Nash, Joshua. "Am I a Half-Jew? Jewishness, Architecture, and Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin", Australian Journal of Jewish Studies XXXV (2022): 127-140

Am I a Half-Jew? Jewishness, Architecture, and Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin

Joshua Nash

Abstract

Europe has many locations of tourism and pilgrimage relevance for people of Jewish heritage. The concentrations camps of Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe are among some of the most obvious. Less obvious places and events can be related to the remembrance and soft staging associated with the Holocaust and Jewish history in Europe. A pertinent example is Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin extension (JMB) to the Berlin Museum, Germany. In this personally oriented autoethnographic reflection, I use the pilgrimage, travel, and Holocaust-cum-dark Jewish tourism experience of visiting Libeskind's architecture in February 2013. In parallel I assess the experience in forming personal ideas and beliefs about what it is or means to be a 'half-Jew' as a patrilineal grandchild of Holocaust survivors. By summarising empirical architectural and cultural research into Libeskind's building and by considering my thoughts and feelings about Holocaust memory and having grown up in and with deep connections to Jewish Australia, I present a case arguing for a re-consideration of what it might mean to be Jewish and half Jewish. Combining literature on Jewish identity and third-generation Holocaust survivors, I emphasise the importance of how culturally aware (architectural) pilgrimage can contribute to a self-reflective event and interpretation of architectural form and history.

Keywords: Architecture, Australian Jews, autoethnography, dark Jewish tourism, Holocaust pilgrimage, narrative and memoir, third-generation Jewishness.

> The guide of the English language tour at the Berlin Jewish Museum clearly had been asked to be particularly attentive to the audience's responses and subjectivities. Like a Northern Californian psychotherapist of the Jungian ilk, he would stop every few minutes, look at us with great concern and ask: "And how do you feel about this? … As a result of various press reportages, this building had been circulating in the media and popular imagination as a Disneyesque horror ride, encompassing loss of orientation, destabilized gravity, claustrophobia, extreme shifts between dark and light, and the spectre of the much publicized Holocaust Tower. (Rogoff 2002, 63)

The reconciliation

How did I *feel* when I visited Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin extension (JMB) to the Jewish Museum Berlin, Germany? How can the personal be melded with(in) the academic as regards Jewishness? And related specifically to my own third-generation Jewish heritage and my grandchild status of Holocaust survivors, how can I use the available and creative process of writing and intellectual engagement with thought and emotion in connection to material culture — here, architecture — as a means to resolve or ameliorate the *something* which I have often felt within me relating to all things Jewish, both positive and negative?

To attempt answers to these questions, I situate this piece theoretically around three relevant research areas: 1. Literature about Jewish identity debates; 2. Literature about third-generation Holocaust survivors and identity, people who are the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, and their feelings and connection to Holocaust memory; and 3. Literature about Holocaust pilgrimage and Jewish dark tourism and their relationship to thinking about Jewish identity.

This article hovers purposely indirectly around uncomfortable questioning: can one be at home in post-Holocaustal environments? This position is posed largely because the Jew/non-Jew binary is based on Holocaust experiences and how the racialisation of Jewishness became prominent in Jewry after this event. Boundaries have always been flexible. Conversion both to Judaism and of Jews to other religions has always occurred. Jews have always intermarried and interpartnered and still do. Most Jews the world over have non-Jewish family.

There is a wealth of literature into Jewish identity debates, the negotiation of latent and hidden Jewish identity across and within generations, and, particularly relevant for my take, for how patrilineal Jews might realise or reconcile their Jewishness personally and practically. The abstract to Naumburg's (2011, 14) article, 'The Struggle of Being Jewish', summarises well several key positions:

> Patrilineal Jews are a minority within a minority. As individuals born to Jewish fathers and non-Jewish mothers, they may identify as Jewish but have questionable status within the greater Jewish community. Those who carry multiple identities and straddle the boundaries of communities may have to choose between their values and lifestyle, and access to the resources and support of community involvement. (Naumburg 2011, 14)

My major involvement with an explicit Jewish community was as a child, adolescent, and young adult within my own patrilineal family wherein I sometimes felt like an outsider. Being born of a non-Jewish mother was obviously not of my doing and several of the behaviours like the occasional consumption of pork and prawns by my family members and my 'multiple identities' since a young boy were difficult to resolve. Jewish patrilineality is

about lines in the sand, where we draw boundaries, and who is in and out. A clear position, with which Naumburg herself struggles during describing her 'father a Jew mother not' status, and which Goldstein (2001) identifies as crucial to more conservative delineations within Rabbinical Judaism, is that patrilineal descent is not real Jewishness. This was the major perspective by which I have lived, something which the attendees at the conference presentation on which this article is based (Nash 2016) made me realise was not as cut and dry as I had previously thought and still might think.

The issues raised and queried here are presented from a narrative and memoir approach. These matters are poignant to Jewish Studies, Jewish societies, and Jewish groups and individuals who grapple with questions of inclusivity at its margins. While these concerns are international in their focus, particularly as fourth- and even fifth-generation descendants of Holocaust survivors are now coming of age, there are several reasons why this work is particularly relevant to an Australian Jewish Studies audience. First, I am Australian and grew up in Australia surrounded by many elements of Australian Jewish culture. Second, many of the exhibitions in Libeskind's section of the Museum are Polish Jew focused, my cultural background. Third, *to think and feel with* an Australian writer at JMB has as much to do with being in Berlin as a 'half-Jew' as it does about a person of Jewish background being anywhere where they reflect in narrative and memoir on their Jewishness and connection to all things Jewish in their world(s), including but not limited to architecture, personal pilgrimages, and third-generation Holocaust survivor-related concerns.

What modern humanities and social science scholarship emphasises about delineations, identity, and status within the Jewish community as regards patrilineality and matrilineality is that there are many shades of grey rather than any defined black and white position (e.g. Sigal 1985, Sosland 2008). There exists the possibility to leave behind the more conservative strictures of Rabbinical takes on Jewishness (e.g. Berkowitz 2009), consider Lev's (2018) 'sometimes Jew', and embrace the positives of a more liberalised world. Such perspectives, including the possibility of being a 'half-Jew', are welcome and even laud the juggling of multiple perspectives:

> Patrilineal Jews may enjoy both the blessings and challenges of a Jewish identity, without the psychological and communal benefits of Jewish status… I was concerned by the idea that one is either Jewish or not; there is no such thing as a "half-Jew." This made sense to me, but it was also quite painful. (Naumburg 2011, 16-17)

This position of a potentially muddled sense of identity formations and common strivings for Jewishness within the many possible realms of the Jewish world leads us to realise that several scholars have described that Jewish identity is 'made up' in modern spheres. Freistadt and Wedell's (1995) 'Histories of estrangement – motherless Jews' brings into consideration ideas and realities of connecting self-perception of Jewishness with real life events

and experiences in the Jewish world. Many children of Jewish males, especially those third-generation Holocaust survivors, feel the brunt of Jewishness without necessarily being accepted within the larger Jewish community itself. Jilovsky, Silverstein, and Slucki's (2016) edition, *In the Shadows of Memory: the Holocaust and the Third Generation*, teases out experiences of the Third Generation, the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, who have particular relationships to the Holocaust, mediated through their interactions with their parents, grandparents, and communities.

The contributions to this work from disciplines such as history, cultural studies, psychology, and sociology grapple in a scholarly fashion, some involving autobiographical accounts, with questions of trauma and its transmission across generations. *In the Shadows of Memory* and Aarons' (2016) *Third-Generation Holocaust Narratives: Memory in Memoir and Fiction* bring us to one moment, point, and axis where we now are in Jewish identity history: the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, who are an 'amorphous mass that can be grouped together under the name of "third " (Jilovsky, Silverstein, and Slucki 2016, 309) are a part of the last cohort who still knew and lived among these people in ways that the next generation will not. Within these traumas and resilience, these literatures strive to represent and grapple with problematic questions of legacy, generational transmission, and historical responsibility. It is this remembrance and identification of connection which I attempt in this article, a paralleling of memory of paternal Jewish lineage with the feelings of inhabiting contemporary built spaces attributed to the reconciling of Holocaustal and World War II pasts.

This amalgam of a search for Jewish identity within third-generation domains is implicated in travel and what has been labelled as the emotive experience of dark Jewish tourism (e.g. Kidron 2013) and Holocaust pilgrimage (e.g. Gross 2006). Gross's take is especially relevant, because it represents how the built environment of Libeskind's JMB and Peter Eisenman's Berlin Holocaust Memorial constitute a paradigm shift in Holocaust commemoration in Germany. They are architecturally different in that the structures resemble their United States counterparts and particularly the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum more than they do the other memorials and museums in Berlin's complex commemorative landscape. An internationally recognisable memorial architecture has emerged, one emphasising gaps, voids, incongruities, and the personal relation to what theorists and commentators have begun to call the 'evil sublime'. Gross (2006, 73) explains:

> Contemporary memorials and museums are not designed to 'merely' house collections; rather, they draw attention to themselves as symbols and symptoms of traumatic memory. They act out the trauma of the Holocaust as architecture; walking through them is supposed to be a step towards working through that trauma as feeling and experience. (Gross 2006, 73)

This is where my dark Jewish tourism, Holocaust-focused pilgrimage, and walking and 'working through trauma as feeling and experience' begin.

A brief note on the JMB institution and its cultural emplacement. While I only consider Libeskind's JMB, of which exhibits concerning the Holocaust relate directly to Polish Jews, the non-Libeskind elements of the Jewish Museum Berlin are more focused on German Jews and Jewry more generally. The Museum is a German national museum, not a Jewish-run or Jewish-created establishment. Jews have entered post factum.

In a similar fashion, the architectural and cultural symbol of the Holocaust Memorial is a German not a Jewish initiative. Jews in Germany remain oftentimes condemned to be figurines of German-identity games. They are easily trapped in the past, while they live in the present. This is demonstrated through increasing socio-political activism in current times by this populace.

A different note on Polish Jewry. The Jewishness of Poles has been transformed significantly by the Holocaust. In terms of Jewishness and mixedness, especially those of Polish Jews, Wohl von Haselberg (2016) and Kranz (2016), tussle with such matters. Both authors are parents of third-generation Holocaust Jews and they detail how parenthood shifted their perspectives on complex matters relating to identity, Jewishness, and, in Wohl von Haselberg's chapter, patrilineality and associated personal politics. Wohl von Haselberg's (2015) edited volume, *Hybride jüdische Identitäten: gemischte Familien und patrilineare Juden*, speaks to much relevant to the context of my treatment of mixed families and patrilineal Jewishness.

The situation

Some context. The majority of the content in what follows was written in early 2016. I am revisiting these ideas in mid 2022. During this time, much has changed in terms of family connections with the Jewish side of my family, separation from my child's mother, and my child growing up and obtaining Polish citizenship. I have told my child about her Jewish legacy. At nine and a half years of age now, she knows something about which I am attempting to describe. I hope this writing is one day received as at least a small piece of her inherited Jewish benefaction.

There have been two people who have reminded me that posing the question of Jewishness is quite a Jewish thing to do. I received the following from my paternal cousin in an email on 3 February 2016: 'Have you considered the fact that you contemplating such questions actually places you directly in a long line of question-asking Jews?' And my friend and colleague, Professor Ghil'ad Zuckermann, reminded me of the same when I was nearing completing of my PhD in linguistics in May 2011. Perhaps I am in good company, regardless of whether I might be half or full or the rest.

I pose this piece as a reconciliation and mediation melding personal selfhood with congruity — Jewishness, having a Catholic mother, my studies

as a linguist and architectural historian and theorist, and striving to be a human and an aesthete. The case study: experiences of experiential architecture at JMB. The reasoning: my aspiring ascertainment of my own Jewishness/non-Jewishness. The time: February 2013, a European tour with my pregnant then-partner. The method: critical creative narrative, autoethnography and memoir as a means of appeasement along the pilgrimage corridor. I am glad to share this journey with you. And I am glad finally to publish this piece so long after I first devised it. The gestation period has been long.

In 2013, soon after the birth of my daughter, and after a run of emails relating to a particular family member's plea that I should let bygones be bygones with my then-estranged Jewish father (we are now on talking terms), I was queried by the same family member that my position on being proud to be a Polish citizen and wanting to pass this whatever-it-is, even if only a passport, to my daughter rather than my Jewish heritage, whatever that may be or become, is not valid. I quote from a 2013 email from this family member:

> I'm also having difficulty with your position on being proud to be a Polish citizen and wanting to pass this on to Olive rather than your Jewish heritage. It seems to me that you have little experience of either being Polish or being Jewish (or Catholic for that matter) so what would you be passing on exactly? … To my way of thinking, one brief visit to Poland, a desire for an EU passport and a distinct lack of historical knowledge does not constitute sufficient basis on which to rest pride, or any other emotion for that matter. (Personal communication, August 2013)

It is bizarre to have sat in rooms with my paternal relatives, biological and blood relationships that have now spanned more than four decades, and to have felt ostracised based on the fact that my mother was not a Jew. I may be one of *them* in surname, but I was rarely made to feel like one of *them* in family. So where this same family member accused me that I would never understand what it was like to be a 'full-Jew', perhaps tautological because 'Jew' implies 'full', I have always wanted to tell her that she would likewise have no idea what it is like to be a 'half-Jew'. Alas, I never expressed my feelings to her. I have no doubt she will read this piece. Another possible sharing and reconciliation.

As a result of these more recent personal happenings, which are arguably based in a more complex past, my treatise can to an extent be interpreted both as a protest against certain ill feelings and a questioning to Jews and non-Jews, academics and non-academics alike: what does one do with one's half Jewishness? I wish my piece to be less of a throwing down of gripes and more based in the positiveness which I believe has developed around the thinking of an intellectual who has considered their placement within, to use a sticky expression, Australian Jewish identity.

As a linguist and environmentalist, I have found the crossover into architecture to be one of ease. Here I attempt something of less effortlessness: a settlement of the relationship of my Jewishness with several of my intellectual pursuits. The scene of Daniel Libeskind's JMB seems like as good a setting as anywhere. Language, pilgrimage, and the built are my ammunition. My final European adventure as a yet-to-become-parent as my target.

Some background into my Jewish connection. I was born in Adelaide, Australia in 1975. My brother was born in Manchester, England in 1973. My father is a Polish Jew born in Russia in 1944. He arrived in Australia with his family in May 1950. My mother is an Irish Catholic born in Sydney in 1945. Father and mother divorced in 1982 after they married in 1972. When I wrote this article in 2016, I was not on speaking terms with any of these people, a likely possible result of the conflict within which I grew up. With mother dead since March 2022, I am now in contact with all other members of my family of origin. I believe this former incompatibility resulted, at least in part, from the contradictions, more cultural and less religious, of my parents' Jewish and Catholic backgrounds. In addition, the fact or fiction that I am a half-Jew as a participant in the Jewish world is a part of the basis upon which my treatise sits; how does one settle and resolve ideas of Jewishness, having grown up as a purported non-Jew in somewhat culturally Jewish settings in 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s Australia? This required restoration of harmony across these fields is my task.

The setting

There is no dearth of literature dedicated to Libeskind's work. Much of it relates to memorial architecture, memory, Holocaust studies, and the relationship between event and material. Much of this writing is bold, noble, claiming that we — Berliners, Germans, humans, the world — should be made aware, accountable, or whatever for what took place some near six decades before Libeskind's extension was erected. Other takes are messy, muddled, even chaotic. I believe this is because the task the writers of these polemics set themselves is so vast, so daunting, so inexpressible in words. Try they do, and succeed some of them most definitely have. Whether success or failure has resulted in any writer's decision to write about the epistemology and ontology of Libeskind's JMB, the writer is to be commended. The task is great. Here I choose the personal.

My autoethnographic method takes a reflective approach and is less overtly scientific. Critical takes like Rogoff's (2002, 64) interpretation of Jewish visitors' dissing the underlying motivation behind the building are strong: 'The three visitors kept muttering in Hebrew: "These Germans, torturing us with their guilt."' Still, my assignment is of a different kind. I write about the *me* in interaction with what I saw on entering the museum and that which came after. While I presented my work personally to the audience

at the Australian Association for Jewish Studies conference in Brisbane in 2016 (Nash 2016), I write this almost 10 years after my JMB visit.

Raschig (2012, 21) poses iconic Jewish sounds as possibly 'a mournful clarinet solo, a primordial shofar bleat, an exuberant rendition of Hava Nagila, a simple "Oy". Silence, even, might be posited, a nod to the "unspeakability" of the Shoah'. It is here the suggestion of silence leads me to Libeskind's void. A highly controversial chasm tract, unheated, unlit, the nature of its surrounds is the driver in how it will, should, and could be perceived. The German winter for me was cold, exposed, and bare yet still friendly. On one side, the place-space is naked, not needing to tell a(ny) story. For me, I see an opening, not only to the museum but also to my own private remedying.

Walking through the older section of the museum, there is a feeling of anticipation, of the new, the building Libeskind built. Worth noting: there is only one way in, thus one way out. The experience of experience drives the work from the outset of the journey. As one walks through the dark gangways, there is a skew. The gangway, the walls, the intersection, the axes, the directions one may or could wish to take. As I merge with my journey, questions arise. Where Raschig (2012) queries what the sound of Jewishness is, I ask: what is the built of Jewishness? How may Jewish traits and composition be mandated in fashioned and potentially fashionable architecture? And more to the point in this personal pilgrimage: how is fabricated form a part of my past-present as I move through these constructed spaces vis-à-vis who I am as a thinker, writer, a half-Jew?

I am with partner with child, a yet-to-be-born whose sex we do not know.[1] The unborn child is not a full Jew. The mother is not either. The father waits in anticipation of something being resolved, a personal endeavour taking him to the stretched physical and emotional realms of his past. The permanent — architecture, structure, form — melds with the (semi)temporary — that which could be removed if required. Hung on walls, I peruse images of many a Jew, from pre-war times through the Holocaust through to the Jews of today and the new lives they are living. I am made never to forget. I get lost in the building, thinking I have not visited certain areas and then realise I have but that I have come at the same place from a different angle. It is as if the architect wishes to show me a multifaceted and multidirectional statement of *do not forget*. Whichever course I take, although I may perceive myself as being lost, wherever I go, however strayed I may identify myself, I cannot leave behind the statements of architecture carried with past.

I note the men and women whose expressions, their eyes, and their demeanour are so similar to those of my paternal grandparents. I stop and I peer more deeply into these windows to the soul. Do I feel anything beyond physical resemblance and some kind of imposed or made-up connection to such faces? I interrogate myself and query what appears to be the beginnings of what I suspect is merely intellectual. Because according to Orthodox Jewish tradition I am not a Jew. Mother is not a Jew, you are not a Jew. If

partner were a Jew, our yet-to-be would be a Jew. But she is not, so the unborn is not either. It can be that cut and dry in post-Holocaustal Jewry. There is no turning back from the tradition. That my previous years of hanging out with my father were like a Woody Allen homeopathic means little. So does my Polish citizenship and passport. I look up again, seeing the black and white of obviously Polish Jews, their thin faces, their blue, piercing eyes. The information cards speak of their attention to family values, their mercantile abilities, their artistry. I look for my paternal grandfather, Jankiel Szczeciniarz, who eventually became John Nash after arriving in Australia in 1950, in those eyes and in the way these people stood. There was something onto which I could hold.

I moved to the following exhibit, up the next flight of stairs, constantly remembering the void space. I recall events from my childhood where I would visit the Jewish side of the family in Sydney. I can now see the brunt of my father's depression after each visit to that from which he ran away. He could not stand his father, or was that the other way around, or both? I was told I could not pronounce Szczeciniarz properly. I was continually made aware by my paternals I was not a Jew. My Catholic mother was somewhere but not here. My brother never seemed to care much about this issue. One time I was the purported laughing stock of a joke: "See, Josh, we're eating ham!" As a vegetarian half-Jew, I still remain unsure of who was meant to be laughing.

Contradictions involving Jewish culture, an almost total absence of Jewish religious practice, the dummy figure of my mother's curious Irish Catholic influence, and the presence of people much older than me in these environments, who seemed much more able to understand all these matters, are all burnt into my early psyche. Whether half or a quarter or whatever else, I was exposed. I know something. I am a third-generation descendant of Holocaust survivors. I can tell the story, a story. And it is relevant. As the family member said, "Josh, you wouldn't know anything about being a Jew". "Pat," came my mental rejoinder, "you wouldn't know anything about being a half-Jew."

As I entered the museum, I felt like I had to bend down, like I was made to succumb to something larger than me, a force, a history, some almost heinous event which required the acknowledgment of all who would join with this experiential architectural event. The skewing of the initial causeways, the losing of my way, always thinking I had been in a particular place. I was consistently looking to find my bearings, either by way of corridors or stairways (architectural) or exhibits and the pictorial (aesthetics). The lack of definitive and orienting fenestration significantly masks one's placement within the walls of the structure, leading to a type of temporal bewilderment and abstraction from the port of call in which one thought one had arrived or through which one was travelling.

Back to the faces. I saw resemblance to my paternal grandfather, the *Jude* stars embedded on the walls. Did I feel some connection to the space through

the auspices the architecture interacting with my emotions? Where the walls sometimes felt like they were caving in on me, I would seek a way out of the greys and neutral colours which encircled me. My revelling in these interstices remind me of Rogoff's (2002, 63) statements: 'As a result of various press reportages, this building had been circulating in the media and popular imagination as a Disneyesque horror ride, encompassing loss of orientation, destabilized gravity, claustrophobia, extreme shifts between dark and light, and the specter of the much publicised Holocaust Tower.' Perhaps it is the ballast of partner, her representation of the feminine and soon-to-be mother, not wanting to venture as far and fast as I do into the realm of something-or-other-ness. Or maybe she is simply seeing more than the father-to-be in a heady and almost delirious state.

I am starting to believe what I am undergoing is mawkish, that my inclination and disposition perhaps verge even on schmaltzy. I really wish this were not the case. I want it somehow to be different. I want to remember my zaida/zayda, Polish-born Jankel Szczecinarz, who became John Nash some time after arriving in Australia in 1950, his hard life, the effect of the several strokes and heart attacks he had at a not-so-old age. Nanni, Shayndel (née Stolik), the loving grandmother, the one who never told me much about her past, but gave me nothing but love. Again, I glare into the sets of eyes on the walls, the maps of resultant diaspora, implements used by Jews of all times to cut their trade. These characteristics and artefacts move me to recall John and Sonia's house in North Bondi, New South Wales, the smells of a grandparental house, the traces of an overtly sad past, an odd present which continually unfolded in front of me during every visit: 1983, 1984, 1985. I believe these yearly expeditions eventually halted in the early 1990s. Still, by then the patterns were already established, whatever Jewishness I was exposed to and whatever I thought it could have meant to me already in tow.

There was the legend of a cake of soap made from Jewish bodies, which existed in my grandparents' house. Although I never saw it, there was an aura of emotional discomfort which surrounded its presence. I never found out why it would have even been there. Perhaps it served as a memory of what should never have happened, what should never be allowed, what should never happen again. It is within these artefacts, my memories of my grandparents, and their parallel emotional geographies that I return to Libeskind's work. I am realising that within an *architecture of absence* in materiality and the built I am experiencing a void within myself, one not of truancy, but of lack. I am not diminishing, pooh-poohing, or equating the dramatic subtleties of Libeskind's architecture expressed as void, axes, and hallways to my level of peculiar construal. This would be non-sensical, comparing apples and oranges. I just see the parallels so vividly: the faces, the implements, the maps, the memories, the paths, and the breaches of humanity are brought to bear on an example of a micro post-Holocaustal relic in suburban Sydney. I meet my past like a mirror as I walk up stairways, sense

loss and the gain to be made from an overt awareness of the Jewish influence on Berlin and Germany:

> Yet the very notion of an "autonomous" Jewish Museum struck them [Berlin city planners] as problematic: the museum wanted to show the importance and far-reaching effect of Jewish culture on the city's history, to give it the prominence it deserved. But many also feared dividing German from Jewish history, inadvertently recapitulating the Nazis' own segregation of Jewish culture from German. (Young 2000, 2)

Segregation. Void. These words weigh heavily on me. It appears the void I feel inside is a result of either cultural exclusion from the paternals, geographical isolation through living more than 1000 kilometres from my grandparents, or a subconscious yet healthy distancing which has come about because I am really not one of them. The reality is my linking to any form of Jewish past, at least in relation to Jewishness as espoused or presented in Libeskind's JMB, is largely intellectual, though it is becoming emotional and real. It is something that is performed on a small stage in my mind, a frame of complicated history and some torturous life events, both those of the Holocaust and to my own Jewish connection. As I imparted to the previously mentioned family member, my grandparents', my father's, and my auntie's stories are not mine. And this is so true in the succinct words of the family member: 'It seems to me that you have little experience of either being Polish or being Jewish (or Catholic for that matter) so what would you be passing on exactly?'

Do I *need* to be a Jew? Probably not. Am I able to swallow Woody Allen films? Generally not. Is there a Jewish influence, memory, and part of me? Somewhere definitely. Do I often want to forget the import and influence of such matters? Indeed. In my own thought and experiential reality, I cannot equate a complete emotional connection to that which I view in the museum. But I cannot deny distinct affiliation either. As I think of the *latkes* my father made for me several times, there is a vast intellectual connection, which I experience. But there is less heart and soul in it for me. I try to make the expression, 'these are my peeps, dude' (these people are *my* people, man), make sense and have more impact than I previously thought. It does not. They might be my people somewhere, but not in the sense that I might wish. Here, the family member could be correct:

> To my way of thinking, one brief visit to Poland, a desire for an EU passport and a distinct lack of historical knowledge does not constitute sufficient basis on which to rest pride, or any other emotion for that matter.

As unsympathetic as this statement appears to me, even years later, there is possibly some truth herein. And then not.

Postscript

Feldman and Peleikis (2014) intimate to us through their article, 'Performing the Hyphen: Engaging German-Jewishness at the Jewish Museum Berlin':

> Yet the Holocaust continues to lurk in the background of visitors' expectations, and the ambiguous nature of the German-Jewish hyphen (Jews as both model Germans and absolute others) requires skilful self-presentation of the museum guides in order to earn their storytelling rights as facilitators of encounter (Begegnung). (55)

Perhaps hyphening is crucial in my posing: hyphens implicate encounter — lost-found, architecture-void, Jewishness-non-Jewishness, patrilineal-matrilineal, self-world.

I feel privileged to have used this time-space to adjudicate my position on this treatise. And I am honoured to be placed now within the corpus of scholarship dealing with Jewish identity, third-generation Holocaust survivors, and the pilgrimage and dark Jewish tourism associated with much around Jewishness in Europe and its relevance to Jewry in the Australian Jewish diaspora.

When I presented this thinking first on 14 February 2016, I left the question 'Am I a half-Jew?' largely unanswered and unresolved. I tended towards thinking that I was not really a half-Jew or anything Jewish at all. After the first day of the conference, we walked from Griffith University in Southbank, Brisbane, to the Brisbane Synagogue. Participants suggested that the conservative, Rabbinical line of 'if your mother is not Jewish, you are not Jewish' was just that: conservative and Rabbinical. There are many shades of grey of Jewishness and at least that many with that horribly sticky idea, identity.

There is no such concept or reality in Jewish orthodoxy or non-orthodoxy in a late modern world anyway, as the family member would like to have me know. What am I, then, within the Jewish world and within the architectural and social bounds of the net Libeskind has stretched with his architecture? Perhaps seeing my grandfather's face within those other faces in Libeskind's Museum was enough.

Returning to my self-posed questions: *How did I* feel *when I visited Daniel Libeskind's JMB?* I felt lost and found: I identified as a Jew, a half-Jew, and a non-Jew, with and without hyphens, all at the same time. *How can the personal be melded with(in) the academic?* Quite adequately, especially when drawing on the now well-developed corpus of third-generation writings about Jewish identity and international Jewry. *How can I use the available and creative process of writing and intellectual engagement with thought and emotion in connection to material culture — here, architecture — as a means to resolve or ameliorate the something which I have often felt within me relating to all things Jewish, both positive and negative?* I would prefer to leave this question to my readers. I entrust this unanswered query as an invitation into further dialogue and fruitful discussion.

Endnote

1. Our child was born as a beautiful girl, Olive Autumn Nash, on 28 July 2013.

References

Aarons, V. (ed.) 2016. *Third-Generation Holocaust Narratives: Memory in Memoir and Fiction*. Lexington Books: Lanham.

Berkowitz, B.A. 2009. "The Limits of 'Their Laws': Ancient Rabbinic Controversies about Jewishness (and Non-Jewishness)." *Jewish Quarterly Review*, 99(1), 121-157.

Feldman, J. and Peleikis, A. 2014. "Performing the Hyphen: Engaging German-Jewishness at the Jewish Museum Berlin." *Anthropological Journal of Jewish Cultures*, 23(2), 43-59.

Goldstein, S. 2001. "Identity, Status, and Rabbinic Leadership in Contemporary Judaism." *The Reconstructionist*, 66(1), 46-43.

Gross, A.S. 2006. "Holocaust Tourism in Berlin: Global Memory, Trauma and the 'Negative Sublime'." *Journeys*, 7(2), 73-100.

Jilovsky, E., Silverstein, J. and Slucki, D. (eds.) 2016. *In the Shadows of Memory: the Holocaust and the Third Generation*. London: Vallentine Mitchell.

Kidron, C.A. 2013. "Being There Together: Dark Family Tourism and the Emotive Experience of Co-presence in the Holocaust Past." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 41: 175-194.

Kranz, D. 2016. "Where to Stay and Where to Go? Ideas of Home and Homelessness Amongst Third-Generation Jews Who Grew Up in Germany." In *In the Shadows of Memory: the Holocaust and the Third Generation*, edited by E. Jilovsky, J Silverstein, and D. Slucki, London: Vallentine Mitchell, 181-207.

Lev, S. 2018. "The Rabbinic Androginos as the 'Sometimes Jew': Investigating a Model of Jewishness." *Journal of Jewish Identities*, 11(1): 75-85.

Nash, J. 2016. "Am I a half Jew? Jewishness, architecture, and Libeskind's Jewish Museum Berlin." Paper presented at the Australian Association for Jewish Studies conference, Brisbane, 14 February 2016.

Naumburg, C.G. 2011. "The struggle of being Jewish." *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*, 17(2): 14-23.

Raschig, M. 2012. "Goeie Ouwe Gabbers: Listening to 'Jewishness' in Multicultural Mokum." *Quotidian: Dutch Journal for the Study of Everyday Life*, 3(1), 21-36.

Rogoff, I. 2002. "Hit and Run—Museums and Cultural Difference." *Art Journal*, 61(3), 63-73.

Sigal, P. 1985. "Halakhic Perspectives on the Matrilineal-Patrilineal Principles." *Judaism*, 34(1): 89-97.

Sosland, L. 2008. "Born of Our Fathers: Patrilineal Descent, Jewish Identity, and the Development of Self." Master of Social Work Thesis, Smith College for Social Work, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.

Wohl von Haselberg, L. 2016. "Legitimate Sadness? Life at the Edge of the Shadows." in *In the Shadows of Memory: the Holocaust and the Third Generation*, edited by E. Jilovsky, J Silverstein, and D. Slucki, London: Vallentine Mitchell, 227-230.

----. (ed.) 2015. *Hybride jüdische Identitäten: gemischte Familien und patrilineare Juden*. Berlin: Neofilis.

Young, J.E. 2000. "Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin: the Uncanny Arts of Memorial Architecture." *Jewish Social Studies*, 6(2), 1-23.