



Gazeta

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Editorial Committee: Fay Bussgang, Julian Bussgang, Shana Penn, Vera Hannush, Aleksandra Makuch, Alice Lawrence, LaserCom Design

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Message from Irene Pipes

President of the American Association
for Polish-Jewish Studies

Founder of *Gazeta*

Dear Members and Friends:

I shall begin with informing you that Tad Taube and Shana Penn of the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture have agreed to publish our *Gazeta* (Newsletter of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies), which Fay and Julian Bussgang edited for over twenty years. They have agreed to cooperate with them since they have a lot of experience in collecting and publishing material relevant to our interests and have partnered with us to produce *Gazeta* for several years.

I spent the most interesting and satisfactory four weeks in Warsaw last October. Of course the highlights were all the events connected with the official opening of the POLIN Museum (note the name, very flattering to us, which echoes our publication of 27 volumes of *POLIN* and more to come). The concert by the Israeli Symphony Orchestra in the beautiful Opera House was wonderful and the reception that followed elegant while giving me a chance to see many old friends and donors to the Museum. The ceremony in front of the Rapoport Ghetto monument was attended by hundreds of people and hundreds more standing around the area who could not get into the Museum for the official opening. Both presidents of Poland and Israel spoke and spoke well. One had the feeling while going around town that everyone was somehow connected with the Museum and Jewish events.

I look forward to our cooperation.

Best wishes,
Irene Pipes
President



Irene Pipes

Message from Tad Taube and Shana Penn

Chairman and Executive Director
of the Taube Foundation for
Jewish Life & Culture

For more than a decade, the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture has had the privilege of reporting on our grantees and projects in *Gazeta*, the newsletter of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies. *Gazeta* is well-known for its presentation of current affairs and program developments in Polish Jewish scholarship and communal life for over 20 years. When Irene Pipes and Antony Polonsky invited us to assume responsibility for production of *Gazeta*, we were honored to do so, as this partnership advances our goals to strengthen Polish Jewish culture and generate American interest in Polish Jewish developments.

In this inaugural edition of a redesigned and electronically distributed *Gazeta*, now co-produced by the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture and the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies, we will continue to further awareness and foster positive interest in Polish Jewish culture and advance *Gazeta's* legacy as built by its reputable founders, Irene Pipes, Dr. Antony Polonsky, and Fay and Julian Bussgang.

Best regards,
Tad Taube and Shana Penn
Chairman and Executive Director



Tad Taube



Shana Penn

History of *Gazeta*

By Julian and Fay Bussgang
Co-editors, *Gazeta*

In 1992, Irene Pipes, President of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies (AAPJS), located in Cambridge, MA, persuaded its board to start a newsletter to inform people interested in Polish-Jewish affairs about the activities of the Association and also about Polish-Jewish events taking place elsewhere in the world. Board members Fay and Julian Bussgang were asked to undertake this task, and Fay, having just begun the study of Polish, suggested that the publication be called *Gazeta* (Polish for newspaper), to which the others agreed.

Among the regular contributors to the newsletter were Irene Pipes, who provided a “Letter from the President” in every issue, and Professor Antony Polonsky, who reported on the upcoming volumes of *POLIN, Studies in Polish Jewry*, a publication sponsored by and supported by AAPJS.



Fay and Julian Bussgang

Many of the articles in *Gazeta* were an abbreviated version of a wide variety of items relating to Polish-Jewish issues that appeared in the Polish or American press. Some were direct reports from friends in Poland giving updates about the activities of their organizations. Other articles were devoted to portraying prominent Polish Jews who had made contributions as writers, scientists, and artists. While from time to time other members of the Association

contributed pieces, most articles were written or adapted by Polish-born Julian, still fluent in Polish. Fay did much of the editing and formatted the articles. Prior to publication, the final draft was sent to the editorial board (Irene Pipes, Antony Polonsky, Richard Fenigsen, and, until her death, Jana Prot) for review.

The publication proved to be very popular among AAPJS members and subscribers, who eagerly looked forward

History of Gazeta, Continued

to each issue, and even among friends and colleagues in Poland who were interested in the American viewpoint of Polish-Jewish affairs. The articles brought to the attention of our readers both the controversies occurring in Poland pertaining to Jews as well as the many initiatives to improve Polish-Jewish relations. *Gazeta* also reported on the emergence of Jewish life among young Jews in Poland, many who had only recently learned of their Jewish heritage. The fact that a great effort was made to be fair and objective in the reporting of Polish-Jewish events was very much appreciated by our readers, who were both Jewish and non-Jewish.

Beginning in 2009, *Gazeta* began to include reports from the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, which shared many of the same interests as AAPJS. As the Bussgangs began thinking of retiring, AAPJS approached

the Taube Foundation about stepping in to continue the publication of *Gazeta*. We are delighted that they have agreed and also offered us an opportunity to continue submitting articles. We are sure that the new *Gazeta* will continue to be of great interest to its readers. ■

Polish Jewish Studies Initiative

By Dr. Jessie Labov
Center for Slavic and
Eastern European Studies
Ohio State University

In Poland over the last two decades, few changes in the country's public discourse have been as striking as the opening up of Polish Jewish history and culture as a topic of debate, in both productive and challenging ways. Our working group is dedicated to moving this conversation forward, especially as it will apply to the intertwined study of these fields in the near future. Starting in March 2014, our working group began a series of events that aim to both define and advocate for the emerging field of Polish Jewish Studies. The goal is to develop further the path marked out by the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies (AAPJS), and bring together scholars and activists from a range of institutions and disciplines who would like to see Polish and Jewish culture more intentionally and productively intertwined. Our goal is to share our collective vision of the field as we imagine it, located in different types of departments,



Dr. Karen Underhill of University of Illinois-Chicago leading a Polish Jewish studies class in Kraków

centers, and programs, as well as in individual scholars' projects. We will discuss relevant courses and syllabi that we are collecting among ourselves, and strategies for funding scholars to learn necessary languages and travel to important sites for this research.

The inaugural meeting of this group, at Ohio State University, convened a group

of scholars active at the intersection of Polish and Jewish studies, together with key institutions concerned with this area. We discussed new research directions, course development, various approaches to teaching Polish Jewish Studies courses, and the development of new vocabularies and narratives; as well as institution building and the development of institutional relationships

Polish Jewish Studies Initiative, Continued

among universities, NGOs and foundations in the US, Poland, Israel, and other countries. We are in the process of forming working groups that will focus on specific projects, such as creating a Polish Jewish Studies summer school, planning panels at conferences, applying for funds for scholarships and fellowships, and working together with AAPJS to integrate past efforts with our current projects.

The OSU workshop will be followed by a second Polish Jewish Studies workshop at Princeton University, April 17-19, 2015. The Princeton workshop will take as its case study a very important development in the narrative and interpretative approaches to Polish Jewish history and culture, namely, the opening of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, in Warsaw in October 2014. The Museum itself represents substantial new material for analysis and discussion – not only of scholarly and cultural

strategies for reimagining the past and present of Polish Jews; but also of the complex cultural politics surrounding national and transnational memory and historical narratives. We will be working closely with its director, Dr. Dariusz Stola, and chief curator, Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, as well as the director of the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Dr. Paweł Śpiwak. These two institutions, together with the Polish Cultural Institute, New York's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and the San Francisco-based Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture's Global Education Outreach Program (GEOP), form a new resource network of unprecedented richness.

We also held a roundtable on "Polish Jewish Studies in the 21st Century" at the 2014 Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) annual convention, which was the first

step in both acknowledging the accomplishments of the previous generation of Polish Jewish Studies scholars, and broadening our audience across several disciplines. We are now planning sessions for the 2015 ASEEES and Association for Jewish Studies conventions, as well as a third workshop at the University of Illinois-Chicago in the Fall 2015 semester. ■

CORE ORGANIZERS

Dr. Irena Grudzinska Gross
(Princeton University)

Dr. Jessie Labov
(Ohio State University)

Dr. Karen Underhill
(University of Illinois-Chicago)

Shana Penn (Graduate
Theological Union)

Dr. Geneviève Zubrzycki
(University of Michigan)

For more information, see:
<http://slaviccenter.osu.edu/about/polish-studies/polish-jewish>.

The Global Education Outreach Program: Extending Access and Impact

By Shana Penn

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which had its grand opening on October 28, 2014, is a laboratory for understanding the functions of public history and how cultural institutions can operate as transformative agents in civil society. Its Research Program offers scholarly opportunities in multi-disciplinary fields: history, cultural anthropology, sociology, religion, museum studies, narrative studies, language studies, etc. The Research Program provides access to the Museum's collections, library, and digital archives; supports the preparation of publications; and provides facilities for scholars, researchers, students, and visitors to conduct research, engage in scholarly exchange, and take part in workshops, seminars, etc.

The Global Education Outreach Program (GEOP) aims to transmit the POLIN Museum's educational message and unique resources



Group Tour of POLIN Museum

worldwide through a variety of academic partnerships and cross-cultural exchanges. With start-up funds from the William Bowes Jr. Foundation and the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, the GEOP is establishing academic partnerships between POLIN Museum and universities and research institutions in North America, Europe, Israel, Russia, and Australia to

support significant research, writing, and college- and university-level teaching about Polish Jews. The GEOP will provide funding for fellowships, faculty and student seminars, conferences and workshops, and international summer study programs. A principal focus of the program is to ensure the development of a new generation of Polish Jewish studies scholars. ■

GEOP: Extending Access and Impact, Continued

GEOP ACTIVITIES 2013-2015

MAY 2013-2014

Linkage created between POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and University of Southern California Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive of 52,000 searchable audiovisual testimonies of survivors and witnesses of the Holocaust and other genocides.

AUGUST 2014-2015

Dr. Antony Polonsky, an award-winning historian and the Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University, appointed as Chief Historian of POLIN Museum; his affiliation with the museum is part of the GEOP.

OCTOBER 2014

420-page Core Exhibition catalogue published.

OCTOBER 2014

Taube-hosted delegation of GEOP Jewish studies professors to POLIN Museum Grand Opening including from Stanford, USC, and Jewish Theological Seminary.

NOVEMBER 11-18, 2014

Core Exhibition Scholar of Hasidism, Dr. Marcin Wodziński, chair of Wrocław University Jewish Studies Department, hosted at UC Davis and lectures about POLIN Museum at UC Davis, Berkeley, Stanford, and the Graduate Theological Union.

NOVEMBER 15-18, 2014

Annual conference of the Association of European Jewish Museums (AEJM) held at POLIN Museum.

FEBRUARY 1-14, 2015

POLIN Museum educators visited and trained in the San Francisco Bay Area at Stanford University, Contemporary Jewish Museum, UC Berkeley's Magnes Collection of Jewish Art & Life, and other Bay Area institutions. The group also spent a week in Los Angeles, hosted by the USC Shoah Visual Archives Foundation.

MARCH 10-13, 2015

Dr. Samuel Kassow, a Core Exhibition Historian, lectured on the POLIN Museum at universities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

APRIL 17-19, 2015

Support for the Polish Jewish Studies Workshop at Princeton University.

INAUGURAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE:

MAY 11-14, 2015

POLIN Museum will host an inaugural international scholars conference on its Core Exhibition and future directions in Polish Jewish studies. See p. 9.

JULY 2015

Five Bay Area educators will participate in the second edition of Polin Academy Summer Session (PASS), designed especially for an international group of teachers and educators to participate in an on-site orientation to the Museum's educational strategies, programs, and exhibitions.

For more information, contact:
GEOP@polin.pl

From Ibrahim ibn Jakub to 6 Anielewicz Street International Conference to mark the opening of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw

By Dr. Antony Polonsky
Chief Historian
POLIN Museum

POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in cooperation with the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute and with the financial support of the Global Education Outreach Program (GEOP) is organizing a scholarly conference to mark the opening of the Museum with the title 'From Ibrahim ibn Jakub to 6 Anielewicz Street.'

The conference will take place between May 11-14, 2015 in POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw and will be opened by a keynote speech by Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Program Director of the Core Exhibition. Our aim is for this conference to be an opportunity for leading scholars in the field to visit the Core Exhibition of the Museum that opened on October 28, 2014 — the curators of the various galleries will be explaining what they hoped to achieve. It will also be an opportunity of evaluate what has been



First Encounters Gallery of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

achieved in the last thirty years in the study of the history and culture of the Jews in Poland and, at the same time, to highlight the gaps in the existing historiography. The proceedings of the conference are divided into five sections — the first will be devoted to the period down to 1795, the second to the nineteenth century, the third to the interwar period, the fourth to the Holocaust and the last to the postwar years.

In addition the conference will afford the participants the opportunity to discuss the

roles which the Museum and the Jewish Historical Institute can play in the development of research into the history and culture of Polish Jews and how this research can be made accessible to a wider public both in Poland and internationally. One round table discussion will be devoted to this topic and a second will examine the role of 'The Historian in the Museum.' The Museum is intending to publish the proceedings of the conference. ■

<http://www.polin.pl/en/conference-may-2015>

The Mandate of the Core Exhibition of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

By Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett
Chief Curator
POLIN Museum

Excerpted from “Historical Space and Critical Museologies: Museum of the History of Polish Jews,” by Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, to appear in: From Museum Critique to Critical Museum, edited by Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius and Piotr Piotrowski. Ashgate, 2015, in press.

Before there was a museum, before there was a building, before there was a collection, before there were significant funds – there was the story. The plan for the core exhibition came first, and all else followed. The story was compelling, and was what ultimately persuaded others to join the project. The core exhibition, divided into seven historical periods from the tenth century to the present, is at the very heart of the



Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett in the Encounters with Modernity Gallery

museum; it occupies virtually the entire footprint of the building and is the inspiration for its programs. From the outset the core exhibition was to be a multimedia narrative exhibition and a theater of history. The designers worked with the idea of narrative space, a story told in four dimensions (time is the fourth dimension), unfolding as the visitor moves.

The exhibition is predicated on exploration rather than guiding, learning rather than teaching, soft mastery (trial and error) rather than hard mastery (information and instruction), and above all on the principle of an open narrative in multiple voices, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in dissonance. For these reasons, the narration is driven by quotations from primary sources from the

The Mandate of the Core Exhibition, Continued

period. Scholarly commentary appears in its own font and panel and is kept to a minimum. These are among the ways of empowering the visitor, who is encouraged to add his or her voice to the chorus of voices in the exhibition.

As for contributing to debates on fundamental issues, there is no end to the debates provoked by any history of Polish Jews, not least the one presented in the core exhibition. Our challenge is to create an exhibition worthy of those debates – and equally worthy of debates that will surely arise from the exhibition itself. As for exposing conflicts, sensitivity to even uttering the word Jew (*Żyd* in Polish) is only one sign that Jews, and what is known in Poland as “the Jewish topic,” are an extremely touchy subject, especially in the post-war period. The POLIN Museum is uniquely positioned to

tackle this sensitive subject, particularly since the task has been in the hands of the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland, the private partner in the private–public partnership that established the museum. The Association was responsible for creating the core exhibition (and raising the funds for it), while the City of Warsaw and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage covered the cost and oversaw construction of the building.

Most important are the concerns about interpretation coming from all quarters in Poland and abroad. What came to me as a surprise were objections to our use of quotations. Will visitors be able to tell the difference between quotations from primary sources (documents, memoirs, autobiographies, diaries, letters, newspapers, reports) and factual information authorized by historians?

If the exhibition succeeds, it should challenge visitors to assess quotations and the sources from which they come – just as historians do. In some cases we provide several quotations that are in opposition to one another, and everywhere we clearly differentiate between quotations from primary sources and texts by our scholars.

Nonetheless, some historians argued that quotations are not “factual,” and asked us to replace some and cut others to align them more closely with statements that a historian could defend. We argue that quotations are clearly not statements by today’s historians and are not to be taken as such. They are our “artifacts” from within the period. They may not be statements that a historical expert today would make – but they do have the authority of those who lived and responded to events from their experience and perspective.

The Mandate of the Core Exhibition, Continued

Leftist critics in Poland object to our use of quotations for completely different reasons. They accuse us of “hiding behind the quotes” and not taking up a position in our own voice. Rather than polemicize, we “speak” through the ensemble of elements that make the whole. Quotations are only one of those elements. We chose them, and we put them in relation to each other and everything else in the exhibition – including our commentary. This approach is inspired by the Jewish tradition of text and commentary.

Perhaps the most sensitive issue is antisemitism, above all in the post-war period. Polish stakeholders ask for more context for violence against Jews, for balancing negative examples of Polish–Jewish relations with positive ones, for providing reasons other than antisemitism for emigration, and for showing that while many Jews left,

some stayed. The challenge was to strike a balance without creating misleading equivalences and neutralizing difficult moments in the historical narration. It became especially important in this period to avoid the passive voice and to identify the historical agents in order that actions by the communist regime (or aided and abetted by it) not be attributed to Polish society.

Jewish stakeholders are sensitive to any account of anti-Jewish feeling or violence that in a subtle, even unintended way shifts from description and explanation to justification. This accounts for our approach to presenting “*żydokomuna*,” the stereotype that communism is a Jewish phenomenon and that Jews were collectively responsible for communism. First, we distinguish the phenomenon of Jewish communists as such from the anti-Jewish feeling and violence attributed to this phenomenon. Second,

we let voices from the period “justify” anti-Jewish feeling and violence by the high proportion and prominence of communists of Jewish origin in the regime. Those whom we quote are responsible for what they say, though we are responsible for selecting the quotations and commenting on them. We also present high-ranking communists of Jewish origin as a phenomenon – whether as individuals in photos or named in texts. Most important, the museum commentary avoids describing claims from the period in a way that might lend credibility to them as explanations, implying justification, for anti-Jewish feeling and violence.

A recurring concern in the post-war story is the place of assimilated Jews, “Poles of Jewish origin,” especially individuals who do not identify themselves as Jews and do not want to be identified as Jews. They



Volunteers painting the elaborate ceiling of a close-to-scale replica of the Gwoździec Synagogue
Photo: Rick and Laura Brown/Handhouse Studio

may come from families who converted to Christianity several generations ago or who hid their Jewish origins from their children. Many people expect the exhibition to celebrate the contributions of Polish Jews, broadly defined, to Poland and the world – in medicine, science, law and politics, in Hollywood, and

in the formation of the State of Israel. Many well-known individuals do appear in the historical narrative of the core exhibition, but in support of the story rather than because they are famous. “Jews are important to Poland, and Poland is important to Jews.” That said, the history of Polish Jews is about all Polish Jews

and not just best known ones. This is a story of a civilization that created what was once the largest Jewish community in the world. Our mission is to transmit that legacy to future generations. ■

Jewish Studies in Poland

Excerpted from original article of same title in *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies*, Vol 10, No. 1 March 2011, pp. 101–118

By Dr. Marcin Wodziński
Director
Centre for the Culture and
Languages of the Jews
University of Wrocław

As in many other post-Communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Jewish studies in Poland have undergone intensive development and transformation in recent years. From being close to non-existent, they have experienced impressive institutional, teaching, research, and publishing developments. Their development owes much to a more general transformation affecting the other countries of the region, especially the fall of Communism and the lifting of the institutional and political barriers hindering the development of Jewish Studies in the former Soviet bloc countries. And there are global aspects, such as a proliferation of research, an increased interest in minority cultures, growing political interest in the Middle East conflict, which translates into a growth of related research activities, and the advent of technologies facilitating access to scholarly resources

located far away from the discipline's main research centers — in our case, Israel and the United States. Besides those general factors, however, there is also a Polish specificity to this discipline.

Within Jewish studies in Poland, there are three main areas of interest: the Holocaust, the aftermath of the Holocaust, and the regional and local history of the Jews. This pattern of interest is revealing when compared to patterns of cultural and scholarly interest in the East European Jewish past expressed outside Eastern Europe, in North America, Western Europe, or Israel.

The Holocaust has attracted growing interest in international scholarship, so there is nothing specific to Poland in this regard. Quite the contrary, Polish research in Holocaust studies has experienced a process of intense maturation, with a number of excellent studies



Dr. Marcin Wodziński

reaching an international readership. By contrast, local and regional history is clearly an area of quite radical misunderstanding and misperception between Polish, or any other East European and international practitioners of Jewish Studies.

For local scholars a history of their surrounding neighborhood is of immediate relevance, but such studies are often perceived outside Eastern Europe as parochial and lacking a wider, that is, proper, historical context. This is only partially correct, as a natural context for those

Jewish Studies in Poland, Continued

studies and scholars is not a history of the Jewish people worldwide. Rather, it is a local and regional history of ethnic and religious groups populating a region and the national history of the country to which this region belongs. Studies of this sort and Jewish studies are attractive to Polish scholars not because of their meaning for wider international research in Jewish studies, but because of their relevance for Polish history and Polish culture, even if perceived in a new and radically broader sense.

Another area of misunderstanding and radical difference between Polish, or East European, and Israeli/American perspectives is the post-Holocaust history of the Jews in Eastern Europe. Jewish history in post-Holocaust Poland is almost invisible to Israeli or American Jewish interests, while it features greatly in Poland and other countries in this part of Europe.

This is true of many other aspects of Jewish studies in Poland. For example, Polish research clearly focuses on those aspects of Jewish history and culture that highlight relations between Jews and non-Jews, especially Poles. When researching economic or social realities, for example, the first topics to be studied were those that highlighted interrelationships, even if they were at times painful and never glorious. This is important for our diagnosis of the research interests, because it reveals the significance of Jewish studies in Poland. It is a question of how the Poles find themselves in relation to this culture, what it says about the Poles and their culture, how it was possible to live together, how it affected Polish culture. Once again, this is an issue of self-identity.

A consequence of such a specific model of interest and motivation is the fact that Polish-Jewish studies

do not really fit within the typical meta-narratives of Jewish studies as perceived by Israelis or North Americans, and should be considered within the context of the Polish, not Jewish, academy. Although an increasingly larger part of Jewish studies undertaken in Poland refers to the current directions in the development of Jewish studies worldwide, the basic point of reference is Polish scholarship and Polish meta-narratives. Paradoxically, the fact that such a huge part of Polish-Jewish studies actively confronts Polish stereotypes, Polish national myths, and Polish cognitive paradigms proves the importance of the context of Polish meta-narratives for those studies and how strongly Polish-Jewish studies are embedded in Polish public debate.

We should add, however that in the past 20 years, fields of research have emerged in Polish-Jewish studies that go beyond the perspectives of

Jewish Studies in Poland, Continued

interest already mentioned. The best example is studies on Jews of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Commonwealth, affectionately called in Poland a Republic of Many Nations, is perceived as an ideal point of reference, as it provides a model of pre-modern multiculturalism and, better than any other period, it embodies the ideals of an open and tolerant Poland — that is, a Poland such as the new scholarship seeks to find.

Excellent research studies by Polish historians of early modern history are developing under the influence also of methodological transformations of early modern historiography in Europe and the United States. These have set the direction of transformation, as well as the methodological standards, within the entire discipline. In studies of the Jewish community in the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth undertaken in

North America and Israel over the last three decades, close cooperation between Polish historians and Israeli and American scholars has proved to be hugely significant for Polish-Jewish studies. As a result of this cooperation, the work of early modern Polish-Jewish historians now refers as much to the international as the Polish academy.

The historiography of the early modern period has definitely stopped being a research arena directed inwardly toward Polish issues and problems, and early modern Polish historians can boast impressive scholarly achievements.

Polish authors are publishing an increasing number of high-quality articles in the most prestigious Jewish Studies journals. More Polish students are appearing at the most prestigious doctoral studies courses, and scholars from Poland are finding positions in departments of Jewish studies

at North American institutions of higher education and at universities in Israel. Although these represent the successes of specific individuals, they also signify a collective effort by many people and circles within Polish-Jewish studies. Above all, they are the result of the interest in Jewish topics among the wider circles of public opinion, whose interest stimulates the development of this discipline.

Polish-Jewish studies are gradually freeing themselves of Polish meta-narratives and the Polish paradigm of Jewish history. It is difficult to say yet where they will find themselves as a result of this transformation and whether they will retain contact with what enlivens Polish-Jewish studies, that is, with the popular interest of Jewish themes within Polish public opinion. ■

Update on the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute

By Dr. Paweł Spiewak
Director
Jewish Historical Institute

The Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute (JHI) holds the world's largest repository of historical resources on Polish Jews. The oldest item dates from the end of the 9th century and an extensive archive dates back to the 19th century. Since 1947, the JHI has housed the vast material heritage of pre-WWII Jewry that was salvaged, reclaimed and preserved by the Central Jewish Historical Commission in 1944 in Lublin, while the war was still raging. These holdings include artifacts, documents, photographs and other items housed under difficult and underfunded conditions.

The JHI's most treasured collection is the Emanuel Ringelblum Archives. Ringelblum, a historian, organized a clandestine network of writers, journalists, historians and artists in the Warsaw Ghetto, called *Oyneg Shabes*, to document Jewish life and death during



Group viewing of Ringelblum archive artifacts

the war, intended for use in war crime tribunals against Nazis after the war. Most of the documents were later recovered and became the basis for the JHI's collection. The *Oyneg Shabes* documentarians met every Saturday in the building which houses the JHI today; before World War II, it was the famous Main Judaic Library and Institute of Judaic Studies (est. in 1928) and it

faced, across a path, Warsaw's largest synagogue, the Great Synagogue (seating 2,200), which was blown up by the Nazis in May 1943.

This past year, the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute has focused on raising the standard of exhibitions and constantly adding to the Central Judaic Library (www.cbj.jhi.pl). The Central Judaic Library (CBJ)

Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Continued

presents the holdings of the Jewish Historical Institute in digital form. CBJ's mission is to not only make available all texts of the Jewish Historical Institute, but also embed them in their historical contexts and provide special research tools for historians, genealogists, and all individuals interested in the history and culture of Jews in Poland. CBJ collections include the Ringelblum Archive.

The Institute has also published several books about the history of the Holocaust as well as ethical and aesthetic works on the representation of the Holocaust in art and philosophy. These include *Who is that Jew?* by Feliks Celnikier, *Jewish Children during the Holocaust Period* edited by Olga Orzel, the exhibition catalogue of *Salvaged*, an exhibit curated by Teresa Śmiechowska, *Social Court at CKŻP: the Jewish Community in Poland Settles the War* by Andrzej Żbikowski, and *Zachor:*

Jewish History and Jewish Memory by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi.

In 2015-16, the Institute will be building a permanent exhibition dedicated to the Oyneg Shabes group and Emanuel Ringelblum. ■

<http://www.jhi.pl/en>

Jewish Genealogy & Family Heritage Center Celebrates 20 Years

By Anna Przybyszewska Drozd, Aleksandra Dybkowska, and Matan Shefi

The Jewish Genealogy & Family Heritage Center (JG&FHC) has reached its 20-year milestone, having assisted thousands of Jews to uncover their Polish roots and Poles to discover their Jewish roots. Based in Warsaw, the Genealogy Center is a department of the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute (JHI), which holds the world's largest collection of archival and other materials about Poland's Jewish history. Here, the knowledgeable, multilingual staff, under the direction of Anna Przybyszewska Drozd, provide expert advice, research, attentive discussions with clients, and the careful reading and interpretation of old and more recent documents from Poland's centuries-long Jewish presence.

In 1994, a small-scale genealogy project within the Jewish Historical Institute began, supported by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation.



Photo: Jewish Historical Institute

After some years and in the face of rapidly growing demand, the genealogy project outgrew its modest physical space, staffing and technological capacities. Enter the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, which began supporting the project in 2004 and helped it realize its strategic plan to become an expanded and technologically sophisticated center for helping inquiring Jews, Poles

and others to explore the most basic questions about their origins: Who am I? Where do I come from? Also very important, the JG&FHC serves scholars and students conducting genealogy research for scholarly purposes. Other significant support has come from the Kronhill Pletka Foundation, the Friend Family Foundation, the Koret Foundation, the Libitzky Foundation, the Morris W.

Jewish Genealogy & Family Heritage Center, Continued

Offit Family, and the San Francisco Jewish Community Federation.

In 2014, the JG&FHC staff met with more than 1,500 visitors to their Warsaw office and helped over a thousand more via email, Skype and phone. This was an increase of about 35% from the previous year's numbers due to increased tourism to Poland especially family "roots" tours. While about a third of the visitors were from the US, there were 26 other countries represented, with significant numbers from Israel, Canada and France. Closer to home, more than 300 Poles visited the Center to explore questions about their hidden pasts.

The Genealogy Center also began a significant partnership with POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, starting with a series of well-attended genealogy workshops in January 2015. The Museum's Resource Center now distributes

contact information about the Genealogy Center to all of their visitors who ask such questions, including JG&FHC's key technological access point: www.jhi.pl/en/genealogy and their popular Facebook fanpage. The Genealogy Center in turn provides its visitors with information about POLIN. The upcoming year will no doubt be the busiest one yet as the Center embarks upon their third decade. ■

Launch of Volume 27 of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*

By Dr. Antony Polonsky

January 2015 saw two launches of Volume 27 of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, the first in Kraków on January 13 at the Maria and Marcell Roth Center for the History and Culture of Polish Jews and Polish-Jewish Relations and the second two days later at the Polish Embassy in London. Volume 27 investigates the situation of the Jews in the Kingdom of Poland, the autonomous, semi-constitutional state, in dynastic union with the Romanovs, created at the Congress of Vienna to satisfy, at least in part, the national aspirations of the Poles. Its autonomous status was severely restricted after the unsuccessful Polish uprising of 1830-1, and almost entirely done away with in the aftermath of that of 1863-4. It did however possess a constitution and a concept of citizenship, which meant that, in theory at least, there was a basis for the transformation of the Jews into citizens.



Dr. Antony Polonsky

In the first half of the nineteenth century the Polish nobility, which even after the failure of the revolution of 1830-1 was the dominant force in the area, took the view that Jewish emancipation was conditional on the Jews' abandoning their religious and social separateness, a development which was regarded as rather unlikely, or, at best, could be expected to take a very long time. The run-up to the insurrection of

1863 changed this situation as a competition developed between the Viceroy of the Kingdom, Alexander Wielopolski, a Pole who was trying to introduce a measure of self-rule that would also be acceptable to the Tsarist authorities, and the growing Polish national movement, to win the support of the Jews. As a result the Jews of the Kingdom received their emancipation on June 4, 1862 from Wielopolski.

Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Continued

The granting of equal rights was not rescinded after the failure of the uprising, and the Jewish elite remained committed to an integrationist view of the Jewish future. Their position was weakened by the slow progress of acculturation, the impact of the ‘new Jewish politics,’ which stressed ethnicity rather than religion as the marker of Jewish identity, and the growth of antisemitism. The period between 1890 and 1914 thus saw a fundamental transformation of Polish political life in the Kingdom of Poland and the emergence of new political movements which challenged the dominance of the Positivists, the exponents on Polish soil of a variant of Western liberalism, and the Jews who were associated with them — integral nationalism, in the form of the National Democratic movement led by Roman Dmowski, and socialism, both in national and in revolutionary forms. Within the Jewish world

the dominance of the integrationists was challenged by the adherents of Zionism and of Socialism. This culminated in conflict over the elections to the Russian Duma of October 1912 that finally undermined the position of the Jewish assimilationists.

The specific features of Jewish life in the Kingdom of Poland have not, by and large, been recognized in the scholarship on this area, and this volume, with contributions from leading scholars in Poland, Israel and the United States, seeks to fill this gap and provide a clear picture of what made the Kingdom of Poland different from the other areas of partitioned Poland and from the centres of Jewish life in Central Europe. Some were present at the launch in Kraków, while others, including the two editors, Glenn Dynner of Sarah Lawrence College and Marcin Wodziński of the University of Wrocław took part in the launch in London, which

also featured a round-table discussion of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, in which the participants were Dariusz Stola, Director of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Chief Curator and Antony Polonsky, Chief Historian of the Museum. ■

<http://www.aapjstudies.org/>

The 6th “Jews and Judaism in Contemporary Research in Poland” Conference of the Polish Association for Jewish Studies (PAJS)

In November 1995 a group of scholars from various Polish universities and academic institutions made a decision to establish the Polish Association for Jewish Studies (Polskie Towarzystwo Studiów Żydowskich, PAJS), which would have as its main goal the consolidation and integration of scholars and institutions involved in Jewish Studies in Poland. Statutory aims of PAJS are the promotion and popularization of scholarly research on Jewish history and culture, with particular attention to the history of the Jews in Poland, and the development of collaboration with Polish and foreign institutions and associations. From its inception the Association has organized conferences to analyze the state of Jewish Studies in Poland entitled: “Jews and Judaism in Contemporary Research in Poland.” The Association also publishes its semi-annual periodical “Studia Judaica.”

On September 29-October 1, 2014, PAJS organized the 6th “Jews and Judaism in Contemporary Research in Poland” conference, which took place at the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU) in Kraków. Over 100 scholars from Poland and guests from abroad participated in the conference. Representatives of institutions that collaborated in the organization of this event and spoke at the plenary opening session included: Prof. Jerzy Wyrozumski and Prof. Maria Kłańska (PAU), Prof. Edward Dąbrowa (Jagiellonian University and the European Association of Jewish Studies (EAJS), and Assoc. Prof. Michał Galas (PAJS and EAJS). Following that Dr. Sebastian Rejak from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs delivered a lecture on: “Jewish Studies and Revival of Jewish Life in Poland, and Polish Foreign Policy.” This was followed by a panel discussion on “POLIN Museum of the

By Dr. Michał Galas
Institute of Jewish Studies
Jagiellonian University

History of Polish Jews and its Role in the Development of Jewish Studies in Poland,” with mediators Prof. Dariusz Stola, POLIN Museum Director; Prof. Antony Polonsky, POLIN Museum Chief Historian; and Prof. Marcin Wodziński, a POLIN Museum Core Exhibition Historian.

After this general session, participants of the conference delivered lectures and presentations in panels during three next days that were dedicated to such major topics as: history of Jews from ancient times to the contemporary period; demography and statistics; history of Judaism, philosophy and kabbalah; Jewish cultures, languages, literatures and press; anthropology and folklore; antisemitism and Holocaust; and commemoration of Jewish life in Poland.

The conference included the General Meeting of PAJS members during which a new board of the Association

Jews and Judaism in Contemporary Research in Poland, Continued

for the period of 2014-2018 was elected. For the second time, Assoc. Prof. Michał Galas became the President of PAJS; Prof. Marcin Wodziński, Vice-President; Prof. Stefan Gąsiorowski, Treasurer; and Assoc. Prof. Magdalena Ruta, Secretary. For the first time at the General Meeting of PAJS, members decided to award Honorary PAJS Membership to scholars who played leadership roles in the development of Jewish studies in Poland and Polish-Jewish relations: Prof. Jerzy Wyrozumski, Prof. Antony Polonsky, and Prof. Jerzy Tomaszewski.

In November 2015 the Polish Association for Jewish Studies will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its existence and activities. This will be a great occasion to summarize achievements and create a program for future development. ■

For more information about PAJS please click on:
www.jewishstudies.pl
www.studiajudaica.pl.

Bródno Cemetery in Praga

By Julian and
Fay Bussgang

In the JTA of February 4, Penny Schwartz of Boston reports on a visit to the 225-year-old Bródno cemetery, Warsaw's oldest and largest Jewish burial ground — located in Praga, on the opposite side of the Vistula River. Substantially destroyed during and after the war, some restoration began in the late 1980s, and in 2012, ownership of the cemetery was formally transferred to the Jewish Community of Warsaw.

Anna Chipczyńska, the 36-year-old president of the Jewish Community of Warsaw explained that the Jewish Community is committed to spending approximately \$800,000 to restore the 13-acre Bródno cemetery and is hoping that much of the money will come from a Minister of Culture grant for which they have applied. The group is planning to open the cemetery to the public for educational and communal programs about the shared Polish-Jewish history of the



Bródno Cemetery

area. The Jewish Community is now responsible for more than 12 Jewish cemeteries in Poland. ■

For more information about the Bródno cemetery, see: <http://www.sztetl.org.pl/en/article/warszawa/12,cemeteries/3529,jewish-cemetery-in-odrowaza-street/>

Warsaw Judaica Team Discovers Pre-War Mezuzah Scroll

Warsaw-based Judaica designers Helena Czernek and Aleksander Prugar, co-founders of “Mi Polin,” create beautiful Judaica and engage in many interactive art projects. They have become best known for their mezuzah project, in which they travel to different towns across Poland, locate and make casts of pre-war mezuzah traces, and turn the casts themselves into mezuzot for Jews in Poland and around the world. Czernek says the goal is to give the old mezuzot new life.

While the duo are determined to find any mezuzot traces, they are most excited when they can find a klaf, or scroll within the mezuzah. They were rewarded in early January, when they discovered a 70-year old scroll in excellent condition in the Polish town of Przemyśl, two hours south of Warsaw.

“The parchment seems to be perfectly preserved,” said Czernek. “It has been taken care of by experts on the



Mezuzah scroll discovered by Mi Polin in Przemyśl; photo: Mi Polin

preservation of monuments of history from the National Museum in Warsaw. We will decide together what to do with that precious piece of Jewish ceremonial art.”

Mi Polin’s project coincides with a national initiative to identify homes whose former Jewish owners perished in the Holocaust. This particular homeowner, noticing the diagonally placed metal on the doorframe, and knowing of Mi Polin’s project, immediately contacted Czernek and Prugar.

Mi Polin’s mezuzot and other art will be on display for the second time in the

Bay Area (the first time was in September at the Osher Marin JCC) at the Peninsula JCC, April 1-June 25. In partnership with Lerhaus Judaica and with support from Taube Philanthropies, Czernek and Prugar will speak at the April 13 opening, with an introduction by Shana Penn, Executive Director of Taube Philanthropies. Mi Polin Judaica can be purchased at the PJCC during the exhibit and regularly at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco. ■

mipolin.pl

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Exploring Poland/Polin - Heritage Study Tour – Summer 2015

By Helise Lieberman
Director
Taube Center for the
Renewal of Jewish
Life in Poland

The Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland is pleased to announce a call for applications for the second year of its summer study program for American students of Polish and Polish Jewish descent, Exploring Poland/Polin – Heritage Study Tour–Summer 2015.

The intensive immersion program, created by the Taube Center and supported by a grant from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is built on the success of last summer’s pilot program, “Towards a 21st Century Polonia: Explore, Connect, Get Involved.” Two 11-day study programs are offered this summer:
Study Tour I: June 18-29
Study Tour II: August 3-14

Deadline for application is April 15, 2015. Almost all expenses per student are covered by the grant, excluding international airfare, travel insurance, and personal expenses. Please share this announcement with students and friends. ■



Participants in the inaugural summer program, “Towards a 21st Century Polonia: Explore, Connect, Get Involved” (Summer 2014)

For more information, and to send information to potential candidates electronically, please visit the program’s website: <http://www.21stcenturypolonia.pl/recruitment.html>

Applications may be downloaded from the website.

PROGRAM CONTACT:

Bartosz Rozbicki,
Program Coordinator

Helise E. Lieberman,
Director, Taube Center for
the Renewal of Jewish Life
in Poland Foundation

Exploring Poland/Polin -
Heritage Study Tour -
Summer 2015

Email: polonia21@centrumtaubego.org.pl

Cell: 48 530 834 040

Website:
www.21stcenturypolonia.pl

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Auschwitz Jewish Center and Jagiellonian University: Jews of Poland: History, Culture, and Memory

By Dara Bramson
Program Coordinator

The Centre for European Studies at Jagiellonian University, the Auschwitz Jewish Center, and Museum of Jewish Heritage are proud to offer a new joint summer school program in 2015: Jews of Poland: History, Culture, and Memory <<http://ajcf.pl/en/programy/jews-of-poland-history-culture-and-memory-2015-summer-school-in-krakow/>>. Based in Kraków, the program offers an in-depth study of Polish-Jewish history and the Holocaust through lectures, site visits, academic discussions, and study tours to Auschwitz and major Polish cities. Participation in the Jewish Culture Festival is also integrated into the curriculum. Students and young professionals of all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

The summer school runs from June 22-July 8, 2015 and offers 4 US credit hours (8 ECTS points) to participants. The \$2,225

program fee includes accommodation during the program, materials, participation in seminars, study trips, site visits and tours, travel costs in Poland, and three dinners (opening, closing, and one Shabbat dinner). In addition to this program, the Auschwitz Jewish Center's Signature Programs include the Program for Students Abroad <<http://ajcf.pl/en/programy/ajc-program-for-students-abroad-psa/>>, weekend-long programs for students studying in Europe and Israel during fall and spring semesters, and the three-week funded summer Fellows Program <<http://ajcf.pl/en/programy/auschwitz-jewish-center-fellows/>> for advanced undergraduates and graduate students in the field. ■

For more information on any of the AJC's Signature Programs, please visit ajcf.org or contact DBramson@mjhny.org.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

International Summer Institute “Teaching about the Holocaust” at the Centre for Holocaust Studies, Jagiellonian University

By Katarzyna
Kopff-Muszyńska
Program Coordinator

The International Summer Institute’s *Teaching about the Holocaust* is an annual summer program that has been held at Jagiellonian University in Kraków since 2006, initiated by Tess Wise, the Founder and the Chair of the Holocaust Memorial Resource and Education Center of Central Florida.

Born in Szydłowiec, Poland, the great-granddaughter of the chief rabbi of Warsaw in the 1920s and the first Jewish member of the Polish parliament after regaining freedom in 1918, Wise is a Holocaust survivor and Holocaust education expert. Since 2006, nine sessions of the Summer Institute have taken place. The Centre for Holocaust Studies (CHS) has organized the Summer Institute since the CHS was established at Jagiellonian University in 2007. Over a span of eight years, several American institutions joined the project, including: The Center for Holocaust and

Genocide Studies, University of Minnesota (2007), Museum of Jewish Heritage: Living Memorial to the Holocaust in New York (2008), and State of California Center for Excellence on the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, Human Rights and Tolerance, California State University, Chico (2008). Since 2009, the strategic partner of CHS has been the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, Illinois; the co-partner institutions are: the International Center for Education about Auschwitz and Holocaust at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, the Galicia Jewish Museum, the International Youth Meeting Centre in Oświęcim/Auschwitz, the Auschwitz Jewish Centre in Oświęcim, and in 2014 the Historical Museum of the City of Cracow. Yad Vashem has also been a partnering institution since the first session of the Summer Institute in 2006.

The main sponsor of the Summer Institute is the Claims Conference: the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany. The project has also been supported by different American funds and trusts, including: Michael H. Traison Fund for Poland, the Elisabeth Morse Genius Charitable Trust, the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, and the Segal Family Foundation. Private donors, some of whom wish to remain anonymous, have generously contributed to the Summer Institute’s budget.

The mission of the International Summer Institute *Teaching about the Holocaust*, specified in 2006, is the sustainable integration of Holocaust studies into Polish schools with the goal of building an open, pluralistic and inclusive society in which prejudice, discrimination and antisemitism are condemned and rejected. In 2014, thanks to a new partner in the project, the Ukrainian Center for

International Summer Institute “Teaching about the Holocaust,” Continued

Holocaust Studies in Kiev, two schoolteachers and one young leader from Ukraine could take part in the program. One teacher from Azerbaijan and two others from Russia also attended the Institute in 2014. The important objective of the project is to provide Polish teachers with contemporary research about the Holocaust and its impact on the present and future. The historical, social, religious and moral context of the Holocaust that the participants study during the week of training can help them in their work with students and facilitate a common ground to share ideas and experiences with other colleagues, non-governmental organization members, university lecturers and researchers and consequently build a network of competent educators. During the seminar, participants have many opportunities to broaden knowledge and reflect on their opinions. The lecturers and experts invited to work with participants make them

aware that teaching about the Holocaust is not only providing dates, numbers and facts, but sensitizing students to the dangers of intolerance, prejudices and xenophobia. Therefore, it is vitally important to provide participants with practical skills for placing the Holocaust in the context of human rights and fundamental values. Such an approach is extremely important now, when racist and nationalistic ideas are getting more and more traction with the younger generations. Responsible and thoughtful approaches as well as carefully chosen methods and strategies are required from a teacher; otherwise lessons about the Holocaust can result in strengthening prejudices and negative stereotypes. The Summer Institute experts — recognized academics, educators, museum curators and experts from the United States, Israel and Poland — come to the seminar to share their expertise and experience with teachers.

They show participants what sources, materials and teaching tools to use, and what methodologies and strategies to apply.

One of the participants commented: *It is important for me to have the chance to meet in person people whom I know only from their scholarly works. Their involvement, dynamic personalities, care, professionalism, dedication to the topic and “spark”...give me strength in my efforts, and I am moved and thankful that they share their knowledge and pay excellent attention to their audience.*

Besides taking part in presentations, lectures, practical workshops, and film sessions, participants go for study visits to memory sites and historical places. A study visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Oświęcim is the central point of the program. Each year there are participants for whom it is their first visit to Auschwitz-

International Summer Institute “Teaching about the Holocaust,” Continued

Birkenau, mainly because they come from distant parts of Poland (this is a particularly tailored target group of the Institute).

Many participants from previous sessions of the Summer Institute expressed the desire to take part in a more advanced program in teaching about the Holocaust, and suggested that the organizers offer a master training for graduates. The Centre for Holocaust Studies at Jagiellonian University and the UNESCO Chair for Education about the Holocaust at Jagiellonian together with the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie are now constructing the agenda of such training for those graduates whose actions and initiatives in teaching about the Holocaust and preserving Jewish heritage locally have achieved positive, far-reaching results. The Summer Institute is a growing and developing

initiative, and we hope to continue to help it evolve. The tenth edition of the program will take place in the first week of July 2015. ■

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The 9th CENTROPA Summer Academy: July 6-14, 2015 Kraków and Warsaw

By Edward Serotta
Founder and Director
CENTROPA

At CENTROPA, we believe that the city is our classroom, and we bring teachers from a dozen countries together to learn from and with each other.

If you are interested in a Holocaust-specific visit to Poland, read no further. During our eight days in Kraków, Auschwitz and Warsaw, we will study interwar Poland — its culture, history and its place in post-Versailles Europe. We will visit Auschwitz with historians and discuss one of the century's great works of literature, Primo Levi's *Survival in Auschwitz*.

In Warsaw we will have a private screening and discussion about Pavel Pawilkowski's Academy Award winning film, *Ida*, and we will tour the largest and most impressive Jewish museum in Europe.

The CENTROPA Summer Academy will also spend a



CENTROPA Workshop, photo: CENTROPA

day with Polish and German historians discussing Poland's Communist decades; the rise of Solidarity, the overthrow of Communism, and Poland's relations with Germany, the European Union, Israel and America.

Best of all, teachers who attend our summer academies work in cross-border groups as they write their own lesson plans and watch

projects created by students in Greensboro, Kielce, Haifa, Mannheim and other cities. We will send you home with lesson plans that you have created, and partnerships that you have made — and will draw from during the school year. ■

For cost information and available subventions, contact Dr Lauren Granite at granite@centropa.org

IN THE NEWS

U.S. Premiere of Galicia Jewish Museum Exhibit at Contemporary Jewish Museum of San Francisco

In Poland over the last two decades, few changes in the country's public discourse have been as striking as the opening up of Polish Jewish history and culture as a topic of debate, in both productive and challenging ways.

In 2003, in an attic of a house in Tel Aviv, a remarkable discovery was made. A young boy, looking through the things of his grandfather who passed away 11 years earlier, found an old leather suitcase bearing metal, rusty cans — inside he discovered over 15,000 negatives made in the 1930s. The author of those photographs, Ze'ew Aleksandrowicz, was born in 1905 in Kraków to a wealthy and assimilated Jewish family. His collection contains photographs taken from all over the world — Poland, the US, Japan, Egypt, and many other places that he visited throughout his numerous journeys.

On February 26, 2015, a small portion of this collection opened for display at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco as a part of the exhibition “Poland and Palestine: Two Lands and Two Skies. Cracovian Jews in the photographs of Ze'ew Aleksandrowicz,” created by the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków, Poland. The images on display paint a powerful picture by introducing their subjects in two distinct cultural contexts: in the streets of Aleksandrowicz's home city, Kraków, and in distant Palestine. In turn, the photographs have become the entry point for telling stories about the relationship between those two worlds, full of contrasts and contradictions.

The opening of the exhibition was accompanied by the projection of short movies prepared by Polish and American students as a part of the project “Our Roots.”

By **Jakub Nowakowski**
Director
Galicia Jewish Museum



Jakub Nowakowski, Director of the Galicia Jewish Museum (GJM) at the opening of the GJM's exhibit, “Poland and Palestine: Two Lands and Two Skies,” at the Contemporary Jewish Museum (CJM) in San Francisco on February 26, 2015, with CJM Director Lori Starr.

The program was designed to encourage pupils and students to trace their own roots and discover their family histories and communities, as well as the histories of students from other parts of the world. Through this medium, the project helps build openness and interest in intercultural exchange, and at the same time encourages

U.S. Premiere of Galicia Jewish Museum Exhibit, Continued



From the *Poland and Palestine – Two Lands and Two Skies. Cracovian Jews through the Lens of Ze'ev Aleksandrowicz* exhibition (Galicia Jewish Museum)

reflection on the differences and similarities in our local histories.

Both projects are part of the educational and cultural programs of the Galicia Jewish Museum. In 2014 the Museum arranged eight traveling exhibitions that were presented in more than 20 locations in Poland, the United States, Lithuania, and Estonia. These projects not only promote knowledge about the history

of Polish Jews, but also challenge stereotypes and misconceptions connected with this subject, presenting it as a part of our common, universal narrative. The fact that Aleksandrowicz's photographs, taken over 80 years ago in Kraków and British Mandate for Palestine, are today presented in San Francisco, accompanied by short movies made by students from the US and Poland, is proof that the stories we tell through our

exhibitions are not only things of the past, but rather fascinating tools that enable us to discover our mutual roots and build bridges that can connect even the farthest shores. ■

<http://www.thecjm.org/on-view/currently/poland-and-palestine-two-land-and-two-skies/about>

IN THE NEWS

Sebastian Rejak of the Polish Foreign Ministry to Visit San Francisco

Sebastian Rejak, Special Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Relations with the Jewish Diaspora, will be visiting the San Francisco on May 4-5. At the Commonwealth Club of California, he will deliver a noontime lecture, entitled: “How Europe’s Challenged Stability Affects Its Minorities: A Polish Perspective.” He will give an overview of the issues facing Ukraine (east of Poland) and the terrorist challenges in France, Belgium and the United Kingdom (west of Poland), as well as discuss how terrorism affects multicultural dynamics and immigrant communities in Europe and specifically in Poland. He will also speak about the issue of recent Jewish emigration from Europe as linked to the ubiquitous feeling that Europe is no longer safe for Jews.

Dr. Rejak will also attend the Polish Flag Raising at San Francisco City Hall the morning of May 4, meet with Polish Honorary Consuls Tad Taube and Christopher Kerosky, the San Francisco-Krakow Sister Cities Association, and members of the Polish- and Jewish-American communities.



Dr. Sebastian Rejak

The 4th Miłosz International Literary Festival

On May 14-19, 2015, Kraków, a UNESCO City of Literature, will host the fourth annual Miłosz International Literary Festival. Organized by the Book Institute, the Festival will consist of poetry readings, panel discussions, art exhibitions and multimedia events held in various historic venues, including churches, synagogues, theaters, and Jagiellonian University.

A biennial event, the Miłosz International Literary Festival has hosted many famous authors, including Adonis (Syria), Mark Danner (USA), Bei Dao (China), Hans Magnus Enzensberger (Germany), Lars Gustafsson (Sweden), Seamus Heaney (Ireland), Edward Hirsch (USA), Jane Hirshfield (USA), Michael Krüger (Germany), Richard Lourie (USA), Philip Levine (USA), Lev Rubinstein (Russia), Tomaž Šalamun (Croatia), Zadie Smith (UK), Gary Snyder (USA), Wisława Szymborska (Poland), Tomas

Venclova (Lithuania), and Adam Zagajewski (Poland).

This year, the program will include: Ruth Padel (UK), Marie Lundquist (Sweden), Valzhyna Mort (Belarus-USA), Robert Hass (USA), Charles Simic (USA), Uros Zupan (Slovenia), Xavier Farre Vidal (Catalonia), Kornelijus Platelis (Lithuania), and Alice Oswald (UK). Polish authors will include: Dariusz Suska, Dariusz Sośnicki, Krzysztof Siwczyk, Julia Fiedorczuk, Wioletta Grzegorzewska, Wojciech Bonowicz, Klara Nowakowska, and Marta Podgórnik.

The 2015 season of the Miłosz International Literary Festival is entitled “A Book of Luminous Things.” The theme is taken from Miłosz’s anthology of international poetry. The Festival highlights the important place of Polish poetry in the international literary scene and Poland’s role as a living cultural center.

Czesław Miłosz’s work serves as an inspiration and an entry point for reflection and cross-cultural dialogue. ■

Information about past seasons of the Festival is available at: www.milosz365.pl

From Galicia to New York: Salo W. Baron and His Legacy

*Jagiellonian University,
Kraków-Tarnów,
May 26-29, 2015*

In 2012 the Center for Jewish Studies at Arizona State University (ASU) launched a formal partnership with the Institute of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University (UJ) in Kraków, Poland. The collaboration between ASU and Jagiellonian University began with a research symposium about the revival of Jewish Studies, the proceedings of which were published in a recent issue of the journal *Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia* (Vol. 11 (2013)).

Comparing shared interests, we realized that ASU and UJ had a lot of common fields for collaboration. Assoc. Prof. Michał Galas from the Institute of Jewish Studies of Jagiellonian University, during his lecture at ASU, drew attention to the most tangible connection, Salo W.

Baron. Salo W. Baron was born in 1895 in Tarnów (75 km east of Kraków) and in 1913 became a student at Jagiellonian University where he studied until the outbreak of World War I. After further studies in Vienna in 1926, Baron was brought to the U.S. where he went on to become a prominent professor of Jewish history at Columbia University and one of the founding fathers of Jewish Studies at American universities. Salo W. Baron is connected with ASU through his family and the Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation, which is a benefactor of Jewish Studies at ASU.

In light of this connection, both institutions — ASU and UJ — decided that the next step in our scholarly collaboration should be a conference to commemorate and examine the intellectual legacy of Salo W. Baron. It will be also the perfect occasion to celebrate his 120th

By Dr. Michał Galas
Institute of Jewish Studies
Jagiellonian University



Salo Baron

birthday on May 26, 2015. The conference, “From Galicia to New York: Salo W. Baron and His Legacy” will be held at Jagiellonian University in Kraków on May 26-29, 2015 and will host scholars from Europe, Israel, Canada, and United States. The presentations will explore Baron’s biography and life experience, assess Baron’s contribution to various sub-disciplines of Jewish Studies, and evaluate Baron’s scholarship in a historical

Salo W. Baron and His Legacy, Continued

perspective. One day of the conference (May 29) will be devoted to a visit to Tarnów, Salo Baron's birthplace and will focus on Baron family history.

Sessions will be open to the academic community of Jagiellonian University, scholars from other universities in Europe, and the general public. The detailed program of the conference will be announced soon on the websites of both universities: www.jewishstudies.asu.edu and www.judaistyka.uj.edu.pl

The conference is co-organized and supported by: Arizona State University Center for Jewish Studies; Institute of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University; Salo W. and Jeannette M. Baron Foundation; The Knapp Family Foundation; Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture and the Global Education Outreach Program; Taube Center for Jewish

Studies at Stanford University; Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies at Columbia University; Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków; and the Regional Museum in Tarnów. ■

Jewish Community Center of Kraków Announces Second Annual Ride for the Living

By Jessica Rosenberg
Jewish Community Center
of Kraków

55-Mile Bicycle Ride from Auschwitz to Kraków Will Take Place on June 5, 2015

On June 5, 2015, Jewish Community Center of Kraków members, supporters and friends from the diaspora will cycle from Auschwitz-Birkenau to JCC Kraków for the Second Annual Ride for the Living. Ride for the Living was inspired by JCC Kraków member Robert Desmond who cycled 1,350 miles from London to Auschwitz visiting WWII sites of liberation. After joining the JCC, he realized his ride should end in a place of hope — JCC Kraków. “Auschwitz cannot be and never was the end of the Jewish story in Poland; it must, like all other times in Jewish history, lead us towards a Jewish future,” explains Rabbi Avi Baumol, Rabbinic Representative of the Chief Rabbi of Poland in Kraków.



JCC Kraków member Robert Desmond, who inspired the Ride for the Living

Ride for the Living is an annual event under the patronage of Chief Rabbi of Poland Michael Schudrich. Riders will tour Auschwitz-Birkenau on Thursday, June 4; join the community for Shabbat dinner on Friday night after the Ride; and then participate in the 7@Nite Festival (an annual event which presents seven different programs (music, art, photography, multimedia) in seven unused and unique synagogues over the course of one evening) on Saturday, June 6. Last year’s Riders raised funds to send Holocaust

survivors from the JCC’s Senior Club to Israel – many for the first time.

“I’m 82 years old and I survived the Nazi occupation by being hidden as a Catholic. Over the past six years, the JCC has become the center of my life. I’m so thankful to Ride for the Living for making it possible for me to travel to Israel for the first time with my fellow JCC Senior Club members,” shared Jan Libin upon his return from the trip. ■

<http://www.friendsofjcckrakow.org/ride-for-the-living/>

25 Years of the Kraków Jewish Culture Festival

By Janusz Makuch and Robert Gądek
Founder/Director and Deputy Director
Jewish Culture Festival

This summer 2015 the Kraków Jewish Culture Festival will celebrate its 25th anniversary season. Founded in 1988, one year before the fall of Communism in Poland, the Festival has transformed from a small event commemorating the Jewish past in Poland into the world's largest celebration of contemporary Jewish culture from the entire Diaspora. While honoring the Jewish past, the Festival looks to the Jewish future. Each year, the Festival's 200+ events (including concerts, workshops, lectures, seminars, exhibitions, live street art, DJ-parties, and guided tours) draw an audience of over 30,000 from around the world.

Each of the past 24 Festivals has built upon the success of the previous year's Festival. Reaching the 25th anniversary gives us an opportunity to reflect on our Festival's achievements and sustainability. We decided



Shalom on Szeroka, the final concert of the week-long Jewish Culture Festival

to celebrate the quarter-century by looking to the term “quarter” itself. The term “quarter” reminds us of our environment, Kazimierz – the Jewish *quarter* of Kraków. Thanks in large part to the Festival, Jewish life has returned to this quarter after decades of absence, and now flourishes there like nowhere else in Europe. We are proud that over 25 years we have contributed so much to our quarter, Kazimierz.

The Festival's presence in the quarter of Kazimierz has inspired us to make the term “quarter” the theme of this year's festival. We will present the cultural achievements of various Jewish quarters around the globe, including Kazimierz, and discuss their development and vibrant cultural and social life.

As in previous years, the concept of *Mi Dor Le Dor* (Heb.: “from generation

25 Years of the Kraków Jewish Culture Festival, Continued

to generation”) will be emphasized during this anniversary season. This year’s Festival will feature presentations by Festival founders and leaders in the Jewish cultural revival as well as by members of the younger generation. Seasoned performers Shlomo Bar, David Krakauer and the Grammy Award-winning band The Klezmatics will share the stage with contemporary stars of Israeli music scene, including Shai Tsabari, Kutiman, and the Polish group Alte Zachen.

The Festival’s opening concert will feature prominent cantors, including Yaakov Lemmer, Ushi Blumenberg, David Weinbach, and The Bells Vocal Ensemble with maestro Yosi Schwartz from Israel. The grand finale concert of the Festival, Shalom on Szeroka Street, will take place in the heart of the Jewish quarter. This 7-hour-long outdoor event will feature all of the Festival artists on one stage.

On that night, the Jewish quarter of Kazimierz will truly be an epicenter of global Jewish culture.

Other Festival performers will include Meron Benvenisti, former Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem during the era of Teddy Kolek, Francesco Spagnolo, Curator of the Magnes Collection of Jewish Art & Life and a Lecturer in the Department of Music at University of California, Berkeley, and journalists Ruth Ellen Gruber (based in Warsaw), Chris Silver (based in Los Angeles, and who explores Jewish quarters in Muslim countries), and Sam Norich, Editor-in-Chief of *The Forward* (based in New York).

For 25 years the Festival has been effectively building bridges between generations, traditions, cultures, and religions; it has changed people’s hearts and minds. For 25 years it has contributed to the rebirth and renaissance of contemporary Jewish life

in Poland. A quarter of a century for the Jewish quarter of Kraków, Jewish quarters around the world, and the entire Jewish community. Join us this summer for the anniversary celebration, June 25-July 5! ■

<http://www.jewishfestival.pl/>

Raise The Roof:

A Film about an Improbable Dream

Courtesy Trillium Studios

Artists Rick and Laura Brown are not Jewish and not Polish, and yet they set out to rebuild Gwoździec, a magnificent wooden eighteenth century synagogue in Poland that was later destroyed by the Nazis. Their vision inspires hundreds of people to join them, using their hands, old tools and techniques to bring Gwoździec's history, culture, science, and art back to life.

Raise The Roof follows the Browns and the Handhouse Studio team to Sanok, Poland, as they begin building the new Gwoździec roof. The crew has only six weeks to hew, saw, and carve 200 freshly logged trees and assemble the structure. Working against a seemingly impossible deadline and despite torrential downpours and exhaustion, the team must create the structure, and disassemble it again for shipping and eventual installation.



Volunteers work on the Gwoździec Synagogue Project in Sanok, Poland.

Photo: Rick and Laura Brown/Handhouse Studio

To paint the intricate ceiling murals, the Browns face another challenge: the 1914 photographs of Gwoździec are black and white and there is only one small color study, called the Breier. Using that as their Rosetta Stone, the Browns slowly build a library of Gwoździec's colors.

Armed with pigments and rabbit skin glue, the Handhouse team sets up to paint the ceiling mural in what seems to be an art

gallery in Rzeszów, Poland. In fact, this building and those in seven other Polish cities where they will work during the summers of 2011 and 2012, are all former or active masonry synagogues. Each Handhouse-trained painting leader is tasked with creating the mural's most iconic images, training students to paint thousands of flowers and vines and greeting visitors — creating a community throughout Poland.

Raise The Roof: A Film about an Improbable Dream, Continued

In the city of Szczepieszyn, Evelyn Tauben paints a flower honoring her great aunt and namesake, Bluma, a Holocaust victim, explaining that she joined the project to encounter Poland in a generative way.

When student Ariel Rosenblum agrees to paint the many inscriptions that wrap the mural, Ania Michalska, a Wrocław University Jewish Studies major, jumps in to help. Together they face the Rabbi of Poland and successfully defend their reconstruction of the texts.

Raise the Roof visits Warsaw in mid-January where Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, the Core Exhibition Director at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, is walking among the impressive gravestones of the Okopowa Street Jewish Cemetery in deep snow. She brushes snow from an intricately carved tombstone and explains that 70 percent of the world's Jewish

population can trace its ancestry to Poland.

The reconstructed Gwoździec synagogue is now the centerpiece of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which opened its doors to the public in October 2014. ■

Learn more about the film's release at: <http://www.polishsynagogue.com/press-release>

A Town Called Brzostek: New Award-Winning Documentary

By Simon Target
Film Director

When Professor Jonathan Webber leaves Oxford for Kraków few people know of his ambition to rebuild an abandoned Jewish cemetery in the remote Polish town of Brzostek. Like many Jews, Jonathan traces his family's roots to Poland, and Brzostek is where his grandfather was born. He asks the local Poles for help and invites Jewish families from around the world for an opening ceremony. But will they come? Do Poles and Jews care about their common history? What happens next surprises even the stoic English Professor himself. Filmmaker Simon Target follows three families from New York, Sydney and Paris as they travel back to Brzostek for the cemetery opening ceremony. He records their stories of life in pre-war Poland, and eyewitness accounts of miraculous survival, bravery and brotherhood during the Nazi occupation.



A Town Called Brzostek

Interviews with Anne Applebaum, Prof. Norman Davies, Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich and the Polish townsfolk of Brzostek help explore centuries of Polish/Jewish history, and the Jewish cultural revival in Poland today. ■

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Executive Producer:
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Music: Nigel Westlake

Editor: Justina Grubski

“All I can say is thank you Jonathan Webber, thank you Simon Target the filmmaker, thank you the people of Brzostek!”
– Dr. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett,
*Chief Curator, POLIN Museum of
the History of Polish Jews*

www.handheldfeatures.com

Who Will Write Our History: Film Project on Emanuel Ringelblum

By Roberta Grossman
Film Director

Who Will Write Our History is a feature-length documentary about the Oyneg Shabes Archive and its creator Emanuel Ringelblum. The film is based on the book of the same name by historian Samuel Kassow. In the words of project adviser Deborah Lipstadt, "This is perhaps the most important Holocaust story yet to be told to a general audience." The film is directed by Roberta Grossman and produced by Nancy Spielberg. Academy Award nominated actress Joan Allen has come onboard to voice Rachel Auerbach. One of only three survivors of the Oyneg Shabes, Auerbach's prolific wartime and post-war writings will provide the film's narration.

The Oyneg Shabes Archive is an extraordinary achievement of scholarly self-study in the very depths of hell. The 30,000 pages of documents preserved in the milk cans and metal boxes are considered the most important cache of in-the-moment, eyewitness accounts to survive the Holocaust. They are the

Dead Sea Scrolls rising from the rubble of the Ghetto. And yet, the Oyneg Shabes Archive remains largely unknown outside academic circles. This film will change that, in the way that only a film can do, by making the story accessible to millions of people around the world.

A panel of the foremost scholars in the field have committed to advising on the project. In addition to Samuel Kassow (Trinity College), they include Deborah Lipstadt (Emory University), Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (Program Director, Core Exhibition, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw), Antony Polonsky (Brandeis University), David Roskies (Jewish Theological Seminary), Yehuda Bauer (Yad Vashem) and Michael Berenbaum (American Jewish University).

The filmmakers' previous work has been preparation for the challenge of *Who Will Write Our History*. Roberta Grossman's 2008 film, *Blessed Is the Match: The Life and*



Emanuel Ringelblum, photo:
Jewish Historical Institute

Death of Hannah Senesh, was shortlisted for an Academy Award and nominated for a Primetime Emmy.

Grossman's *Hava Nagila (The Movie)* was the opening or closing night film of more than 40 Jewish film festivals in 2012. Recently, Nancy Spielberg and Grossman released *Above and Beyond* to audience and critical acclaim. ■

Polish Court Rules Ban on Ritual Slaughter Unconstitutional

Courtesy of JTA:
the Global Jewish
News Source

(JTA) — A de facto ban in Poland imposed last year on the slaughter of animals without stunning, which includes the kosher and halal rituals, is unconstitutional, a Polish court ruled.

On December 14, 2014, a 5-4 majority of Polish Constitutional Tribunal justices ruled that the ban ran contrary to the country's constitution, the European Jewish Association, a Brussels-based lobby group that has fought to scrap the ban, said in a statement.

The ruling was on a petition that argued the ban violated the European Convention on Human Rights and led to “discrimination in social and economic life of Jews in Poland,” polska.newsweek.pl reported.

The Union of Jewish Religious Communities in Poland was among several entities that appealed the ban. The union filed its petition

with the tribunal over a year ago to review the case. Rabbi Pinchas Goldschmidt, president of the Conference of European Rabbis, said in a statement that the ruling meant that “shechitah can continue in Poland as it has done for generations.” He thanked Poland's chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich, for his efforts to reverse the ban.

Rabbi Menachem Margolin, director of the European Jewish Association, said the ruling was a “relief” because it “prevents a dangerous precedent that would have affected all European Jewry.”

Ritual slaughter was banned in Poland starting Jan. 1, 2013, after the country's constitutional court scrapped a government regulation that exempted Jews and Muslims from a law requiring the stunning of animals prior to slaughter. Jewish ritual slaughter, or shechitah, as well as Muslim ritual slaughter, or halal, requires that animals be

conscious before their necks are cut. Before the ban, Poland had a \$500 million industry of halal and kosher meat for export.

In July 2013, a draft bill aimed at legalizing ritual slaughter failed to pass in the parliament.

On March 5, KRIR, or the National Council of Agricultural Chambers in Poland, filed a bill that would legalize ritual slaughter. With the Constitutional Tribunal's judgment, the parliament will now take up the bill. ■

<http://www.jta.org/2014/12/10/news-opinion/world/polish-court-rules-shechitah-ban-unconstitutional>

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND
RESEARCH PROJECTS

Jewish Space in Contemporary Poland

Since the early 1980s, Poland has been home to profound debate and reflection on the loss of its once large – and today minuscule – Jewish minority. This explosion of the past into the present is visible in a variety of media — print, film, music, and even food — but it has been expressed most of all in the built environment and the cultural meanings such physical heritage enables. Across the country, dilapidated synagogues and cemeteries have been restored, Jewish streets recreated, and Jewish museums built. Because Poland was the geographic epicenter of the Holocaust, few other European countries have attracted as much global interest and experienced such intense reflection on the Jewish genocide. But Poland’s new conjurings of Jewishness cannot be read as simple gestures of reparation for past wrongs, nor as mere mercenary projects of development or instrumental national self-fashioning.

Rather, a “Jewish” presence in both urban and rural landscapes

has reemerged in tension and synergy with other remembered minorities, and in complex negotiation with at times divergent local, regional, national, and international groups and interests. These involve primarily Poles and Jews, Americans and Israelis, but also Germans, and to a lesser extent Roma and even sexual minorities. New global actors have become increasingly interested in “sites of pluralism,” even as some spaces – such as Auschwitz and communal properties embroiled in restitution claims – remain contested, fractured grounds. This volume unearths the multiple factors, paradoxes, and possibilities represented by specific sites and initiatives. Using space as the common analytical category, the book will enrich understanding of newly emerging forms of pluralism and nostalgia in post-1989 Europe.

This impulse to restore, preserve, and memorialize raises a range of issues salient to current studies of memory, heritage, and the re-imagining

Edited by
Dr. Erica Lehrer and
Dr. Michael Meng
Indiana University Press
Publication date: 4/27/2015



of nations in the aftermath of large-scale political violence and genocide. This volume enriches these topics through the breadth of its focus and its interdisciplinary approach. It scrutinizes diverse types of sites (museums, memorials, sites of atrocity, tourist districts, gentrifying urban neighborhoods, provincial towns, and Jewish communal properties), and employs a broad range of analytical approaches (history, anthropology, sociology, economics, literary and religious studies). ■

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

Sefarim Seed Grants Program in Jewish Studies Publishing

Since 2013 the Sefarim seed grants program for Jewish studies publishing, co-sponsored by the Dutch Jewish Humanitarian Fund, Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture and Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland, has supported the co-publication of high-caliber non-fiction works of Polish Jewish interest which reflect a broad range of issues and contribute to the field of Polish Jewish studies for Polish and international readers. It awards grants of up to 1,200 Euros toward the publication of selected works that bring new insights and perspectives on Jewish history, heritage and contemporary life. In contradistinction to other grant programs in publishing that prefer to fund completed studies awaiting publication, Sefarim accepts works-in-progress. In addition, the project hosts sessions with authors and their publishers.

One of the works to be published this year is *Mishnah: Nashim* edited by Roman Marcinkowski, Professor of Hebrew Studies and an expert in Talmudic studies. The publication is part of a broader project that encompasses the first Polish academic coverage of these essential rabbinic texts, including the first translation of several orders of *Mishnah* from the original languages into Polish. Sefarim will also introduce *Vagabond Stars: A World History of Yiddish Theatre* by Nahma Sandrow to Polish readers, a book that provides an illustrated world history of the Yiddish drama over more than 300 years.

Other books awarded within the projects are: *Sze'erit hapleta: Ocaleni z Zagłady Działalność American Joint Distribution Committee w Polsce w latach 1945-1989* [Saving the Remnant of Polish Jewry. The Activities of the American

By Magda Matuszewska
Taube Center for the
Renewal of Jewish Life
in Poland

Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Poland, 1945-1989] by Anna Sommer Schneider; *Na szczęście to Żyd!* Lucky Jews by Erica Lehrer; *My, Żydzi z Polski* [We, Jews from Poland] by Irena Wiszniewska; *Rzecz o Irenie Sendlerowej* [About Irena Sendlerowa] by Halina Grubowska; and *Wieloplemienny tłum: Jakub Frank i ruch frankistowski 1755–1816* [The Mixed Multitud: Jacob Frank and the Frankist Movement, 1755–1816] by Paweł Maciejko.

<http://www.centrumtaubego.org.pl/sefarim-book-publishing-project>

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

New Emigration and Re-emigration of Polish Jews (1989-2015) in the Context of Changes of Identity

By Dr. Alina Cała and
Bogna Pawlisz-Skoczylas
Research Project Coordinators

After the fall of the Communist regime in Poland, and even a little earlier (with the re-establishment of diplomatic relations after 1985), it became possible for Polish citizens to travel to Israel. Emigration also became possible. An example is the first trip for young Polish Jews organized by the Joint Distribution Council in 1989, of which most of the approximately 10 participants chose to remain in the State of Israel. Others emigrated to Israel by leaving legally from Poland to Western Europe or the United States, and then continuing to Israel from there, which was the intended but unstated purpose of their trip.

Some of the Jews born after WWII undertook to give new meaning to their Jewish origins. Starting in the late 1970s they created their own identity, *ab initio* as it were, learning the history and customs of the



Farewell to Gdańsk Station, photo: E. Turlejska

Jews from books. In the late 1980s, Jewish associations in the United States began to support the religious life of Jews in Poland. Due to their patronage, the national rebirth of Jewish life in Poland was centered around Jewish religion. After 1989, the new Jewish communities began attracting mostly younger Jews. Most of them identified with mainstream conservative Judaism, with a relatively small group affiliating with

Hasidism and/or Orthodoxy, instead. The latter usually decided to emigrate to Israel.

Emigration has not always ended in success. There have been cases of maladjustment, and even most tragically — suicide. Those who have found their place in Israeli society changed their religious identity; they became devout followers of Judaism, or the opposite — they abandoned religious customs completely

New Emigration, Continued

or drifted to a loose form of traditionalism. In other cases, emigration failed, and those Jews returned to Poland.

While some Jews are struggling to emigrate from Poland to Israel, others struggle to abandon Israel and return to Poland and rebuild their lives there. This phenomenon is most commonly found amongst Jews from previous waves of emigration, mainly from the years 1968 to 1971. These returnees are confronted by the need to redefine their identities to adapt to life in a new Poland that is totally different from their memories of the old Poland. Additionally, they are challenged to find new careers and solutions to ordinary life problems such as dealing with a family scattered across two continents.

Still others do not formally change their nation of residence, but find themselves perpetually in transit, moving back and forth between Poland

and Israel (and sometimes other countries, especially the United States, as well).

Although the total number of Jews emigrating and then re-emigrating is of necessity small, due to the small size of the Jewish minority in Poland, it is more than a marginal phenomenon, and seems interesting and worthy of exploration in its own right.

The methodology we will use in these studies is qualitative, in-depth interviewing, drawing on sociological and ethnological methods. We will also use group interviews and focus-groups. Due to the language of the study's subjects, interviews will be conducted in the Polish language in Israel and in Poland by a group of co-workers who live in these two countries.

THE QUESTIONS WE SEEK TO ANSWER INCLUDE:

1. Circumstances behind the decision to emigrate/re-emigrate;
2. Problems in Poland/Israel, which had an impact on the decision;
3. Relationship to Judaism and *halacha* (including the individual elements of religion: holidays, *kashruth* observance, other extents of religious observance);
4. Transformation of religiosity after emigrating/re-emigrating (including religion as a motive, such as for conversion);
5. Perceptions of positives and negatives of living in a new country;
6. Transformation of national identity;
7. Transformations of attitude and approach to the cultures of the old and new country;

New Emigration, Continued

8. Problems of adaptation (learning a foreign language, finding the right job, neighborhood and social contacts);
9. Changes in personal circumstances, including family (starting a family, keeping in touch with family and friends living in the old country, etc.)
10. Contacts with the old country (family, social, professional, cultural, etc.).

We prepared a detailed questionnaire focusing on the research questions outlined above, to be used by the interviewers. Should first contacts with respondents raise new questions, the questionnaire will be expanded as needed, and previous interviewees will be re-queried. We hope that the interviews will bring sufficient material to enable identification of common themes in attitudes and

life strategies, as well as the system of values and awareness, of the respondents. We will complete the research with the publication of a book, summarizing the results and indicating the regularity and specificity of the issues raised by the respondents.

This research project is supported by a grant from the Taube Center's Sefarim seed-grant program in Jewish studies publishing. ■

Dr. Alina Cała is a historian specializing in 19th and 20th century Polish-Jewish history, antisemitism and Jewish assimilation in Central and Eastern Europe. She is the author of, among other works, "Assimilation of Jews in the Kingdom of Poland (1864-1897)" (1989) and "The Image of the Jew in Polish Folk Culture" (1987) and a former board member of the Jewish Historical Institute.

Bogna Pawlisz-Skoczylas is a tour guide and official translator (International Bible Contents) at The Jewish Agency for Israel and served for seven years as Editor-in-Chief of the Jewish Magazine, Jidete.

NEW PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

Recent Books from the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

I HASIDISM AND POLITICS THE KINGDOM OF POLAND, 1815–1864

Marcin Wodziński

This analysis of the political relations between the Kingdom of Poland and the hasidic movement shows that by creating advantageous socio-political conditions the government actually accelerated the growth of the movement, to the extent that unique features of Polish hasidism can be attributed to the impact of government policy. The study also demonstrates the unusually modern character of hasidic political activity, and charts its distinctive path of development in the Kingdom of Poland into ‘anti-modernist modernity’.

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I FAMILIES, RABBIS, AND EDUCATION TRADITIONAL JEWISH SOCIETY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY EASTERN EUROPE

Shaul Stampfer

The family and the community, which were in a very real sense the core institutions of east European Jewish society underwent very rapid change in the nine-

teenth century. The essays in this volume look at the past through the prism of the lives of ordinary people, with results that are sometimes surprising, and always stimulating. The topics they treat are varied, but the concern to explain what lay behind the visible reality is common to all of them.

428 pages, paperback
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I LITHUANIAN YESHIVAS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY CREATING A TRADITION OF LEARNING

Shaul Stampfer

This is the first systematic study of the Lithuanian yeshivas that flourished from 1802 to 1914 in their social and cultural context; their legacy still dominates orthodox Jewish society. The main focus is the yeshiva of Volozhin, which in its independence of the local community was the model for everything that followed, but chapters are also devoted to the yeshivas of Slobodka and Telz, and to the kollel system.

432 pages, paperback
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I POLIN: STUDIES IN POLISH JEWRY, VOLUME 26 JEWS IN THE KINGDOM OF POLAND, 1815–1918

Glenn Dynner, Antony
Polonsky & Marcin Wodziński

The Kingdom of Poland had the largest concentration Jews in eastern Europe and a liberal policy towards them that engendered cultural and political movements of all sorts. Hasidic courts flourished despite the opportunities of modernization, yet modernizing maskilim similarly established institutions that influenced Jewish society in a completely different direction. Later came integrationism, Zionism, Jewish socialism, and cultural autonomy. The resulting ferment was a critical factor in shaping the modern Jewish experience.

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October 8, 1930 –
November 4, 2014

Jerzy Tomaszewski

By Dr. Antony Polonsky

Jerzy Tomaszewski, who died on November 4, 2014 at the age of 84, was one of the principal figures in the revival of the study of the history of Jews in Poland. He was born in Radomsko, a town between Łódź and Częstochowa that, before the war, was the home of a large Jewish community and of the court of the Radomsker rebbe. He often remarked that it was the constant presence during his childhood years of hasidim in traditional Jewish dress which made him aware of the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional character of Poland. He was for many years a professor at and Director of the Mordechai Anielewicz Centre for the Study and Teaching of the History and Culture of the Jews in Poland at Warsaw University and was also, subsequently, professor of the Wyższa Szkoła Gospodarki Krajowej in Kutno.

Professor Tomaszewski was one of the pioneers in the study of national minorities in Poland in the twentieth century, above all Jews, and a great expert on

the history of Central Europe, particularly that of the Czechs and Slovaks. He was present at all the conferences that transformed Polish-Jewish studies. As one of the founders of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*, he was a member of its editorial collegium and contributed frequently to its volumes. For many years, he was connected with the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. A member of its Scientific Council since 1970, he was also elected in 1985 to serve on the Institute's Board of Directors and, in addition, served as Deputy Chairman of the Jewish Historical Institute Association. In 2005, he was one of the signatories, along with the Minister of Culture and National Heritage and the Mayor of Warsaw, of the agreement establishing POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. In 1998, he was the recipient of YIVO's Jan Karski and Pola Nirenska Award and thereafter served on the Karski Award Committee.

His many publications include *Z dziejów Polesia 1921–1939*.

Zarys stosunków społeczno-ekonomicznych (On the History of Polesie 1921–1939. An Outline of Social and Economic Conditions) (Warsaw, 1963); *Rzeczpospolita wielu narododów* (A Republic of Many Nations) (Warsaw, 1985), *Ojczyzna nie tylko Polaków: Mniejszości narodowe w Polsce w latach 1918–1939* (A Fatherland not only for Poles: National Minorities in Poland in the Years 1918–1939) (Warsaw, 1985), and *Preludium zagłady: wygnanie Żydów polskich z Niemiec w 1938 r.* (Prelude to Destruction: the Expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany in 1938) (Warsaw, 1998). His latest book *Czechy i Słowacja* (Czech Lands and Slovakia) was published only a few months before his death. The conference held in London on January 15, 2015 to launch volume 27 of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* was dedicated to his memory. He will be sorely missed. We express our condolences to this wife Zofia, his daughter Agata, and his family. ■



November 13, 1946 –
December 26, 2014

Stanisław Barańczak

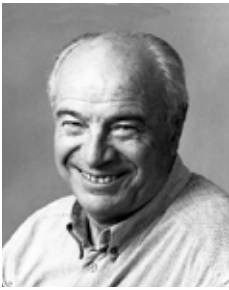
By Julian and
Fay Bussgang

Dr. Barańczak was born in Poznań, Poland, and received his doctorate from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where he continued teaching and writing poetry. After he became politically active against the oppressive Communist-controlled government, he was forbidden to publish in Poland. Thus, in 1981, when he was offered a position at the Slavic Department at Harvard, he and his family moved to the Boston area.

Barańczak was a leading poet in the Polish ‘New Wave,’ and after his move to Boston, he continued to produce impressive work dominated by his ethical and political concerns. Some of his works were influenced by the English religious poet John Donne and the American poets Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost. His book *Surgical Precision* [*Chirurgiczna precyzja*] won the 1999 prestigious Nike Award for a publication in Polish literature.

Barańczak was also a prolific translator of Polish poetry into English and English poetry into Polish. He translated into English such works as the poems of Zbigniew Herbert and Polish Nobel Prize-winners Wisława Szymborska and Czesław Miłosz and translated into Polish works of Shakespeare and other poets such as Robert Frost. He continued working at home even after his illness forced him to retire from teaching.

Until Parkinson’s disease began to disable him, he served as a valued member of the board of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies in Cambridge, MA. When he was no longer able to serve on the board, his wife, Anna Barańczak, became a member and kept him informed of our activities. Professor Barańczak left a great legacy and will be greatly missed. ■



July 31, 1929 - February 16, 2015

Feliks Tych

By Dr. Antony Polonsky

Feliks Tych, who died on February 16, 2015, was a leading figure in Jewish life in Poland and was, from 1996 to 2007, Director of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. Born in Warsaw, he grew up in Radomsko in central Poland, the ninth child of the owner of a metal works. The town was the site of the first ghetto to be established in the General Government after the German invasion of Poland in 1939. In the summer of 1942, his parents entrusted him to a non-Jewish friend who brought him secretly to Warsaw, where he survived on false documents as the 'orphaned' nephew of a Polish high school teacher. His parents and siblings were murdered in Treblinka.

He studied history at the University of Warsaw and received his habilitation with a study of the left wing of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) during World War I. He had already become a researcher at the Archive and Institute of the Polish Labor Movement and succeeded in convincing the Historical Institute at the Central Committee

of the Polish Communist Party to publish a journal on social and labor history, the quarterly *Z pola walki* of which he became editor-in-chief. He was also subsequently employed by Institute of History at the Polish Academy of Science.

He was dismissed from this post in the 'anti-Zionist' campaign of 1968 and also 'purged' from all other scholarly bodies, losing his position at *Z pola walki*. His wife, Lucyna, daughter of Jakub Berman, a key figure in the establishment of communist rule in Poland after 1944, lost her position as stage director. Feliks continued his scholarly research as an 'independent writer,' publishing three volumes of the letters between Rosa Luxemburg and Leon Jogiches. These made him well known outside Poland and he became a key figure in the International Conference of Labour and Social History honorary member, playing an active role in the conferences it organized in Linz in Austria. In the early 1970s, he was again hired as a researcher in the archive of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party and

in 1982 was again appointed professor of history.

As he grew older Feliks became more interested in his Jewish background. This led him to take the position of Director of the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH). Here his expertise in the publishing of document collections gave a new impetus to publishing the rich archives of ŻIH, above all the archive organized in the Warsaw ghetto by Emanuel Ringelblum. A prolific author and editor, he edited and co-authored *Pamięć. Historia Żydów polskich przed, w czasie i po zagładzie* (Warsaw 2004, 2006, 2008), published in English as *Memory: History of Polish Jews Before, During and After the Holocaust*. Most recently he co-edited, with Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska, an extensive study of the history of Jews in Poland since the Second World War, published in English by Yad Vashem in 2013 as *Jewish Presence In Absence: The Aftermath of the Holocaust in Poland, 1945–2010*. Our condolences go to his wife and family. ■

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Diary of Gela Seksztajn, photo: Jewish Historical Institute



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