

Jessa Sinnott

B.A., Anthropology, University of California, Irvine, 2015

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Sidney and Rosalie Rose Fellow, Sinnott enjoyed the support of a Shahun Parish research award for her dissertation project on neighborhood and pogrom violence in Nazi (and Soviet) occupied Poland. The chief objective of her research is to create a fluid snapshot of a local sociocultural reality in which the murder of Polish Jewry took place. This project will consider three overarching categories of analysis to develop a narrative of the perpetration of mass violence: the identification of actors and methods of aggression, ethnic and/or national socialization and shifting moralities, and the economic incentives for committing intra-communal violence. This microhistory will provide a framework in which to examine the broader themes of interethnic relations in Poland, Polish antisemitism, and the national identity and culture that allowed for attitudes of indifference and violence in the face of Jewish suffering; demonstrating the ways in which anti-Jewish, neighborhood aggression fit into the totality of occupational violence.

Sinnott plans to draw on a variety of primary source materials. These include police and military records, documentation of postwar trials for “crimes against the Polish nation,” held by the Soviet-imposed Polish authorities and collected by the Chief Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes Against the Polish Nation, which would later become the Institute of National Remembrance, as well as oral histories and written testimonies to be accessed through the Pilecki Institute in Warsaw, the USHMM, and Yad Vashem. Sinnott plans to continue her research in the coming year by examining documentation made

available by Poland's Institute of National Remembrance and by visiting local archival branches.

Sinnott has narrowed her research locality, and will be conducting a microstudy on the historic Powiat Szczuczyński, in the present-day county of Grajewo. Over the summer Sinnott conducted archival research at the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) in Warsaw, under the guidance of Dr. Joanna Tokarska-Bakir.