

On May 18, 1941, Chaim Kaplan wrote in his Warsaw ghetto diary: "Nazism came to annihilate us. It is the enemy of Judaism in its spirit and in its practice... However—the human spirit is inexplicable. Unconsciously, we accept its ideology and follow in its ways. Nazism has conquered our entire world. It severely damages our public life".

The tendency for victims to identify (in many very different ways and forms) with their perpetrators is evident in Jewish writings during and after the Holocaust. Sometimes these tendencies are reflected on (as in the above case), sometime they are merely described and at times they are even "enacted" in the text. In some cases these tendencies are related to specific Jewish authorities (e.g. *Judenrat*) or social groups (e.g. rich corrupted Jews), while in others, as in Kaplan's case, they are related to the entire Jewish society under Nazi occupation.

These tendencies are of fundamental historical consequence for Jewish societies during and after the war but they are rarely account for by professional historiography. In other words, they are part of history in the sense that they have influenced and shaped it (as the sources testify), but they remain absent from professional historical accounts. This suggests that our historical understanding and reconstruction is necessarily partial and inaccurate.

The field of psychoanalysis has developed sophisticated conceptual tools to address the very human, and therefore historical, phenomenon of "identifying with one's perpetrator." In my talk I will address the methodological ways by which historiography can non-reductively draw on these conceptual tools in order to write a more comprehensive and accurate history of the Jews during and after the Holocaust. I will illustrate my claim by briefly focusing on two themes: social relationships in the ghettos and the yearning for vengeance after the Holocaust.