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# Jewish Identity Construction and Perpetuation in Contemporary Britain

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“You can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards.” (Steve Jobs)

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## ABSTRACT

### **Jewish Identity Construction and Perpetuation in Contemporary Britain**

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This thesis attends to the major question '*how is Jewish identity created and maintained in contemporary Britain?*' To answer this question, I have done one year of ethnographic fieldwork in Britain, which included 121 interviews with Jewish people of various ages and across different religious as well as non-religious denominations.

This thesis identifies four major elements informing the creation and perpetuation of Jewish identity: One, a sense of difference from the majority population creates and maintains the identity. Jews can perceive themselves to be different religiously, nationally, ethnically and/or culturally from white Christian British people. Two, trauma memory has an impact on the creation and sustenance of this identity. Vicarious group trauma, meaning trauma experienced by proxy of previous generations, can inform identity through its influence on everyday experiences. Three, community affiliation plays a role in creating and particularly reinforcing the identification. The Jewish community provides resources, social interaction and thus signalled attention, and regard; all of them respond to innate human needs that a person aims to have satisfied. Four, a group norm of continuity is important in the perpetuation of this identity within and across generations. This norm is created and sustained by its members through their focus on endogamy. Wanting to have a partner from one's own group, have Jewish children and raise them in a Jewish lifestyle can, thereby, reinforce and maintain a sense of Jewishness (inter-) generationally. Without members marrying within the faith and having children that are raised with Judaism, it would be difficult to preserve Jewish identity in a country where the group does not constitute the majority.

The thesis concludes that there are two reasons why Jews in diaspora have been able to sustain as a group and maintain their identity over time. Firstly, the multi-dimensionality of the Jewish group and respective affiliation platforms have allowed its members to create a multi-faceted meaning of being Jewish, and, secondly, continuous external challenges to the group's security together with constant reminders of those challenges; both have prevented the group from assimilating into mainstream society.

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# 1. Introduction

There is a large body of research in Sociology exploring how long-established diaspora groups<sup>1</sup> have been able to retain a collective identity separate from the mainstream society. The British Jewish community is an interesting example of such a group, which sociological research has not yet explored. Their history in Britain extends back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, yet Jews are still identifiable on the social landscape. This stands in contrast to other groups, such as the Protestant Italians (White 2001: 150), who also arrived before Britain adopted a policy of multiculturalism encouraging minority groups<sup>2</sup> to assert and maintain their identities<sup>3</sup>. While it cannot be asserted where the Italians live in London today, it is common knowledge that Jews tend to live in Northwest London, recognizably in areas such as Golders Green, Hendon and Stamford Hill. Why is it that this minority, unlike others, has not assimilated to the extent of losing its distinctive group identity?

Jews are generally not phenotypically identifiable as a minority group in Britain. Not having a different skin colour, they do not encounter colour prejudices that could hinder their integration into the majority society. On average, this group has become highly educated and economically prosperous (Graham et al. 2007), factors which

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<sup>1</sup>The terms diaspora, diasporic, and diaspora-isation are extensively debated in literature. Recent research refers to diaspora as “communities of people dislocated from their native homelands through migration, immigration, or exile” (Brazier and Mannur 2003: 8). Jewish Diaspora has mainly been associated with the forced exile (*galut*) of the group from the region of the Kingdom of Judah and Roman Judaea, which begun with the 6th century BCE conquest of the ancient Kingdom of Judah and the destruction of the First Temple (586 BCE). Note, it needs to be considered that Jews have lived outside of the ‘land of Israel’ and were thus in voluntary diaspora even before this time (Sand and Lotan 2009).

<sup>2</sup> I use the United Nation’s definition regarding the constitution of a minority group: “A group of citizens of a state, constituting a numerical minority and in a non-dominant position in that state, endowed with ethnic, religious or linguistic characteristics which differ from those of the majority of the population, having a sense of solidarity with one another, motivated, if only implicitly, by a collective will to survive and whose aim it is to achieve equality with the majority in fact and in law” (Gyurcsik 1993: 22). Thus, Jews constitute an ethnic and religious numerical minority in Britain.

<sup>3</sup> The beginning of multiculturalism in Britain is associated with the immigration of members of various ethnic groups since the late 1940s. It started with the Black Caribbean workers who arrived after the Second World War (but predominantly during the 1950s), followed by the Asian migrants mainly from China, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh during the 1950s-60s and subsequent other groups (e.g. Greek-Cypriots and Vietnamese immigrants). The start of multiculturalism can also be associated with the establishment of policies, which include the British Nationality Act of 1948 and the Race Relations Act of 1965, and the foundation of committees like the Race Relations Board in 1966; both intended to help minority groups to assert and maintain their identities.

## Chapter 1

normally promote assimilation. Thus, their continuous existence as a sizable community is remarkable and challenges the universal application of assimilation theories such as the ‘melting pot’ (Gordon 1961)<sup>4</sup>.

Jews’ success in preserving their unique identity is especially significant considering the discrimination and persecution that the group has long faced - most devastatingly during the Holocaust<sup>5</sup>, which systematically destroyed about two-thirds of European Jewry and one-third of world Jewry. To understand what has led this group to preserve its identity in the face of continuous anti-Semitism and general processes of assimilation, the following core question is examined in this study: *How is Jewish identity created and maintained in contemporary Britain?*

This research will use the qualitative methods of in-depth interviewing and observation to explore the social processes and mechanisms of Jewish identity construction and perpetuation, taking into account that there are three major sub-groups of Jews in Britain: Jews affiliated with traditional synagogues (referred to as ‘traditional’ from henceforward), those affiliated with non-traditional synagogues (‘non-traditional’), and those who lack affiliation with any synagogue (‘unaffiliated’)<sup>6</sup>.

Examining how identity is produced and reproduced among these three groups of British Jews<sup>7</sup> will assist me in drawing appropriate conclusions as to why Jews, on the whole, have not assimilated over time to the extent of losing their distinct identity. My conclusions will also shed light on why some diaspora groups are successful in preserving their identities, while others are not.

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<sup>4</sup> A similar argument was also put forward in Graham’s doctoral thesis on the socio-spatial boundaries of British Jews (Graham 2008).

<sup>5</sup> Discrimination and persecution has occurred in different geographical areas of their settlements throughout history including the blood libels and massacres in Europe during the Middle Ages (e.g. German and French Crusades), the persecution and discrimination of Jews in the Far and Middle East (e.g. massacres in Fez in 1276 and 1465), the Pogroms in Eastern Europe (1880-1919), or the English massacres at London and York (1189 and respectively 1190) and the persecution of Jews during Holocaust all over Europe (1938-1945).

<sup>6</sup> The traditional group encompasses the Modern Orthodox and the Ultra-Orthodox (Orthodox) as well as the Sephardi denominations, and the non-traditional (Progressive) group includes the Reform and Liberal denominations (Blau 1966). The unaffiliated group comprises Jews, who are not affiliated to a synagogue and is essentially an ethnically-defined group (Liebman 1999).

<sup>7</sup> When I refer to the major ‘groups’ of British Jews throughout this thesis, I mean the following three denominational sub-groups: the traditional as well as non-traditional affiliated, and unaffiliated denominational groups.

### **1.1. Definitional Complexities**

There has been a long debate as to whether “Jews are a race, a nationality, or a religious or cultural group” (Wirth 1956: 53). Most researchers regard them either as a religious or an ethnic group, while some consider the group to be a mixture of both (e.g. Kosmin 1999).

Firstly, Jews are understood to be an ethnic group. Looking at research outside of the Jewish context, Hutchinson and Smith define ethnic communities as groups that share a sense of kinship, group solidarity and common culture (Hutchinson and Smith 1996). Smith provides a detailed definition of an ethnic group as being a collectivity within a larger society that has “a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories, one or more elements of common culture [such as customs, or a language], a link with a homeland and a sense of solidarity among at least some of its members [perception of connection between members; e.g. sense of being a family]” (Hutchinson and Smith 1996: 6; Smith 2003: 20). This definition fits Jews as they have a) myths of common ancestry such as descending from the twelve tribes of Israel; b) shared historical memories of their people such as their slavery in Egypt and the escape from it marked on the festival of Passover<sup>8</sup>; c) a common culture such as is presented in the language of Yiddish or Jewish folklore; d) a link with the homeland called Zion (i.e. the biblical land of Israel), and, e) a shared sense of solidarity through, for example, being members of ‘the chosen people’, or as a consequence of persecution. Thus, a study of Jewish identity needs to take into account the ethnic dimension in the exploration of the identity.

Secondly, Jews are also perceived as a religious group. A religious group can be defined as a group of individuals that has a common faith and worship of a god, gods, or spirits. Judaism is a religion because central in the Jewish belief is that there is only one God, and that there is a special covenant between God and the children of Israel (Jews). A religious identity is commonly defined as one’s sense of belonging to the religion in terms of faith (e.g. Heath et al. 2007). This definition cannot, however, be applied straight-forwardly to Jews’ sense of religious identification. Religious Judaism, meaning biblical and rabbinic Judaism, highlights the religious aspects of Judaism and

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<sup>8</sup> Passover is an eight-day long festival that commemorates the Hebrews’ traumatic exodus (escape) from enslavement in Egypt and their survival of the escape. During this timeframe, the Hebrews were officially still an ethnic group and not a religious one.

attests an emphasis to i) the *Torah*<sup>9</sup>, in which Judaism is primarily about a covenant between God and the Jewish people and herewith the observance of the commandments<sup>10</sup>, and, ii) ethical monotheism with the centrality of God, whereby the focus is directed towards the ethics and the ethical land (Epstein 1977; Fishbane 1987). This means that a belief in God is not the one central aspect in the Judaic religion.

Furthermore, the Judeans were first an ethnic group before they became a religious one<sup>11</sup>. The ‘ism’ of Judaism identifies the Judeans as being primarily concerned with membership of a people rather than adherence to specific beliefs such as a belief in God (De Lange 2000; Solomon 2000). Many of the major religious holy day rituals relate to Jews as an ethnic group such as Passover (*Pesach*). This religious festival commemorates the exodus of the people from Egypt and their freedom from slavery, however at that point this people were not yet a coherent ‘religious’ group. The Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*)<sup>12</sup> and the Feast of Weeks (*Shavuot*)<sup>13</sup> are two other

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<sup>9</sup> Torah denotes the five books of the Jewish bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

<sup>10</sup> There are 613 commandments (*mitzvot*) in Judaism that guide all aspects of life, i.e. what to do and what not to do. Traditional observant Jews will try to follow the commandments as much as they can. Non-traditional observant Jews will follow some of the commandments but their theology does not regard all of the *mitzvot* as binding. Secular affiliated and many unaffiliated members will often follow a few of the commandments but will not tend to attest any religious significance to it.

<sup>11</sup> According to the biblical account, Jews became an ethnic group when God made a covenant with Abraham. Abraham did not worship idols in a time when everyone did, and eventually God showed himself to Abraham and promised him that if he would leave his home and family, God would make him and his progeny a great nation and bless them. Abraham accepted the offer, and the covenant (the first of two) between God and the Jewish people was established (Genesis 12). Abraham had a son named Isaac, and Isaac fathered twin sons Jacob and Essau (Genesis 25). After Jacob successfully wrestled with the angel of God, the name "Israel" was given to Jacob. This birth is regarded as the birth of the people as a nation, '*Am Yisrael*'. Jacob fathered twelve sons and they became the ancestors of the Israelites, also known as the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Another affirmation of God's special relationship with the Jewish people, who later became known as God's "chosen people" (Deuteronomy 7:6), took place when God made a second covenant with Israel as an ethnic people or nation through Moses. God gave the Torah to Moses who then revealed it to the Jewish people/nation at Mount Sinai. This is also regarded as the birth of the Jewish people/nation as a religious group.

<sup>12</sup> *Sukkot* is an eight-day long festival and commemorates the 40 years of survival of the Jewish people in the desert after their exodus from Egypt. Observant Orthodox and some Progressive Jews tend to build a *sukkah* in synagogue but also at home such as in the back garden or on the balcony. A *sukkah* is a hut which resembles the type of temporary shelters used by their ancestors in the wilderness during the exodus. Four types of plant material form part of the ritual associated with the observance of this festival: an *etrog* (a citron fruit), a palm branch, a myrtle branch, and a willow branch (Leviticus 23: 39-40). The hut must have a roof of branches and leaves through which those inside can see the sky. I found that observant Jews tend to take their meals in this hut during the time of Sukkot or at least during the Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest. Biblical teaching suggests that Jews should dwell in these structures during the festival. Eating in them is a type of minimum fulfilment of this *mitzvah* (i.e. commandment), which the climate of Britain allows.

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‘religious’ holy days that also commemorate ethnic experiences of the group<sup>14</sup>. Thus, the ethnic and the religious components of Judaism intersect, which indicates that Jews cannot be studied as a religious group or as an ethnic group, but should rather be examined as an ethno-religious group. Hence, the ethnic dimension should be taken into account when studying members’ religious identification with Judaism, just as the religious dimension ought to be taken into consideration when researching their ethnic identification.

Thirdly, Jews are also referred to as a national group. Anderson defines a nation as “an imagined political community [which is] imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 1991: 6). Accordingly, “those that share the same national identity consider themselves to share common bonds of comradeship and responsibility for each other” (Heath et al. 2007: 10). Although Smith himself advocates an elusiveness to the concept of national identity, he still defines it as “the maintenance and continual reinterpretation of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that form the distinctive heritage of the nation, and the identification of individuals with the heritage and its pattern” (Smith 2003: 24-25). He further asserts that a nation’s cultural resources and traditions are comprised by ethnicity as defined above. Comparing the stated definitions of nationalism and ethnicity shows that there is no clear distinction as to what constitutes either an ethnic or a national group, and the associated identities. This also applies when looking at the Jewish group and its history. Even before God promised this ‘ethnic’ group a land (the promise was mentioned first to Abraham in Genesis 15:18-21), God referred to them as a nation - ‘*Am Yisrael*’, the nation of Israel - and called Jews ‘Israelites’ and ‘the people of Israel’. The promised land, ‘the Land of Israel’, which was Canaan, was first given to Abraham’s descendants after they had walked through the desert for 40 years, following the Exodus from Egypt (Deuteronomy 1:8). Even after they lost their land in 70 CE (Zeitlin 1936; Aviv and Shneer 2005), Jewish identification with the nation persisted and is expressed in

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<sup>13</sup> *Shavuot* marks the day the Torah was given by God to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago. It commemorates the day that Jews made the transition from an ethnic to an ethno-religious group.

<sup>14</sup> *Shavuot*, *Pesach* and *Sukkot* have their roots in agricultural festivals.

ethnic songs like ‘Next Year in Jerusalem’ or in religious prayers such as the *Amidah* prayer<sup>15</sup>.

The identification with the ancient homeland, which relates to the ‘ethno-national’ aspect of being Jewish, must be viewed in the contemporary context of the existence of the State of Israel. While Israel is not a Jewish state *per se*, the Jewish nature of Israel is outlined in its Declaration of Independence. The declaration asserts the necessity for members of this group not only to have their own land following the Holocaust, but also the significance of it being Israel - the homeland of the Jewish people, both formative of and central to their identity. Furthermore, Israel enacted legislation in 1950 giving people of Jewish ancestry and their spouses the right to gain Israeli citizenship and to emigrate to Israel (Richmond 1993). Over three-quarters of Israel’s population is Jewish (CBS 2011), and a great proportion of self-identified Jews live in Israel (AJC 2008). Further, it incorporates the ancient nation of Zion, the biblical Land of Israel. Therefore, it can be asserted that Israel is now not only a symbolic but also a physical nation for Jews. In view of the state and the land of Israel, Jewish identification can be seen as having a national dimension, which intersects with the ethnic and religious dimensions discussed above.

Fourthly, Jews can also be described as a cultural group. A cultural group is a community of people who share a set of ideas, attitudes (Lawson and Heaton 1999), beliefs, values and norms (Efferson et al. 2008) that are recognizably different from those of other groups. Group culture is often not only symbolically (e.g. visually) expressed by group members, but also behaviourally. Cultural groups are often identifiable by ethnic markers, which are observable traits that signal group affiliation, such as speech (e.g. Barth 1969). For example, the culture of the Ashkenazim<sup>16</sup> has largely been related to *Yiddishkeit* - the Jewishness of traditional Eastern and Central European Jews, who also spoke Yiddish. Markers can also be of a religious nature, such as dress style. For instance, observant men in traditional Judaism, and sometimes also women in non-traditional communities wear a *kippah* (a skullcap) as Jewish law asks members to cover their heads so that the fear of heaven is upon them. As Jewish culture

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<sup>15</sup> The daily prayer must be said facing towards Jerusalem and contains the words: “Rock of Israel! Arise to the help of Israel. Deliver, as You promised, Judah and Israel...His name, the holy One of Israel...Lord, who redeemed Israel” (Singer et al. 2006:75), and, “He is your God, Zion, from generation to generation (Singer et al. 2006:79)”.

<sup>16</sup> Ashkenazi Jews are Jews who come from Eastern and Central Europe.

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derives from ethnic and religious traditions, their culture should be explored in view of the ethnic and religious group identification. Cultural affiliation should still be examined separately from the advocated group dimensions such as ethnicity, as secular Jews often emphasise solely their cultural identification with Judaism (Kudenko and Phillips 2010).

Fifthly, Jews have also been described as a racial group. 'Race' is today a disputed concept in the research community outside the United States of America because of its exclusive boundaries. Only a few recent studies have applied this concept and they focus on whites, blacks, South/East Asians and particularly mixed ethnic groups in Britain (Aspinall et al. 2008; Song 2010; Murji 2011; Thompson 2011). Scholars outside of America mainly research 'race' in terms of ancestry as a dimension of ethnicity (e.g. Hall 1992a; Hall 1996; Bayar 2009).

The dispute over applying 'race' when studying ethnic groups often relates to abusive usage of the concept by nationalist groups, who have employed the term to define national membership in highly exclusive terms and to justify the persecution of minorities, such as the Nazi persecution of Jews during the Holocaust. This particularly explains scholars' sensitivity regarding the usage of 'race' in connection with the Jewish diaspora. That said, the racial categorisation applied to Jews during the Holocaust, stating that a person is Jewish if at least one of their grandparents is Jewish, may still be significant in defining the identity. In other words, being Jewish 'racially' - in terms of being connected with members of one's group through blood - may still hold resonance in members' identification with the group due to the Holocaust. Taking Weber's race definition into account<sup>17</sup>, I will refer to 'race' and subsequently 'racial' identification only when (primordial) connections constituted by blood are perceived subjectively by members as a common trait (Weber cited in Fenton 2010: 60) and when institutions use it to define Jews, or otherwise bring it into connection with this group. Considering that there are also governmental institutions that view anti-Semitism as part of racism, such as the political group 'All-Party Parliamentary Group against Anti-Semitism', and that this usage might impact on members' identification with the group, I will also refer to

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<sup>17</sup> Weber sees race independent of ethnicity by relating group bonding and subsequent action to race in terms of blood relationships (Hutchinson and Smith 1996), arguing that race "creates a group only when it is subjectively perceived as a common trait" (Weber cited in Fenton 2010: 60).

‘race’ when official reports, institutions, or individuals associate racism with the group and its members.

In addition to the diversity of what Jews are group-wise, there is also diversity of Jews along (religious and non-religious) denominational lines<sup>18</sup>. This means that members can also define themselves along denominational lines:

To begin, there are two sub-cultures of Judaism, Ashkenazi and Sephardi Judaism. Ashkenazim and Sephardim have different genealogy, traditions and customs as each developed in different areas of the world. Ashkenazim are people descended from the medieval Jewish communities along the Rhine River in Germany and later on associated with Eastern Europe, particularly Poland and Russia. Sephardim are the descendants of Jews expelled from Spain (1492), Portugal (1497) and Navarre (1498). Like traditional Ashkenazim, Sephardim also believe in traditional theological Judaism. Although there are small differences in Sephardi customs and liturgy<sup>19</sup>, their religious observances tend to be identical to those of the traditional group of the Modern Orthodox.

There are synagogue-affiliated (affiliated) traditional Jews, including the Ultra-Orthodox and Modern Orthodox Jews<sup>20</sup> as well as the Sephardi Jews. Members of these groups – or of any other religious denomination within Judaism - would identify

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<sup>18</sup> Before the Enlightenment and Emancipation (18<sup>th</sup> century), there was only pre-modern ‘Traditional’ Orthodox Judaism. The Enlightenment and Emancipation started the development of modern Judaism, with its central characteristic of fragmented religious movements. The newer forms of Ashkenazi Judaism include Modern Orthodoxy, Reform, Liberal and Masorti Judaism. As part of the Jewish response to Enlightenment and Emancipation, traditional religious beliefs and practices in Judaism were re-examined and subsequently reformed to respond to the religious requirements of Modernity in Europe. In detail, the Enlightenment stimulated the *Haskalah* - the Jewish Enlightenment - an intellectual movement developed by Moses Mendelssohn in Europe, which lasted from approximately the 1770s to the 1880s. Since the general Enlightenment brought more appeal for Jewish people to engage in gentile society, *Haskalah* focused on vocational, educational and religious reforms in Judaism. Thus, *Haskalah* encouraged Jews to study secular subjects (Hirsch and Elias 1996; Feiner 2003). This encouraged critical as well as objective examination of Judaism, largely motivated by reformist impulses, which led to the discovery that Judaism developed and has changed in the past and thus gave support for the thesis that there is capacity in Judaism for evolutionary developments and subsequently the development of the Progressive denominations, including Masorti (Woodhead et al. 2009). Initial alterations occurring on a practical level were mainly aesthetic reforms; imitating Christian theology in regard to worship and practices (Blau 1966; Philipson and Freehof 1967). Reforms, which are found in the Progressive movements, included increased decorum in synagogues, instrumental as well as choral music, confirmation ceremonies, removal of aspects of the liturgy deemed obsolete and of passages from the liturgy that were theologically problematic, redefinition of the rabbi’s role (rabbis were attested less power), reduction of restrictions to participate more in general society and most distinctively the inclusion of vernacular sermons on theological themes (Philipson and Freehof 1967).

<sup>19</sup> For example, Ashkenazi Jewry developed the Yiddish language, while Sephardim developed Judeo-Spanish; i.e. Ladino.

<sup>20</sup> Orthodoxy includes, the Ultra- and Modern Orthodox Jews.

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themselves as such, even though some of them might not have membership in a respective synagogue. These Jews follow the traditional interpretation and application of the laws and ethics of the *Torah* (written law) as legislated in the *Talmud* (oral law)<sup>21</sup> and codified in the *shulhan arukh* (code of Jewish law). This means ‘traditional’ Jews<sup>22</sup> understand the written law (*Torah*) through the oral law (*Talmud*). Hence, the written law gives authority to the oral law. Members place higher importance on learning and studying the *Talmud* than the *Torah*, whereas non-traditional members<sup>23</sup> (Liberal and Reform Jews) only give importance to the *Torah* (Epstein 1977). Traditional members, moreover, give complete authority to God, the texts of the *Torah* as well as the *Talmud*, and their rabbi. It is worthwhile noting thereby that the *Talmudic* texts were developed by rabbis. Their theology regards all of the 613 *mitzvot* (commandments) as binding.

It is worth recognizing that the Ultra-Orthodox denomination consists of two groups: Hasidic and Haredi Jews. Hasidic Judaism consists of a collection of different dynasties, originating in different provinces and villages in Eastern Europe. Each of the dynasties has a particular Rebbe, who is regarded by following members as their spiritual leader, and teacher of Judaism. Each Rebbe sets certain distinctive theological and cultural principles that the members of their group will follow. There are many larger and minor Hasidic sects<sup>24</sup> and members of such sects would not only identify themselves as Hasidic Jews, but would also identify themselves by their sect’s name. For example, one of the more well-known Hasidic dynasties is the Chabad-Lubavitch movement and thus individuals of this group would also claim to be Chabad Jews. Haredi Judaism also has different groups with diverse spiritual orientations and customs

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<sup>21</sup> The *Talmud* is a religious text containing rabbinic discussions on Jewish law and ethics and as such Jewish customs and traditions. The *Talmud* includes 1) the *Mishnah*, which is the written version of the oral law, and, 2) the *Gemara*, which is a discussion and commentary on the *Mishnah* (De Lange 2000)

<sup>22</sup> This is not to say that I do not recognise that within Orthodox Judaism there have been varied efforts to construct accounts of tradition that cannot entirely be viewed as the perpetuation of received traditions and practices. However, the Ultra-Orthodox, Sephardi and the Modern Orthodox Jews are all traditional in that they uphold a theology which understands the written law through the oral law and regards all of the *mitzvot* as binding.

<sup>23</sup> The non-traditional religious groups are generally a development in response to traditional Ashkenazi Judaism.

<sup>24</sup> While Hasidim study the books of the *Torah* as the other traditional affiliated Jewish groups, they also focus on studying Jewish mysticism including Kabbalah, which the others do not. The concept of having a Rebbe that provides special interpretations of Judaism also distinguishes Hasidic Judaism from other forms of Judaism. According to my Ultra-Orthodox interviewees, followers of each dynasty have their own customs. For example, the men who belong to the Gur Hasidic sect will wear very tall fur hats and sometimes even boots on the Sabbath, a perpetuated tradition from their place of origin in Eastern Europe. Their way of life is paternally transmitted from generation to generation. Hence, a son follows the traditions of the father and paternal grandfather.

divided broadly into the Luthuanian-Yeshivish (Mitnaggedim) streams from Eastern Europe and the Oriental Sephardi Haredim (Baumel 2003). An Ultra-Orthodox person of the Haredi group would generally also identify themselves as being Haredi.

Unlike Ultra-Orthodoxy, Modern Orthodox Judaism combines strict adherence to *halakhah* (the collective body of Jewish rabbinic law) with the engagement in modern society. In this way, Modern Orthodox Judaism synthesises pre-Modern Orthodox Judaism with modernity brought forward by the Enlightenment. This movement developed out of the belief that it was possible for Jews to maintain religious law and with it the customs whilst engaging in the non-Jewish world, such as in social and human science scholarship. Sephardi Jews also share this belief. Ultra-Orthodox Judaism is a response to this development by voluntarily seeking to separate itself from secular society in order to protect the continuation of pre-Modern Orthodox Judaism. Pre-Enlightenment, the separation was mainly created through externally imposed legislation by the host countries that prevented Jews' complete integration into mainstream society. In essence therefore, a leaning, which is now known as Ultra-Orthodox Judaism, developed to collectively refuse engaging in the new opportunities presented to Jews by Enlightenment thought and a changed political landscape. A fear of where the new opportunities would lead created an emphasis on maintaining and even enhancing an inward focus.

Although the Ultra-Orthodox regards itself as the sole heir of 'Traditional' Judaism, it has also introduced various changes including the reinvention of some of the traditions to suit their altered circumstances. One important change is the general loss of concern for '*Am Yisrael*' in terms of the Jewish peoplehood which can be seen in the fact that Ultra-Orthodox members have not only separated themselves from non-Jews but also from other non-Ultra-Orthodox Jews. Hence, even in contemporary society, Ultra-Orthodox Jews live reclusively and try to avoid not only non-Jewish life, but also non-Ultra-Orthodox Jewish life. In contrast, Modern Orthodox and Sephardim integrate on the whole more into secular non-Jewish society as illustrated by members' participation in non-Jewish education and employment.

Next, we have the affiliated non-traditional Jews. They are also known as Progressive Jews. Members of the Reform and Liberal denominations belong to this stream of Judaism. The Progressive maintains that Jews' individual autonomy

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overrules 'traditional' Jewish law and traditions. The individual decides which Jewish practices, if any, to adopt as binding. Thus, non-traditional members do not follow certain rules advocated in the Jewish texts such as the celebration of the second days of festivals and they interpret such texts less conservatively than traditional members. The latter can be seen in the fact that the Progressive denominations have a less conservative attitude towards homosexuality (Kahn 1990: 48) and intermarriage than traditional denominations (Brook 1989). Still, there are differences between Liberal and Reform Judaism in their theology. Whereas Reform regards religious laws as a set of general guidelines - rather than restrictions and obligations that have to be observed as the traditional denominations see it - Liberal Judaism attests that such laws should be personally evaluated and re-evaluated by their practical appropriateness to contemporary conditions within society. The Liberal movement emphasises that religious laws should only act as spiritual assistance in creating, maintaining and enhancing members' sense of Jewishness. In other words, Liberal Jews are even more 'liberal' in their Judaism than Reform Jews. Such nuanced theological differences also lead Progressive Jews to identify themselves as being either Reform or Liberal. On the whole, since authority lies more with the individual in non-traditional Judaism, it can be expected that Judaism is more life-encompassing for traditional Jews than for non-traditional ones.

Masorti Judaism (alias Conservative Judaism) is yet another of the current streams of Judaism, and it is also the youngest<sup>25</sup> (Blau 1966). It is considered a middle-of-the-road Judaism between traditional and non-traditional religious Judaism. The Masorti movement practices traditional Judaism but interprets teachings in view of modern knowledge and scholarship. It wishes to preserve the traditions as much as possible, but its historical consciousness facilitates a greater willingness to innovate and adapt where necessary. As such, Masorti Jews believe in the human development of the written and the oral law. Whereas Orthodox Judaism asserts that the *Torah* was dictated by God to Moses on Mount Sinai, Masorti's theology emphasises that the *Torah* is a divine document composed by individuals, but still stimulated by God, and accordingly reflects his will. Masorti sees the oral law as having developed in response to environmental conditions and, consequently, gives primacy to the written law over the

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<sup>25</sup> Masorti Judaism developed in mid-19th century Germany with the work of Zacharias Frankel (Baskin and Seeskin 2010).

oral law. In other words, for Masorti, *halakhah* has a history, which allows them to identify the influences to which it has been subject in the past, making them more open to modern innovations that respond to contemporary issues and concerns (such as feminist issues). Thus, members of this stream would certainly identify themselves as Masorti in order to distinguish themselves from other Jewish groups, particularly from traditional denominations.

Lastly, there is the group of Jews without synagogue affiliation. They are often referred to in literature as secular Jews (e.g. De Lange 2000). According to Finestein, many unaffiliated Jews have the “desire to remain distinctively and discernibly Jewish whilst not holding to religious beliefs” (Finestein 1977: 187). They often retain a connection to their people and culture and thus a Jewish identity. For example, research asserts that some of them will still observe traditions such as the marking of holy days (Graham 2003), but they will do so in a cultural way without imbuing religious meaning into such observances. Unaffiliated Jews are also found among the fiercest supporters of Jewish causes such as Jewish Socialism or Zionism (De Lange 2000). Thus, there are members who identify themselves as Jews without synagogue affiliation.

With this in mind, Jews’ observance of laws and traditions and their involvement in the community vary independently of their affiliation to a synagogue; that is to say, some unaffiliated members observe commandments and engage in communal activities, while some of the affiliated members do not. Accordingly, there are affiliated Jews who do not observe any laws such as the *kashrut* (dietary) laws, and do not go to synagogue for the major holy days, but would still define themselves as belonging to an affiliated denomination. For example, results from a 2002 survey of London Jews show that 57% of the respondents who regarded their religious practice as secular - as they did not fulfil rituals such as lightening the Sabbath<sup>26</sup> candles or fasting on *Yom Kippur*<sup>27</sup> - were members of an Orthodox (Modern Orthodox) or strictly Orthodox (Ultra-Orthodox) synagogue, and 20% were members of a Progressive synagogue<sup>28</sup> (Graham 2003).

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<sup>26</sup> The Sabbath is the Jewish Day of Rest.

<sup>27</sup> *Yom Kippur* is the Jewish Day of Atonement.

<sup>28</sup> As with all the survey statistics provided by the JPR and the Board of Deputies of British Jews, careful interpretation of the results is required as their researchers find it difficult to include traditionally ultra-Orthodox or unaffiliated Jews in their survey research. In this study, only 17% of surveyed Jews did not belong to a synagogue. Furthermore, research on standard survey questions regarding religious practice have found that questions on religious practice tend to lead to a biased answer since the results show more what the respondents wish to do than what they actually do (Hadaway and Marler 1998).

Taking into account the various groups and denominations and the countless levels of engagement with Judaism as a religion, culture, nationality and ethnicity, it is difficult to define or categorise British Jews in a singular manner. Still, there is a common understanding of Jews broadly forming one distinctive group and sharing one group identity. It is exactly this shared understanding in view of the definitional complexities that makes the investigation of Jewish identity creation and perpetuation possible and compelling.

These definitional complexities, however, mean that the production and reproduction of the identity needs to be researched by looking at different groups of Jews with varying levels of engagement with Judaism and examine their identity as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. This approach is critical to capture the variance of meaning that being Jewish can have; only then can we fully understand the mechanisms and processes responsible for the continuation of the identity over time. I will adopt this approach in order to fulfil the aim of this study, which is to analyse how Jewish identity is created and perpetuated in contemporary Britain.

## **1.2. British Jewry**

The first account of Jewish settlement in Britain dates back to 1066 (Skinner 2003). After their expulsion in 1290 by King Edward I, Jews were readmitted unofficially under Oliver Cromwell in 1656 (Neuberger 1995). The first arrivals were Sephardim, followed by mainly Ashkenazim. According to Sinclair and Milner, this makes Jews the oldest and longest established minority group in Britain (Sinclair and Milner 2005). The largest Jewish immigration wave came from Eastern Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The catalyst for this wave was the persecution of Ashkenazi Jews in areas controlled by Russia in 1881 - also known as the Eastern European Pogroms - and broadly ceased following the implementation of the 1914 Aliens Restriction Act<sup>29</sup> (Cesarani 1990). Although there was also a Jewish refugee wave to Britain because of the Nazi regime during the 1930s, it was not as significant as the 1881-1914 migration (Endelman 2002).

Today, Jews in Britain are mainly 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> generation immigrants. According to the 2001 Census, there are 266,740 self-identified Jews living in the United Kingdom (UK) (Graham et al. 2007: 3). The Census chose to define Jews in religious terms

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<sup>29</sup> Note there were also economic migrants among this wave of Jewish refugees (White 2001).

Adding to this statistic those Jews who identified themselves ‘by ethnicity only’ in England and Wales, and Scottish Jews who identified themselves as Jewish by upbringing but held no current religion, the total number of Jews increases to 270,499 (Graham et al. 2007: 3). This figure is, still, only an estimate as the Census question inquiring after the ethnicity of respondents was biased towards inquiring after respondents’ colour and nationality (Graham et al. 2007: 21) and the answer categories for this question did not include ‘Jewish’. Examination of the 2001 Census figures and data from several large surveys also supports the argument that Jews have been underenumerated (Graham and Waterman 2005; Voas 2007). Researchers from the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR) have suggested that there are about 300,000 – 350,000 Jews in Britain.

A majority of these Jews are affiliated to a synagogue. A 2010 JPR study based on Jewish sample survey information indicates that 73% of all Jewish households in Britain belong to a synagogue (Graham and Vulkan 2010: 34). This survey recorded 82,963 households belonging to synagogues in the UK in 2010. This membership belonged to a total of 409 synagogues (Graham and Vulkan 2010). **Table 1.1.** shows the distribution of membership by religious denomination based on their survey data. The Modern Orthodox group is the largest affiliated group with a membership of approximately 55%. Progressive Jews are the second largest group with around 28 % (19.4% Reform, 8.7% Liberal). This is followed by the Ultra-Orthodox with a membership of about 11%, and the Sephardi group, with a 3.5% membership. Although both of these latter groups are also considered part of the traditional denomination, their membership size is much smaller than that of the Modern Orthodox denomination. Masorti is the smallest affiliated group, with a 2.7% membership (Graham and Vulkan 2010)

**Table 1.1. Distribution of membership by Jewish religious denomination ranked by level of conservatism, 2010 (N=82,963)**

Denominational strand	Number of members (by household)	% of total membership
Ultra-Orthodox <sup>30</sup>	9,049	10.9
Modern Orthodox (Ashkenazi) <sup>31</sup>	45,393	54.7
Sephardi	2,930	3.5
Masorti	2,269	2.7
Reform	16,125	19.4
Liberal	7,197	8.7
Total	82,963	100

*Source:* Graham and Vulkan 2010

Furthermore, statistics by the Board of Deputies of British Jews indicate that there are 30% of Jews that are without synagogue membership in Britain (Schmool and Cohen 1998). This proportion resonates with the 2001 Census data on unaffiliated Jews in Britain suggesting that 25% of Jews are unaffiliated (Graham and Vulkan 2010). JPR researchers even suggest this proportion to be around 50%. Thus, the unaffiliated Jewish population ranges between 25% and 50%.

According to the 2001 Census, a greater majority of British Jews may be considered middle-class. Whereas a fifth of all jobs (20.4%) among the general population were categorised as ‘manual’, only 6.6% of all Jewish identified respondents worked in such occupations. In contrast, 25.1% of these respondents were ‘managers and senior officials,’ compared to 15.1% of the general population that hold such employment. It is worth noting that Jews were almost three times as likely to be ‘corporate managers’ than ‘managers and proprietors in services’. Additionally, one in five worked in ‘professional occupations’ (22.9%), which is twice the ratio of the general population<sup>32,33</sup> (Graham et al. 2007: 91-92)

<sup>30</sup> The researchers call the Ultra-Orthodox Jews strictly Orthodox Jews. The sample is taken from the synagogues aligned with the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations and others of a similar ethos (Graham and Vulkan 2010).

<sup>31</sup> The percentage of Modern Orthodox Jews, which the researchers call central Orthodox, is taken from the United Synagogue, the Federation of Synagogues and independent Orthodox synagogues (Graham and Vulkan 2010).

<sup>32</sup> The 2001 Census mainly used the five-class version of the NS SEC operational occupational categories to categorise class: Class 1: Managerial and professional occupations; Class 2: Intermediate occupations; Class 3: Small employers and own-account workers; Class 4: Lower supervisory and technical occupations; Class 5: Semi-routine and routine occupations; never worked and long-term unemployed. Those who are middle class would be in classes 1 – 3 (ONS 2010).

The fact that the community is thriving can, furthermore, be seen in that it is a “visible point of reference on the social landscape” (Alba and Nee 2005: 11) of Britain. For example, there are countless religious and non-religious Jewish charities, societies/clubs for children, youth, adults and elderly people (e.g. choirs and football clubs), cultural organisations (e.g. Limmud<sup>34</sup>) and institutions (e.g. Ben Uri Gallery or the Jewish Community Centre for London) and independent events and activities (e.g. Jewish Film Festival). The community even has its own newspapers such as the Jewish Chronicle, a security service - the Community Security trust (CST)<sup>35</sup>, organisations that represent and lobby for the community with the government like the Board of Deputies for British Jews, and institutes providing data on the Jewish community, for example the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR). According to the JPR, it exists in order to assist Jewish organisations plan more proficiently and efficiently for the community’s sustenance in the future. Another example reflecting the community’s vibrancy is the number of Jewish schools in the state (voluntary-aided) and independent sectors in Britain, which has more than doubled in the last two decades (Short 2002). The number of children at such schools has increased by 500% over the last 50 years - from 4,000 in 1950 to 22,640 in 1999 (Valins et al. 2002). This means that such schools are now largely oversubscribed (Symons, 2001).

In terms of geographical concentration, over half of Britain’s Jews (165,945) live in the London region (Graham et al. 2007: 29) and a majority of them reside in North London. North London has the most densely Jewish populated areas. Out of all the Local Authority Districts (LADs) in London, Barnet in North London has the highest

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<sup>33</sup> The statistics must be seen in the context that the Ultra-Orthodox will often not fill out surveys such as the Census as they regard this activity as engaging in secular society. Thus, there is an under-enumeration of Ultra-Orthodox Jews in the 2001 Census due to their high non-response rate (Graham and Waterman 2005). From the 2001 Census results of the enumerated Ultra-Orthodox, it can be expected that this group is mainly working class as 47% of the enumerated Ultra-Orthodox respondents aged over 25 were economically inactive (JPR 2007). This is associated with the fact that children in those communities often do not get extensive educational qualifications and do not want to work outside of their community (Valins et al. 2002).

<sup>34</sup> Limmud is an educational organisation. Limmud aims to enable each participant to go one step further on their own Jewish journey by offering access to some of the world’s most dynamic Jewish educators, performers and teachers. The Limmud events employ all educational styles including lectures, workshops, text-study sessions, film, meditation, discussions, exhibits and performances. It is particularly popular with secular Jews (see <http://www.limmud.org> for details).

<sup>35</sup> The Jewish Security trust represents British Jewry on a variety of police, governmental and policy-making committees dealing with security and anti-Semitism. According to their website, this organisations assists securing more than 300 synagogues, Jewish schools, 1000 Jewish communal organisations and buildings; and around 1000 communal events (see <http://www.cst.org> for details).

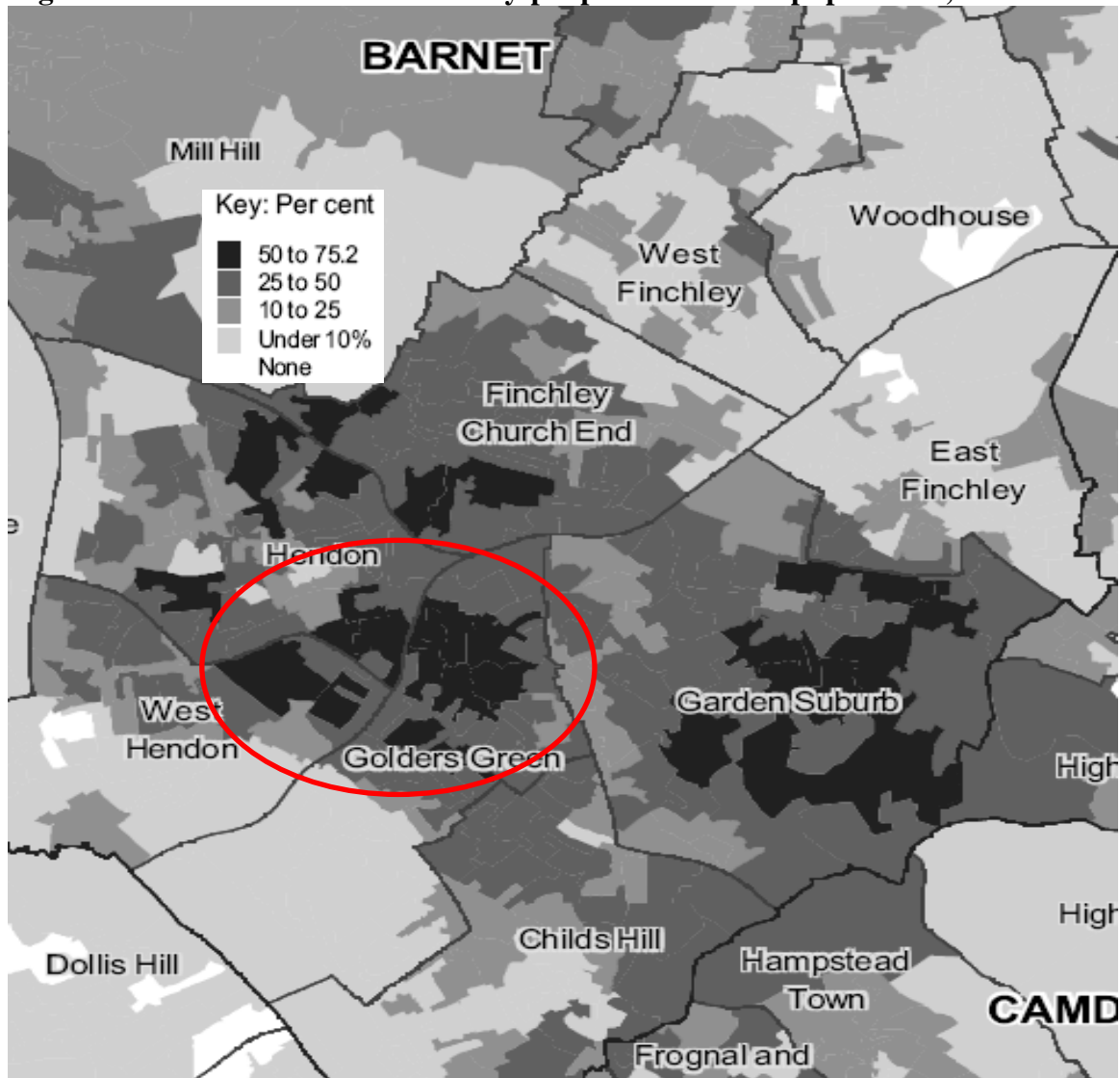
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Jewish population with 46,686 Jews; 17.52% of the total UK Jewish population (Graham et al. 2007). 13 of the 37 council wards in which half of London's Jewish population lives are located in Barnet (Graham et al. 2007: 27). Thus, there are certain neighbourhoods in North London that are predominantly Jewish. For instance, **Figure 1.1.** shows the existence of such neighbourhoods in South Barnet, particularly in Hendon, West Hendon and Golders Green. In certain neighbourhoods (OAs<sup>36</sup>) of those three districts, such as the East of West Hendon, the South of Hendon, and North of Golders Green (circled red), Jews make up 50 – 75% of the population.

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<sup>36</sup> An Output Area (OA) is the smallest geographical unit. Output Areas are approximately equivalent in size and population to postcode blocks although they are not coterminous with them. OAs are surrogates for neighbourhoods and streets and it is only at this smallest scale that Jewish majorities appear in some areas, e.g. South Barnet (Graham et al. 2007: 31, 34). In general, there are somewhat fewer than about 500 OAs per LAD. OAs contains usually about 300 people, though in some instances they may contain more than 1,000. Different to the larger-scale geographical units, OAs are Census subdivisions as such, statistical units and are not administrative jurisdictions. There are 218,040 OAs in the UK, whereby, Barnet has 1.015 OAs (Graham et al. 2007: 26).

**Figure 1.1. Jews in South Barnet by proportion of OA population, 2001**



Source: Graham et al. 2007: 32

Although Jews, on the whole, have integrated into British society, they have not assimilated in terms of “becoming similar” (Brubaker 2001: 539) to the mainstream society, particularly in view of their ethno-religious culture and national outlook<sup>37</sup>. For instance, most of the community still mark the major Jewish holy days, at least in an ethnic way (De Lange 2003). Graham showed in the 2002 survey study of London Jews that three-quarters of the entire survey sample attended a Passover *Seder* (a ritualistic dinner marking the festival) ‘every year’. Nearly half of the secular respondents said

<sup>37</sup> There seems a general consensus in research that the term ‘integration’ allows for the possibility of parity to occur (such as in education and the work place) without considerable diminishment of the distinctive (ethnic or religious) culture and communal attachments (Alba 2005: 43).

that they attended a *Seder* every year (47%), and over three quarters of such participants (82%) said they attended a *Seder* ‘some’, ‘most’ or ‘every’ year (Graham 2003). Moreover, the majority of Jews feel an attachment to Israel. A survey study by the JPR in the 1990s found that 43% of the sample felt a strong and 38% had a moderate attachment to Israel (Kosmin et al. 1997). A 2010 JPR study found that for an even greater majority (82%) of respondents Israel plays a ‘central’ or ‘important but not central’ role in their Jewish identification (Graham and Boyd 2010). The most recent 2011 JPR study of Jewish students found that about half of the respondents (51%) had ‘very positive’ feelings towards Israel and a further 38% claimed ‘fairly positive’ feelings towards Israel. This is interesting considering that the majority of students in the general population (63%) had ‘no feelings either way’ about Israel (Graham and Boyd 2011). It is worth noting that none of these studies inquired about the symbolic attachment to the ancient land of Israel<sup>38</sup>.

Overall, the evidence indicates that the community has only segmentally assimilated<sup>39</sup> and that British Jewry on the whole is thriving. This conclusion contradicts a set of literature suggesting that British Jewry is shrinking; partially through a wave of disaffiliation among Jews. Studies, however, do not only show a decline in synagogue membership (Graham and Vulkan 2010), but also lower Jewish birth rates (Neustatter 1955; Waterman and Kosmin 1986; Schmool and Cohen 1998), and marriage rates (Vulkan 2012), as well as an increase in intermarriage (Miller et al. 1996; Schmool 2003; Graham et al. 2007) among British Jews. The declines in synagogue membership and birth rates have been attributed to migration to Israel (Vasagar 2006; Wynne-Jones and Jeffay 2006) and the changing trend in marriage patterns has been linked to increased integration of Jews into mainstream society and an associated

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<sup>38</sup> Research has shown that Jews often do not see themselves as coming from Zion (now incorporated into Israel) and subsequently Israel, and thus do not see Zion, nor the State of Israel as their homeland (Aviv and Shneer 2005; Lambert 2008). Since this research is limited to American and Russian Jewry, it is difficult to assert whether the results can be generalised to British Jews.

<sup>39</sup> Assimilation is defined as losing the group’s distinction (mainly ethnic distinction) and its corollary cultural and social differences. Alba and Nee, however, do not require the complete disappearance of the group’s distinction (such as their ethnicity) for assimilation to take place as long as the group members still abide to a number of ethnic markers (Alba and Nee 2005). Accordingly, assimilation might occur to members of a group “even as the group itself remains a highly visible point of reference on the social landscape, embodied in an ethnic culture, neighbourhoods, and institutional infrastructures” (Alba and Nee 2005: 11). For example, minorities can assimilate educationally and economically into the mainstream society. Some scholarship defines this as ‘segmented’ assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997b).

decrease of Jewish education and home life (Sacks 1994). The heightened presence of other ethno-religious minorities in Britain since the late 1940s may have increased members' opportunities to integrate into the country and thus might indirectly be responsible for the proclaimed 'vanishing diaspora' (Wasserstein 1997).

According to the Board of Deputies for British Jews, however, there is no accurate way of assessing migration to Israel (Rocker 2012). Furthermore, the statistics on Jewish marriages are not an accurate way of estimating whether British Jewry is flourishing or not because these statistics generally do not include secular marriages or same-sex ceremonies between Jews, nor do they usually incorporate performed blessings for intermarrying couples in synagogues (Rocker 2012). Moreover, Jews are increasingly living in non-marital partnerships (Graham et al., 2007), which contradicts assertions that the decline in marriage rates is synonymous with a decline of the population. Nor does the increase in intermarriage necessarily mean a decline in the population either, as the children of inter-married parents can still feel Jewish and perpetuate the identity. The same phenomena account for the decrease in synagogue affiliation; unaffiliated members can still maintain a sense of Jewishness by participating in non-religious Jewish organisations and events, by executing ethno-religious Jewish rituals in the home and by having Jewish friends.

In any case, more recent data shows that the average Jewish birth rate is actually increasing. Using data on circumcisions, the Community Research Unit at the Board of Deputies of British Jews estimated that in 1997 there were 2,742 Jewish births in the UK. Ten years later, in 2007, there had been 3,314 births. This trend is largely driven by the Ultra-Orthodox community whose birth rate has increased over this period (Abramson et al. 2011). The average growth of this group from the early 1990s to the present (2007) has been about 4% per year (Vulkan and Graham 2008).

With this in mind, the data used to show that British Jewry is not flourishing is mainly provided by mainstream synagogues and samples consist predominantly of middle-of-the-road synagogue-affiliated Jews. Studies lack including synagogue-unaffiliated and Ultra-Orthodox Jews in their samples that are increasing in size. Although unaffiliated Jews are now one of the largest Jewish groups in Britain, most statistics either underenumerate this type of members or typically fail to include them as

a distinct sample group<sup>40</sup> (Graham and Waterman 2005; Voas and Crockett 2005; Voas 2007). The Ultra-Orthodox are also underenumerated or mainly left out as a separate sample group in most survey research because of their high non-response rate. Recent studies that have tried to obtain data on Ultra-Orthodox Jews' synagogue membership and birth rates indicate that this group is increasing significantly in numbers and strength: 17% (45,500) of Britain's Jewish population is Ultra-Orthodox (Addelman 2007). One third (33%) of all British Jewish children up to the age of 18 are Ultra-Orthodox (Vulkan and Graham 2008). As studies do not provide accurate measures of the Jewish population in Britain, the argument that British Jews are in decline and will eventually 'vanish' (Wasserstein 1997) can be challenged. Still, it can be concluded from the recent statistical evidence cited above that there is a polarisation of Jews toward the strictly religious and non-religious extremes of Judaism. This polarisation is in line with the rise in secularisation and religious fundamentalism in general society (Kaufmann 2010).

Although the statistics that show a decline in the British Jewish population can be challenged, public figures and institutions effectively employ these statistics to question Jewish continuity and thereby draw attention to the importance of Jewish continuity. For example, Jewish academics and religious leaders such as the British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks have published books with titles such as "Will we have Jewish Grandchildren?" (Sacks 1994) or "Vanishing Diaspora: Jews in Europe since 1945" (Wasserstein 1997) and have given talks about threats to Jewish survival (e.g. Sacks 2010). According to the recent sociological study called "Turbulent Times: The British Jewish Community Today" by Kahn-Harris and Gidley one of the major aims of such efforts is to circumvent further disaffiliation and to draw unaffiliated Jews back into the affiliated community (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010). The success can be observed in the creation of Jewish organisations such as 'Jewish Continuity', which mainly uses outreach and education in order to stimulate Jewish revitalisation (Alderman 2003; Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010).

While I cannot disprove that there has been a decline in the British Jewish population, the methodological problems and biases of surveys used to identify a

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<sup>40</sup> Studies investigating the underenumeration of Jews have demonstrated that members of this group are increasingly defining themselves in ethnic rather than religious terms (Miller et al. 1996; Kosmin 1999; Graham and Waterman 2005).

decline means that the proposition can be challenged. Furthermore, the presence of Jews on the geographical, political and social landscape of Britain suggests that the community is thriving. In light of the group's continuous presence despite challenges to its existence, it is interesting to explore how Jews have resisted total assimilation into the mainstream by examining the mechanisms and processes informing the identity and its perpetuation.

### **1.3. Literature on the Jewish Diaspora**

Much research has been produced about the Jewish Diaspora, most of it of a historical and descriptive nature (e.g. Swierenga 1994; Lavie and Swedenburg 1996; Wettstein 2002; Jayaram 2004). There is a lack of empirical ethnographic research exploring this Diaspora. Furthermore, the majority of literature focuses on American and Israeli Jewry. There is conspicuously little published about British Jewry, despite the fact that the 2001 British Census states that Jews are the fourth largest 'religious minority' population in Britain (Statistics 2006) and they make up the fourth largest Jewish population in the world outside Israel (AJC 2008). The majority of published studies on British diaspora groups, particularly in Sociology, deals with more phenotypically visible minorities such as British Muslims,<sup>41</sup> especially those from South Asia (e.g. Dwyer 2000; Geaves 2004), notably Pakistan (e.g. Jacobson 1997b; Jacobson 1998; Dwyer 1999).

The scant literature that is published on British Jewry and, in some cases, its identity, tends to explore it in a descriptive format (e.g. Brook 1989; Alderman 1994; Alderman 1998; Endelman 2002; Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010; Abramson et al. 2011). Of the few studies that are based on primary empirical methods, most take a quantitative approach, but they also tend to be descriptive (e.g. Kosmin and Levy 1983; Miller 1998; Becher et al. 2002; Valins 2003; Graham 2008). Moreover, much of the research is outdated. There exists no recent research that explores the multi-dimensional nature of Jewish identity creation and perpetuation empirically as well as analytically through qualitative methods.

In general, various sociological phenomena in the study of minorities have been applied to Jews, such as 'families' (e.g. Davey et al. 2001), 'intermarriage' (e.g. Barron

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<sup>41</sup> According to the 2001 Census, only 4.1% of British Muslims define themselves as being 'White'. This makes it agreeable to state that on the whole British Muslims are phenotypically distinct and thus visible.

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1946; Philips and Fishman 2006), ‘kinship’ (e.g. Sinclair and Milner 2005), ‘segregation’ (e.g. Valins 2003) and ‘social capital’ (e.g. Philips and Fishman 2006). None of these studies, however, have explored the nuanced role played by these social phenomena as part of the processes and mechanisms through which Jewish identity is created and perpetuated, and how they interrelate and reinforce each other in this regard. Moreover, such studies have not addressed to what extent these processes and mechanisms vary or are concurrent for different groups of Jews. Accordingly, my study differs from much of the existing work in that it does not view the Jewish group as a single entity. Instead, it acknowledges that there are different denominational groups with varying degrees of ethno-religious observance and community involvement. Hence, my work will consider when exploring the identity that ‘being Jewish’ can have different connotations for different types of members<sup>42</sup>. In this way, my research is the first to investigate qualitatively how the major groups of Jews construct and perpetuate their identity for themselves and to their offspring, paying special attention to the ways in which the processes and mechanisms involved are shared by or vary between the different groups.

An important contribution of this study to existing research is the inclusion of unaffiliated Jews in its analysis. Despite the fact that they are the second biggest group of Jews in Britain after the Orthodox, scholars have tended to exclude unaffiliated Jews in their examinations of this group and its identity, or they have only included a few of its members and thus researched them together with less or non-devout affiliated Jews as part of the ‘secular’ Jewish group. Since unaffiliated members see themselves as Jewish, but can be expected not to be affiliated to a synagogue for some distinct reason, they must be considered as a separate entity and studied as such. Accordingly, my study fills a gap in literature by including unaffiliated Jews as a separate sample group, and thus shedding light on how such members create and perpetuate their identity outside of the traditional context of synagogue affiliation. Although this work includes unaffiliated Jews who are completely removed from the Jewish community, religion and culture and would not mention that they were Jewish unless they were asked, it focuses on unaffiliated Jews who maintain an affiliation to Judaism. This focus was chosen because

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<sup>42</sup> I refer to ‘types’ when I denote members of different ages, denominations and with different levels of community involvement and ethno-religious practice.

this research is primarily interested in finding out how the identity is sustained and perpetuated.

In general, my qualitative project contributes substantially to understandings of the formation of Jewish allegiances and their impact on identity creation and re-creation, as well as the integrated nature of social phenomena such as religious, ethnic, national and cultural identification with the social construct, social belonging and adherence to this construct. My research will illustrate that Jews cannot be studied as either a religious, ethnic, national or cultural group, but the nexus between religion, ethnicity, nationality and culture must be considered in the examination. Furthermore, it will demonstrate that Jewish identity should be researched in the light of the meaning 'being Jewish' has for members *themselves*; as not only institutions such as synagogues or Jewish schools, but also individuals often have an interest in wanting to perpetuate the identity for themselves and to their children.

Although this study provides a snapshot of Jewish identity production and reproduction in Britain, it will still be able to identify associations and draw plausible conjectures about the direction of causations.

#### **1.4. Overview**

This dissertation is organised to address the question 'how is Jewish identity created and maintained in contemporary Britain?' Regarding the organisation of the thesis, there are seven chapters. **Chapter 1** has situated the thesis. It has outlined the complexity involved in trying to categorise and define British Jews and thereby justified an exploratory investigation of Jewish identity construction and perpetuation. **Chapter 2** discusses the methods and data sources used in this study. It argues for the usage of the qualitative methods of in-depth interviewing and participant as well as direct observations so that an exploratory study of the identity can be completed. The research process is also described. This includes an account of the evolution of the sampling design, execution of the fieldwork in view of practical as well as ethical considerations and the documentation as well as analysis of the data obtained.

After these two introductory chapters, four substantive empirical chapters (**Chapter 3 to 6**) follow contributing towards answering the overarching question. Each of the core chapters addresses and analyses thereby central sociological phenomena

found to be important in Jewish identity creation and construction. **Chapter 3** explores members' perceptions of difference from the majority population, being white Christian British people. It finds that a sense of difference is essential in the creation and maintenance of Jewishness. **Chapter 4** argues that trauma memory in the form of vicarious group trauma, meaning the emotional experience of the historical knowledge of group trauma, informs their identity, by exploring how such trauma impacts the everyday experiences of its members. **Chapter 5** demonstrates the importance of the Jewish community and subsequently the affiliation with it in the identity creation and sustenance. This is done by examining why members contribute to their community. **Chapter 6** deals with generational and inter-generational identity continuation. It demonstrates how the group norm of continuity is created and sustained by members' focus on endogamy.

In the conclusion, **Chapter 7**, the findings from the four core chapters regarding the major processes and mechanisms informing Jewish identity creation and its sustenance will be discussed in view of their implications and to give recommendations for the study of this and other social groups and associated phenomena. This final chapter will also reflect on why this group was able to maintain its identity over time in a country where it is not in the majority. It will speculate as to why some diaspora groups have also been successful in this regard and why others have not. It will end with suggestions for further academic inquiry.

## 2. Methods and Data Sources

This work is an ethnography of British Jewry. It investigates Jewish identity creation and perpetuation in contemporary Britain through qualitative methods. As data is selected on the dependent variable - by researching Jews who categorise themselves as members of this group - this research included explicit variation on the dependent variable by observing and interviewing Jews of different ages and denominations and with different levels of community involvement and ethno-religious practice. Although this project studies Jews with and without synagogue affiliation and, accordingly, also includes Jews who have no affiliation at all to the Jewish community, religion and/or culture, it focuses overall on Jews with an association to Judaism, either religious or non-religious. This focus is necessary because this research is interested in finding out how Jewish identity is perpetuated within or outside of the traditional context of synagogue affiliation. It can be expected that Jews without any kind of association are less likely to perpetuate the identity within and across generations. Thus, when studying Jews without synagogue affiliation, it is indispensable to concentrate on those members who maintain an association with Judaism.

### 2.1. Methods

This study applies the qualitative methods of in-depth, semi-structured interviewing<sup>43</sup> following an interview guide; and participant as well as direct observation<sup>44</sup>. These methods were chosen because they allowed the investigation of group identity creation

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<sup>43</sup> Semi-structured interviewing means that the researcher uses an interview guide when interviewing research subjects, but the questions of this guide are accompanied by interview-dependent follow-up questions to get in-depth information to supplement respondents' answers.

<sup>44</sup> Whereas the researchers do not participate in the social environment of the observations when doing direct observations, they do so in participant observations (for more details consult the following works: Bruyn 1966; Spradley 1980; Jorgensen 1993). In other words, the latter form of observation requires that researchers participate "in the social world, in whatever role, and reflecting on the products of that participation...[and thereby are] still able, at least in anticipation or retrospect, to observe...activities 'from outside' as objects in the world" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007: 16-17). McCall and Simmons assert that "participant observation is not a single method but rather a characteristic style of research (McCall and Simmons 1969: 1). Researchers participate in social interactions that occur in natural settings and talk to participants in order to experience interactions in these natural settings themselves and to discuss their interpretations of observed phenomena.

and maintenance to be exploratory in nature. Quantitative methods, specifically survey research, still seem to be preferred when investigating group identities and in particular Jewish identity. This is understandable considering the advantages of quantitative methods; they allow for controllable conditions and thus produce results with high reliability that can be used to make confident predictions and generalisations. Survey research with its usually large and random samples can be particularly advantageous in this regard. Such research can, nonetheless, have disadvantages; surveys using closed-ended questions and pre-determined answer categories can force responses onto respondents. This is not the case in qualitative research, where the study evolves with the fieldwork in an inductive process. Thus, such investigation bias is decreased as the research is not driven by assumptions determined at the outset. Accordingly, the strength of qualitative research is its dynamic nature.

There are several advantages to using in-depth, semi-structured interviewing and observations for my research. In-depth interviewing permits analysis of not only the cognitive, but also the affective aspects of respondents' replies (Patton 1987). It sets the stage for the respondents *themselves* to explore profoundly how they think and feel about a topic such as their identity and to account for why they feel, think or behave in a certain way. In other words, this method allows exploring how individuals *themselves* make meaning of social phenomena such as their identity and their wish to perpetuate it. In this way, a deeper understanding of examined social phenomena can be achieved. Interviewing is particularly suitable when studying the 'hidden' population of Jews because it offers sampling techniques, such as snowball sampling<sup>45</sup> (Berg 1988) and purposive sampling<sup>46</sup> (Dane 1990), that help the researcher find such a difficult-to-access population. Furthermore, a semi-structured method of interviewing allows the researcher to be even more exploratory, by following the interviewees' self-explorations with more in-depth questions, and thereby ensuring not biasing the respondents'

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<sup>45</sup> Snowball sampling is a technique for finding research subjects by which one interviewee gives the researcher the name and contact details of other possible interviewees, who then also do the same (Miles and Huberman 1994). Snowball sampling is regarded as the most useful strategy to obtain a rich sample, especially when researching 'hidden populations' (Van Meter 1990). It uses the social networks of identified interviewees to provide an ever-expanding set of potential contacts (Faugier and Sargeant 1997; Thomson 1997). This non-probability method was used since the desired sample characteristic, being British Jews, is relatively rare and often difficult to access.

<sup>46</sup> Purposive sampling allows selecting interviewees on grounds of characteristics (e.g. age or gender) that are important for the conduction of the research (Dane 1990). In other words, interviewees are sampled on the basis that they suit the purpose of the study.

## *Chapter 2*

answers, while still maintaining the control in the investigation. For example, following up on respondents' answers with further questions allowed me to gain more depth of insight into the nuances of their identities.

The method of observation is advantageous to use as it allows researchers to come into closer contact with research subjects through participation in their activities and events. Observation helps the researcher to gain a thorough understanding of the quality of social networks, and the web of relationships as well as social dynamics among individuals in those networks. In this way, the texture of the social structure, in which individuals are embedded, can be researched. Furthermore, the researcher observes and interacts with the subjects in a variety of situations, so that s/he can detect links between their actions, emotions, views, opinions, behaviour and characteristics, and the social context in which they live. Accordingly, as a complement to the interviews I conducted, my observations allowed me to put the respondents' accounts into a social context, and thus assisted me in drawing inferences and making deductions from the interview data.

Thus, using these qualitative methods allowed for an explorative investigation of what it means to be Jewish and provided for a wide-ranging and nuanced analysis of members' diverse ways of identifying with Judaism and perpetuating their identity within and across generations. Still, there are also disadvantages using qualitative methods. For the most part, qualitative research only allows for a small sample. However, my small sample of British Jews did permit me to study the population and associated phenomena in-depth, with attention to subtleties. Moreover, the qualitative data collection methods of interview and observation can introduce bias. However, doing observations in addition to interviews decreases the recall bias (e.g. respondents can intentionally/unintentionally misguide the researcher or hide information) and the social desirability bias of the interview results. Both methods provide independent confirmation of the results to each other. For example, self-reported accounts from interviews were checked for consistency against observed behaviours in social interactions and contexts, and vice versa (Bogdan and Taylor 1975).

Researchers in the field may also constitute a source of bias, as their presence can shape social interactions and dynamics. I was conscious that my Christian, German background, including my Christian name, may have had an impact on how people engaged with me during my interviews and observations. I was, however, pleasantly

surprised that my background did not prevent an open welcome in all the communities and families that I have visited, nor did it prevent me from finding interviewees. My background did not even inhibit respondents and observation participants from talking to me about the Holocaust. In other words, it did not obstruct my interactions with research subjects nor prevented me from getting authentic data on important topics such as the Holocaust.

Nonetheless, to increase the validity of my findings and ensure their reliability, I employed the technique of triangulation - comparing the data produced through interviews, observations and, if applicable, documented accounts; e.g. evidence from books, studies and media sources. If the results generated from these different data sources demonstrated similar patterns, they could be included as findings in this thesis.

To conclude, I can be confident that my thesis provides an accurate snapshot of Jewish identity creation and perpetuation among British Jews.

## **2.2. The Sample**

According to the 2001 Census, there are 270,499 self-identified Jews living in the UK (Graham et al. 2007: 3). Regarding the sizes of the religious denominations, the Modern Orthodox is the largest group (55%), followed by the Progressive (19.4% Reform, 8.7% Liberal) and largely behind the Ultra-Orthodox (11%), Sephardim (3.5%) and Masorti (2.7%) (Graham and Vulkan 2010). As discussed in **Section 1.2.**, the unaffiliated population size ranges between 25% and 50% (Schmool and Cohen 1998; Graham and Vulkan 2010). Comparing the affiliated and unaffiliated groups, we find that the following three groups are the largest ones in Britain: the traditional group of the Modern Orthodox with 55%, the non-traditional group of the Progressive with 28% and the unaffiliated Jews with an average size of 38%. Considering this statistic, I set size as the selection criteria for my sample and focused on these three groups for my study.

In this thesis, I refer to 'secular' Jews when I allude to affiliated members who are less and not at all engaged with Judaism as well as unaffiliated members. Furthermore, I refer to 'respondents' or 'interviewees' when I denote people that I interviewed, and 'participants' when I discuss phenomena relating to interviewees and people in my observations. To avoid constant repetition, I also refer to 'Jews' as 'members' and 'non-Jews' as 'gentiles'. Moreover, see **Appendix A** for a list of words and terms with

definitions that might be unfamiliar to the reader. The reader should, furthermore, know that some details relating to the participants have been amended in order to guarantee their confidentiality. For example, names referred to in quotes and professions mentioned in quotes and text were altered to ensure anonymity of the participants and the information they provided.

### **2.3. Fieldwork**

Although I conducted preliminary fieldwork, which included talking to Jewish people and doing a few observations at Jewish religious and non-religious events from June to the end of August 2008, in order to establish the interview guide (see **footnote 72** for further details), the majority of my data collection was done from September 2008 to September 2009.

#### **2.3.1. Observations**

The observations were concentrated in densely Jewish populated areas in North London. Over half of Britain's enumerated Jews (165,945) live in the London region (Graham et al. 2007: 29). Most of the London Jews live in the North-West London boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Camden, and Harrow (JPR 2000). Barnet has, thereby, the highest Jewish population (Graham et al. 2007). Certain neighbourhoods in Barnet, such as the East of West Hendon, the South of Hendon, and North of Golders Green have a Jewish population of 50% - 75% (Graham et al. 2007). I conducted observations in such neighbourhoods in North London in order to acquire an understanding of the texture of the community; for example what it is about living in a Jewish area and participating in the community that informs Jews' sense of group belonging.

I concentrated my observations on one particular Modern Orthodox synagogue community and the families of its members. I spent nearly a year in this community, going to synagogue almost every Saturday morning for about five months, engaging in its social activities and spending social time with its families, such as by having holy day dinners and lunches at their houses. Going to synagogue regularly was an important way for me to gain and maintain access to the community and to stay in regular communication with its members.

I also conducted observations in other Modern Orthodox as well as Progressive communities and families, and spent time with unaffiliated Jewish people in order to compare results. For example, I participated not only in a Modern Orthodox but also in a Reform Passover *Seder*. I also participated in various non-religious activities and events such as those organised by Limmud and the Jewish Learning Exchange. I conducted observations at different Jewish youth group meetings and formal as well as informal gatherings of different Jewish people, their friends and families. It was an intense fieldwork period, in which I took up every opportunity to join events, activities, services and get-togethers. Note, focusing my observations on specific areas and a particular community was important to maximise the predictive potential of my findings.

As part of a full year of observation in different Jewish communities, I participated in the marking of every major holy day in the Jewish calendar. I started by observing *Yom Kippur*<sup>47</sup> in 2008, and I ended my observations with this holy day in 2009. In detail, I have done the following ethno-religious observations:

- *Yom Kippur*: On the 9<sup>th</sup> of October 2008, I fasted and followed the respective services in a Modern Orthodox synagogue. I broke the fast with a Modern Orthodox family. On *Erev Yom Kippur* (the eve of Yom Kippur), the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2009, I went to the *Kol Nidre*<sup>48</sup> service in a Reform synagogue.
- *Sukkot*: On the 17<sup>th</sup> of October 2008, I went to a Modern Orthodox synagogue service to mark the festival and had lunch in the *sukkah*<sup>49</sup> of one of the synagogue members. I also visited the *sukkah* of another member of this synagogue.
- *Simchat Torah*<sup>50</sup>: On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October 2008, I went to a Modern Orthodox synagogue service and joined the synagogue's celebration of this festival afterwards.

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<sup>47</sup> *Yom Kippur* is the Day of Atonement. It is one of the holiest days in the Jewish calendar when Jews atone and repent for their sins. They normally observe this day by fasting for 25 hours and by spending most of this day following synagogue services.

<sup>48</sup> *Kol Nidre*, meaning "all vows", is a prayer that is recited in the evening service beginning *Yom Kippur*. The service is named after this prayer. It is regarded as one of the most emotional prayers due to its solemn melody. It asks God to annul all personal promises that were made during the year.

<sup>49</sup> See footnote 12 for a definition of a *sukkah*.

<sup>50</sup> *Simchat Torah* is a joyful holiday, which celebrates the completion of the annual Torah reading cycle.

## Chapter 2

- *Chanukah*<sup>51</sup>: I marked this holy day in the home of a Modern Orthodox family on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2008.
- *Pesach*: In 2009, I did a four-day long observation of this eight-day long festival starting with a *Seder*<sup>52</sup> on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May at a Reform home, then I went to a Modern Orthodox synagogue service on the morning of the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> of May and ate lunch at various synagogue members' houses on those days. I also participated in a community *Seder* in a Modern Orthodox synagogue on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May. I experienced a *Seder* in a Modern Orthodox home on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2010.
- *Purim*<sup>53</sup>: I went to a *Megillah* (the Scroll of Esther) reading in a Modern Orthodox synagogue on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March 2009 and to a Purim Party afterwards. I also went to a reading at the Jewish Learning Exchange on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2009. I was invited to a festive meal in a Modern Orthodox home on that day as well.
- *Shavuot*: I went to a festive dinner at a Modern Orthodox home and then to a *Tikkun Leil*<sup>54</sup> for the youth and one for adults at a Modern Orthodox home on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May 2009.
- *Rosh Hashanah*<sup>55</sup>: I had a festive dinner with a Modern Orthodox family on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. I also went to a service at a Modern Orthodox synagogue in the morning of this holy day, being the 19<sup>th</sup> of

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<sup>51</sup> *Chanukah* is the Festival of Lights. It is an eight-day festival commemorating the rededication of the Second Holy Temple in Jerusalem in the Maccabean Revolt in the 2nd century BCE. It also commemorates the miracle that the oil for the menorah (seven-branched ancient lampstand) in the Temple burned for 8 days, although there was only enough oil to keep the menorah lit for a single day. The only religious observance related to the holiday is the lighting of candles on a candelabrum (also called menorah), one on each day of the festival, which is traditionally accompanied by the saying of an associated blessing.

<sup>52</sup> The Passover *Seder* is a ritualised feast that marks the Jewish holiday of Passover. It is conducted on the eve of Passover and the first day of Passover. The ritual involves the telling of the story of the Hebrews' liberation from slavery in Egypt.

<sup>53</sup> Purim remembers the deliverance of Jews of the ancient Persian Empire from Haman's plot to annihilate them. It is a story recorded in the 'Book of Esther'. This festival is marked by giving presents to friends and family as well as charity to the poor, a celebratory meal, wearing masks and costumes and through public recitations of the Scroll of Esther (*Megillah*).

<sup>54</sup> *Tikkun Leil Shavuot* is the tradition of staying up the whole night (*leil*) of Shavuot (the anniversary of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai) studying with the community (relevant presentations, discussions and readings are part of this) in order to re-experience the standing at Sinai where the Torah was received.

<sup>55</sup> *Rosh Hashanah* is the Jewish New Year. There is the belief that on this holy day God balances Jewish people's good deeds of the year against their bad ones, and makes a decision on what the following year will hold for them.

September 2009. Afterwards, I had lunch at another Modern Orthodox home.

During this timeframe, I also attended 15 Sabbath services (excluding the Sabbath services that fell on yearly holy days) in Modern Orthodox and Reform synagogues and 12 additional Sabbath meals at unaffiliated, Reform, Liberal and Modern Orthodox houses.

Regarding the cultural observations during my fieldwork time, I visited people's houses, or met with them for food or drinks outside of the home. I also went to a *bris* (circumcision rite), several birthday as well as engagement parties, and weddings. Note that I did not include any observations made at birthday/engagement parties or weddings in my thesis, as I was there in private capacity. These events did, nevertheless, inform my knowledge about Jewish life and thus my study overall. Moreover, I did observations at the Jewish book week, the UK Jewish Film Festival, exhibitions relating to Jews such as at the Ben Uri gallery, Jewish theatre plays in London, youth group meetings such as Bnei Akiva gatherings and at Limmud (Hackney's Day Limmud on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2008 and the Limmud conference from the 28<sup>th</sup> of December 2008 to the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2009). I visited a Jewish primary school and went to talks, seminars, workshops and movies about Jewish topics at the Jewish Community Centre for London, London Jewish Cultural Centre, the Jewish Learning Exchange, synagogues, Universities, the Oxford University Chabad Society, and the Oxford University Jewish society. I also did the course "Y Kosher" (*kosher* means allowed to be eaten) at the Jewish Learning Exchange to understand the rules and associated terminology regarding *kashrut*<sup>56</sup>. Furthermore, I spent time walking around Jewish areas, sitting in cafes and restaurants and going to Jewish shops, all while observing Jewish people's interactions with each other.

In terms of political observations, I visited the office of the Chief Rabbi<sup>57</sup> and the United Synagogue<sup>58</sup> *Beth Din* (rabbinical court), Tribe (the youth organisation of the

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<sup>56</sup> A framework of Jewish law dealing with what foods are and are not permitted to be eaten and how foods must be prepared and eaten.

<sup>57</sup> A Chief Rabbi is a recognised religious leader of a Jewish community in a country. In Britain, he is the religious leader of the United Synagogue, but often regarded as the religious leader of British Jewry by gentiles.

United Synagogue), the Board of Deputies of British Jews<sup>59</sup>, the Institute for Jewish Policy Research (JPR)<sup>60</sup>, United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA)<sup>61</sup>, Birthright Israel<sup>62</sup> and the Community Security trust (CST). All these observations helped to inform my understanding of the texture of the Jewish community and its diverse social structure.

While I tried to integrate during my observational fieldwork, I maintained a conscious distance by communicating my researcher status in social interactions with participants, and by talking with them about my study as well as the reasons for my attendance. This also gave the observed people a chance to ask questions about me and my research so that they felt more comfortable for me to be in their environment. Besides, before starting my observations in the Modern Orthodox synagogue community where I conducted the majority of my observations, the Rabbi informed the regular community members of my presence in the community and the reasons for it. Also in this case, I maintained transparency in the research process by informing people I met during my observations about my doctoral research student status and my reasons for being in their community. As most of my observations in this community took place on holy days, I made sure to carry a handbag with me. This is normally not 'the done thing' in traditional communities, and helped to visually identify me as an 'outsider' and thus the advocated ethnographer in the community.

Regarding my observation technique, current literature in the field of ethnography shows that researchers have moved from observing and interpreting idle talk to analysing face-to-face conversations and social interactions in a more nuanced way. This is done by examining, for instance, utterances, actions, gazes, gestures as well as the moral and inferential foundations of the social interactions, and then put them in the

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<sup>58</sup> United Synagogue is the largest religious grouping within the Jewish community in Britain, covering 62 Modern Orthodox synagogue communities. It takes its religious authority from the Chief Rabbi of Britain and has its own Beth Din. The United Synagogue has the largest membership of all British Jewish institutions (see <http://www.theus.org.uk> for details).

<sup>59</sup> The Board of Deputies of British Jews is the central representative body of British Jewry. It was founded in 1760 as a joint committee of the Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews in London. Today, it is regarded as representing the views of and speaking on behalf of secular and religious Jews in Britain (see <http://www.bod.org.uk> for details).

<sup>60</sup> The Institute for Jewish Policy Research was founded in 1965 in London. It is a research institute and think tank specializing in contemporary Jewish affairs related to Jews in Britain and sometimes also extends its focus to researching Jewish related issues across Europe (see <http://www.jpr.org.uk> for details).

<sup>61</sup> United Jewish Israel Appeal offers educational programmes among them is their Israel Experience programme that funds summer tours and gap years in Israel (see <http://www.ujia.org> for details).

<sup>62</sup> Birthright Israel provides free educational, first-time trips to Israel for Jews between the ages of 18 to 26 (<http://www.birthrightisrael.com>).

wider normative social context (see Denzin and Lincoln 2003 for more details). This is exactly what I have done during my fieldwork. Such nuanced observations have been of utmost importance for my study. Only in this way was I able to observe, for instance, that a thriving synagogue community was influenced by mutually expressed regard (i.e. attention, notice, care) among its members. I used my finding of ‘an ethos of regard’ in **Chapter 5**, where I advocated that such an ethos helps in making communities cohesive and thereby assists in their continuous resource creation. Accordingly, only by engaging over a period of time in the same community and observing the nuanced interactions in this structure could I find out that Jews in London who get involved in the community do not live anonymous city lifestyles, but rather lead social lives that resemble the ones in a small village where people know and help each other.

For the documentation of my observational fieldwork, I kept a journal as suggested in ethnographic literature (e.g. Burgess 1995). For example, I wrote down what people did in rituals and social interactions, how participants behaved and interacted with each other (e.g. observing how participants greeted each other), what was talked about during observations, who talked to whom and to whom people did not talk, how participants looked (e.g. their style of dress), and their verbal and most importantly emotional expressions in actions and in interactions among each other as well as with me. Noting down how participants responded to me as an observer over time (e.g. avoiding talking to me or looking at me) allowed me later on to put their actions into their social reality and be able to make inferences. I would also note the ‘atmosphere’ of the social environment during observations, because this helped me to situate the participants’ talk, expressions and actions in the social context.

Note, the quotations reported in this study that derived from my observation data are not strictly verbatim, but rather very close to verbatim. They certainly do not distort the quoted persons’ language or intentions.

### **2.3.2. Interviews**

I conducted 105 interviews with Jews from different denominations and an additional 16 ‘expert’ interviews. The interview data is complemented by countless non-recorded unstructured conversations and observations.

I am confident that I have reached a saturated interview sample. Aggregate information of the 105 interviewees is presented in **Table 1.2**. All respondents were above 18<sup>63</sup>. Interviews were classified according to the respondents' self-identification with the denominational group categories<sup>64</sup>. **Table 1.2** shows that the sample has an approximately equal spread of gender (sex), age, and engagement with Judaism. Engagement with Judaism is measured in terms of the interviewees' level of ethno-religious practice<sup>65</sup> (e.g. observance of the major holy days and dietary restrictions) and their involvement with the community, including the culture. Regarding the former, I looked at the respondents' involvement with other Jewish people (e.g. friends and acquaintances) and in community institutions. In consideration of the latter, I looked at their engagement in 'Jewish activities', such as reading about Jewish related issues or books by Jewish authors, engaging with the history of their group or its language (e.g. Yiddish), and going to Jewish events. It is important to have a demographic spread of interviewees in order to capture variation in people's identification with Judaism, so that the study can provide a confident overview and analysis of Jewish identity creation and perpetuation. Although this thesis focuses on Jews that maintain a religious or non-religious affiliation with Judaism, I included in my interview sample members who have completely detached themselves from Judaism and the Jewish community to the point that they would not state that they were Jewish unless they were asked or it came up as a topic of conversation, in which case they would mention that they had grown up Jewish or were Jewish by ethnic inheritance.

It should be noted that the sample does not reflect a wide demographic spread in terms of social class; the majority of the respondents identified themselves as middle class (84%). Thus, the possible participants they suggested tended also to be middle class; even when I purposefully asked them for working class interviewees. The statistic of middle class respondents does, however, resonate with the results of the 2001 Census, suggesting that a majority of Jews in Britain are middle class.

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<sup>63</sup> The minimum participation age of 18 years was chosen since it can be expected that people from 18 years onwards have a stable identity (Sinclair and Milner 2005).

<sup>64</sup> Note that this classification does not necessarily mean that all interviewees who identified themselves as Modern Orthodox, Reform, Liberal or Masorti were official members of synagogues and paid membership fees. For example, a few regarded themselves as belonging to an affiliated denomination by virtue of their upbringing in this denomination. Furthermore, a few interviewees regarded themselves as belonging to an affiliated denomination because they had an official membership due to their spouse, but did not go to synagogue, practice, or got involved in the community life.

<sup>65</sup> Devotion to Judaism in religious terms excludes in its categorisation the importance of a belief in God.

**Table 1.2. Aggregative demographic interviewee information (N=105)**

Characteristics	Ultra-Orthodox Jews	Modern Orthodox Jews	Masorti Jews	Progressive Jews	Unaffiliated Jews	Total
N (%)	4 (4%)	33 (31%)	4 (5%)	19 (18%)	45 (43%)	105 (100%)
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	1 (25%)	19 (58%)	1 (25%)	12 (63%)	26 (58%)	59 (56%)
Female	3 (75%)	14 (42%)	3 (75%)	7 (37%)	19 (42%)	46 (45%)
<i>Age range</i>						
18-30	1 (25%)	10 (30%)	0 (0%)	3 (16%)	5 (11%)	19 (18%)
30-40	1 (25%)	7 (21%)	1 (25%)	3 (16%)	9 (20%)	21 (20%)
40-50	1 (25%)	4 (12%)	1 (25%)	4 (21%)	6 (13%)	16 (15%)
50-60	0 (0%)	7 (21%)	1 (25%)	5 (26%)	20 (44%)	33 (31%)
60 and above	1 (25%)	5 (15%)	1 (25%)	4 (21%)	5 (11%)	16 (15%)
<i>Engagement with Judaism</i>						
Very engaged	4 (100%)	11 (33%)	0 (0%)	5 (26%)	10 (22%)	30 (29%)
More engaged	0 (0%)	12 (36%)	2 (50%)	5 (26%)	7 (16%)	26 (25%)
Less engaged	0 (0%)	8 (24%)	1 (25%)	5 (26%)	13 (29%)	27 (26%)
Not at all engaged	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	1 (25%)	4 (21%)	15 (33%)	22 (21%)
<i>Social Class</i>						
Working Class	2 (50%)	5 (15%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (9%)	11 (10%)
Lower-/Middle Class	2 (50%)	26 (79%)	4 (100%)	17 (89%)	39 (87%)	88 (84%)
Upper-middle/Upper Class	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	2 (11%)	2 (4%)	6 (6%)

*Source:* Author's compilation

This study focuses on unaffiliated, Modern Orthodox and Progressive interviewees. Nonetheless, I have interviewed a few Masorti and Ultra-Orthodox members in order to obtain a well-rounded view of identity creation and maintenance among British Jews. Most of the interviewees were from North London, because concentrating on an area with densely Jewish populated neighbourhoods furthered my understanding of how community structures and context informs identification with Judaism (see **Table 1.3.** below).

I started by interviewing unaffiliated Jews. In total, I conducted 45 interviews with this group. The interviewees ranged from being ‘very engaged’ with Judaism such as by a) being involved in the community through being members of Jewish organisations and having Jewish friends including being involved in Jewish culture e.g. learning Yiddish and going to Jewish events, and/or b) doing some of the ethno-religious practices (such as fasting on *Yom Kippur*) over being ‘more’ as well as ‘less engaged’ with Judaism to being ‘not at all engaged’ with it such as by not being involved in the community and culture, nor engaging in any ethno-religious practices<sup>66</sup>. Unaffiliated interviewees, who were ‘not at all engaged’, for instance, would not assert that they are Jewish unless someone asked them.

I sampled five unaffiliated respondents from non-religious Jewish organisations (British Shalom Salaam Trust, the Jewish Community Centre for London, Jews for Justice for Palestinians, the London Jewish Cultural Centre and the Oxford Jewish Society) by sending blurbs through their email lists, and posting and distributing flyers at their institutions and/or events. I found two interviewees through flyers hung up in cafés and shops in Jewish areas. Four of the respondents were found through Jewish and non-Jewish contacts and 11 were directly met at Jewish and even non-Jewish events<sup>67</sup>. 23 of the interviewees were found through unaffiliated and affiliated respondents; i.e. via snowball sampling and purposive sampling. The latter technique was used to find mainly unaffiliated respondents, who were further removed from the community, including Jews for whom being Jewish did not play a big or any part in their daily lives.

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<sup>66</sup> Unaffiliated interviewees were still considered as ‘not at all engaged’ if they had been to Limmud once or twice, but otherwise did not engage in Jewish culture or organisations and did not seek having Jewish friends.

<sup>67</sup> An example would be that I talked about my study and then found out that the person I was talking to was Jewish and s/he asked me or I asked him/her to participate in my study. Or, I talked to a non-Jewish person about my study and they offered to refer me to somebody who was Jewish and whom they thought I should interview.

About three months into my fieldwork, I started focusing also on interviewing Modern Orthodox and Progressive Jews. The 33 interviewees of the Modern Orthodox persuasion ranged from being ‘very’, ‘more’ and ‘less’ observant and involved in the community including the culture (i.e. engaged with Judaism) to being ‘not at all’ observant and involved (i.e. ‘not engaged at all’ with Judaism)<sup>68</sup>. I met 11 of the 33 Modern Orthodox respondents by sending out study participant requests through synagogue emailing lists and three interviewees through flyers distributed at Limmud events. 11 were directly met at Jewish and even non-Jewish formal and informal events. Eight respondents were approached through snowball and purposive sampling via interviewees. The first interviewees were mainly found through gatekeepers. The interviews were predominantly with ‘very’ and ‘more’ observant and community involved members. The subsequent snowball sampling also led me to mainly ‘more engaged’ members, which is why I engaged in purposive sampling, which assisted me in finding interviewees, who were ‘less’ and ‘not at all’ engaged with Judaism.

The 19 Progressive interviewees also ranged from being ‘very’, ‘more’ and ‘less’ observant and communally involved to being ‘not at all’ observant and involved<sup>69</sup>. I

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<sup>68</sup> Regarding the coding of the different levels of engagement with Judaism for the Modern Orthodox interviewees, those who were coded as being ‘very engaged’ would not, for example, eat out in non-kosher restaurants. They might have a cup of tea or a cold salad if they have to (e.g. because of a work function), but otherwise they would only eat at kosher places. They would also mark all the festivals and get involved in the Jewish community life such as by going to synagogue regularly and consciously be surrounded by a Jewish circle of friends. They would also be involved in Jewish culture by going to events such as the Jewish Book Week. The ‘more engaged’ coded respondents tended to do and have all that but they were slightly more relaxed in their observance such as by eating vegetarian out. If they were very involved in the community such as by working voluntarily or non-voluntarily in the community and had a Jewish circle of friends, but ate meat but not pork or shellfish out of the house and still had a kosher home, I also coded them as being ‘more engaged’. I coded respondents as being ‘less engaged’ when they would only go to synagogue sporadically and not for all the major festivals on a yearly basis, did not eat pork and/or shellfish but apart from that did not bother much about whether food or kitchens in family homes were kosher, and/or were not much or at all involved in community life and culture. Modern Orthodox respondents who were coded as ‘not at all engaged’ kept very few or no Jewish laws and did not want to be involved in the affiliated community life or culture, and accordingly did not go to synagogue and/or did not necessarily seek to have Jewish friends. They saw themselves as belonging to the Modern Orthodox denomination by way of upbringing or because of their partners.

<sup>69</sup> Examples of the coding of the different levels of engagement with Judaism for the Progressive Jews: ‘Very engaged’ coded Progressive Jews were interviewees who kept most of the dietary restrictions such as by having a kosher kitchen or by not bringing non-kosher meat or pork and shellfish into the house, marked the major festivals, importantly had Friday night dinners, and were involved in Jewish community life by having a Jewish circle of friends and engaged in Jewish culture such as by reading Jewish books. ‘More engaged’ coded Progressive Jews differed in that they were a bit less involved in the Jewish community and were more critical towards it. ‘Less engaged’ coded Progressive respondents were not involved in the community a great deal and did not observe many laws including the festivals on a regular basis. There was no continuum in their engagement with Judaism as a religion, and community including culture. Thus, they did not consciously seek to be surrounded by other Jews on a constant basis.

found 11 of the 19 interviewees through snowball sampling, meaning through affiliated and unaffiliated interviewees. Two respondents were found through a contact at University, one was met at Limmud, another one at University, and two were approached through emails to people who were publically known as being Jewish. I found one interviewee through advertising at Limmud and another one through the Jewish Socialist mailing list.

At a later stage of my fieldwork, I also conducted four more interviews with Ultra-Orthodox Jews (three Haredi women and one Neturei Karta<sup>70</sup> man) in order to get an understanding of the conservative end of traditional Jewish life. Doing so also became necessary, as participants had often used this group as a reference group in their explanations about their Jewish lives, and members of this group were part of some of the observations in Jewish areas. I found these interviewees through purposive sampling. One respondent was found through an unaffiliated interviewee, whereas the other three were found through more engaged Modern Orthodox respondents. These respondents were all ‘very engaged’ with Judaism in terms of religious practice, involvement in the community and with the culture. Lastly, I conducted four interviews with Masorti members. Masorti Jews were not often mentioned by interviewees, and I wanted to understand why this was the case in order to get a complete picture of ‘Ashkenazi’ identification. Interestingly, these respondents were referred to me automatically through snowball sampling via affiliated and unaffiliated interviewees. Two of the respondents were ‘more engaged’ with Judaism, meaning more observant and involved in the community and culture, whereas one was ‘less engaged’ and another one was ‘not at all engaged’ with Judaism<sup>71</sup>.

In general, the interviews were semi-structured<sup>72</sup>. All but two of the interviews were recorded<sup>73</sup>. I began the interviews by asking very open questions about

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‘Not at all engaged’ coded Progressive interviewees did not want to get involved in the community such as by going to synagogue or having Jewish friends, they also did not tend to observe laws such as marking the festivals or dietary restrictions and were not particularly interested in Jewish culture. They would see themselves belonging to one of the Progressive denominations by way of upbringing or because of their partners.

<sup>70</sup> Neturei Karta is a Haredi sect that follows an anti-Zionist ideology. They are against the existence of the Jewish state Israel. They believe that Jews must wait for the Messiah to bring about the end of the Jewish exile from their Promised Land.

<sup>71</sup> Regarding the coding of the different levels of engagement with Judaism for the Masorti interviewees, the same coding structure as for the Modern Orthodox respondents applies. See footnote 68.

<sup>72</sup> In the process of designing the interview guide, I have consulted various literature to assist me in this endeavour (e.g. Marshall and Rossman 1995; Mason 1996; Ritche and Lewis 2003). A first revision of

interviewees' sense of Jewishness. This allowed me to follow up on what the respondents regarded as important in their identification with Judaism. The rest of the questions dealt with their upbringing, the impact being Jewish had on their current lives, the community, Jewish language, their relations to other Jews, as well as their views on particular topics, being Christmas, partnerships, Israel and anti-Semitism in the past and present<sup>74</sup> (see **Appendix B** for the interview guide). The interviews normally took 90 to 120 minutes.

All participants provided written on-line and offline consent before the interviews (see **Appendix C** for the paper informed consent form). The interviewees were informed that appropriate safeguards for security and confidentiality would be applied to ensure against the unintentional identification of the participants. The interviewees were reassured of the protection of their information and anonymity by notifying them of the limits on the use, disclosure and the secure retention of the data. It was also mentioned that data released would not contain the interviewees' names, initials or other identifying information<sup>75</sup> (Marshall and Rossman 1995). Thus, pseudonyms have been

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the drafted interview guide was done after conducting 5 cognitive interviews (Campanelli 1997). Cognitive interviews included illuminating respondents' understanding of the questions' intent and as such the comprehensibility of the questions. Next, I pre-tested the improved guide by doing three pilot interviews with Jews from all three major sample groups. This has helped me in framing my questions more precisely and allowed me to practice my interview skills (Appleton 1995).

<sup>73</sup> Two interviews could not be taped electronically because of the interviewees' *Sabbath* observance (see **Table 1.3** for details).

<sup>74</sup> At first, I also included questions about the '*Eruv*' in the interview guide because I thought the creation of the *Eruv* in Northwest London in February 2003 (BBC 2008) surrounding the area of Golders Green caused fragmentation in the community and thus would be an interesting topic to explore in interviews in order to find out about the frictions in the community. Note, an *Eruv* is seen to demonstrate a physical reminder of a boundary that allows traditional Jews, who observe the commandments concerning the Sabbath, to a) carry certain items such as carrying house keys, and, b) push something like a pram or wheelchair, outside the walls of their own property in a designated area (thereby the *Eruv* area), which would otherwise be forbidden during the Sabbath (Eruv 2008b; Eruv 2008a). However, respondents did not have strong opinions about the *Eruv* creation, nor could they remember many details about the conflict it caused. I also found out during interviews and observations that it is a normal phenomenon to create an *Eruv* when there is a community of observant traditional Jews present in an area. For example, they even created one at the Limmud Conference that I went to in 2008. Furthermore, the *Eruv* is not highly visible and its creation had not affected anyone apart from observant traditional members, and so the conflict about it was quickly over and forgotten. As such, it did not prove to be an interesting sociological phenomenon worth examining and so I took the questions pertaining to the *Eruv* out of the interview guide.

<sup>75</sup> Further information regarding the interview process: I communicated the approximate length of the interview when scheduling interviews (Moore 1996; Faugier and Sargeant 1997). There were also safeguards in place concerning the timing of the interview conduction. Interview times were picked when the interviewees had sufficient time to respond to my questions. I conducted most of the interviews at the homes of the interviewees, not only because it was a quiet location but also because it gave me observational information about their sense and expression of Jewishness. Before the start of and during the interviews, I reassured the interviewees that: a) they can end the interview at any point in case they

## Chapter 2

used in the write-up of this thesis. Using names instead of numbers, the reader can relate better to each speaker as a person. I selected the pseudonyms on an arbitrary basis. Still, if respondents had Jewish names, I allocated them different but equally Jewish-sounding names.

Furthermore, all interviewees had some Jewish background. Most of them were raised at least with some ethno-religious practices. If not, they knew that they were Jewish because their family communicated it to them by telling them about their family history and the Jewish holy days and/or by having Jewish friends. This point will be elaborated further in **Chapter 3** of this thesis. **Table 1.3.** shows some demographic data on the interviewees that will help to contextualise the interview quotes in the chapters. Names and associated interview information are listed in the order in which the respondents were interviewed within each denomination, giving some suggestion on the sampling process when viewed in association with the level of engagement with Judaism. The level of Jewish engagement with Judaism in this table refers to the respondents' current levels of engagement. I could not include in this table how I have found the interviewees, as there was the possibility that this might have compromised their anonymity, especially in cases where respondents were referred to me by other interviewees. A few respondents were worried about mentioning their professions in association with other personal details. Thus, **Table 1.3.** excludes such information, but includes detailed data on class, providing an indication of the type of jobs the interviewees held at the time of the interview<sup>76</sup>.

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should feel uncomfortable, and, b) they would not need to answer questions if they felt that they are too sensitive. I have never addressed the respondents by their names during the interview in order to provide security in case the recordings would be stolen. Questions that were thought to be of unethical content in the interview were not asked. After the conduction of the interviews, I normally asked them whether they knew of other Jewish people who suited my selection criteria and who might like to participate in my interview study. I also wrote fieldwork notes after the conduction of each interview.

<sup>76</sup> Again, professions mentioned in association with interviewees in this thesis are not their actual employments but similar ones in order to ensure their anonymity and the information they provided.

**Table 1.3. Demographic information for sample of interviewees (N=105)**

#	Name	Sex	Level of Jewish Engagement	Age	Partnership Status	Social Class	Residence
<i>Ultra-Orthodox Interviewees</i>							
1	Maya	F	Very engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
2	Mosche	M	Very engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
3	Yael	F	Very engaged	30s	Married Jewish	WC	North London (JA)
4	Chava	F	Very engaged	60s	Married Jewish	WC	North London (JA)
<i>Modern Orthodox Interviewees</i>							
5	Samuel*	M	Very engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
6	Ophra*	F	Very engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
7	Saul	M	Very engaged	20s	Jewish Partner	MC	North London (JA)
8	Devra	F	Less engaged	50s	Married Jewish (W)	WC	North London (JA)
9	Thomas	M	More engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
10	Stephen	M	More engaged	-20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
11	Edward	M	More engaged	60s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
12	Adinah	F	Very engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
13	Steve	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
14	Steward	M	Less engaged	80s	Married Jewish	WC	North London (JA)
15	Anna	F	Less engaged	80s	Married Jewish	WC	North London (JA)
16	Eden	F	Less engaged	60s	Married Jewish (W)	WC	North London
17	Devery	F	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
18	Jola	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
19	Johanna	F	Very engaged	20s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
20	David	M	More engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
21	Stephanie (C)	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
22	Daniel	M	Less engaged	60s	Married Jewish, Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
23	Zachariah	M	Very engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
24	Evan	M	More engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)

#	Name	Sex	Level of Jewish Engagement	Age	Partnership Status	Social Class	Residence
25	Benjamin	M	Not at all engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	Oxford
26	Ethan	M	Less engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	Reading
27	Adah	F	More engaged	20s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
28	Emma	F	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
29	Alon	M	Very engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
30	Hugh	M	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	UMC	North London (JA)
31	Josie	F	Very engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
32	Joshua	M	More engaged	30s	Married Jewish	UC	North London (JA)
33	Joel	M	More engaged	30s	Jewish Partner	MC	North London (JA)
34	Adena	F	Very engaged	20s	Single W/P	WK	North London (JA)
35	Alexandra (C)	F	Less engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	Oxford
36	Jonah	M	Less engaged	20s	Jewish Partner	MC	Oxford
37	Scott	M	More engaged	30s	Single W/P	MC	Oxford
<b><i>Masorti Interviewees</i></b>							
38	Josephine	F	Less engaged	40s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
39	Johnda	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
40	Amber	F	More engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
41	Russell	M	Not at all engaged	80s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
<b><i>Reform Interviewees</i></b>							
42	Robert	M	More engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
43	Richard	M	More engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	South London
44	Orah	M	Less engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
45	Paul	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)

#	Name		Level of Jewish Engagement	Age	Partnership Status	Social Class	Residence
46	Michael	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
47	Joelle	F	Less engaged	60s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
48	Sara	F	Less engaged	30s	Non-Jewish Partner	MC	North London
49	Malcolm	M	Very engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London
50	Gabriel	M	Not at all engaged	40s	Married Jewish	MC	North London
51	Hazel	F	Less engaged	20s	Half-Jewish Partner	MC	Oxford
52	Robin	M	More engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
53	Ruben	M	More engaged	60s	Married a Convert	MC	North London (JA)
54	Mike	M	Not at all engaged	30s	Half-Jewish Partner	MC	North London
<i>Liberal Interviewees</i>							
55	Anthony	M	Very engaged	60s	Married Jewish	UMC	North London
56	Allen	M	Very engaged	20s	Jewish Partner	MC	North London (JA)
57	Ornetta	F	Very engaged	60s	Married Jewish	UMC	North London
58	Jonati	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish, Single W/P	LMC	North London (SJA)
59	Abarrane	F	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
60	Lisa	F	Less engaged	40s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London
<i>Unaffiliated Interviewees</i>							
61	Daphne	F	More engaged	40s	Single N/P	MC	East London
62	Rudolph	M	Not at all engaged	60s	Single N/P	MC	North London
63	Esther	F	Less engaged	30s	Married Non-Jewish	LMC	North London
64	Arion	M	Not at all engaged	30s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London
65	Noam	M	Less engaged	30s	Single W/P	UMC	North London

#	Name	Sex	Level of Jewish Engagement	Age	Partnership Status	Social Class	Residence
66	Jack	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	South London
67	Andrew	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London
68	Jennifer	M	More engaged	50s	Single N/P	MC	North London (SJA)
69	Jeremiah	M	Less engaged	30s	Single W/P	UMC	North London
70	Beth	F	Very engaged	50s	Single W/P	MC	North London (SJA)
71	Mathias	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	LMC	North London (SJA)
72	Tamara	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	LMC	North London (SJA)
73	Annabel	F	Less engaged	30s	Single W/P	MC	East London
74	Emily	F	Not at all engaged	40s	Single N/P	MC	East London
75	Tom	M	Less engaged	40s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London
76	Toby	M	Less engaged	20s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
77	Gabriel	M	Very engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
78	Laura	F	Less engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
79	Peter	M	Less engaged	50s	Single N/P	WC	North London (SJA)
80	Erica	F	Not at all engaged	50s	Single W/P	MC	North London (SJA)
81	Anne	F	Very engaged	30s	Single W/P	MC	East London
82	Kenneth	M	More engaged	50s	Single N/P	WC	Bristol
83	Catherine	F	Very engaged	60s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
84	Jethro	M	Very engaged	60s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
85	Salome	F	More engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	East London
86	Sally	F	More engaged	40s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
87	Isabelle	F	Less engaged	30s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
88	Hilary	F	Not at all engaged	20s	Single N/P	MC	Oxford

#	Name		Level of Jewish Engagement	Age	Partnership Status	Social Class	Residence
89	Rose	F	Not at all engaged	40s	Married Jewish, Married Non-Jewish	MC	South London
90	Ben	M	Very engaged	50s	Single N/P	MC	Greater London
91	Avery	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Non-Jewish Partner	WC	East London
92	Timothy	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
93	Jim	M	Not at all engaged	-20s	Single W/P	MC	South London
94	Adam	M	Less engaged	30s	Single N/P	WC	North London
95	Bruce	M	More engaged	60s	Single W/P	LMC	North London (JA)
96	Elliot	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Single W/P	MC	North London
97	Brianne	F	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
98	Claire	F	Less engaged	20s	Single W/P	MC	North London (JA)
99	Beatrix	F	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London (SJA)
100	Larry	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London
101	Albert	M	Very engaged	30s	Jewish Partner	MC	North London (JA)
102	Aron	M	Less engaged	20s	Jewish Partner	MC	Oxford
103	Eric	M	Not at all engaged	60s	Married Jewish, Married Non-Jewish	MC	North London (JA)
104	Alonso	M	Not at all engaged	50s	Married Jewish	MC	North London
105	Debralee	F	Less engaged	40s	Married Jewish, Non-Jewish Partner	MC	North London (SJA)

*Notes:* Meaning of the following abbreviations: \* = Interview was not recorded, (C) = Convert, F= Female, M = Male, - 20 = between 18-20, N/P = No preference in marriage partner, W/P = With preference to marry Jewish, (W) = Widowed, UC = Upper Class, UMC = Upper Middle Class, MC = Middle Class, LMC = Lower Middle Class, WC = Working Class, JA = Jewish area, SJA = Secular Jewish area.

*Source:* Author's compilation



I also conducted 16 ‘expert’ interviews with employees, researchers and representative of Jewish institutions as well as with academics active in Jewish-related fields of study. This enriched my understanding of the community, and the mechanisms and processes involved in its sustenance. I decided that I would not mention the names of the experts in my thesis and communicated this before the interview. I thought that they would then be more willing to communicate openly their views and opinions pertaining to the community and particularly its issues. Thus, I gave them pseudonyms, which were selected on an arbitrary basis. I refer to the interviewees by their title (which is their real title) and surname in the text, as it is important to distinguish the ‘experts’ I interviewed in an official capacity from the respondents, who spoke to me as a private person (**Table 1.4.**).

**Table 1.4. Demographic information for sample of expert interviewees (N=16)**

#	Name	Sex	Age	Institutional Role
1	Mr John Scholem	M	20s	Employee at Birthright Israel
2	Mrs Paulina Greig*	F	40s	Employee at Jewish Care
3	Mr Aiden Lustick	M	20s	Employee at Tribe
4	Mr Allen Fein	M	20s	Employee at the United Jewish Israel Appeal
5	Mr Patrick Gilman	M	40s	Employee at the United Synagogue
6	Mr Martin Kamps	M	50s	Leading Employee at the Board of Deputies of British Jews
7	Mr George Neuhausen	M	30s	Leading Employee at the Institute for Jewish Policy Research
8	Mr Hank Finkelstein	M	50s	Representative at the Community Security trust
9	Mr Warren Cohen	M	18	Youth Group Leader at Bnei Akiva
10	Mrs Lara Boyd	F	30s	Volunteer at the Jewish Learning Exchange
11	Mrs Natasha Liebman	F	30s	Reform Rabbi
12	Dr Ralph Leonard	M	50s	Academic in the field of Anti-Semitism
13	Dr Ruth Goldstein	F	30s	Academic in the field of Jewish Studies
14	Prof Leopold Bernstein	M	60s	Academic in the field of Nationalism
15	Mrs Sandra Kaufmann*	F	40s	Teacher at a Reform Primary School
16	Mrs Elizabeth Altmann*	F	50s	Teacher at a Modern Orthodox Sunday School

*Notes:* Meaning of the following abbreviations: \* = Interview was not recorded as the conversation only pertained to a specific inquiry, M = Male, F = Female, Dr = Doctor, Prof = Professor, Mrs = Misses, Mr = Mister.

*Source:* Author’s compilation

It should also be mentioned that I have had many more informal conversations with different academics working in related fields, community leaders such as Modern Orthodox and Progressive rabbis as well as volunteers in and employees of different Jewish organisations.

In regard to the retention of the interview data gathered, I keep information identifying individuals in an excel database with unique identifier codes. The identifier codes were used to label the recordings. Then, there is another database containing anonymised information about the interviewees. The database included the following categories: identifier code, pseudonym, denomination, age, class, level of engagement with Judaism, interview date and time, quality of the interview content, and a section for notes on important information about the interview and interviewee. The recordings and the two databases are all kept in a separate storage location. I had exclusive access to the interviewee information and the recordings.

After each interview, I wrote down a description of the setting of the interview, my impressions of the interviewee (e.g. looks, dress and behavioural style, character) and his or her way of interacting with me and the surroundings<sup>77</sup>, a brief description of how the interview went, and what I learned from the interview, meaning ‘things’ that stuck out in the interview (e.g. interesting answers to questions, contradictions between what was said and my observations about the environment they lived in or particular behaviours in response to questions) and would push the research forward.

Note some interviewees are quoted more frequently than others in this thesis. This simply reflects that some interviewees were more concise in their answers, or were particularly articulate in their descriptions and illustrations of the phenomena and associated social mechanisms and processes pertaining to Jewish identity construction and maintenance. It was also important to quote some interviewees more than once in order to illustrate that multiple factors inform their identity.

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<sup>77</sup> If I conducted the interview in their house I noted, for instance, how they lived, whether they had any Jewish symbols in the house (e.g. books by Jewish authors) or even how they interacted with members of their family. I wrote down anything that caught my attention. This gave me a well-rounded view of the interviewees and helped to contextualise their answers.

## 2.4. Analysis

I applied grounded theory in my study (Glaser and Strauss 1968; Strauss 1987; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Strauss and Corbin 1997), which means that I generated the theory for my empirical doctoral research chapters from my data. The iterative process is vital to grounded theorising, a method in which “theory is developed out of data analysis, and subsequent data collection is guided by emergent theory” (Hammersley and Atkinson 2003: 158). The iterative process was applied throughout the data collection phase and across data collection processes; being observations and interviewing.

Hammersley and Atkinson note that analysis begins even in the pre-fieldwork phase, as the researcher starts data gathering when writing research reports, reviews and developing research ideas (Hammersley and Atkinson 2003). In my case, the analysis of preliminary data obtained from non-recorded conversations, pilot interviews and observations fed into my research design and data collection.

There was a dialectical interaction between the interview and observation data collection. For example, I identified patterns during the interview data collection and then followed these further during my observations and vice-versa. There was also dialectical interaction between data collection in general and data analysis. I was able to explore and assess emerging patterns while doing the interviews, while listening to the recordings and transcribing them, as well as while doing observations and writing as well as reading observation notes.

In detail, I have fully transcribed more than one third of the interviews in my sample. Then, selective transcriptions were done in view of emerging patterns. Once there was an indication for patterns, I commenced a more in-depth analysis of the patterns identified by paying attention to and asking more follow-up questions about them when doing interviews and even during observations. This can be described as a process of “internal falsification” (Tavory 2009: 55). The same was done in observations. I analysed the notes from the observations taken during fieldwork. This was done by reading through the notes, selecting and defining concepts to find patterns and variance in patterns among and within the three sample groups. When interesting phenomena were discovered during observations or when writing up or reading through my fieldwork notes (such as the importance of the community, with its resources and frictions), I paid special attention to the finding not only during observations but also in

## *Methods and Data Sources*

interviews. In general, observational analysis was done with a view to finding particular details and examples that highlighted circumstances under which Jews differ from non-Jews, and which illustrate the texture and experience of being Jewish in Britain. My observational data examination also focused on group bonding or boundary mechanisms as these helped to contextualise my interview data.

I started building my theory for each chapter while doing my fieldwork by drawing upon literature that seemed most relevant to the emerging concepts and patterns. This, in turn, also helped me to interpret the results. The use of combined methods, observations, and a large number of interviews, including expert interviews - and also documented accounts when applicable - informed my conclusions.

I saw my data as being saturated when I found that new data fitted into the patterns already found during fieldwork. Again, I used the technique of triangulation to address issues of the reliability and validity of my data findings. Only if the results generated from interview transcript data and observation based field notes and, if applicable, evidence from literature and media sources demonstrated similar patterns, they could be included as findings in this thesis. Furthermore, I presented my findings to experts in the field of Jewish studies, at Jewish events such as at the Limmud Conference in 2008/9 and the Oxford University Chabad Society 2012 and to some of my study participants, which provided an additional indicator of their validity. This latter determination of validity is based on a strategy suggested by Creswell and Miller (Creswell and Miller 2000).

### 3. The Edge of Britishness and the Notion of Difference

**Chapter 3** is the first of four core empirical chapters. This chapter will provide an overview of the mechanisms and processes associated with the first element informing Jewish identity creation and perpetuation, a sense of difference from the British majority population. It will demonstrate that Jews perceive themselves to be religiously, culturally, ethnically, and nationally different from ‘white’ Christian British people.

There is a breadth of research in sociology examining social identities as an open and complex concept (e.g. Dovidio et al. 2009). Particular attention has been placed on investigating how members of minority groups construct their identification with the majority group (Jacobson 1997b; Jacobson 1997a) and negotiate their sense of minority identity vis-à-vis the majority identity through the exploration of dual identities (Verkuyten and Zaremba 2005; Dovidio et al. 2008; Hopkins 2011), sometimes in regard to hybrid or hyphenated identities (Caglar 1997) and transnational identities (Wilcox-Ghanoonparvar 2007).

In Britain, research has focused on visible and recently immigrated minorities such as Muslims, Sikhs, and Asians and the examination of their minority identity in view of their sense of Britishness<sup>78,79</sup> (e.g. Hall 1995; Dwyer 2000; Abbas 2005). However, it is also interesting to explore more longstanding minority groups that are missing from the public debate about multiculturalism and diversity and from the

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<sup>78</sup> A sense of Britishness refers to a sense of identification with the British nation. British national identity is a social identity that was constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century based on a conflict with the ‘other’ of Catholic France. It is built on the common project of the British Empire with its economic and military successes and opportunities, and on shared Christian traditions, which in the beginning were Protestant religious and cultural traditions (Tilley and Heath 2007).

<sup>79</sup> Note that Britishness can encompass Englishness (Jacobson 1997a; Langlands 1999; Mann 2011). Dodd and Jacobson argue that Englishness and Britishness can slip into each other. Dodd asserts that this may be a result of the “intimate yet superior way in which the English have lived with so many other groups” (Dodd 1995: 35; Jacobson 1997a: 184). This research concurs with their finding that Britishness can sometimes be synonymous or encompass Englishness. Some of the statements by respondents, for instance, indicated that it can be difficult for them to distinguish between being English and being British. Thus, Englishness is referred to interchangeably with Britishness in this work. This must be seen in the context that Britishness as a national identity is in decline and sub-ordinate national identities such as Englishness are coming to the forefront (Fenton 2007; Heath et al. 2007; Rojek 2008).

literature on the national identification of minority groups; perhaps due to a perception of them having merged into the mainstream because of their ‘white’ ethnicity or ‘middle class’ status. Perspectives on Britishness by such ‘hidden’ populations can provide new nuanced insights into the understanding of nationhood as well as how national identity, in this case Britishness, alongside the intricacies and social dissonance it produces, are perpetuated in society.

The Jewish community, whose history in Britain extends back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, represents an important case study. According to the 1976 Race Relations Act, Jews can be considered an ethnic group. The government and its institutions, such as public policy agencies, however, view them as a religious group and regard their ethnicity as British only. For instance, the 2001 Census did not have a ‘Jewish’ answer option for the question ‘what is your ethnic group?’. Accordingly, the 2001 Census showed that 96.8% of Jews recorded their ethnicity as ‘White British’ (Graham 2003). Other studies, however, suggest that the lack of a ‘Jewish’ answer category to the ethnicity question has led the group to be underenumerated (Graham and Waterman 2005; Voas and Crockett 2005; Voas 2007). This is supported by further research showing that members of this group are increasingly defining themselves in ethnic rather than religious terms (Miller et al. 1996; Kosmin 1999; Graham and Waterman 2005). This means that members would not necessarily have defined themselves as ‘White British’, but rather as ‘White Jewish’, ‘British Jewish’, ‘Jewish British’ or even as ‘having a Jewish background’ had such options been available. My study found, for instance, that the respondents did not only identify themselves as British, but also as Jewish, which the following responses indicate:

If I apply for a job and you get this ethnic minority forms that say ‘how would you describe yourself?’ Usually, they don’t fit. And it says ‘other’. If I put ‘other’ I put East European Jewish background. I see myself as coming from the Eastern European Jewish culture (Mathias)

I am a Jewish Brit...You have some connection with English Jewish people that you don’t have necessarily with non-Jewish people because...where you come from is slightly different and so where you are going to is slightly different...your outlook on life is slightly different than the one of a lot of people (Noam)

Being Jewish does make you aware of a difference with the rest of society... The wandering Jew is really what I feel like although I have grown up and lived in this country for years (Jethro)

[Being Jewish means] the inability to see myself as just another person, just another British person (Robin)

Contrary to the indications of previous research that minorities feel part of an out-group (Moghaddam and Taylor 1987; Brewer 1991; Judd et al. 1995; Oyserman and Sakamoto 1997; Weisskirch 2005; David and Turner 2011), I found that British Jews still perceived themselves as part of the in-group, the British nation, as they regarded themselves to be British. However, their sense of Jewish difference from the British majority population, which they perceived to be white Christian British people (referred to in this chapter as ‘non-Jews’, ‘whites’ or ‘gentiles’) located them on the edge of Britishness.

Exploring Jews’ meaning-making of their British identification in view of their Jewishness and thereby their notions of difference from the majority population, I will demonstrate that members can perceive themselves to be different in four distinct ways: religiously, culturally, ethnically and nationally. These four notions of difference are claimed to constitute the four edges of Britishness and to inform members’ sense of Jewishness. Engaging in this examination, I will, thus, reveal the core group dimensions of Jewish belonging and related identification processes and mechanisms.

### **3.1. Social Identities**

Research has, in the main, used social identity theory (SIT) to examine group identities (Hogg and Terry 2001; Wetherell et al. 2001). As developed by Tajfel and Turner, this theory asserts, first of all, that one of the main tendencies of human nature is to categorise oneself and other people into groups (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Individuals categorise themselves as part of a group and subsequently identify themselves with it because they strive to achieve or maintain a satisfactory concept of themselves, meaning a high and secure sense of positive identity<sup>80</sup> (Dekker et al. 1997; Hogg 2006). People identify themselves with multiple groups simultaneously (Dovidio et al. 2008). However, some identities are more salient than others. Social identity scholars assert that an important and simple way for individuals to identify themselves is to identify with their own ethnic, religious or national minority and majority group (Deaux 1995;

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<sup>80</sup> Identifying oneself with a group can fulfil one’s need for belonging, so as to obtain psychological security and also to provide motivation, an audience and give a person power (Coenders 2001).

Huddy 2001; Huddy 2003; Hogg 2006; Greenfield and Marks 2007; Huddy and Khatib 2007). These groups are relatively easy to belong to, as they often present a broad range of opportunities for people to identify with them; e.g. via symbols (Breuilly 1994), traditions and rituals (Smith 2003).

Thus, the majority of literature relating to dual identities focuses on the investigation of majority and minority identities (Verkuyten and Zaremba 2005; Dovidio et al. 2008; Hopkins 2011). Baysu et al. states that even though members of minority groups have multiple identity options open to them, they often choose to adopt - and then negotiate between - both their minority ethnic, national or religious identity and the majority group's national identity; this holds even in the second generation (Baysu et al. 2011). This is in line with Hall, who claims that members of such groups "must learn to inhabit two identities, to speak two cultural languages, to translate, and negotiate between them" (Hall 1992b: 310; Dwyer 2000: 475). Based on empirical findings, Deaux claims that although minorities can share a common national identity with the majority group as fellow citizens, their minority identification still sets them apart from the mainstream<sup>81</sup> (Deaux 2006). The literature asserts that this is due to the fact that members of diaspora groups, for the most part, assimilate or acculturate only partially, even in the second or third generation (e.g. Portes and Zhou 1993; Zhou 1997b; Alba and Nee 2005).

Further, Tajfel theorises that minorities may want to create a positive-sum relationship between their minority and the majority (national) identity<sup>82</sup>, but are often unable to do so (Tajfel 1981; Hopkins 2011). This is understandable considering that national identities are often linked to a dominant ethnic/racial/religious/cultural majority group, which may clash or contradict with the meaning-making of diaspora members' identification with their minority group. Empirical research in Britain explores such difficulties faced by minorities, but focuses on visible and recently immigrated groups, including Asians, Sikhs (e.g. Hall 1995; Dwyer 2000) and Muslims. By way of example, Modood has illustrated that British Muslims find it difficult to assimilate

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<sup>81</sup> This argument is also mentioned in the article "Dual Identity as a Two-Edged Sword: Identity Threat and Minority School Performance" by Baysu et al. (Baysu et al. 2011).

<sup>82</sup> For example, Hopkins relates to the positive-sum relationship by asserting that if minorities find it hard to assimilate, they will then try to obtain inclusion in the majority population by being members of the majority in a minority way. He explores how Muslims contribute to Britain as members of their minority group (Hopkins 2011).

completely into British society because of their perceptions of discrimination, and so instead choose to differentiate themselves more powerfully from non-Muslim British people by adopting a more encompassing religious identity of being (British) Islamic instead of, for example, (British) Bangladeshi Muslim (Modood 2005). Hopkins reports that some British Muslims negotiate concerns over their commonality with, and distinctiveness from, the majority group by describing themselves as “being British in a Muslim way” (Hopkins 2011: 264). In this way, Muslims can have a superordinate commonality and a sense of sub-group distinctiveness (Hopkins 2011).

Jacobson’s studies deal with dual identities by exploring the interrelationship between young British Pakistani Muslims’ minority identity in view of their Britishness (Jacobson 1997b; Jacobson 1997a). One of her studies finds that there are the civic, racial and cultural categories of Britishness, which are apparent in the form of perceived boundaries and shaped, as well as reshaped, in social interactions (Jacobson 1997a). The civic boundary of Britishness includes people if they have British citizenship. Although respondents saw themselves part of this civic dimension, they still tended to regard their citizenship as an incomplete and insufficient basis of national allegiance. The racial boundary defines people as British if they have or are perceived to have British ancestry or British blood. Many of the interviewees voiced their acute awareness that they, or members of ethnic minorities generally, are not accepted as fully British by white British people on the ground of ‘race’. Lastly, the cultural boundary defines Britishness in terms of adherence to a set of values, attitudes, and lifestyles that are regarded as British. A number of respondents specified their sense of difference in this regard as well<sup>83</sup> (Jacobson 1997a).

The findings of these studies indicate that the ethnic or religious identity of minority members sets them apart from the majority group. There is a perception among members of minority groups that they are not able to completely adopt the national identity of the majority group. This can even be expressed as a positive distinctiveness from the national mainstream. Nonetheless, even this distinctiveness points to the

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<sup>83</sup>Jacobson’s other study finds that the social boundaries that encompass expressions of religious identity among young British Pakistanis are pervasive and clear-cut in comparison to increasingly permeable ethnic boundaries, particularly in regard to Britishness (Jacobson 1997b). For instance, some of her Muslim interviewees mentioned not drinking alcohol as a boundary that separates them from the culture of British non-Muslims, and thus a cultural component of Britishness of which that they do not perceive themselves to be part (Jacobson 1997b).

suggestion that members of minority groups can perceive themselves to be on the fringes of the national in-group, instead of being at its core. This sense of difference from the majority population may not only inform but indeed constitute their minority identity.

Research to date has focused on the investigation of the ethnic and religious aspects of minority identities in view of the national identity of the majority group. However, it has neglected to explore other aspects such as the cultural and national dimensions of a minority's identity, and as such the investigation of the identity as an open, multi-dimensional phenomenon. This is regarded as necessary in order to capture all the nuances of a minority's perception and thus sense of difference from the majority group and the extent to which these notions inform and constitute their minority identification. Considering furthermore that there is limited research in the area of dual identities of diaspora groups that have long been in Britain and are regarded as relatively assimilated, and Jews are not only a long-standing but also multi-dimensional British Diaspora group, their multi-facetedness makes it interesting to explore the ways in which members do not feel completely British because of their Jewishness.

On the topic of the dual identities of British Jews, there are two related studies by Kudenko and Phillips, both exploring Jewry in Leeds (Kudenko and Phillips 2009; Kudenko and Phillips 2010). The first multi-method paper found that younger people were more overt about their Jewish identity and did not feel that they had to tone it down or even hide it. The authors claim that the recently developed multiculturalist ethos has given these members the confidence to show their dual allegiances. For instance, when Israel and England were drawn in the same qualifying group for the 2008 European Cup, some of the interviewees regarded it as a test of Jewish loyalty and thus supported the Israeli football team. Nevertheless, the authors concluded that multiple loyalties did not undermine the Jewish respondents' sense of Britishness and citizenship. While the participants openly declared support for Israel in sporting events and other affairs, this did not detract from their feeling of belonging to the British nation (Kudenko and Phillips 2009). Their second qualitative paper illustrated how the imported identities of Jewish immigrants were once reorganised to suit an assimilationist agenda, and how the development of a British multicultural citizenship improved the re-negotiation of their Jewish and British identity. Some of the subjects in

this study, irrespective of age, expressed their general support for cultural, ethnic and religious pluralism as part of Britishness alongside their desire to identify with their community in a positive way, that is, to be proud of their Jewishness and to demonstrate this identity publically (Kudenko and Phillips 2010).

Accordingly, Kudenko and Phillips' work indicates that the examination of the notion of Jewish difference in light of members' sense of Britishness is important. My work will take a more targeted, systematic approach in this regard by exploring the different ways Jews perceive themselves to be different from the majority population, being white Christian British people. This will indicate ways in which members perceive themselves on the edge of Britishness and at the same time crystallise some of the core dimensions of Jews' minority identity.

### **3.2. The Edges of Britishness**

Although the findings of my observations were instrumental in the preparation of this work, this chapter draws primarily on interview data. All of the interviewees had British citizenship. Yet, when asked to determine the extent to which they perceived themselves to be British in view of being Jewish, they presented a full spectrum of viewpoints. A few respondents saw being British and Jewish as part of many identities they had. For instance, Mathias said: "It's one of my identities. Jewish, person from London, English, European, citizen of the world". Other interviewees' responses were more complicated and ambivalent in this regard:

On the form, when you go to hospital, I tick 'White British'. I could tick 'British Other'. I do see it [being Jewish] as an ethnic identity but sociologically we all carry round many identities. For the ethnic and race assessment for Islington council, I could be African Caribbean, I could be Indian subcontinent, but they don't have a Jewish box to tick on the form...Being religiously Jewish may have an impact. If a fascist movement moved here and I had to find a shelter, going to Israel, the basis of my entry of Israel would be my right to return, so that is being religiously or genetically Jewish (Elliot)

A few interviewees either completely rejected the idea that they were British whilst acknowledging their British citizenship or downplayed their Britishness as they saw themselves as predominantly Jewish:

I don't identify as an English or British person. I am a person, who lives in Britain, although I am a citizen of Britain. My ethnic identity is Jewish...The

way one was raised and the community within which one was raised and the fact that you were born a particular religion that is the way you identify yourself. I am a Spanish Jew from Italy, who happens to have British citizenship. It's more the culture in which one was raised that gives one an identity (Jethro)

I am British...Even though I do have a positive relationship to England, and I'm thankful that England has a positive relationship towards me, I would always be more Jewish than I am English, and I think most Jews in most countries feel that way...I would be Jewish wherever I live. If you lived in a country long enough you lose your Englishness (Adena)

The greater proportion of respondents, however, very clearly affirmed their Britishness alongside their Jewishness:

I'm British: I respect the monarchy. I am a big royalist. I like the queen...We need to keep the laws of the country as much as we need to keep the laws of Judaism (Joshua)

Culturally I'm quite British but the genetic pool that I come from is going to be more similar to other Jewish people so I guess it's like the genes...But then I'm very proud of what Britain does (Thomas)

I feel completely integrated into British society. I feel British as anybody else. I am a British Jew. I am feeling very British and I am feeling very Jewish. I have a lot of both traits. I identify with both things (Adam)

On a Census, I would write 'White British' because that's ethnicity. Judaism isn't an ethnicity...It [being Jewish] is not even a religion; it's more a way of life. For me, it's much more than that, it's an intrinsic thing that's 24/7 even when you are not doing stuff you are still Jewish. It's not mutually exclusive. I embrace my nationality as a British person; I embrace my religion and my culture as a Jew. The two can fit together (Zachariah)

Some of the participants asserted their dual identities by prioritising one over the other:

I am British. It [being Jewish] comes in as a religious identity (Eden)

I am Jew first and then a Brit. I am very happy to be a Brit and I think there are lots of great things in this nation but primarily I am Jewish (Joel)

My findings concur with those of Kudenko and Phillips (Kudenko and Phillips 2009; Kudenko and Phillips 2010) in that the greater proportion of people with whom I engaged during my fieldwork also felt quite comfortable asserting their identity overtly. They, however, do not specify which members of the community assert their Jewishness

more openly apart from hinting in their 2009 publication that younger members show this prevalence. In my ethnographic sample, those who felt comfortable communicating an overtly Jewish identity in the non-Jewish world included some of the younger and more secular Modern Orthodox Jews, Progressive members of all ages and levels of devotion as well as community involvement, and unaffiliated but community-involved Jews. Their confidence in expressing their minority status in the majority world can be associated with the presence of other minorities in Britain, as participants often referred to other ethnic and religious minorities such as Greeks, Italians or Muslims in Britain in their comments about the elements constituting their sense of Jewishness.

Still, there were some young, traditional participants, such as Josie, who voiced that they did not like asserting their Jewishness in public: “Jews often don’t like to disclose that they are Jewish when they are in a non-Jewish environment. I think that’s something we have in common”. Similar assertions were made by older traditional participants:

I met a man the other day who is going to emigrate to Israel. And I said to him, ‘tell me the one thing that’s different in Israel to being in England’ and he said to me, ‘the one difference is when I’m in a restaurant, hall or place like this [a gentlemen’s club], and I say the word Jewish I don’t have to whisper it’. It’s true...I can turn around to my friends and say ‘I am Jewish’ [emphasised], but you wouldn’t say that in a club in London, because people would [tutting]...Religion is something private (Hugh)

This attitude may be a residue of their integration strategy into British society from the past, which led members to regard their Jewishness as a private matter of religious denomination and assert their Englishness (or Scottishness or Welshness) in public as to facilitate integration (Kudenko and Phillips 2009; Kudenko and Phillips 2010).

### **3.2.1. The Religious Edge**

Jews may see themselves on the religious edge of Britishness as a result of their minority faith. First, with their religion comes a number of different faith expressions. Observing religious laws such as marking holy days may impact members’ social interactions with gentiles. Likewise, not participating in the majority population’s expressions of faith, or doing so only in a negotiated way, can create social dissonance between themselves and gentiles. The sense of difference brought about by religion is argued to inform members’ identification with Judaism.

### **3.2.1.1. Faith and its Expressions**

This group has different holy days as well as festive occasions and its members often follow different religious observances such as dietary restrictions. For instance, their day of rest is not Sunday, but Friday (sunset) to Saturday (night time) and they may follow strict observances associated with their days of rest, such as not being able to do any chores, write or turn off/on the electricity<sup>84</sup>. Accordingly, their different lifestyle can set them apart from the mainstream population.

A lot of people in my ethnographic sample engaged in Jewish holy days, festive occasions and associated religious practices that are different from non-Jewish ones. In Judaism, there is even a special name for festive occasions; they are called *simchas*. *Simchas* can be anything from a *bris* (circumcision rite) or a *bar-/bat-mitzvah* (coming of age ritual) to a wedding. Many interviewees noted the differences between themselves and white British people by referring to their diverging lifestyles:

The way we lead our lives [is different from gentiles]...Judaism dictates a lot of home life whether you have a family or not, so all the kosher things and the weekly rituals and the yearly rituals. There's always a focus in life, which I see in the Jewish way of life. It influences our week and our year with all the festivals and that sort of thing. It impacts quite a lot on my life (Adinah)

Everything that happens in one's life revolves round the synagogue and the community. The birth, bar-mitzvah, bat-mitzvah, wedding, funeral and anything in between. That's always when the synagogue and the community gets involved. There's nothing that I can think of in the life cycle that doesn't have a communal or synagogue element to it (Devery)

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<sup>84</sup> Observant Orthodox members are not supposed to cook, spend money, write, operate electrical devices, or do other activities associated with creating or working on the Sabbath. They are also expected to fulfil the 'positive' Sabbath commandments such as resting, having three Sabbath meals together with family and friends, observing the rituals such as saying the *kiddush* (sanctification of the wine) before meals, and engaging in acts of kindness. In contrast, the liberal movement does not 'prescribe' the observances of all those Sabbath laws. Rather, they 'encourage' their congregations to participate in the "full observance of the peace of the Sabbath, with attendance at the synagogue services" (LJS 2011). According to the liberal Rabbi Elizabeth Tikvah Sarah, for a liberal Jew, celebrating the Sabbath includes the following elements: a) ceasing to do what one is doing at that moment; b) liberating oneself from work; c) setting apart the Sabbath from the rest of the week (i.e. going to a coffee shop instead of the gym; d) celebrating life by eating, singing and dancing together and by reaching out to others; e) resting and renewing by unwinding and being with oneself, and, f) repairing the world by doing charity work (JC 2010). The same accounts for Reform Judaism where it is said that "rest on the Sabbath is in order to emulate God resting after the work of creation," which also involves adapting the Sabbath laws of resting to modern times: "Many Reform Jews choose to adapt the rules involving rest to accommodate electricity and driving, which were not options available during biblical or rabbinic times" (RM 2011).

### Chapter 3

A greater proportion of participants, especially secular ones, asserted that the marking of holy days and festive occasions is for them a cultural activity and not a religious one. Their marking was not motivated by a belief in God or by the aim to fulfil particular commandments. Instead, it was regarded as part of the Jewish cultural engagement of their traditions with which they grew up:

We have Friday night, it's not religious. We say the blessings, have a nice dinner and that's the limit (Noam)

I celebrate Jewish festivals like Chanukah and Purim sometimes...My mum doesn't force it upon me. She doesn't follow some of the rules up either so we have Sunday lunch together instead of a Friday night dinner (Jim)

Furthermore, the perception of difference in respect of their lifestyle was also expressed in the observance of dietary laws (*kashrut*). For example, some of the participants kept the dietary restrictions advocated in Judaism at home and ate out only in *kosher* restaurants, while for others it also meant eating only vegetarian in non-kosher restaurants (for some that included eating fish and for others not) or only not eating pork and/or shellfish at all. Thomas, for instance, grew up in an observant Modern Orthodox home and only ate vegetarian in non-kosher restaurants:

My Jewish identity is very well founded. It does make me feel different. I am constantly aware that I'm Jewish. It doesn't escape my mind and I think I'm the same as a non-Jewish person because it is just part of who I am. I am Jewish. It would be like forgetting you are a boy. It is just one of the fundamentals of who I am and where I've come from is that I am Jewish. It is not something that I necessarily felt like that I had to be reminded of; it's not like that the Jewish circle reminded me of that I am Jewish. I think maybe the way to look at me keeping kosher is more that I am seeking to express that I am Jewish. It helps you to remind yourself. It's more a statement that everyone can see that I am Jewish.

Or, Hugh, who was '*kosher*' at home and did not eat pork or shellfish outside of the home, said:

I had lunch with a friend of mine today...on the menu it had liver and bacon with vegetables and I called the waiter over and said 'could I have the liver without the bacon?'...My friend said 'oh, don't you want the bacon?', and I said 'no, I don't eat bacon'...I wouldn't have what he ate, and that reminded me of being Jewish...I'm always reminded of it...Tradition, tradition.

Some participants also did not keep a kosher home, but only ate vegetarian at home, such as Tamara; others did not bring shellfish, pork and any other non-kosher

meat into the house, such as Michael. Even many of the secular members I talked to did not eat pork and/or shellfish, which was related to the fact that they did not grow up with those foods or the fact that refraining from those foods had become part of expressing being Jewish. For Aron, for instance, not eating shellfish or pork was a way to express and thereby maintain his identity, while away from his family and community, at university.

Accordingly, Jews' diverging lifestyles can have consequences for social interactions with gentiles by marking them apart in non-Jewish environments. This in itself can reinforce their sense of Jewish belonging and identity. Some interviewees talked about how their lifestyle lets them stand out in their non-Jewish work or study environment. The unaffiliated Salome mentioned: "When someone says at work 'let's have a meeting on such and such day', so I will say 'I can't because this or that [referring to the yearly holy days] is happening'". Relating to the perception of difference in his study environment, Modern Orthodox respondent Stephen volunteered:

There are some things that make you stand out from your friends, especially in a non-Jewish school. I can't go out Friday night...Judaism brings difference...For example, if it's a choice between having vegetarian and having a special plastic kosher meal when everyone else is having the normal thing, I'll have vegetarian. Still, it sets me apart from the other people.

The Modern Orthodox Alon also gave two poignant examples in this regard: "When I finished my exams this year, everyone was going out on a big clubbing night, Friday night. I can't go...I am more committed to being religious than I am to going out clubbing on a Friday night" and "the thing with our graduation ball, right? A really fancy do: a three course meal, dancing and stuff. I wanted to go because it was the last time I would see a lot of my Uni mates. I'm not gonna eat...It does make things hard". Another traditional student told me in an informal conversation that he went to university lectures on Saturdays, but would not take notes because he was trying to observe the Sabbath laws. That same student also noted that he would not eat with his fellow students in the cafeteria because of his dietary restrictions. This made him not only feel separate from his fellow students but also prevented him from interacting with them socially.

This illustrates another finding. Members' different lifestyles can also separate them from gentiles insofar as it may discourage frequent interaction. At the same time,

their lifestyle can also lend itself to closer friendships with other members and consequently can reinforce a sense of Jewishness. For example, the Modern Orthodox Johanna said,

The people I have in my life I'm close with, are in my life because our lives are compatible...Their lives can be intertwined with mine so perfectly, whereas with Christians it would be difficult to do that.

Saul, who is from the same denomination as Johanna, volunteered examples of how this lifestyle created a sense of difference and brought him close to other Jews:

My day is centred around Judaism...which means anyone who becomes a close friend of mine is somebody who is compatible with that. It makes it a lot easier if you have all those things in common. With my non-Jewish friends, there's a constant difference. I am involved in this world where I am constantly involved with that stuff so it naturally lends itself to close friendships with those people because I am always involved with them and we are talking about the same things. We have this mutual understanding...We spoke, for example, about food and the fact that if I want to have dinner, I need to find somewhere kosher, makes a difference...Three minutes after having eaten bread, I pray and do grace after meals...Also, I am not prepared to do a lot of the things that non-Jewish people are prepared to do like going to a club or bar.

Recall Stephen, who described how his lifestyle made him stand out in non-Jewish environments. He also volunteered that his lifestyle made him feel connected with other members:

About 25% of the school is Jewish. My best friends, and the friends I see out of school the most, are the Jewish people. It's inevitable about going to a school where you have most in common with Jewish people...We're all doing the same thing on Friday nights: None of us are going out and on shabbos we're all going to synagogue. So it's inevitable that I will come out being most friendly with the Jewish people - I think so many people feel that way...It's a common thing between you, whether you're religious or not you're still Jewish...It's a deep-rooted thing that you'll have Judaism in common...we all have completely different beliefs, and it's not even like we live our lives the same way, it just happens to be that we have this thing in common, and it's so big, and it's so strong, that...it draws you towards people.

Secular participants like Noam also noted that even a minimal execution of traditions created a sense of difference and explained that this difference bonded them with other Jews and subsequently informed their minority identity.

Jews have normally been raised in a Jewish lifestyle and thus with a sense of difference in this regard. Most of my interviewees had at least some Jewish upbringing in terms of following ethno-religious traditions and observances as well as engaging in the community (including having Jewish friends), such as by marking some of the major festivals in one way or another in a home or at a synagogue, having a *bar/bat mitzvah*, going to Jewish Sunday school (*cheder*), observing dietary restrictions at home and/or outside of the home, or engaging in cultural activities, like going to a Jewish school, joining a religious or cultural youth group, going to a summer/winter camp, or on a trip to Israel where they either learned about or were exposed to Jewish traditions and observances. The fact that such an upbringing can have an impact on their sense of Jewish belonging and the expression of it in adulthood can be seen, for example, in that I observed many members sing Hebrew songs such as *Kol Ha'Olam Kulo Geshet Tsar Me'Od* (the whole world is a narrow bridge)<sup>85</sup> or *Mitzvah Gedola L'Hiyot B'Simcha Tamid* (it is a great commandment to always be happy) at get-togethers or festivals that they have learned as part of their Jewish upbringing. Richard said: "We have all learned them in our youth groups, and you sing them all the time; on campsites and trips". Or, Stephen volunteered: "They sing them everywhere - like we just had a big event at a synagogue - and everyone sings the songs all the time, people love the songs". Still, a few of the interviewees like Erica and Timothy had a Jewish upbringing only insofar as their parents had a circle of Jewish friends and lived in a Jewish area.

Note that some people in my ethnographic sample have become less observant than their parents over time and indeed a few stopped observing traditions altogether. Others have become more observant than their parents. Nonetheless, the fact that all of the interviewees identifying as a member of the group were exposed to at least some Jewish upbringing indicates that growing up with a Jewish lifestyle is important to the creation of not only a sense of difference but also a sense of Jewishness. Accordingly, when asked why respondents saw themselves as Jewish, a lot of them, such as the secular Reform interviewee Sara, referred to their Jewish upbringing:

I grew up being Jewish. It became like a heavy part of my identity. It's different, I enjoy it...It's not necessarily about belief or religion...it's more about how I've led my life, the routine, the traditions, the cultural elements. Any time I see my family, it's been in a Jewish context, Friday nights,

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<sup>85</sup> Since the foundation of the State of Israel, Modern Hebrew songs such as *Kol Ha'Olam Kulo Geshet Tsar Me'Od* have become part of British Zionism by being taught in Zionist youth groups and schools.

Saturdays, Saturday lunches, we say prayers, religious festivals, weddings. It's just always there. They've always had lots of family around for the festivals. I would be off school on those occasions so you had to specially take a day out of school...It's what we did as a family. We had no pork or seafood in the house. They eat it outside of the house but not inside of the house. It [not eating pork or seafood] helps to identify myself, it reminds me...It's a pointed action if you have never eaten it, and it separates me, and I quite like that. Especially now that my fiancé and his family are not Jewish, there are not many tangible things. It's an automatic thing: If I say I don't eat pork, I identify myself as Jewish. It's ridiculous, I'm not kosher.

Similarly, unaffiliated interviewee Jeremiah said that he perceived himself as Jewish and thus maintained a sense of difference from gentiles because of his, albeit minimal, Jewish upbringing:

I still see myself as Jewish although it [Judaism] didn't play a big part in my life at home. My mother didn't buy pork or seafood, but apart from that it was like in every household. We didn't talk about religion because it wasn't of interest to us. But when I was in Israel if there was a festival then there would be a dinner or something. If my uncle was going to synagogue, I would go with him...There were a number of Jewish influences. A lot of my mother's friends were Jewish. I have an uncle who when I was much younger, he was much more religious, and he did dinners every Friday night, and there was a short period of time when we would go there for this Friday night dinner and we were exposed to Judaism there as well...My uncle trained me for my bar-mitzvah and it was taken seriously...Six months of tuition and hard work.

In summary, Jews can perceive themselves as different from gentiles not because of their minority faith alone but more precisely because of the associated lifestyle including their practices. Their different lifestyle can make them feel that they stand out in interactions with and separate from gentiles. This sense of difference can, in turn, inform their sense of Jewish belonging and Jewishness.

### **3.2.1.2. Christmas Celebrations**

I focused on Christmas in my interviews to explore the extent to which Jews engage in the faith festivals of the majority population<sup>86</sup> and found that respondents either did not engage in the marking of Christmas, or celebrated only parts of it. For many British people, Christmas is a secular national holiday, but interviewees did not see Christmas

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<sup>86</sup> I also found other expressions of the Christian faith – for example assemblies containing prayers or chapel services in schools – that may create social dissonance but the analysis of Jews' (non-) participation in Christmas was the one with most analytical depth.

in this way. The understanding of Christmas as having Christian connotations made the marking of it problematic for many members. In other words, they grappled with Christmas and the celebration of it. Some worried about how to mark this festival in a way that would not impede or obstruct their Judaism, while others worried about how best not to mark it at all. Some of the latter people indicated that Christmas made them feel uncomfortable. I will illustrate in this section how their negotiated marking and non-marking of Christmas can make them feel different and in this way inform their sense of Jewish belonging and identity. It is worth noting that the interview evidence presented in this section concurs with my findings through observations.

The interviewees, who did not want to mark Christmas, did so because they still saw it as a Christian festival:

The fact that other people celebrate Christmas doesn't have any resonance...I don't actively think that other people sit down and have a Christmas meal (Allen)

The only way that I mark Christmas is that I know it's a holiday and that there will be good TV on. What else do you want to do? To be honest with you, the way that I perceive Christmas is that I will have a couple of days off and chopped liver...At Shabbat, I have that kind of time every week. It's not like once a year I am cooking for my family. It's like every week, every festival, I'm cooking for my family (Johnda)

Some of these members even made a point of going on destination holidays during Christmas in order to avoid marking it. For instance, David noted: "At Christmas time, we travel abroad normally". Similarly, Aron noted in a non-recorded conversation with me: "We [his family and himself] try avoiding Christmas by going on holidays over Christmas and New Year. We are not Christians so we try not to mark it in any way and the best way is by going on faraway holidays". Others avoided celebrating Christmas by engaging in non-Christmas activities, including charity work like working in a soup kitchen or going to Limmud:

One of the advantages of Limmud for me is its time of the year...Jews devise their solutions to the problem of Christmas in all sorts of different ways. When I was a teenager I used to do things like volunteer to work in hospitals and things because I hate Christmas...That's a kind of demonstration that this is a Christian country, and it upsets me; so I try to avoid it (Rose)

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I found that the conscious decision not to participate in Christian traditions and instead to partake in non-Christian and even Jewish traditions can reinforce a person's sense of belonging to the Jewish group. It also indicates that, for these members Britishness is imbued with Christianity:

We do not celebrate Christmas; we celebrate Chanukah [which mainly falls in the Christmas period]. That's probably quite an important way in which you are Jewish, because you don't celebrate Christmas (Andrew)

My primary perception is that it's a Christian religious festival...I understand very clearly that the way Christmas is celebrated in Britain has moved away from its religious origin in that symbols like Christmas trees and eating turkey are modern constructs; Santa Claus goes back 80 years...I see them as British observances as much as Christian observances. At the end of the day, I have my traditions and those who practice other religions have got their traditions and I don't think there should be any confusion. We have festivals on each week...If we give presents it should be at that time in the Jewish calendar, not on December the 25<sup>th</sup> (Steve)

The examples illustrate that the conscious decision not to partake in societal Christian expressions creates social dissonance and in this way can inform their Jewish belonging and identity.

The social dissonance became particularly apparent when interviewees were asked whether they sent Christmas cards, which is an important British cultural tradition. Like some of the respondents who marked Christmas in one way or another, many of the respondents who did not mark this festival still sent Christmas cards. It was explained that this was done mainly out of politeness as they perceived Christmas to be a major festival for Christian British people. Thus, sending Christmas cards represents a way to maintain good relations with them. For instance, Joshua, who did not mark Christmas, said:

I send Christmas cards to non-Jewish friends. It's their festival. I mean they send us cards when it's Rosh Hashanah. It's just polite. We send them to the cleaner, the au-pair, the window cleaner. Everyone who is kind to us, we give a card.

Some of these respondents did not send Christmas cards and instead sent 'winter wishes'. This highlights the desire, rooted in a sense of Jewishness, to maintain a distance from what is seen to be a Christian festival and the traditional means of marking it. For instance, Johanna noted:

We have a caretaker in the building and he often puts up his Christmas cards from everyone... We talk to him all the time and we felt it would be a bit nasty if we didn't send him a Christmas card, so we spoke to our rabbi about it, and so we do send 'winter wishes' to people but rather than say 'Happy Christmas' we say 'Happy New Year' and 'Good Winter Break'... There are three or four people who we sent them to, just because either we felt that they would be upset if we didn't, or it was a nice opportunity to give them a gesture.

The elaboration of her justification for sending 'winter wishes' cards illustrates the negotiation process of being Jewish in a non-Jewish country:

[There is] a set of laws called 'The Laws of the Non-Jews' and there are certain things that Jews can't do just because non-Jews do them. And one of them is their festivals - you can't celebrate their festivals. And so sending Christmas cards could be associated with the whole celebration of Christmas and therefore we'd be celebrating Christmas, which is one of the laws we're not allowed to do... The reason he [the rabbi] said you can do it is because it wasn't a Christmas card.

Next, other members' direct negotiation of the marking of Christmas can be suggested to also inform their sense of Jewish belonging and identity. A greater proportion of interviewees - even some of the more observant ones - engaged in one or more of the major Christmas traditions. Respondents rarely, however, mentioned exchanging presents. Furthermore, only Emma, Erica and Abarrane mentioned attending the occasional Christmas carol concert. Such a gesture was specifically expressed by some members like Rudolph as going "a step too far". The same applies to having a Christmas tree in the home, a practice often shunned by those in my ethnographic sample:

We've never had a Christmas tree at home. Christmas can be a religious thing but I very strongly don't want to assimilate. I didn't think it would matter to me too much until I was in a student house with three people who brought a Christmas tree in because that's a beautiful thing around Christmas time. My identity was always not having a Christmas tree. There's also lots of emotional stuff associated with it. It was very weird. What is this alien thing doing in my house? (Jonah)

This quote illustrates that, quite often, markers and expressions of identity are not rationally motivated. The finding regarding the negotiation of this non-Jewish practice concurs with quantitative findings by Barack Fisherman and Medding et al. (1999) about the negotiation of identities in mixed marriages of Jews in America (Medding et al. 1999; Barack Fishman 2004). Medding et al., for instance, show that Jewish families

are by far less likely to have a Christmas tree in their home than families in which only one partner is Jewish (Medding et al. 1999). In my interview sample, only Lisa, Jack and Abarrane, who all married gentiles, said they put up a Christmas tree at home. These three all felt they had to negotiate their identity not only in view of British society but also with their non-Jewish partners and, as a consequence, had to adapt their identity markers. Thus, for some, marrying outside Judaism requires greater amendments to their markers and accordingly to their boundaries with non-Jews. Yet, the findings indicate that it is exactly such negotiation that can accentuate their Jewish identity.

With this in mind, most of the respondents who marked Christmas got together only for a meal with their family and friends - some even had turkey. The finding that none of them engaged in the traditions of Christmas on a regular basis suggests that there is a negotiation process happening in view of being Jewish in a Christian country. The following array of responses illustrates the different elements of Christmas that respondents in my interview sample engaged in:

If I was at home, we probably would have some kosher turkey. It's more like the family comes together, a national holiday. And everybody is off work, and you don't have any other things that you have to do that you do on Jewish festivals, there's no pressure and there's no tension (Devra)

We are usually at Limmud. I like Christmas dinner but most years I don't have Christmas dinner. If it's a day off we go round to family's houses like my uncle's but we don't do presents. I like turkey and Christmas pudding...it's part of British society. It would be very hard to completely ignore it. It barely has any meaning to me. It's just part of how British society works (Robin)

My wife's sister married a non-Jew so they have grown up more with Christmas than with Chanukah. So now it has been part of our experience. We tend to either invite my mum or my wife's mum to come round to eat. We might have Christmas crackers. We don't attach any significance to it. We sometimes pop down and see the lights between Oxford and Regents Street. With the kids, we told them that there is Christmas and we put a little stocking with presents up for them when they were really young. We wanted them to be familiar with what other people are doing because they have grown up in a much less Jewish centred world because most of their friends wouldn't be Jews (Mathias)

The sample of responses, moreover, illustrates that most of the interviewees justified their engagement of Christmas traditions by arguing that Christmas has lost its religious significance and has become simply a national or public holiday, that their engagement

in some elements of Christmas was not religiously motivated, or that Christmas did not have any religious significance to them. Some also justified their engagement by saying that they would mark Chanukah as well (since it mostly falls in the same time period). The justification of their participation in some of the Christmas traditions suggests that there is still a part of them that perceives Christmas as a Christian festival, which they know that as a Jewish person they should not mark. This, in turn, indicates that they negotiate their engagement as a Jewish person and from a Jewish angle. This suggests that when members engage in non-Jewish traditions, it can accentuate and even reinforce their sense of difference and as such their belonging to the Jewish group and identification with Judaism.

There was a strong pattern that respondents who grew up with the social dissonance would perpetuate it. Recall Andrew, cited above, who does not mark Christmas:

The first wife of one of my mother's brothers was Christian...I don't remember my mother or father ever going there when they had a Christmas tree. They didn't want to have anything to do with Christmas...I may have asked my mother why and she would have said 'we are Jewish and we have Chanukah instead'...What you think about is the people around you. It was just natural for me that we did Chanukah because we were Jewish and other people who weren't Jews did Christmas.

Similarly, Thomas volunteered:

I used to get pissed off that I did not get presents. I felt I was screwed. I think there was a feeling of missing out and it's on TV and everywhere and when they'd ask [at school] 'what did you get for Christmas? I got all these presents', and I was like: 'I did not get any of this crap'. I got crappy chocolate money for Chanukah and a dreidel, it's not fair.

However, the strong boundaries instilled by his parents led him to perceive Christmas as a Christian festival and thus not mark it: "I don't believe Jesus Christ was the messiah. I don't believe in him, why would I celebrate his birth?"

In summation, this section has shown that Jews may perceive themselves to be religiously different from gentiles because they choose either to negotiate their participation in Christian traditions, or not to participate at all. The social dissonance created by that may also inform their group belonging and identity.

### **3.2.2. The Cultural Edge**

Jews may locate themselves on the edge of Britishness because they maintain an additional Jewish culture. I found indications that members of this group perceive British culture to be individualist, and Judaism to be a collectively and in particular a family oriented culture, which they valued. My research also found indications that language is an important component of Jewish culture. Many people in my interview sample used elements of the Jewish language when among other members, suggesting that they regard the Jewish language to be separate from mainstream British culture. Distinguishing themselves culturally from gentiles may inform members' minority belonging and identification.

#### **3.2.2.1. The Value of Family Closeness**

Many participants emphasised the importance of their culture being a collectively oriented one, in which the family is at the centre of Jewish life. They perceived British culture to be individualist and thus not family-centred. To them, being Jewish meant being in regular contact with one's family, including the extended family. The evidence indicates that the importance of family is regarded as a positive Jewish value. For instance, Adena commented:

Jewish families are much more involved in their children's lives. There's cross-generational involvement in families. A lot of English families don't have that. A girl told me that she was more upset when her dog died than when her grandmother died because she only saw her grandmother once a year at Christmas, but I suppose unless you live thousands of thousands miles away from your grandparents that's unheard off. You are expected to see them very regularly, if not regularly. And you expect them to have an involvement in your life. And that sort of family involvement is also with the wider family, cousins, second cousins and aunts and uncles, in-law family. You adopt another family when somebody gets married...It's an extended network of family connections...It's not at all similar to non-Jewish families.

Sara also saw strong, frequent and intergenerational family involvement to be an important part of Jewish life:

It [being Jewish] also changes your values on family...I do have this sense of importance of family...I have a very strong family unit in my close and also my extended family...My grandpas and grandmas almost in a way set up this strong close-connected family. My cousins live two minutes away from me and my grandparents' house is just around the corner. We are all

very close. We are seeing each other at festival times...Jewish people my age, they are all living in Northwest London...they just don't go.

She, furthermore, compared Jewish families to non-Jewish ones:

Although I'm marrying out, I'm still insisting in living in Northwest London close to my parents and brother. My first cousins are like my brothers and sisters. I see my aunts and grandparents every week...The extended family is closer than it is in most of my [non-Jewish] friend's family...My boyfriend's family are very close but he doesn't see them for months at a time. And certainly the extended family is not as close at all.

My evidence indicates that Jews are raised to perceive Judaism as being connected with a focus on family and family involvement. Traditionally, the family will spend time together on Jewish holy days and festive occasions. This is supported by the fact that group members are not supposed to work on most of the holy days. Accordingly, spending time with family on Jewish festive occasions and holy days may lead members to connect family time with Jewish time and thus a sense of family belonging with being Jewish. For instance, even the unaffiliated Noam explained how Judaism binds the family together:

Being committed to your family, close family connection, that's how I've grown up, which is why it's important. Why I feel it's Jewish is because somewhere in our history or culture that has been very closely linked with Judaism as a religion and culture. We have practices where we are always together. That's the only time when we can be together now that we are all older...English people don't have that.

A lot of the participants referred to the importance of the Sabbath as a time when the family is together. This weekly tradition, which is associated with family time and generally bringing members of the community together in a Jewish context, assists in creating a perception that Judaism is a collectively oriented culture with a focus on the family. The positive value it has for them was demonstrated by the fact that many of the people that I came across during my fieldwork continued the Sabbath family tradition in their adult lives, even when they had become secular:

The Judaism that I grew up with was a nice, warm thing. It was about having family time; lighting candles and having nice meal. It was about the festivals at all times sort of doing fun things, singing nice songs...All these observances were unique and special and fun, they made you feel special. It was time with the family...It is the reason why I make an effort to get home on a Friday night. We all sit down together...Non-Jews have Sunday lunch,

we have Friday nights. That's something that other Jews relate to as they say that's everybody's family time (Robert)

It was also interesting to note that some of the unmarried respondents emphasised that they wanted to maintain this tradition when they have children because they attached a positive value to it. For instance, even single Noam, who was raised in an unaffiliated Jewish household said:

It [being Jewish] affects who I am and how I want my family to be. Effectively, I want to have a Jewish family...I want my family to be brought up in the similar way that I was brought up...I like having Friday nights because everyone in the family takes time to be together. I also want that when I have a family.

This section has illustrated that a significant number of participants emphasised the importance of their culture being collectively oriented, in which there is a focus on the intergenerational involvement of the nuclear and extended family. In this way, many of them perceived their culture to be different from mainstream British culture in that it is less individualistic. They also associated their perceived deeper family connection with living a Jewish lifestyle, which involved marking the regularly occurring Jewish holy days together. This indicates sociologically that it is the practice and not necessarily the faith that informs their sense of difference and accordingly their sense of group belonging and identity.

#### **3.2.2.2. Language**

There was an indication during my observations that there is a 'Jewish language'. Although most of the interviewees agreed with the existence of such a language, their understanding of it varied. For a small number of respondents, mainly secular Jews and particularly those without a 'strong' Jewish upbringing (e.g. in terms of ethno-religious practice and community involvement), Jewish language was only constituted by the incorporation of Yiddish and sometimes Hebrew words into British English. They used these words mainly in interactions with other Jews. For many of the other respondents, particularly those with a 'stronger' Jewish upbringing and more involvement in the community at present, the language integrated a much wider range of elements. For these interviewees, the Jewish language involved using a particular accent, and

moreover a discourse style<sup>87</sup> and set of gestures that were perceived as being less reserved than the British style and gestures. A few also mentioned using specific grammatical devices that differ from standard British English grammar. The language of the Ultra-Orthodox, even those who were not Hassidim, consisted of mostly Yiddish, and sometimes even classical Hebrew.

In detail, many respondents advocated that Jewish words, being Yiddish and Hebrew words, are part of the Jewish language and are used naturally in interaction with other members of their group. For example, Gabriel said, “It’s automatic. When I meet Jewish people I start using Yiddish words...There’s this familiarity, so you throw in Jewish words into the conversation”. Similarly, Saul recounted:

There are Jewish languages like Hebrew or Yiddish. There are words. For instance, ‘I am feeling a bit schwach, which means I am feeling a bit weak...The more you enter this [Jewish] world the more you talk like that...I have had conversations with people who got up in the university and said: ‘That’s not pshat’. It is not true. They forget themselves for a second and slip back into how they normally speak among their [Jewish] friends.

The subconscious use of such words in interaction among members was confirmed through numerous observations. I found that the usage of Yiddish and Hebrew words was part of Jewish culture. For instance, members say ‘*gut yom tov*’ (have a good festival/holy day) to each other during festivals or holy days. They also wish each other a ‘*gut shabbes*’ or ‘*shabbat shalom*’, meaning a good Sabbath before or during the weekly Sabbath, or say ‘*shana tova*’ to wish each other a good year on *Rosh Hashanah*. After the Sabbath is over, they often wish each other a ‘*gut woch*’, a good week. They also use ‘*mazel tov*’ to congratulate each other at *simchas*. A lot of Jewish words that are used refer to particular observances, such as ‘*kosher*’ (allowed to be eaten or used according to the dietary or ceremonial laws), ‘*parve*’ (Hebrew term) or ‘*pareve*’ (Yiddish term) used to describe food without any meat or dairy ingredients, ‘*kippah*’ (a skullcap, worn mainly by male Jews), ‘*sheitel*’ (a wig that observant Orthodox women normally wear). There are also words that are used in situational contexts such as ‘*schlep*’ (to carry or a tedious/difficult journey), ‘*chutzpah*’

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<sup>87</sup> My definition of discourse style is informed by Tannen and Gumperz (Gumperz 1970; Gumperz 1971; Tannen 1981; Gumperz 1982b; Gumperz 1982a). Discourse style as part of the Jewish language refers to the interpretation of discourse, and the encoding of the meaning of the discourse, meaning the way and how things are said.

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(quality of audacity) or *'l'chaim'* ('to life', said when toasting each other), *'oy vey'* (oh woe) or *'nu'* (so?). Scott said in regard to the Jewish words he uses with Jews:

I would never use Anglicised names for a lot of things so like I am not even sure I know which book Deuteronomy is in English, right? I call it *devarim*, it's one of the books of the Torah. I don't use English words and it's not that often that you need to describe Pesach to a non-Jewish person. I would never call Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement...I wouldn't say festival but *yom tov*.

Indeed, when I asked the interviewees whether they used Yiddish and Hebrew words in interaction with Jews and non-Jews, I found that most respondents would only use such words in interaction with other Jews. In this way, such words create and reinforce connectivity between them. The major reason given for the limited use of the words with gentiles was that they believed non-Jews would not understand the nuanced meaning of the words. Such words were perceived to be associated with the social context and setting in which Jews have grown up. Robert noted in this regard,

It points to a richness of common experience that trying to find an English word for it doesn't convey...Judaism is for me very much in here [pointing to his heart]. It is not out there...That is partly the attraction of association with and to Jewish people. I can't have it with non-Jewish people...there is no similarity, they don't share that experience.

Saul argued:

We are also aware of the different worlds. It is like people who know a couple of different languages. You slip into the language that really says what you want to say. For example, the word *schlepp naches*...if I want to say to my mum: 'I hope you're gonna be *schlepping naches*', which means 'I hope you're going to be proud'. It means more than proud. It is the pride that a Jewish mother shows when she has the smile on her face, she is really *schlepp naches*...you know what it means [if you come from that circle]; so you can relate to it...[With non-Jewish people] I would then need to say there is this word that means, by the time you finish you have broken the conversation...It does not flow very well... It is just easier to say things just in English also this world is not their world. They [non-Jews] don't know what it means in that particular context and the community, and how it is perceived.

Not using these words with gentiles can contribute to the perception of difference from them. For instance, Mathias explained:

We are very different culturally...A lot has to do with certain Yiddish phrases that we use and Yiddish is very rich in describing character types. I don't know whether you know the word *nebbech*, someone you feel a bit

sorry for. Instead of saying he is such an unlucky person you would say he's such a *nebbech*. We know exactly what it means and I can't share that with non-Jewish people...Me and my wife have used Yiddish words with the children growing up.

Like Mathias, Joshua also refers to the socialisation effect of using such words in interaction with other Jews:

There are Jewish people who don't really notice it, but we throw in Yiddish words or Hebrew words. I don't speak Yiddish but I use Yiddish words because they have just been inserted into common parlance among Jews...I have just been surrounded by people using them in my childhood so I have just picked them up.

Thomas referred to how growing up in a Jewish home made the language become 'second nature':

I was very used to it [people understanding him when he uses Jewish words] coming from Hendon. You know the first time I had to explain what Passover was? 'It's called *Pesach*, how can you not know?' Everyone knows, right? [ironically said]. It didn't even cross my mind that people wouldn't know, or what *kosher* is.

Although the majority of respondents used these words only in interaction with other members, a few of my respondents, in particular the more secular ones, also used them in interaction with close non-Jewish friends. For instance, Daphne noted,

I grew up with Yiddishisms being used as part of ordinary language...With my Jewish friends I will use these words...Somebody might ring up here and I will say, 'Oh dear, he's a *meshuggeneh*' I have trained them [her non-Jewish friends] to know what *meshuggeneh* means...They're the best words. There is no English for *meshuggeneh*!...Some of these words have a warmth to them that doesn't exist in English.

The quote illustrates that the use of Jewish words with gentiles can be a demonstration of pride in belonging to the Jewish group. In this way, using the language can inform and accordingly reinforce their sense of Jewish belonging and identity. The finding that such respondents mainly used these words with gentiles who are close to them, further, indicates that the words are used to establish and reinforce connectivity.

A greater proportion of respondents gave the Jewish language a wider and more encompassing definition. It can consist of - among other elements - differences in grammar. For instance, direct or indirect objects are sometimes dropped at the end of a sentence. An observed example was: 'go with [her]' whereby the object 'her' was left

out. I also observed that subjects may be moved to the end of a sentence, as in statements such as ‘go to the shop, your sister’. Or, Yiddish prepositions are used instead of English ones<sup>88</sup> such as ‘I’ll come by you’ instead of ‘I’ll come to you’ or ‘come by me’ instead of ‘come to me’. Similarly, adjectives may be stated first followed by the subject and then the verb as illustrated by Kenneth, quoted below in the array of Jewish language examples. Or, Annabel, quoted below as well, referred to the grammatical idiosyncrasy of questions being phrased like statements. A few of these respondents also described departures from standard British English such as formulating statements as questions or answering a question with another question. For example, Arion replied to the question whether there’s a Jewish language: “Answering a question with a question”.

A majority of respondents understood the Jewish language to consist not only of Jewish words, but also of a Jewish accent<sup>89</sup> that clearly differs from the usual British English accent. I observed that the accent can include a particular intonation to words, including the use of a strongly pronounced ‘s’ like a ‘z’ such as ‘zo’ instead of ‘so’, or pronouncing a ‘t’ as a ‘d’, or a ‘w’ as a ‘v’ like ‘vad’ instead of ‘what’. A few of the respondents noted, thereby, the musical up-and-down intonation of sentences. Some also used different sentence intonations for the different points they were making. For instance, Saul illustrated this by saying: “↑‘On the one hand, it could be like that or that’. See, I’m saying that on a higher tone of voice, but ↓‘on the other hand, it could be like that or that’. Now I use a lower tone of voice while speaking”. The accent may also include a high-falling pitch boundary for a dramatic point. This accent was referred to by a few participants as either an Eastern European or a New York Jewish accent. A

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<sup>88</sup> This means that Yiddish, which basically means Germanic, grammatical forms are translated into English.

<sup>89</sup> The following transcription conventions, gleaned from Tannen (Tannen 1981) and from the International Phonetic Alphabets, are used to illustrate the accent: ↑ High rising contour, ↓ Rising contour, ∨ Falling contour, ↓ Low rising contour, ↑ Rising-falling contour. If these symbols are behind the last syllable of a sentence, the phonetic sound is attributed to the last syllable of that word. If the symbol is before a word, it is applicable just for the word. ↓ Extra low tone bar - marks very low pitch on phrase, continuing until punctuation, ↓ Low tone bar - marks low pitch on phrase, continuing until punctuation, ↑ High tone bar - marks high pitch on phrase, continuing until punctuation, ↑ Extra high tone bar - marks very high pitch on phrase, continuing until punctuation, “ Extra high tone, marks primary stress, ´ High tone, marks primary stress but is less pronounced, ” Extra low tone, marks secondary stress, ` Low tone, marks secondary stress but is less pronounced, ~ High rising contour, in terms of high rising stress, ~ Low rising contour, in terms of lowering stress, “ lengthened vowel sound, underline indicates emphatic stress.

few people referred to this wider defined language as ‘*yeshivish*<sup>90</sup>’ because the accent has a chanting quality like that used when reading and discussing Jewish texts, which is taught in *yeshivot*<sup>91</sup>. I found in my observations that this *yeshivish* style of speaking is simply a language tool used mainly by more involved community members, and that its users have not necessarily studied at *yeshivot*. Members use it especially when talking about things relating to Judaism such as in their *chavrutas* (one-to-one religious learning classes).

Many interviewees saw the language as also being constituted by a discourse style, which they described variously as ‘analytical’, ‘argumentative’, ‘demonstrative’, ‘direct’, ‘emotional’, ‘fast’, ‘gregarious’, ‘interruptive’, ‘loud’, ‘neurotic’, ‘making fun of oneself’, ‘open’, ‘personal’, ‘pushy’, ‘talking a lot’ and ‘weary’. My observations confirmed these style elements. Interestingly, the Jewish language was also associated by some with gestures, such as ‘tutting’ (clicking the tongue), ‘shrugging with one’s shoulders’ and talking with one’s hands “like the Italians” as described by an elderly Jewish woman during my observations. I witnessed that ‘tutting’ was often used to express hesitation or a short thinking break: “They tutt when they talk, that’s a verbal tick” (Adena). Mentioned examples of the use of this more widely-defined language in popular culture included many of the Jewish characters in the series ‘Seinfeld’ or in Woody Allen movies (including Woody Allen himself), and specifically Larry David in his series ‘Curb your Enthusiasm’.

Most people who described these elements of Jewish language had a strong Jewish upbringing and those who actually incorporated these elements into their speech tended to be community involved Jews, in particular traditional members. The following sample of responses illustrates the diverse and interconnected elements of Jewish language:

It’s not just the use of Yiddish words. I think there is a particular way of speaking, which is partially intonation and the positioning of words. There’s a shrug and a ‘\you’re aʒking ʌme?’, ‘\How’z buʒinezz?’ That’s not just the positioning of the words, that’s the intonation... ‘\Whäd? Żo \you don’t like ʌid?’ [starting deep and pronounced and ending on a high note said in an accusational and pushy way]... Maybe it’s more intonation and expression.

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<sup>90</sup> Please note that ‘*Yeshivish*’ can include not only Hebrew, and Yiddish but also Aramaic words, which again are incorporated into the British English language when talking to other Jews.

<sup>91</sup> A *yeshiva* (plural *yeshivot*) is a Jewish educational institution, which provides the study of traditional religious texts.

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It's more to do with the words to go with it. It's rhythmic almost...It's the talking with your hands (Annabel)

There's a Jewish language in the sense of a shared understanding, a bit of a sort of turn of phrase or ways of being humorous, or ways of saying things that crosses countries just like 'Ialrèady!' and saying the opposite of what you mean sometimes as a humorous device. Or if you want to say somebody wasn't nice, you say 'nīce she wàzn'd' or 'nīce he wàzn'd'. There are ways of using words...I think in the sense of language as being shared, involving shared understanding...I think that is the deeper sense really, rather than say Hebrew (Kenneth)

If being British means having emotional constipation than being Jewish means having emotional diarrhoea because we always talk about our problems (Hazel)

There is a style of thought and conversation that continues to be very familiar: a lot of talk, argumentative, a lot of arguments, being quite open with other people. One of my very close non-Jewish friends Catholic, from Liverpool, working class, originally said: 'You probably have more conversation in one night than in our family life has in a week'. All that wearing everything very openly and having a go at each other (Emma)

Like Woody Allen sounds very Jewish...He uses the Jewish language, the intonation, the neurosis, it's very Jewish...worry-ness is very Jewish, paranoia, that sort of thing. He's got a headache, and he's like: 'lOh my god - lbrain dùmour' [high-falling pitch boundary for a dramatic point]. And he's got a whole thing like hypochondria, and that sort of thing. And obviously it's an extreme version of it...it's a caricature...but it's playing on this worry, sort of analytical type (Johanna)

Jewish humour...any humour that makes fun of being Jewish (Adena)

I use my hands a lot... so that's the Jewish mannerism...If I am making a joke about something I will use a Jewish intonation. The Jewish intonation is usually with the inflection. And it's a sardonic humour. 'Diz iz vhäd you call a holiday?' [said in a 'pushy' way]... 'lAnd Vall dät you can tell from hëllö?'... My son also has a wonderful sense of Jewish humour...He just turned six and I was saying something to him when he had done something: 'lBíg bøy of zix vhy are you doing dat?' And hë zaid: 'lI've jüst turned zix and alrèady she'z callīng me zèvén'...It is sort of the way the inflection goes. And most Jews will get this from their immigrant parents with Yiddish expressions thrown in, that gives just a little bit of piquant (Catherine)

There's certainly Jewish body language...Jewish English has got Yiddish intonations and speech patterns, and our ways of phrasing a sentence, of actually piecing together oratory, maybe have roots in Yiddish...If someone is acting as Fagin, a non-Jew, they're doing a stereotype of a Jew, the

sentences will go up at the end of the sentence. And there's a certain speech pattern that...goes back to Yiddish. And you can hear it in Hebrew as well. A musicality. The way that words are put together in terms of emphasis, so there's: 'You'd think 'that's good' is a fairly flat way that a teacher might speak to a child. But a Yiddish way would be more of 'you think dät'z 'good?' It's a different emphasis, or 'dät's gööd'. It's different speech patterns that alter the meaning...There's a Jewish intonation that often you can recognise...before you hear the name or hear what they're saying, there's a certain tone in a voice and an accent (Devra)

There's a style of speaking that's very North London Jewish but you have to have lived here for a long time to get it. It's very subtle differences: A different tone of voice, the use of certain words like you drop in bits of Yiddish...It's a very over-excited way of talking and Jews whether they are religious or not will share that. There is a kind of Jewish language. There do seem to be things that seem to be common in different Jewish societies (Robin)

Jews, kind of, talk with a nuance...It's just in the phraseology, it's on the emphasis that they put on certain syllables even on their words...If someone said to you 'I think I'll go and have a sleep' [flatly spoken]. A Jew would say to you 'Meh, I think I'll gò and have a 'zleep'. It's just the way they speak! It's handed down; they talk in a sing-a-song way, they talk in a slightly musical way, which to the Jewish ear you pick up quite easily...When Jews talk to each other, they get bolder, they, they bring a philosophic world weariness to the phrasing and the tone of their voice that they wouldn't bring on with non-Jews. They shrug their shoulders, it's like: 'lach, Jwe've been through zuch a lot; nothing zurprises us' (Avery)

Additionally, I found that most of the Haredi, and particularly the Hassidic Jews, speak entirely in Yiddish with one another. Thus, for Ultra-Orthodox members, Yiddish is a living language that is used in interaction with one another. For instance, Chava, who is Haredi, said:

In Stamford Hill, in this area, I would say that 80% of children, if they don't actually speak it, will understand Yiddish. The majority of the schools in Stamford Hill, either the Jewish Study lessons are conducted in Yiddish, or it's taught as a language. And the vast majority of the parents will be speaking Yiddish at home...For instance, my boys, their Jewish Studies, until they left school, were always conducted only in Yiddish...Because the majority of yeshivas that most boys go to after doing their A-levels, most of them conduct, the lectures are given in Yiddish.

These elements of the language described above not only arise as a natural consequence of being around other Jews but are sometimes purposefully used to create a separation between them and gentiles. For instance, Mosche, a Haredi, said:

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My parents speak English, but I decided to speak Yiddish in my family... We need more barriers and separation from the [non-Jewish] society. You go to the bus stop; why should a child read the advertisements?... They have immorality and things like that... If it's not your mother language you don't always want to try to know what's written. If it's your first language, it strikes you, if you like it or not.

In general, I found there was a tendency in my interview sample for respondents to use this wider defined language only with other group members. This suggests that it can create and reinforce a sense of connection among them. Some respondents even volunteered this consequence in the interview. For example, Robin said, "Linguists call it code-switching. It's quite a way of creating connection, creating an in-group". Or, Aron noted:

When you are really young, you have like your secret language with your friends, so it [the Jewish language] is like that, right? It's something that you can use with this person because this person knows. In the same way, you have in-jokes with your friends...no one else would understand...It's something like a shared vocabulary that maybe outsiders don't know. I suppose there's some connection there. I think it gives you a connection with the other person.

Avery, who was cited above explaining what this language means to him, elucidated that it binds Jews together:

When Jews are together, like any ethnic group, you can relate in a way that you can't quite do with people from a different ethnic group. If you could put me in a room of ten people, and you say two of these people are Jewish, point them out, I'll probably know just by looking at them...just talk with a couple of them for a few minutes, then I'll know. It's clannish...and when you've been brought up and heard it, you notice.

In sum, my findings indicate that there is a Jewish language, but the understanding of what it comprises varies for different types of Jews. The evidence indicates that members have been socialised into using it among themselves. It is an intimate tool that can provide and reinforce connection among Jews, because it is applied in the context of a majority population that does not share and use this language. In this way, it presents a bonding mechanism that assists in creating and reinforcing a sense of belonging to the group and a feeling of Jewishness. My findings indicate that members attach positive meaning and thus value to this language, which assists in its perpetuation.

### **3.2.3. The Ethnic Edge**

British Jews can feel ethnically different from non-Jews because of their non-British ancestry and the resulting concern about the possibility of experiencing racism. This can inform their sense of Jewish belonging as well as identity and at the same time make them feel that they are on the edge of Britishness.

#### **3.2.3.1. Ancestry**

A considerable proportion of participants perceived themselves to be different from non-Jewish British people because their ancestry did not originate in this country. Nearly all respondents raised their immigrant background during the interview, even when their family had immigrated to Britain as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> century:

My mother was a refugee. She was born in Egypt and she came over in 1956 in the Suez crisis. My Grandmother was Egyptian and my grandfather was Adeni. My father's father was Hungarian and was in the death camps and my grandmother was in hiding all over Europe during the Second World War, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria so to some extent I'm not British because I'm the product of refugees (Zachariah)

Laura, whose grandparents came from Eastern Europe, simply said: "I have a British passport...but I haven't got deep roots in this country". The same sentiment was expressed by Timothy:

I'm clearly not a national here...I have a British passport, but on these forms, I tend to write 'Jewish'...I've not got any Anglo-Saxon in me, probably not got any Norman in me - I'm sort of Eastern European, Russian, possibly Slavic, from the Hungarian, so ethnically it doesn't make any sense to put it, although culturally I'm very British...In order to do that [self-identify as British on forms] my family would have needed to have been in the UK for nine generations.

Timothy's words highlight the interesting finding that even Jews who have been in Britain for generations can still perceive themselves to be immigrants.

Many interviewees mentioned that being part of an immigrant group was associated with their Jewish background and thus constituted their identity. Some respondents noted that this immigrant background made them feel connected with other Jewish people. For example, David explained that having an immigrant background informs his sense of belonging to the group and thus his minority identity:

Background is the fact that all Jews are immigrants from somewhere. I mean my wife's family has been here for 200 years but even they were immigrants

at one point, so none of us are Anglo-Saxons. None of us are part of the indigenous population.

David further illustrated how this ancestral notion of difference from non-Jewish British people is part of the Jewish experience by describing the meeting of another couple:

I asked her husband where he's from and he said Kent, so immediately you think - they are quite religious, quite observant - well there aren't many communities in Kent. He was a convert to Judaism and it's very interesting how someone can effectively find their way into this environment but it's very unusual. Here was someone, who was completely within the Jewish circle, completely observant, lives very locally but whose family comes from Kent and that seems quite strange. It's strange here was an indigenous British person. It just makes you realise how the fact that we all have stories and we all come from somewhere else is the norm.

In fact, both converts that I interviewed claimed that they did not feel ethnically Jewish because of this ancestral difference. Stephanie told me that she felt different from those who are born into Judaism at the Passover *Seder*, which marks the Jewish exodus from Egypt<sup>92</sup>, because she does not come from a long line of Jews: "My family didn't come out of Egypt". This highlights that to perceive an ancestral difference from gentiles, Jews need to have been born into Judaism, which, in turn, indicates that being Jewish is perpetuated by birth and thus is a hereditary identity.

Overall, the evidence indicates that the importance of ancestry is associated with a communal emphasis on being born into Judaism. It can foster the feeling of connectivity with one's ancestors who were immigrants, as if each is "a link in a chain" (Zachariah), an expression I heard often in my fieldwork. Almost all of my respondents, independent of their affiliation, answered the question of why they regarded themselves as Jewish by referring to the fact that they were born Jewish:

My mother's Jewish...I was born Jewish...my blood is Jewish (Avery)

I would describe myself as a Jewish person partly because my parents are Jewish and I was born Jewish...Judaism in that respect is a culture or a community that you're born into (Isabelle)

Genetically, it [being Jewish] is in your blood. It's a religion and a people. It's inherited from my mother (Josie)

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<sup>92</sup> It is asked of Jews to remember this day as if they themselves came out of Egypt, "remember this day, in which you came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 13:3).

Participants often emphasised thereby that their parents, mother or father, and also their grandparents and the parents of their grandparents were Jewish. They often volunteered that they could trace their family back several generations:

I am Jewish because my mother was Jewish, her mother was Jewish and her mother before her (Yael)

We were one of the first families in England. My parents, my grandparent, my great-grandparents, I can trace ourselves back to Cromwell's times (Anthony)

This emphasis on ancestry suggests furthermore that Jewishness is perceived as an inheritance and is thus also perpetuated as a hereditary identity.

The importance of ancestry and thus being born into Judaism is directed by the religion itself<sup>93</sup> and therefore by many Jewish institutions. The religious denominations and many community organisations have official membership criteria based on ancestry. For example, the membership criteria across the religious denominations are as follows: Officially, to belong to an Ultra-Orthodox, Sephardi or Modern Orthodox synagogue, a person must be born to a *halachically* (according to rabbinic Jewish law) Jewish mother. Observational evidence, however, suggests that to be considered a member in the Ultra-Orthodox community, both of a person's parents must be *halachically* Jewish<sup>94</sup>. For someone to be a member of a Reform and Masorti synagogue, also a person's mother needs to be born Jewish. To be part of a Liberal synagogue, either one's father or mother needs to be born Jewish<sup>95</sup>. Even non-religious community organisations have often membership criteria based on ancestry such as the Federation of Zionist Youth (FZY)<sup>96</sup> or Birthright Israel. For example, Mr Scholem, an employee of Birthright Israel, commented:

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<sup>93</sup> According to Torah, Jews should not marry out because their children would then turn to other religions: "You shall not intermarry with them: do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. For you will turn your children away from Me to worship other gods" (Deuteronomy 7:1-3).

<sup>94</sup> The definition of *halachically* Jewish differs in non-Orthodox Judaism. The stringency in application of *halakhah* differs. This is most evident in conversions. A woman who has converted through Reform will not be considered '*halachically*' Jewish by the Orthodox because the conversion standards required are not as extensive in the non-Orthodox denominations.

<sup>95</sup> This does not preclude that gentiles can convert to the different denominations and belong to them. However, conversion numbers are low. And conversion is generally discouraged in Judaism. More so in the Orthodox stream than in the non-traditional one. See **Chapter 5** for more details regarding conversion to Judaism.

<sup>96</sup> FZY is a Jewish Zionist Youth Movement. They offer, for instance, imaginative peer-led programmes on a weekly basis, camps, seminars and events at a national and international level. Their aim is to

A Jew in Birthright is someone who has one Jewish grandparent, maternal or paternal. Very few streams of religion in the UK would agree with that. In fact, the only people who share that are the State of Israel and Hitler. And that's a statement in itself.

The fact that the institutional guidelines on membership have an impact on members' sense of Jewish status is further highlighted by the fact that not only most of the affiliated but even most of the unaffiliated respondents referred to their direct Jewish heredity in replies to the question why they regarded themselves as Jewish. For instance, the unaffiliated Eric said, "According to Jewish law and the major religious institutions in this country, I am Jewish". Considering that most Jews in Britain belong to a synagogue (Graham and Vulkan 2010) and that even unaffiliated people in my interview sample defined themselves as members of the group because of their Jewish heredity, it can be inferred that community institutions have an impact on Jews defining themselves in ethnic (i.e. ethno-racial) terms and thus assist in perpetuating the perception of ethnic difference from gentiles among Jews.

### 3.2.3.2. Racism

Many participants perceived themselves as part of a 'racial' minority and expressed this in notions about the Jewish experience of racism, which was found to be mostly synonymous with anti-Semitism in my data<sup>97</sup>:

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develop a strong Jewish and Zionist identity in British Youth. Importantly, this organisation is a pluralist youth movement, which means that members from all streams of Judaism and from varying political beliefs can participate in their events (see <http://www.fzy.org.uk> for details). For instance, talking to several members of FZY I found that they see people as Jewish if they have at least one Jewish grandparent.

<sup>97</sup> Please note that anti-Semitism is closely related to and is often regarded as synonymous with or part of racism, as both concepts assert that it is discriminated against a particular group of persons based on their common descent or heredity including hereditary traits (Falk 2008). For example, the UK government regards anti-Semitism to be part of racism and uses the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry definition to determine racist incidents: "an incident that is perceived as racist by the victim or any other person, and this would include antisemitism" (APPGAA 2008). It also asserts that the current rhetoric about Israel and Zionism (from the far-right, the far-left and Islamist extremists alike) can imply anti-Semitic sentiments as they concur with general manifestations of hatred towards this group (APPGAA 2008; APPGAA 2010). Also, many of the interviewees saw anti-Semitism as part of racism. Thus, I use anti-Semitism in this study synonymously with racism and all the quotes in this section relate to anti-Semitism in terms of racism. Anti-Semitism in my study can be anything from negative attitudes or hostility towards members of the Jewish group to persecution of those members. This definition is based on Helen Fein's definition of anti-Semitism as "a persisting latent structure of hostile beliefs towards Jews as a collective manifested in individuals as attitudes, and in culture as myth, ideology, folklore and imagery, and in actions – social or legal discrimination, political mobilization against the Jews, and collective or state violence – which results in and/or is designed to distance, displace, or destroy Jews as Jews" (Fein 1987: 3).

British people have become apathetic. Nobody is standing up and saying 'anti-Semitism is a problem', 'Holocaust denial is a problem' and it's down to us as regular ordinary Jews to make a difference in life. There's nobody doing that. Anti-Semitism is a big issue by way of Holocaust denial and anti-Israel sentiments...There's a feeling in the community that...if a gentile criticises Israel they are being anti-Semitic (Zachariah)

There's this huge problem with anti-Semitism, which I think also makes you feel different. The fact that you know that there's this history of anti-Semitism and even if you don't perceive yourself as different, other people do. I think that has actually become very important in the Jewish identity now (Hilary)

Anti-Semitism and you are aware of this issue and maybe you've been in an instance and you immediately know. I've spoken to my Christian friends about it and they have no idea. They have no feelings, they say they can't understand how you can feel threatened having a religion in this country. They don't come across it. We have that in common (Josie)

Jews are the chosen people, if only in the tragic sense that their fate has been so much more subject to persecution and hatred than perhaps anybody else's. And certainly within living memory, the fate of the Jews in Europe and indeed in the Arab countries has perhaps been unique...We are chosen for hatred and destruction (Edward)

These examples already indicate that members of the group have been socialised to perceive that they, as a 'racial' minority, have continuously experienced anti-Semitism throughout history and can thus even today experience racism. This can, of course, inform their understanding of being Jewish and thus different from the majority population.

I found that participants' perceptions of continuous anti-Jewish racism were established not only by socialisation within the family, but also by a concerted, organised communal effort to educate young people about anti-Semitism. For example, the CST representative, Mr Finkelstein, said that his co-workers go into Jewish educational institutions and teach their youth about anti-Semitism in the past and present and about how they can protect themselves against it. In addition, educational institutions themselves, like *cheders* (Jewish Sunday schools), Jewish schools and youth groups, play an important role in communicating the continued existence of anti-Semitism to young members. These institutions teach Jewish youth the meaning of the festivals associated with the anti-Semitism their ancestors experienced throughout history such as *Chanukah*, *Pesach*, *Purim*, or *Succot*. For example, I observed that some

children learned through the Passover story and songs that they are directly descended from *Avraham* (Abraham), his son *Yitzchak* (Isaac), and grandson *Jacob* (Israel) and that their ancestors, being the descendants of the 12 sons of Jacob, suffered slavery and escaped from it. ‘The ballad of the four sons’, which is a famous song during Passover, teaches and reminds Jews that their ancestors were persecuted because of their ethnic difference:

“And the father proudly answered,  
‘As our fathers ate in speed,  
Ate the Paschal lamb 'ere midnight  
And from slavery were freed’.  
So we follow their example  
And 'ere midnight must complete  
All the Seder; and we should not  
After twelve remain to eat”  
(Blech 2006: 123)

The following example from my observational fieldwork also indicates that Jews are taught about continuous anti-Semitism throughout history and that this can have an impact on them. A Modern Orthodox woman told me that her seven-year-old daughter reported learning about the martyr prayer – which is about a group of ten rabbis who were martyred for their Judaism by the Romans in the period after the destruction of the second Temple – as part of the *Yom Kippur* observance in her Jewish school. She asked whether she would be punished like that and if her family would die if she didn’t obey God’s commandments. There is a belief in Judaism that anti-Semitism occurs to Jews because they have not been observant enough. Accordingly, the findings indicate that the perception of continuous anti-Semitism can be linked to learning about the ancestral experience of ‘racism’ and in this way can add to their perception of being ethnically different from the majority population.

Additional evidence suggests that these institutions place a particular emphasis on educating children about the Holocaust. A number of participants told me that assemblies are held in Jewish schools and *cheders* to commemorate the Holocaust every year around the time of Holocaust Remembrance Day<sup>98</sup>. This is often accompanied by a

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<sup>98</sup> I found during my fieldwork that a lot of Jews, especially younger ones, do not attend any of the many community organised activities to commemorate the Holocaust on the Holocaust Memorial Day. This agrees with Cooke, who found that not a lot of people attend organised Holocaust commemorations in England (Cooke 2000).

minute's silence to remember the victims. For instance, Mrs Kaufmann, a Reform Sunday school teacher, said:

We explain to the young ones that Jews in Europe weren't wanted anymore and the governments decided to destroy them. We explain that adults but also children had to die for no other reason than they were Jewish, just because they were Jewish. We also tell them about the concentration camps, but not in too much detail, because they cannot handle the horrid details of what has happened there. We often teach the younger ones about the yellow patches Jews had to wear; the ghettos or we read Anne Frank with them.

In addition, a few interviewees told me that Holocaust survivors are invited into Jewish schools to speak to older pupils about their experiences in the camps and that films are shown about the Holocaust even in *cheders*. Mrs Altmann, a Modern Orthodox *cheder* teacher, told me in this regard: "we repeat this [meaning the Holocaust commemoration] every year so that it becomes part of their memory". Indeed, Holocaust commemoration through Jewish educational institutions can facilitate the perception that Jews can experience anti-Semitism even in present times. For instance, Claire noted:

It [meaning the Jewish trauma] started with like the blood libels, Pogroms in Eastern Europe and in a way like we are taught [in Jewish educational institutions] as if it's always led up to the Holocaust...They [teachers] tell you Jewish persecution will never end and that others are always out to get you.

Other Jewish organisations such as the Jewish Learning Exchange, Aish or Tribe also play a role in ensuring young Jewish people are being made aware of the Holocaust by, for example, arranging educational trips to Amsterdam to see the Anne Frank House, to Poland and the Czech Republic to visit concentration camps, or to 'Yad Vashem' (Israel's official memorial to the Jewish Holocaust victims and the world centre for research and education of the Holocaust) as part of Israel tours. Mr Fein, an UJIA employee, said about taking young members to Israel and educating them about the Holocaust: "For UJIA, it's very important for the young Jews to make that connection between the era of the Holocaust and their lives as Jews".

An awareness of the Holocaust is also informed by mainstream, non-Jewish institutions, such as non-Jewish schools teaching about it. In England, it is compulsory to teach children about the Holocaust in schools. It is part of the Key Stage 3 History curriculum, normally taught in Year 9 (age 13-14) (DFE 2010). Although independent

schools do not have to follow the National Curriculum, many do so in order for their pupils to succeed in the national examinations (HET 2011). The Holocaust Education Trust, which measures participation in their 'Outreach Programme' and 'Lessons from Auschwitz' project as well as in programmes supported by other organisations, reports that while there is no formal requirement for Holocaust education in other British countries, it is still generally taught. This is also indicated by the fact that the Holocaust can be found in a number of exam specifications as part of the GCSE and A-level history course not only in England, but also in Wales and Northern Ireland (HET 2011). Furthermore, the UK Country Report 2010 by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Education reports that according to their evidence, a majority of schools in Britain teach the Holocaust. A survey of Scottish schools, for instance, showed that about 1/3 of surveyed pupils had learned about the Holocaust while at primary school and 3/4 of them responded that they had learned about it during secondary school (DFE 2010). There are also many exhibitions (e.g. the Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum), plays (e.g. *Fiddler on the Roof*), movies (e.g. *Schindler's List*) and documentaries about anti-Semitism.

All of these can contribute to a sense of ethnic difference among Jews, which is indicated in the following array of respondents' narratives:

My family suffered greatly [at the hands of the Nazis] and I have read a lot about it but I haven't told my son of course because he is only eleven. He knows that my grandfather was murdered but it doesn't mean very much to him. So he'll become 14 and one day I will take him to the Holocaust museum in the Imperial War Museum<sup>99</sup> (Ruben)

I did my A-level coursework on the persecution of Jews in the past 2000 years. Every country that I go to on our holiday, my mum used to take me to the Holocaust museum there, every single one. So I have been in Paris, Washington, New York, Rome, all over (Jim)

If there was a programme on television about the Holocaust or about Hitler or whatever, she would almost certainly watch it, and she would almost certainly get extremely upset. So it was almost like a compulsion. I think she felt that somehow she had a duty to watch it...and I watched it with her (Timothy)

I don't know how you could ever not know about it [Holocaust]. We were taught in school about it. In cheder, it was touched upon it, trip to Poland

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<sup>99</sup> Ruben asserted that children are only allowed into this exhibition from the age of 14 onwards.

with a Jewish organisation. It's like when do you become aware of the fact that the Queen is the Queen of England? You just know because you are brought up in that environment. You are brought up with it (Adena)

In my secondary school I studied it briefly and then I learnt about it when I was in Israel on my gap year. Last year, I went to Poland on a trip with a youth movement and we went to Auschwitz, Krakow, Warsaw and it's a really important trip for a Jewish person to do that and see for themselves and learn about it (Josie)

In sum, both Jewish and non-Jewish institutions highlight members' 'racial' difference from gentiles, and in this way can encourage them to perceive themselves to be part of a 'racial' and therefore ethnic minority that can experience anti-Semitism.

### **3.2.4. The National Edge**

Jews can perceive themselves to be on the edge of Britishness nationally due to the fact that they maintain – or are perceived to maintain - dual national loyalties, which may also be expressed as dual national pride. Many participants maintained a loyalty not only to Britain but also to Israel in terms of the present State of Israel as well as the ancient homeland. It is argued that this aspect of difference can also affect their sense of Jewishness<sup>100</sup>.

Some participants expressed their dual loyalties by asserting that they belonged to two nations, 'Eretz Israel' and Britain:

Although I am an English Jew and regarded as English, I also am part of the Jewish nation...When we come from all over the world and sit down at a Shabbat table, whether that be in England, Frankfurt or Jerusalem, we may all have different accents and languages, but the identifying bond of unity is our Jewish national heritage (Eric).

A few participants expressed this dual loyalty by asserting that they had two 'homes':

In England I feel at home in some ways and in Israel I feel at home in other ways. In England, I am very much at home with English people, with people living in England, culturally, the language...In Israel, there's a sense of brotherhood there. I feel at home, it feels very much that's where I belong (Saul).

Many people referred to politics, especially the political situation in the State of Israel, in discussing their dual loyalties. For instance, Hugh noted:

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<sup>100</sup> It must be noted in this respect that a greater majority of the interview respondents said 'yes' to the question about whether Israel is still the homeland of Jews, but did not regard it as their own homeland.

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I am British...but I do always remember that at the end of the day, the loyalty is with Israel above all else...I think I'm more critical round a dinner table with friends...but when I have to speak publicly, as I do frequently now, particularly with my new position, I have to be a little more circumspect and I have to tow the line a little bit more.

It is notable that a greater proportion of respondents referred to their dual political interest in this regard:

I am a Jew first and then a Brit...My Jewish life is expressed through my relationship with Israel...I read the Haaretz, the Israeli newspaper, before I read the BBC website. I've visited Israel for work or pleasure for about 20 times and I can't stay away (Joel)

I probably care more about the politics in Israel than I care here, right? Because I think that politics in Israel influences so many things. The Gaza war influenced that there was anti-Semitism here more than there has ever been, right?...Politics in Israel changes how Jews are perceived all around the world and therefore it is important (Larry)

Some people in my ethnographic sample referred to their dual loyalties in regard to sports. For instance, in a non-recorded conversation with Aron, he told me that when Israel plays England, it is difficult for him to decide which country he is 'for', but he thought he might be for England. If Israel were to play another country, he would definitely be for Israel, though. Like a few other interviewees, Evan also volunteered this example,

It complements each other [being Jewish and British]. I don't feel they are in conflict. They are both important. Ask who I supported when I took my son to the England-Israel match. I wouldn't have been disappointed whoever won. I would have felt happy if England won. I wouldn't have minded if Israel won. I sat in the Israel stand, though.

Dual loyalties in this regard were also expressed as dual pride, such as with Jonah:

The previous Olympics, they [Israelis] have won a gold medal. I saw the Israel flag, and the national anthem playing in the international arena, you feel pride...That doesn't mean I don't feel pride for Britain.

I found that Jews can be socialised into this loyalty towards Israel. For example, Avery noted,

You were brought up to develop a connection with Israel as a child, from my earliest childhood I was asked to put pennies in the box to send to Israel to support and to build a home for the Jews there. To always think of Israel...as a haven...as peace and security and all the rest of it. So you develop a very affectionate attitude...I've just thought of this like a 'Jew-topia', and when

you're a child you are persuaded to believe that - and this is the key - whatever Israel does, support it.

Accordingly, a Jewish upbringing can expose members to the importance of Israel in religious Judaism, in terms of *Eretz Israel*. For example, Prof Bernstein noted:

It was the cradle of the bible, for the rabbis being in Israel is equal to fulfilling all the mitzvot, all the commandments. It's the place where you really ought to be...It contains Jerusalem, the holy city for Jews, it contains the Wailing Wall...The philosopher Ahad Ha'am thought of Israel as a cultural centre, a spiritual and cultural centre for Jews. And of course the religious regard it as the place of the bible and the holy land.

Some of the yearly holy days marked by the group relate to Israel such as to the Temple in Jerusalem. For example, the Temple service is central to the *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* rituals. At the conclusion of the *Yom Kippur* service, the words 'Next Year in Jerusalem' are normally recited. Also, the three pilgrim festivals (*Pesach*, *Shavuot* and *Sukkot*) refer to Jerusalem by pronouncing that all Jews should assemble there<sup>101</sup>. Or, the eight-day festival of *Chanukah* marks the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd century BCE. There are also a number of fasts recalling the destruction of the temple such as the *Ninth of Av*, the *Tenth of Tevet* and the *Seventeenth of Tammuz*. The daily prayers and those recited as part of synagogue services on the Sabbath and other festivals all contain numerous references to Jerusalem and most congregations face Jerusalem when reading the *Amidah*<sup>102</sup>. Even at most religious wedding ceremonies, Israel has a place<sup>103</sup>:

We are told in our tradition that we should remember Jerusalem at the height of our joy...In our happiest day in our lives we should take a moment to remember the destruction of Jerusalem 2000 years ago, which is why at a Jewish wedding they break the glass. The breaking of the glass is a memorial for the destruction of the temple and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans...Right before they break the glass, everyone is very excited and happy and the rest of the day is going to be very, very happy, but they take

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<sup>101</sup> Another example is the forty-nine days 'Counting of the Omer', which recalls the daily *Omer* offering at the Temple between the time of Passover and *Shavuot*.

<sup>102</sup> For instance, the *Amidah* prayer, which is part of most services, must be said facing towards Jerusalem. The following supplication regarding Israel is contained in it in one form or another: "To Jerusalem, Your city, may You return in compassion, and may You dwell in it, as You promised. May You rebuild it rapidly in our days as an everlasting structure, and install within it soon the throne of David. Blessed are You, Lord, who builds Jerusalem...Find favour, Lord our God, in Your people Israel" (Singer et al. 2006:86).

<sup>103</sup> The custom of the groom breaking a glass with the heel of his shoe as part of the wedding ceremony remembers the destruction of Jerusalem. The following sentence from the psalms is often recited in one form or another: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning" (Psalms 137:5).

one moment beforehand and say: ‘If I forget you Jerusalem I will let my tongue adhere to my palate and allow my right arm to forget its cutting and literally, if I will forget you at the height of my joy’ (Scott).

Thus, there is a religious focus on remembering *Eretz Israel*, which can lead Jews, particularly affiliated members, to attach importance and develop loyalty to Israel in general, including the State of Israel.

There is also support for the State of Israel in religious Judaism. Although synagogues of the Progressive movement may not be as supportive of Israel as the Modern Orthodox movement and its leading institution, the United Synagogue, most synagogues will still be generally pro-Israel. For instance, the United Synagogue, to which most of the affiliated members in Britain belong (Graham and Vulkan 2010), “strongly believe[s] in the centrality of Israel in Jewish life” (US 2011). Accordingly, the United Synagogue, alongside other religious denominational institutions, introduced a prayer for the welfare of the State of Israel and its defence forces in 1948 that is said as part of the weekly synagogue service on the Sabbath morning (Singer et al. 2006)<sup>104</sup>.

Furthermore, my ethnographic evidence suggests that support for the State of Israel is encouraged through its institutional leaders. Rabbis will often show and ask for the community’s support for Israel in speeches such as by asking to give charity to Israel. In the Modern Orthodox synagogue where I did the majority of my observations, the rabbi often referred to the State of Israel and the importance of supporting it in speeches at the end of synagogue services. For example, he once asserted doubt about President Barack Obama’s political support for Israel, saying “we will have to wait and see what happens”.

Thus, there is a religious focus on remembering *Eretz Israel* and the State of Israel, which can lead Jews, particularly affiliated members, to attach importance not only to *Eretz Israel*, but also to the State of Israel and by extension develop a sense of

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<sup>104</sup> The prayer goes as follows: “May He who blessed our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, bless the State of Israel, its leaders and advisors in the land which He swore unto our fathers to give us. Put into their hearts the love and fear of You to uphold it with justice and righteousness, and may we be worthy in our days to witness the fulfilment of the words of Your servants, the prophets: “For out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. Heavenly Father: Remember the Israel Defence Forces, guardians of our Holy Land. Protect them from all distress and anguish, and send blessing and success to all the work of their hands. Grant peace in Your Holy land and everlasting happiness to all its inhabitants, so that Jacob shall again have peace and tranquillity, with none to make him afraid. Spread the tabernacle of Your peace over all the dwellers on earth. May this be Your will; and let us say, Amen” (Singer et al. 2006: 67).

loyalty towards both. The importance of the State of Israel for British Jews is supported by the findings of multiple survey studies. For example, the 2010 Jewish Policy Research (JPR) survey study on British Jews' attitudes towards Israel found that the more observant respondents were, the more likely they were to say that Israel is central to their identity: 64% of self-identified secular respondents said that Israel is either 'important but not central' or 'central', compared to 92% of self-identified religious respondents (Graham and Boyd 2010).

A loyalty to the State of Israel can also be created and fostered by Jewish institutions in Britain other than synagogues. There are several Zionist youth organisations that cater to both religious and secular young members in order to assist them in developing a connection with Israel, such as the Association of Jewish Sixthformers, Betar, Bnei Akiva, B'nai B'rith Youth Organisation, Ezra, the Federation of Zionist Youth, Habonim Dror, Liberal Jewish Youth-Netzer, Maccabi, Noam Masorti Youth, Netzer Olami (Reform Synagogue Youth-Netzer) and Hanoar Hatzioni. The organisations generally offer weekly meetings, summer and winter camps, and trips to Israel, including gap years. Evidence from the JPR's 2011 National Jewish Student Survey, indicates that a majority of Jewish youth participates in these youth organisations and visits Israel. Their data shows that most respondents (88%) have been involved with a Jewish youth movement at least 'occasionally', and the majority of these respondents (67%) have 'regularly' been involved. Also, the majority of their respondents (82%) have participated in an Israel Experience summer programme ('tour'). Furthermore, many of the respondents (40%) went on a gap year in Israel and, of these, 22% studied at a yeshiva/seminary<sup>105</sup> (Graham and Boyd 2011: 7). Speaking of the youth movements that offer weekly meetings, Jethro said:

There was a youth movement called Habonim which was based on a Zionist ideology, it revolved around the creation of the State of Israel. We used to learn Israeli songs and a lot of the social activities were linked to Israeli activities, the Jewish festivals. Israel played a key function in the Jewish community.

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<sup>105</sup> Note that the sample consists of more devout respondents: 52% of the sample considered themselves to be 'Religious' or 'Somewhat religious' and the majority of the respondents (55%) classified themselves as traditional Jews and 18% as 'Reform/Progressive' (Graham and Boyd 2011). Thus, it can be expected that children who have grown up in a very secular affiliated or unaffiliated Jewish home will either only occasionally have participated in such as movement or not at all, and they are also less likely to have visited Israel with a Jewish organisation.

Daphne, who was a member of Bnei Akiva when she was young, referred to the early playful engagement of its members with Israel, which for her developed into a deeply embedded loyalty not only to Israel, but also to Jews:

I really enjoyed it as a kid. I went to all the camps, summer and winter. It was a lot of fun, just socially, it was a lot of fun...It was nice to see people from different areas. It brought people together from Manchester and from the provinces into London, so I got to make friends from elsewhere and see them regularly.

I found that many parents in my ethnographic sample put an emphasis on children joining youth groups in order to give them a Jewish background and friends and a sense of Jewish belonging. For instance, Jonah, who has been a member of the FZY, said:

I was talking about youth movements. A lot of the other secular-ish Jewish people of my age have also been to Jewish youth movements, so immediately we have that in common and it bonds us together.

It was interesting that Adinah noted that all of her closest friends are from Bnei Akiva and that they bond over such shared elements of Jewish background.

The focus on Israel by those youth groups was illustrated by Warren, a youth group leader of Bnei Akiva:

Things are very Israel-orientated, so we have little flags everywhere...some of the songs have it in them...I wouldn't say it's like a brainwashing thing. It's just that Bnei Akiva is very Israel-orientated and the kids know that. They know that that's our message, so it's not like I'll run a group and be like 'you all have to go to Israel'...I think the general message is that the best thing is to go to Israel, because that's the ultimate...Israel is our homeland<sup>106</sup>. It's where we're supposed to be.

Using an activity example, he illustrated how loyalty to Israel is fostered during their weekly meetings:

At the end of our group meetings at 5:30, everyone comes together...we have this big ceremony and basically I say 'Put your feet together', and then usually I say 'Stand to attention', and everyone just stands with their feet together...then I shout out 'Who are we?' and all the kids shout back 'Bnei Akiva'. I say it again to get all the kids really into it. I say 'What is our way of life?' I say this all in Hebrew and they answer: 'Torah and work' and then 'What is our motto?', 'The people of Israel in the land of Israel according to the Torah of Israel'. That's all very Israel, Israel, Israel, because we are Zionists...Then I say basically, 'We're going to sing the anthem of our

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<sup>106</sup> Note that most interviewees did not see Israel as their personal homeland, which concurs with findings by Aviv and Shneer or Lambert (Aviv and Shneer 2005; Lambert 2008).

movement<sup>107</sup>’, Then after that I say ‘we’ll now sing the anthem of our homeland’ and this is the Jewish national anthem, the Israeli national anthem. I say at the end ‘Ha Shem be with you’ and...’Bless you’, and then ‘Dismissed’.

To create a link to Israel, some youth movements also promote trips to Israel. For instance, Joel, who was a member of Bnei Akiva, said:

At the age of 16, we have this thing called Israel tour, where a lot of Jewish children, 16 years old, go to Israel for a month. You go with a Jewish youth movement. A lot of people join a Jewish youth movement just so that they can go on an Israel tour, because they know that this is this fantastic experience of a lifetime. If you are totally, totally unaffiliated then you won’t go. But it’s a big success of the British community that actually we can take people, who are in general not very affiliated, and they can go on this trip, and we get a lot out of it.

There are also other organisations, such as UJIA, AISH or Birthright Israel, that focus on taking youth to Israel in order to establish a connection to the country. Birthright Israel, for example, takes young Jews on a free trip to the country. Mr Scholem explained,

The idea was that young Jews have the opportunity to visit an education programme in Israel because it increases all kinds of key indicators of Jewish identity. It makes them more likely to marry Jewish, to give money to Jewish charities, to support and visit Israel. It’s a free trip. About 240,000 Jews have been to Israel for free in the last 8 to 10 years. In the UK, we’ve been working with them for about 6 years and we have taken just over 1,060 young people, who are all aged between 20 and 26. For some people it’s the first time they have Shabbat or going to the Western wall. For some of them it’s the first time to have dealt with the Holocaust in an educational capacity [they are taking them to *Yad Vashem*]...It’s fun and intensive, it brings out a lot of emotional reactions about what’s going on...It creates collective Jewish memory...The land is catered essentially to our history and our traditions and therefore a central part of Jewish upbringing is a relationship to Israel and therefore they should have that. It’s a rite of passage.

The fact that Zionist organisations and travel to Israel can create an affiliation with - and subsequent loyalty to - both Israel and other Jews was commented on by numerous respondents who had participated in them. For instance, Albert noted:

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<sup>107</sup> The anthem of Bnei Akiva is called ‘*Yad Achim*’ and it also relates to Israel as it reads: “Our homeland is the land of our Forefathers, our holy land. We have inherited her from the Might of Jacob. Our minds are immersed in the depth of her Torah, our hands are clinging to her soil” (see <http://www.bneiakiva.org/about/basics/yadAchim.asp> for details).

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You go to Israel as a teenager. Back then, it was only about drinking and having a good time with other Jewish kids, but again it's with other Jewish kids. You relate having good times to being with other Jewish kids. You go to Israel and you meet Jewish soldiers, they might tell you about their lives and their family and from then on every time you hear on the news something about the war and the soldiers or soldiers who were injured in Israel you think back to the soldiers you have met and so you feel an association and connection with Israel and with fellow Jews.

Thomas stated, in reference to his Zionist youth group:

If there was a big war, I hope I would fight in it and die. Going to FZY has paid off being brainwashed. We are a genetic ethnic group so it doesn't seem unnatural to me to have a country and I've also got some relatives there. In the same way, you'd go and protect your family; these people are my extended family, right? In the same way, why'd you fight for Britain, which I would also probably fight for. In part you feel like you are protecting the people that are your community and your genetic relations.

It should be noted that not all Jewish people that I came across felt a loyalty to Israel. Still, I found that almost all of my interviewees perceived themselves to have at least an association with Israel. Many of the participants' comments indicated that feeling a link with Israel was generally a socialised response to participation in religious and non-religious Jewish institutions. Nonetheless, there was also evidence that this sense of connection was influenced by other factors, including: having family in Israel and visiting them there, the idea of Israel as a 'safe haven' or 'insurance policy' in case anti-Semitism increases (see **Chapter 4** for details), and a perceived external identification with Israel through pro-Israel Jews and non-Jewish entities such as the British government and its citizens, the British media, and the State of Israel, which all automatically make an association between Diaspora Jews and the State of Israel. Regarding the latter, Mike asserted, "We are defined by non-Jews as Jews in the relation to the State of Israel". I found that the external identification with Israel can also lead Jews to stand up against Israel. For instance, Kenneth said,

I stand up when Israel is bombing Gaza on behalf of all Jews. I, like many others, will say 'hold on a minute, you don't do it on our behalf'. So in that sense that is where the Jewish identity comes out, in antagonism, in opposition to the mainstream identity.

In summary, British Jews' dual loyalties can make them feel on the edge of Britishness. This dual loyalty may be expressed in having two 'homes' or nations, Britain and Israel, in dual political interest, in split support for Israeli and British politics

and sports teams, and in terms of national pride for both Britain and Israel. It was illustrated that members of this group can be socialised into having a loyalty to Israel through their participation in Jewish institutions, such as synagogues or youth groups, as well as through trips to Israel that focus on establishing a link with the state. While religious streams have focused on creating an association with the Land of Israel and the representation of *Eretz Israel* as a spiritual home among members for a long time, the general religious and non-religious institutional support to establish a connection with the State of Israel among members can be suggested to be a more recent phenomenon. For example, most of the British Zionist youth groups, listed in this section, were founded after 1950, mainly in the '70s and '80s, and the widespread provision of trips to Israel has been institutionally instigated primarily since the 1990s<sup>108</sup>.

### **3.3. Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has demonstrated that members of this group can perceive themselves as different from the British majority population because they are not only British but also Jewish. Many of the respondents, although they lived in London where they were surrounded by other ethno-religious minorities, felt a sense of religious, cultural, ethnic, and national difference because of their affiliation with Judaism - pushing them towards the fringes of the in-group, the British nation. This, in turn, was argued to inform their sense of Jewishness. The differences could blend into each other, meaning some of the participants perceived their religious difference as a cultural one. The finding resonates with other research suggesting that there is an overlap between the dimensions of a social construct such as British national identity conveying the entities as being interdependent with the characterisation of one dimension being able to draw on the characterisation of another and vice versa (Meer et al. 2010).

Notably, none of the participants felt different in all four ways at the same time. Accordingly, participants still felt at the core of Britishness in one or more of the four dimensions and thus still part of the in-group; this is an interesting finding considering that there is a set of literature, which suggests that majority groups perceive minority

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<sup>108</sup> Jewish youth organisations and respective foundation year in Britain: AJ6 – 1977, BETAR – 1974, Bnei Akiva – 1936, BBYO – 1940, EZRA – 1930s, FZY – 1910, Habonim Dror – 1980, LJY-Netzer – 1940, Maccabi – 1934, Noam Masorti Youth, 1988, Netzer Olami (RSY), 1982 and Hanoar Hatzioni – 1956. Organisations that are not youth organisations providing trips to Israel and their respective foundation year in Britain: UJIA - 1996, AISH – 1993 and Birthright Israel – 1994.

groups as out-groups (Moghaddam and Taylor 1987; Brewer 1991; Judd et al. 1995; David and Turner 2011).

In details, my findings, firstly, indicated that members can feel on the religious edge because they have a different faith to the majority Christian population, and thus take part in different expressions of faith (religious observances and traditions). Their different lifestyle can lead them to feel separate from non-Jews as it can impinge on their social interactions with them, which, in turn, can inform their sense of Jewish belonging and identity. Not participating in the religious celebrations of the majority population - such as Christmas, the holiday participants in this study were asked about - or negotiating participation in them, can cause Jews to experience social dissonance with gentiles and so impact on their perception of difference and thus identity. The findings regarding members' boundary negotiation relates to previous research, such as that by Barack Fisherman, who also explores the negotiation around Christmas celebrations, but only in mixed marriages between Jews and gentiles in America (Fisherman 2004). Medding et al. also relate to the boundary negotiation with regards to Christmas in their report about American Jewish identity in mixed and conversionary marriages (Medding et al. 1999).

Overall, I conclude that social identity negotiation can be a process in which members of a Diaspora group are in dialogue with the majority society regarding the expression and thus meaning their identity should take on. Thus, the identity is informed by the Jewish traditions not followed by British gentiles and by the Christian traditions that are performed or rejected by Jews. It can be argued that even the non-performing of majority faith traditions requires negotiation of the impact of Jews' Britishness on their Jewishness and vice versa. This was illustrated by the internal discussion of members, who did not mark Christmas, about whether to send Christmas cards or 'winter wishes' cards to gentiles.

Secondly, this chapter has claimed that Jews perceive themselves on the edge culturally. I found that members are able to have an additional culture that differs from British culture. There was an indication that members perceive British culture to be individualist, which stands in opposition to their perception of Judaism as being a collectively oriented culture with a focus on the nuclear as well as extended family. Hence, many people in my sample emphasised the Jewish value of family closeness.

Connecting Judaism with family was found to be associated with the fact that the family tends to be together on the weekly and yearly high holy days. For example, the holy days can link family time with Jewish time and thus a sense of family belonging with a sense of Jewish belonging. Judaism teaches people that they do not have to believe in God in order to fulfil the commandments and thus to live a Jewish lifestyle. In fact, it teaches that Jews should practice Judaism and then faith in terms of a belief will follow (Exodus 24:3-7). While theology asserts the importance of practice in feeling Jewish, my study indicates sociologically that it is also the practice and not the faith alone that informs belonging to the Jewish group and identification with Judaism.

I have also demonstrated that there is a Jewish language that can create a notion of difference in Jews. My respondents' understanding of this language varied. For some members, mainly secular Jews and particularly those without a strong Jewish upbringing (e.g. in terms of ethno-religious practice and community involvement), the Jewish language was constituted only by the insertion of Yiddish and sometimes Hebrew words into the British English language, mainly in interaction with other Jews. My findings indicate that members do not tend to use Jewish words with gentiles because they believe these words would not have the same meaning and resonance with them. Using such words would require an explanation of the social context, which would interrupt the flow of conversation. This justification concurs with findings by Gumperz - who ethnographically studied language use by Latin Americans in America and the use of South Asian Dialects - that members of a group use certain elements of a language only with other group members whom they expect to have the same language socialisation, and so know how to contextualise and thus interpret the language codes to infer the same meaning from it (e.g. Gumperz 1982a). My work, furthermore, concurs with his in that it contends that language provides a nuanced way for members of a group to relate to one another, contributing to a sense of connection among them and in this way influencing their identification with the group. Finding that some members also use this tool with certain non-Jews who are close to them supports the conclusion that language used in social interactions assists in creating and subsequently reinforcing social connections and group belonging.

Many respondents – mainly those with more encompassing Jewish upbringings and current involvement in the community, a large proportion of whom were traditional

– defined Jewish language as comprising a wider range of elements. For example, in addition to using Jewish words, they referred to a Jewish accent, discourse style and/or gestures. A few of these respondents also mentioned departures from standard British English such as phrasing statements as questions or answering a question with another question. Even specific grammatical devices that differed from the standard British English grammatical syntax were mentioned. The Ultra-Orthodox respondents, even though they were not Hassidim, thought the language constituted mainly of Yiddish, which they used in interaction with other Ultra-Orthodox members.

These findings demonstrate that there are subtle differences in the use of the elements of the Jewish language for different types of Jews. This indicates a need for research to attend more closely to the nuanced differences in the use of language by sub-groups of diasporas. For example, Tannen’s ethnographic work demonstrates that there is a conversation style among Jews in New York consisting of “pitch, amplitude, intonation, voice quality, lexical and syntactic choice, rate of speech and turn-taking as well as what is said and how discourse cohesion is achieved” (Tannen 1981: 166). My research builds on Tannen’s by illustrating that Jews make use of an even wider range of Jewish language elements than identified in his asserted conversation style (incorporated in my work in the analysis of the discourse style) and that the usage of language elements varies among members according to the extent of their Jewish background, community involvement and traditionalism. In the end, it should be remembered that participants mainly used the language among themselves, suggesting that they regard it to be part of a different culture that is separate to British culture.

Thirdly, Jews can perceive themselves to be on the edge of Britishness ethnically. I have illustrated that many participants perceived themselves to be not fully British because they did not have British ancestry. The importance of ancestry in defining one’s group affiliation is associated with the fact that a person’s Jewish status is mainly defined by heredity (i.e. ancestry) according to the religion and most Jewish institutions. This indicates that being Jewish is, on the whole, regarded as a hereditary identity. I have, furthermore, demonstrated that a greater proportion of participants perceived themselves to be part of a ‘racial’ minority and able to experience racism. This was suggested to be associated with the finding that members are often socialised through

Jewish institutions into an awareness of continuous anti-Semitism. This notion of ethnic difference was also informed by mainstream non-Jewish institutions such as through Holocaust education in schools. Accordingly, it is not only Jewish institutions but also non-Jewish institutions that can encourage Jews to feel different. These notions of ethnic difference from the majority population can have impact on members' sense of group belonging and thus Jewishness.

Fourthly, Jews can understand themselves to be on the edge nationally in terms of having dual loyalties, for Britain and Israel, which was sometimes even expressed in having pride for both. Other participants referred only to having a link to Israel, which put them on the national edge. Some of these participants had a negative connection with Israel, which they expressed by opposing some or all of Israel's political actions. In this way, these participants counter-associated themselves vis-à-vis the mainstream support for Israel. The finding, which I term, 'an oppositional association with Israel' is also described by Landy, who studies the oppositional movement of Israel-critical Jews in Britain (Landy 2011). Like me, he argues that this oppositional association with Israel can impact Jewish belonging and identity. Further, I explained that there is a focus within Judaism on establishing a link and by extension loyalty to the land and the State of Israel among members. While religious streams have for a long time focused on Israel as a spiritual home for Jews, the general religious and non-religious institutional support to establish a connection with the State of Israel among members can be suggested to be a more recent phenomenon. It was interesting to find that non-Jewish entities (e.g. states like Britain and Israel, British people and the national media) can also assist members in creating a link to the State of Israel. Some participants perceived that these entities crudely connect Jews with the country. Thus, members can perceive themselves to be externally identified as having a link with Israel, which can, in turn, influence the creation of a personal association with the state.

Accordingly, this chapter has illustrated that there are factors affecting a sense of difference and informing a sense of Jewishness that have been supported by the religion, with its observances and traditions, for millennia. There are, however, more recently-introduced influences that are supported not only by Jewish institutions, but also by non-Jewish ones, such as the Holocaust commemoration. Thus, the idea that Jewish

### *Chapter 3*

identity has been determined only religiously in the same way continuously over centuries was shown to be not the whole truth.

In sum, a notion of difference can be suggested to be essential for members of this group to perceive a sense of Jewishness. Based on the findings, I argue that the four edges of Britishness also represent four dimensions of their group belonging. The first dimension is the religious one. Being religiously Jewish and thus religiously part of the group is informed by following Jewish traditions and observances (i.e. the lifestyle), which can be followed in an ethnic way, as well as by negotiating the participation in expressions of the Christian faith. The second dimension is cultural. Being culturally Jewish and belonging to the group in this way relates to having Jewish values and a Jewish language. The third dimension is ethnic. Belonging ethnically to the group is informed by having Jewish ancestry and a perception of being part of a 'racial' minority that can experience anti-Semitism. The last component is the national one. Being nationally part of the group is founded in an association with, or loyalty to, Israel.

## 4. Vicarious Group Trauma

**Chapter 3** illustrated that Jews are taught that their group has experienced continuous and substantive anti-Semitism over time, ranging from negative attitudes or hostility to organised persecution. This chapter argues that members can relate to such traumas of the past as if they happened to them. In this way, these traumas are able to influence their everyday experiences and through that inform their sense of Jewishness.

There is a focus in sociology on the intra- and inter-generational transmittance of traumas (e.g. Alexander et al. 2004; Eyerman et al. 2011). Most of this research is based on secondary literature and focuses on the transmission of trauma memory in terms of the historical knowledge of group trauma and its impact on the identity of the collective. In this chapter, I extend this work by studying the symptoms of traumatisation among members, who have not gone through the group trauma themselves. I argue that in this way transmitted traumas can become constitutive of members' group identity. To do so, I develop the theory of *vicarious group trauma*. Vicarious group trauma is defined in this chapter as a life- or safety-threatening event or abuse that happened to some members of a social group but is felt by other members as their own experience because of their personal affiliation with the group. When many members of a group feel as if they experienced the group trauma themselves by having symptoms of traumatisation or can be attested to have those symptoms, we speak of vicarious group trauma.

The chapter will test the theory by exploring through the methods of observation and in-depth interviewing vicarious traumatisation in the everyday lives of Jews in Britain, thereby indicating how vicarious group trauma can become part of their identity<sup>109</sup>. I establish that vicarious group trauma can create anxiety and elicit perceptions of threat and, by extension, hypervigilance. I show how an institutional focus on threat can accentuate and reinforce these latter two traumatisation symptoms and thus vicarious group trauma. I also explain that vicarious group trauma can lead to

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<sup>109</sup> Note that not all the participants explicitly mentioned the feeling of having experienced traumas by proxy of a previous generation(s) and related to those traumas as being constitutive of their identity. However, since a lot of the subjects did state this, I can infer that there is vicarious trauma among British Jews and that it forms part of the collective.

response behaviours such as helping threatened minorities. The fact that traumas of the past can set into motion mechanisms in the present confirms that the trauma can be experienced vicariously. I argue that the mechanisms elicited reinforce the importance of the trauma for group members by making it more immediate for them. Accordingly, group traumas of the past interweave and interpenetrate with members' current lives and can thereby become constitutive of their group identity.

#### **4.1. A Theory of Vicarious Group Trauma**

There has been a focus in recent sociological research on the exploration of trauma transmission. Most of such research, however, uses secondary literature to examine how trauma memory in the form of historical facts and experiences of trauma is transmitted to members who have not personally experienced the trauma, and can become part of their association with the group and in this way binds them together rather than disconnecting them (Assmann 2006; Eyerman 2011; Eyerman et al. 2011). Zerubavel, for instance, theorises that “being social presupposes the ability to experience events that happened to groups and communities to which we belong long before we joined them as if they were part of our own past” (Zerubavel 1996: 290). The authors of the edited volume ‘Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity’ similarly assert that “a cultural trauma occurs when members of a collectivity feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their group consciousness, marking their memories forever” (Alexander et al. 2004: 1). To construct a *cultural trauma*, the memory of the traumatic event needs to be part of the cultural and public discourse and represented as being destructive and threatening to the existence of the group, its culture, and members' personal identity. Their book applies the model in a series of case studies, including the Holocaust and slavery in the United States (Alexander et al., 2004).

There is also a small set of qualitative and quantitative literature that analyses the Holocaust as a cultural trauma specifically in the second- and third-generation offspring of Holocaust survivors (Kellerman 2001; Litvak-Hirsch and Bar-On 2006; Scharf 2007), also in comparison to the offspring of non-survivors (Lazar et al. 2004). The survey findings by Lazar et al. (2008) suggest that there are sociocultural mechanisms at work in Israel - such as Holocaust education and the country's perceived

role as providing security for Jewish people - that influence the third-generation offspring of both Holocaust survivors and non-survivors to perceive the Holocaust as a cultural trauma<sup>110</sup> (Lazar et al. 2008).

Indeed, there are various social mechanisms that can be responsible for the transmission of trauma memory. Research by scholars such as Alexander et al. and Eyerman demonstrates the importance of *carrier groups* (e.g. the mass media) in imparting trauma to members who have not experienced it directly (Alexander et al. 2004; Eyerman 2011). In this way the trauma becomes part of the group identity and can therefore also change a group's "future identity in fundamental and irrevocable ways" (Alexander 2004: 1). Carrier groups "articulate the significance of and represent the trauma for the collective....making it available for communication and shared understanding...They help transform emotional responses into words and images that can be dispersed and remembered" (Eyerman 2011: 27). Hirsch, for instance, examines how the trauma of the Holocaust is transmitted through the arts to the second generation; in her case through photography (Hirsch 2008). This scholar developed the concept of *postmemory* to describe "the relationship of the second generation to powerful, often traumatic, experiences that preceded their births but that were nevertheless transmitted to them so deeply as to seem to constitute memories in their own right" (Hirsch 2008: 103).

Landsberg emphasises the importance of mass cultural technologies - producing a unique transmission of images and narratives about the past – in making it possible to take on memories of events through which people did not live (Landsberg 1997; Landsberg 2004). The sensuous engagement that experiential museums or technological developments (e.g. the mass dissemination of film) provides enables secondary memory formation. Landsberg referred to these memories as *prosthetic memories* arguing that while "the traumatic experiences are not originally based", they are "nevertheless experiences with one's own body...and as such, become part of one's personal archive of experience, informing not only one's subjectivity, but one's relationship to the present and future tenses" (Landsberg 2004:66).

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<sup>110</sup> These recent quantitative findings resonate with analyses from earlier studies based on secondary literature such as Ben-Amos' and Bet-El's research about collective trauma remembrance in the form of memorial ceremonies in Israeli schools and its impact on Jewish national identity (Ben-Amos and Bet-El 1999).

While the sociological literature has focused on the transmittance of trauma memory on the group level, the psychiatric and psychology literature has concentrated on exploring trauma transmission at the individual level, understanding the term trauma simply “as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind” (Caruth 1996: 3-4; Eyerman 2011: 19). Trauma is an emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma that is stored in a person’s long-term memory and is so strong as to bypass rationality and affect the person’s cognition and emotions. Such research has looked at how the trauma can be transmitted to another person. Studies such as by MacCann and Pearlman found that trauma may be experienced by people who come into contact with trauma victims over a prolonged period of times, e.g. family members or therapists, as they are able to suffer signs and symptoms of traumatisation similar to those of the victim (McCann and Pearlman 1990). They termed the process *vicarious traumatisation*. The outcome has also been labelled *secondary trauma* by others such as (Figley 1983). For example, there is evidence that children of Holocaust survivors (Danieli 1985; Prince 2009) and Vietnam combat veterans (Motta et al. 1998) can experience social and psychological difficulties that are symptomatic of posttraumatic stress disorder. While the psychiatric and psychology literature demonstrates on the individual level how the actual trauma can be transmitted to another person who has not lived through the traumatic experience themselves by analysing the symptoms of traumatisation that they display, there is a gap in the sociological literature exploring empirically on the group level, vicarious traumatisation in everyday live.

As a response, I outline a theory of *vicarious group trauma*. Vicarious group trauma is defined in this chapter as a life- or safety-threatening event or abuse that happened to some members of a social group but is felt by other members as their own experience as they personally identify with the trauma on an emotional level because of their shared group membership. In this way, the transmitted trauma can become part of their group identity. As mentioned above, sociological and psychological literature already suggests it is the resulting emotional experience of the life- or safety-threatening event or abuse, despite not having suffered the trauma themselves, which creates trauma memory. For example, Landsberg, cited above, argues that people who have not lived through trauma can still adopt its memory through the personal emotional experience of empathy in response to the communicated trauma knowledge (Landsberg 2009). I

extend this theory by arguing that through individuals' personal association with the trauma as a member of the group, the historical fact of trauma or the communicated knowledge of the life- or safety-threatening event or abuse can become an emotional trauma experience, - an emotional wound - for individuals, who have not directly experienced it. The historical knowledge is tagged with powerful emotions so that it becomes an experience for them, and in this way, the transmitted trauma can impact on their emotions and perceptions of the world. When many members can be attested, or they themselves attest, to have this emotional experience associated with the trauma, the personal visceral trauma becomes a shared trauma; in other words vicarious group trauma.

The actual trauma memory can differ between members who have gone through the trauma themselves and those who have not, but both types of members may, nonetheless, have an emotional experience of the remembered trauma, which can be felt in similar ways. A personal association with the transmitted trauma knowledge on the emotional level as a result of group membership can be a common phenomenon among members because they are able to feel that the trauma could have happened to them as well. This emotional immediacy makes the memory powerful enough to elicit strong emotions and perceptions.

Group membership is crucial in the construction of vicarious group trauma. For example, a non-Jewish person visiting the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC may start feeling a connection with the trauma and adopt the prosthetic memory as described by Landsberg (Landsberg 2004). It may, however, be unlikely that the memory will be strong enough to result in secondary traumatisation - by having an emotional experience that allows them to feel as if they themselves have been subject to the traumatic experience and results in symptoms of traumatisation – if they have no direct ethno-religious association with the group; or as noted above not spent time with a survivor of that trauma. So while the historical fact of trauma, which may also involve an emotional response providing the memory with strength, can be taken on by anyone without any direct personal relation to the traumatic event, or the person(s) it happened to, the actual traumatisation with its symptoms as a result of the communicated trauma knowledge and accordingly the viscerally felt traumatic experience may not be created.

As follows, vicarious group trauma can act within and across many generations and become part of members' identity. The theory distinguishes itself clearly from other theories on trauma transmittance such as Hirsch's concept of postmemory as the focus of its conceptualization rests on the transmittance of the actual trauma in terms of an emotional traumatic experience rather than of the historical knowledge of trauma (Hirsch 2008).

Reviewing the literature, we find that there is a research gap studying secondary group traumatisations on the micro-level. Thus, ethnographic research is needed to study not only how vicarious group traumatisations manifest themselves among individual members impacting on their identification with the group, but also how the traumatisations are informed and sustained.

While there have been overall interesting analyses of how past Jewish traumas can be a part of group identity and can be effective in sustaining that identity (e.g. Freud 1932), there is little published research about group trauma among British Jews and its effect. Cooke examines how debates over the perceived appropriateness of Holocaust memorial sites in London structure various discourses concerning Anglo-Jewish identity (Cooke 2000). Another study, by Berman, looks at Holocaust commemorations in London and discusses the relationship between the commemoration and unity formation, suggesting that associated rituals and collective mourning help to bind this community together (Berman 2004). While both are helpful in shedding light on the importance of trauma remembrance in the creation and perpetuation of Jewish identity in Britain, neither of these or other studies engaged in primary research methods such as ethnography. Thus, this work uses in-depth interviewing and observations to contribute to the existing research by exploring vicarious traumatisations among members of the British Jewish community and its impact on Jewish identification.

#### **4.2. Remembered Traumas**

At the outset of this investigation into the impact of vicarious group trauma on Jewish identity in Britain, it is imperative to explore which traumas British Jews remember. I found that participants often remembered traumas in which their family members died due to or survived anti-Semitism. Over half of my interview sample mentioned close or distant family members enduring anti-Semitism in the past. These remembered traumas

were mainly more recent ones, such as the Eastern European Pogroms, the Holocaust, and the persecution of Jews in Argentina and Iraq. For example, Modern Orthodox Evan, whose parents fled from Baghdad, noted, “I have grown up in a Baghdadi family...you are conscious of the fact that there have been terrible times for Jews in Iraq”. Another interviewee, Edward, showed me photos of his grandparents, who had to flee Eastern Europe because of the Pogroms, whilst telling me about their ordeal to come to this country. A few respondents also remembered earlier family traumas, such as the persecution of relatives in Portugal and Spain. For example, when unaffiliated Brianne defined her identity, she argued:

It is about having some built-in understanding where Jews have come from, what’s happening to the Jewish populations over the centuries and identifying with that...knowing that one branch of my family were expelled from Spain in the 15<sup>th</sup> century for being Jewish. I have quite a lot of Sephardies in my family so I know that that part of my family suffered persecution as far as that.

In narratives about their lives, however, such interviewees referred not only to the trauma experiences of their own family members but also to the trauma of the group as a whole. For instance, Erica, whose parents survived the Holocaust and became refugees in England, felt Jewish because of her family’s history of persecution. Still, she referred to the impact the Holocaust trauma had on her in general terms:

You’ll find that’s quite a common trait in the next generation of people who have suffered trauma that they become anxious...There’s a part of me that separates me from others that is the Jewish part of me that defines very much my reaction to situations...I suppose in any political situation, there’s always in the back of your mind, what is the Jewish angle to it. How does it affect being Jewish? It has been quite horrible with all the stuff going on in the Middle East. You do feel quite sort of anxious.

The Reform interviewee Richard mentioned anti-Semitism in association with his anxiety about his physical safety in Britain and argued that it reminded him of the history of anti-Semitism, noting the Holocaust, the Eastern European Pogroms as well as the following memory of his family trauma: “My family had to leave Limerick in Ireland due to a pogrom in the early twentieth century, which was a religious-based pogrom, based on a local Catholic priest”. The Limerick Pogrom was actually an economic boycott waged against the Jewish community from 1904 to 1906, which led the community to leave town (Keogh 1998).

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Note that interviewees also remembered traumas even if their family did not directly experience them and most importantly they could also remember them as their own trauma. The young unaffiliated Jim, who lived removed from the Jewish community and did not have any family involved in Holocaust, stated: 'They [the Nazis] killed us.' Or, Modern Orthodox Ophra, who was in her 30s and whose in-laws went through the Holocaust and lost everything they owned, offered another example: 'I am Jewish. The history of Jewish persecution is my history...The Nazis have tried to kill us. This is part of me'. As the examples demonstrate many participants used subjective and personal pronouns such as 'I', 'us' and 'we' when talking about their group's traumatic experiences, already indicating the vicariousness of the trauma for them.

Jewish traumas formed part of the lives of all the interviewees cited above. This was also suggested by the visual symbols of such traumas found in their houses. In fact, there have been visual symbols of Jewish traumas in a greater majority of homes - even in Jewish organisations such as synagogues and schools - that I have visited. Examples I observed in Jewish homes include photos of family members who died in or survived traumas, framed reports, transcripts, art (i.e. sculptures, paintings or posters relating to persecution or survival) and books relating to traumas, especially the Holocaust. This indicates that trauma is remembered in - and therefore part of - everyday Jewish life.

In general, the remembered traumas varied from discrimination and hostility against Jews to anti-Semitic attacks and organised persecution throughout history. For instance, Alonso illustrated the encompassing content of vicarious traumatisation as follows:

Trauma is the persecution, the discrimination, the accusations, because I think that is connected to an ancestral aspect of my history. You see so the trauma is actually connected to a historical part of being part of a group. So, for instance, let's say that Hitler would have actually won. I'm telling you today that I wouldn't be here talking to you so it can actually not be traumatic for me, but that's also why it is.

Interestingly, there was a subtle difference in trauma memory between secular and engaged affiliated participants. Secular Jews focused more exclusively on the memory of the Holocaust, whereas engaged affiliated participants tended to remember the Holocaust in association with earlier traumas, such as the enslavement in Egypt and their exodus over a hundred years later, the destruction of the First and Second Temple,

the rededication of the holy Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, or the trauma of being nearly annihilated in the ancient Persian Empire. My findings suggest that engaged affiliated members' longer trauma memory can be related to their observation of holy days associated with those earlier traumas in the home, synagogues and Jewish (Sunday) schools. The enslavement in Egypt and the subsequent exodus of Jews is commemorated at *Pesach*, the first and second destruction of the Temple is remembered on the *9th of Av*, the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem is commemorated in the festival of *Chanukah*, and the trauma of nearly being annihilated in the ancient Persian Empire is commemorated at *Purim*. For example, the unaffiliated Claire, who was in her 20's and didn't have any close family experiencing the Holocaust, noted:

It [meaning Jewish trauma] started with like the blood libels, Pogroms in Eastern Europe and in a way like we are taught [in Jewish educational institutions] as if it's always led up to the Holocaust...They [teachers] tell you Jewish persecution will never end and that others are always out to get you.

Thus, the communication of past trauma can inform the personalization of the trauma memory in terms of creating an awareness that one could have also suffered the trauma because of one's group membership assisting in creating a vicariously felt trauma experience.

In contrast, remembrance of the Holocaust among all types of participants is not unexpected considering the focus placed on the Holocaust in Jewish and non-Jewish education as well as mainstream culture such as movies, documentaries and exhibitions about the Holocaust. For instance, Jim, quoted above, who went to a non-Jewish school, said: "I did my A-level coursework on the persecution of Jews in the past 2000 years. Every country that I go to on our holiday, my mum used to take me to the Holocaust museum there, every single one. So I have been in Paris, Washington, New York, Rome, all over".

Lastly, it is interesting that the remembered traumas are predominantly not British. Only a few interviewees - and no observation participants - mentioned traumas that occurred in Britain, such as the massacres at London and York (1189 and respectively 1190), the trauma of their forced exodus in 1290, or the Battle of Cable Street (4 October 1936). This last was a protest - leading to a riot - of the anti-Semitic

British Union of Fascists led by Oswald Mosley through the heavily Jewish East End of London. Had Mosley ascended to power with his anti-Semitic party during the Second World War, it can be expected that he would have formed alliances with Germany, which would have meant Jewish persecution in Britain. One of the few respondents who referred to this last example was Daphne, who noted:

I was smuggled onto a television programme...They'd got Oswald Mosley on as an interviewee. Oswald Mosley is Britain's great fascist...He led a Fascist movement in the 1930s called the Black Shirts. During the Second World War he was jailed for being a fascist. He was presented as this man with slightly odd ideas who believes in a united Europe...I got up and said, 'if this man had got his way I wouldn't be here today'.

Talking about the relative disregard of British traumas with a young Modern Orthodox man at one of my Sabbath observations, he added: "You are right. No one remembers the Mosley riot and how quickly it could have turned around for us here in Britain". This indicates that members remember the traumas of their group selectively. The following section will demonstrate how selectively remembered traumas are part of the daily lives of Jews in Britain and in this way inform Jewish identity.

### **4.3. Vicarious Traumatization**

Having identified what kind of traumas members of this group remember, I will now illustrate how those traumas can have an impact on their lives. I argue that they can elicit anxiety and create perceptions of threat, which can shade into hypervigilance as a response to threat indicators. I also claim that an institutional focus on threat can reinforce threat perceptions and hypervigilance. Lastly, I argue that the emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma can lead members to engage in behaviours to pre-empt perceived threats to their group as well as in charitable behaviours. My claim is that through these mechanisms, trauma can inform the respective group identity. In addition, these mechanisms can reinforce and accentuate the trauma and its importance by making the trauma more immediate for Jews. Overall, the analysis of those mechanisms will validate that the traumas are vicariously experienced.

While I recognise and will illustrate that these mechanisms are interconnected and can reinforce each other, I will explore them separately in order to provide analytical leverage. Note that the mechanisms elicited in response to the personalised and thus

emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma will be analysed independently of whether participants have family members that survived or were killed in Jewish traumas. This is because, as the last section has illustrated, interviewees who had family members involved in traumas did not only refer to the trauma of their family in narratives about their lives, but also the traumas of the whole group. Moreover, I did not find a significant difference in the mechanisms elicited by vicarious group trauma between the participants with family histories of Jewish trauma and those without them.

#### **4.3.1. Anxiety**

Traumas, especially more recent ones like the Holocaust and the Eastern European pogroms, elicited in many participants a feeling of anxiety; they felt anxious about having to undergo another trauma in the future because of their Jewishness. This trauma anxiety, in turn, informed their identification with the group. Anxiety is defined in this study as a deep-seated emotional state of discomfort and apprehension about future uncertainties. Whereas fear is an emotional response to a definite or known threat and as such takes on an object to be afraid about, anxiety is a state of uneasiness in response to an imprecise or even an unknown threat.

For the Modern Orthodox interviewee Johanna, who did not have close family relations dying in or surviving the Holocaust, the Holocaust in conjunction with earlier traumas, evoked anxiety, which informed her sense of group belonging:

I can't really disassociate the Holocaust from my images of anti-Semitism throughout Jewish history...it's been up and down. Sometimes we've been absolutely great like now in Britain. Jews are at a height of doing fine, and then we'll be the lowest of low, and there will be crusades or a pogrom or something...Anyone who is Jewish can be a victim of anti-Semitism. So it makes me feel bonded with them [Jews] in that way.

This interviewee's trauma anxiety was also connected with hypervigilance through the perceived threat of anti-Semitism - and all as a result of vicarious group trauma:

It makes me more cautious on the streets...I have an absolute terror of being hurt...it separates me from the non-Jewish world and strengthens and connects me more with the Jewish people. It also pushes me more towards Jewish people and away from non-Jewish people. It makes me more suspicious and more distrustful.

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Thus, this quote highlights how the mechanisms in response to this type of trauma memory can interrelate and the importance of group membership in experiencing vicarious traumatisation and thus vicarious group trauma.

Johanna, furthermore, asserted that her husband, who was present at the interview, shares her experiences and explained that they are constitutive of his sense of Jewishness as well:

[He believes] there have been ups and downs for them [Blacks] but generally it's gone from awful, awful to a bit better, a bit better, a bit better...The life now for a black person is probably better in the West, in America and in Britain than it was a 100 year ago...That isn't the case with the Jewish history...sometimes we are advisers to the king and sometimes we are some the scum of the earth. The fact that over so many centuries it's been like that, it makes you think that...maybe it's that we are almost the same as them but a bit different because most Jews are white.

Adena, an interviewee from the same denomination, referred to the fact that, despite not having any family directly involved in the Holocaust, she still feels a sense of anxiety:

I'm third generation English, but I think that, even though I was lucky enough not to have had my family - like my close family - directly affected by the Holocaust, I think that you can never lose sight of the fact that I think you're living in a country at the mercy of that country. I don't know whether that's just paranoia on the part of Jewish people or whether it's real, but I live in a very benevolent country; I'm very lucky. Could that change in the future? Yes...Jews in Germany were very comfortable before the War, there was no one more German than the Jews, completely integrated into society, and I don't know if we'll ever lose sight of the feeling that times could change, and that we can't depend on it.

It is interesting that this interviewee considered interpreting trauma anxiety as paranoia. Perhaps she did this to offset the intensity of such a deep-seated emotion, which could indicate the strength of the impact vicarious group trauma can have.

Even the unaffiliated Alonso - who grew up in Argentina and had family members suffering anti-Semitism there - claimed that his group shares an inherent trauma anxiety, which he argued is related to him being connected with other Jews in the past and present.

There is a sense of national anxiety in Jews...If someone would say something very bad about Israel; I would react in a different manner than you are going to react, because obviously you feel immediately what is actually touched is something that...is more in the limbic system. That is

where the emotions are located and associated with a much more primitive way of being. A comment like that is going to touch the trauma that has gone on for 2000 years, so I cannot react like you.

This quote also illustrates that anxiety can be associated with other asserted mechanisms, in this case the perceived threat of a future trauma. The fact that this particular unaffiliated interviewee related his trauma anxiety to the continuous persecution of Jews over the years makes him an exception to a strong pattern; most secular Jews in my ethnographic sample related their anxiety to the Holocaust alone. This can be associated with the fact that secular members do not tend to follow any or many ethno-religious rituals related to the commemoration of earlier traumas, but are exposed to diverse information about the Holocaust in their daily lives, such as through family, the media or schools, as indicated in **Chapter 3**.

Whereas some participants, such as those quoted above, expressed anxiety in relation to vicarious group trauma very overtly, others expressed their anxiety more subtly in narratives about anti-Semitism or Israel. For instance, when I asked Steve whether it is still important to fight against anti-Semitism, he answered: “It’s imperative...because it’s based on forethoughts [of another trauma]”. Similarly, Rudolph said when talking about anti-Semitism in Britain:

You can never discount that [meaning another trauma happening to Jews]. One should never discount that. There have been problems for Jews in the last few years in England...Bad things do happen to Jews in England. Synagogues are being firebombed. People are being attacked in the street...Will it ever go back to 12<sup>th</sup> century York?

In response to the interview question ‘why it is still important to fight against anti-Semitism’, Larry, for example, answered:

To prevent that anything like the Holocaust can happen again. To prevent anti-Semites getting support. If Jews don’t speak out against it, people just think it’s ok. And then other people can do it as well. And then something like the Holocaust or an attempt will happen again.

Interestingly, a majority of respondents expressed their trauma anxiety in view of possible safety options; namely having Israel as their “safe haven” (Zachariah) or “insurance policy” (Hugh), a place that would provide Jews with security in the event of another trauma. For instance, the Progressive Orah noted, “Israel is important to me because we need a country to go to in case times get worse again”. Or, Josie, who was

in her twenties, claimed: “If there would be another emergency, I know Israel would always be there for me and I would go and live there”. Even Jonah, who did not have any direct Holocaust link and who was less involved in the community, felt comforted by the existence of Israel:

I feel more secure with the fact that I have this insurance policy of Israel...Every Jew can go to Israel, no questions will be asked. They get citizenship immediately<sup>111</sup>. They allowed in a million Russians in 1991 and these Russian Jews were very privileged...When people try to get rid of it, it makes me very uncomfortable. It makes me think actually when there were problems in Ethiopia or Yemen...they [Israelis] actually airlifted them in...The Israeli air force went in and got them out...I like having Israel for that reason.

This particular finding should be read in light of the historical context that political Zionism used the Holocaust and Jews’ existing trauma anxiety as a justification for the foundation of Israel<sup>112</sup> (Novick, 2004).

In summation, this section has shown that trauma endured by Jews from previous generations can elicit anxiety among members in the present. While some participants expressed this anxiety openly and directly, others referred to it in more subtle ways. Perhaps the latter participants did not want to be perceived as being oversensitive.

#### **4.3.2. Perceived Threat**

Trauma can sensitise people to perceive potential dangers in situations or things in their environment. Accordingly, I found that many participants perceived threats from gentiles or non-Jewish entities based on the traumas their group had to endure in the past. Some participants perceived danger in the form of prospective actions from states such as Iran or terrorist groups such as Hamas. They drew on evidence from previous Jewish traumas to validate their perceptions, suggesting that threat perceptions are fuelled by vicariously experienced group traumas. For example, the young Modern Orthodox Alon, without close relatives having experience the Holocaust, opined:

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<sup>111</sup> The Law of Return is legislation enacted by the Israeli government in 1950 and amended in 1970 in response to Jewish persecution over the centuries, particularly the Holocaust. It gives all persons of Jewish ancestry (e.g. even grandchildren of Jews) and their spouses the right to move to Israel and get Israeli citizenship (Richmond 1993).

<sup>112</sup> Political Zionism saw Israel as the solution to anti-Semitism, particularly in Europe, as it provided Jews with their own country. Theodor Herzl, who is regarded the father of modern political Zionism and as such founder of the State of Israel, saw this state as a ‘political haven’ for the group (Herzl 1967; Herzl 1986).

I get worried about what's happening in Iran... There's going to be another threat to Jewish people and it is how Iran promises to wipe out Israel off the map... It probably just means that I am paranoid... X-million Jews would be killed for no reason like in the Holocaust... being Jewish and having that knowledge of history and knowledge of persecution... it does add an extra dimension of worries in the equation.

Furthermore, several participants perceived anti-Semitism due to Israel's domestic policy with regards to the occupied territories as threatening because it reminded them of traumas experienced by their group in the past. Participants' expressed worries about a perceived increase in anti-Semitism following the airstrikes and ground invasion in Gaza in December 2008. This threat perception was often expressed very subtly in responses to the interview question about whether it is important to fight against anti-Semitism. For example, Robin first distanced himself from the notion that it was still important to fight against anti-Semitism by asserting that he does not think the Holocaust could happen again: "I am not worried that I will be physically in danger in this country". However, later in the interview when he talked about the recent Gaza conflict, it suddenly appeared that Robin did have a threat perception, a threat that was for him connected to the Holocaust and to even more recent attacks on Jews, such as the Mumbai attack on the Lubavitch family in November 2008<sup>113</sup>:

It [anti-Semitism] doesn't make me feel massively insecure as a Jew in Britain. It doesn't feel it's at that stage 'yet'. Only very, very recently have I become more personally worried because I think during the Gaza conflict some of the rhetoric became quite scary. I do occasionally worry about security in Jewish buildings... At some point there probably will be a terrorist attack on a Jewish target in Britain... It will happen... In Mumbai, they attacked the Lubavitch home... We are not anywhere near that [the Holocaust]... I worry what's gonna happen in Israel and how that's gonna impact on Jews... I do support the CST<sup>114</sup> financially.

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<sup>113</sup> The Rabbi Gavriel and Rivkah Holtzberg, the directors of Chabad-Lubavitch of Mumbai, were killed during the terrorist attack by Islamist terrorists on their centre in Mumbai on November 26 2008.

<sup>114</sup> The CST is the Community Security trust. It is a charitable organisation funded by the Jewish community to provide representation and advice for the community on matters of security and anti-Semitism; e.g. provision of a yearly anti-Semitic discourse and incidents reports. Its aim is to protect it from "bigotry, anti-Semitism and terrorism" (CST 2011). This organisation provides physical security, training and advice for the protection of British Jews. It provides security advice without charge to any person in charge of Jewish schools, synagogues or communal organisations. It also monitors anti-Semitic activities and incidents and represents British Jewry to Police, Government and media on anti-Semitism and security. This organisations "believes that the fight against anti-Semitism and terrorism is an integral part of safeguarding... [the community] against extremism and hatred" (CST 2011).

Robin's attempt to distance himself from a perception of threat in association with the vicarious group trauma indicates that he consciously understands that such a mechanism can be elicited in response to this memory. His apparent inability to prevent himself from experiencing it points to the power of this personalised trauma memory.

Moreover, in several conversations perceived threat of another trauma for Jews was expressed in a very offhand manner. For instance, after a Sabbath lunch in the beginning of 2009, a Modern Orthodox male in his early twenties talked about wanting to '*make aliyah*' (i.e. move to Israel). He spoke mainly about the positive aspects of living in Israel, but, surprisingly, while getting ready to leave, he added: "It's getting dangerous here. Anti-Semitic attacks are increasing in Britain and all around the world. Look at France, all the Jews are leaving...They move to Israel". Without vicarious group trauma it would be unlikely for such a strong statement to be asserted. Considering that the Gaza conflict had erupted not long before and that members in the community talked about the increase in anti-Semitism due to Israel's military actions, this particular threat response is understandable<sup>115</sup>.

Or, at a Habonim (Modern Orthodox youth organisation) group meeting around the same time, one of the leaders, a Modern Orthodox male about to come of age, mentioned that he wanted to move to Israel. He explained to me that he could not do so yet because he had to be an example for the non-Jewish population to decrease anti-Semitism. In his view, this was particularly important in the British political climate of the time, because anti-Semitism was on the rise in response to Israel's domestic policy towards Gaza. In response to the question how he came to have this perception of threat, he replied that his parents, particularly when coming together with their friends, talk about the dangers of anti-Semitism, also in view of the Holocaust.

Moreover, when talking about previous traumas, some interviewees made a link to talk about current threats to Jews, which demonstrates the association between the two even more clearly:

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<sup>115</sup> The quote must be put into context that there has been a focus in the community on anti-Zionism being anti-Semitic (see Klug 2003b; Cohen and Lerman 2008 for further details). Many affiliated participants referred to anti-Zionist accusations as being anti-Semitic. Many of the secular participants, particularly the unaffiliated ones, mentioned that there is also a concerted effort to portray purely anti-Zionist rhetoric as anti-Semitism by Zionist organisations and its supporters. Some mentioned that this is done in order to increase support for Israel among British Jewry. For instance, Kenneth noted, "one of the favourite accusations of Zionism against non-Jews, who are opposed to Zionism or support the Palestinians, is that they are anti-Semitic".

## *Vicarious Group Trauma*

I think about the Pogroms of my grandfather. If somebody already has a critical view about something important for a Jew, immediately you think it's unfair. The meaning to you and to me is going to be different; the historical involvement is different (Ben)

We have that [the Holocaust] in common. Innately you feel threatened, we know the history of the Jewish people and it's hard for the Jewish people; they've always had problems...In every generation it happens, we have had Hitler and the Nazis, now we think there's a growing threat whether it's the BNP or Islamic Extremism coming out publically saying they will kill the Jews, for example. There's this feeling there and you can't really ignore it (Josie)

It also came to my attention that members often look out for signs of threat to their group - such as negative news about Israel or anti-Semitism - in the mainstream newspapers or in online media. For instance, Anthony, whose family has been in the country for centuries, and subsequently would not be expected to have a threat perception, expressed his perception in this way:

If you are Jewish, you look out for what they write about Jews. If they write something bad about Israel, you just see it. Such news stands out to you. It wouldn't stand out to you [non-Jews].

Anthony felt that Jews were - as he called it - "hardwired" to notice such reports or comments because of their personal and thus emotional association with the trauma memory.

Some interviewees noted that this threat perception also made them sensitive to the way gentiles talk about Jews or topics relating to them in their presence. Accordingly, a perception of threat can be expressed in threat sensitivity and as the next section will show can also shade into hypervigilance. For instance, the unaffiliated Eric, who grew up with his mother and two aunts, who all survived concentration camps, noted:

You just hear when people talk about Israel or Jews. It's like you're always on guard. You always want to know whether people are anti-Semitic; whether there's a threat for us. It's in us. History has taught us to be on the lookout.

Negatively perceived comments about the group or Jewish issues, which were told by gentiles or written in the broadsheet press, as well as online, were often interpreted by participants as a sign of anti-Semitic sentiments or an increase of it amongst non-Jews

and an indicator of threat to Jews<sup>116</sup>. This form of expressed threat perception was illustrated in one of Adena's comments:

Jews are very conscious of anything negative or high profile about anybody who is Jewish. For example, Bernard Madoff...Immediately non-Jews will think 'he's Jewish' [derogatory tone] and immediately all the stereotypes will come up: Jew, wealthy, fraud, thief, criminal, all Jews are rich and are thieves...With the current economic climate, people need to have a scapegoat and the fear is that Jews will become the scapegoat again because of people like that.

Bearing in mind Adena's trauma anxiety, the quote by her illustrates that perceived threat and anxiety are inter-connected and reinforce each other.

Jews also talk about threats posed to their group in Britain and abroad with their friends and family. I observed that when anti-Semitic attacks occurred, community members heard and talked about them repeatedly. This was found to be associated with the community's social interconnectedness. Dr Goldstein, an academic in the field of Jewish studies, noted in this regard: "The Jewish community being what it is, at least ten people will know about it [an anti-Semitic attack] and then from those ten people another ten people know etc., etc.". For example, Joshua's friend was beaten up by someone at an anti-Israel rally in London and he said that it was immediately a central topic in his Modern Orthodox community: "everyone knew about it". The following quote by Ornetta illustrates that Jews talk not only about attacks that occur in their immediate vicinity, but also about the ones that take place abroad, such as the terrorist attack on the Chabad-Lubavitch centre in Mumbai:

The tragedy in Mumbai, which I think took the whole of the Jewish world by shock. Everyone was talking about that, everyone was praying for them, everyone was kind of united about that. So any big thing that's happening anywhere in the world, that's related to Jewish people I think would come up...When I heard it was a Lubavitch couple that were victimised it pulled on my heart strings... So that made it particularly poignant, that two Jews were targeted...it just reminds one of the anti-Semitism that's there, which is always very scary.

Consider that hate crime statistics show that physical and verbal attacks against Jews are relatively rare (CST 2010)<sup>117</sup>, while threat perception among participants is prevalent.

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<sup>116</sup> To put my finding into a wider context, Cohen's quantitative research concludes that Jews see anti-Semitism as a more serious threat when the perceived use of anti-Semitic terms in the news media increases (Cohen 2010).

This discrepancy suggests that talking about and looking out for threats can reinforce a threat perception.

#### **4.3.2.1. Hypervigilance**

The perception of threat can even take the form of hypervigilance, a state of constant alertness. It can be expressed in hyperawareness and hypersensitivity to threat indicators. Threat indicators are cues that are perceived as being negatively related to one's group; through them threat beliefs can be continually reinforced. As I will show in this section, some participants directly referred to their own or others' hypervigilance as 'paranoia' or 'oversensitivity':

You are suspicious [because of the Holocaust]; a constant fear that they [non-Jews] don't like you...It's the identity of Jews. I cannot believe that there are Jews who don't feel this particular hypersensitivity (Johnda)

Adah, who did not have immediate relations dying or surviving the Holocaust, gave a poignant example of such hypervigilance:

We are all victims of anti-Semitism [ironically said]...Anti-Semitism won't go away and it might be disguised by anti-Zionism or anti-this or anti-that...I think like for me the Holocaust is not prevalent, it doesn't cut in my Jewish identity, but for a lot of people it is...A friend of mine got a ticket and he said that the officer was, for sure, anti-Semitic. And I was like 'no, you were driving at 50 miles an hour in a 30 zone. What do you expect?' He was like 'no, no, he was anti-Semitic; he could have let me off'. It's victimisation. People think that everything that happens to them is because they are Jewish such as 'I didn't get the job because they thought I was a Jew'...Everyone who is rude to them is so because they are Jewish.

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<sup>117</sup> For example, comparing the average number of anti-Semitic incidents in Britain over the last ten years - 586 incidents according to the CST (CST 2010) - to the number of Jews living in the UK - 270,499 according to the 2001 Census (Graham 2003) - results in the statistic that 1 in 462 members experiences anti-Semitism in this country. The CST defines an anti-Semitic incident as "any malicious act aimed at Jewish people, organisations or property, where there is evidence that the act has anti-Semitic motivation or content, or that the victim was targeted because they are (or are believed to be) Jewish" (CST 2010: 8). Incidents can take numerous forms such as physical attacks on Jewish persons or property, verbal or written abuse, or anti-Semitic pamphlets and posters. CST does not incorporate the overall activities of anti-Semitic organisations in its statistics; nor activities such as aggressive notices or massed anti-Semitic chants on political demonstrations. The CST does not record as incidents anti-Semitic material that is generally presented on websites. It will, however, record hateful comments against members posted on blogs or internet forums of which the CST was notified. But only if it can be proven that they are indeed motivated by anti-Semitism or of anti-Semitic content and particularly target Jews (CST 2010). Still, careful interpretation of the anti-Semitic incident data is needed as it was asserted by the CST and the All-Party Parliamentary Group Against Anti-Semitism (APPGAA) that anti-Semitic incidents are often not reported to the police, because they are seen as minor or they occur on the Sabbath and observant members cannot report to the police on the Sabbath (APPGAA 2006b; APPGAA 2006a; CST 2008).

Another example of hypersensitivity surfaced one Sabbath afternoon in a group conversation about anti-Semitism over the centuries. A Modern Orthodox in his mid-twenties recounted a story about how his hypervigilance due to vicariously experienced anti-Semitism manifested itself in his life. He had just started a new job as an investment banker in the city. Because he wore a *kippah* and had requested to have certain working days off for major holy days, he was recognizably Jewish. He felt that he had to work extra hard and be better than others in order to prevent negative attitudes towards him from surfacing. His anticipation of anti-Semitism was informed by the history of discrimination against Jews. Right from the start of his new employment, he felt that one colleague in particular was anti-Semitic. He started, as he called it, “an anti-Semitism tally”, noting down every instance in which he perceived the colleague was racist towards him. After having gathered enough evidence, he decided to talk to other colleagues about this employee’s behaviour towards him. He realised that his perception was, as he labelled it “paranoia”, when he found out that this person was equally rude to others and thus “just a bad person”.

Participants also expressed heightened sensitivity when they talked about being afraid of wearing Jewish symbols such as *kippot* or t-shirts with Jewish-related emblems or Hebrew script on them. The reasons respondents gave for this was that they did not want to fuel anti-Semitism toward themselves:

There are anti-Jewish feelings at university. She [my daughter] won’t wear any jewellery or garments that will identify her as Jewish at university because the Muslim, Islamic society is extremely powerful and she feels intimidated (Alonso).

We took one of my son’s friends to Camden and he wore a *kippah*. I wish he would have taken it off. I was so afraid that something would happen to us. You make yourself vulnerable to anti-Semitism if you walk around being visibly Jewish (Amber)

We are very conscious of anti-Semitism and I would discourage my girls from being too vocal about their Jewish identity as a matter of self-preservation, when they are out and about in the general community...you mark yourself out as different and it’s the difference the non-Jewish community finds threatening...There’s a lot of anti-Semitic feeling in the community. They don’t think they should ever be ashamed of it or hide it,

but I wouldn't be happy if my daughters, for example, wore a Magen David<sup>118</sup> around their neck (Alexandra)

The quotes illustrate the finding that some Jews are, indeed, concerned about being externally identified as being Jewish for fear of negative consequences. This was often associated by participants with the Holocaust memory. The Holocaust demonstrated that one was deemed Jewish, discriminated against and persecuted not if one identified as a member, but rather if one was externally identified as such, in that case by being at least one-quarter Jewish (i.e. if one grandparent was Jewish). This also led some of the participants to feel that they could not escape their Jewishness. This sense of inescapability because of the Holocaust memory, in association with elicited threat perception, hypervigilance and even anxiety, could inform these members' sense of Jewishness:

I define myself as Jewish because that's how other people would define me, even if I didn't define myself that way...When I was about 12 my mother took me to a new cinema where they were showing pictures of the Holocaust, and one of the things that I remember as being the most traumatic experience was the fact that people who didn't even know they were Jewish, even people who had converted, were defined that way...I think it [her Jewish identification] is very much about persecution and the potential for it... I guess there's always the fear of a Holocaust and everything that has led to it... my fear is at a personal level, that I would be discounted; I wouldn't be seen for who I am. I would be seen as Jewish (Abarrane)

There always will be persecution [for Jews]...I share the history [of persecution], shared family experiences [with other Jews]...and one could say that in view of the situation that prevailed in Germany and the rest of Europe during the war, there would be an incentive to depart. But that doesn't work anyway if you take that line of interest. Mr Hitler would have turned around and said 'you are a Jew' whether you are, or not. There was no real incentive to depart (Steward)

When you truly understand what actually the Holocaust was, at that point as a Jew you truly fear that it might happen again, and as soon as you understand that fear for many people that is their Judaism. For many people their Judaism begins and ends with that real fear of persecution for no other reason that they had a Jewish grandparent. I worry about how difficult it would be for Brits to do it...not very...and that's a very real day-fear. It might not really express itself on daily basis in a real tangible way but that's something that goes through Jewish minds every day (Zachariah)

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<sup>118</sup> Magen David is known as the star or Shield of David and is a generally acknowledged symbol of Judaism and Jewishness.

## Chapter 4

Even the unaffiliated Avery, who was not involved in the community and did not have a direct Holocaust link, referred to the inescapability of his Jewishness due to the Holocaust memory when explaining his sense of anxiety and hypervigilance:

I'm full of Jewish blood. You are born into a club. It's not a club that you can leave even if you choose to because the blood is in you...with Jews there's this warmth, which isn't with British people...There's always that fear that...they might turn against you because you are Jewish. We are brought up in our childhood to expect it...There might be a point to persecute me in the future...As long as there are Jews there will be anti-Semitism. It [being Jewish] is something that you feel could be used against you...Images that come up: Germany in the 1930s; organised anti-Semitism. It's about never having to drop your guard by believing that these people would never use this tool against you (Avery)

Accordingly, we find that even for secular members, threat perception can morph into the more intensified form of hypervigilance.

Mr Kamps from the Board of Deputies of British Jews even asserted that hypersensitivity especially in response to the Holocaust, is a general community phenomenon:

I was on the Committee where we discussed whether on the Census 'Jewish' should be an ethnic answer category...Members said 'how can we ever allow ourselves to write the word Jewish on the Census form, which then gets put on a computer and then when another Hitler comes, all he has to do is press one button on a computer and he has a list of every Jew in England. And then we're rounded up and put in camps within 24 hours. If we don't say who we are we can carry on'. There is this mentality, that's always there. There have been too many scars in our history. And people are still, perhaps, very aware of it...That is a real issue for people.

He expressed the realisation that this collective belief might be hypersensitivity when he continued:

One of the younger members of the Committee pointed out to me something that I thought was quite interesting, that Sainsbury's and Tesco's know that my wife buys kosher sausages, and pickled cucumbers and gefilte fish, and that's all on their computer. And if Hitler ever took over Sainsbury he would press a button and find every Jew that has ever been shopping.

In summary, evidence indicates that group trauma - albeit not always in the forefront of people's minds - can have a powerful influence on identity by engendering these two mechanisms.

#### **4.3.2.2. Institutional Focus on Threat**

There is an institutional focus on threats to Jews that can accentuate and reinforce threat perceptions and by extension hypervigilance for those exposed to it, who are mainly community-involved Jews, particularly affiliated ones. I argue that this focus can also reinforce the trauma.

Religious and non-religious Jewish organisations arrange many events to inform members about threats to them. This includes events about anti-Semitism in the present that connect it to anti-Semitism in the past, for example, events about anti-Semitism in regard to Israel, which has been coined as ‘the new anti-Semitism’ (Klug 2003a). There are various lectures, seminars, workshops and movie screenings that focus on threats to the group at places such as synagogues, university Jewish societies, Chabad society centres and other cultural and political group meetings. For instance, there are still various Holocaust survivors who give talks within the community (for example, at Jewish student societies meetings) about their experiences in the camps. One reason often given for doing so is to raise awareness that another trauma like the Holocaust could take place and needs to be prevented. I found that now even the children of Holocaust survivors are giving these talks. In general, my observations have shown that the events tend to be well-attended. Dr Goldstein noted in this regard:

I was actually discussing a possible programme of talks at one of the large United Synagogue Communities and I found it fascinating that they said they can only guarantee a good turnout when there’s a discussion on anti-Semitism.

Thus, there is an indication that institutions place importance on perpetuating threat perceptions within the community. The fact that there is an audience that wants to hear about threats suggests their success in this regard.

In the synagogues in which I did observations, the rabbis also focused on possible threats to the group in their communication with synagogue members. I found that this is one of the key places where threats are accentuated. At the time of the European Parliament elections, for instance, a Modern Orthodox rabbi urged his congregation during the Sabbath morning service to vote so that the BNP would not get any seats, to prevent another trauma like the Holocaust. Such statements can strengthen perceptions of threat and simultaneously reinforce the importance of the trauma among Jews, as

illustrated in the following comment by Adah, about a week after hearing the rabbi's speech:

Look at the European Elections now, the BNP have got a strong chance of getting seats...and that's worrying. It is worrying because that's like how Hitler came into power. It's happening before our very eyes.

Adah was quoted earlier as saying that the Holocaust does not have an impact on her, but here we see that this memory elicits a threat perception in her. As with Robin, this demonstrates that although there can be a cognitive understanding of the mechanisms that can be elicited in response to the transmitted trauma, this does not necessarily inoculate people from experiencing them. Such evidence suggests that the impact of vicarious group trauma is strong enough to bypass a person's rational thinking.

The interview with Adah was conducted in a Jewish café. While I was talking to her, a Board of Deputies of British Jews delegate came to our table to encourage us to vote in the upcoming election. The conversation between my interviewee and the delegate turned to how thankful she was for his efforts to encourage voting so that the BNP would not win any seats. This caught the attention of a male Jewish immigrant from Israel in his mid-thirties sitting next to us. He interrupted them saying: "No one is here for us". Adah started a conversation with him in Hebrew and then turned to me to argue:

See that's the general Jewish attitude. He says: 'they are all as bad as each other, they all want to kill us, what do I care? So if I vote Labour, Conservative or BNP, they all want to kill us, so what difference does it make?'

Adah then said to me: "Victim mentality. Perfect example. They believe no matter who gets into the European parliament; they all want to kill us". This conversation illustrates how easy it is to be confronted with an institutional traumatising mediator - as in the form of this delegate - when in a Jewish area. The described situation also shows that institutional agents can assist in the construction as well as accentuate and reinforce members' sense of perceived threat and, by extension, hypervigilance. This would be unlikely to occur without a sense of group affiliation. Moreover, it highlights that non-religious organisations also focus on possible threats posed to the group.

Regarding the focus on threat by non-religious institutions, it is important to mention that the Jewish community in Britain even has its own security organisation

called the Community Security trust (CST). CST represents and advises the community on matters of security for Jews, such as anti-Semitism. CST also monitors hate crimes against members and possible terrorist threats (e.g. CST 2004). According to the CST representative I interviewed, Mr Finkelstein, it is even important to monitor threats posed to the group in other countries as those threats could spill over into Britain. The Holocaust was referenced as an example of how threat can spread. This illustrates how vicarious group trauma can even affect organisations' outlooks; in this case making it an institutional goal to inform the community about threats and to safeguard it through prevention work. The fact that the CST is a charitable organisation, funded primarily by Jews themselves, implies not only that there is a considerable level of perceived threat within the community in Britain, but also that this community assists in perpetuating this institutional focus on threat.

Let us look in more depth at how the CST's focus on threats manifests itself within the community. The CST particularly focuses on threat prevention by offering security advice and training for Jewish schools, synagogues and other communal institutions, and to Jewish individuals such as pupils and university students. Recall that some of my interviewees mentioned that they did not feel comfortable wearing Jewish symbols outside of the community because they did not want to fuel anti-Jewish sentiments and be a target of anti-Semitism. The following example shows how such threat perceptions can be reinforced among members by an institutional focus on threat:

I didn't feel secure wearing T-shirts with Israeli writing on them [at university]. I felt like people would make offensive comments. The CST advised us against it or tried to facilitate us to do it. The CST always tries to allow the community to operate as much as possible as it wants to do. So rather than saying 'don't wear that T-shirt, they say 'wear that T-shirt and we'll make sure that someone is here so that you can' (Aron)

The CST also advises Jewish institutions on appropriate security measures to prevent anti-Semitic incidents, such as using CCTV cameras, security alarms, and most importantly, security personnel on their premises. For instance, after the Gaza invasion in 2008, the CST advised Jewish institutions to increase their security measures. The impact this had on members can be seen in that Dr Goldstein - who argued that "the Holocaust is not just a shadow" and that it "makes Jews want to battle against anti-Semitism" - subsequently agreed with the increase of security in her daughter's Jewish primary school as a response to the Gaza incursion:

They have employed an extra security guard. They have already got two full-time security guards and they have changed the closing time of the school. It used to be that the younger children would finish at three thirty and the older children at four. Because that meant that the school gates were opened until ten past four, so for a whole forty minutes, which was seen to be too big a security threat, they have now changed it, half that gap and made the infants finish not until ten to four so that the school gates would only be opened for twenty minutes, which I find to be an unbelievably radical move. One assumes that this is because of a real perceived threat because that requires an awful lot of commitment from parents and teachers to implement.

The fact that the school and parents complied with the security advice and implemented additional security measures illustrates the community's heightened level of perceived threat and, by extension, acute sensitivity to threat indicators, as well as security bodies' power to accentuate such threat - a power that can be justified because of the Holocaust.

The strong influence of the CST's focus on threat monitoring on Jews' sense of threat perception is further illustrated in the following quote by Alon, who does voluntary security service in front of a Modern Orthodox synagogue:

People are being trained by the CST. They are having emergency buzzers that alarm the police...People get nervous when people drive past [the synagogue] slowly and take photos...so you have to be aware and have heightened security measures. I think there is a serious, serious threat.

I infer from my ethnographic evidence that most Jewish institutions in London, such as synagogues, cultural organisations and schools, take the advice from the CST and have increased security measures. Whereas some Jewish organisations will have only secured electronic doors, fences and gates, cameras and/or security personal on their premises, others such as the CST will have all of these security measures and additional ones, such as thorough passport controls and metal detectors. Still, there are also organisations such as synagogues that I visited which never or only rarely have security personal present for their events<sup>119</sup>. For example, some synagogues have security personal only for the services during high holy days.

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<sup>119</sup> Neturei Karta institutions do not have security measures in their institutions because they do not believe they will be targets of anti-Semitism as they are against Zionism and thus the concept of a Jewish state such as the State of Israel. Moshe, a member of this group, explains the reason for it as follows: "In this area we don't have security...We have no problem with our Muslim neighbours. We don't feel that we should be targeted. We don't feel that we should have enemies, we've done nothing wrong, we don't participate in Israeli war crimes, we don't see in any way why we should have security".

Dismissing CST security protocol, the Reform Rabbi Liebman opined that security measures such as security personal or fences around synagogues can only be regarded as pro-forma: “Terrorists cannot be prevented from attacks by fences or security personnel without guns...they could just throw a bomb in”. In regard to the impact of security advice by institutions such as the CST, Saul also gave a critical account:

If you listen to the CST you’d probably get quite worried, and you’d be worried when you walk out on the street, although they’re trying to get people to feel safer about things...I don’t like what it does to you as a person. If you think that people are out there to get you, it makes you a really nervous wreck, and it just makes you not feel part of society.

The quotes should be put in the context that there has not been any grand organised attack against a Jewish institution alone since 1994<sup>120</sup> (CST 2004). This suggests that while security measures (e.g. CST patrols on holy days in Jewish neighbourhoods) function mainly as deterrents against low-level, less organised attacks against the community and provide an image of safety, their existence can also reinforce the perception of being under constant threat and thus hypersensitivity.

Furthermore, my observational evidence suggests that Jewish news organisations such as newspapers and magazines focus on threats to Jews as they frequently report about anti-Semitism in the past and present. This was also picked up by some of the participants, who argued that such intense focus on threats to members by the Jewish media can assist in bringing the trauma of the past into the present and thus can accentuate members’ existing threat perceptions and hypervigilance::

When I read the Jewish Chronicle, there are always tales about anti-Semitism, there is always something about anti-Semitism so one is reminded of these things and you don’t need the Holocaust [said ironically] (Ruben)

If you read the Jewish Chronicle on a daily basis you start thinking another Holocaust is about to happen (Josephine)

To sum up, my findings suggest that there is a focus by Jewish institutions on threats to the group, which stands in association with vicarious group trauma. It was suggested that the community focus on threat can accentuate and reinforce threat perceptions and by extension hypervigilance. The focus on threat can also reinforce the

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<sup>120</sup> On July 18, 1994, a terrorist attack was mounted on the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires, Argentina. 85 were killed and over 250 people were injured in this attack.

trauma memory by making the trauma more immediate for members. Considering that most of the less community-engaged Jews are not exposed to constant and multiple traumatisation mediators (such as CST patrols) because of their physical and social distance from the community, it can be inferred that the traumatisation agents provided by community institutions have a strong impact only on engaged Jews; particularly on involved affiliated ones. This might suggest that, on average, threat and hypervigilance and thus vicarious group trauma seem to be less prominent among less or non-engaged Jews.

Interestingly, the existence of the effects of vicarious group trauma on members' lives was validated by some members. However, most of them were found to be unable to prevent the mechanisms elicited in response to vicarious group trauma from being produced in them. For example, while Robin and Adah were aware of the effects trauma memory can have on Jews, they both insisted that this did not apply to them; this was contradicted by my findings. Robin and Adah's susceptibility to the mechanisms elicited in response to trauma memory despite their understanding of them indicates the strength of vicarious group trauma. In other words, the emphasis by some participants that trauma memory did not have these effects on them, but still finding that they, nonetheless, were subject to its impact, denotes that members, in most cases, cannot avoid its influence and thus the powerfulness of vicarious group trauma. Their proneness to the effects might be the result of having been socialised into a culture in which the elicited mechanisms are the norm - as suggested by Adah in her comments about victim mentality - and are also fostered by institutions.

### **4.3.3. Behaviours**

Group trauma can also have an impact on the identity of Jews through behaviours. It is well-documented that trauma memory can have an impact on the behaviours of second-generation Holocaust survivors (e.g. Danieli 1985; Scharf 2007). Whereas these studies have yielded very particular and subtle behaviours, a broader study of the influence of trauma memory on the behaviour of all Jews – including those members who may not have any family involved in the Holocaust or any other Jewish trauma – has not yet been undertaken. As a result, this work explores more general behaviours in response to vicarious group trauma by taking into account all participants, whether they have grown

up in families with Holocaust survivors or not. This examination is done in view of how these behaviours constitute their identity. I found that many participants engaged in two kinds of behaviours associated with the emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma, threat pre-emptive and charitable behaviours.

The first behaviour was associated with reducing perceived threat in response to Israel's domestic policy in view of its actions in the occupied territories - ultimately in order to prevent another trauma. Affiliated participants tended to avoid having political conversations about Israel with non-Jews. When they did engage in dialogue, they tended to focus on the positives. In contrast, unaffiliated and sometimes even secular affiliated participants tended to speak out against Israel. In detail, many unaffiliated participants consciously criticised Israel and its policy in conversations with gentiles or through online and offline writing (e.g. publishing articles that are critical of Israel's policy in the *Jewish Quarterly*) or by participating in organisations such as Jews for Justice for Palestinians (JFJFP)<sup>121</sup>, the British Shalom-Salaam Trust, Independent Jewish voices or the Jewish Socialists or by engaging in anti-Israel campaigns (e.g. the 'Stop Arming Israel' campaign by the 'War on Want' organisation). I found evidence in my ethnographic research that such behaviour was motivated by the desire to decrease or prevent an increase in anti-Semitism in response to Israel's actions in the occupied territories, so that ultimately another traumatic event could be averted.

Some participants from JFJFP and other such organisations to which secular affiliated members also belong wrote articles against Israel and Zionism, joined protests against Israel's actions towards Palestinians, gave public speeches to inform people about Israel's perceived wrongdoings, engaged in open letter writing to their MPs, signed petitions and/or engaged in boycotts against Israel. Several of them believed that speaking out against Israel as 'Jews', particularly collectively with other group members, would show the non-Jewish population that not all Jews are for Israel and in this way would decrease anti-Semitism. The following excerpt from the interview with Emma, whose father survived the Holocaust, illustrates how her personalised trauma

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<sup>121</sup> Looking at the website, reports and flyers of JFJFP, there is an indication that the organisation focuses more on what Israel is doing wrong than on what can, should be and is done to help Palestinians. This was also found when I did interviews with signatories of this organisation. It is interesting that JFJFP uses the Holocaust to disregard Israel's attitudes and actions towards the Palestinians and other states in various ways. The organisation has a section on their website called 'Holocaust' which dedicates itself to associations made between Israel and the Holocaust. For instance, an article in this section compares Shimon Peres to Holocaust deniers, who as Peres would trivialise the event (Avnery 2009).

memory affects this moral obligation to speak out against Israel in order to prevent another Jewish trauma:

It [JFJFP] is a more powerful lobby...It's very good for the pure reason of protecting ourselves from anti-Semitism...It is easier to go on that path with people who have got Jewish oversensitivity...When the issue is racism and anti-Semitism and when the issue is Israel, I feel more comfortable doing it as a Jew. One has to deal with sensitivities of hearing Israel is, well let's say, compared to the Nazis...If you have never been part of a group that has never been persecuted, you have a little bit more adaptation to make than somebody who has been...I suppose ultimately it's going back to my greatest fear, the idea that anti-Semitism was always here, that the Jews are a terrible lot...It's partly showing off saying to people: 'Look, don't classify me as somebody who only looks after their own interests'.

Emma connecting her response behaviour with hypervigilance illustrates that the mechanisms can be inter-connected. For some people like Emma speaking out as part of a Jewish group is easier than speaking out alone, which, in turn, can be suggested to inform a sense of belonging to the Jewish group and therefore the identity. Laura, another JFJFP signatory, but without any direct Holocaust link, expresses a similar sentiment:

I am active in solidarity movements around Israel and Palestine and there was a big event where we had to celebrate Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary at the Windsor castle and this we felt was not a good idea because...it was a fundraising event for, I think, the Zionist federation, the monarchy supporting it. The Zionist federation in this way was actually taking a stand in ethnic cleansing. There was a protest outside and the interesting thing about the protest was there was an automatic way in which the Jewish groups that were protesting all gathered together. We were all doing the same thing. There was a sort of unspoken sense in which Jewish people all gravitated to one another...A sense of a common approach, a sense of a safety area...There's a sort of comfort zone.

In this regard, it is interesting that some of the unaffiliated and even a few secular affiliated participants even used the Holocaust memory to criticise Israel's policy, such as its military actions, publically. Several members stated that Israel's creation as a 'safe haven' necessary after the Holocaust could no longer be justified because of Israel's discriminatory actions towards Palestinians. Some of them, for example, argued that Jews have gone from being the oppressed to becoming the oppressors. As members of the group that went through the Holocaust, these individuals believed that they had to

speak out against Israel's traumatising actions. Gabriel, who is also a signatory of JFJFP, noted:

As Jews we feel Israel is speaking in the name of Jews everywhere then we, as Jews, are going to say 'not in my name'...In the way history has sort of caught up with us. It has actually led whole groups of people to carry out things without question, or to carry out things and find that they can excuse them, and find things that they can justify what can become more and more unjustifiable...People who were so badly persecuted have very little compassion for those who are persecuted. It's like the abused becomes the abuser.

While I frequently observed unaffiliated Jews publically criticizing Israel, this behaviour was not very common among affiliated Jews apart from members of Neturei Karta. One of its members, Mosche, said:

The biggest security is to tell the Muslim community that we have nothing to do with the atrocities, what's going on in the Middle East...The whole concept of the Holocaust and the denial, and all this business is all due to Zionism, because Zionism wants to exploit it and use it for political gain...For us, it's just the last big atrocity that happened to us Jews in Europe after many, many centuries of persecution, of suffering, of expulsions.

Among affiliated participants, I found that there was a greater tendency to avoid criticizing Israel publically and instead to argue on behalf of its policy making vis-à-vis the occupied territories and Palestinians in particular in conversations with gentiles so as to decrease or prevent an increase of anti-Semitism - which they perceived to be fuelled by a negative interpretation of Israel's policy - and thus another Jewish trauma. In this vein, it can be argued that their behaviour was grounded in vicarious group trauma. For instance, Alon, who was quoted above mentioning how his vicarious trauma led him to perceive a threat regarding Iran, illustrated later on in the interview why he felt he had to argue the positives of Israel's politics:

I do not need to give the negatives. If you want to know the negatives, you open the newspaper; you go on websites...How many people are there that are coherently putting across Israel's point that you gonna listen to? None...I genuinely feel that a lot of the media is extremely biased...Education is extremely biased...All universities or student politics are anti-Israel for no necessary reasons to it...King's College gave Shimon Peres an honorary PhD when he came to England...the student body tried to renounce that...Or, Israeli academics went to SOAS a few years ago and the student body set up the fire alarms and they had to bring the police. Riots took place just because these guys were from Israel.

The ethnographic findings indicate that support of Israel is fostered and reinforced through mainstream Jewish institutions that are publically pro-Israel, such as a majority of synagogues like the United Synagogue, various major youth groups (including Habonim Dror, Bnei Akiva, Netzer Olami or FZY) and non-religious organisations like the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Accordingly, public criticism of Israel by community members was not socially accepted. For example, Hugh explained the communal support for Israel as follows: “It’s a matter of loyalty and Israel has enough enemies, many enemies. Almost the whole world is Israel’s enemy. It’s important that Israel mustn’t feel isolated”. He articulated that there can be consequences to having a publically critical attitude towards Israel:

When I have felt obliged to speak openly, some of my friends have told me that I am too public in what I say, and I get criticised. If you spend every day of your life criticising Israel and they can never do anything right, then you’re bracketed with those that are Israel’s enemies...You would find yourself almost being ostracised by your own community and would find it very difficult to be taken seriously in your own community, because you’re so hostile...If you are outspoken about everything that Israel does, you end up being a bedfellow with people that hate Jews, and hate Israel because it’s a Jewish country.

Indeed, I found evidence in my ethnographic data that extensive public criticism of Israel can lead to social exclusion from the community. For instance, Jethro relayed:

I was ostracised in synagogue for my activities...My community discovered my views on Israel, I am very critical of the Israeli state and that makes you feel much more distant from one’s community...When they discovered letters that I wrote to the press and they saw me on demonstrations, anger and hostility was present. They were actually very hateful towards me, calling me a Nazi and all that sort of thing...At synagogue they turned their back on me so in fact I don’t go to synagogue anymore.

Such evidence suggests that criticism of Israel, and especially public opposition, is equated with supporting anti-Semitism. It also illustrates the trauma anxiety existent in the Jewish community.

Interestingly, during my fieldwork, I also encountered that affiliated members often avoided engaging in political conversations about Israel with gentiles. They felt that gentiles would perceive their argumentation in support of Israel’s policies as being “biased” (Amber) or “emotionally driven” (Joelle) rather than objective, which might then fuel negative opinions about Israel and Jews in general. For instance, Thomas, who

grew up with a Jewish grandmother who fled Germany during the Second World War, argued:

There is subtle racism [against Jews]...and it is also expressed in attitudes towards Israel. So when people express vehemently anti-Israel attitudes that makes me feel a bit like they are anti-Semitic. I stopped talking to my friends about Israel. A lot of them are anti-Israel, so there is no common ground, so I can't really debate with them...I do think that there should be somewhere where we can definitely be safe and in charge of their own destiny as a result of the Holocaust...I do have some emotional attachment so I'm not gonna be as objective as them and that reinforces their negative opinions of Jews.

Like many other affiliated participants, Thomas believed that gentiles have a negative opinion of Israel and therefore of Jews because of the media's negative bias in reporting about Israel:

They [non-Jews] are not going to be objective either because of the media and stuff...There is a definite case of double standards [in Britain]...there are lots of places that are controversial like Chechnya and Kosovo but it is the one [country] that gets most attention, which is not fair.

To sum up so far, the findings indicate Jews adopt behaviours to pre-empt future threats and therefore trauma to their group.

The second behaviour as a result of vicarious group trauma that I identified was associated with the fact that Jews align themselves with people that are or have been threatened (e.g. oppressed or discriminated against). Due to belonging to a minority that has gone through various traumas in history, many participants felt the need to support and accordingly help other people who are going through or have gone through a traumatic time. For instance, Daphne noted:

It [Jewish culture] means a culture of combating injustice...because of the historic position of being the underdog and of being persecuted there is a long and very proud tradition of Jews standing up not just for themselves but for others who are being persecuted...For example, if you look at the Rivonia Trial, when Mandela was sent to prison for life, there were 12 defendants...All 6 white defendants were Jewish ...When I grew up I knew that in the Civil Rights Movement in the States, a high proportion of white people who took part in that, were Jewish...For me, it has a connotation of justice, equality, building a kinder, fairer, more humane world. And I know that a lot of Jewish people have been involved in that kind of thing.

When the topic of charitable giving was raised, affiliated participants, particularly traditional ones, focused on their charity to Jewish people, who they perceived as being

threatened or having experienced threat. In contrast, unaffiliated and even some non-traditional participants spoke mainly about helping any minorities that are experiencing or have experienced trauma. For example, the very secular Reform interviewee Paul explained that he helped traumatised people because of his group's trauma:

The fact that my father had to flee for having the label Jewish and members of my family either went through the camps or died in the camps means that out of respect for those who suffered for being Jews one has to retain the label of Jewishness...The only thing of any importance is the need to be prepared to stand up and be counted were there to be persecution, but nonetheless for that history. The other thing that is important, for most of history, the Jews have been the persecuted rather than the persecutor and having that history gives one an obligation to try and prevent persecution and support those people who are persecuted...I'm involved in the refugee organisation.

Accordingly, for a lot of participants helping other traumatised people was regarded as their moral responsibility because of the trauma their own group has experienced. Interestingly, some of the participants connected their responsibility to help to the well-known post-Holocaust motto 'Never Again'. While affiliated members applied the motto primarily to give reason for helping people from their own group, unaffiliated members used the motto mainly to justify helping society in general, thus mainly non-Jewish minorities:

It [the Holocaust] has a huge impact on everybody, because you grow up knowing that your people were target for something and that you in a sense are a survivor because you weren't there and because you aren't destroyed...You feel the responsibility to say 'never again'... There are a lot of people who feel that they have a responsibility because of what has happened to Jewish people...A lot of Jews will say 'never again' to Jews, I say 'never again' to anybody...You are much more sensitive to persecution and oppression of other people, which is why you find a lot of Jews are actively involved in organisations dealing with civil right, civil liberties, left wing organisations and so on (Laura)

As mentioned above, affiliated members, particularly traditional ones, focused in their narratives on how they helped their own people as they perceived some of them as still being threatened or needing their protection so that they could flourish after the trauma they had experienced. This does not necessarily mean that they did not support gentiles or their causes. For example, the Liberal Allen, said:

The fact that my people have come from a position of being persecuted has made me in my life very conscious of the fact that I need to stand up for

people that are persecuted or suffering injustice...It [the Holocaust] has formed my identity in other ways as well. I am involved in lots of social justice issues. It's been a large part of what has formed my social conscience if you like...If I give to non-Jewish causes it's often through a Jewish organisation so let's say to non-Jews overseas or whatever. There's a sense for some of the British Jewish community to try protecting vulnerable Jewish communities overseas and I was part of that experience in Argentina when the Jewish community went through some quite traumatic episodes in recent years.

The Modern Orthodox Ophra also saw it as imperative to help other Jews by giving money to the CST because she believed that Jews in Britain might be in danger at one point in the future - a belief based on recent traumatic events including the Holocaust. Ophra also gave money to the Israeli army, because she wanted Jews to be able to protect themselves as they were unable to do so during the Holocaust. This illustrates how different mechanisms elicited through vicarious group trauma, in this case trauma anxiety and giving charity as a response behaviour, can interrelate.

In general, I found that many affiliated participants gave money to Israel because they regarded it as a home for the Jewish people. They believed Israel needed their support to protect itself so that it could strive and continue existing as a 'safe haven' for Jews. This must be seen in the context - as the UJIA employee, Mr Fein, purported - that a majority of charity for Israel comes from the Diaspora (see Gidron et al. 2004; Jeffay 2010; Katz et al. 2010 for further reference). He explained this support as follows:

I suspect they value the communities in Israel especially it being the home for the Jews. Israel is a very successful country and successful economically but there are areas in it which are very deprived and we see it as an important thing to build up those areas and make it more of an attractive option to live there...It's all got to do with the fact that every Jew feels a kind of connection to Israel to a lesser or greater extent...for us - for people, who are giving lots and lots of money - we want to make sure that Israel can support itself.

To sum up, this section has presented how transmitted traumas can impact Jews' behaviours. Finding that charitable behaviour can result from people seeing themselves as part of a minority that has been threatened, indicates how easily such a mechanism can reinforce group belonging. The results indicate that the behaviours associated with the emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma can interact with the other mechanisms discussed in this chapter, namely anxiety, threat and hypervigilance.

The fact that participants referred to the communal aspect of their behaviours suggests that behaviours in response to viscerally felt traumatic experiences might even be part of Jewish culture, which would facilitate their perpetuation.

#### **4.4. Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter I have developed a sociological theory of vicarious group trauma. The theory purports that people can feel a threatening event and abuse that were inflicted on members of their social group as if this had happened to them. Individuals identify with the traumatic incident or abuse personally as members of their group so that it can be an emotional experience for them. Through a personal association with the trauma as members of the group, a historical fact of group trauma can become an emotional trauma experience for them strong enough to bypass rationality and elicit strong emotions and perceptions, i.e. vicarious traumatisation. Accordingly, we speak of vicarious group trauma when many members of a collectivity can be attested to have or they themselves feel as if they have a visceral identification with their group's trauma reflected in signs and signals of traumatisation. In this way, vicarious group trauma can inform members' sense of belonging to the group.

Using the method of ethnography, the chapter applied the theory by exploring how transmitted group traumas manifest themselves in the everyday experiences of Jews in Britain impacting their identification with the group. To do so, the chapter showed first which traumas Jews remembered and concluded that group traumas are remembered selectively termed as '*chosen trauma*' by (Volkan 2001). Secular participants tended to remember only the Holocaust, which was proposed to be related to the communication of the event through mainstream culture and education. As shown in **Chapter 3**, the Holocaust Education Trust reports that Holocaust education is generally part of the national curriculum in British schools even though it is not a formal requirement in Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland in independent schools in England (HET 2011). There are also many exhibitions (e.g. the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War Museum), plays, movies, and documentaries about the Holocaust. Devout affiliated members had a propensity to also remember earlier Jewish traumas such as the enslavement in Egypt and their exodus over a hundred years later. This was suggested to be related to the observation of holy days associated with those traumas in

synagogues, Jewish schools and families. For instance, the enslavement in Egypt and the subsequent exodus of Jews is commemorated at Passover. In this way, the chapter showed that there are not only Jewish institutions including the family but also non-Jewish ones which assist in the transmission of trauma memory and highlight members' difference from gentiles, which in turn can inform identification with the group.

The chapter then illustrated that the vicarious sensation of traumatic group experiences can create anxiety and elicit perceptions of threat and, by extension, hypervigilance as well as response behaviours. It is well-documented in the psychology literature that transmitted trauma can elicit these traumatisation symptoms in people who come into contact with trauma victims over a prolonged period of times such as family members or therapists (MacCann and Pearlman 1990); case studies have been written about the traumatisation symptoms found in second- and third-generation offspring of Holocaust survivors (Danieli 1985; Prince 2009). My study adds to literature in this area as there is only little research exploring secondary traumatisation among Jews on the group-level including Jews who have not been in close contact with trauma survivors. My findings resonate thereby with research such as by Hirsch and Chaitin describing that Jewish-Israeli young adults, with and without family connections to Holocaust survivors are fearful because of the Holocaust (Hirsch and Chaitin 2010). Similarly, Lazar et al. relate to trauma anxiety by asserting that it exists among Israeli Jews also those without direct connection to Holocaust survivors in the form of needing Israel as a place of safety (Lazar et al. 2008). Their article connects Jews' association of Israel as a safe haven with political Zionism's focus on the need for a sovereign Jewish state by arguing that the lack of it "was one major contributing factor that Jews in Europe, prior to and during the Holocaust, were singled out for massive persecution" (Lazar et al. 2008: 116).

With this in mind, the chapter also demonstrated that there is an institutional focus on current threats to Jews that can assist in accentuating vicarious group trauma and in the construction and perpetuation of secondary traumatisation, in this case threat and hypervigilance. Secular Jews were less exposed constant and multiple institutional traumatisation agents such as security guards in front of synagogue because of their physical and social distance from communal structures. This suggests that, on average, vicarious trauma might have a lesser impact on less or non-community engaged Jews'

sense of identity than on the identity of more engaged Jews. In other words, the findings indicate an association between the level of involvement in the social Jewish structure and the prominence of vicarious group trauma among members.

Overall, I have argued that the mechanisms elicited in relation to the personalised and thus emotional experience of the historical knowledge of trauma can have an impact not only on group identity creation and perpetuation but also on reinforcing the importance of the trauma itself. My research findings in this regard concur with theoretical work on the subject. Volkan, for example, asserts that when a chosen trauma is completely resuscitated within a large group in instances that are stressful and bring about anxiety, a time collapse takes place (Volkan 2001). In these circumstances, he argues, fears, anticipations, fantasies and defences associated with a chosen trauma re-emerge, and both conscious and unconscious associations are made between the mental representation of the past trauma and a current threat. His theory purports that this process generates the image of present enemies and conflicts, and an event that occurred centuries ago will be felt as if it happened yesterday (Volkan, 2001).

My work also adds to such research by using primary research methods to show that the trauma of the past can interweave with the present. The trauma of the past penetrates the present of the group members remembering the trauma through its impact on their everyday experiences. In this way, the trauma can become constitutive of the group identity and contributes to its continuation. The effect of the remembered traumas on the 'lived' lives of members can also reinforce the trauma memory, meaning it can increase the importance of the trauma for the members by making the trauma more immediate for them. Accordingly, the trauma of the past is powerful in group identity creation and perpetuation because of its effect on the present.

## 5. The Community and its Resources

**Chapter 4** indicated the importance of the community in being able to influence members' sense of Jewishness. This chapter will focus solely on the community and how it can inform identity creation and sustenance by examining why Jews invest in their community.

Communities provide various resources that are advantageous to their members, such as charities or schools. The concept of social capital in terms of resources has been used extensively to explore characteristics of communities and their preferences for taking care of themselves autonomously rather than accessing state services (Hussain 2008: 20). Most of the extant research is, however, theoretical or quantitative and thus lacks an ethnographic perspective on social capital creation among social groups, particularly minorities. While studies of social capital creation have tried to explain why communities provide wide-ranging resources to their members (e.g. Putnam 2000; Zhou 2005), they have not examined ethnographically why members *themselves* contribute to their communities.

Research suggests that the Jewish minority, along with other ethnic and religious minorities, is better at accruing community resources than majority groups (Coleman 1988; Philips and Fishman 2006; Richman 2006). Coleman, for instance, examined the social capital of Ultra-Orthodox Jews. By analysing the Jewish diamond trade in New York City, he showed that a tightly knit community structure, dense ties and reciprocal trust assist Jews in conducting business without contracts (Coleman 1988). Richman extended Coleman's case study by looking in particular at their community institutions and how these help create economic advantage in the diamond industry, specifically in allowing Jewish merchants to reliably implement diamond credit sales (Richman 2006).

Thus, this chapter will examine the British Jewish community in view of their social capital creation, analysing thereby why and how resources increase within the community via institutions and members giving to other members. My investigation will focus in particular on why British Jews *themselves* contribute to a) the general Jewish community, meaning to general communal (i.e. non-denominational)

organisations, and/or b) their denominations, meaning to the their respective institutions and/or directly to their members. It will also explore how the creation of members' motivations for contributing to their community overall is facilitated. This investigation will provide answers to the question of why people in general donate and give help to their respective communities.

To justify the examination of social capital creation among Jews in Britain, this chapter firstly shows that British Jewry has dense social capital. Secondly, it explores members' motivations to create this capital. Thirdly, the conditions for the motivations to be created are analysed by examining the social structure of the Jewish community. Considering that a group's social capital is dependent on members' motivations to create resources in their community and, by extension, on the conditions facilitating the formation of their motivations, I argue that we can look at social capital creation as a system consisting of motivations and associated conditions and examine how this system is sustained. I explore in this chapter how an 'ethos of regard' assists in making people engage continuously in the community's social structure and thereby motivate them to give to the community.

Because community affiliation in Britain is existent mainly through synagogue affiliation – which is said to provide “the spiritual, social and material foundations for communal life”<sup>122</sup> (Hart and Kafka 2006: 5) – this chapter focuses on the affiliated Jewish community in view of its resource creation. Examining social capital creation within the Jewish community, my chapter will provide insights into the mechanisms informing Jewish identity creation and its perpetuation.

### **5.1. Social Capital Creation**

Many studies have been written about the social capital of ethnic and religious minority groups (e.g. Bankston and Zhou, 2002; Smidt, 2003; Dent, 2005). For example, there is a considerable body of research analysing the ethnicity of diaspora groups as a form and a source of social capital. Sharing the same ethnic group membership is one basis for the creation of systems of social relations, which can facilitate social capital creation

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<sup>122</sup> About 70% of British Jews are associated with a synagogue through personal or family membership (Valins et al. 2002).

among members<sup>123</sup> (Portes 1987; Werbner 1990; Fernandez Kelly 1995; Bankston et al. 1997; Zhou 1997a). There is also a set of literature published on religious minority groups and their social capital<sup>124</sup> (e.g. Putnam 2000; Smidt 2003). Coleman and Hoffer, for instance, focus their analysis on religion as a source of social capital. They suggest that religious schools, such as Catholic schools, are sources of social capital because they associate children with churches as norm-enforcing institutions (Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Coleman 1988). As these existing studies are mainly either theoretical or quantitative, research applying ethnographic methods is needed in order to provide a more nuanced account of social capital creation among minority groups.

While literature on social capital creation focuses on different ethnic and religious minority groups, there is only little research analysing the social capital of the multi-dimensional group of Jews. The few extant studies focus on American Jewry; they suggest that the Jewish community is good at accruing social capital in the form of resources and thus makes an interesting case study to analyse social capital creation among minority groups (e.g. Coleman 1988; Philips and Fishman 2006). Using secondary literature, Richman, for instance, found that Ultra-Orthodox diamond merchants in New York employ enforceable executory diamond trading agreements founded on trust. The agreements function through a reputation mechanism that is assisted by a tight network of family connections, community institutions and members for whom community membership is vital (Richman 2006). His work indicates that there is dense social capital among Jews. Still, it needs to be clarified whether the density of social capital is the same in the Ultra-Orthodox denomination in general and furthermore among less conservative denominational groups, including among the unaffiliated Jews. Accordingly, my study examines the quantity of social capital among British Jews by analysing the resources existent not only in the general Jewish community, meaning in community organisations (such as charities), but also in the major denominations, being the traditional (Modern and Ultra-Orthodox) and the non-traditional (Progressive) denominations, and among unaffiliated Jews.

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<sup>123</sup> Bankston and his co-authors, for instance, speak of ethnicity as social capital, although their argument would be the same if they described ethnicity as particular patterns of organisation and interaction that produce social capital (Bankston and Zhou 1995). In terms of the source of social capital, literature focuses on ethnicity as a function to achieve educational mobility (e.g. Modood 2004; Zhou 2005).

<sup>124</sup> For example, Bankston and Zhou have asserted that participation in ethno-religious institutions tends to construct network relationships with effective norms (Bankston and Zhou 2002).

To do so, I follow the scholars of seminal works about this phenomenon, such as by Bourdieu<sup>125</sup> (Bourdieu 1983: 249), Coleman<sup>126</sup> (Coleman 1988: 98; 1990: 302) and Putnam<sup>127</sup> (Putnam 2000: 19) and examine the social capital of British Jewry as a resource. Such existing research on this topic is, however, unable to provide a coherent definition of social capital as a resource. Current definitions are overly encompassing and, accordingly, include many different social phenomena, such as trust (e.g. Putnam 1998), social network structures (e.g. Coleman 1990) and network links or ties (e.g. Bourdieu 1983). These concepts are not capital. If anything, they are mechanisms facilitating social capital creation. The entanglement of differing functions, forms, sources and levels of actors in these definitions of social capital make them promiscuous and thus unusable in their present forms. Accordingly, this study defines social capital clearly as the resources of a social group created and accessed by people belonging to the group by virtue of their actual and perceived membership.

In consideration of the research gaps in the field of social capital creation, I apply this definition to analyse not only the existent social capital in the general community but also its creation among the major denominations of British Jews from an ethnographic perspective. Note that I also use documented accounts to establish the quantity of social capital in the Jewish community. To analyse why members contribute

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<sup>125</sup> Bourdieu relates to social capital by asserting that it is “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu 1983: 249). He focuses on the benefits accumulating to individuals through participation in groups and on the intentional construction of sociability for the rationale of constructing this resource. There are two major elements in his social capital definition. One, the social relationship itself that allows individuals to access resources held by their associates, and two, the quantity and quality of those resources (Portes 1998). Still, Bourdieu (echoing Coleman) does not assert aggregate discriminate access criteria to resources.

<sup>126</sup> Like Bourdieu, Coleman relates to social capital as a resource and also connects its creation and access to a social network structure. Coleman’s version of social capital assumes three forms, which makes his analysis imprecise. The three forms are: 1) obligations and expectations which rely on the trustworthiness of the social environment; 2) the capacity of information to flow through the social structure; and 3) the existence of norms accompanied by sanctions (Coleman 1988: 119). He also fails to differentiate between the resources of a group and the ability to acquire them through membership in the social group structure (Portes 1998). Further, Coleman mixes the conditions for social capital creation into the definitional properties of social capital, which makes his definition very encompassing.

<sup>127</sup> Putnam also regards social capital as a resource (Putnam 1993), referring to it as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam 2000: 19). Putnam’s concept of social capital has the three following components and thus differs especially from Bourdieu with his singular emphasis on social networks: 1) moral obligations and norms; 2) social values (operationalised as trust); and 3) social networks (especially voluntary associations) (Siisiainen 2003). As such, social capital means features of social organisations, being networks, norms, and trust. They all facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit (Putnam 2000). Thus, his definition of social capital is even more encompassing than Coleman’s definition, which makes it all the more imprecise.

to the community overall, I explore their motivations. Taking an ethnographic approach allows me to undertake a more nuanced analysis of members' impetuses to give to their community. In this way, I could find three motivations for members to contribute to the community, which I analyse in this chapter: self-interest, the norm of giving and a sense of responsibility to ensure the continuation of the group. I argue that these motivations are based on a sense of group belonging.

Next, I examine the conditions facilitating the construction of the motivations; as without conditions, it can be argued that the creation of the motivations could not be facilitated. Coleman relates to social capital not only as a resource, but also connects its creation to a social network structure. He analyses the concept by its function as "a variety of entities with two elements in common: They all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain action of actors - whether persons or corporate actors - within the structure" (Coleman 1988: 98; 1990: 302). Thus, this study looks at the social structure of the community in view of how the structure facilitates the construction of members' motivations to give to the community. I demonstrate, thereby, that the geographical proximity among Jews, the ideological frictions and organised social gatherings in community (sub-group) networks<sup>128</sup> can condition the formation of the motivations as they are able to facilitate the creation of a sense of connection among members and in this way a sense of group belonging.

The motivations and associated conditions that I argue assist in the creation of social capital together are a symbiosis, and thus can constitute a system of social capital creation. Looking at social capital creation as a system consisting of motivations and associated conditions, it can be argued that external mechanisms are needed to sustain this system. Previous research has looked empirically at the mechanism of gossip as a policing force ensuring collective behaviour (e.g. Baumeister et al. 2004, Coleman, 1990)<sup>129</sup>. Due to its detected power, it could be expected that gossip can sustain such a

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<sup>128</sup> Sub-groups in this chapter can denote denominations, denominational groupings (e.g. Ultra-Orthodox sects), synagogue communities, and organisations.

<sup>129</sup> Research has shown that gossip is an important mechanism in establishing a norm and assists groups in overcoming "the second-order public-good problem of sanctioning" (Coleman 1990: 284; Gambetta 1994: 203). Gossip serves as a policing device that groups employ as a low-cost method of regulating members' behaviours, especially those that reveal pursuits of selfish interests that come at a cost to the wider community (Baumeister et al. 2004). Research has found that this form of information sharing prevents free-riding (e.g. Dunbar 2004) as it provides a group-level adaptation to members' norm offenses (e.g. Wilson et al. 2000). Coleman has, for instance, written about the importance of the social

system. I, however, did not find that this mechanism, with its controlling and disciplinary functions, had significant power in supporting this social capital creation system by making it more cohesive and thereby preventing negative behaviour such as the free-riding of resources. Jews' participation in community networks can be expected to be mainly voluntary, which make them less likely to engage in resource abuse anyway. The group is mainly middle-class (Graham et al. 2007), which can also be associated with being less likely to engage in deviant behaviour.

I found strong evidence that an 'ethos of regard' can assist in supporting this system of resource creation. 'Regard' has been analysed mainly in Psychology literature. For the most part, 'regard' has been applied on the individual level to study, for instance, the need for 'regard' in view of a) the implicit and explicit self-evaluation of members from different ethnic groups in association with their group culture (Hettisa et al. 1999) and b) self-esteem and attachment processes (Murray et al. 2000). There are only a few studies that explicitly research 'regard' as a sociological phenomenon by examining it on the group level. There is an interesting sociological study by Carter and Feld that relates to my exploration of how 'regard' can sustain the system of social capital creation (Carter and Feld 2004). They look at the impact of 'positive regard' on the size and density of individuals' networks. Their quantitative survey analysis suggests that more 'regard' tends to come along with positive interaction that promotes more social interaction. Accordingly, 'regard' stands in association with larger personal and denser networks (Carter and Feld 2004). Using quantitative methods, such studies cannot provide a nuanced analysis of the process of how 'regard' promotes social interaction and thus network density and cohesion. Consequently, my study will use qualitative methods to analyse how the Jewish community's 'ethos of regard' – defined in this study as a culture of attention, notice and giving of care<sup>130</sup> – can sustain their social capital creation system.

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structure in the effectiveness of gossip to communicate community norms and prevent their defection (Coleman 1990).

<sup>130</sup> Avner Offer looks at the 'economy of regard' by exploring reciprocal exchange. The scholar demonstrates how reciprocity is driven by the pursuit of 'regard'. His concept of 'regard' relates to my work by showing that 'regard' signs are not only embodied in goods but also in services such as providing care, notice and, at the very least, attention. Considering that Offer argues that "regard provides a powerful incentive for trust" and promotes "sociability, and sociability facilitates cooperation" (Offer 1997: 454-455), I will extend his theory of 'regard' to look at it as a gesture to facilitate action, in my case resource creation. This is done by analysing how 'regard' can work as part of a group culture to facilitate trust and sociability among members of a group and in this way the creation of connections leading to

## **5.2. Jewish Capital**

Jewish social capital divides itself into ‘general community’ resources, which are provided by community organisations, and ‘denominational’ resources, which are made available by the denominational institutions and/or their members.

To access the ‘general community’ resources, Jews need to be Jewish by either ancestry or religious conversion. General community organisations refer mainly to the definitions of Jewish status provided by the religious denominations in order to decide who can access the resources. Accordingly, a person seeking to access most of the resources must have at least a father who was born Jewish, or they must have converted through one of the religious denominations. Some of these organisations, however, only require one grandparent to have been born Jewish (meaning the mother or father of the grandparent must have been born Jewish) in order to access the resources (e.g. Birthright Israel). Note that organisations’ access criteria are not always publicly stated or enforced when people want to access the resources, but I infer from my ethnographic evidence that those criteria are assumed. The general community capital is created because members donate money to or volunteer in community organisations.

‘Denominational social capital’ refers to the resources of denominational institutions (e.g. organisations and synagogues) and their members that are accessed mainly by members of the respective denominations. Denominational capital is created because members of each denomination give (money or help) to their denominational institutions (such as by paying membership fees), or directly to other denominational members. Note that there are no institutions for synagogue-unaffiliated Jews only. Thus, when I refer to the denominational capital of unaffiliated Jews, I denote the resources that unaffiliated members give to each other on an individual basis.

The access criteria for religious denominational social capital are based on the respective denominational membership criteria, which are based on ancestry and conversion. Conversion criteria vary across the denominations, which helps to explain why conversion is a separate membership/resource access criteria. The resource access criteria to the religious denominations are as follows: officially, Jews who want to access the resources of the Ultra-Orthodox denomination must have been born to a

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cooperation and other behaviours that rational actors in a communal entity would normally not engage in such as communal resource creation.

*halachically* Jewish mother or they must have converted through the Ultra-Orthodox *Beth Din* (rabbinical court of Judaism), such as the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations *Beth Din* in Stamford Hill. Individuals wanting to access the resources of the Modern Orthodox denomination must have been born to a *halachically* Jewish mother, or they must have converted according to the rules of the Modern Orthodox *Beth Din*, such as the United Synagogue *Beth Din* or through an Ultra-Orthodox or Sephardi *Beth Din*<sup>131</sup>. For people who want to access the resources of the Masorti denomination, their mother needs to have been born Jewish, or they must have converted according to the Orthodox, Sephardi or Masorti conversion standards. If Jews want to access the resources of the Reform denomination, their mother needs to have been born Jewish or they must have converted according to the conversion standards of the Reform, Orthodox or Masorti denominations. To access the resources of the Liberal denomination, either a person's father or mother needs to have been born Jewish or the person must have completed at least the Liberal conversion process.

Thus, if people want to access resources by joining a religious denominational institution, meaning a synagogue, they need to show their conversion certificate, or their birth certificate and/or their parents' marriage contract (*ketubah*)<sup>132</sup>. Mr Gilman, an employee of the United Synagogue, said regarding the application to become a member of a Modern Orthodox synagogue:

If they can show their parents' [Orthodox] Jewish marriage certificate they don't need any of those [other certificates like their own Jewish birth certificate]. We just have to substantiate the Jewishness of our members. That's the point. Because of Reform or Masorti conversions, it's such a delicate topic. You know people have to tiptoe around it. We cannot run the

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<sup>131</sup> Considering that this study does not include Sephardi Jewry in its analysis, I have left out an analysis of their resource access criteria in the text. To access the resources of the Sephardi denomination, a person needs to be *halachically* Jewish or must have converted according to the Sephardi *Beth Din*.

<sup>132</sup> These certificates are normally checked for validity particularly if the resource pertains to being married in a synagogue. Mr. Gilman, for example, asserted that if a couple wants to marry under Orthodox auspices, both of them must provide either birth certificates proving their Jewish background, which requires being born to a Jewish mother or parents, or Orthodox conversion certificates. It is also a normal procedure that their parents' ketubot (Jewish marriage contracts) is checked for validity. Mrs. Boyd, whose father was a Registrar for Modern Orthodox marriages in the United Synagogue Chief Rabbi's office, told me the following story in this regard: "There was one case of a Kohen - a Kohen is not allowed to marry a proselyte or a divorcee. The Kohen was engaged to this young woman, and when my father made investigations - he would never sign anything without having investigated, worldwide, not just in England - he found out that this woman had not been born Jewish. They'd fixed the date of the wedding and everything...In the end, they went for Reform and they accepted her...However, their children are non-Jews". This highlights the strictness of the boundaries pertaining to membership and thus to resource access of the religious denominations.

risk of questioning the Jewish status; we have to make sure that we know our members are Jewish.

Among unaffiliated Jews, being Jewish - and thus meeting the resource access criteria - is based on self-definition. Unaffiliated respondents predominantly saw themselves as Jewish because they were born to a Jewish parent or parents. Several unaffiliated respondents volunteered, however, that they regarded others as part of the group even if they had a less immediate Jewish ancestry, such as having a Jewish grandparent only. Thus, it can be suggested that the access criteria to resources provided by unaffiliated Jews are less strictly defined but are still based on Jewish ancestry or conversion.

The following sub-sections illustrate that there is a wide range of general community resources available, but that the quantity of accrued denominational capital varies according to the level of Jewish conservatism. The evidence indicates that the more conservative and thus 'traditional' a denomination is, the greater the quantity of resources available within the denomination. The analysis of social capital existent among British Jewry shall demonstrate that there is overall high social capital within it.

### **5.2.1. General Community Resources**

General community resources are available through community organisations of which there are many in Britain. A report from 2000 estimated that there are 1,910 voluntary, financially independent Jewish community organisations operating in Britain (Halfpenny and Reid 2000). Considering the size of the community, which is estimated to comprise 270,499 individuals (Graham et al. 2007), there is roughly one organisation for every 142 members of the community (Halfpenny and Reid 2000). Many community organisations are registered as charities. Statistics on charitable giving demonstrate that members donate a lot of money to Jewish charities. A survey executed in 2002 by the JPR showed that respondents in the UK were most likely to give highest priority to Jewish causes. Further, their evidence indicates that members give more to charity than non-Jewish British people. On average, members who support only Jewish causes give a median of £150 over one year (mean value £1,602)<sup>133</sup> (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998), which is much higher than the median donation of £10 (mean value £31)

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<sup>133</sup> This value is based on a 1995 postal survey of a sample of 2,194 British Jews (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998).

given by British people in general (NCVO 2009). Furthermore, members give more to charity when they support Jewish causes (median value of £150) than when they support non-Jewish causes (median value of £50) (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998). This indicates that the quantity of Jewish organisational resources is extensive and that they are highly valued by community members.

I found during my fieldwork and research online that there is a vast amount of educational, care giving, cultural, employment, financial (e.g. bursaries and scholarships) and security<sup>134</sup> resources available to community members. For instance, every synagogue I visited had a board full with leaflets from Jewish organisations (including groups) offering services such as help for the blind and handicapped, or courses on subjects such as yoga or Yiddish. Indeed, many participants perceived their community to be a major provider of resources to them. For example, Johanna said: “In the Jewish community, there’s always a network that will support the needy... There’s a lot done, and a lot of money is raised”.

This section will illustrate the wide range of general community resources available to Jews by looking at the resources that were most mentioned by participants, being the educational (including financial and religious) and cultural (including care) resources.

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<sup>134</sup> Members also have access to security services such as protection from or information about terrorist threats and anti-Semitism. The Community Security trust (CST), for instance, is a charitable organisation funded by the community to provide representation and advice for its members on matters of security and anti-Semitism. For example, they provide a student’s guide to anti-Semitism on campus as well as yearly anti-Semitic discourse and incidents reports. This organisation concerns itself solely with the gathering, analysing and publishing of statistics relating to anti-Semitic figures and responding to threats to Jews by providing physical security and advice. The quantity of its resources can be seen in the fact that this organisation has the capacity to help secure over 170 synagogues, 80 Jewish schools, 64 Jewish communal organisations and approximately 1000 communal events every year (<http://www.cst.org>). Another example is the organisation ‘Streetwise’, which works with Jewish schools and community organisations to enhance the personal safety and development of young people through anti-bullying programmes, life skills training, self-defense training and safety information like advice about using public transport or the Streetwise leadership program. The extensiveness of its resources can be seen in the quantity of people using them. It engages over 10,000 young people each year (<http://www.streetwisegb.org>). Overall, I found that the level of professionalism is very high in these security and safety organisations so that they are frequently used by and work in collaboration with British police forces and government agencies. The extensiveness of the security and safety resources reflects their quantity, and the extent of attention paid to details and the fact that government institutions use them indicates their quality. Note that their websites do not state what type of Jews can have access to these resources and it seems that they do not request for people to confirm their Jewish status when they want to access such resources. Considering, however, that the CST and ‘Streetwise’ tend to work in Jewish establishments or at community events, a detailed description of who can have access to the resources could be seen as unnecessary.

Organisations often publically state the access criteria - pertaining to ancestry and conversion - for their resources. Sometimes, however, they are only indirectly communicated, for example, through advertising that is tailored specifically towards Jews. In general, ethnographic evidence suggests that more valuable resources, such as educational resources, have stricter access boundaries.

#### **5.2.1.1. Cultural Resources**

There are many cultural community organisations in Britain such as cultural societies (e.g. Jewish university societies) and clubs (e.g. the Jewish Community Centre for London). My observational evidence indicates that these organisations are generally very efficient in planning large numbers of different events to suit the needs of a diverse membership. Activities range from theatre or cinema trips, to communal dinners and movie nights, to sporting events. Some organisations target particular age groups, such as Jewish youth organisations (e.g. FZY), which arrange a wide range of activities including summer and winter camps for their members. I found that these organisations are an important part of Jewish youth culture in Britain:

Bnei Akiva teaches Zionism, Jewish identity, what it means to be a Jews in the world today. I was very involved in Bnei Akiva. I used to go to all the camps and things. I have a whole network of friends from there. After GSCE you go on tours and I have very close friends from there (Saul)

I feel very affiliated when I'm running the youth group, and when I'm in the youth group, it makes you feel very – because it's so nice to be part of a collective, it makes you really involved...The community aspect, youth groups are important for that. It's just something that makes me feel closer, that makes me more – I always feel very religious and very affiliated and very close to God, almost, if there is one, when I'm on these camps. It makes me feel really, you know, get involved – everyone's doing it, we're all doing it (Stephen)

There are also many university societies for Jewish students across Britain. Jewish societies at university cater to the spiritual and social needs of their members through a variety of events that are generally for members from all backgrounds. Note that not all Jews join these youth and student societies, and thus not all make use of these or other community resources. For example, most of the interviewees in my sample who were already secular during their teenage years and later at university did not feel

comfortable in youth groups and university societies because they did not feel they fitted in:

In terms of the wider Jewish community, I always felt very alienated. I went to Haberdashers' school, which had like 40% Jews or something like that. It's still very renowned for having this materialist pushy Jewish minority, who aren't very nice who aren't very friendly and that was tied into the wider teenage social life in North London and I didn't really fit into the youth movements. I tried hard. I went to several Jewish summer camps. It just didn't really fit. I was very left-wing, I listened to alternative music and things like that, I was quite intellectual... This didn't make me part of this social life. I went to a Habonim camp, even there I didn't fit it (Robin)

Regarding the access criteria to cultural organisations, I found there is sometimes no publicly stated access specification. Still, these groups' publicity tends to promote itself to Jewish people by using Yiddish and Hebrew words (e.g. the '*Pesach Appeal*' or '*Mitzvah Day*' on the 'Jewish Care' website<sup>135</sup>) or by addressing their clientele as Jews on websites or flyers. For example, the Jewish Community Centre website advertises "It's a great place for Jews of all ages to meet other Jews" (JCC 2011). Thus, the likelihood of gentiles accessing these resources is low. Having interacted with attendees and organisers at a range of cultural events and activities that do not publicise resource access criteria on their websites, such as Limmud events and Jewish student society activities at Oxford, I found that being Jewish by direct ancestry was assumed.

Furthermore, although participation in such cultural organisations generally costs money; the costs tend to be low as resources are often subsidised through donations achieved via fundraising (such as Limmud events). Sometimes activities and events are completely funded through charitable donations (e.g. trips to Israel with Birthright Israel). Having looked at the websites of several cultural organisations and having attended many cultural events and activities, I found that cultural organisations also rely on volunteers to support their work.

By way of example, the extent of the social capital available to members through community organisations - because of the considerable donations to them - is demonstrated by the resources of 'Jewish Care', which provides both care facilities and cultural resources. Services are largely subsidised through donations. Many people donate to this charity; according to a survey on Jewish charitable giving that was

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<sup>135</sup> See <http://www.jewishcare.org> for details.

executed in 2002 by the JPR, over half of the respondents (53%) donated to Jewish Care (Becher et al. 2002). It is the largest health and social care organisation for the community in London and the South East of England with 1,100 staff and 2,500 volunteers. The organisation runs more than 70 centres (including services) and cares for more than 7,000 people every week. This is possible due to its large budget; in 2008 Jewish Care had a budget of £18.8m<sup>136</sup>.

In detail, Jewish Care provides various services for older and less able people in particular<sup>137</sup>. Financial assistance and grants can be provided for those services. For old and less able people there are day community centres, residential and nursing homes, respite care and home care services (e.g. delivery of *kosher* meals to homes). The organisation's 'Fix-it Scheme' helps disabled, ill or elderly Jews with specific jobs around the house. There are also free family carers' services, such as regular mailings with information from national carers' organisations, confidential telephone or face-to-face meetings with support/advice workers and support group meetings<sup>138</sup>.

This organisation even offers a range of therapeutic services for Holocaust survivors and refugees that are even tailor-made to meet their specific needs. Such members can also participate in a daily programme of activities. Some of Jewish Care's services are specifically for younger people and range from health and support services (e.g. young carer support, Tay-Sachs Disease screenings and access to Jewish Action and Training for sexual health)<sup>139</sup> to cultural events and activities, such as 'Champagne and Sushi' as part of the singles' events programme, to sporting opportunities.

Again, while some of their services - mainly those that are inexpensive to deliver - are free to users, the majority of services cost money but are subsidised through donations. Jewish Care has many fundraising events to support the provision of their extensive range of services. In a conversation with Mrs Greig, an employee of this organisation, she claimed that their facilities and services were only for Jews; she mentioned specifically that membership by birth was assumed. According to her, this was mainly not questioned. She also did not expect gentiles to take advantage of the

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<sup>136</sup> See <http://www.jewishcare.org> for details.

<sup>137</sup> Services for less able people include people with mental health problems, people with a physical or sensory disability, Alzheimer's disease or other forms of dementia, or those who are visually impaired.

<sup>138</sup> See <http://www.jewishcare.org> for details.

<sup>139</sup> Jewish Care also have support teams for people living independently who have mental health issues (see <http://www.jewishcare.org> for details). The institution also offers supported housing for younger people with mental health issues and housing for young people who have physical or sensory disabilities.

resources as their advertisement was geared towards community members. For instance, the use of 'Jewish' in front of the resources offered on their webpage conveys that the resources are only for Jews. The fact that this vast amount of resources is provided by only one communal organisation indicates the existence of an incredibly large pool of resources available to the Jewish community overall.

#### 5.2.1.2. Educational Resources

Members have access to a wide range of financial resources pertaining to education such as scholarships and bursaries<sup>140</sup>. Jewish youth also have access to subsidised educational trips to Israel or countries with a Holocaust past such as Poland. Two groups offering such trips are UJIA and the Jewish Learning Exchange. Most importantly, Jewish children have access to Jewish schools. Looking at statistics by the JPR from a 1995 survey on British Jews in London in **Table 5.1.**, we find that a greater percentage of parents overall send at least their eldest child to a Jewish day school (average 37%). Note that the more conservative members are in their outlook, the more likely they are to send their children to Jewish schools (Valins et al. 2002). Thus, an importance is placed in the general community on children attending such schools.

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<sup>140</sup> Jewish charities have various grants, bursaries and hardship funds that members of the group can access, such as bursaries for Jewish children from poor families to go on educational trips provided by the Federation of Zionist Youth (<http://www.fzy.org.uk>). Another organisation, Finnart House, provides scholarships and hardship funds for university students from this community (<http://www.finnart.org>). Their criteria for eligibility are that the applicants must show proof that they have Jewish parents, a Jewish mother or evidence of conversion by a rabbinic authority. Sometimes students need only to show proof that they belong to a religious institution in order to be eligible for a Jewish scholarship, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association Scholarship and the Stuart Young Foundation scholarship (<http://www.anglojewish.org.uk>). This, however, means that the applicants need to conform to the ethnic or conversion standards of the religious denominations. Making the distinction between members by birth and conversos – the latter are marked out as being different - suggests that the status quo - and accordingly the default as well as - the norm of those accessing community resources is being Jewish by birth.

**Table 5.1. Percentage of parents with school-age children who sent their eldest child to a Jewish day school according to Jewish identity (N=464)**

Jewish identity category	Percentage of category who sent their eldest child to a Jewish day school
Secular	7
Just Jewish	22
Progressive	9
Traditional	49
Strictly Orthodox	96

*Source:* Valins et al. 2002

There is also a prioritisation in the community for children to have Jewish education. Becher and his co-authors show in their JPR 2002 survey analysis of Jews in London that most respondents favoured a Jewish secondary school (Becher et al. 2002). The preference is also reflected in the number of Jewish schools. According to the JPR 1999 survey, there are 135 such day schools in the UK, of which 3% are Progressive; 53.1% Central Orthodox (i.e. Modern Orthodox) and 44.6% are Strictly Orthodox (i.e. Ultra-Orthodox) (Valins et al. 2002). The preference is revealed, furthermore, in the great demand for such schooling. Although it has been argued that community numbers have declined by over 25% during the last 50 years, the number of Jewish children in full-time, community-provided education has increased by around 500% from 4,000 in 1950 to 22,640 in 1999. The increase over the years indicates that there is an over-demand of applicants to these schools at the moment (Valins et al. 2002).

I found three reasons that can assist in explaining the importance of and preference for faith schools among members and also what makes these educational resources valuable in general. One, they provide a Jewish social network which may establish and reinforce a sense of identity. For example, a Modern Orthodox mother in her forties told me during one of my observations that it was important that her daughter attended a Jewish school so that both of them could enjoy a community environment with Jewish friends. Similarly, Ophra said: “It’s important to send your children to Jewish schools to be part of the community”. Or, as Reform interviewee Robert explained: “We wanted our kids to have Jewish friends and to be exposed to that, so their Jewish identity would be something that was natural”.

Two, Jewish schools offer religious education. Survey research has concluded that in particular members with a religious outlook felt that a ‘good religious education’ was

important because it contributed to a person's sense of identity (Becher et al. 2002). Yael, who is Haredi, informed me that Ultra-Orthodox children are all sent to community provided schools in order to be educated in Jewish studies:

Secular Studies and Jewish Studies are generally split between. Some schools split morning and afternoon, some it's an integrated timetable. But the average school, certainly in Stamford Hill, the whole morning is for Jewish Studies - that's to learn Chumash, the Torah - that's the law, history, all the various general knowledge, all the various things, the Jewish side of things - that will be taught in Yiddish. And then you do the normal, your Maths, your English, Geography, History, Science - all those things are done generally in the afternoon and obviously conducted in English.

This reason must be seen in the context that the Ultra-Orthodox also send their children to Jewish schools for them to remain within the community social circle so that they are protected from "risks" (Yael).

In a similar vein, a very devout Modern Orthodox man in his twenties who had a secular Modern Orthodox background told me that he wanted to send his future children to a community provided school so that they would not lack religious knowledge in adulthood. He said: "I've never been to a Jewish school and although I do a lot of religious studying I feel I will never be able to catch up with people who have been to Jewish schools since they were little".

Three, Jewish schools achieve examination scores that are considerably higher than the national average (Short 2002; Valins et al. 2002). Nearly half of the respondents in a JPR survey, for instance, agreed that educational standards at Jewish schools are higher than alternative non-Jewish schools (strongly agreed 10%; agreed 33%) (Becher et al. 2002: 56). This is in line with some participants' perceptions of the educational quality of Jewish schools. For example, the Haredi interviewee Chava noted:

They [Jewish schools] have very good results. The Jewish mind is very trained. In fact, if you read the tables, statistically Jewish schools are very good. Not because they're naturally clever, although some are, but because they're used to from a very young age, our children by the age of seven are, generally speaking fluently and reading and writing Hebrew and English. So they automatically have two languages straight away. They don't necessarily speak Hebrew, but they can read it and write it. And they have a reasonable understanding because they learn that as part of their Jewish Studies.

Similarly, Albert noted, “There’s an emphasis on education in the community. It’s always about ‘what grades did Johnny down the road get?’ Parents send their children to Jewish schools because they are known for providing good education so their children can thrive academically”. Indeed, several of the parents I talked to preferred to send their children to Jewish schools due to their high educational standards; this desirability may contribute toward explaining why educational resources have stricter access criteria.

To get into most of the community provided schools, children need to be Jewish by heredity, or at least one of their parents (normally their mother) needs to have converted. The type of conversion accepted varies according to the denomination of the school. To attend one of the Ultra-Orthodox schools, a child must be *halachically* Jewish, which means that at least the mother must be *halachically* Jewish, or must have converted through an Ultra-Orthodox *Beth Din*. To become a pupil at a Modern Orthodox school at least the mother of the child needs to be *halachically* Jewish or must have converted according to the rules of an Ultra-Orthodox, Modern Orthodox or a Sephardi *Beth Din*<sup>141</sup>. For children to go to a Progressive school, their parents need to have been members of a Reform, Liberal or Masorti synagogue for several years or to have converted according to the conversion standards of the respective denominations. This means to be members of a Reform synagogue, at least the mother of the applicant needs to be Jewish or the person must have converted according to the Reform, Masorti, Orthodox or Sephardi conversion process. Masorti synagogues require that their members have at least a mother who was born Jewish or that they must have converted according to the conversation standards of the Masorti, Sephardi or Orthodox denominations. To be part of the Liberal synagogue, a person’s father or mother needs to have been born Jewish or one parent must have completed at least the Liberal conversion process.

In cases when schools cannot fill their places exclusively with Jewish children, issues regarding the *halachic* status of applicants become more flexible<sup>142</sup> (Valins et al. 2002). For example, Esther said that her friend was able to attend a Modern Orthodox

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<sup>141</sup> To become a pupil at a Sephardi school at least the mother of the child needs to be *halachically* Jewish or must have converted according to the rules of a Sephardi *Beth Din* or, alternatively, through an Ultra-Orthodox or a Modern Orthodox *Beth Din*.

<sup>142</sup> Note that schools will, nonetheless, prioritise Jewish children over those who are not (Valins et al. 2002).

school in London over 15 years ago when Jewish schools were not oversubscribed even though she was not *halachically* Jewish:

Her father was Jewish but her mother wasn't, but she identifies very strongly as being Jewish. She went to a Jewish school and she's got a very strong Jewish identity even though *halachically* she's not Jewish. And I remember in the sixth form she really wanted to learn *Talmud* and she went round and tried to find someone in the school who'd teach her *Talmud* and no one would.

The quote indicates that distinctions are made if Jews do not fit the exact access criteria.

With this in mind, the strictness of the access criteria to Jewish resources and particularly educational resources was highlighted in the court case against one of the leading Orthodox schools in London called the 'Jewish Free School' (JFS) in June 2009. Parents sued the school claiming race discrimination because their son was not accepted at this educational institution because his Jewish status did not agree with the school's admission policy. The school relies on the authority of the office of the Chief Rabbi to determine who is Jewish for the purpose of admission. The Chief Rabbinate only considers a child Jewish if the child's mother is Jewish matrilineally (as in traditional Jewish law) – meaning the mother of the child was born to a Jewish mother who herself was born to a Jewish mother or had converted - or the child's mother has converted to Judaism through an Orthodox authority (Herman 2011: 150). As the mother in the JFS court case converted to Judaism under Masorti auspices and JFS admissions policy can only accept children whose mother converted through an Orthodox rabbinic court, the school had to reject the child's admission (Herman 2011: 150).

The Court of Appeal as well as the Supreme Court ruled in the family's favour, declaring the school's policy amounted to race discrimination. According to the judges, "Jews constituted a racial group defined principally by ethnic origin and additionally by conversion" (BBC 2009b). In other words, Jews were considered "a protected ethnic group under the RRA [Race Relations Act] 1976, and thus, any discrimination on the basis of being Jewish, or, as in this case, not being assessed as Jewish, was contrary to the Act"<sup>143</sup> (Herman 2011: 150). For that reason, the judges decided that "the mother

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<sup>143</sup> According to section 17 of the Act, a person cannot be discriminated against on the "grounds [of] namely colour, race, nationality, or ethnic or national origins" (Supreme-Court 2010).

and son were being [racially] discriminated against because they were not genetically Jewish (in the eyes of the school)” (Herman 2011: 150).

The United Synagogue with the Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks also got involved in the debate highlighting the complexities of the parentage definition of Jewish status by advocating that the assumed racial definition is a religious definition of the status (Persoff 2010) and as a faith school they had the legal right to engage in religious discrimination (Herman 2011). The judges counter-argued this point by asserting that the school’s decision to admit a pupil should depend on religious grounds, hence on faith and its practices, so “to discriminate against a person on the ground that they were or were not Jewish was therefore [still] to discriminate on racial grounds and could not be accepted” (BBC 2009b).

This debate shows that there can be rigid access boundaries to Jewish resources. While gentiles can convert into the different religious streams of Judaism, they cannot convert to the ethnic group which is part of religious Judaism. Thus, in determining who can access communal resources a distinction is drawn between conversos – who are generally not encouraged to convert<sup>144</sup> and thus few in number<sup>145</sup> – and members by birth. This distinction indicates that being a member by birth is the status quo and the norm<sup>146</sup> and adds exclusivity to accessing the resources. The ethnic criterion also gives belonging to the group an exceptional status, which can inform the sense of Jewishness of those who are hereditarily Jewish, which is the greater majority of British Jewry.

In sum, the preference for faith schools highlights the perceived quality of Jewish educational resources. The access restrictions to these resources illustrate the focus on ancestry in Judaism.

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<sup>144</sup> Particularly the traditional denominations regard conversion as undesirable; while other denominations are not missionary, they are less hostile to conversion (TCFSC 2009).

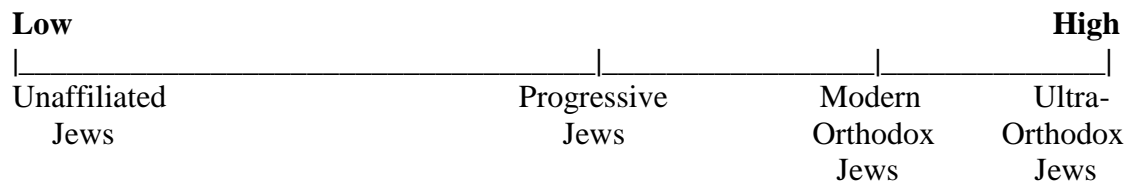
<sup>145</sup> This is also reflected in the low conversion numbers. In Britain in 2010 there were only 88 conversions in the Reform denomination, followed by 71 in the Liberal denomination and 36 in the Ultra-orthodox and Modern Orthodox Ashkenazi denomination. This amounts to 196 conversions. This number includes adoption conversions. The number of Masorti and Sephardi conversions could not be provided to me. The figure is particularly low if compared to the number of conversions to Islam in Britain in 2010, which was about 5,200 (Brice 2011).

<sup>146</sup> I am aware that having a separate membership category for ‘conversos’ is associated with the disagreements across the denominations concerning the conversion processes. However, this fact does not discount my argument overall. To the contrary, the disagreement highlights that a fuss is made about conversion, which, in turn, indicates that Judaism is a religion into which members are normally born. Thus, we can also infer from this that the norm of being Jewish is being Jewish by birth.

**5.2.2. Denominational Resources**

Denominational social capital refers to resources of the denominational institutions and their members that can be accessed by Jews of the respective denominations. Considering that there are no institutions that are solely for unaffiliated members, in this study the denominational capital of unaffiliated Jews refers to the resources that unaffiliated members provide to each other. I suggest in this section that social capital is denser in the traditional group than in the non-traditional one and there is very sparse capital among unaffiliated members. When we put social capital on a spectrum ranging from low social capital on the left to high social capital on the right, as in **Figure 5.1.**, the unaffiliated members are on the far left side of the spectrum, followed by the Progressive (note that there was no difference found between the Reform and Liberal Jews in the density of social capital) in the middle of the spectrum, then the Modern Orthodox on the right side of the spectrum and finally the Ultra-Orthodox on the far right side of the spectrum. In other words, my findings show that the more conservative members are (in terms of following a Jewish lifestyle) the more social capital they have.

**Figure 5.1. Denominational capital scale**



*Source:* Author's compilation

Firstly, I found that traditional Jews have a denser social capital than non-traditional and unaffiliated Jews. There is a very dense social capital present in the Ultra-Orthodox community. The Ultra-Orthodox community has a very strong network that is based on members helping each other. This denomination tries to be self-sufficient and independent from mainstream gentile society. It provides a lot of social services of which the most important ones are loan services. It, furthermore, facilitates

its own employment, shops (supermarkets, clothing stores, butcher shops and bakeries) and has its own aid services<sup>147</sup>. Yael, who is Haredi, described several such aid services:

I collect twice a year for an organisation called 'Help for Brides' and 'Charity for Local Families,' and this organisation, besides giving money to poor brides to help them defray the costs of the wedding, to buy clothing, to buy a wig, to set up a home - they will give them a lump sum. When it comes before the Jewish holidays, before Passover, which is a very expensive time of year - before any Jewish festival they [the latter charity] distribute money amongst the poor families in the area. It's a regular collection that's made through most of the streets in this area...I go to the ladies in the street and I invariably send in not much less than £300 just from my street as donations to this organisation and they then distribute these funds. Now at [Ultra-]Orthodox Jewish weddings, ladies will go round to each table with a tray, asking for contributions towards this cause...so that helps poor brides that can't afford to make their own wedding...There's even an organisation that's set up recently to encourage people, instead of making very fancy weddings...to cut the cost of your wedding...and donate to sponsor a couple who can't afford to make a wedding at all.

The community even has its own medical service with doctors and an emergency medical aid with an ambulance through Hatzola<sup>148</sup>. Zachariah, who is a very devout Modern Orthodox man, said of this service:

Hatzola is an organisation...[that] only operates in Stamford Hill, Hendon and Golders Green, and it is the most amazing service. Anybody who phones Hatzola no matter whether the person is Jewish or not, any time day or night, is assured of them turning up and dealing with the need in question. It's a private ambulance service free of charge.

Although this respondent asserted that the service is available to gentiles, the fact that people get to know about this service mainly through the community network indicates that this service is primarily for Jews and Ultra-Orthodox members in particular. This intent was also indicated by Mr Kernkraut, who formerly ran the service from his home with his wife Esther: "We do have our own ambulance". In regard to the general

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<sup>147</sup> For example, Johnda volunteered at a fully kosher refuge provided by the Jewish Women's Aid. The refuge was a place where women and children, mainly from this community, could escape domestic violence. She emphasised that there is a lot of domestic abuse that is predominantly ignored in the Ultra-Orthodox community, and that women from this community would rather stay in their violent marriages than go to a non-kosher refuge, making this institution crucial.

<sup>148</sup> *Hatzola* is a volunteer-run service, run by Jewish volunteers, offering a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week service for the North London Jewish Community - that includes Emergency Response, First Aid Classes, First Aid Advice, Blood Pressure Tests, Wound Dressing, Patient Support and a 24 Hour Call Centre - for the North London Jewish community. It was started in 1979 after two members of the North London community died while waiting for NHS ambulances to arrive after having heart attacks (see <http://www.hatzola.net> for details).

medical services offered, he said: “If anyone needed to know who a specialist for a particular disease is, they would come to me. I would then recommend who the right person is for their problem” (Ryan 2003). This quotation highlights the finding that community resources are often perceived to be better than non-Jewish resources.

In general, social services are part of the community’s *gemach* system. *Gemach* (*gemilat chasidim*) means ‘acts of kindness’. It was originally only a Jewish free-loan fund, but has developed to include free loans of household items, clothing, books, equipment and other services. *Gemachs* are mainly run by individuals but can also be run by businesses and organisations:

The idea is communities are obligated to set up a gemach for everything and anything. So in the world of Stamford Hill and Golders Green, there’s a gemach for anything. If you are a young mother and you need a machine to help you extract milk, there’s a gemach for that. If you have an elderly relative and you need to borrow a wheelchair...you can get a wheelchair from somewhere (Zachariah)

You can get everything from someone...Up the road you have the buggy and cot gemach so when your nieces and nephews are coming...Or, the tables and chairs gemach, so you can have tables and chairs for simchas [Jewish festive occasions] or the bottle gemach. There’s a medicine gemach, so you can get paracetamol (Maya)

There are people unfortunately who can't afford, for example, certain things. So they will go to a gemach when they have another baby – ‘Do you have a cot, or a buggy or clothes?’ We give, for example, when my children outgrow their clothing that's still good I give it to a gemach (Chava)

Valuable resources, however, seem to be more difficult to obtain from a *gemach*. For example, Yael, said:

We didn't have the £2000 up front that was needed [to improve their house], so my husband went to a gemach, borrowed this £2000 for a limited time, and as soon as we got the money paid by the council we repaid that loan. Gemach is usually a temporary loan society. Now, there are some people who literally live on money like that, because they don't have any other money. It's not generally, as far as I know, given for ordinary living expenses; it's given if somebody's child is getting married or they have a bar mitzvah or even a bris. They may need money in order to be able to make the celebration. And they will go to the gemach and the gemach will insist on two guarantors - they don't give the money out just that easily - and they will insist on a repayment plan. It's all done very legally and very formally and people are not embarrassed, it's a normal thing to do. And that's how people very often manage to make weddings. And they pay it off, and people can be paying it off for years and years, if somebody's got six or

seven children - if they don't have the money for the first then they certainly don't for the seventh. And people will be paying it off. But if they go to work, from their wages, whatever, they pay back what they have to these *gemachs*.

This system only works because people give to *gemachs*. Although I found that the services are provided by volunteers at no cost, there is a tradition of making donations such as items or money for the up-keep of the services. Still, they seem to be understood as voluntary contributions. Zachariah explained:

There's always an assumption that for each of these services if you can you will donate as gratitude for the service. So if you borrow a wheelchair you might give them £10 or £20 to say 'thank you'. If you borrow a table cloth you give them a fiver. If you borrow a machine, you give £20, whatever it is. Some people don't give. Some people do give. Some people give a lot. Some people don't give a lot. But the idea is one of communal responsibility. It provides for an amazingly caring community and at the same time an amazingly closed community.

On the other hand, Maya, who is also Haredi, emphasised that money does not need to be given and is often not given directly in exchange for a provided service:

This isn't about money. You do it for free. You can donate money or material for the upkeep. For the medicine you don't donate money. For tables and chairs, you wouldn't pay but other people would donate to keep the tables and chairs up to date, you don't pay necessarily when you borrow. If someone has died and you want to do something good in their honour then you donate.

It is understood that because some people cannot pay for or contribute towards the running of these services, others will give more in an act of charity. This arrangement is illustrated by the following example described by Chava:

A very good group of ladies will [voluntarily] prepare this reception [before or after the wedding ceremony]. You pay them what it costs. My daughter got married and we did the same thing...The bill came to £720 or £780 for the cost of the food. I gave them £1000...There'll be somebody else who can't even afford £200 and they will do this reception free of charge. So every donation that comes in from people who pay for their services will help to cover the costs for somebody who can't afford to pay. So you call it a the reception *gemach*...Even people who are quite wealthy will do this type of reception and give a very good donation to the cause, so that will help them defray costs when they do it for somebody who can't afford to pay for it.

My evidence suggests that if donated money is not needed to provide a particular service, the money is forwarded to a fund for *gemach* services that addresses critical needs in the daily life of this community.

Although *gemachs* are mainly run in Ultra-Orthodox communities, I found that some devout Modern Orthodox members will occasionally give to or take advantage of them. For instance, Johanna asserted that she borrowed a *mezuzah*<sup>149</sup> from a *gemach* when she moved house because she forgot hers at her old house. Or, Josie volunteered:

I don't make use of it because it is for people in need. I have given goods to a *gemach*. I know it exists and it's there if I need it. You know you are there for each other. If you need anything you don't even need to know the person, there would be help in some way.

Still, I found that less devout members from the Modern Orthodox denomination and Jews from other denominations would not take or give to a *gemach*. This could be due to the greater ideological differences separating these members from the Ultra-Orthodox denomination. Thus, Ultra-Orthodox resources are mainly provided and accessed by individuals of the Ultra-Orthodox community.

This community is highly interconnected and organised. It is predominantly self-reliant through its inter-dependence. Chava said in this regard:

We have organisations, we have charitable things that prepare meals to try and support families. We do try as much as we can to help within the community...We do not want to be dependent on the non-Jewish society; we take care of our own people.

To stay independent and separate from mainstream society they also favour Jewish services over non-Jewish ones. Mosche, who is Hassidic, stated:

Jews learn to treat each other as one family, and therefore help each other more...You go to the synagogues and there are papers up, a billboard...For example, it says: 'If you want to go to the airport, please call me'...Sometimes it can be a bit complicated - if the fellow Jew wants a bit more money than the non-Jew. So I am not necessarily obliged to take the fellow Jew. I'm doing him a favour to support him because he needs to earn a living...I help my brother.

Like Mosche, Maya emphasised that people employ each other to keep the community independent from the mainstream. She gave the example that some women

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<sup>149</sup> A *mezuzah* is a sacred parchment inscribed with specified Hebrew verses from the Torah (Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21). It is a commandment to hang up a *mezuzah* on the doorframe of a Jewish home before moving.

work as child-minders so that other women can go to work in the Jewish community, enabling their husbands to follow their religious studies.

Whereas I found that the Ultra-Orthodox focus on individually-provided resources that are accessible to everyone within the group, within the Modern Orthodox I found more focus on resources being distributed centrally, mainly through synagogues. This is in keeping with the fact that the synagogue is the centre of the community in non-Ultra-Orthodox denominational networks, whereas community life in the Ultra-Orthodox network takes place in members' houses. The following conversation between Johanna and her husband, who have both attended Ultra-Orthodox services, illustrates this point. Her husband said: "Ultra-Orthodox synagogues are functional - somewhere you go to pray. They're not a centre of the community". Johanna added: "Yes, definitely. Whereas, in a Modern Orthodox shul, that's the heart of the community, that isn't the case with the Ultra-Orthodox - it's functional".

Accordingly, I found during my fieldwork that members of Modern Orthodox synagogues have access to various benefits through the synagogue, such as the right to be buried in a Jewish cemetery. They have, furthermore, access to resources such as social networks in terms of friends and leisure groups (e.g. reading clubs, choirs or toddler groups), organised events and activities (e.g. yoga classes, children's programmes on the Sabbath as well as a communal *kiddush*<sup>150</sup>), and information about good services (e.g. accommodation, jobs, handyman services), via a synagogue websites or notice boards. For example, the United Synagogue employee Mr Gilman said:

You [as a member of a Modern Orthodox synagogue] can go to shul, you can go to the kiddush afterwards, you can have a relationship with the rabbi, you can put yourself on the list for community care, which operates across each of the synagogues...If somebody is elderly or unwell you get access to meals on wheels or being visited. There's a group of volunteers in every synagogue and they will do anything from during the week of Shiva after bereavement, they'll provide food if need be, to they'll bring food for the elderly. They have visitations to Jewish people in prison to Jewish people in the army. They have all sorts of activities going on a daily basis in a synagogue; they have activities for elderly people, nurseries for kids, and what happens is people may bring a couple of quid and put it in a box by the door and that will provide sandwiches.

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<sup>150</sup> *Kiddush* is a blessing recited over wine/grape juice to sanctify the Shabbat and other Jewish holy days. In synagogue, it takes place in form of an after-service gathering and tends to be accompanied by food and drinks.

According to this employee, services are, for the most part, provided by volunteers and paid for by synagogues, which means through synagogue membership fees and donations. The United Synagogue, which has the largest membership of Jews in Britain, is a special case in this respect as it provides resources to its members not only through its synagogues but also directly through its central governing body such as its youth group 'Tribe'<sup>151</sup>.

Nevertheless, resources are also provided by synagogue members individually. Some Modern Orthodox participants mentioned to me that synagogue members provide helpful information to each other, such as names of cheap and good tradesmen or where to find lower than standard rate bar or bat mitzvah preparation lessons. They also provide services such as legal advice or counselling to members of their community. For example, Devery noted, "they recommend doctors to you: 'Whoever went to see so and so, who was very, very good'. And I wouldn't hesitate to ask because I know there's kindness and good will in my setting". Or, David volunteered, "someone might say: 'I will move out of the area. Do you know anyone who is looking for a house? Then we can keep the estate agent out of it'".

Resources can also include the provision of employment and internships or helpful information in this regard. For example, Edward asserted that people would say things like "why don't you talk to so and so, they might be able to help". Or, the lawyer Steve asserted the following:

The most important aspect of going to synagogue is meeting other people. It's a meeting point, that's very important. I also use it for networking. I know who the dentists are, I know who the property dealers are, I know who the solicitors are, I know who the merchant bankers are. If somebody comes to me and says: 'I want a driving instructor. I can say: Malcolm is a driving instructor. Matthew is a driving instructor'. Sometimes, I pick up business in shul. [Interviewer: So if you need someone for banking information or a job, would you then go to someone in shul?] Yes, yes. I know that about other people, who go to shuls in Northwest London. So I would always start with someone I knew and someone who knew me than a stranger.

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<sup>151</sup> In terms of the resources Tribe provides, Mr. Lustick, volunteered: "We have now got 12,000 members...Tribe has been successful in linking schools with synagogues. We have two major US secondary schools, one is JFS, it has 2,000 students, and King Solomon has 950 students. That's about 3000 teenagers we have regular contact with, and the idea is to encourage them back into the community. In order for that to work we have to make sure that our communities are vibrant places...We have five primary schools with a total of 3,500 to 4,000 kids across them...We run programmes in the schools...After school clubs in synagogues...We provide karate lessons, it's a way to get them involved. We have these after schools clubs also in some of the synagogues. It's slowly growing".

Another lawyer, Steward, said:

I started my training with someone who used to be the best friend of my cousin. When I wanted to switch to another firm halfway through my training course, things weren't working out, I went to someone I knew from a little shul in Hendon and then when I left that firm, I was brought in, I was headhunted, to look after a new firm that was being set up by a group of people, one of whom I knew from the shul I went to at the time.

Members also provide physical help to each other. For example, Johanna said:

If someone is unwell in the community, Lucy will make them food. Or if they have a baby, Lucy will do the shopping for them and give them food. When you need a bit of help the community is there to give you help.

Or, Adena claimed proudly:

It [the community] is a support network. It's people around you who are like you, people who like you, and people who are similar to you, people who look out for you, people who you look out for, people whose lives you share and inter-mingle with. I'm single, and live by myself...I've been sort of adopted by the community, they look after me on Shabbat. I'm fed on most Shabbat...I think when people die, there's also that support network. When someone's ill, people take care of the other stuff that you maybe can't take care of yourself; the shopping, the washing, the picking kids up from school. It might just be little things but, people sort of club together when they need to.

Stephen provided a personal example illustrating how the community helps each other:

We had a fire in this house and the whole of the upstairs was ruined, and we had to move out, and within five minutes we had a hundred people outside offering us their houses and giving us food and taking our food, and that's – when there's crisis, when there's happiness, you share it with everyone.

I found that traditional members can even access the financial resources of other individual synagogue members. Eden said: "When my husband was killed and they [community members] were fantastically supportive to me...It has gone on for years and years that there has been an eye kept out: 'Is Eden ok?', 'Have you got enough to live on?'" Hugh also told me that he is asked for money by synagogue officials to give to anonymous community members in need, whom he will almost always help.

So far the evidence presented indicates that there is a vast amount of social capital within the traditional denomination. The examples illustrate that community members function as a resource pool from which fellow members can draw without any immediate direct costs. While it appears that the Ultra-Orthodox have a very dense

social capital to sustain the independence and separation of their community from mainstream society, the social capital of the Modern Orthodox is less dense as it is focused on maintaining as well as enhancing a strong and tight-knit Jewish community life instead. Perhaps as a corollary of this difference, I observed that resources can vary across synagogue communities in the Modern Orthodox community, but not in the Ultra-Orthodox community. Mr Gilman said in this regard:

There are some [synagogue] communities that have very few volunteers with a very poor community care facility. There are some [synagogue] communities that are buzzing. They have all sorts of activities going on on a daily basis in a synagogue.

Secondly, I found that the social capital of the non-traditional denomination is weaker overall. Although Progressive Jews engage with other members in their community and create and exchange resources there, they also have other non-Jewish social networks to which they contribute and onto which they seem to place equal or more importance. For instance, Debrahlee said: “I enjoy being involved in Jewish and non-Jewish environments. I get things from both sides”. Or, after asking him whether people in his community also support and help each other, Richard replied:

To an extent, not a massive extent...I have got lots of friends through quite different networks and quite different ways of meeting them and people...so in the last couple of week someone who I haven't seen since 2004, not a Jewish person, but I helped him to get a job interview, trying to find somewhere to crash on the floor...so I don't think I relate to a Jewish person differently because of that.

The noticeable difference between the traditional group and Progressives was that the latter often extended their resources to non-Jews, which helps to explain why I found there to be weaker social capital within the non-traditional world than the traditional one. Michael noted in this respect:

Once a month, we [members of the synagogue] go and collect some food from Marks & Spencer and we take it to a non-Jewish organisation in Finchley for the homeless. So that's just an hour a month. That's organised through the synagogue but it's a sense of being involved in the outside community.

Nonetheless, I found through observation and talking to Progressive members and rabbis that there is still a significant amount of communal resources (such as participatory programmes for children and youth, activities and charity events for adult

members) existent within the Progressive networks, again mainly available through synagogues. Michael said, for example, “there are parts of the synagogue where people help each other out...Some of the work people are doing in synagogue is very much focused on helping directly but equally there are lots of roles which are about committees”. He continued:

Our synagogue does have a welfare structure which helps people if they need to get to synagogue, we have a shuttle, we have hired cars which pick them up and bring them, or people will bring them. We have people who go and visit the elderly or the sick. And obviously there’s a lot of fundraising going on in the synagogue. I’ve mainly been involved in educational stuff at synagogue [e.g. teaching about Judaism for converts]...If somebody wants help looking for a job then there’s somebody in the synagogue they can contact. It’s one of the professional staff that acts as a kind of focus so if somebody wants to ring in and say ‘have you heard of anything, I’m looking for an engineering job?’ They, then, put them in contact with someone we know about who has a job in engineering. We have publicised that.

Similar resources were also mentioned by other Progressive interviewees.

In reference to resources provided by individual members of the community to other members of their group, respondents mainly mentioned inviting other members to their homes for festival meals such as the weekly Sabbath dinners or lunches, and supporting other members in cases of need. For example, Allen opined, “If something ever happens to my family that’s bad, other Jews will rally round and help us”. Richard, who was cited above saying that he accesses and provides resources to non-Jewish networks, volunteered that he still felt it was easier to access individuals’ resources in the Reform community:

People from my community, I would expect them to be, feel happier about asking me for those sorts of favours than someone I just knew myself and I would be a vague friend of - so I suppose it probably has some impact in terms of who would I expect to receive help from...it’s not the same thing [with a non-Jewish friend].

On the whole, the evidence demonstrates that there is still a considerable amount of resources present in this denomination. As with the communal resources of the Modern Orthodox, careful interpretation of the data on Progressive resources is needed. I observed that the quantity of communal resources depends on the synagogue to which Progressive Jews belong. I found that Progressive synagogues that have fewer and more elderly members have scarcer resources. For example, one Reform synagogue that I

visited in Finchley had a large and young congregation, and many of the different resources mentioned above were available there. The synagogue, which also had a school in it, looked vibrant and colourful and thus welcoming. One could see the amount of work that was put in by its members. In contrast, another Reform synagogue in a less dominantly Jewish area consisted of mainly old people; the resources provided were scarcer, which was reflected in the lifeless appearance of the institution. Rabbi Ethan of this synagogue said: “People have moved away. What’s left is a congregation that consists of mainly elderly members. So there is not much going on here anymore”.

Thirdly, I found very low social capital among unaffiliated Jews. Non-religious institutions and groups that provide affiliation platforms for unaffiliated members, such as the Grassroots Jewish group, the Jewish Socialist Group, and the Red Herring Club, can offer some resources to unaffiliated members. My observations have shown that such organisations often have bulletin boards or online newsletters which are used to provide resources such as cheap accommodation to members. The resources provided through such institutions/groups, however, are not exclusive to unaffiliated members; affiliated Jews can and do join them<sup>152</sup>. Thus, it can be argued that they are general community organisations. Looking at the individual level, I only found weak evidence that unaffiliated members help each other individually. Nevertheless, Timothy, who came from an unaffiliated background, noted that his mother employed Jewish people in her two restaurants and got professional advice mainly from other Jews:

My mother employed a number of people there who were Jewish and were friends; I think there had been an accountant and a manager. I think there was for her a sense of community, a huge sense of community.

A few similar statements were provided by other unaffiliated participants. Mostly, however, I found that the resources unaffiliated Jews get and provide are mainly friendships and having festival dinners together, such as Friday night dinners to mark the Sabbath or Passover *Seders*. For instance, the unaffiliated Toby said:

A lot of our friends in this area of London are Jewish, I have a lot of friends who are non-Jewish, but we spend Friday nights with people who are Jewish and therefore we do some of the Friday night rituals because it means

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<sup>152</sup> Cross denominational interaction is more likely to occur at general community events. Still, it should be kept in mind that only certain types of Jews attend these events. For instance, the cultural Jewish Limmud conference attracts mainly more-involved unaffiliated members and less- as well as more-engaged affiliated Jews. Very devout traditional and Ultra-Orthodox members would not regard Limmud events as ‘kosher enough’ in terms of their activities and meals.

something to my friends and my wife so that's how we tend to do Friday nights...at home and at other people's houses.

Furthermore, unaffiliated members, even those who are very removed from the community, can still access the resources of affiliated friends and family by attending holy day dinners at their houses or by getting help from them. For example, Peter told me that his unaffiliated mother asked a Modern Orthodox friend from London whether she could help him to get settled in London, which effectively meant letting him stay at her house for free and helping him to find a job. The favour was granted without questions asked. I found that in many affiliated families there are members that have disaffiliated. These families still want their relatives to be involved in community life and so they provide resources to them, for example by inviting them to communal holy day dinners. At one of the Modern Orthodox Sabbath meals that I attended, for instance, the participants talked about a family whose son disaffiliated and the sadness it caused the family. The parents still invited the son for festival dinners so that he would retain a sense of his Jewishness in the hope that he might re-affiliate in the future.

Thus, it can be argued that unaffiliated members create most or all of their resources outside of their Jewish network or they mainly assist in the creation of general community social capital, which explains their low denominational capital.

### **5.3. Motivations**

Having shown that a lot of social capital exists in the Jewish community overall, I will now explore the impetus for the creation of the resources. I found evidence for rational choice theorists' proposition of self-interest in Jewish giving. Some of the people in my ethnographic sample who donated to or volunteered in community and denominational institutions or helped other Jews directly did so in order to get or have the possibility of obtaining benefits. Still, this was only one of three motivations that I found. A greater proportion of participants gave because they had been socialised into the Jewish norm of giving. Others gave due to a perceived responsibility to ensure the continuation of Jews. The evidence will indicate that these motivations are based on a sense of belonging to the group<sup>153</sup>.

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<sup>153</sup> Because, as argued, there is very low social capital in the unaffiliated community, this chapter will focus on the affiliated groups' motivations for social capital creation. Unaffiliated Jews' motivation for

### 5.3.1. Self-Interest

Rational choice theory asserts that “all behaviour results from individuals pursuing their own interests” (Field 2008: 24). Coleman, for instance, uses rational choice theory to argue that people engage in social structures because they facilitate certain behaviours which, in turn, enable the consequence of benefits (Coleman 1990). Social interaction and cooperation to accrue resources is thus seen as an investment to achieve actual or possible benefits. According to rational choice theory “each person does what will serve their own interest” (Field 2008: 24); hence, members invest by giving money to or volunteering in communal institutions or by giving to members of their community directly in order to obtain possible or actual benefits from their investment.

I found evidence that members gave to communal and denominational institutions in order to be able to have access to their resources, which were often perceived to be either cheaper or better in quality than the ones offered by the mainstream. For example, Steward advocated that he paid membership fees to the United Synagogue in order to be buried in a Jewish cemetery. Some participants, however, did not even give to Jewish organisations but still accessed their resources because they perceived them to be better and cheaper. For example, Larry told me that he took his parents to a Jewish old age home instead of a non-Jewish one because it was cheaper. As previously mentioned, such organisations receive a large amount of donations, meaning the resources offered can be subsidised. This subsidy helps to explain why Jewish resources can be perceived to be better in both quality and price than the resources provided by the majority society.

In general, I found that members can give little or nothing and still receive a lot of resources. This means that the costs are generally low but the benefits are high. This system seems to work not only because a lot of members give to Jewish organisations, but also because a lot of them give more than others. For instance, traditional members give more money to Jewish charities than non-traditional and unaffiliated members (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998). The systems’ viability can be expected to stem mostly from the fact that not everyone accesses the resources. The low investment and high returns correlation can, nonetheless, encourage people to give to the community, which was indicated by the high capital of ‘Jewish Care’.

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giving will be referred to only in regard to their communal giving, as this was found to be more pronounced among the unaffiliated participants.

Furthermore, I found that members also gave to communal institutions and groups so that they would be able to access their resources in the future if they should need them. When I mentioned to Albert that Jews in Britain donate most of their charity money to Jewish Care (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998), he opined that a lot of them do so out of self-interest: “Why do you think people give money to Jewish Care? In case something happens to them they know that they get a great service - better than in the non-Jewish world”. Accordingly, investment in communal resources can work like an insurance policy. In cases where the likelihood that people will access the resources is low, the quantity of the resources increases, as does the return on investment for those who do access the resources. Accordingly, voluntary giving to Jewish organisations can take place because members do not only rationally consider their actual needs but also consider their probable future needs. In other words, some people give not only because of altruism that benefits others at the expense of the self, but also because of the overall benefits or possible future benefits. For instance, a few respondents in my interview sample, including Samuel, volunteered that they donated money to the Jewish security organisation CST in case they needed their help in the future.

Next, I found that a few participants also gave to community organisations and other members because it made them feel good. For instance, Hugh said:

I’ve had a particular role in the last few years, dealing with the rituals of death. I’ve been negotiating with the Home Office and coroners because Jewish people have to be buried within 24 hours of death, and it’s not always very easy to get registrar certificates and suchlike...I’ve been able to achieve something with that, and that’s again something that I’ve been able to put back into the community and I feel, we have a Jewish word ‘mitzvah’ which means good deed, and in a sense if it’s important to somebody to have a relative who’s buried within 24 hours or their whole world will fall apart if it didn’t happen...So I would like to try and help them, and if I’ve done that to achieve that then it makes me feel good. So it’s also for my self-gratification.

Or, Michael noted:

I am involved in Jewish organisations outside the synagogue as well as being involved in synagogue, so I am associated with Jewish environments and Jewish groups which give me an identity<sup>154</sup>...I feel I have something to contribute...There’s a little bit of extra involvement because it’s a Jewish environment. I enjoy being involved in Jewish environments...I have been

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<sup>154</sup> I cannot mention which committees the interviewee was on because it could compromise his anonymity.

involved for so long in all sorts of ways that I feel kind of familiar and that helps...I get something out of that...there's a sense of being able to change things or do things, contribute something that you get a certain rewards for it - maybe a job well done.

These examples suggest that careful interpretation of data on altruistic behaviour of individuals is needed because sometimes a notion of self-interest can stimulate this behaviour and thus lie underneath it.

Some members also mentioned that they gave to members of their denominational institutions, in order to be able to belong to the respective community network. For instance, Adah said that in order to belong to a denominational community “you need to have all these social brownie points and help people”. This means that if you want to belong to a Jewish group and have a Jewish circle of friends you have to give to the members of this group. This indicates that Jews need to comply with the ‘culture of giving’ in the community - to be elaborated on in the next sub-section - in order to belong. Naturally, members often want to belong to a Jewish group because they have been socialised into feeling a connection with fellow members. They want to be with people who share their background and outlook. Jola said in this regard:

With our Jewish friends you feel you have a certain amount in common that you don't have with your non-Jewish friends...There's almost more of a family feeling with Jews...The similarity of background and assumptions creates a very comfortable environment in which also certain issues don't need to be discussed...Your children grow up knowing that there's a society in which they belong, because Jews don't belong in all branches of English society and you want them to grow up knowing that there's somewhere where they feel absolutely comfortable and nobody will be antagonistic because they are Jewish.

This is also why she felt she had to give to her denominational community: “You make friends, you contribute, you do your share of preparing the kiddush and that kind of thing”. Or, Jonati volunteered:

I want to contribute to the Jewish socialists rather than the non-Jewish ones...I feel more accepted amongst Jewish socialists than I did amongst other kinds of socialists, because I've got a different way of behaving because I'm Jewish. Well, we tend to talk with our hands, we ask personal questions...Being demonstrative, gregarious, courageous...We may be a bit assertive sometimes where other people feel they can't compete with us...We don't drink and in the socialist group a lot of social drinking is going on.

Next, a majority of participants gave to others individually because they expected that their contribution would be reciprocated indirectly in the future. In other words, they gave with the expectation that at some point in the future another member would provide the same or even another resource to them. For instance, an unaffiliated woman in her thirties told me in an informal conversation that her Modern Orthodox parents always took Jewish people in to spend the holy days with them in case they did not have a place to go<sup>155</sup>. She told me that giving to the community was associated with expected returns. This means that if she was going abroad, she would not hesitate to contact a Modern Orthodox Rabbi and tell him to find her someone in the local community with whom she could spend the upcoming holy day. She emphasised that Jews will not *ask* for such a resource but rather they will *request* it. Furthermore, other traditional participants mentioned in a blasé fashion when talking about their travelling that they went to Chabad houses<sup>156</sup> or to synagogues of their denomination in foreign countries to be invited for a meal by resident members. For example, Alon mentioned in an offhand fashion when talking about his travels in Mexico:

The national bread in Mexico is called like pan...it is considered by the Jewish community there to be kosher so I just had that and I had like a tub of Peanut butter that I took with me and that was like pretty much it. But there are also Jewish communities in Mexico and I kind of ate with them.

The examples indicate that members assume that because they give to the community they are also able to receive from it. There seems to be a community norm of sharing and accessing resources that is based on socially accepted self-interest. The following example further supports the suggestion that self-interest is part of the community culture. A woman in her twenties who was in the process of converting to the Modern Orthodox denomination told me that her Rabbi encouraged her to call people from the community in case she had nowhere to go for a holy day. He told her that she should simply mention that she had no invitation for the holy day, and that the person on the phone would pick up the cue and invite her for the day.

In summary, the ethnographic evidence indicates that social capital creation is, indeed, supported by members' self-interest.

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<sup>155</sup> Note that Jewish people should not mark holy days by themselves.

<sup>156</sup> Chabad-Lubavitch is a missionary Hasidic (Ultra-Orthodox) movement that focuses on making Jews more observant through outreach. A Chabad House is a Jewish community centre with educational and outreach activities such as communal dinners. It also offers travelling Jews a place to have kosher meals.

### 5.3.2. Cultural Giving

There is a cultural norm of giving within the Jewish community. Many people in my ethnographic sample saw giving to members directly or to Jewish organisations as an expression of their identity. It was regarded as “what you do when you are Jewish” (Bruce). Participants often referred to religious concepts when explaining why giving to others was part of Jewishness. Some interviewees referred to it as a *mitzvah*, a commandment:

We always make new people feel welcome in synagogue...We introduce ourselves and invite them home to eat with us...we do it because we are Jewish. It's a mitzvah (Hazel)

Others understood giving to others as *tzedakah*, charity:

One of the big things in Judaism is to give tzedakah, charity, and it's technically 10% of your income must go to charity (Orah)

I give to charity...If there are people who need your help in your community you might have a stronger obligation to help them rather than the wider community...A Jew is required to give 10% of their earnings to tzedakah (Johanna)

Progressive and unaffiliated participants tended to refer to their giving as *tikkun olam*, which means ‘repairing the world’:

There's an interesting concept in Judaism. Our Jewish identity is so much constructed through the notion of tikkun olam. It comes from the Talmud and it's the idea that we have the responsibility to heal the world...If you are looking at it from a religious perspective, we have to set an example and lead our lives in a good way and also help others to improve the lives of others who are not so fortunate...looking at it in a non-religious way, which is how I look at it (Joelle)

I found that such participants emphasised that they took the concept of ‘Jewish giving’ and also applied it to the non-Jewish world. Hence, they gave to people outside of the community and did so as ‘Jews’. For instance, Robert mentioned, “I try to give to Jews and non-Jews an equal amount but if I give to non-Jews I do it through Jewish organisations”. There is even an explicit ideology within Progressive Judaism to turn the focus of *Tikkun olam* outwards, which means also providing charity to non-Jewish causes. This helps to explain why there are fewer resources in the non-traditional community than in the traditional one. The finding that non-conservative participants tended to emphasise giving to the non-Jewish world and place less emphasis on

philanthropy towards the Jewish world, whereas the inverse was found for Orthodox participants is also supported by statistics. According to JPR statistics on British Jews, 52% of the secular respondents (less devout affiliated and unaffiliated members) favoured giving only to non-Jewish charities as compared with 7% of the strictly Orthodox ones (Ultra-Orthodox members). Only 6% of the secular respondents – in comparison to 29% of the strictly Orthodox ones – gave to Jewish charities only (Becher et al. 2002).

The fact that secular participants' acts of giving to people outside of the community were perceived to be part of the Jewish norm of giving supports my finding that there is this norm among members of the group. Yet, 'giving' can only be perceived to be an element of Jewish culture if group members have been socialised into being Jewish in the first place:

There's this warmth with Jews...I think I'm a good manager with people. I will be very caring about the staff. There's something about learning to care when you are Jewish. There is something about nurturing that is inherent. I do think it's from my parents. I do believe it's something I inherited. It's a warmth, a caring and a nurturing...Last Wednesday when there was a strike, we were going to go to theatre, but we wanted to give it a miss. We discussed it with my [Jewish] neighbour. Later, she came over to say if we wanted a lift she would be driving there anyway. I'm not sure anybody else would have done that. We are very good at that. We are very open and offering (Beatrix)

With respect to how 'giving' has become part of Jewish culture through socialisation, Dr Leonard, an academic in the field of anti-Semitism in Britain, asserted:

For centuries many Jewish communities in Europe were self-contained and, by the same token, self-reliant. Communal giving to promote the welfare of community members has become a 'habit' and is now part of Jewish culture.

In conclusion, it was shown that there is a cultural norm of giving in the community which can motivate Jews to give to institutions and members of their group.

### **5.3.3. Responsibility for Jewish Continuity**

Another motivation to provide resources to Jews is to ensure the continuation of Judaism. Some participants mentioned that the reason they contributed to the community and gave to other members was a sense of responsibility to sustain the group. For instance, Zachariah noted:

I'm a link from all the generations before me and the great history and the wealth of heritage and the vast and extensive contributions that have been given to the world. I'm that link to the possibility of contributions in the future...I feel strongly that my role and the role of each Jew is to ensure the continuing of Judaism, as an ideology, as a people, as a religion, as a lifestyle...The power [of every Jew] is in his contributions...what has this Jew done for the community? What has this Jew done for Judaism?...There are huge social and practical responsibilities associated with being Jewish.

Devery volunteered, "I remember we helped Russian Jews because it is our responsibility, especially after the Holocaust, to ensure the continuation of our people". Even the unaffiliated Timothy noted this motivation for making donations to the Jewish Museum in London:

It's one way of helping to keep something of this Jewish culture alive, and in a way it feels as though it's honouring my mother's experience as well [she survived the Holocaust], because the Jewish museum in London – I mean a lot of it is about Judaism in the UK. For most of her life, that was her experience. So it's my one connection really with the Jewish community. For some reason it's important that I have one.

Still, Timothy's contribution could also be motivated by self-interest. This might indicate then that members' motivations to give to the community can also interconnect.

With this in mind, members can also have more than one reason to give to the community. Recall Hugh, who was cited above asserting that he contributed to the community because of self-interest. He also did so out of a sense of responsibility to ensure the continuation of Judaism:

I've been very involved in this Jewish organisation for many years...We do it for preserving Judaism, the food, customs like the brit milah - the circumcision. We defend our community against attacks from the right-wing, we look after the interests of Jews...it's important to me because it's part of my fibre, my being.

Interestingly, participants often associated their responsibility to ensure the continuation of Judaism with the history of anti-Semitism and the fact that they have to help each other because history has shown that gentiles will not do so:

Through the ages, Jews have liked to be self-employed because when persecution came you could pack it all up and leave. That absolutely runs through to today...We always had to help each other...that has been shaped by the environment that generations to generations have lived in...That really sums up how our history has affected us (Paul)

For many, community is one of the most important aspects of being Jewish. When our grandparents came to this country fleeing from persecution in Eastern Europe, as many of our ancestors did, they came to places where there were members of their faith and bonded together and looked after each other, established communities, charities and so on. It has always been a tradition that Jews and Jewish charities are looking after their fellow Jews. So I do that, too (Anne)

In summation, participants, independent of their affiliation, gave to other Jews either directly or through institutions because they felt a responsibility to ensure their group's continuation.

#### **5.4. Conditions**

This section will look at the social structure of the community to explore the conditions in which people's motivations to give to the community are created. I will analyse how geographical proximity, ideological frictions and organised social gatherings facilitate the creation of a sense of connection among members and, in this way, a sense of group belonging. As a sense of belonging to the group was indicated to be the foundation of the three motivations presented above, these conditions and their ability to create a sense of belonging can be seen as fundamental to Jewish giving.

##### **5.4.1. Structural Proximity**

I argue that the Jewish community overall has a tight network structure. A tight network structure indicates that there are high levels of interaction and subsequently dense social connections (i.e. ties) among individuals in this structure, which assist in creating a sense of belonging to the group. This, in turn, is vital in order to create the motivations to give to the group. I found that this tight structure can be facilitated through the geographical proximity of group members because it allows members to meet and interact with each other.

According to statistical evidence, the larger proportion of Jews have settled in particular areas in the northwest of London<sup>157</sup> (Graham et al. 2007). Many people with

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<sup>157</sup> 165,945 British Jews live in London (Graham et al. 2007). The figure largely does not incorporate Ultra-Orthodox members because they do not tend to fill out surveys. Thus, this figure is only an estimate. It has also been affected by the choice of the 2001 Census to define 'Jewish' in religious terms. The survey question about the ethnicity was biased towards inquiring after the colour and nationality of the respondents (Graham et al. 2007). Considering that members, particularly secular ones, tend to define

whom I have engaged during my fieldwork acknowledged that most members live in Northwest London. Noam, for example, commented: “Jewish people tend to live together. Most of them live in Northwest London. 99% of middle class, normal Jewish people live in Northwest London”. Furthermore, quantitative research has shown that members tend to live in particular neighbourhoods, meaning on particular streets and the surrounding side streets, in Northwest London (Graham et al. 2007: 34). My observations have revealed that Ultra-Orthodox members have settled in Stamford Hill, Hendon, Highgate and at the lower end of Golders Green (meaning around the lower end of Golders Green road) towards Hendon. Modern Orthodox members have also settled around Hendon, Golders Green, Hampstead and the area surrounding Kinloss. Younger and less traditional Modern Orthodox members who want to be surrounded by Jews with a more modern lifestyle (e.g. by having a choir during services) live in Belsize Park area and around St. John’s Wood. Progressive Jews have settled around Finchley. More- and even less-engaged unaffiliated and less-engaged affiliated members seem to live in areas close to affiliated Jewish areas in Northwest London, such as Willesden Green, Brondesbury Park, Tufnell Park, Maida Vale, Marble Arch, Kensington and Surrey. This observational evidence indicates that there is indeed geographical proximity among Jews.

I found that participants wanted to live in or close to Jewish areas in order to have access to a community life, meaning to Jewish facilities – such as schools, *kosher* shops and restaurants, synagogues or other Jewish cultural institutions – and thus to events and activities, such as Jewish theatre performances. This reason was also mentioned by several secular participants. For example, Josephine, a Masorti interviewee, who is not particularly engaged in Judaism, chose to live in a secular Jewish area located close to an affiliated neighbourhood because it allowed her to have easy access to - as she called it - a “Jewish vibe” without having to live in the affiliated neighbourhood, which she found “claustrophobic”. The unaffiliated young couple Toby and Isabelle chose the

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themselves in ethnic and cultural terms, it can be expected that those members have not identified themselves as Jewish in this study (Graham and Waterman 2005; Graham et al. 2007: 21). Looking at the four major Jewish populated Local Authority Districts (LADs) in Northwest London (Barnet, Harrow, Camden and Hackney) in comparison with the general Jewish population in London, we find that 49% of the London Jewish population lives in this area. In five of the wards in Northwest London Jews form one third of the population (Garden Suburb 37%, Elstree, 34.8%, Canons 35.9%, and Kersal 33.7%) (Graham et al. 2007)

same living situation to be close to their family, friends and community institutions so that Isabelle could still engage in some of the traditions. Toby noted:

She [Isabelle] finds a lot of cultural meaning in...in kind of doing Jewish things and traditions and things like that. So one reason for living in Northwest London is to live close to the institutions and also friends, family and things, who live in Northwest London...We keep kosher here – so proximity to kosher shops and things like that...When it came to decide to live here, she felt more strongly about wanting to be here but I mean most of my friends are in Northwest London...A lot of our friends in this area of London are Jewish.

Thus, living in or close to Jewish areas provides members with the opportunity to be surrounded by other members of their own group.

For many of the devout affiliated participants it was particularly important to live in Jewish areas so that they could lead a community lifestyle and thereby follow observances:

Judaism is about community. I would love to live in the Swiss Alps. You can't practice Judaism without a community. You can't get kosher food without a community. You can't have a prayer service by yourself (Zachariah)

We live in a Jewish [Modern Orthodox] area for our own religious lives and for the fact that we would expect to meet like-minded people and make friends. We've always had many Jewish friends. And the most important thing is for our children to grow up in such an environment, to get kosher meat and to have Jewish [Modern Orthodox] schools nearby. Jewish life is something that is essentially collective. It's not an individual thing. Dependent on how observant you are you need Jewish facilities, you need a community of ten men to pray effectively, you need availability of kosher meat, schooling (David)

Accordingly, wanting to lead an observant life can also imply wanting to be with “like-minded people” (Ornetta). For devout affiliated members, this often meant Jews from their own denomination. I found that it was specifically vital for devout traditional members to live close to other Jews with the same religious outlook, particularly in view of the level of *kashrut* observance so that they could easily eat at each other's houses.

Several devout affiliated members also mentioned that they preferred to live close to a synagogue of their denomination in order to be able to attend services easily and to

take part in the synagogue social life that suits their particular theology. For instance, Adena opined:

It's important to live in an area with a shul, with people I can identify with or feel similar to. In a Progressive or only an Ultra-Orthodox shul, I wouldn't feel comfortable either...I wouldn't live around Reform Jews because I don't have anything in common with the way the Reform lead their services and their theology. They have mixed seating. I couldn't go there to pray...I could make do with an Ultra-Orthodox shul, but it wouldn't be my first choice. I don't identify with them as much and I don't think that they identify very much with me....I'm very different looking to Ultra-Orthodox girls<sup>158</sup>.

I found that having a synagogue of their denomination within walking distance was especially important for observant traditional Jews, because Judaism forbids driving on most of the holy days. By default, this also makes it easier for them to engage in synagogue community life.

Note that many of the participants who wanted to live in or close to a Jewish area had a Jewish upbringing and were accustomed to having access to community facilities. For example, Sara, who was in the process of marrying someone non-Jewish, still wanted to live close to her parents and thus close to a Jewish area because she had grown up in a community environment:

In England, Diaspora Jews, here we are such a huge minority. You don't have so much moving out of London...I bump into [Jewish] people who I know from school when I was ten. Isn't it funny that we stayed within three tube stops of our parents? It's the Jewish connection.

Thus, wanting to live in or close to Jewish areas can also be associated with having family living in such areas. Even the unaffiliated Brianne, who was not at all engaged with Judaism, lived in the middle of a Modern Orthodox community because of her now deceased parents.

In sum, there was an indication in my sample that there is more geographical proximity among the affiliated Jews, particularly traditional members, than among unaffiliated members. Accordingly, it can be expected that affiliated members have tighter community networks because of their institutional affiliation. This helps to

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<sup>158</sup> Adena dressed very modestly, wearing a long black skirt and a top with long sleeves and a high neckline. Her hair, however, was worn shorter than Ultra-Orthodox women her age would wear theirs, and her floor-length skirts and colourful glasses would not have been regarded as appropriate in the Ultra-Orthodox community.

explain their greater giving to the general Jewish community through charities and their greater denominational social capital. The finding that some of the unaffiliated members in my sample wanted to live in Northwest London – mostly in areas near affiliated Jewish areas – in order to be close to their family, friends and Jewish amenities helps to explain why there is at least some social capital among unaffiliated Jews and why they contribute to the creation of the general community social capital.

#### **5.4.2. Frictions**

The previous section has demonstrated that Jews often live close to each other. This proximity can be suggested to create an overall tight network structure because the likelihood of members meeting and interacting with other members is great. Furthermore, the fact that members of denominational networks are able to live close to other members of the same network suggests the existence of tight sub-group network structures, such as network structures of denominations, denominational groupings (e.g. Ultra-Orthodox sects), synagogue communities, and organisations. These sub-group network structures also assist in facilitating the construction of an overall tight network structure. I argue that the existence of dense sub-group networks is assisted by ideological frictions creating divisions between the networks. Ideological frictions can hinder Jews from forming close bonds with Jews across networks, particularly across denominational networks, and in this way can support the creation of close bonds within networks. For example, through his employment at the US youth organisation ‘Tribe’, Mr Lustick found the following:

There is no cohesion between the Ultra-Orthodox community, the Modern Orthodox community and the Non-Orthodox community. There’s no cohesion. They are separate entities functioning within the same orbit.

I found that the ideological frictions between denominational groups that create divisions between them are streamlined along differences in lifestyle. Many unaffiliated and Progressive members that I encountered saw Modern Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox communities as being “too insular” (e.g. Gabriel or Toby) or “claustrophobic” (e.g. Esther) and perceived Orthodox members to be “closed-minded” (e.g. Ethan). For example, Reform interviewee Robert said:

I live in a Jewish area and my synagogue draws people from a very, very wide area of North London, because it's quite politically specific in that it's

probably the most open-minded one about a lot of these sorts of questions in terms of people's sexuality and all sorts of things...I probably would not want to live in Golders Green, Stamford Hill, those sort of places...They can get quite insular...People would judge you on the basis of 'do you work on a Saturday?' rather than anything else that you're doing.

A more general analysis of the divisions and the frictions between the communities was provided by Prof Bernstein, who belongs to the Reform denomination:

There are a lot of conflicts between the different religious parts of the Jewish community. There is no negotiation between the Ultra-Orthodox and us. In this country, where there is a lot of tolerance, it allows these groups to flourish in their own way but that does not prevent considerable denunciations...condemnation by the Ultra-Orthodox of the [Modern] Orthodox and certainly of the Reform, particularly the Orthodox are against the Reform, they regard them as not Jewish. Not the Jews themselves, but the religion is not Judaism. It is only Judaism if it adheres to the Torah.

He asserted that the divisions between the denominations regarding lifestyle can also be observed in marriage decisions:

I am sure there are Orthodox who marry Reform just as there are Orthodox Jews who marry secular Jews and indeed there are Orthodox Jews who leave the community altogether and marry out, but on the whole the boundaries remain that in the sense, Reform Jews tend to marry Reform or Liberal Jews, Progressive Jews. Because they believe that God was discovered by Jews rather than God revealed himself once and for all on Mount Sinai. But there is little intercommunication between Reform and Orthodox rabbis.

Along similar lines, some participants of the Modern Orthodox persuasion perceived Progressive Jews' interpretation of Judaism to be a defamation of the faith. Zachariah, for example, asserted, "they cherry pick what they observe". He complained:

The ideology of non-Orthodox organisations is for people to be a Jew in the home and a Brit on the street and that is the creed of Progressive Judaism. There's a place for Judaism on a Friday night when you make kiddush or if you light the candle, or if you go to shul on Saturday morning - 'Day to day, I'm British'.

There was also an indication in my sample that some Modern Orthodox participants perceived unaffiliated Jews to have let down their group, especially if they had married out, did not raise their children with the traditions and did not support Israel. In contrast,

I did not find that Progressive participants had such strong views about unaffiliated members.

Many Modern Orthodox participants also perceived the Ultra-Orthodox to be too insular and closed off from the rest of society. Some even spoke in derogatory ways about them, for example by calling them ‘the black heads’ in a condescending tone. Zachariah’s sarcastic comment about the Ultra-Orthodox community illustrates this point:

The fear in response to that [the movement of Modern Orthodox Judaism] caused what is known as the Haredi community<sup>159</sup>: ‘We are so afraid of liquidizing or diluting our Jewishness that we lead a closed and insular life’.

Moreover, my data indicates that the Ultra-Orthodox often do not accept other types of members as Jews because they see them as engaging too much in secular society and thus not fulfilling their religious obligations. For example, Hassidic Mosche said:

Judaism is a race as well, because someone who's born Jewish to a Jewish mother is obliged, according to Judaism, to maintain Judaism, to be a Jew - and is a Jew...But that doesn't necessarily mean that you just get a stamp for being Jewish. To be considered Jewish, for example to be counted as a participant in a congregation, in a service in a synagogue, you have to be practicing [Ultra-Orthodox] Judaism...There is no such thing as Reform Jews, secular Jews.

Haredi Yael illustrates the ideological frictions between the Ultra-Orthodox and the other denominations when referring to whom it would be acceptable to marry:

Reform doesn't come into question. As far as we're concerned a lot of Reform Jews aren't Jews...It's a very sensitive subject. We will only marry within the [Ultra-] Orthodox community.

In this respect, it is worth mentioning that participants often perceived the denominations above them in conservatism as not wanting to engage with them. For example, it repeatedly came up during my fieldwork that unaffiliated, Progressive, and Modern Orthodox members perceived that Ultra-Orthodox members would not want to talk with them because of their diverging lifestyles.

The frictions between the denominational networks are also streamlined along communal representation, which became apparent when I asked interviewees the

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<sup>159</sup> ‘Haredi’ is sometimes used as a name to describe all the Ultra-Orthodox Jews within the community at large.

question, ‘what do you think about when representatives from prominent Jewish organisations such as the Chief Rabbi speak on behalf of British Jews to the outside world?’:

There’s a bit of a worrying trend. It [the community] is becoming less and less happy to have one representative because of the polarisation...We are such a tiny minority that we really need to speak with one voice about certain issues like kashrut...He [The Chief Rabbi] is trying to represent all of British Jewry. From a religious point of view, trying to represent someone who’s Liberal or someone who is Ultra-Orthodox in the same breath is very difficult (Thomas)

Accordingly, in their answers to my question many unaffiliated interviewees expressed that representatives of the Jewish community like the Chief Rabbi or the Board of Deputies of British Jews pretend to speak in the name of all British Jews, but in fact speak only for affiliated observant members. Subsequently, these unaffiliated interviewees did not think that their views - which mostly did not seem to agree with the general views of the affiliated community, especially in regard to Israel - were represented. For example, Salome said:

Take the Board of Deputies, for example...When they organised the rally for Israel, they gave the message that all Jews are for Israel, which is NOT true. They did not speak in my name, although they pretend to speak in the name of all Jews.

There was more of a pronounced emphasis by Progressive participants on being against the Chief Rabbi speaking out in the name of all Jews:

I think it's fine for the United Synagogue to have a Chief Rabbi; I don't think that he should present himself as speaking on behalf of all Jews in the Commonwealth, nor should the government and the media and other people treat him as though he speaks on behalf of all Jews (Robert)

The Modern Orthodox members that I encountered were generally supportive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and particularly the Chief Rabbi speaking in the name of all Jews:

The Chief Rabbi is extremely eloquent. And he does a very good job and he’s probably more popular in the non-Jewish world than he is in the Jewish world...The Board of Deputies, which I’ve been a member of, isn’t brave enough, or courageous enough, or outspoken enough. But then maybe they have their wisdom, I don’t know. It’s very difficult for any one person or any organisation to represent a group where there’s such diversity (Devra)

My evidence indicates that Ultra-Orthodox members generally do not seem to mind the Chief Rabbi being in the position that he is in but also do not want to associate themselves with any communal representative bodies.

There are also frictions between other sub-groups, such as denominational groupings, synagogue communities and religious or non-religious organisations. For instance, Neturei Karta's anti-Zionist ideology is generally not appreciated by other Haredi and Hassidic sects<sup>160</sup>. Similarly, the Chabad Lubavitch Chassidim are often not 'liked' by other Ultra-Orthodox communities because of their less insular lifestyle, including their outreach activities aimed to make members become more orthodox.

Interestingly, I found that ideological frictions exist even within networks; this chafing seems to lead to the continuous creation of new sub-groups; e.g. religious, youth, cultural or political organisations. Mr Lustick relayed a comment about this fragmentation made by a former politician who now holds a post in which she is in daily contact with Jews:

This politician has never met a people with such an incredible capacity for creativity, expansion and endeavour...but because of it - to quote her 'you have so much fucking money'. She says 'that means firstly you have so much money and secondly you have so many opinions', and that means that whenever Jews disagree they have so much money to set up another organisation. It fractures the community and this is the biggest problem of the Jewish community.

'Independent Jewish Voices' (IJV) and JFJFP are examples of non-religious organisations founded because of internal ideological disagreements. These two groups were established to present an opposition to the perceived uncritical support of Israel by major religious and non-religious institutions such as the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Such organisations give Jews with more critical attitudes towards Israel affiliation platforms from which they can get their voices heard, particularly, to the non-Jewish world. For instance, the secular affiliated Benjamin reasoned his engagement in these two organisations by saying:

The attitude of the formal Jewish community is that we should support racism and ethnic cleansing [in Israel], but I think the attitude of most people within the community is actually more confused...I don't want the Jewish identity to become this one-dimensional matter of political obedience, which it is in danger of becoming.

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<sup>160</sup> The members of Neturei Karta are against the existence of the Jewish state Israel. They believe that Jews must wait for the Messiah to bring about the end of the Jewish exile from their Promised Land.

Even within the different synagogue communities there are frictions, which seem to be reflected in the frequent erection of new synagogues in Jewish areas. In the borough of Barnet, for instance, which has the highest Jewish population in London, there are now 62 out of the 401 synagogues in the whole of Britain. Thus, one in six British synagogues is located in this area<sup>161</sup> (Graham and Vulkan 2010). Many affiliated participants mentioned that there are several synagogues to choose from in Jewish neighbourhoods. One of the prominent reasons for the erection of new synagogues is theological disagreement within already existent synagogue communities. For example, a Modern Orthodox synagogue in London split - according to some of its members - because part of the congregation wanted to have a more modern service (e.g. more modern tunes for the sung prayers) and a less separate seating arrangement between men and women, whereas the other part wanted to maintain the status quo. Now there are two synagogue communities with two separate prayer services within one synagogue building.

The evidence overall suggests the following: conflict of interest (friction) within sub-groups networks seems to lead to the continuous creation of new sub-groups. This fragmentation process keeps the sub-group size small. Small groups provide greater potential for interaction among members and make it easier for members to create connections with other members; hence, small sub-groups seem to be better in fostering a sense of belonging to the group overall, i.e. a sense of Jewishness. This sense of group belonging can, in turn, inform the members' motivations for giving to the group. As I have argued, the basis of the motivations analysed in this study is a sense of belonging to the group.

At the same time, I argue that ideological frictions between existent sub-groups resulting in negative attitudes towards each other keep the groups separate, which also assists in keeping them small, allowing for greater opportunity to create connections among group members. These frictions also build internal group boundaries that can assist Jews in identifying with their respective sub-group(s), which then naturally extends into identifying with the group in general. This argument concurs with Simmel, who asserts that conflict, which I define as friction, is an integrative force in the group

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<sup>161</sup> Careful interpretation of the data is needed as an under-enumeration of synagogues can be expected. This inaccuracy is due to the fact that Ultra-Orthodox members often will not fill out the surveys on which this data accumulation is based.

and assists in creating sociation of the individuals as part of their group: “A certain amount of discord, inner divergence and outer controversy is usually tied up with the very elements that ultimately hold the group together; it cannot be separated from the unity of the sociological structure” (Simmel 1964: 10-11). In this way, frictions can facilitate the creation of the motivations to give to the Jewish community.

#### **5.4.3. Organised Social Gatherings**

Organised social gatherings in community (sub-group) networks are particularly important in the creation of connections among members and a sense of Jewish belonging because they facilitate interaction rituals among members. According to Collins, an interaction ritual is a mutual-focus/emotional-entrainment mechanism whereby participants in interactional situations “develop a mutual focus of attention and become entrained in each other’s bodily micro-rhythms and emotion” (Collins 2004: 47). What Collins describes is a positive emotional energy that is constructed in social interactions. Positive emotional energy is attention that people interacting with each other give to one another, meaning they give time and within that time focus to each other. In other words, a mutual feeling of being paid attention to is created in interactions.

This form of attention is a subconscious mechanism, unlike an active, consciously-expressed behaviour that presents a sign of attention. Thus, it can be suggested to be a nonverbal behaviour that signals attention to the receiver. Attention in interaction signals the property of a willingness to be there for the receiver. Getting attention is a basic human need, which is necessary to achieve a positive self-concept, for which everyone strives (Tajfel and Turner 1979; Hogg 2006). Giving attention in the form of focus in interaction presents a mechanism that responds to an innate need of being attended to in order to feel accepted and thus safe and secure (Maslow 1999). Accordingly, attention can have the power to create a positive emotional energy and mark the interaction as a positive experience. This, in turn, can assist in the creation of a sense of connection between the interacting individuals. Frequent positive interaction between members of a group can thus lead to dense connections and ties among them. In this way, a sense of group belonging, which is regarded as necessary in order to motivate Jews to give to the group, can be established.

Organised social gatherings are thereby particularly important because they get people together and provide opportunities for interaction. This must be seen in the context that all social interactions are guided by cultural norms (Small 2009). Hence, organised social gatherings can actually encourage interaction because they provide a forum in which it is the norm to do so. In this way, organised gatherings can act as an incentive for people to make the effort to meet and talk to each other.

There are many organised formal and informal get-togethers in the Jewish community. Regarding formal meetings, there are, for instance, the communal rituals - such as the marking of festivals through synagogue services - that have the same overall meaning in all communities and contain the same major components. Attendees of synagogue prayer services normally talk to each other before or after and even during the services. Several interviewees mentioned that they went to synagogue services with the sole purpose of attending to their relations with other Jews:

So much of the thing [meaning of going to synagogue on Yom Kippur] is ritual. All of your family is there all of your friends are there, you can't just not go, and a great portion of the day I'm chatting anyway, gossiping, talking about football and politics but for a few minutes I will take it seriously (Hugh)

Because of the importance of community I go to synagogue. It's a social commitment. People in synagogue won't know that I don't believe. The people I sit with and talk to in synagogue, they wouldn't know and I go because it's socially important. It's part of belonging to the community...I meet my friends there, we talk; it's nice (Jola)

A minor but important communal ritual providing interaction is the *kiddush*. It takes place after most of the services in synagogue. At all *kiddushes*, drinks and food are provided over which people can be encouraged to start talking to each other; in this way the ritual facilitates an introduction to conversation. Attendees walk around the room, greet people they know and chat with each other about what has been going on in their lives. For example, Evan said: "I like seeing people I know. I like kiddush because people stand around and talk". I observed that new people are normally welcomed and spoken to and then introduced to others. Accordingly, the ritual also encourages attendees to make an effort to talk to the people they do not know or who are simply not engaged in conversation. This indicates that there is also a norm that facilitates this

behaviour, which can be suggested to be part of the community's 'ethos of regard' on which it will be elaborated upon in the next section.

An interesting scenario occurred when the weekly *kiddush* at a Modern Orthodox synagogue did not take place over Passover. Some of the congregation members were surprised and disappointed about it because they were looking forward to interacting with other members at this occasion. The fact that the attendees missed the ritual even though they could have just gathered and talked to each other without it taking place – as some of them did – indicates furthermore that organised get-togethers provide a forum and most importantly encouragement for interaction because they can work as an excuse for people to talk to each other. Thus, while formal rituals themselves, such as the sanctification of the wine as part of the *kiddush* ritual, may connect people - as Durkheim would argue (Durkheim 1915) - I found that the organised gatherings associated with the rituals provide a forum for interaction and thus facilitate the building of ties in this way as well.

The importance of organised formal gatherings as opportunities for interaction was further indicated by respondents' answers to the question concerning what is important to them, if anything, regarding the Sabbath observance. I found that it was not the actual rituals - such as the blessing of the wine or bread before the meals - that made the Sabbath important to them. Most interviewees who marked this weekly holy day spoke most enthusiastically about how the informal part of the shared meals, such as the Friday night dinners, is important to them because it provides an habitual opportunity to connect with family, friends, and members of the community:

Things like Shabbat, it's a very family occasion, people have guests over and you go out to guests, you know. Seder night again, it's a great example. You bring people in from outside the community. A lot of the things build and create a strong community of people that share a lot of their lives together and that really creates interdependence and that creates a strong community (Alon)

Accordingly, because of the interactions they facilitate, formal rituals can build and strengthen connections and thus ties among the participants and, subsequently, a sense of belonging to the group overall.

Organised informal social gatherings are also important in this regard. Examples include engagement parties, Jewish book week, Jewish film festival, conferences (e.g. Limmud conferences), book club meetings, lectures, seminars, and teaching sessions

(such as those provided by the Jewish Learning Exchange, the Jewish Cultural Centre or the Jewish Community Centre). When I attended a small meeting about Jewish identity at the Limmud conference 2008/2009, I found that participants - who did not previously know each other - just started telling their stories, for example stories about what it was like for them growing up with the shadow of the Holocaust or in the East End of London. Even when the session was over attendees kept on talking to each other. Thus, such cultural activities can provide people with the opportunity to engage with other group members and in this way connect with one another as 'Jews'. This connection can then inform their sense of belonging to the group. This argument was reflected in the comments of some of the Limmud participants. Rose, a first-time attendee, said:

You can strike up conversations with all sorts of people. What I've done is have particular things [sessions] that I wanted to follow. So you find people keep popping up in the same things. I've gone on my own, don't know anybody. I'd heard about it and was tentatively thinking about it for a couple of years before I did it...They were saying there were some people for whom Limmud was their only Jewish experience - that's me...After four intense days, I came back from it, I walked round my neighbourhood, I'm probably the only Jew in my neighbourhood...and, you know, it's different.

Thus, all kinds of organised social gatherings in a Jewish context provide occasions for Jews to give mutual signalled attention to each other, to connect or re-connect, and to create or re-create a sense of togetherness as members of the same group and thus a sense of belonging to the group. I argue, however, that the effectiveness of organised gatherings in being able to create strong connections among members in order to facilitate social capital creation is affected by two factors: frequency of attendance and attendance boundaries.

One, the frequency of attending organised social gatherings determines their effectiveness in creating dense ties and a strong sense of Jewish belonging. I found an association between regularity of participation in organised get-togethers and intensity of a sense of connection felt with other Jews. Devout affiliated - particularly traditional - participants who subsequently participated a lot in organised events and activities tended to perceive members of their denominational network, and often even Jews they did not know, as members of their family:

[Being Jewish] means I have a much wider family, so that I have an international family...I know that when I go away, there's going to be someone there that I can go to, go for lunch or go for dinner and I know that

they'll be somewhere wherever I go, I'll never be on my own, because I've always got this family behind me (Stephen)

There's this assumption that they [Jews of one's denomination] are more like family...you'll know people who are the same. The community is quite small and especially if they are religious they will know someone who knows you then it's already safer. If I met you and you know someone who knows someone then it's fine. You feel safer if you know someone who knows someone else so you reckon that they are safe (Adah)

Such devout, affiliated members were also the ones who often told me during my fieldwork that Jews are relationally connected with each other and can 'always' establish an indirect link between each other. Such respondents, for instance, referred to 'the six degrees of separation between Jews', that is, the perception that any two Jewish people can work out a connection between them that does not exceed six links, an idea which is in line with Milgram's work on the six degrees of separation between people in the world (Milgram 1967). For example, Zachariah was one participant, who mentioned this connection:

There are six levels of separation. Every person that I were to meet in Israel within at most six levels we would be able to know how we know each other. We almost definitely know someone who we both know and if not then we both know someone who knows the other person. It's true we are an incredible small people, incredibly closed community. Any Jews you encounter you somehow work out a connection.

Members' feelings of connection with Jews in general due to an actual strong interconnectedness with a lot of Jews in their personal social environments was, indeed, found to be associated with creating and also accessing resources in the community. For instance, Adah, who was quoted above talking about the perceived sense of connection among group members, also noted how it assists her in accessing the social capital of Jewish people she does not know personally:

I needed to do a repair on my skirt and I didn't have a sewing machine and I was standing in a street and I saw a friend of mine who I vaguely know and I asked her: 'Do you have a sewing machine by any chance?' And she said: 'No I don't have a sewing machine but my friend has a sewing machine. Here, have her number' and I called her and said: 'I'm such and such's friend. I have a skirt to sew up can I come round?' And she was like 'I live in such and such place'. I went to her house, I went to her room and she just left me there alone. People are very trusting. There are places you can do adjustments for free just because you know someone.

It can be argued that the more members interact with other members, the greater the sense of connection not only with the Jews they know but also the ones they do not know. Accordingly, this connection can facilitate giving to Jewish acquaintances as well as to Jews in general.

Two, attendance boundaries can also influence the effectiveness of organised social gatherings. I found that Jewish events and activities, such as Sabbath meals, are generally not attended by gentiles:

I don't think I have [invited non-Jews along to a Sabbath meal]...I'm a bit embarrassed about what they would think...A lot of my non-Jewish mates, wouldn't be interested...To ask a friend 'do you wanna come round and have dinner with my family'...that's just a bit weird...If you'd invited me for Sunday lunch I wouldn't be like [a disgusted look]. I would understand because I do that. But if I came from a family where I didn't, I would be like: 'no thanks' (Alon)

We would tend not to invite non-Jews to share in our Shabbat meals, if only because of the stylised or ritualised nature of those meals, which non -Jews may feel a bit awkward or uncomfortable about in sharing...It's only our hesitation that they might feel a bit out of things, with the kiddush and the grace after meals. These things are perhaps difficult to share with a non-Jew (Edward)

Hence, Jewish gatherings seem to be an activity that takes place separate from non-Jews.

The attendance boundaries to general community and denominational institutional organised gatherings are based on the membership/resource access criteria of the sub-groups. These criteria assist in making the gatherings exclusively Jewish and marking them as Jewish; this helps participants to connect to each other as Jews at these meetings and, in this way, contributes to the effectiveness of the bonding activity and thus to the strength of the established connections, and to the creation of a sense of group belonging.

Furthermore, attendance boundaries must be viewed in the context of the divisions between the sub-groups, which often cause the gatherings of affiliated members to be attended mainly by members from the same denomination, which assists in creating strong denominational ties. A general suggestion is then that the stronger a sub-group's interaction boundaries are towards other Jewish groups and non-Jews in general, the more the members of the sub-group have the opportunity to engage and connect with

each other, which consequently means that they engage and connect less with others outside of their own sub-group. This process can create very strong ties within sub-groups and thus facilitates giving within sub-groups and to Jews in general more so than to gentiles. My findings revealed an association between denominational devotion - and thus strength of inter-denominational boundaries - and the quantity of social capital present in the denominational group. The Ultra-Orthodox, who live very removed from gentiles and other denominational members, and who are generally devout and thus frequently attend organised formal gatherings within their synagogue communities, had the highest social capital. Next on this scale were the Modern Orthodox Jews, who on the whole place more emphasis on their own sub-group networks than other Jewish or non-Jewish ones. This was not the case for the Progressive and even less so for the unaffiliated members, which helps to explain their sparser capital.

The secondary analysis of 1995 JPR survey statistics about charitable giving to Jewish and non-Jewish causes by denomination (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998), which is presented in **Table 5.2.**, correlates with my argument that the more traditional members are in their outlook - and thus the more involved they are with Judaism and subsequently the more they interact with members of their own group, to the exclusion of other groups of Jews and non-Jews - the higher their level of giving to the community in general, in this case Jewish charities, and the lower their giving to the non-Jewish community, in this case non-Jewish charities.

**Table 5.2. Donations to Jewish and non-Jewish charities in percentage by denomination (N = 545)<sup>162</sup>**

	Unaffiliated Jews <sup>163</sup> (N=230)	Progressive Jews (N=88)	Modern Orthodox Jews (N=170)	Ultra-Orthodox Jews (N=57)	Total (N=545)
Jewish	10	43	72	81	42
Non- Jewish	90	57	28	19	58
Total %	100	100	100	100	100

*Source:* Goldberg and Kosmin 1998

In summary, I have demonstrated that organised social gatherings provide a forum for interactions. These organised meetings encourage the building and strengthening of social ties and thus a sense of belonging to the Jewish group through the mechanism of mutually provided attention in interaction. This, in turn, was argued to facilitate the creation of the motivations to give to Jews.

### 5.5. System Cohesion

Exploring social capital creation as a system, comprising motivations and conditions that facilitate their formation, I argue that there needs to be external mechanisms that sustain this system. In this section, I explore how an ‘ethos of regard’ can be effective in making the system of social capital creation cohesive. An ‘ethos of regard’ is defined in this study as a culture of mutual attention, notice and giving of care. In this way, ‘regard’ is a behaviourally expressed sign and thus a gesture.

According to social identity theory (SIT), everyone has an innate propensity to belong to a group (Hogg et al. 1995; Fiske 2004). Individuals categorise themselves as part of a group and subsequently identify themselves with a group<sup>164</sup> to obtain

<sup>162</sup> I have drawn on the statistics on Jewish giving by Goldberg and Kosmin, who presented a four dimensional statistic of the percentage of giving to four charity types - being ‘None’, ‘Non-Jewish’, ‘Jewish only’ and ‘Jewish and Non-Jewish’ by ‘Secular’ (‘non-practicing’ Jews called unaffiliated Jews in **Table 5.2.**), ‘Progressive’, ‘Traditional’ (named ‘Orthodox Jews’ in this table) and ‘Strictly Orthodox’ Jews (named ‘Ultra-Orthodox Jews’ in this table) and ‘Just Jewish’ (which I did not include in this statistics) (Goldberg and Kosmin 1998). I re-calculated these statistics to suit a two-dimensional statistical analysis on giving to ‘Jewish’ and ‘Non-Jewish’ charities by unaffiliated, Progressive, Orthodox and Ultra-Orthodox Jews.

<sup>163</sup> The fact that unaffiliated members still give to Jewish charities can be associated with the fact that some of them still attend communal events such as Limmud.

<sup>164</sup> Accordingly, social categorisation of an individual as a member of a group creates and defines an individual’s place in society (Linssen 1995; Coenders 2001). Social groups provide their members with an identification of themselves in social terms (Tajfel and Turner 1979).

psychological security and safety (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Although other researchers such as Tajfel put those reasons next to others such as power obtainment (Tajfel 1970; Tajfel et al. 1971), psychologists such as Maslow (Maslow et al. 1987; Maslow 1999) or Baumeister and Leary (Baumeister and Leary 1995) demonstrate that obtaining security and safety is an innate need and its fulfilment a primary instinct and thus most important in individuals' pursuit of a positive self-concept. All people want to feel psychologically safe and secure in a social environment to be who they are and feel good about themselves. Once a person has developed a secure and safe sense of positive identity by identifying themselves with a social group (Dekker et al. 1997), he or she will try to protect, enhance, bolster, and defend it. If their sense of positive identity is weak or weakens, they will inevitably try to strengthen it (Weinreich 1989; Coenders 2001; Weinreich 2002). People constantly look for ways to strengthen or maintain their identity.

In light of this theory, a community with a 'regard ethos' is attractive for people to belong to because 'regard', in the form of being cared for, noticed and attended to, demonstrates to the receivers directly that they are wanted as part of the group. When a person gives 'regard' to a previously unknown person, this 'regard' breaks down an innate trust barrier, allows a sense of connection to arise and subsequently provides "a powerful incentive for trust" (Offer 1997: 454). In this way, a community with an 'ethos of regard' can also make people want continuously to belong to the community, because expressed 'regard' among members fulfils their innate need of feeling secure and safe and thus feeling good about themselves. Accordingly, people belonging to a group with an 'ethos of regard' will tend to express 'regard' to one another on a continuous basis, which can facilitate their on-going and regular engagement in the social structure of such a group. Constantly experienced 'regard' from group members can foster a feeling of connection with and trust in group members and thereby, help facilitate the creation of a solid sense of belonging to the group. As a consequence, 'regard' is able to assist in sustaining the creation of the motivations of members to give not only to those in the immediate group structure, but also to those in the extended group structure.

Participants often referred to 'regard' in more general terms as being a major component of Jewish culture:

Being nice to others [meaning other Jews] is what you do when you are Jewish (Hazel).

It's very much the thing of belonging to a community of having support and actually affection in our community from close around me (Jola).

Likewise, Scott responded to my question about what the most important aspects of being Jewish were for him: "noticing what's going on around you, caring about the people around you, and not being overly selfish".

Several participants referred to being attended to by fellow members in terms of being missed in the community when they did not attend communal events. Adena illustrates how being missed can provide members with a feeling of group belonging:

The synagogue is the central point of Jewish life...we really feel part of that community and we contribute to that community in different ways...when we aren't there, people would ask: 'Where are you? Is everything ok?' You are missed and you miss people who aren't there. You feel very part of it. It's being part of something bigger.

Some of the participants also referred to the care that is provided to mourners during the weeklong bereavement period of sitting *shiva*<sup>165</sup>. It is considered a deed of consideration and compassion to pay a home visit (i.e. to make a *shiva call*) to the family of mourners. People bring food, pray together, talk about the deceased by sharing stories of his or her life and often even help the mourners out in the household. In addition to making the recipients feel good about themselves, showing care also allows the carers to feel good about being there for others and to feel needed, which facilitates the creation of connections between the caregivers and those receiving the care. Thus, 'regard' can contribute to interdependence, which is suggested to be positive because it fulfills a vital innate need for security and safety. Alon illustrated this argument by describing the assimilation process of his Jewish cousin into the community because of 'regard':

I have a cousin who is very irreligious and has been going out with a non-Jewish boy for ages, she is completely secular...She saw that my mother was sitting shiva at her house in the Southend. A lot of families visited her, made her food, made her meals, helped her out in the home did sort of the washing...just helped out doing something at her mother's home...She saw the people who were coming, driving to see her and really helping my mum out because there is this communal interdependence and she was amazed by it...She has become more interested in Judaism because she was very impressed by how religion is meant to help people...that it actually has a very human side to it.

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<sup>165</sup> Sitting Shiva is following all or some of the rituals associated with the week-long period of grief and mourning for the nuclear relatives/family of the dead person.

Furthermore, my observations showed that members expressed ‘regard’ when welcoming each other at social events or even when meeting each other randomly. For instance, on the Sabbath, Jews in the streets will stop to wish others that they recognise as being Jewish ‘*Gut Shabbos*’ (a good Sabbath), even if they do not know them personally. This interaction is normally not found in the majority British Christian society on their respective weekly day of rest, Sunday. Even on regular (not holy) days, I observed that members who knew each other would stop to greet each other, often with a handshake and a tap on the shoulder or even an embrace. They tended to inquire about each other as well as their respective families and ask for social information updates. Inquiring about the family is very important in Jewish culture because of the importance the family has in Judaism. Inquiring about their family signifies to the conversation partner that s/he is personally noticed. In this respect, Evan said about the *kiddush* in synagogue that it offers members an opportunity to provide nuanced, verbally-expressed attention to each other, facilitating the development of connectivity among members: “you know about each other’s lives and you know you will see each other next week. The on-going interest, there’s continuity”. This is even done during prayer services. Hence, I observed that as members arrive, they walk around the synagogue during the service greeting already present members by shaking their hands and having short chats with them. Their smiles indicated to me that such focused interaction provides mutual contentment and validation.

‘Regard’ also extends to Jewish people that are met for the first time such as by making an effort in their communication with each other and in this way providing mutual notice facilitating thereby the creation of a sense of connection and group belonging. For example, I heard and observed that members will play the ‘Jewish Geography’ game when they meet, which provides mutual notice and thus can create connection between them<sup>166</sup>. The following array of responses illustrates this and other such examples:

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<sup>166</sup> Indeed, other researchers have also picked up on this Jewish custom of trying to establish a link between members in terms of finding mutual acquaintances when they meet for the first time. Ethan Diamond notes in his book “And I Will Dwell in Their Midst: Orthodox Jews in Suburbia” that this game can work as follows: “One person asks, “You’re from [insert name of city here]? Do you know [insert person’s name here]?” The other one usually responds something like, “Sure, he sits behind my uncle in synagogue,” or “I met her once at a youth group convention,” or “She is really good friends with my sister’s college roommate” (Diamond 2000: Xv). Similar examples were provided by my respondents and during my observations. For instance, Jonah said: “There’s a thing called playing Jewish geography,

I was at this dinner once...I was talking to this lord about a lot of things and we disagreed about a lot of things. He liked fox hunting, I liked Tottenham. He was upper-class, I was from a working class background...He favoured a rise in tuition fees which I campaigned against. He probably saw from my name that I was Jewish so he asked me 'Are you Jewish?' – and automatically we started talking about a lot of communal stuff issues and community...That [being Jewish] is something that brought us together...Even though we are so different we can talk on the same wavelength. You can say it's the name jacket. We probably know the same people as well. There is this joke in the social community and the first thing someone asks you is 'do you know x, y and z?' Or, 'Which university do you go to? Oh, you must know so and so'. We are all kind of inter-connected. There's a sense of community and understanding (Allen)

If I go on holiday with my wife and we go to a hotel, and I sit by a swimming pool, within ten minutes I can tell, around that pool, out of 500 people, around that corner there are two Jewish people there. I will go over to them, and we will have something in common, and I will relate to them, and that's sort of nice to feel part of a club, a family, and that's very meaningful for me...I think we have in common, the religious side and all that that entails, a common history, and I suppose these days we have in common also our affection for Israel and our concerns about the preservation of the Jewish way of life...Or, we will make a comment, I'll amble over, and make a comment to my wife, or use a phrase, or she'll use a phrase [e.g. a phrase that's particularly Northwest London or Yiddish words] and they'll pick it up. It's an acknowledgement (Hugh)

There are neighbours across the road...and I'll be chatting away or whatever, and I'm sure when they said goodbye they said 'Shabbat Shalom'. I was like, 'Oh my gosh! They're Jewish! I had no idea'...So we've invited them for Friday night...I suppose there's slightly more of a connection, which is why it would be nice to invite them round. Whereas to invite totally non-Jewish people around for Friday night is a bit weird (Adinah)

You go off to University and you meet other friends, then you are part of a Jewish society and you automatically have friends that you wouldn't have necessarily otherwise. Community gives you a lot and it's important to also give back to the community. For example, I have non-Jewish friends who went to University and they had a few friends from their hall and their course but you meet people slowly. I think it's naturally human you don't have trust when you meet a new person. If you are going a Jewish society event, you automatically meet people and you click with them and you become friends. There aren't really the same boundaries as when you meet a stranger...My non-Jewish friends had it tougher (Josie)

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which is, you meet some people, you go: 'you are from North London?', 'you are Jewish?', 'Do you know?' And I go through a list of 15 people I know and you then tell me 'yes', 'no', 'yes', 'no'". This custom of making an effort to get to know a fellow Jewish person by trying to establish connection with them provides attention as it makes this person feel wanted.

As the final quote above illustrated ‘regard’ can thus encourage and facilitate integration into a social network.

‘Regard’ was also perceived by some of the participants to be more pronounced in the Jewish community than in the non-Jewish Christian majority group, which also indicates that value is placed on providing ‘regard’ to fellow members:

Someone dies everyone knows what they are meant to do, you know. The community immediately rallies round, they bring food, for seven days you are meant to do nothing but sit on these low stools. You know what you have to do. People visit you, they bring you food. You spend those days taking time out of your life to mourn that person... Whereas in Christianity someone dies it often takes weeks to even be buried and you are sort of in this limbo where people are kind of too polite to come round in England, don’t quite want to disturb them and there’s lots to do and then you go back to work (Sara)

Non-Jewish friends are more reserved. If I’d phone one of mine, a very nice lady and I ask: ‘Can you help me?’ [She goes:] ‘Oh well I don’t know, I might have an appointment, I might do this, I might do that. I don’t know’. On the whole, Jewish people try to help each other (Beatrix)

Or, interestingly, Samuel once said to me when it was very late to travel back home after the ending of a festival celebration: “You can stay with us. It’s not a problem. It’s not like the British, I really mean it”.

In sum, my findings concur with Offer’s work on ‘regard’, which states that this gesture can provide acknowledgement, acceptance, kinship, respect, sociability and status (Offer 1997). Thus, a community with an ‘ethos of regard’ may provide people with security and safety and with a positive identity in social terms by making them want to belong to the Jewish group. Thus, communities with this ethos as part of their culture are very gratifying and therefore attractive to belong to. They can make individuals want to start and continue engaging in the social structure of the community, facilitating thereby the creation of strong connections and ties among individuals, and thus a sense of group belonging. This can then facilitate the development of their motivations to give to other Jews.

## 5.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter has demonstrated that the Jewish community is important for its members because it can create a sense of belonging by offering *wide-ranging resources* (i.e. social capital), a social structure that provides *regular social interaction* and with it signalled attention through the geographical proximity of its members, frictions, and organised group gatherings, as well as *regard*. All of these factors that Jewish community affiliation provides respond to the innate need of individuals to belong to a group in order to feel safe and secure. Thus, affiliating oneself with the Jewish community is very attractive as it answers individuals' pursuit of these feelings on a continuous basis.

Thereby this chapter has indicated that the social capital of the community is more multi-faceted than previously described. There are resources provided by the general community through community institutions as well as resources provided by the separate denominations through their religious institutions and by the denominational members directly. Furthermore, the quantity of the resources vary among the three different denominational network groups, meaning the traditional, the non-traditional and the unaffiliated Jews, as well as between different synagogue communities within the religious denominations. In most cases there are strictly defined access criteria to the resources based on ancestry and religious conversion which can be expected to affect the overall great quantity and perceived quality of the group's capital. Thus, future research examining the social capital of minorities needs to look at their capital less crudely by analysing variations across sub-groups and by exploring further the role of access boundaries in determining the quality and quantity of resources within sub-groups.

Regarding the motivations for Jews to contribute to their community, I found that giving to the group through its institutions and to its members directly was sometimes motivated by rational self-interest. However, it was also motivated by a cultural norm to do so. This 'culture of giving' can also be extended to benefit gentiles, which was mentioned mainly by Progressive and unaffiliated members. Another important motivation for giving that I identified was a sense of responsibility for Jewish continuity. These three motivations were argued to be based on a sense of belonging to

the group. Hence, the simple act of giving as Jews to the community or gentiles can maintain as well strengthen members' Jewish identity.

In view of why members of groups in general contribute to their respective communities, I suggest that self-interest, a culture of giving and a sense of responsibility for the continuation of the group can be possible explanations. While self-interest has been widely discussed in the literature as being able to assist in social capital creation (Dolfsma et al. 2008), the other two motivations have so far been neglected. Accordingly, scholars in the field of social capital are encouraged to research their impact in other communities.

Next, the conditions for these motivations to be created were examined. Looking therefore at the social structure of the community, I demonstrated that geographical proximity, ideological frictions and organised social gatherings in community networks may condition the formation of the motivations by enabling the creation of a sense of connection and group belonging among members. I demonstrated that the geographical proximity offers opportunities for members to meet, interact on a frequent basis, and build strong ties among each other. I have also demonstrated that conflicts of interest (frictions) within sub-groups lead to the creation of new groups. These fragmentation processes lead network groups to remain relatively small in size, which allows for more interactions among members of the same network groups and thus for more opportunity to create connections and a sense of belonging to the group overall.

Furthermore, I have also argued that frictions themselves are important in creating a sense of group belonging among members. Frictions help individuals to create meaning of their place within the group through internal intra-group comparison. My argument agrees with Simmel and Coser, who assert that conflict, in my case friction, aids the function of creating and sustaining group identities (Coser 1956; Simmel 1964).

Organised social gatherings in sub-group networks, such as synagogue communities, can do the same. Accordingly, my findings support Richman's argument that community institutions are important in social capital creation (Richman 2006) because they provide a physical place to meet and interact. Looking at the micro-level of how institutions work and what they provide, I illustrated that they offer organised social gatherings, which supply a platform for and in this way also encourage communication among members. Communication with members allows participants to

form connections with each other and, by extension, to develop a sense of group belonging.

These findings also resonate with Small's claim that social capital creation is conditioned by the structures of the institutions themselves (Small 2009). As I do in this chapter, Small demonstrates that institutions which offer frequent and continuous opportunities for interaction create more opportunities for members to build strong ties, which he argues is necessary for social capital creation. Small does not, however, analyse the mechanism that allows the interaction to be regarded by the participants as a positive experience to then be able to facilitate resource creation. I argued that participants provide each other with attention in interactions. Getting attention in the form of focus satisfies a basic human need because attention is necessary to achieve a positive self-concept and identity, for which everyone strives (Hogg 2006).

My work builds on Small's theory by arguing that access boundaries to social gatherings also inform the effectiveness of the interactions in building strong connections among participants. Social gatherings that are attended only by members of the same group are more effective because members can create better and more intense sociations of themselves as members of the group. Accordingly, it can be concluded that members who engage with other members in a Jewish context assist them in associating and positioning themselves as members of the group and so reinforce their sense of Jewishness.

Finally, previous research has not looked at social capital creation as a system with motivations and associated conditions that have to be fulfilled in order for social capital creation to work effectively. I found that the system can be strongly supported by an 'ethos of regard' – a culture of actively expressed attention, notice and care giving – within a group. 'Regard' is powerful because it can satisfy people's innate need for security and safety and, accordingly, can make individuals want to belong to a group. This response mechanism can make people want to engage in and participate continuously in the social structure of the group and can thus assist in facilitating the creation of strong connections and ties among group members. These connections and ties create the conditions in which the motivations to give can develop. Consider that an 'ethos of regard' leads people to want to belong to the group and thus can support identification with the group, whereas other controlling or disciplinary mechanisms,

such as gossip (e.g. Baumeister et al. 2004, Coleman, 1990), only work if people already want to belong to the group; it can be suggested that in comparison to disciplinary mechanisms the 'ethos of regard' has a stronger impact on making the system of social capital creation work effectively and cohesively. Thus, my findings in this respect suggest that in communities to which people belong voluntarily, incentives to adopt and comply with norms, such as a norm of giving, work better than controlling or disciplinary measures.

## 6. Continuity

**Chapter 5** found that many Jews invest in the community in order to facilitate its continuation. **Chapter 6** analyses in greater depth the importance of continuity in Judaism by examining why Jews want a partner from their own group. This will provide insights into how Jewish identity is perpetuated by its members within and across generations.

“My parents said that being gay is one thing, but marrying out would be worse” (Kasin 2011)

Much research has been published about the marriage choices of minorities (e.g. Muttarak and Heath 2010; Song 2010). Such studies, however, lack ethnographic exploration of why minority members *themselves* want a partner from their own group. It is interesting to look at British Jews in this regard. Although Jews make up a long-standing Diaspora group in Britain, and members are generally not obstructed from integrating into mainstream society and thus intermarrying is not precluded by social and structural barriers such as language and socio-economic status, statistics suggest that three quarters of all members still ‘marry Jewish’<sup>167</sup> (Graham et al. 2007). This figure must be viewed in light of the religious instruction that Jews are to marry within the group in order to ensure the continuation of Judaism, which indicates the existence of a norm of endogamy and thus continuity within the community (Cohen 2006). This norm is fostered by a community focus, including an institutional one, on continuity through endogamy (Sacks 1994; Wertheimer and Bayme 2005). One of the underlying motives of cultivating this norm is to counteract a suggested decline of the British Jewish population (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010). This communal focus on continuity through endogamy makes it interesting to explore ethnographically why British Jews *themselves* want a partner from their own group. This chapter looks at answers to this unexamined question and provides nuanced insights into how the norm of continuity and with it identity is perpetuated within and across generations.

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<sup>167</sup> According to the 2001 Census, 78% of women and 75% of men married in (Graham et al. 2007).

### 6.1. Partner Choice

A large body of research in Diaspora studies focuses on the perpetuation of group identity through endogamy. One set of studies researches generational continuity of minority identities by exploring how members of a minority group can maintain their own identity through endogamy (Al-Yousuf 2006; Schwadel 2006). For example, in-marriage can present an expression and marker of the group identity and, in this way, can sustain members' identity (Charne et al. 2008). Another set of literature focuses on inter-generational perpetuation of minority identities. It often takes American Jews as a case study or sample group (Chertok et al. 2008). This perspective purports that if members 'marry in' they will most likely also have Jewish children and so sustain inter-generational continuity. Some studies in this set of literature have explored the factors leading to members' endogamy and exogamy (e.g. Fishman and Goldstein 1993; Cohen 1995; Philips and Fishman 2006).

For instance, Chiswick and Chiswick use economic language when arguing theoretically that it is religious human capital in form of *Torah* studying and associated activities, such as observances of the festivals, that determines Jewish continuity<sup>168</sup> in the form of in-marriage (Chiswick and Chiswick 2000). Their research, which is based on secondary analysis, claims that people having a lifestyle that makes substantial use of Jewish human capital want to 'marry in' because they will have an easier time and it will be less costly for them to maintain their lifestyle with a partner who has a similar one (leading then to generational continuity). In other words, group members leading a Jewish lifestyle prefer endogamy. In contrast, people not leading a Jewish lifestyle that makes heavy or any use of Jewish human capital will extend their marriage preference to include gentiles with a similar level of (non-specific) religious human capital or with a religion that is less family-oriented. Note that having a Jewish lifestyle involves participating in many ritualised family gatherings to mark the festivals (Chiswick and Chiswick 2000). Chiswick and Chiswick's research leads to the expectation that children growing up with this lifestyle will be more likely to adopt such a particular

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<sup>168</sup> Jewish intergenerational continuity is defined by Chiswick in his earlier work as "the consequence of voluntary participation in Jewish life at least to the point of ensuring the intergenerational transmission of Jewish human capital" (Chiswick 1999: 50). His assumption is that Jews "with high levels of Jewish human capital are more productive Jewish consumers [and thus will be less likely to marry out, as it would be too costly for them], and those with little Jewish human capital have less to lose if they leave the community [through exogamy]" (Chiswick 1999: 50).

lifestyle in their adulthood and accordingly want endogamy. They want someone with a similar way of life and to raise children with this style of living, which, then, naturally leads to a perpetuation of Jewishness across generations.

Indeed, not only theoretical (Moss and Abramowitz 1982), but also empirical studies have claimed that parents can intentionally transmit their Jewish norms and values to their children and with it their Jewish identity. Such research argues that inter-generational Jewish continuity can best be perpetuated in families that provide their children with a strong Jewish background (e.g. Chiswick 1999). For example, Lasker and Lasker found in their quantitative work remarkable correspondence between what the parents perceived to be vital dimensions of their own Jewish identity (such as ethics, community, religious proficiency, faith, observances and foremost knowledge of people and heritage, and less so having Jewish friends) and that of their children (Lasker and Lasker 1991).

However, research on endogamy mainly explores the partnership preferences of people who are already married. Thus, it lacks an examination of the preferences of individuals who are in non-marital partnerships with members from their own group and singles who have a predilection for a partner from the same community. There is, furthermore, a lack of literature exploring the social context in which people have grown up in view of its impact on their partner preferences. Accordingly, studies do not address how individuals understand their wish for a Jewish partner in view of how their social environment might have shaped their preference, nor do they examine whether there are sub-group differences in this regard. Moreover, studies in this field do not compare their findings in this respect against those of individuals who choose to be in partnerships with gentiles. Overall, research in this area is either of theoretical or quantitative nature; there is a lack of studies using an ethnographic approach. Thus, I investigate ethnographically why some Jews in Britain want to ‘partner in’ (i.e. ‘partner Jewish’, meaning to be in a partnership with or marry someone Jewish) in view of (i) the social environment in which they have grown up, and, (ii) why others ‘partner out’ (i.e. ‘partner non-Jewish’ meaning to be in a partnership with or marry someone non-Jewish).

I first examine members’ reasons for wanting a Jewish partner. I include in this analysis participants who are either a) single with a preference for a Jewish partner or b)

in a relationship with a Jewish partner, including those who are married to one. It can be suggested that the figure of members marrying in would be lower if not for the negative consequences for people marrying out. Secondly, therefore, I explore the violations to the norm of continuity and thus endogamy from the participants' point of view independently of whether they have married out, in, or at all. This indicates, furthermore, how the norm of Jewish continuity is fostered. Thirdly, I analyse how Jews who have partnered out, including those who have married out, make meaning of their choice. This provides further indication of how Jewish continuity through partnering in is sustained.

Note that over half of the interviewees in my sample (62 of 105) had Jewish partners<sup>169</sup>. Of the 29 respondents that were single, 20 respondents (69%) wanted a Jewish partner. Lastly, 14 respondents (13%) had a non-Jewish partner.

## **6.2. Partnering In**

According to the *Torah*, Jews should not partner with gentiles because their children would then turn to other religions: 'you shall not intermarry with them: do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons. For you will turn your children away from me to worship other gods' (Deuteronomy 7:1-3). Indeed, a few participants explained their partner choice accordingly. For example, the devout Modern Orthodox Adinah, who married Jewish, said, "it wouldn't have occurred to me to marry someone non-Jewish, because it's a commandment". However, such participants also asserted that the socialisation into (a) a Jewish lifestyle in order to want to be with someone who has the same background and outlook, and/or, (b) a sense of responsibility to marry in, affected their preference for a Jewish partner. The latter was expressed in, and thus associated with, a sense of loyalty to perpetuate the Jewish heredity and the traditions by marrying in. Adinah, for instance, also referred to the first reason informing her endogamy decision: "If your values are hugely different, surely it's harder to have a relationship like that".

Thus, the first reason many participants, even the secular ones, mentioned for wanting a Jewish partner was 'a wish for social harmony in a relationship', which they

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<sup>169</sup> Two interviewees in the Progressive sample had half-Jewish partners, which were counted as Jewish partners.

based on having a common background and a similar outlook on life. For example, the unaffiliated Beth reasoned her preference for a Jewish partner as follows:

Birds of the feather stick together. Because of the comfort thing, the background and the knowledge...It might come a time when you have a massive argument that it would come up, that somebody might use it against you.

Or, the secular unaffiliated Annabel volunteered:

They [Jewish men] would have similar values to me, an understanding of my upbringing and I would like my children to be raised Jewish. If I married someone non-Jewish, technically they would be Jewish, but for me, I would prefer if I had someone with a similar background.

As typified by Annabel above, the preference based on a wish for social harmony in a relationship for a partner from the same group was also found to be associated with wanting to raise the children in a Jewish lifestyle without much negotiation. For example, the very devout Modern Orthodox Steve argued:

When I contemplated getting married, it was for the purpose of having a family. It's difficult for a Jewish man to bring up a Jewish family with a non-Jewish woman because she doesn't share his assumptions about what the children should be taught and in practice it's the wife that controls questions such as kashrut and to some extent Shabbat. It's really important for the partners to be in accord with one another on these subjects...Children ask questions all the time. Such a person would have to say 'I can't answer this question, ask your father'. That's not a great satisfactory state.

Or, the Reform interviewee Robin, who did not belong to a synagogue and was less engaged in Judaism when he was younger, still wanted to marry in due to social homophily<sup>170</sup>, including providing his children with a Jewish upbringing:

They [his parents] raised me and my sister to both have a strong Jewish identity...I did want to marry someone Jewish...It just makes life so much easier. There are just so many things that you don't need to discuss. We both think pretty much the same about most Jewish things. We both want to raise our kids as Jews...My son goes to a Jewish school...It's good that he's educated in the community that we live in and that we spend most of our time in...It makes it a little easier that he gets the Jewish content and identity.

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<sup>170</sup> Homophily theory asserts that individuals, if they are given the choice, are more likely to enter and stay in relationships with others who are similar to them on vital social dimensions; for example in terms of outlook on life (such as values) and education levels (Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954; Mare 1991; Fisher 1992; McPherson et al. 2001).

Raising his children in a Jewish lifestyle, his hope was that they would also want marry in:

The most important thing is to make them comfortable in the Jewish community, make them want to make Jewish choices, so if they live in that world then eventually the partner will likely to be Jewish. I want this to continue. I want my grandchildren to be Jewish...If someone marries a non-Jew it makes it more difficult, and a couple of generations down the line who knows what will happen. When both parents are Jewish it reinforces it, it just makes it easier. It's the best way of transmitting Jewish identity across the generations.

Hence, one of main reasons given for raising children in a Jewish lifestyle such as by following a range of ethno-religious traditions, as well as by engaging socially in the community, was the hope that they would marry someone from the community as well and continue the religious and the hereditary legacy. The Modern Orthodox Hugh, for example felt he had “to set an example for the next generation” like his father and grandfather did by keeping a stricter Jewish lifestyle - observing the festivals and other ethno-religious practices, such as by having a *kosher* household - so that his children would carry on this way of life and marry in.

Or, a Modern Orthodox mother in her fifties told me that she set strict ethno-religious observance rules for her children, so that as adults they would value Judaism and marry in. For example, when her son wanted to go out for the millennium New Year with his friends, which was on a Friday night, she did not allow him to because it was the Sabbath. This mother argued that if she had started to allow her children to circumvent the observances, they would not see the importance of perpetuating them and sticking with Judaism by marrying in: “If you start loosening the rules, where will it lead? They will marry out”. One of her three children has married Jewish, and the others are single and very devout.

This indicates that there is a conscious effort on the parents' side to socialise their children into having a Jewish background so that they would want to be with someone who had the same upbringing. Interestingly, some participants during my observations told me that they increased their practice of Judaism when they had children and others

intended to do so once they had offspring, as they regarded it as the best way to ensure their children would also perpetuate Judaism by marrying in<sup>171</sup>.

Note that the wish for a partner from their own group based on social homophily could even be more nuanced. The participants often specified that they wanted their partner to have a similar Jewish lifestyle as themselves, such as a comparable level of ethno-religious observance and community involvement. For instance, I met a less devout traditional man in his late-twenties during my observations who was dating a woman from the same denomination but with a stricter observance level. He already knew that the relationship would end in the near future because of their diverging levels of observance. He found her lifestyle, as he called it, “too restrictive”. For instance, she would not consider eating at non-kosher restaurants, while doing so was a part of his everyday life that he did not want to discontinue. Although these details regarding similar Jewish lifestyles could be seen as trivial, they were very important to participants in their partnership choices. This can, of course, also affect the reasoning for wanting a Jewish partner in general:

I'm a religious Jew and I want to instil those values into my children and to be honest my view of a marriage isn't one where father and mothers have different values and do different things and I think that would not really create a very stable and good home. I'm sure there are lots [of Jewish and non-Jewish people]...who think that 'while I'm going to get married to a religious Jew, I want to eat what I want and be able to do what I want on Saturday'...Conflicting values can be very difficult and for that reason, I don't think that it would work (Alon)

It was mainly to do with the upbringing and the lifestyle that I wanted to lead, which would have been incompatible with someone who wasn't Jewish and religious...It was important to me that my children have a strong Jewish identity and so I want them to be brought up in a religious atmosphere...We value Judaism and we want Judaism to continue, we have to make sure we safeguard it a little bit because it's so easy to disappear (Johanna)

Such evidence indicates that similar Jewish lifestyles are important not only in wanting to partner in, but also in the kind of Jewish partners members prefer.

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<sup>171</sup> Still, it should be noted that there are Jews who have grown up with a strict and strong traditional upbringing, but have married out. For example, I met an elderly woman at the 2008 'Day Limmud' in London, who said: "I have done everything. I have upheld all the traditions, I have marked all the festivals, I have kept a kosher home, but my children have all married out. I wonder what I did wrong. What have I done wrong?".

## *Continuity*

Next, a greater proportion of participants, regardless of their denomination or level of engagement with Judaism, advocated that a sense of responsibility to marry Jewish informed their wish to partner in. Their responsibility was expressed in a sense of loyalty to continue the ethno-religious heritage (e.g. the traditions) and particularly the ancestral heritage in this way. For example, asking the unaffiliated Eric why he married Jewish the first time, he responded: “It was a racial thing. It was about continuing the Jewish race”. Or, the unaffiliated Anne explained wanting a Jewish partner at one point as follows: “I want to marry Jewish because I don’t want Jews to die out”. The following answers by interviewees from different Progressive and Modern Orthodox denominations also illustrate this point:

We are so small in number so we need to kind of continue as Jews otherwise we will die out completely. For me, that would be a really bad thing if we were dying out because so many people have tried to do that, Hitler or whatever, to destroy us (Allen)

I was born Jewish and if my children or grandchildren are not Jewish then two thousand years of persecution, three thousand years of struggle will have been lost and wasted and I won’t have done my bit (Scott)

I want my children to be Jewish...It’s less likely if my wife would be a gentile for my kids to be Jewish or to grow up to be Jewish and even less likely that their kids would be...I want my children to continue this tradition and heritage. I am just one step in a long line and I want that line to continue (Joel)

My paternal grandma told me about how she saw her brother get shot by Nazis...my maternal grandma told me that she was a baker and survived in Auschwitz by working in the kitchen. This is why I feel responsible to try marrying someone Jewish (Hazel)

I found that the responsibility for endogamy among participants was associated with expectations communicated to them by their parents and community that they should marry in. Some participants admitted that they did or would in the future instill this sense of responsibility in their children so that their family line and thus Judaism would carry on. Hugh, who was cited above, overtly communicated the responsibility to marry Jewish to his children:

The one thing I said to them from their earliest days was ‘try to always marry Jewish people’...You’ve got to continue these traditions and this heritage and pass on to them, that I want them to pass on to their children and so on and so forth, otherwise we run out. And if you don’t, I say, then

## Chapter 6

Hitler wins. If we all assimilate and marry out, then it's the end of the Jewish people. We've lasted for thousands of years and we should end I think by marrying within...that's a slightly racist sort of argument.

Both of his children married Jewish.

Some participants also volunteered openly that they were affected by the parental expectations to marry in and wanted to express their loyalty by getting a Jewish partner.

Thomas said:

My mum is always asking: 'Are you hanging out with enough Jewish people? You seem to be hanging out with lots of Christian people, you are not going to meet someone'...They always check whether I am going to the Jewish society...My mum said that she would be very upset if I would end up with someone non-Jewish, she said that explicitly...I don't want to upset my mum. The fact that I will upset her is a consideration.

After my presentation about the reasons for exogamy and endogamy among British Jews at the Limmud Conference in 2008, two Modern Orthodox men in their twenties talked to me about their experiences concerning parental pressures to marry in. One of them said: "My mother always tells me to find a 'nice' Jewish girl. The emphasis is always on 'nice'; like non-Jewish girls aren't nice". They both volunteered that when they went to University, which also meant meeting more gentiles, the pressure from their parents to find someone Jewish increased. They admitted that the communicated parental expectations to marry in affected their partner choices. Both of them had been in non-Jewish relationships and ended them because of their feelings of guilt.

In general, I was compelled by the sheer number of heart-breaking stories I heard from my participants about how they ended relationships with non-Jews because of family loyalties. For example, the unaffiliated Jewish-married Mathias, who grew up in a secular Modern Orthodox home, volunteered:

One of the [non-Jewish] partners, I engineered breaking up with because my parents were so hostile that I kind of compromised and gave in. I thought this was going to be a very difficult situation.

Or single Zachariah, who grew up in a more devout Modern Orthodox, said:

The grief that is experienced by the parents of a child that marries out is caused by a recognition that they were not able to instil in their children the guilt, the responsibility or the burden of being Jewish...It means something to me that my father would tear his clothes and 'sit shiva' [pronouncing the child dead] for me if I were to marry out. He would be irreparably hurt as a

human being...It means to have the dialogue that I have had with my mother from a young child. I know what's important to them...I am that link in a chain. It would be arrogant of me to think for a minute that I should not marry a Jew. It would be wrong of me to think that I even had a choice in that matter. People have actually died for me to be Jewish...so how dare me to throw that away on a whim...I have had a very extensive deep-meaningful relationship for three years, whilst I was in University, with someone who wasn't Jewish...Ending it was the hardest thing that I did but that's why I ended it, she wasn't Jewish...I just couldn't go through with it.

Overall, my findings indicate that the expectations were more strongly communicated in traditional families than in non-traditional and unaffiliated families.

Next, some participants, mainly traditional ones, mentioned that expectations to marry in were also communicated by the community. Recall Steve, who married in because of social homophily. Asking him later in the interview whether he was raised in the belief that he should marry in, he answered:

Yes, 100%...I felt that they [his parents] had emphasised that it was of importance; not just of my parents, teachers at cheder, in general conversations with other kids growing up with me...I suppose once we got to the age of 16, once we started dating, we might, if we were forward looking enough start thinking in general terms about the concept of marriage. It came into the conversation, the need for endogamy...we struggled to learn what we had to do. The question of why we had to do it was something we left out...It was given like fasting on Yom Kippur.

Similar statements were provided by other traditional respondents.

The evidence regarding the existence of expressed community expectations in other denominational networks was little. Richard said the following with respect to the expectations conveyed in the Reform community: "There is the whole social pressure and snobbishness around. 'They might be nice but it would be better if they were a Jew'- that kind of thinking". The lack of communicated communal expectations in the unaffiliated and the Progressive - particularly the Liberal - networks might be associated with the fact that there is less of a stigma to out-marriage in those communities. This suggestion will be explored in the following section.

### **6.3. Violations to Endogamy**

Examining the negative consequences for those marrying out, I will suggest that these repercussions attach a stigma to out-marriage. The stigma signals to members that

endogamy is the norm. Accordingly, the stigmatisation of out-marriage can assist in the maintenance of the norm of continuity and in the perpetuation of the identity.

Firstly, I found that exogamy can create social dissonance within nuclear families, meaning between the out-marrying children and their parents. The social dissonance was associated with disappointed family and community loyalties. There was sadness and disappointment about out-marrying children across all researched denominations. For example, the Reform interviewee Joelle, whose two children married out, said:

I would have preferred if they had married Jewish, but that's sentimental and yet a strong feeling...it was about Jewish continuity...If they had married someone Jewish there would have been more of a family connection.

However, the social dissonance is greater in traditional families, as the following array of responses illustrates:

A very good friend of mine, very involved in his community, he takes the services, he's very religious, and his daughter married a non-Jewish man...He had the wedding in Italy. You can smudge it a bit if you have the wedding overseas...I know that he's never accepted this young man. He will sit with him and he'll come to his home, and I'm sure he'll have Jewish grandchildren, technically, but he feels let down (Hugh)

When I decided to marry a non-Jew, there were accusations of breaking the line of five, six thousand years, it is this line of unbroken ancestries...My Mum was crying and crying and crying - for months!...She accused me of a lot of things...like I was committing something that was similar to the Holocaust...My parents weren't at the wedding...My Dad was angry towards me. Then my brother would say some things at me...Our engagement party, which was at my in-laws' house, and I came up and I was like 'I don't know whether I can do this, everyone's shouting' - my family going, 'how can you do this? You're causing so much pain'...My grandfather once said to me, if I murdered the Queen, he would stand by me, but if I married out, he could never stand by me (Arion)

My Dad didn't want any Jewish aspect to the wedding at all - no broken glass, no seven blessings...I could not have any Jewish ritual while I was doing something so profoundly against Judaism. How could I possibly have a Jewish prayer when I'm marrying a non-Jew?...You can't possibly sanctify something that is un-sanctifiable according to Jewish law...you couldn't possibly have a Jewish celebration at my wedding, because it wasn't anything to celebrate. And saying grace after meals and all that was just a total and utter no-no, so we couldn't have a sit down dinner...When my husband said to my Dad at the wedding, 'Thank you for welcoming me into

the family,' my Dad said, 'Oh, well you welcomed yourself into the family' (Esther)

My parents were very unhappy when I married my wife...My father put me through a ritual catechism...He would say, 'why is our family so small?' And I would say partly because my parents don't have many children, but also because the wider family died in the camps. And he would say, 'Why did my family die? Why did your family die?' And I would reply, 'Our family died because they're Jewish!...He would say, 'So your family had died, to give you this opportunity to marry out? That's not how it ought to be'. It was terrible, he didn't speak to me for four years...He wrote me out of his will, said he was going to say kaddish [prayer for the dead] for me (Jack)

In general, the repercussions are talked about in the community and in this way a stigma is attached to out-marriage, indicating to others that they should marry in. This can foster members' reasoning for wanting a partner from their own group, particularly the sense of responsibility to marry Jewish. For example, even the unaffiliated Debralee, who came from a Reform family, said:

It would have been so hard [to marry out] because the rifts within the family would have been terrible...we knew what happened if somebody decided to marry out.

Secondly, there are sanctions for out-marrying people and their partners. The sanctions were found to be more severe in traditional networks than in the other networks examined. Parents in the Ultra-Orthodox community will still '*sit shiva*' for the out-marrying child. Hence, the out-marrying person and the partner will be shunned in Ultra-Orthodox communities. In Modern Orthodox networks, out-marrying Jews and their partners are generally pushed towards the social periphery or even excluded, and generally socially denounced. They cannot bring their non-Jewish partners to synagogue.

The sanctions seem to be less severe in Masorti networks. In Masorti synagogues, for example, rabbis tend to be more open towards inviting in non-Jewish partners. The aim, according to Masorti participants, however, was to make these partners convert to the religion. The Masorti respondent Amber noted her surprise, for example, that there was one non-Jewish husband in her synagogue community whose involvement members accepted despite his having no intention to convert.

## Chapter 6

Progressive networks appear to incorporate non-Jewish partners more readily into their respective synagogue communities. While Reform still proclaims publicly that it prefers same-faith marriages, it tends to respect the participation of non-Jewish partners in synagogue services. Some of the Reform synagogue communities have started catering to inter-faith partnerships by having events for couples engaged in them (Reform 2008). Liberal synagogue communities have even begun offering memberships for non-Jewish partners (LJS 2011). This indicates a direct relationship between the conservativeness of religious denominational networks and the severity of sanctions and thus stigma against out-marriage in them. The following array of responses illustrates this association:

I've got family members who married non-Jewish people...They [her parents] were very careful not to invite them round as a couple because they didn't want to show their children that 'yes, it's fine you can marry out, it's no big deal'...By marrying out you do in some respects separate yourself from the [Modern Orthodox] community and say you are not a part of it in the same way...You make a decision that the life you are going to lead and the life the children are going to lead is probably going to be less and less associated with Judaism and that's quite a powerful statement especially if you are a man who marries out because then you are saying 'I don't care if my kids are Jewish' (Johanna)

One of my cousins is not with someone who is Jewish and she [his mother] is always bitching about that and that the kids are not Jewish because they are not circumcised and they are not brought up Jewish at all...So, I certainly couldn't go to synagogue with a non-Jewish person...I would miss being part of it [meaning his Modern Orthodox community life] (Thomas)

Marrying out is possibly the most serious thing I think you can do [in the Modern Orthodox community]; to say, I'm not longer affiliated, and I don't care (Stephen)

You hear things when you grow up [in a secular Modern Orthodox community]. There were people in our extended family who had married out and it was the way they talked about them, they weren't part of the family as if it was a bad thing: 'So and so married out!' [Accusatory tone]...It wasn't said to me. It was when all the adults were talking, they were talking about 'so and so married out' [said accusatorily again] and you pick out vibes that it is a bad thing so you don't need to be told (Tom)

At my [Reform] wedding, somebody wanted my parents to ask somebody who had married out to my wedding, a member of the family, and she refused, she wouldn't have him because it was an example to my brother

she wouldn't have an example of accepting somebody who had married out (Orah).

The [Reform] community gossips about people who marry out (Richard)

The majority of people in my generation are marrying out and have mixed marriages...but no one [Reform rabbis] will marry us...no one will give a Jewish blessing to it...Maybe it's something that I have to get over with but I just feel that there is: 'oh she's the one that has married out. However accepting it is at one level, there is also a great disappointment (Sara)

There's this kind of expectation that you should be going out with a Jew otherwise there will be some sort of rejection and you are not quite part of the Jewish community because you have married someone who isn't Jewish, in the general community, not in the Liberal community (Allen)

Even though there might not be obvious or serious sanctions against out-marrying members in some communities, particularly in Liberal and unaffiliated networks, talk about the sanctions - as highlighted by Allen - can make even members from such networks aware that out-marriage is 'generally' frowned upon. This belief can exist because the traditional community, which strongly stigmatises out-marriage, is the largest Jewish group in Britain; 69% of all affiliated Jews belong to the traditional denomination (Graham and Vulkan 2010). Thus, the communicated sanctions can make all kinds of members - even if they would not apply to them personally - perceive that there is a stigma to out-marriage and accordingly a norm of endogamy in the general community. The stigmatisation of out-marriage may assist in fostering members' preference for Jewish partners and thus their reasoning for partnering in.

With this in mind, marriage to converts was also found to be stigmatised<sup>172</sup>. Converts were often not regarded by many as fully Jewish and thus marriages to converts were often not perceived as 'real' Jewish marriages. For example, the convert Alexandra asserted:

I am aware that other people might somehow regard me as not quite being entirely Jewish by virtue of having converted...the Orthodox community doesn't really regard me as Jewish. They regard my conversion as a means to an end and the end is the re-introduction of my husband into the community and also ensuring that our children are Jewish...the community

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<sup>172</sup> Note that the stigma can also hold for marriages to half-Jews (meaning if only the father of the person is Jewish). For example, I met a woman at a Limmud conference in 2008 whose father was Jewish but whose mother was not. She told me that she decided to convert to Judaism through the Masorti denomination because otherwise she would not be accepted by the general community excluding the Liberal community as a full member and a possible marriage partner.

finds a way to communicate that to you, that they don't really regard you as Jewish...Even friends from the community said 'so what kind of Jew will you be now?'...It [being Jewish] is something that I have to continue to earn or to prove...Jewish people make critical comments to me about the phenomenon of conversion apparently not knowing that I have converted.

In this vein, the Reform interviewee Orah, whose son married his wife only after her conversion to this denomination, still perceived their marriage to be an out-marriage:

It was very difficult for me when he married out because I knew he rejected at the same time everything...If his wife wanted to change her mind, she could throw it away but my grandchildren couldn't throw it away, even though halachically they wouldn't be considered Jews because it's their mother that converted...My grandchildren would not be accepted by so many people, I suppose that's what it is. Because it is important to everyone to be accepted...If they are rejected because their mother is a convert and they are not good enough then they are going to suffer hurt over which you have no control and they have no control. Hitler would think of them as Jews.

Several participants also articulated that they preferred their children to marry someone who was Jewish by birth rather than a convert as the latter was lacking direct ancestral and social Jewish background. For instance, Edward replied when asked whether he would be upset if one of his children married a convert:

I'd be less happy in that situation than if the partner had always been Jewish...I do feel that there would be a lack of common experience, of common background, which might endanger the marriage and also which would make a rapport, a relationship between me and that person less full than it would otherwise be if they had always been Jewish.

Evidence indicated that in the Ultra-Orthodox community converts have a lower status in the marriage market due to the same reasons. Converts get married primarily to other converts, Jews with family problems, disabled members, or returnees to the religion:

If a person has two choices - convert or not convert - you take someone who comes from a more Jewish background. There is always a worry with converts because the offspring might want to go back to where they originate...The matches, how people get married, goes through the family. So they come to the parent and say to the parent, 'I have a suggestion for you, I have a convert'. And the parent says, 'Very nice, but last week someone suggested someone to me who is not a convert. So what should I take a convert for?' It would be unfair to say a convert can only get married to a convert, because that's not the case...If something is not in line with a family, then they would go with the convert, because they wouldn't have

any choice...Very often you find in the Jewish community converts marry people whose parents are not religious (Mosche)

You'll get someone who's converted to marry another convert, or to marry someone who's returned to Judaism ...There are so many returnees that there's usually not a major problem, they usually find somebody...There's an expression: the apple doesn't fall very far from the tree...Their [converts'] genes, unless they have Jewish blood somewhere along the line, it is the blood of non-Jews, and what's in oneself is there, and one just doesn't know how it's going to affect the next generation (Yael)

Why would we not want our children to marry somebody who's a ger [convert]? The way we do everything comes naturally; you do things the way you see it at home; whereas a ger is somebody who has to learn it and it doesn't come naturally to them. So you want your children to marry someone who grew up in the same way as we did (Chava)

Converts' lower status in the community due to their lack of direct Jewish ancestry and upbringing demonstrates that endogamous partnerships are considered to be between two people who are Jewish by birth. It can be suggested that many members grow up with the stigmatisation of out- and even conversion marriage. Being raised in this environment can, thus, inform members' preference to be with a person who was born to two Jewish parents and raised Jewish. Still, the findings that out-marriage causes stronger social dissonance in traditional nuclear families and that there are more severe sanctions against out-marrying members in traditional communities suggest that it is easier to perpetuate continuity and thus identity within traditional Jewry.

#### **6.4. Partnering Out**

Exploring why some Jews partner out provides further indication of how continuity through partnering is perpetuated. Most of the participants who had non-Jewish partners did not have strong and strict Jewish upbringings with stringent execution of ethno-religious practices and social engagement in the community. Furthermore, they were not exposed directly to any - or at least any strong - overt family or community expectations to marry in, and stigmatisation of out-marriage. The lack of a strong and strict Jewish upbringing kept these participants from adopting an encompassing Jewish lifestyle in their adulthood, which involves being engaged in the community. Without engagement in the Jewish community, finding a Jewish partner naturally is less likely for these participants, especially considering the relatively small Jewish population size.

Accordingly, Elliot explained his exogamy by referring to how he drifted away from the community over time:

I probably continued going to synagogue till about age 15. It wasn't for me. The day I stopped going my father stopped going as well because he'd been going to keep me going...He viewed it as his business to give me a Jewish grounding, a Jewish foundation and that would always be there for me and I might take it up more or less, I might ignore it...When I met my wife, I'd considerably moved away from the Jewish community...I was not a synagogue goer, I wasn't a member of any Jewish circle. I'd moved away from the Jewish area because I don't like commuting (Elliot)

For most of the participants who partnered out, their distance from the lifestyle and community was also associated with negative attitudes towards the religion and/or community. For example, Arion, who married out, noted in this regard:

In my last two years of school as well, but especially after I moved to University I was not in a Jewish crowd anymore...I didn't practice anyway before...The [Jewish] friends that I made that I'm still in touch with are from my student days....we all had very similar views on being Jewish and we were very kind of cynical [of the community] and we shunned it quite a lot.

The exogamous Jack volunteered that he did not happen “to fall in love with a Jewish woman” because he was not involved in the community during his dating years. He explained his distancing from the community as follows:

I never for a second entertained the notion of believing in god, even when I was going to synagogue, which one had to do, certainly in the period leading up to one's bar mitzvah. The sort of hypocrisy that goes on even in Orthodox Jewish families like mine is terrible. I did my bar mitzvah...and then I never went back ever again...I went to the Jewish Society [at University] for Yom Kippur...it occurred to me there that even though these kids were Jewish, I had absolutely nothing in common with them, that I belonged to a different, leftier, more liberal tradition, and I thought they were terrible snobs, and very insular....so that was actually the last time I fasted.

Interestingly, most of these participants still had a sense of guilt about letting down their families and their group by not continuing Judaism, particularly the hereditary line. This indicates that they still felt a sense of responsibility to marry in and thus had a wish to find a Jewish partner. Considering that the expectations regarding endogamy were only, if at all, subtly communicated to these participants, it can be tentatively concluded that a less nuanced and more direct communication of

expectations and stigma against out-marriage can have a strong influence on members' partner choice.

Overall, the findings indicate that a strong and strict Jewish background is important in believing that there is greater social homophily in Jewish relationships than in relationships with non-Jewish partners and having a greater sense of responsibility to marry in. This fits with research such as by Chiswick and Chiswick, which claims that continuity through endogamy can be best perpetuated in families that provide their children with a strong Jewish background through activities such as Torah study and the keeping of the Jewish laws (Chiswick and Chiswick 2000).

My findings add to such work by suggesting that these families tend to be traditional ones. They tend, on the whole, to follow Jewish traditions more closely and thus are more involved in the community than families from other denominations. In traditional Judaism, following the laws and traditions of the Torah and Talmud are binding, whereas in non-traditional Judaism authority lies more with the individual, which means the individual decides which Jewish practices, if any, to adopt as binding. This means that a Jewish lifestyle is, on average, more encompassing for traditional members than for members from other denominations. Following a traditional Jewish lifestyle, parents may provide their children not only with a stronger but also a stricter Jewish background by following a stricter observance of the festivals, and thus create more separation between Jews and non-Jews. This can be suggested to provide greater inclination for members to adopt such a lifestyle in adulthood and as a consequence to want to marry someone from their own group who is similar to them, and feel greater responsibility to perpetuate this lifestyle by marrying in having Jewish children. Dr Goldstein, who is Modern Orthodox, believed that the Orthodox are, on average, better in perpetuating the identity through their more encompassing Jewish lifestyles, saying:

The more you do Jewish things in a Jewish context, the less you do non-Jewish things with non-Jews. The more Jewish things you let your children do, the more steps you create between them and non-Jews. There will be a greater perception of difference between them and gentiles. This makes it more likely that they will marry Jewish.

Furthermore, traditional families and communities seem to have stronger consequences for and accordingly greater stigmas attached to out-marriage, which help communicate the expectation that members should marry in. Dr Goldstein said in this

regard: “the stigmas to out-marriage are stronger within the traditional world”. It can be suggested that this makes it, then, also easier to instigate a sense of responsibility for endogamy among young traditional members.

Finding that gentile partners are generally socially denounced in traditional families and communities, and can even be socially excluded, means that children normally grow up in those communities with only Jewish couples around them. This can, furthermore, signal to them that being part of their respective community means having a partner who is a member of the group as well. The stronger and stricter Jewish upbringing in the traditional denomination, including the stronger stigmatisation of out-marriage, assists in explaining why there are more endogamous marriages within this denomination than in the non-traditional one (Graham and Vulkan 2008). In 2007, for example, over three quarters of all affiliated Jewish marriages were (Ultra- and Modern) Orthodox<sup>173</sup> (Graham and Vulkan 2008). Thus, my findings suggest that generational and inter-generational continuity can be ensured in traditional communities and their families more reliably than in non-traditional and unaffiliated ones.

### **6.5. Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter I have detailed how Jews understand their preference for a partner from their own group. I contextualised the findings by exploring how the social environment in which members grow up can perpetuate the norm of endogamy and thus safeguard generational and intergenerational continuity. This was done by exploring the consequences of out-marriage. Then, I contrasted these findings with an analysis of how others who had gentile partners understood their choice of ‘partnering out’.

Many participants, even those who were secular, explained their preference for a Jewish partner with wanting social harmony in a courtship. They wanted a partner who had a similar background and outlook on life. This reasoning resonates with research findings that people in Western society mainly follow the pattern of social homophily in spouse selection. Individuals tend to marry others from the same social group

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<sup>173</sup> In 2007, the total number marriages by denomination were as follows: Ultra-Orthodox: 243, Modern Orthodox (including the United Synagogue, Federation of Synagogues, and other synagogues recognising the authority of the Chief Rabbi): 464, Sephardi: 43, Masorti: 33, Reform: 97, Liberal: 31. Note that the Ultra-Orthodox Orthodox has very high birth rates, which can contribute towards explaining its high marriage rate. The Ultra-Orthodox Orthodox represents about 12% of the total Jewish population in the UK, and approximately 40% of all UK Jewish births take place in this denomination (Abramson et al. 2011).

(Lazarsfeld and Merton 1954; Bell 1981; Epstein and Guttman 1984; Buss 1985; Kalmijn 1998; McPherson et al. 2001; Furman and Simon 2008). My finding that Jews prefer to partner not simply with any other members, but specifically with those sharing a similar Jewish lifestyle in terms of ethno-religious observance and community involvement, suggests that future research needs to be more nuanced with regard to variances of social homophily patterns in spouse selection within groups.

While social homophily in partner choice has been widely discussed in literature, the next reason, a sense of responsibility for in-marriage and thus group continuity, has not been. Several participants, including those who were secular, explained their endogamous partner choice with a sense of responsibility to marry in. Such feelings were expressed by participants as, and thus associated with, a sense loyalty to continue Judaism, particularly the hereditary line, through partnering in.

Many participants did not gloss over the fact that they had been consciously socialised through a Jewish upbringing - meaning mainly through the observance of ethno-religious practices and engagement in the community - to perceive greater social harmony in Jewish partnerships than in non-Jewish ones. Some mentioned that their parents and community communicated the expectation to marry in to them while they were growing up, which particularly informed their sense of responsibility to do so in adulthood. This must be viewed in association with the focus on continuity by community institutions - which is partially due a proclaimed decline in the British Jewish population - through educational activities and events particularly for the youth and outreach (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010). This furthers the understanding that several parents also volunteered that they raised their children in a Jewish lifestyle and even admitted communicating expectations regarding endogamy to them so that they would also choose to perpetuate Judaism by partnering in. This finding concurs with research that argues socialisation agents such as parents or schools can through 'deliberate socialisation' transmit their outlook and thus preferences to children (LeVine 1973; Barkow 1989; Lasker and Lasker 1991). Bearing in mind that previous work has been of theoretical and quantitative nature, my findings have added to the literature by providing an ethnographic perspective on how deliberate socialisation works in practice.

Looking at the social context in which Jews grow up, I found that partnering in is also informed by the stigmatisation of out-marriage. A stigma is attached to exogamy

through the negative consequences for the people engaging in it. The consequences for and thus the stigma attached to out-marriage were, however, stronger in traditional families and communities than in the other ones.

My exploration into why some members partnered out indicated the importance of a strong and strict Jewish upbringing in developing a preference for an endogamous partnership. The findings suggest that through such an upbringing a strong sense of responsibility to marry in and a belief that one could only find harmony in a partnership with a member from the same group can be instilled. Considering that the stigmatisation of out-marriage was stronger in traditional families and communities, and that traditional networks seem to be able to provide children with a stronger and stricter upbringing, it can be suggested that the traditional denomination is better in ensuring generational and intergenerational continuity through endogamy and thus in perpetuating Jewish identity.

Interestingly, there were members who partnered out, although they had a preference for a Jewish partner. They did not engage in respective social environments during their dating years to find such a partner because they had drifted away from, and/or had negative attitudes towards the religion and/or the community. This demonstrates how important deliberate efforts to engage in respective group networks are in order to be able to find a partner from one's own group. This is particularly applicable for members of minorities whose generally small population size makes it less likely for members to find a partner from the same group by chance. Thus, although my work agrees with previous research suggesting that participation in group structures, hence social interaction and the subsequent opportunity to meet and mate is an important factor in endogamy decisions (e.g. Waite and Friedman 1997; Muttarak and Heath 2010), my findings also suggest that research should not ignore more nuanced mechanisms in this association such as individuals' *motivation* and thus *willingness* to engage in respective group networks in order to find a partner from their own group.

Finding that conversion marriages are often not regarded as fully endogamous marriages by participants due to converts' lack of Jewish upbringing and direct ancestry indicates that the status quo of an in-marriage is between two people who are Jewish by birth. Thus, members are socialised into perpetuating the identity as a hereditary identity which is formed through a Jewish upbringing. This contributes towards making the

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barrier for inter-marriage generally salient and assists in the perpetuation of the identity within and across generations.

## 7. Conclusion

This thesis began by asking the question ‘*how is Jewish identity created and maintained in contemporary Britain?*’. It noted that Jews are one of the oldest minorities in Britain, with a history dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The preservation of their identity over time even in the face of discrimination and persecution made it interesting to explore why this diaspora group has not assimilated to the extent of losing its distinct identity. This question has mainly been addressed in the extant literature from a historical and descriptive approach and thus answers have so far been elusive. This study used an ethnographic approach to answer this question by exploring how individuals from the three major sub-groups of the Jewish Diaspora – synagogue-affiliated traditional, non-traditional and synagogue-unaffiliated Jews with a focus on those who still maintain an association with Judaism such as via friends, family or non-religious groups - construct and perpetuate their identity for themselves and to their offspring. It showed that British Jewry is thriving and how it ensures its sustenance. The thesis thereby profoundly counteracted a set of literature that asserts that Jews are threatened through a proposed decline of their population in Britain (Kahn-Harris and Gidley 2010) and are generally ‘vanishing’ (e.g. Wasserstein 1997).

As discussed in the methodological chapter, in-depth interviewing and direct as well as participant observation were used to engage in this exploratory investigation. To increase the reliability and validity of the findings, data results produced through observations (field notes), interviews (transcripts) and sometimes also evidence from literature and media sources were compared. Only if congruent patterns were found in two of the three data sources were they included in this work.

This final chapter will now summarise the findings from the four core chapters (**Chapter 3 to 6**) in order to answer the central question<sup>174</sup>. Then, this chapter will draw conclusions as to why Jews were able to sustain themselves as a group and preserve their distinct identity over time. In light of the findings and conclusions drawn, it will outline the elements informing Diaspora group identification in general and the reasons

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<sup>174</sup> Note that I did not find any gender differences regarding the creation and maintenance of Jewish identity among British Jews.

why some diaspora groups are able to sustain their identity over time whereas others are not. Finally, general suggestions for future research on diasporas, and particularly the Jewish Diaspora, will be presented.

### **7.1. Jewish Identity**

The four core chapters presented four major elements informing Jewish identity in Britain: a sense of difference from the majority, trauma memory, community affiliation, and a group norm of continuity. The findings associated with these four elements, including the related processes and mechanisms, involved in Jewish identity construction and sustenance, are outlined below. This is also done in view of the implications of the findings and to give recommendations for the study of this Diaspora and other social groups, particularly minority groups, and associated phenomena.

#### **7.1.1. A Sense of Difference**

This research demonstrated that Jews' sense of difference from the British majority is crucial to their identification with the group. The Jewish group's sense of difference from the majority population, identified as being white Christian British people, resulted from participants' perceptions of having a different ethnicity and religion as well as an additional culture and national allegiance. Participants felt British and thus not part of an out-group, but perceived themselves to be on the edge of the in-group, the British nation, in these four ways.

My research findings suggest that there are four dimensions of Jewish group belonging: religion, nationality, culture and ethnicity. The first dimension is the religious one. Being Jewish in terms of religious affiliation involves following Jewish traditions including commandments and not participating in the Christian festivals or by negotiating participation in them. The second dimension is cultural. Being part of the group in a cultural sense is associated with having Jewish values, such as emphasising family closeness, and using a Jewish language. For many respondents the latter is understood to be constituted by Jewish words, accent, discourse style, gestures and non-English grammatical devices. The third dimension of Jewish belonging is described in ethnic terms, referring to Jewish ancestry and a perception of being part of a 'racial' minority that throughout history has experienced anti-Semitism. Finally, there is the

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national dimension of group belonging, which is understood as a national affiliation with *Eretz Israel* and/or the State of Israel.

Examining members' Jewish identity in view of their identification with the majority group provided a deeper understanding of their identity and thereby their position as a minority in a majority country. The insights gained through an investigation of members' dual identities suggest that other scholars seeking to understand a social group's process of identification should investigate more closely its members' identification in view of a reference group that can be comparably important to them.

By demonstrating that minorities do not necessarily perceive themselves as 'out-groups' but can believe themselves to be on the edge of their respective in-groups, my study suggests that the analysis of identity should be less crude in its categorisation of minorities as out-groups. Having researched members' sense of Jewishness in view of their belonging to the British nation, this research found that members perceived themselves on the edge of Britishness religiously, culturally, ethnically and nationally.

From these findings, this work can infer four core dimensions of Britishness, which correspond to the four dimensions of Jewish group belonging. The first dimension of Britishness is religion. It defines people as being fully British if they are Christian and take part in expressions of the Christian faith. The second dimension is the cultural one, which defines people as fully British if they adhere to only British values and have only one native language, the British English language<sup>175</sup>. The third core component is ethnic, which categorises individuals as fully British if they have British ancestry and are part of the 'racial' majority population. Lastly, there is the national dimension, which regards people as fully British if they have loyalty solely to Britain and no links to other countries. In a wider framework, this work suggests that looking not only at how minorities feel British, but also at the ways in which they do not feel British provides more profound insights into their British national identification and the social phenomenon of national identity in general.

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<sup>175</sup> This is not to deny the existence of the regional variation in this language such as Scottish or regional English accents and even class accents.

### 7.1.2. Trauma Memory

Trauma memory also provides a force in Jewish identity creation and reinforcement. My study argued that Jews can feel a life- or safety-threatening event or abuse that happened to their ancestors as their own experience. Individuals identify with the traumatic incident or abuse personally as members of their group so that it can be an emotional experience for them. Through a personal association with the trauma as members of the group, a historical fact of group trauma can become an emotional trauma experience for them strong enough to bypass rationality and elicit strong emotions and perceptions, i.e. vicarious traumatisation, and in this way informs their sense of belonging to the group. Previous research (e.g. Zerubavel 1996) has already circumscribed the existence of such trauma memory theoretically. My work labelled this concept ‘vicarious group trauma’, outlined a corresponding theory, and validated its existence through an analysis of its impact on the everyday experiences of Jews using primary research methods.

In detail, I showed that vicarious group trauma can create anxiety, threat perceptions, and by extension hypervigilance, among members. I illustrated that an institutional focus of threat can accentuate an existent threat perception. Then, I demonstrated that this type of trauma memory can also lead members to engage in behaviours to pre-empt threats to them and in charitable behaviours such as by helping groups and individuals that are or have been threatened.

Having illustrated that vicarious group trauma has an impact on the everyday experiences of not only affiliated Jews, but also unaffiliated ones – that is those members that have little or no involvement in the community and thus engagement with Judaism - my findings suggest a redirection of research focusing on the analysis of public rituals associated with group traumas (such as commemorations associated with Jewish traumas) and their impact on group identity creation (e.g. Zerubavel 1995; Ben-Amos and Bet-El 1999; Alexander et al. 2004; Graham 2004). My work proposes that public rituals might not be as important in this regard as argued in the literature. Public rituals, of which the majority are observed by more engaged members, might only reinforce the trauma memory of those members. Accordingly, future research should focus more of its analysis on the place of trauma memory in the daily life experiences of group members. Researchers in the field of diaspora studies should explore the extent to

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which vicarious group trauma can have an impact on the everyday experiences and therefore the identity of other diaspora groups, such as Sikhs with their trauma of the partition of Punjab in 1947, or Irish Catholics and their remembrance of 'Bloody Sunday' (21 November 1920).

Having demonstrated the impact negative group memory can have on members' identification with their respective group, another suggestion for future research is to examine whether positive group memories, such as the memory of 'D-Day' (the landing operations of the Allied invasion of Normandy during the Second World War) or 'V-Day' (the day Britain declared victory against Germany in the Second World War, 9 May 1945) have more or less power than negative group memories in this regard.

### **7.1.3. Community Affiliation**

My study also documented the importance of the Jewish community in fostering members' identification with the group by exploring the social capital of the community and its creation. I demonstrated thereby that community affiliation provides members with frequent social interaction and thus signalled 'attention' as well as with gestures of care, notice and, at a minimum, attention derived from the community's 'ethos of regard' and wide-ranging resources in the form of friends, goods, and services. All of these factors that Jewish community affiliation provides respond to the innate need of individuals to belong to a group in order to feel safe and secure. Thus, these factors make Jewish community affiliation attractive and can so assist in the creation and reinforcement of members' sense of Jewishness.

In detail, my work showed that the community has overall high social capital, although the denominational capital varies in quantity. There are generally more resources available in traditional communities than in the non-traditional ones and only very scarce resources available among unaffiliated Jews. Access to the capital is mainly determined by publicly defined institutional membership criteria based on ancestry or conversion. These access boundaries can inform members' identity positively because they add exclusivity to being able to make use of the resources. These findings suggest that scholars should look at the social capital of groups less crudely in order to capture nuanced variations in the existence of resources within sub-groups. They also highlight the importance of examining access boundaries (such as membership rules) around

group resources because, as I have indicated, they can affect the quantity of a group's capital.

Members' investment was motivated by the norm of giving as part of Jewish culture, a feeling of responsibility for the group's continuation, and even self-interest. As these three impetuses are based on a sense of belonging to the group, giving to other group members assists in maintaining and strengthening a sense of Jewishness. I found that three conditions facilitate the creation of connections among members and, by extension, a sense of group belonging in them and so allow for the formation of these motivations: the geographical proximity among Jews, the ideological frictions among community networks and organised social gatherings in these networks.

Previous research has not looked at social capital creation as a system with motivations and associated conditions. Doing so, I argued that the system needs to be supported by mechanisms sustaining the system so that it can work effectively. I claimed that the system of Jewish capital creation was supported by an 'ethos of regard' within the community, which contributed to its cohesiveness. An 'ethos of regard' means a culture of attention, notice and care giving. 'Regard' can satisfy people's innate need for security and safety and in this way can make people start and continue participating in the social structure of the group. It can thereby assist in the creation of strong connections among members and a feeling of group belonging. This may, then, motivate members to give to Jews.

The rational choice literature asserts that strict religious groups, sects or communes that demand a lot of commitment from their members are more successful in achieving collective behaviour and as such reducing free-riding. These groups screen out individuals who lack commitment and stimulate the involvement of those who remain to create strong networks that provide interaction, friendship and status (Iannaccone 1992; Iannaccone 1994; Stark and Iannaccone 1997; Cragun and Lawson 2010). Such explanations of collective behaviour are, however, incomplete. They do not elucidate how groups stimulate the continuous involvement of their members over time. How do they ensure that their members do not start engaging in free-riding after a while? More nuanced mechanisms need to be included in the examination of collective behaviour.

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Based on my findings, I predict that stricter groups offer more organised gatherings and, with them, more opportunities for interaction where ‘attention’ can be provided. Attention in the form of focus in interaction signals the property of a willingness to be there for a person. In this way, the frequent attendance of organised social meetings can facilitate the building of strong connections among members. Furthermore, many religions follow a theological credo of being kind to each other, which means stricter religious entities might inculcate their members to follow more strongly an ‘ethos of regard’. Considering that both signalled ‘attention’ and expressed ‘regard’ fulfil the need for security and safety, they can be suggested to provide strong incentives for people to want to belong to such groups and engage in their social structure instead of defecting from it. Accordingly, it can be suggested that the mechanisms of signalled ‘attention’ and expressed ‘regard’ make it more attractive for members to contribute to the respective group network instead of engaging in free-riding.

Lastly, future research should investigate ethnographically whether other diasporas, such as Pakistani or Bangladeshi Muslims or Sikhs in Britain, have the same system of social capital creation in place. Do the same conditions and motivations influence the quantity of their resources, and does an ‘ethos of regard’ sustain their systems of resource creation? Answering these questions would allow us to make more nuanced and confident predictions about what makes some communities more able than others to accrue resources. This would also assist in closing a gap in research pertaining to the lack of ethnographic research about diasporas’ motivations and conditions to create capital. In particular, there is a lack of research about how organisational structures can motivate members from other diasporas to contribute to their communities.

### **7.1.4. A Group Norm of Continuity**

This research demonstrated that there is a group norm of generational and inter-generational continuity in the Jewish community that is created and sustained not only by community institutions but also by its members’ focus on endogamy. This was done by examining why Jews want a partner from their own group. It was indicated thereby

how the norm of continuity and thus the identity is perpetuated generationally and inter-generationally through partnering in.

Numerous people in my ethnographic sample argued that a relationship with a member from their own group would be more socially harmonious because of their shared Jewish background and outlook on life, particularly in view of the desire to lead a Jewish lifestyle. A greater proportion of participants also explained their preference for a Jewish partner as a sense of responsibility to continue Judaism by marrying in. Such a feeling was often expressed by participants in notions of loyalty to their family and people.

Many participants mentioned that they were consciously socialised through a Jewish upbringing into perceiving greater social harmony in Jewish partnerships. This must be viewed in the context that there has been an increase of Jewish education via community institutions such as youth groups, and outreach in order to counteract an advocated decline of British Jewry and ensure Jewish continuity. With this in mind, some also mentioned that they were raised with expectations not only by their parents but also by their community to marry in. This can be argued to have assisted in creating a sense of responsibility to do so.

Accordingly, a number of spouses volunteered that they raised their children in a Jewish lifestyle and even admitted that they communicated expectations for endogamy to their children so that their offspring would also prefer to partner in and perpetuate Judaism.

The community largely stigmatises out- and conversion marriages as well, which can foster members' desire for Jewish partners. The stigmas were stronger in traditional networks than in non-traditional and unaffiliated ones. Exploring why some members partnered out revealed how important a strong and in particular a strict Jewish upbringing is for wanting to have a partner from one's own group. My findings indicate that, on the whole, traditional members are more successful at perpetuating the identity to the next generation. Children are, on average, raised with more and a stricter execution of the ethno-religious practices. This can create a greater perception of social difference to non-Jews and a greater want to continue belonging to the community as well as wish and sense of responsibility to want to continue Judaism, through partnering

## *Conclusion*

in. Contributing to the traditional community's success in perpetuating endogamy and thus the identity is the greater stigma that is attached to out-marriages.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that future research should further analyse the importance of diaspora groups' continuity through endogamy from the perspective of the group members themselves. As I have demonstrated that looking at individuals rather than institutions and their representatives provides a more nuanced understanding of how the norm of endogamy and thus continuity - and, by extension, identity - is perpetuated. When researchers seek to understand group continuity, they may find it instructive to examine not only what makes members of a minority maintain their identity and partner in, but also how those who do partner in make meaning of their decision to do so in the context of a society that supports integration of minorities into the mainstream.

### **7.2. Jewish Group Sustenance**

Diaspora Jews have been able to maintain themselves as a group over time because of two distinguished reasons: one, the multi-dimensionality of the group and its resulting different affiliation platforms for members, and two, the continuous challenges to Jews' security from multiple entities, together with the constant reminders of them through Jewish and non-Jewish communication streams. These two reasons are suggested to have prevented the group's assimilation into the mainstream society over time.

#### **7.2.1. Group Diversity**

Jews are a multi-dimensional group; they are a cultural, a national, an ethnic (sometimes described as 'racial') and a religious group. As a result, there are various ways for Jews to connect with Judaism by imbuing meaning to 'being Jewish' through different affiliation platforms.

Individuals can connect religiously with Judaism through the execution of traditions such as rituals, and observances. The traditions include most importantly the weekly and yearly holy days. The execution of those traditions provides interaction with members in a Jewish context and a way of creating a sense of group belonging. Furthermore, the integration of observances such as the dietary restrictions into their everyday lives not only creates and expresses their Jewish connection but also

reinforces it. Note that some unaffiliated members observe traditions and observances without attaching a religious meaning to it. This is possible because the ethnic and the religious dimensions of Judaism intersect.

It is important to note, thereby, that the various religious denominations that developed through external and internal stimulus – e.g. the Enlightenment and the subsequent *Haskalah* leading to the foundation of modern religious Jewish groups such as the different Progressive groups – provide the diverse membership with a variety of institutions and thus affiliation platforms to choose between, allowing members to connect with Judaism in a ethno-religious way that suits their preference. Thus, one can presume that the group’s ability to adapt in response to the ideological challenges posed to Judaism - such as by developing religious streams with reformed and less ‘traditional’ Jewish theologies and associated institutions – has helped the group to preserve itself and with it its identity over time.

The ethnic group association provides members with a sense of ancestral belonging. It can instil a sense of responsibility to help Judaism continue by, for instance, providing resources to the community and by marrying Jewish, both of which can impact members’ sense of identification with the group. Considering that the ethnic and religious dimensions of Judaism intersect, a connection with the ancestors can be created through the marking of holy days. Rituals, as part of the festival observances, assist in the creation of this bond with one’s ancestors. For example, at the Passover *Seder*, participants are required to view themselves as if they came out of Egypt. Passages like the following ones are read aloud from the *Haggadah* at the *Seder*: “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord our God brought *us* out” (Deuteronomy: 6-21), and, “You shall tell your son on that day, it is because of what God did for *me* when *I* went forth from Egypt” (Zerubavel 1996: 290, Exodus 13:8). An ethnic connection to one’s ancestors can also be created through clearly defined ethnic group membership criteria that are existent in most of the religious denominations to which the greater majority of British Jewry belongs (Graham and Vulkan 2010). These criteria impact on members’ understanding of being Jewish. For example, even most of the unaffiliated respondents saw themselves as members of this group because their parents were born Jewish and thus met the institutional membership criteria of immediate

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Jewish heredity. This suggests the importance of genealogy in members' ethnic connection with Judaism, an argument also supported by Zerubavel (Zerubavel 2012).

Individuals can also create a connection to Judaism by associating themselves with the national Jewish group through constructing a link to Israel in terms of their ancient homeland *Eretz Israel* and/or the current State of Israel. A link to Israel is created through formative experiences such as having family in Israel and visiting them or attending Zionist youth groups and synagogues. Many rituals as part of synagogue services relate to the ancient homeland and even to the State of Israel. These rituals can help members to construct a link to Israel. This link was found to be expressed by supporting Israel financially or politically, or paradoxically by being critical of its policies, particularly relating to the occupied territories, and as a consequence participating in actions against Israel, such as by joining groups that are anti-Israel and/or support Palestinians' rights (e.g. JFJFP).

Judaism can also provide people with a cultural group association through behavioural expressions like using the Jewish language and expressed norms - including values (e.g. the Jewish value of family closeness). For instance, the norm of a commitment to morality can be expressed by giving charity or helping minorities that are or have been threatened, or through political engagement signified in the development of Jewish political movements like the Bund<sup>176</sup> or the Jewish Socialist Group. There are also various general community organisations that offer cultural activities such as Limmud, Jewish Book Week and courses in topics such as Yiddish or Jewish cuisine. These cultural affiliation platforms are particularly important for secular Jews to make meaning of being Jewish.

Although the multi-dimensionality of group association helps all kinds of members to imbue meaning to 'being Jewish', this multi-facetedness also signifies that there is not one meaning of 'being Jewish' that is common to all. Yet, because the group dimensions are interrelated, aspects of members' meaning-making of the identity can overlap, particularly in view of their socialisation into a Jewish background and their outlook. For example, although a sense of difference was found to be part and parcel of their Diaspora identity, for members it took on different meanings that could still

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<sup>176</sup> The Bund is a secular Jewish socialist party founded in Russia in 1897. The Bund still exists in some countries. Its focus today is associated with devotion to Yiddish, promoting social and thus political autonomy, and accordingly opposes national ideologies such as Zionism.

overlap. The notion of difference was often connected by my interviewees to being born into Judaism or alternatively having Jewish ancestry, having had a Jewish upbringing, having a different lifestyle, and/or a link with Israel, but not one of the respondents mentioned all of these notions together.

The very fact that there is no singular way of identifying with Judaism explains why there is still an understanding of Jews being one group and sharing one group identity. The overlapping patterns of the meaning-making of the identity among members create this understanding. This conclusion relates to Wittgenstein's concept of 'family resemblance', where he contends that a family does not need to have one thing in common in order for its members to be able to relate to it (Wittgenstein and Anscombe 1953). Families and their members are related to each other through criss-crossing and overlapping patterns of similarities; "sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarity of detail" (Wittgenstein 2001[1953]: 27). In other words, members can form and feel part of a group because they are "interconnected by a number of properties, each of which is shared by some of them" (Stern 2004: 130), not because one property is common to all of them.

In sum, the multi-dimensionality of the Jewish group provides members with multiple ways of creating meaning to their categorisation as members of the group. In this way, the multi-facetedness of Judaism has assisted in the prevention of the group's total assimilation into the mainstream society and in its preservation over time. Still, it needs to be considered that affiliation platforms particularly institutional ones are needed for members to create meaning of their religious, ethnic, national, and cultural categorisation in order to be able to identify with the group concept and sustain the identification over time.

By exploring the differences in members' identification across the denominations, I found that it is easy for affiliated members to imbue 'being Jewish' with multi-dimensional meaning, and thus sustain a strong sense of Jewishness through their religious denominational networks. Religious networks provide various affiliation platforms through their physical institutions (e.g. synagogues, youth movements, religious educational organisations, courses, and clubs), which provide many, and most importantly frequent organised social gatherings. Thus, they offer numerous opportunities for interaction in Jewish contexts so that members can create a strong

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sense of group belonging by attaching multi-faceted meaning to being Jewish. The greater opportunity to make meaning of being Jewish in members' lives allows then for a greater perception of difference between the members and non-Jews and subsequently a stronger sense of Jewishness. This was also indicated by my finding that particularly traditional Jews - because they tend to have a stricter observance of the weekly and yearly holy days and thus are more involved in synagogue communal life - have more success in perpetuating the identity generationally and inter-generationally.

Like affiliated members, unaffiliated members have access to Jewish family and friends networks and thus informal affiliation platforms, which can also assist them in making meaning of their identity; for example through participation in Jewish rituals such as Friday night dinners to mark the Sabbath. Some of the unaffiliated Jews are also members in non-religious Jewish organisations that afford them institutional affiliation platforms and thus opportunities, though normally less frequent ones, to engage with members of the group in a Jewish context to create Jewish connections and belonging and thereby add meaning to being Jewish. I have indicated in this thesis that there are various social (cultural including political and educational) organisations that offer Jews institutional non-religious membership platforms. Thus, unaffiliated Jews can still find meaning in being Jewish. Nonetheless, the Jewish lifestyle of unaffiliated members overall was found to be less life-encompassing than that of the affiliated members, and particularly that of devout affiliated ones. This leads me to conclude that in particular institutional affiliation platforms - in this case religious affiliation platforms - are important in sustaining a Diaspora group and thus identity over time as they offer organised frequent gatherings.

### **7.2.2. Security Challenges**

Jews' ability to maintain their group identity in countries where they have not been in the majority was also found to be driven in large part by the continuous challenges posed to the group's security. Jews have experienced continuous anti-Semitism ranging from discrimination to organised persecution in various countries since its beginning (Goldhagen 1997). I claim that these security challenges have led to a perception among Jews that their assimilation into the mainstream is impossible; this perception, in turn, has aided the group's persistence.

Although it can be argued that the group now has its own country providing Jews with a sense of security, the constant threat to Israel by surrounding Muslim states - expressed in various wars and by states like Iran, whose leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that Israel has to be "wiped off the map" (Fathi 2005)<sup>177</sup> - was indicated by participants to present even another challenge to their sense of security<sup>178</sup> as illustrated by Zachariah:

My Jewishness has to come first, then being British, because I am faced with the very real reality that maybe one day I'll have to leave Britain because of it...because history has dictated so. It's incongruous to have a homeland, it's peculiar that we have Israel and there is the fear that Israel is not old enough yet to be a real safe haven. Maybe Israelis have to leave Israel. That's a very real political fear at the moment. You cannot get too attached to a place.

As this quotation highlights, there is, in fact, a perception among Jews that their assimilation into the mainstream is unachievable due to anti-Semitism, a notion deriving from the continuous challenges to the group's security over the years. This belief can be seen to have assisted in the preservation of the group and its identity over time.

There have been various studies showing that there is an association between 'group threat' and in-group identification. Group threat enhances a sense of insecurity in members leading to an increase in intergroup differentiation and in-group favouritism (e.g. Grant and Brown 1995; Branscombe et al. 1999; Badea et al. 2010). Studies have also shown that trust can have an impact on this association (Voci 2006). Indeed, I found that members' trust of non-Jews and their countries was affected by the security challenges posed to the group in the past and even in the present, such as those presented by anti-Semites and particularly through threats to Israel. This was indicated in my study by the finding that due to previous Jewish traumas many participants had anxiety in view of their safety and threat perceptions vis-à-vis non-Jewish entities, such as non-Jews, political parties (BNP) and/or states (Iran) and thus also perceived the British media to be biased in its reporting of Israel.

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<sup>177</sup> A more recent example would be Egypt threatening to review the 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty if pledged aid by the United States is withdrawn (Kirkpatrick 2012)

<sup>178</sup> This must be seen in the context that Jews have already lost their 'nation' twice. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, when the First Temple destroyed in the conquest of the ancient kingdom of Judah and in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD during the Bar Kokhba revolt during the Roman occupation of Judea. This can play into the perception of a challenged group security in view of Israel.

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Importantly, the belief among Jews that complete assimilation into the mainstream is not possible because of the challenges posed to the group's security over time was found to be fostered by the religion and its institutions. Many of the religious holy days remember the traumas the group has gone through over the years (e.g. *Pesach* or *Purim*). In addition, there are numerous rituals associated with remembering their insecure position that are not part of the holy days remembering traumas. For example, even on the joyous festival of *Rosh Hashanah*, it is customary to raise awareness of the group's past and present enemies by eating beets at the ritualised festival meal and saying the following words out loud: 'May it be your will, Lord, our God and the God of our ancestors, that our enemies be removed'. Likewise, the communal martyr prayer read during the *Mussaf* service on *Yom Kippur* refers to a group of ten rabbis who were martyred for their Judaism by the Romans in the period after the destruction of the second Temple<sup>179</sup>.

Furthermore, as part of most synagogue services, a prayer for the royal family is read out loud to express Jews' loyalty to the state. For example, in the United Synagogue prayer book, the prayer for the Royal family reads as follows: "He who gives salvation to kings and dominion to princes, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom – may He bless our sovereign Lady, Queen, Elizabeth, Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Charles, Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family". The commentary says that this prayer echoes the instruction of Jeremiah (29:7) to those in the Diaspora: "Seek the peace of the city to which I have carried you in exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because in its peace, you shall find peace"<sup>180</sup> (Singer et al. 2006: 421). Thus, the prayer is said to

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<sup>179</sup> There are many more communal prayers and readings that relate to traumatic incidents in their ancestors' past. For instance, there is the formal commemoration of Jewish trauma as part of the memorial service called *Yizkor* ('to remember') following the *Torah* and *Haftarah* (texts from the book of *Nevi'im* (prophets)) readings on most of the important Jewish holy days (*Yom Kippur*, the last day of Passover, the second day of *Shavuot*, and the eighth day of *Succot*). As part of the weekly Sabbath services there is also the '*av harachamim*' prayer, in which God is asked to remember the many Jewish communities destroyed through the ages, and in which one prays for the souls of all Jewish martyrs. Furthermore, it has become tradition in congregations to specifically remember and pray for those who were killed in the Holocaust. The Holocaust Prayer is an adaptation of the standard *El Male Rachamim* Memorial Prayer. God is asked to grant rest to the souls of the six million Jewish men, women and children who suffered different forms of death during the Holocaust. The prayer asks for the souls of the martyrs to find eternal peace and not to bear similar tragedies for the Jewish people in their merit. I have observed that, in Progressive synagogues, the worshippers mention in the *mourners' kaddish* (prayer for the dead) that the prayer is said for those victims of the Holocaust who do not have any relations who could recite the *mourner's kaddish* for them.

<sup>180</sup> In one of the Liberal Prayer books, the prayer for the Royal family reads as follows: "Almighty God, we pray to thee for our Sovereign Lord KING GEORGE, our Gracious QUEEN ELIZABETH MARY the

maintain the state's support for the group to be in the country. This highlights that the religion and its institutions remind Jews that they are part of a group with a challenged security, which can foster the perception among them that they are unable to completely assimilate into the mainstream population.

The belief is also nurtured by the majority population, who communicate their challenged security through governmental policies (and with it political committees such as The All-Party Group Against Antisemitism) regarding anti-Semitism such as the Race Relations Act as well as Holocaust commemoration in the non-Jewish educational sector and, most importantly, by making the Holocaust part of mainstream culture through, for example, exhibitions.

I conclude that the experience of continuous challenges to their group's security over time, together with the constant reminders of them from multiple Jewish and even non-Jewish entities, has assisted in creating the perception among Jews that they are unable to assimilate totally into the mainstream, which, in turn, has aided the persistence of the group over time.

### 7.3. Diaspora Group Sustenance

In light of the findings, I argue that there are four major elements informing the existence and perpetuation of a diaspora identity. Firstly, *a sense of difference* from the majority creates and maintains such a minority identity. My research demonstrated that Jews perceive themselves to be different from the mainstream society in terms of religion, nationality, ethnicity and culture. Secondly, *group memory* has an impact on the creation and sustenance of diaspora identity. This study illustrated how vicarious group trauma can be a force in Jewish identity creation and sustenance through its impact on members' everyday experiences. Thirdly, *community affiliation* plays a vital role in the creation and reinforcement of group identification. I have demonstrated that the Jewish community offers its members a sense of belonging by providing resources, social interaction and with it signalled 'attention', as well as 'regard', all of which

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QUEEN MOTHER, the PRINCESS ELIZABETH, and all the Royal Family. We beseech thee to bless and keep them. Grant the King and his counsellors wisdom to govern the Empire in accordance with thy holy will, so that it may help to set righteousness, justice and abiding peace in the earth. Deepen our love for our country, our desire to serve its cause, our resolve to uphold its good name by our own right-doing. Hasten the time when they rule will be accepted by all mankind, and when the reign of peace and love will be established in the world. Amen" (Synagogue 1937: 53).

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respond to the innate human need to feel secure and safe. Fourthly, *a group norm of continuity* is important in the perpetuation of diaspora identity within and across generations. I demonstrated that there is a norm of Jewish continuity in the community that is created and sustained by its members' focus on endogamy. Without members marrying in and having children that are raised with Judaism as an ethnicity, religion, culture and/or nationality, it would be difficult to preserve Judaism in a country where the group is not in the majority.

From the conclusions drawn in this research, it can be predicted that diaspora groups that provide diverse institutional affiliation platforms that suit the needs of a multi-faceted membership and/or have experienced challenges to their group security that are embedded into their group culture, are likely to sustain themselves as a group over time. Two examples of such diasporas are the Irish Catholics and the Sikhs in Britain. Irish Catholics are a long-standing diaspora group in Britain with various immigration waves, one of the most significant ones taking place during the 1930s (Bronwen 1979). According to the 2001 Census, there are 691,232 self-identified white Irish-born residents in Britain, which makes them the third biggest ethnic group (Statistics 2006). It can be predicted that one of the reasons for their sustenance over time is the remembrance of the challenges to their security such as the yearly 'Bloody Sunday' commemoration. Furthermore, this group provides various cultural institutions for its members to create meaning of 'being Irish' in Britain such as the West London Irish Society, the London Irish's Women's Centre or Camogie sport groups.

Although Sikhs are a more recent immigrant group compared to the Irish Catholics and certainly to the Jews they are also a thriving diaspora group in Britain. Sikhs immigrated to Britain from the Punjab in the 1950s/60s and from other places such as East Africa later on (Singh 2011: 201-204). According to the 2001 Census, they are the third largest religious minority group in Britain (336,179) (Singh and Tatla 2006). A majority of Sikhs, like Jews, have high levels of educational attainment and are thus very integrated (Nesbitt 2011). Still, they are able to maintain a separate identity from the mainstream, which, based on my findings, can be predicted to be associated with offering a wide range of affiliation platforms. For Sikhs, these are provided chiefly through their varied religious institutions (*gurdwaras*), which afford members not only diverse religious, but also cultural, affiliation networks. There are

about 200 *gurdwaras* in Britain today (BBC 2009a; Nesbitt 2011). Furthermore, the group has endured various traumas such as the 1947 partition and the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple. As advocated in recent research based on secondary literature, these traumas can be suggested to be part their collective memory as they are used in discourses by organisations and community elites in the diaspora to maintain and strengthen members' group belonging (Barrier 2006; Tatla 2006; Jacobsen and Myrvold 2011). This is an academic avenue that is yet under-explored; ethnographic research is needed to make more confident predictions regarding how trauma is made part of the group's social structure – for example, how it is used by organisations - to inform the perpetuation of Sikhism.

It can be subsequently envisaged that other diaspora groups that have assimilated into the mainstream populations have done so because the groups did not experience challenges to their securities that were embedded in their cultures. It can also be predicted that these groups did not provide, and thus their members did not have access to, diverse institutional affiliation platforms to create meaning of being part of the group. Examples of such groups in Britain include the Flemish and the Dutch (weavers) (Delmarcel 2002), the Huguenots (Gwynn 2001), or the Protestant Italians (White 2001); all of them arrived before there was a policy of multiculturalism existent in Britain and have assimilated into the majority society to the extent that they are no longer identifiable as a distinctive group on the social landscape. These are only tentative predictions but, in association with the findings of this thesis, it might persuade researchers to explore these possibilities further through a systematic empirical approach.

#### **7.4. Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the findings of this thesis, more ethnographic research is needed in the exploration of how diasporas sustain themselves in countries where they are not in the majority. As I have demonstrated, ethnography provides a more nuanced account of how subtle processes and mechanisms can inform a diaspora's persistence. I suggest that particular attention should be paid to the exploration of diaspora groups' ethnic and/or religious organisational structures in view of how they assist them in preserving their distinct identities.

## *Conclusion*

It would be valuable to research the extent to which identity creation and sustenance differs between diaspora groups that arrived before there was a policy of multiculturalism and those that arrived after its implementation. Considering that research focuses on diasporas that are more phenotypically identifiable, such as Pakistani or Bangladeshi Muslims, a suggestion would be to compare the longer-established diaspora group of British Jews with a more recent diaspora group in Britain that is also generally not phenotypically different from the mainstream population, such as the Catholic Poles, in view of the creation and preservation of their group identity. Most Polish people immigrated to the UK after the 2004 enlargement of the European Union. Between December 2003 and December 2010 the Polish-born population in Britain augmented from 75,000 to 532,000 (Statistics 2011: 1). A comparison with the Polish diaspora in Britain would also fill the general research gap regarding this diaspora group in the sociological literature.

Furthermore, it would be interesting to extend my research by doing the same study with American Jews in order to add a comparative angle to my work. Although both are longstanding minorities in their respective countries, American Jewry has a much higher intermarriage rate than British Jewry. While over 50% of American Jews marry out (Mayer et al. 2001; Dashefsky and Heller 2008), only about 25% of British Jewry does so (Graham et al. 2007). This statistical difference indicates that there might be variance between American and British Jewry in the processes and mechanisms leading to the creation and sustenance of identity; this would be a compelling subject for ethnographic exploration.

Bearing in mind that this work focused on Jews that integrate into British society while maintaining their distinctive minority identity, my study begs to be extended by conducting additional interviews with Ultra-Orthodox Jews and do observations in their communities in order to investigate more profoundly how the perpetuation of identity differs between Jews who, on the whole, integrate into the mainstream society and those who try to avoid integration. This investigation would be a relevant addition to my work as I have indicated that it is easier to perpetuate Jewish identity generationally and inter-generationally among the Modern Orthodox, who are, like the Ultra-Orthodox, part of the traditional stream of Judaism. Particularly the Modern Orthodox, whose members are generally more devout and thus less integrated into non-Jewish society, seem to

create a greater social distance between themselves and non-Jews through their all-encompassing Jewish lifestyles. The children have a stronger and stricter Jewish upbringing, as the families tend to follow the religious observances more conservatively. This was found to be positively associated with marrying Jewish in adulthood and thus perpetuating the identity.

The evidence I have collected about the Ultra-Orthodox community so far also points to a reputation mechanism that leads their members to comply with community norms that assist in perpetuating the identity, such as the norm of marrying within the group. Members comply with community norms because they are conscious that their own reputation and that of their family could be compromised. A compromised reputation could have consequences for members and their families, such as social denunciation or exclusion from the community and, most importantly, not being able to marry off the children appropriately.

Furthermore, it would be fascinating to compare the collected ethnographic data of the Ultra-Orthodox with interview data of Ultra-Orthodox members that have left their respective communities. Such 'dissident' interviewees can be expected to provide a more critical insight into how the Ultra-Orthodox community sustains itself, adding thereby to the analytical leverage of the processes and mechanisms responsible for it.

To conclude, this thesis set out to demonstrate how Jews create and sustain their identity in a country where they are not the majority. By exploring not only why members of this group feel Jewish but also how members *themselves* make meaning of their identification - in terms of their understanding of how they came to identify as members of the group and the impact being Jewish has on their lives - I was able to provide original insight into the field of Jewish Diaspora scholarship.

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## APPENDIX A: Glossary

The Jewish religion and culture has produced distinctive words that might be unfamiliar to the reader. In the interests of reference and clarity, I have compiled the following glossary of words and terms used by participants during my fieldwork

Term	Meaning
Amidah	Central prayer of the Jewish liturgy
Am Yisrael	The nation or children of Israel; Jewish peoplehood
Bar-mitzvah	Coming of age ritual for boys
Bat-mitzvah	Coming of age ritual for girls
Beth Din	Rabbinical court of traditional Judaism dealing with matters such as conversion and divorce
Bris	Circumcision rite
Chanukah	An eight-day festival commemorating the rededication of the Second Holy Temple in Jerusalem in the Maccabean Revolt in the 2nd century BCE.
Chavruta	One-to-one religious learning session
Cheder	Jewish Sunday school
Chutzpah	Quality of audacity
Counting of the Omer	It is a verbal counting of each of the forty-nine days between Passover and Shavuot.
CST	Community Security trust
Devarim	Deuteronomy
Dreidel	A four-sided spinning top with a Hebrew letter on each side. It is used during Chanukah to play a popular children's game.
Eretz Israel	The land of Israel
Erev Yom Kippur	Eve of Yom Kippur
Eruv	A symbolic boundary for observant traditional Jews so that they can carry and push items outside of their home during the Sabbath.
FZY	Federation of Zionist Youth
Galut	Forced exile
Gefilte fish	An Ashkenazi dish consisting of a poached mixture of ground deboned fish.
Gemach	Acts of kindness, free-loan fund
Gemara	A discussion and commentary on the Mishnah
Ger	Non-Jew
Gut shabbes	'Have a good Sabbath!'
Gut woch	'Have a good week!'
Gut yom tov	'Have a good festival/holy day!'
Haftarah	A specific selection of texts from one of the biblical books of the Prophets which are read after the Torah reading on the Sabbath and other holy days.

Haggadah	A text guiding the observance of ritual acts and prayers at the Seder.
Halachah (Halakha)	The collective body of rabbinic Jewish law
Halachically Jewish	Being Jewish according to rabbinic Jewish law
Halakha	Halachah
Haskalah	Jewish Enlightenment
JFJFP	Jews for Justice for Palestinians
JPR	Institute for Jewish Policy Research
Yeshiva	A Jewish educational institution, which provides the study of traditional religious texts.
Kashrut	A framework of Jewish law dealing with what foods are and are not permitted to be eaten and how foods must be prepared and eaten.
Ketubah	Jewish marriage contract
Ketubot	Jewish marriage contracts
Kiddush	Sanctification of the wine
Kippah	A skullcap
Kippot	Plural form of kippah
Kohen	A Kohen is a member of a family of priests within the tribe of Levi.
Kol Nidre	Kol Nidre, meaning 'all vows' is a prayer that is recited in the evening service beginning Yom Kippur.
Kosher	Allowed to be eaten
L'chaim	'To Life!'
Limmud	Jewish education organisation
Magen David	The shield of David
Making Aliyah	Immigration of Jews to the Land of Israel
Making a 'shiva' call	Visiting first-degree relatives of a dead person during their week-long mourning period.
Mazel Tov	Congratulations
Megillah	Scroll of Esther
Meshuggeneh	A crazy person;
Metzuzah	A piece of parchment affixed to the doorframe in Jewish homes that shall remind of God's presence.
Mishnah	The written version of the oral law
Mitzvah	Commandment
Mitzvot	Commandments
Nebbech	A timid, unfortunate simpleton
Mourner's kaddish	Prayer for the dead; also recited as part of the Sabbath service.
Nevi'im	Book of Prophets
Nu	'So?'
Oy vey	'Oh woe'
Parev	Foods without animal or dairy ingredients
Pareve	Foods without animal or dairy ingredients

Passover	See Pesach
Pesach	It is an eight-day long festival that commemorates the Hebrews' traumatic exodus, being the escape, from enslavement in Egypt and their survival of the escape.
Pshat	True. Or, simple understanding of a text.
Purim	Purim remembers the deliverance of Jews of the ancient Persian Empire from Haman's plot to annihilate them. It is a story recorded in the 'Book of Esther'. This festival is marked by giving presents to friends and family as well as charity to the poor, a celebratory meal, wearing masks and costumes and through public recitations of the Scroll of Esther (Megillah).
Rosh Hashanah	Jewish New Year
Sabbath	Jewish Day of Rest
Saying 'kaddish'	Denotes to one of the rituals of mourning, and means one pronounces a person as dead.
Seventeenth of Tammuz	A minor fast day commemorating the breach of the Jerusalem walls before the destruction of the Second Temple.
Schepp naches	To be proud
Schlep	To carry or a tedious/difficult journey
Schwach	Weak
Seder	The Passover Seder is a ritualised feast that marks the Jewish holiday of Passover. It is conducted on the eve of Passover. The ritual involves the telling of the story of the Hebrews' liberation from slavery in Egypt.
Shabbat	Jewish Day of Rest
Shabbat shalom	'Have a good Sabbath!'
Shabbos	The Jewish Day of Rest
Shana Tova	'I wish you a good new year!'
Shavuot	It marks the day the Torah was given by God to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago.
Sheitel	A wig
Shiva	Collective morning period for the dead
Shomer negiah	A person who refrains from physical contact with members of the opposite sex.
Shomer shabbat (shabbos)	Refers to a person who observes all the laws associated with the Sabbath.
Shul	Synagogue
Shulhan arukh	Most authoritative legal code of Judaism that traditional Jews follow.
Simcha	A happy event
Simchat Torah	Simchat Torah is a joyful holiday, which celebrates the completion of the annual Torah reading cycle.
Sitting 'shiva'	First-degree relatives of the dead person are in the week-

Sukkah	long ritualised mourning period. It is a hut which resembles the type of temporary shelters used by their ancestors in the wilderness during the exodus.
Sukkot	It is an eight-day long festival and commemorates the 40 years of survival of the Jewish people in the desert after their exodus from Egypt.
Talmud	The Talmud is a religious text containing rabbinic discussions on Jewish law and ethics and as such Jewish customs and traditions. The Talmud includes 1) the Mishnah, which is the written version of the oral law, and, 2) the Gemara, which is a discussion and commentary on the Mishnah.
Tenth of Tevet	A minor fast day that takes place on the tenth day of the Hebrew month of Tevet.
The Day of Atonement	Yom Kippur
The Feast of Tabernacle	Sukkot
The Feast of Weeks	Shavuot
The Festival of Lights	Chanukah
The Ninth of Av	The fast commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temple in Jerusalem. It is also considered appropriate to commemorate other Jewish tragedies.
Tikkun Leil (Shavuot)	Tikkun Leil Shavuot is the tradition of staying up the whole night (leil) of Shavuot (the anniversary of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai) studying with the community (relevant presentations, discussions and readings are part of this) in order to re-experience the standing at Sinai where the Torah was received.
Tikkun Olam	Repairing the world
Tisha B'Av	The Ninth of Av
Tzedakah	Charity
Torah	The oral and written law. Torah denotes the five books of the Jewish bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.
US	United Synagogue
Yad Vashem	Israel's official memorial to the Jewish Holocaust victims and the world centre for research and education of the Holocaust.
Yeshiva	Jewish educational institution which provides the study of traditional religious texts mainly Talmudic and Torah studying.
Yeshivish	A style of speaking taught in yeshivot
Yeshivot	Plural form of yeshiva
Yiddishkeit	An Ashkenazi Jewish way of life that includes the Yiddish language, foods and kletzmer music.
Yizkor	'To remember', a memorial service held four times a year

Yom Kippur

Holiest day of the year where Jews atone and repent for their sins.

## APPENDIX B: Interview Guide

### INTERVIEW GUIDE

[Note that the sub-questions are interview dependent follow up questions]

#### Introduction:

- I will introduce myself and explain why I am here. For example: Hello, my name is Christina Fuhr, I am a second year doctoral student at Oxford University. I am conducting a study about Jewish culture and identity.
- I will ask for permission to tape record.
- I will tell the interviewee that if s/he feels uneasy about a particular question at any time during the interview, s/he should not feel obliged to answer it. Furthermore, the interviewee can end the interview at any point in time if s/he does not want to continue.
- I will, furthermore, inform the respondent that I am interested in his/her opinion, thoughts and feelings to the questions and as such that there is no right or wrong answer to any of the questions.

#### Before we start...

1. How come that you live in this area?
2. **Question only for synagogue-affiliated interviewees:** How come that you are a member of your synagogue? [**Prompts:** Burial rights, family ties, community something else?]
3. Are you a member of any Jewish organisations?
  - a. If so, which ones?
  - b. Why are you a member of this/these organisation(s)?

#### Jewishness:

##### Let's start talking about Jewishness...

4. How would you define a Jewish person?
5. Why would you describe yourself as a Jewish person? Explain why or why not.
6. What does it mean being Jewish for you?
7. What are the most important aspects of being Jewish for you? [**Prompts:** Jewish values, Jewish ethics, Jewish food, Jewish education, Jewish traditions/customs, community, history of persecution, something else?]
  - a. Please explain what you mean by those aspects.
  - b. Why are they important aspects of being Jewish for you?

8. Would you describe yourself as a religious Jewish person?
  - a. If so, why? And, do you view yourself in any other way Jewish? [**Prompts:** Ethnically, culturally, nationally Jewish or anything else?] If yes, please elaborate.
  - b. If not, why not? Do you view yourself in any other way Jewish? [**Prompts:** Ethnically, culturally, nationally Jewish or anything else] If yes, please elaborate.
  
9. Could you please explain what impact being Jewish has on your daily routine and life?
  - a. Would you say, for instance, that you:
    - i. Engage in Jewish cultural activities? [**Prompts:** Read books by Jewish authors, cook or buy Jewish food, watch Jewish movies, go to Jewish exhibitions or anything else?]
    - ii. Observe any high holy days?
    - iii. Observe any dietary laws?

**Rituals:**

**Let's talk about a bit more about the day to day life of being Jewish. There are, of course, holy days in Judaism:**

10. May I ask, do you mark the weekly Sabbath in any way?
  - a. If so:
    - How do you mark it? Do you keep the Sabbath laws? Who do you invite? [**Prompts:** Jewish friends (who are those friends?), family, non-Jews?]
    - Why is it important to you to mark the Sabbath?
  - b. If not, why don't you mark it?
  
11. May I ask, do you mark Yom Kippur?
  - a. If so:
    - What do you do on Yom Kippur? [**Prompts:** Fasting, going to synagogue, anything else?] And, why do you do this?
    - Why is it important to you to mark Yom Kippur?
  - b. If not, why don't you mark it?
  
12. Do you mark Pesach?
  - a. If so:
    - How do you mark it? Who do you invite? [**Prompts:** Denominational friends, family, non-Jews?]
    - Why is it important to you to mark Pesach?
  - b. If not, why don't you mark it?

**Christmas:**

**Now there are also non-Jewish traditions that are celebrated in Britain such as Christmas:**

14. Do you mark this holiday in any way?
- a. If so:
- How do you mark this holiday? Do you get together with your family on Christmas, give presents to each other, have a turkey, have a Christmas tree, send Christmas cards, something else?
  - Why do you mark Christmas?
  - What kind of meaning does Christmas have for you?
- b. If not, how come that you don't mark Christmas?
15. Did your parents mark Christmas in any way?
- a. If so, why?
- b. If not:
- How was it as a child not celebrating Christmas while other children celebrated Christmas?
  - Have you ever asked your parents at one point during childhood why you did not celebrate Christmas?
    - If so, how did they explain it to you?
    - If not, why?
- c. Did you participate in Christmas activities in school? Explain why or why not.

**Upbringing:**

**Let's stay with your childhood...**

16. Would you say you were raised Jewish? At home? Outside of the home?
- a. If yes, did you take part in any Jewish activities as a child? [**Prompts:** Going to cheder, bar/bat mitzvah, being a member of Jewish youth group, going to Jewish summer camps or going to a Jewish school?] If yes, did those activities have an impact on your sense of Jewishness? If yes, how so? If not, why?
- a. If not, why don't you think you were raised Jewish? Where does your sense of Jewishness come from instead?
17. Are your parents affiliated to a synagogue?
- a. Would you say your parents have a stronger or weaker sense of Jewishness? Please explain your answer?
18. Was it difficult for you to maintain your Jewish identity growing up in a society that is not predominantly Jewish?

### **Community:**

19. Is it important for you to be part of a Jewish community? Please elaborate.
  - a. What is special about being part of the Jewish community? [**Prompts:** get help, care, friends, emotional support, something else?]
  - b. What do you like or dislike about it?
  
20. Is there anything that all Jewish people have in common? Please explain your answer.
  
21. Do you feel you share a common descent with fellow Jews?
  - a. If so, what do you mean by it? How is it expressed?
  - b. If not, why?
  
22. Do you perceive yourself to be different from non-Jews? If so, in which way? If not, why?
  
23. What do you think about the concept of Jews being the chosen people?
  - a. Do you feel you are a member of a people? Why?
  - b. Do you like being part of the Jewish people?
  
24. Do you feel you could not be Jewish if you wanted to? [Do you feel you could leave being Jewish behind?] Please explain your answer.
  
25. In general, when you randomly meet fellow Jewish people, for instance, on holidays, do you feel immediately a connection with them? Why or why not?
  
26. What do you think about when representatives from prominent Jewish organisations such as the Chief Rabbi speak on behalf of British Jews to the outside world?
  
27. What is your ethnic, national, racial identity?
  - a. **Important:** How is the relationship between being Jewish and being British for you? [**Prompts:** Do you feel like a British Jew or a Jewish Brit, do you feel more Jewish than British or vice versa?
  
28. Do you interact a lot with other Jews in your daily life?
  - a. If so:
    - Why do you interact a lot with other Jews in your daily life?
    - What kind of Jews are they? [**Prompts:** Reform, Liberal, Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox, Ashkenazi Jews, Sephardi Jews or synagogue-unaffiliated Jews?]
    - Where do you normally meet fellow Jews? [**Prompts:** Synagogue, work, neighbourhood, Jewish group meetings, something else?]
  - b. If not, why?
  
29. Are your close friends Jewish?

- a. If yes, how so? What kind of Jews are they? [**Prompts:** Reform, Liberal, Orthodox, Ultra-Orthodox, Ashkenazi Jews, Sephardi Jews or synagogue-unaffiliated Jews? Devout Jews?]
- b. If not, why?

**Group Language:**

**Let's talk a bit about the usage of language in your life:**

- 30. Do you think that there is something like a Jewish language? If so, what does it entail?
- 31. Do you use a lot of Yiddish words like “chutzpah” or “schlep” when interacting with other Jewish people? Why or why not? Example?
- 32. Do you use a lot of such Yiddish words when interacting with non-Jewish people? Why or why not? Example?
- 33. Do you ever use Hebrew words like “chavruta” when interacting with other Jewish people? Why or why not? Example?
- 34. Do you ever use such Hebrew words when interacting with non-Jewish people? Why or why not? Example?
- 35. Do you talk about Judaism when you are with other Jewish people?
  - a. If so:
    - Why?
    - What do you talk about?
  - b. If not, why don't you talk about Judaism with other Jewish people?
- 36. Do you talk about Judaism when you are with non-Jewish people?
  - a. If so:
    - Why?
    - What do you talk about?
  - b. SYNAGOGUE-UNIf not, why?
- 37. Do you talk about Jewish related issues like Jewish events or articles from the Jewish Chronicle when you are with other Jewish people?
  - a. If so:
    - Why?
    - What do you talk about?
  - b. If not, why?
- 38. Do you talk about Jewish related issues when you are with non-Jewish people?
  - a. If so:
    - Why?
    - What do you talk about?
  - b. If not, why?

**Israel:**

**I am now going to ask some questions about Israel, because I would like to understand to what extent it affects your identity as a Jewish person.**

39. Do you follow the events occurring in Israel? Please explain why or why not.
40. Do you support Israel?
- If so, in which way? [**Prompts:** Politically, financially or by attending social events etc.]
  - If not, how come that you don't you support Israel?
41. In general, is Israel important to you?
- If so, why and in which way?
  - If not, why?
42. Do you feel an attachment or connection to Israel?
- If so, why and in which way?
  - If not, why?
43. Have you ever been to Israel?
- If so, why? Did going to Israel have an impact on seeing yourself as a Jewish person? Please explain your answer.
  - If not, why?
44. What do you feel about the concept of Israel as the homeland of Jews?
- Is it applicable to you? Explain why or why not.
  - Do you feel that you still come from Israel or Zion? Explain why or why not.
45. Do you talk a lot about Israel with fellow Jews?
- If yes, why? What do you talk about?
  - If not, why?
46. Do you talk a lot about Israel with non-Jews?
- If yes, why? What do you talk about?
  - If not, why?
47. Do you see yourself as a Zionist?
- If yes, how so?
  - If not, why?
48. Do you support the idea of Jews having their own land to live on? Please explain your answer.

**Intermarriage:**

**Now I would like to talk with you about partnerships. This can be a sensitive topic for some people so if you don't want to answer any of those questions just tell me to move on, please.**

49. Are you married? If so, with another Jewish person? In a Jewish or non-Jewish partnership? Single?

**Questions for respondents with a Jewish partner:**

50. Where did you meet?
51. Do you live together with you partner?  
a. If yes, for how long have you been living together?
52. Was it important for you to have a Jewish partner? Please explain your answer.  
a. Have your parents raised you in the belief that you should marry someone Jewish?
53. Is it important for you to marry someone Jewish? Please explain your answer.
54. Do you think there might be difficulties or negative consequences marrying a non-Jewish person or a convert to Judaism? Why or why not?
55. Is your partner more or less "Jewish" than you?  
a. Is it an issue?

**Questions for respondent with a non-Jewish partner:**

56. Do you live together with your partner?  
a. If yes, for how long have you been living together?  
b. Where did you meet?
57. Was it ever important to you to have a Jewish partner?  
a. If so, how come? Why did it change?  
b. If not, why?
58. Did you have any concerns going out with a non-Jewish person at all (at first/still)?  
a. If so, what were the concerns and why? If not, why not?  
b. Is it a problem for your family, Jewish friends and your Jewish community that your partner is not Jewish?
59. Have there been any difficulties, negative reactions or consequences going out with a non-Jewish person? If so, why and from whom? If not, why?  
a. Are there any difficulties being in a relationship with a non-Jewish person that you wouldn't face if you were in a relationship with a Jewish partner?
60. Have your parents raised you in the belief that you should marry someone Jewish?
61. Where do you stand on the issue of intermarriage?  
a. Do you see any problems or difficulties in marrying a non-Jewish partner?

- b. Is it important for you to have Jewish children and raise them with Judaism? Please explain your answer.

**Questions for respondent that has married a fellow Jew:**

62. Was it important for you to marry someone Jewish? Why or why not?
- a. Have you ever considered being with a non-Jewish person? Please explain why or why not. If yes, why have you then ended up marrying someone Jewish?
63. Have your parents raised you in the belief that you should marry someone Jewish?
64. Do you think there would have been any problems, difficulties or negative consequences if you had wanted to marry a non-Jewish person or a convert to Judaism? If yes, why and from whom? If not, why?
65. Where did you meet each other?
66. Is your partner more or less “Jewish” than you?
- a. Is it an issue?
67. Did marrying a person that is Jewish have an effect on how you feel as a Jewish person? In either case please explain why.
68. Do you have children?
- a. If yes, do you raise your child/children Jewish?
- If yes, how? Has your Jewish practice changed since having children? Is it important for you that your children marry someone Jewish? Please explain your answer.
  - If not, why?

**Questions for respondent that has married a convert to Judaism:**

69. Under which auspices did your partner convert?
70. Was it important for you to marry someone Jewish? Why?
71. Have your parents raised you in the belief that you should marry someone Jewish?
72. May I ask why your partner converted?
- a. *If the partner converted because of the respondent:*
- Why was it important for you that your partner converted?
73. Were there any difficulties, negative reactions or consequences to you marrying a convert to Judaism?
74. Where did you meet each other?
75. Is your partner more or less “Jewish” than you?
- a. Is it an issue?

76. Did marrying a person that is Jewish have an effect on how you feel as a Jewish person? In either case please explain why.
77. Do you have children?
- a. If yes, do you raise your child/children Jewish?
- If yes, how? Has your Jewish practice changed since having children? Is it important for you that your children marry someone Jewish? Please explain your answer.
  - If not, why?

**Questions for respondent that has married a non-Jew:**

78. Was it ever important to you to marry a Jewish person? Please explain why.
79. Have your parents raised you in the belief that you should marry someone Jewish?
80. Did you have any concerns dating a non-Jewish person at all (at first/later on)?
- a. If so, what were the concerns and why?
- b. If not, why?
81. Was it a problem for your family, friends and your Jewish community that you married a person that is not Jewish? Please explain your answer.
- a. Have there been any difficulties, negative reactions or consequences going out with and marrying a person that isn't Jewish? If so, why and from whom? If not, why?
82. Was conversion of your non-Jewish partner ever a consideration? Why or why not?
- a. Do you think that there would have still been problems, reactions or negative consequences if your partner had converted to Judaism before getting married to you?
83. Are there any difficulties being in a relationship with a non-Jewish person that you wouldn't face if you were in a relationship with a Jewish partner?
84. Did marrying a person that is not Jewish have an effect on how you feel as a Jewish person? In either case please explain why.
- a. After having married a person that is not Jewish, do you now:
- Practice less Judaism?
  - Engage less with other Jews?
  - Feel less Jewish?
85. Do you have children?
- a. If yes, do you raise your child/children Jewish?
- If yes, how? Has your Jewish practice changed since having children? Is it important for you that your children marry someone Jewish? Please explain your answer.
  - If not, why?

**Anti-Semitism:**

**The last topic, to which I would like to ask you some questions, is anti-Jewish hostility in other words anti-Semitism.**

86. May I ask, do you think there is anti-Semitism in Britain? In your immediate surroundings?
- If not, why?
  - If so:
    - a. Why do you think that there's anti-Semitism around?
    - b. Is there any particular group from whom British Jews experience or perceive anti-Semitism at the moment?
    - c. Have you ever come across anti-Semitism? If so, what kind of anti-Semitism have you come across?
    - d. Have you ever experienced any anti-Semitism directed towards you? If so, what kind of anti-Semitism have you experienced?

**If respondents have not come across or experienced any anti-Semitism ask: Why do you still perceive that there is anti-Semitism around you?**

87. Do you think that other Jews perceive that there is anti-Semitism? Why?
88. What kind of emotions does the existence of anti-Semitism elicit in you?
- a. Does it remind you of previous incidents of anti-Semitism in history? If so, how come and in which way?
99. May I ask, do you think that the Holocaust has an impact on your life?
100. Do you support actions against anti-Semitism in any form?
- a. If yes, how so?
  - b. If not, why?
101. Do you talk about anti-Semitism with fellow Jews?
- i. If yes, why? What exactly do you talk about?
  - b. If not, why?
102. Do you talk about anti-Semitism with non-Jewish people?
- a. If yes, why? What exactly do you talk about?
  - b. If not, why?
103. It is still important to fight against anti-Semitism? Please explain why or why not?
104. Do you feel that anti-Semitism is a central topic of the Jewish community? Please explain why or why not.
- a. Do you feel that anti-Semitism should be a central topic of the Jewish community? Please explain why or why not?

105. Some people argue that Jews in Britain are very prosperous, integrated, have good jobs etc. and do not see any reasons why it is still important to fight against anti-Semitism? What do you think about that?

**Closing Questions and Statements:**

- Ask whether the interviewee wants to say anything that was not covered in the interview.
- Reassure the respondent of confidentiality and anonymity.
- Ask interviewee if s/he can be contacted later on for follow-up questions if necessary.
- Thank the respondent.
- Leave the interviewee with a feeling of success: “I really appreciate your time and input. Your views have been very valuable for my project”.
- Ask the interviewee whether s/he knows anyone, who might be interested in participating in this study.

## APPENDIX C: Consent Form



Dear Participant,

I am conducting interviews with ultra-orthodox, orthodox, reform and secular Jews from London for my doctoral research project on how Jewish identity is created by different groups of Jews in Britain. Therefore, I will be asking you questions about your upbringing, the impact of being Jewish on your life as well as your views on particular topics. If, after reading the following, you agree to participate, please sign below. A few details first:

- Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and the responses are strictly confidential. The interview will be transcribed anonymously; no one will have access to the recordings except my doctoral supervisors and myself. The recording will be destroyed after the research is finished. Although parts of this interview may appear in the final research report, no names will be disclosed.
- You can ask questions of me at any time, make additional comments or changes to the questions, and choose not to answer particular questions. Also, you can withdraw from the interview at any time. **There are no right or wrong answers to the questions.** I am interested in your opinion, thoughts and feelings to the questions and as such any information provided will be helpful.
- I would like to record the interview so that I don't have to write so many notes while talking, but will turn the recorder off at your request. I will store the recording securely.

Thank you very much. Your participation in and contribution to this study is highly valued and much appreciated.

Christina Fuhr

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*I confirm that I am happy to be interviewed:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Today's Date