



Paper cut by  
Monika Krajewska.  
*Between Two Worlds.*  
An exhibition inspired  
by *The Dybbuk* by  
S. An-sky. Courtesy of  
the author. The inscription  
says: "I sought him but  
could not find him; I called  
him, but he gave me no  
answer." "For love is as  
strong as death, jealousy  
as cruel as the grave; its  
flames are flames of fire,  
a most vehement flame."  
"My beloved is mine, and  
I am his" (Song of Songs).

# Gazeta

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# A Gazeta Farewell

For the past seven years, we at the editorial team of Gazeta have had the opportunity to publish what Faye and Julian Bussgang began decades ago as a newsletter, as Poland and Polish Jews were transitioning from Soviet-era communism to a European-style democracy. Since then, the Polish world has undergone enormous political, social, and cultural shifts. We continued to report on those in all of their storied forms, engaging with scholars, journalists, cultural commentators, and artists at the forefront of social change. Our editorial platform enabled us to report on issues and events great and small, tragic and heartwarming, and to witness the growth of Polish Jewish studies. We are now at a new era in Polish Jewish studies, when the many flourishing public forums, particularly social media, are offering almost instant access to news and events. As Irene Pipes notes in her message, Gazeta finds itself in a changed world, full of opportunities for exploring the Polish-Jewish story from innumerable perspectives. We hope our efforts have contributed to this burgeoning in cultural activities, scholarship, art, and life. We thank our many contributors and learned guides and most of all our devoted readers. The mission of Gazeta has truly been fulfilled.

—The Editors



Fall/Winter 2021



Spring/Summer 2021



Winter 2021



Summer/Fall 2020



Spring 2020



Fall/Winter 2019



Summer 2019



Spring 2019

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Fall/Winter 2018



Summer 2018



Spring 2018



Fall 2017/Winter 2018



Summer 2017



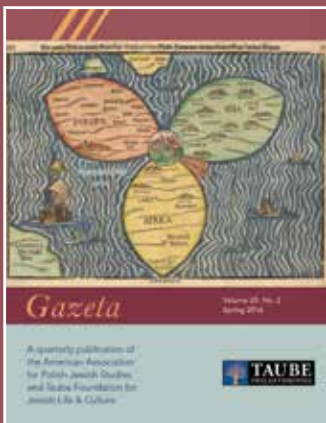
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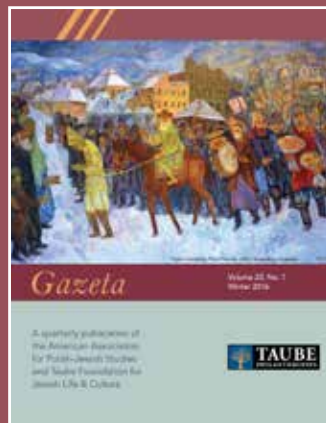
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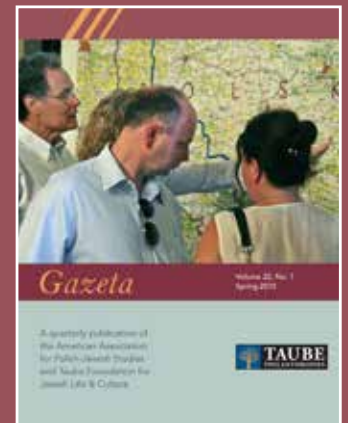
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# Message from Irene Pipes

President, American Association  
for Polish-Jewish Studies

Founder of *Gazeta*

Dear Friends,

This will be the last issue of *Gazeta*, a publication which has appeared since March 1992. We at the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies and the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture feel that we now have other and more effective ways of communicating with our members and supporters, above all through our websites and our partnership with POLIN Museum of the History Polish Jews in Warsaw. We would like, however, to acknowledge all of those who have worked on producing *Gazeta* over the years, and, in particular, its founding editors, Fay and Julian Busgang.

This issue of *Gazeta* appears shortly before the eightieth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. We recognize this in a special section, which features a series of recent and up-coming commemorative events and publications. These include an exhibition to be held at POLIN Museum about the fate of Jewish civilians during the uprising—a subject also described by Irena Klepfisz's poem, *Warsaw, 1983: Umschlagplatz*. Aleksandra Engler-Malinowska describes the memorial project created at 28 Nowolipki Street in Warsaw where the collection of documents, now known as the Ringelblum Archive, was buried. Retrieved in 1946, this archive stands as one of the most important testimonies of the Holocaust, now published in Polish by the Jewish Historical Institute as described by Antony Polonsky. And Marta Markowska gives us an account of *Women Fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto*.

We congratulate Konstanty Gebert, who was awarded the KLIO prize for his book, *Ostateczne rozwiązania. Ludobójcy i ich dzieło* (The Final Solution. Mass Murderers and their Work), and applaud Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett on the establishment of the Brayndl Prize. There will also be an exhibition of Opatów based on the paintings of Mayer Kirshenblatt, at POLIN Museum, as described by its curators, Natalia Romik and Justyna Koszarka-Szulc. Also recognized in this issue, Katarzyna Laziuk of Mińsk Mazowiecki was awarded the eighth annual POLIN Award for her exceptional commitment to preserving Polish Jewish heritage.

Finally, in February 2023, a conference will be held at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in London to celebrate the publication of Volume 35 of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*. We hope any of our members or supporters who will be in London will attend.

I hope you are all well and that we shall soon be able to meet in Warsaw.

With best wishes,

Irene Pipes  
President



Irene Pipes

# Message from Tad Taube and Shana Penn

Chairman and Executive Director,  
Taube Foundation for Jewish Life  
& Culture



Tad Taube



Shana Penn

When we agreed to co-publish *Gazeta* with the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies in 2015, we saw a great opportunity to serve the mutual interests of our two organizations. As we wrote in the first co-published issue, “This partnership advances our goals to strengthen Polish Jewish culture and generate American interest in Polish Jewish developments.” The collaboration has succeeded beyond our expectations. As we have learned in discussions with scholars, community leaders, and our readers, *Gazeta* has made a vital contribution to strengthening and deepening the ties that bind those that care about Polish Jewry and Polish Jewish studies world-wide. Our collaboration has enabled *Gazeta* to maintain its high quality content, while adding a touch of artistic flair and finish, to produce a publication of which we are most proud.

*Gazeta* began as a bridge with an emerging post-Communist nation, but today many bridges exist which, together with *Gazeta*, have contributed to an environment of endless opportunities for our readers, not only through the online world but in-person and on-site, via the travel opportunities available between today’s Poland and the rest of the world.

This is a fit moment to celebrate the opportunity that we seized and fulfilled seven years ago—and to bring the enterprise to its conclusion. In this final issue, we extend thanks to our readers, contributors, and editorial team, and offer best wishes to all, with the expectation that *Gazeta*’s mission will continue to be advanced by the many voices, ideas, values, and efforts of all who are dedicated to Polish Jewish studies.

Tad Taube and Shana Penn  
Chairman and Executive Director

## FEATURE ESSAY

# Other Monuments. Remembering and Commemorating the Holocaust

Aleksandra Janus

Cultural methods of remembering and commemorating are not unchanging. They are always influenced by the politics of memory prevailing at a given moment, drawing inspiration from academic discourses and aesthetic trends, echoing social changes, and responding to the specific current needs of contemporary societies. Reaching the end of the “era of the witness,” in which the testimonies of the Holocaust survivors shaped the way the Holocaust is remembered, we

see the emergence of new tools and methods that will allow us to continue studying the past even when we no longer have living testimonies. Along with that, new possible ways of communicating this knowledge to the wider public and new forms of commemoration are emerging, drawing from both the vast collections of testimonies as well as data gathered by studying the materiality of

traces of the Holocaust. As a researcher, activist, and artist, I am interested in how memory of the Holocaust takes the forms of certain objects (a monument, a site of memory), how certain discourses about the past are institutionalized, and how we can support the process of turning certain uncommemorated sites and histories into sites of memory and integrating them into local memory cultures.



*Still Standing* performance, FestivALT.  
Photograph by Klaudyna Schubert. Used with permission



In my practice, I have been using artistic interventions as a means of introducing the memorialization process to a given location. Regardless of whether it is a site located in an urban environment, in a village, or in a forest, I collaborate with artists, researchers, activists, and other experts to find a way to inspire a commemorative process that can be community-driven, collaborative, and inclusive. It usually begins with a small, temporary gesture that can initiate the process of negotiating the future of each site. Giving it time allows various actors and stakeholders to get involved. One example of such an approach is the Reference Points project (<https://tinyurl.com/zapomnianereferencepoints>), in which a team from the Zapomniane (Forgotten) Foundation ([www.zapomniane.org/en](http://www.zapomniane.org/en)) marks burial sites of Holocaust victims. Another one is *Still Standing*, a commemorative performance staged annually in the area of the former Płaszów concentration camp in Kraków.

### **Reference Points — the Power of Temporary Gesture**

The marking of burial sites of the Jewish victims of extermination is not only

an act of instantiation of the memory of Jewish communities and their tragic deaths, but it is also an attempt to protect their remains, respecting the provisions of Jewish religious law. While organizing a permanent commemoration (which may take the form of a tombstone or a monument) requires time and resources, at Zapomniane Foundation we felt that once a burial site is located, it should be recognizable in the landscape while it awaits its permanent commemoration. Looking for a form and shape of a marker to be located at the sites of previously unmarked graves, we tried to ensure that the interference it would cause in the landscape was minimal. Marking was primarily intended to play an informative function—to provide information about a given place and legitimize it in the eyes of those who know its character. We therefore decided to create wooden markers inspired by the pre-war wooden *matzevot* in the Jewish cemeteries in Eastern Europe. We wanted it to be respectful, but at the same time we wanted the marker itself to constitute something less than a conventional monument,



Wooden *matzevah*, Zapomniane Foundation.  
Photograph by Steven D. Reece, Used with permission

not aiming to replace a permanent commemoration. We envisioned a marker able to play a facilitating role precisely as an act of modest interference—it can facilitate future commemoration of the site by “bringing out” local knowledge, focusing local initiatives and locally conducted research, as well as encouraging commemoration practices. If a marker is an indirect form that does not replace commemoration and, at the same time, it serves to disseminate knowledge about such places, its form should allow for its relatively easy placement in space.

The markers were made of larch wood, most resistant to water and weather conditions from among the locally occurring trees. The same

text was placed on all the markers: “Here rest Jews of blessed memory murdered during the Holocaust,” with the Star of David and a *tantzava* (Hebrew letters TNCBN—the acronym of “May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life”). The choice of material was dictated by the aforementioned assumption of modest interference in the landscape: a wooden marker made of a material most often found in marked places or in their close vicinity fits into, and sometimes even merges with, the landscape. Since 2017, together with the Zapomniane Foundation we have marked ninety-one previously uncommemorated burial sites of Holocaust victims with wooden *matzevot*. Nine of them have been turned into permanent commemorations,

with one in the process of being permanently commemorated. Our experience shows that such gestures can become a tool to open up local knowledge and inspire a commemorative process. Being less than a monument, the markers leave room for different actors to take action and create the discourse around them. Being vernacular, they facilitate the sharing of local knowledge. Being temporary, they create space for various stakeholders to negotiate the future of the site. At the same time, this symbolic gesture changes the status of the site, turning it into a site of memory that inspires new behaviors, without imposing a national memory discourse, thereby letting the community of those who recognize themselves as actors of the commemorative process take action.

### **Still Standing — a Monument in Motion**

*Still Standing* is a performative piece on which I have worked with choreographer and dancer Weronika Pelczyńska, with the support of FestivALT, a Jewish art and activist collective based in Kraków. It was created as a response to the heated debates surrounding the site of the former concentration



Conversations with the audience, *Still Standing* performance.  
Courtesy of FestivALT

camp in Kraków that has still not been commemorated. There is a Communist-era monument on the site that does not do justice to the victims (not mentioning the victims' identity and providing no explanation to what events it commemorates), while the rest of the area is covered with a vast green space with minor informative or commemorative interventions located on its territory. The performative piece was an attempt to raise awareness among visitors about the location, aimed at engaging them and sparking conversations about the current status and the future of the site. It was designed as a temporary but repetitive intervention into the space. So far, it has been presented six times over three years—each year twice, in autumn, around Sukkot.

The performance itself explores the body as a vehicle of memory and site-specific live sculpture. It is accompanied by an audio recording for the audience to listen to while watching movements of the performers. Based on a historical choreography of Israeli choreographer Noa Eshkol, the performance was inspired by the piece she prepared for the 10th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in

1953, to be performed in the Lohamei Hageta'ot (Ghetto fighters) kibbutz.

While we are faced with conflicting narratives and expectations related to how the site should be commemorated, the performance is an attempt to commemorate it in a temporary way to create a platform for discussion. Using movement, choreography, and storytelling, its purpose lies in encouraging empathy and care for the site. By placing the bodies in space—with its layers of history—the performance creates images for the observers to interpret. By exploring relationships turned into physical action it creates a constant shift from the past to the present, from the collective to the personal. By being performed annually around Sukkot, its goal is to create a temporary monument for people to gather together outside and reflect and discuss.

### **Caring for the Future of Our Past**

These two examples explore the potential of collective commemorative actions, along with the exhibitions I had the privilege to co-create (most recently Natalia Romik's *Hideouts. The Architecture of Survival* at Zachęta National

Gallery of Art in Warsaw (see *Gazeta* Vol. 29 No. 1, 2022), and *Speculative Cartographies: Mapping sites of Difficult History* and *Difficult Histories* at Port Loggia Gallery & Treaty Space Gallery in Halifax, Canada, November 2022.

They are not intended as an alternative to more traditional commemorative initiatives, but rather as a complementary process that can support them by creating space for discussion, negotiations, and ground-up activities that might emerge around a given site or a story. I see such processes as crucial to integrating hidden or erased histories into local memory cultures and encouraging the attitude of ownership and care for the sites of difficult pasts. ■

*Aleksandra Janus, PhD, is a researcher, activist, and artist, focused on memory cultures and commemorative strategies related to the Holocaust. She is a vice-president of the Zapomniane Foundation, a collaborator of the Research Center for Memory Cultures of Jagiellonian University, and co-founder of the Museum Lab program for heritage professionals in Poland as well as the Culture for Climate collective.*



# Special Section: 80th Anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

## Recent Writing on the Warsaw Ghetto

Antony Polonsky

The Warsaw Ghetto was closed off in November 1940, confining nearly 450,000 people in a small number of city blocks. A little more than a year and a half later, between July and September 1942, most of them were deported to the death camp at Treblinka. It took time before those who had managed to avoid this fate became aware of what the Nazis had in store for all Jews, but by the time this information became available there was widespread shame at the failure to respond to the deportation. Two underground partisan organizations, the Jewish Fighting Organization (Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa—ŻOB) and the smaller, but equally militant, Jewish Military Union (Żydowski Związek Wojskowy—ŻZW), were formed. When the Nazis attempted again to deport Jews on January 18, 1943, members of these organizations resisted. The Germans, astonished at the opposition they

*By the time this information about the Treblinka death camp became available there was widespread shame at the failure to respond to the deportation.*

encountered, responded with a massive use of force. After several days and the removal of approximately 6,500 people from the ghetto, they halted the deportation. They returned on April 19, intending to destroy the ghetto entirely. In response, 650 inadequately armed young men and women, 500 from the Jewish Fighting Organization and around 150 from the Jewish Military Union, began the first major action of Jewish resistance against the Nazis.

April 19, 2023, will mark the 80th anniversary of the uprising. I should like to

discuss some of the most important works that have appeared in the last fifteen years on the tragic history of the Warsaw Ghetto and the revolt. One major contribution is Samuel Kassow's *Who Will Write Our History? Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Oneg Shabbat Archive* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2007). Emanuel Ringelblum was the main architect of the underground Oneg Shabbat archive in the ghetto, which was created to record the sufferings of the Jews confined there. This definitive and deeply moving biography is, above all, an account of the creation and functioning of the archive, but it also provides a valuable account of Ringelblum's own short life, as well as illuminating the tragic fate of the Jews imprisoned in the ghetto. In 2018, the book formed the basis for a docudrama of the same title film directed by Roberta Grossman.

The Oneg Shabbat archives were buried in three tranches in milk churns and tin chests. Two of these were found in September 1946 and December 1950. The material in them is now lodged in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw with a complete photocopy in the Yad Vashem archives in Jerusalem and another in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The Jewish Historical Institute published this material in Polish as *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta*, with the thirty-sixth and final volume appearing in 2021. This monumental achievement has made the archive available to a much larger readership. Five volumes have also appeared of a shortened version in English, and two more were published at the end of 2022. There is also a project to publish the entire contents of the collection in Hebrew.

Another major contribution to our understanding of life in the ghetto is *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) by Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, which was first published in Polish in

*Engelking and Leociak provide a comprehensive account of the evolution of the ghetto and of the lives of those confined there from its creation to its final liquidation. All aspects of Warsaw Ghetto life are investigated, including the supply of food and smuggling, education, religious activities, and the nature of the Jewish Council set up by the Germans to administer the ghetto.*

2001 as *Getto warszawskie. Przewodnik po nieistniejącym mieście* (Warsaw: Stowarzyszenia Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów). Based on a large mass of sources and supplemented by original maps, this is a comprehensive account of the evolution of the ghetto and of the lives of those confined

there from its creation to its final liquidation following the 1943 uprising. All aspects of Warsaw Ghetto life are investigated, including the supply of food and smuggling, education, religious activities, and the nature of the Jewish Council set up by the Germans to administer the ghetto.

Katarzyna Person's *Warsaw Ghetto Police: The Jewish Order Service during the Nazi Occupation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2021) first appeared in Polish as *Policjanci: Wizerunek Żydowskiej Służby Porządkowej w getcie warszawskim* (Warsaw: Żydowski Instytut Historyczny, 2018). It examines one of the most problematic issues in the history of the ghetto, the functioning of the Jewish Order Service, usually referred to as the Warsaw Ghetto Police, established by the Jewish Council. It draws from many sources, including documents from the wartime period, diaries, German and Jewish official documentation, and ghetto newspaper articles, supplemented by post-war materials, trials of former members of the Jewish Order Service, as well as interviews

with former policemen and those who witnessed their actions. The study examines the opinion of the police in the ghetto and the mechanisms the members of the force developed for justifying their actions.

A dark picture emerges. Although initially the ghetto police saw themselves as a protective barrier between the ghetto residents, on one hand, and the German authorities and Polish police, on the other, they quickly became corrupted. Given that most policemen were unpaid, bribery became widespread and a degree of brutality widely accepted. As a result, the force met harsh criticism. The book also explains how the police became a tool of the Nazi occupiers and played a nefarious role during the Great Deportation in the summer of 1942.

It is often asked what Jews in the ghetto knew about the fate the Germans had in store for them. This is the subject of Maria Ferenc's "*Każdy pyta, co z nami będzie.*" *Mieszkańcy getta warszawskiego wobec wiadomości o wojnie i Zagładzie* ("Everyone is asking what will happen to us." How the Inhabitants of

*Although initially the ghetto police saw themselves as a protective barrier between the ghetto residents, on the one hand, and the German authorities and Polish police, on the other, they quickly became corrupted.*

the Warsaw Ghetto Reacted to News about the War and the Holocaust. Warsaw: ŻIH, 2021). The Nazis attempted to keep secret their genocidal plans and claimed that those deported were being sent to work in the East. Ferenc investigates the questions of what the Jews in the ghetto knew about what was happening in the outside world, how they reacted to such information, and when they became aware of the true German intentions. The book placed second in the Gierowski-Shmeruk competition for the best book on Judaica published in Poland in 2022.

*Bohaterowie, hochsztaplerzy, opisywacze. Wokół Żydowskiego Związku Wojskowego* (Heroes, Hucksters and Storytellers in the Story of the Jewish Military Union. Warsaw: Stowarzyszenia Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów, 2011) by Dariusz Libionka and Laurence Weinbaum sheds important light on the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. Most accounts have concentrated on the larger of the two principal combat organizations, the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB), and usually ignored the Jewish Military Union (ŻZW), which had its ideological roots in the Zionist Revisionist movement led, until his untimely demise in the summer of 1940, by the Russian-born Zeev (Vladimir) Jabotinsky. This fascinating and path-breaking monograph is, in fact, two books, the first being a detailed examination of the sources to show how the history of the Jewish Military Union has been falsified and distorted, both by those who oppose it ideologically and those who seek to exaggerate its importance because of its links with the Polish underground. The book also reconstructs the largely neglected role of the Jewish

Military Union in the uprising. Only during the Great Deportation from the Warsaw Ghetto in the summer of 1942 was the ŻZW established. Members of Betar, its youth movement, were not represented at the meeting that set up the ŻOB, and so they established the ŻZW when they were not accepted into the ŻOB. The ŻZW fought mainly at Muranowska Square, where it hoisted two flags, the white and red Polish flag and the blue and white Zionist flag. Here, after three days of resistance, the survivors withdrew to the “Aryan” side, where they were betrayed and liquidated.

These books give us a much fuller picture of life in the Warsaw Ghetto and of the uprising and its significance, which was not always fully understood, even at the time. Emanuel Ringelblum survived the revolt, although he did not participate in it. In his last letter to the outside world, written on March 11, 1944, a week before his hiding place on the Aryan side was discovered and he was killed, he described in detail the forms of resistance in the ghetto. He cited the collection of materials on

*These books give us a much fuller picture of life in the Warsaw Ghetto and of the uprising and its significance, which was not always fully understood, even at the time.*

Nazi atrocities, the creation of clandestine schools, the fostering of cultural activities, and the organization of welfare relief. He devoted only one paragraph to armed opposition, and although he did refer to it as “the superb epic of Jewish resistance” it is clear that he considered non-violent forms of opposition at least as important.

We can appreciate the dilemma of those who hoped, however mistakenly, to salvage something, to avoid total annihilation. Yet, it is the fighters of the ghetto whom we should salute. Like Ringelblum, Mordechai Anielewicz, leader of the Jewish Fighting Organization, left a final letter, written four days after the beginning of the uprising to Yitshak

Zuckerman, his deputy on the Aryan side. It articulates clearly why the revolt was so important:

“I am unable to describe to you the conditions in which the Jews are currently forced to live. Only a few individuals will endure it; sooner or later, the rest will die ... Be well, my friend. Perhaps we will see one another again. The most important thing is that my life’s dream has come true. Jewish self-defence in the ghetto has been realized. Jewish retaliation and resistance has become a fact. I have been witness to the heroic battle of the Jewish fighters.” ■

*Antony Polonsky, PhD, is Chief Historian at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews.*



# From Idea to Realization: The Ringelblum Archive Commemoration Project at Nowolipki 28 Street in Warsaw

Aleksandra Engler-Malinowska

For many decades the site at Nowolipki 28 Street in Warsaw was just an empty square surrounded by gray buildings. It had no benches to sit on, only grass and a few big poplars. Everything surrounding it was dark, giving no hint that this was truly an important place.

Nowolipki 28 Street (Nowolipki 68 before the war) is where, on August 3, 1942, in the midst of the Great Deportation, Izrael Lichtenstein, Dawid Graber, and Nachum Grzywacz hid the first of three tranches of documents and materials of what is now known as the

Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto, or, more officially, the Ringelblum Archive. Two of the three tranches were unearthed after the war and are preserved at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. They are the largest collection of contemporaneous Jewish



The monument commemorating the Ringelblum Archive.  
Courtesy of *The Commemoration of Ringelblum Archive* (Upamiętnienie Archiwum Ringelbluma)

materials related to the Holocaust. Since 1998 the collection has been included in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register.

Nowolipki Street bore no sign of its historical significance until a sequence of events brought it to the fore. First was a lecture in 2009, when Prof. Jacek Leociak, author of *Warsaw Ghetto. A Guide to a Perished City*, stated that Nowolipki Street should have a commemorative plaque to mark the burial of the ghetto documents and materials. His comment led two listeners, Łukasz Mieszkowski and Marcin Urbanek, to propose that a plaque was not enough. They wanted something more. “We approached the professor,” recalled Urbanek, “who gave us the green light. The project was conceived in two weeks’ time.

The Ringelblum Archive Commemoration consists of an underground chamber with an illuminated document visible above ground at the site where the first tranche of documents was dug up. Mieszkowski and Urbanek, who designed the memorial, decided to focus

*The Ringelblum Archive Commemoration consists of an underground chamber with an illuminated document visible above ground at the site where the first tranche of documents was dug up. Mieszkowski and Urbanek decided to focus the viewer’s attention on the facsimile of Dawid Graber’s last will, which says, “What we were unable to shout out to the world, we buried in the ground.”*

the viewer’s attention on the facsimile of Dawid Graber’s last will, which says, “What we were unable to shout out to the world, we buried in the ground.”

As Mieszkowski and Urbanek began looking for organizational and financial support, they gained endorsements from local Polish intellectuals and specialists in the field, among them Prof. Leociak and Dr. Eleonara Bergman. With attorney Tomasz Kapliński, they founded the informal Social Committee of the Ringelblum Archive Commemoration. Reaching out to governmental and municipal institutions, they received initial organizational support from author and local activist Beata Chomałowska, the president of the Stacja Muranów Association. The Social Committee soon gained its final composition: Mieszkowski, Urbanek, Kapliński, Chomałowska, Łukasz Prokop, and myself. Members and supporters of the Social Committee worked on this project pro bono, a true expression of commitment. We found additional encouragement and support from Paulina Kieszowska-Knapik, Katarzyna Górka, Paulina Sobieszuk, Alicja Mroczkowska, and Aleksandra Sajdak. I became the project

coordinator on behalf of the Stacja Muranów Association in 2015.

The commemoration project had two parts. The first, a revitalization of the square, was made possible thanks to the people of Warsaw, who financed it from the municipal budget. The second, the monument itself, was completed thanks partly to the Stacja Muranów Association's cooperation with municipal authorities, represented by Krzysztof Strzałkowski, mayor of the Wola District, and most of all because of the partnership that Stacja Muranów made with the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute, headed by Piotr Wiślicki.

The association, led in this special endeavor by its CEO Michał Majewski and supported by his development associate Agnieszka Dulęba, undertook to produce the monument and find financial support. Thanks to donors and benefactors from Poland and the world, the work was accomplished on April 19, 2021, after overcoming many obstacles, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Since

then, many tours and groups have visited the site. The monument was nominated for the 2022 Architectural Prize of the Mayor of Warsaw—the first time that a memorial was nominated.

For me it was extremely important to have this monument erected. First, because it is a beautiful and thought-provoking piece of modern art. Second, because people should know not only the larger history but the history closest to them. Though I grew up at Nowolipki Street in the 1980s, I only learned the name of Emanuel Ringelblum and the story of the Oneg Shabbat team of documentarians led by Ringelblum when I started working for the Taube Center for Jewish Life and Learning Foundation. The people who live on Nowolipki Street today should have the chance to learn about the bravery and resistance of Emanuel Ringelblum and his colleagues. It is a story of great heroes during tragic times in Warsaw.

I hope that this small glass cubicle and the educational

activities that will grow around it will exceed our goals for generations to come. Every remembrance about the role of real documents and the real people behind them, matters. This monument is, paradoxically, more contemporary than we initially thought. ■

**Aleksandra Engler-Malinowska** served as coordinator of the Ringelblum Archive Commemoration Project, on behalf of the Stacja Muranów Association. She is a certified guide for POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and also for tours of Jewish Warsaw. Previously, she served as study tour manager for Taube Center for Jewish Life and Learning Foundation. Among her creative works she was co-creator of the theater play *Baszert. A Girl from Nowolipki*.

# *Question of Character. Women Fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto*

Edited by Sylwia Chutnik and Monika Sznajderman

Marta Markowska



Cywia Lubetkin.  
Wikimedia Commons



Niuta Tajtelbaum.  
Wikimedia Commons



Tosia Altman.  
Wikimedia Commons

To mark the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Czarne Publishing House, in collaboration with POLIN Museum, is preparing *Question of Character. Women Fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto*, edited by cultural studies expert Sylwia Chutnik and cultural anthropologist Monika Sznajderman.

The story of the 1943 uprising and its brave male soldiers is well-known. And the women? They more often got a footnote, mentioned as

liaison officers, orderlies, or partners of better-known male fighters. This time it will be about them: the daring actions of Niuta Tajtelbaum (Wanda with Pigtails); the sacrifice of Regina Fudem, who descended into the sewers to return to the ghetto for another group of insurgents; Shoshana Rosa Kossower, who fought in the Old Town during the uprising.

The goal of this “herstorical” project is to restore to memory these brave, yet mostly unknown, women

and to explore what kind of people they were, what constituted their characters and attitudes, what path brought them to the ranks as fighters. The profiles are introduced by women writers from a range of backgrounds, including journalists, social scientists, and Holocaust writers, whose work centers on the contributions of women to herstory.

The women fighters profiled are: Tosia Altman (by Kalina Błażejowska)

Regina Fudem (by Agnieszka Haska)

Mira Fuchrer: (by Monika Tutak-Goll)

Rywka Pasamonik (by Agnieszka Dauksza)

Niuta Tajtelbaum (by Patrycja Dołowy)

Dorka Goldkorn (by Joanna Ostrowska)

Chajka Bełchatowska (by Magdalena Kozłowska)

Cywia Lubetkin (by Natalia Judzińska)

Bronka Feinmesser/Marysia Warman (by Agnieszka Glińska)

Frania Beatus (by Karolina Sulej)

Miriam Szyfman, Szoszana Kossower (by Anna Szyba, Karolina Szymaniak)

Pnina Grynszpan-Frymer (by Katarzyna Czerwonogóra)

As Hanka Grupinska writes in the book's afterword: "These girls went to the Jewish underground to defend each other. But also, and perhaps even more so, they went to the Organization to be with others, not one alone ... To be able to run through the holes in the walls as fast as possible,

*These girls went to the Jewish underground to defend each other. But also, and perhaps even more so, they went to the Organization to be with others, not one alone ... To be able to run through the holes in the walls as fast as possible, and through the streets of the ghetto at night as quietly as possible—but together.*

and through the streets of the ghetto at night as quietly as possible—but together."

The book will be available in Polish in April 2023 through POLIN Museum; an English version is in preparation. ■

*Marta Markowska is an editor and senior publications specialist at POLIN Museum.*

## Exhibitions at POLIN Museum

### *Around us a sea of fire. The Fate of Jewish Civilians during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*

Temporary exhibition at POLIN Museum

April 17, 2023–January 8, 2024

Zuzanna Schnepf-Kolacz



Ruins of the Crown Artillery barracks at 19 Zamenhofa Street amid the remains of the Warsaw Ghetto. POLIN Museum stands at this site. The photo, taken on August 11, 1947, comes from *Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes (A Photographic Chronicle from the Building Site 1 August 1947–19 April 1948)* by Natan Rapoport and Leon Marek Suzin. POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, donated by Alicja Pawlicka-Suzin.

**A**round us a sea of fire. *The Fate of Jewish Civilians During the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*, a temporary exhibition at POLIN Museum, is the centerpiece commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, the first and largest Jewish uprising in occupied Europe. What makes this exhibition unique is its focus on the fate of civilians, a story historically overshadowed by the armed uprising. At the outbreak of the uprising, those still in the ghetto—approximately 50,000 Jewish civilians—hid for weeks in improvised

shelters and bunkers. Hidden underground, they refused to comply with German orders. They fought the despair, loneliness, starvation, and fear, each and every day, hour, and minute. Their quiet resistance was as important as the armed opposition. This exhibition tells their story.

Taking the perspective of civilians, the exhibition presents key events of the uprising, places of torment, and hiding places. Visitors will encounter the living conditions and daily life of Jewish civilians hiding in bunkers, shelters, and

improvised hideouts, their daily routines, how they coped with basic physiological needs, and how they supported each other. As curators and designers, we focus on the relations that developed among the people who hid together, on their feelings and emotions. On one hand, their experience was of conflicts, fear, panic, lack of hope, the feeling of being abandoned by the world's indifference, of a life forsaken. On the other hand, they expressed the human craving for love and intimacy, the urge to act and take responsibility for others. Their lust for life, the will to

save oneself and one's loved ones, building a community whose members supported and protected one another were ways to oppose the evil forces surrounding them.

The exhibition will occupy approximately 689 square feet of the temporary exhibition space on two levels at POLIN Museum. The scenography and a soundscape designed especially for this exhibition will simulate the reality and evoke the sensations of confinement: the darkness, the lack of space and air, and the sounds, which were often the only sign of what was happening above ground.

The exhibition will break new ground in how it presents the Holocaust to the public. By focusing on the experiences of civilians in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, it will provide a unique perspective on this historic event. The exhibition will be devoted to the events that took place, and yet it will touch upon the dilemmas, attitudes, and feelings, it will pose questions that remain vital in today's world. How do we behave in the face of death? Where is the line between struggling to survive and surrendering? What do people feel when they are excluded from society and experience indifference or disdain? Many



A glow over the burning Warsaw Ghetto, most likely a view of the brush-makers' workshop in the quarter of Świętojerska, Wałowa, Franciszkańska, and Bonifraterska streets, April 1943. Photo: Zbigniew Borowczyk, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, donated by Edward Borowczyk through Halina Kobyłecka.

people in the ghetto described themselves as “drowning,” devoid of any hope for rescue. How do we oppose evil, how do we combat it? What is indifference and where does it lead us? Do we feel ashamed when we witness the suffering of others?

The exhibition will be based on the testimonies of Jews who hid in the bunkers both in the ghetto area and on the “Aryan” side. We avoid using German documents and photos, which show the victims as seen through the eyes of the perpetrators. Since all the objects and keepsakes were destroyed and burnt, words acquire a special role in the exhibition. Not only do they convey the feelings and experiences of their authors, they constitute a unique testimony—often the only tangible trace left behind by

those who perished in the Warsaw Ghetto.

The exhibition is co-organized with the Polish Center for Holocaust Research. The following scholars, artists, and experts have contributed to the creation of the exhibition: Prof. Barbara Engelking, the author of the exhibition concept; curator, Zuzanna Schnepf-Kończak; production curator, Agata Polak; exhibition design and cooperation in exhibition design, Małgorzata Szcześniak; cooperation in exhibition design, Saskia Hellmann; graphics, Renata Motyka; soundscape, music, Paweł Mykietyń; script and direction, Wawrzyniec Kostrzewski; cooperation, Kajetan Prochyra; art installation, Joanna Rajkowska; exhibition production, Deko Bau. ■

## POEM

### *Warsaw, 1983: Umschlagplatz*

by Irena Klepfisz

*“In Treblinka bin ikh nit geven.” —H. Leivik*

No horrors this time.  
It's 1983. June. Summer  
Warsaw is tense but over Solidarnosc  
over amnesty.

A small white brick wall.  
Two plaques in Polish and Yiddish  
to the effect that from here  
zaynen zey geforn kayn Treblinka.  
Two stubby candles on either side  
neither burning. The guide  
lights one with a lighter.  
The wind blows it out.

A gas station pumping gas  
right behind. A building on  
one side. Perhaps from that time  
efsher an eydes. Maybe it saw.  
And there are tracks  
I think.

I do not cry. What's to cry  
about? An ordinary street.  
People going about  
their business forty years later  
tense about amnesty.

This street might have been my home.  
This street might have been the beginning  
of my journey to death.  
I must remember:  
it was neither.

I live on another continent.  
It is 1983 . I am now a visitor.  
History stops for no one.

*Poet Irena Klepfisz was born in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1941 and, with her mother, survived the war hiding in an orphanage and later in the Polish countryside. After the war they settled in New York, where Klepfisz became a scholar, translator, and teacher. Her poetry engages the Yiddish language to create a Jewish feminist poetics.*

*Author's notes on translations: *umschlagplatz* (German), place from which Jews were deported to death camps; *zaynen ztry geforn kayn treblinka* (Yiddish), They left for Treblinka; *ejsher an irydes* (Yiddish), perhaps a witness. The epigraph translated as *I was never in Treblinka* is from the title poem of a collection by the Yiddish poet H. Leivik.*

*This poem originally appeared in *Ikon. Creativity and Change. Anniversary Issue Ikon, Focus on Autobiography & Short Fiction*, January 1, 1990, p. 66. Republished with permission.*



## REPORTS AND UPDATES

# Jewish Poland at the Litvak Cultural Forum

Antony Polonsky

**K**aunas, the inter-war capital of Lithuania, which is today a town with a population of around 300,000, was designated the European Capital of Culture for 2022. In spite of the inhibiting effect of the pandemic, the year was marked by a very ambitious program of events including more than sixty art exhibitions, over 250 concerts, and a similar number of stage events. One of the goals of the organizers was to foster the development in Kaunas of “a community that accepts

its history and is open and culturally active.” As a result, a principal theme of the year was the history of the Jewish community of Kaunas, which in 1939 numbered around 32,000, about a quarter of the city’s total population. Jewish architects were among those who participated in the rapid development of the town in the inter-war years and in the creation of the remarkable complex of modern buildings which marked the period when it was the capital. These buildings are mostly

still standing and formed an impressive backdrop to the many events that took place in the course of the year.

Highlights of the Lithuanian Jewish past centered around the Litvak Culture Forum, whose patrons were Ingrida Šimonytė, Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Jewish community, represented by Prof. Liudas Mažvilis, and the forum’s chair, Faina Kukliansky. The central event was a four-day conference held in late September that had as its main theme “What Does It Mean to Be Litvak Today?” Among those who spoke at the opening session were the prime minister, the ambassador of Israel, Hadas Wittenberg Silverstein, and Katharina von Schnurbein, coordinator of the European commission for combating antisemitism and promoting Jewish life. Her theme, eloquently expressed, was “An EU without Antisemitism: Implementation



Photo courtesy of Daiva Citvarienė, Litvak Culture Forum, copyright Kaunas 2022. Used with permission

of the EU Strategy to Combat Antisemitism and Promote Jewish Life.” The goals of the Litvak Culture Forum were clearly set out by Dr. Virginija Vitkienė, CEO of the Kaunas 2022 program, and Dr. Daiva Price, head of its Memory Office. One of the aims of the Memory Office is to awaken the multicultural memory of Kaunas and the towns in its district and remind the public of its rich history.

Several speakers examined the nature of Litvak identity, including myself, who gave the inaugural address, and a roster of other scholars. Peter Salovey, president of Yale University, cited the history of his family in discussing the dimensions of this identity. Robert Kusek and Wojciech Szymanski of the Jagiellonian University analyzed the way Litvak Jews in South Africa envisioned Lithuania. Other scholars were Prof. Tsvia Walden, who described the Litvak influence on modern Hebrew, and Šarunas Liekis, dean of the faculty of politics and diplomacy at the Vytautas Magnus University. This was followed by a session on the nature of the Litvak community in today’s Lithuania in which a



Photo courtesy of Daiva Citvarienė, Litvak Culture Forum, copyright Kaunas 2022. Used with permission

number of communal activists participated.

A principal theme of the forum was “How Does Art Help Us Remember?” Central to the Capital of Culture events, temporary exhibitions were organized, and several artists were on hand to discuss their work. Internationally known South African artist William Kentridge’s work was featured in *That Which We Do Not Remember*, as well as Jenny Kagan’s *Out of Darkness* and Bruce Clarke’s installation *Ecce Homo: Those Who Stayed*, which was held in the Kaunas Ninth Fort Museum—a place where many Jews were murdered during WWII, which commemorated the victims

of both the Holocaust and the Rwanda genocide. Artist and photographer Marilia Destot presented her moving multimedia piece *My Poetic Journey. How to Revisit, Remember, Transmit a Fading History?*

Three photography exhibitions shed light on local sites of Jewish heritage and Jewish artists from Kaunas. *Back to Kaunas* featured the work of Israeli Michael Shubitz. Mauša Levis and Shimon Bajer, two Jewish photographers, featured their inter-war photography in Kaunas. And a series organized by Rosa Litay, Lia Shibboleth, and Carol Hoffman was dedicated to street names in Israel that

commemorate leading Litvak figures. The last project was assisted by the Vilnius Gaon Museum of Jewish History.

Two installations sought to bring the importance of the Jewish past in Kaunas to a wider audience. The first of these was Jyll Bradley's *Threshold*, which sought to mark buildings formerly inhabited by Jews by artistic renderings of *mezuzot*, while the second, *Walls Remember*, by local artist Lina Šlipavičiūtė-Černiauskienė, imprinted enlarged versions of inter-war photographs on suitable outside walls.

Sessions devoted to literary works discussed the Hebrew poet, Kaunas-born Leah Goldberg, whose book of poems for children, *Apartment to Let*, has been translated into Lithuanian and illustrated by Sigutė Chlebinskaitė. Aneta Anra spoke about how she came to write *Jehudit: How Beautiful the World Could Be*, the account of the life of a Lithuanian Jewish survivor.

Linking the Jewish past in Lithuania through music was a performance of Anatoly Shenderov's *After Chagall*, an attempt to bring back the lost pre-war Jewish world, a concert of klezmer



Photos courtesy of Daiva Citvarienė, Litvak Culture Forum, copyright Kaunas 2022. Used with permission

music by pianist Aleksandr Paley and clarinetist Karolis Kolakauskas, and a recital of songs from the Kaunas and Vilnius ghettos performed by Marija Krupoves. The musical highpoint was the premiere of the *Kaunas Cantata*, a collaboration between two Litvaks—the artist Jenny Kagan and the composer Philip Miller, including Lithuanian and other international musicians. The performance sought to

raise awareness about the difficulties brought about by historical traumas, which are a feature of the Litvak past, by inviting the audience to confront themselves and to talk about the difficult choices Jews and Lithuanians faced during WWII. These cultural and artistic exchanges were particularly relevant to many struggles today, especially in light of the nearby war zone of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. ■

# “New Realities of Jewish Heritage”: A Conference Marking the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Jewish Heritage Europe

Ruth Ellen Gruber

Held in Kraków this past summer, the international conference “New Realities of Jewish Heritage” addressed key concepts in the research, preservation, status, and future of Jewish material heritage in Europe. (See conference announcement in *Gazeta* Vol. 29, No. 1, 2022). The conference took place at the Galicia Jewish Museum, June 26–27, during the Kraków Jewish Culture Festival, and

marked the 10th anniversary of the web portal Jewish Heritage Europe ([www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu](http://www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu))—a project of the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiv Europe, for which I serve as coordinator.

The conference gathered more than twenty-five speakers from a dozen countries and a number of institutions and disciplines. Presenters addressed a range of issues,

including the impact of new technologies on research and preservation, the role of Jewish heritage in the arts, and strategic thinking on local and international levels in a variety of Jewish and civic spheres.

The concluding panel, “Jewish Heritage—Who Is It For?,” tackled a question that is key both in countries in which Jewish populations were decimated in the Shoah and



Conference session featuring Ruth Ellen Gruber, Jonathan Webber, and Edward Serotta.  
Photo courtesy of Jewish Heritage Europe

in places where synagogues and cemeteries have been abandoned by population shifts and dwindling congregations. In the absence of Jews, who should care for Jewish heritage sites? And why? What is appropriate adaptive reuse?

Moderated by Michael Mail, CEO of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, the panel included three cultural activists engaged in highlighting Jewish heritage within the context of local, national, and global heritage as a whole: Lilian Grootswagers-Theuns, of the Future for Religious Heritage Network; Dr. Susanne Urban, who led the successful effort to have the medieval Jewish heritage of the ShUM cities on the Rhine—Worms, Speyer, and Mainz—placed on UNESCO’s roster of World Heritage sites; and Michał Laszczkowski, former CEO of Poland’s Foundation for Cultural Heritage.

The foundation has been involved in the clean-up and preservation of Warsaw’s Okopowa Jewish Cemetery and other Jewish cemeteries in Poland.

Spearheading these efforts, Laszczkowski, a non-

Jewish advocate, began his presentation by answering the question posed by the session’s title. “Who is Jewish heritage for?” he asked, and then replied: “It’s for me, for people like me.” That is, for himself as a Pole; a citizen of a country where Jews have a history going back a millennium and deeply entwined with Polish history in general. In short, Jewish heritage in Poland is also Poland’s heritage.

The conference brought together veterans in the field as well as newer practitioners. This was highlighted in the session “Photographers of Jewish Heritage—Different Styles, Different Objectives.” Moderated by the photographer and essayist Jason Francisco, the panel brought together three other photographers whose focus on Jewish heritage reflects their own intergenerational and creative perspectives.

Monika Krajewska, a pioneer in the photographic documentation of Jewish cemeteries in Poland, discussed how she began her work in the 1970s, seeking out and rediscovering long-forgotten sites and documenting them in black

and white. Budapest-based architectural historian Rudolf Klein, who uses photography in his research and has held many photographic exhibitions on synagogues and Jewish cemeteries, discussed the issue of where documentary photography ends and artistic photography begins. Matyas Kiraly, a Budapest-based Jewish-studies master’s student, spoke about using digital photography to reach online audiences. His Instagram account of Jewish heritage sites, “Abandoned Jewish Memories,” has nearly 16,000 followers.

The conference was organized by the Galicia Jewish Museum, the Taube Center for Jewish Life and Learning in Warsaw, and Jewish Heritage Europe, in association with the Kraków Jewish Culture Festival and in partnership with the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland (FODŹ), which itself celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. ■

*Ruth Ellen Gruber is director of Jewish Heritage Europe and former Distinguished Visiting Chair in Jewish Studies, College of Charleston.*

# The Mausoleum of Jewish Fighters

Witold Wrzosiński

The Mausoleum of Jewish Fighters for the Independence of Poland (known as the cemetery on Gęsia before World War II), is located at the Jewish Cemetery in Warsaw on Okopowa. The Jewish Cemetery was established in 1806 at the initiative of the Jewish Community in Warsaw. The idea of constructing the mausoleum came in 1938 as the Jewish community wished to commemorate the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of Poland's victorious fight for independence. The originators of the concept wanted to create a place to honor the Jewish soldiers taking part in campaigns and battles of particular significance to Polish history and their common Polish-Jewish identity. It was to be a site to revere the memory of the fallen Kościuszko insurgents, Napoleon's soldiers, November and January insurgents, so-called Great War soldiers, and Jewish soldiers fighting in the



The Mausoleum of Jewish Fighters for the Independence of Poland. Photograph by Aleksandra Sajdak. Used with permission

years 1918–21 in the ranks of the Polish Armed Forces for the independence and the borders of the Republic of Poland. Berek Joselewicz, an officer of the Polish Legions in Italy, and Henryk Wohl, director of the treasury in the national government in the January Uprising, were also to be commemorated in a special way.

The idea to build the mausoleum is attributed to Maurycy Mayzel, who acted as the commissar-president of the Jewish Community in Warsaw. The site's designer, Marcin Weinfeld, was appointed through an open competition. While some criticized the

monumental size and style of his design, the decision-makers ultimately approved his concept. Construction started with removal of the grave markers from the site and building an elevated platform. In 1939 the builders constructed the concrete-and-brick structure of the mausoleum but were unable to complete it because of the war, and most of their work was destroyed during the 1940s.

The construction that was interrupted in 1939 finally recommenced in 2018 for the 100th anniversary of Polish independence, and was completed a year later by the Cultural Heritage Foundation thanks to funding from the PKO Bank Polski Foundation in cooperation with the Jewish Community in Warsaw. It now stands as the central, symbolic commemoration of the Jews who fought for the independence of Poland. ■

*Witold Wrzosiński is director of the Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street in Warsaw.*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Exhibitions

# Opatów in Mayer Kirshenblatt's Paintings

Temporary exhibition at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw  
March – October 2024

By Natalia Romik and Justyna Koszarska-Szulc

We are now preparing an exhibition of paintings by Mayer Kirshenblatt that offers rare insight into the life of a Polish shtetl before the German invasion in 1939—his hometown of Opatów. The paintings that Kirshenblatt began to produce in the 1990s, when he himself was in his seventies, vividly capture reminiscences of life in a shtetl. During the Holocaust, sixty percent of the city's inhabitants were murdered by the Nazis. What remains are just traces of Jewish architecture, wooden buildings intended for demolition, which are sold without any awareness of their previous owners or functions.

The exhibition will present at least fifty of Kirshenblatt's 300 paintings. These artworks offer a story within a story, an archive that will gain life as a result of our place-based research. Through his work, the artist gives us a "tour" of his hometown. Step by step, we discover the urban grid,



Mayer Kirshenblatt, *Market Day*.  
Courtesy of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

the natural environment, the functions of the buildings, and the diverse professions of the residents. We meet family and neighbors, become familiar with town gossip and local legends.

The symbolism and anthropological sensibility of Mayer Kirshenblatt's paintings suggest unique thematic threads that the

exhibition will highlight. Kirshenblatt's recollections form a unique treasury of the history of shtetl history, including Jewish holidays, Christian neighbors, topography of the town, performances, harvests, commerce or simply the daily ambience of the shtetl, including its lively holidays. Even though his paintings have been previously

exhibited, including at the Jewish Museum in New York, Aird Gallery and Koffler Gallery in Toronto, the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley, California, the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, the Galicia Museum in Kraków, and his hometown of Opatów, the core of an anthropological record of the town has not, until now, been properly represented.

Our curatorial process was inspired and informed by the work of Prof. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Mayer's daughter, who in 1967 began interviewing her father about life in Opatów. The research resulted in their book, *They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland before the Holocaust*, upon which we base our curatorial framework, while the extensive collection of Kirshenblatt's paintings remains the vital element around which the exhibition is organized. Our research was further conducted in cooperation with local activists, historians, NGOs, and Jewish communities in Israel and Canada, and draws upon archival materials from Polish, Israeli, and American institutions and private collectors.

The exhibition will also display our research results about the architectural traces of the Jewish past. Wood recovered from demolished buildings will become a main design material for the scenography. Wooden “frames”—self-supporting elements—will carry narrative and historical information about the shtetl. From the recycled wood we will create a *tish*, a table, to be placed in the heart of the exhibition space, an intentional meeting place for workshops, discussions, and educational activities. A specially designed construction of original wooden window frames and doors from the demolished houses will include showcases for original objects connected to Jewish life in Opatów, both before and during the Holocaust, including Judaica, maps, and ephemera. One of the frames will present 3-D scans of a former *mikvah* that today houses a candy factory.



One of the old wooden houses in Opatów, September 2022.  
Photograph by Natalia Romik. Used with permission



A monument unveiled in the Jewish cemetery in Opatów in October 2022, on the 80th anniversary of the ghetto liquidation.  
Photograph by Natalia Romik. Used with permission

Kirshenblatt's paintings, accompanied with excerpts from Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's interviews, together with the architecture of the town, will tell a revitalized story of Jewish life. We hope that this



new perspective will help inspire critical examinations of Opatów and the shtetl phenomenon itself. Together with the SENNA Collective, we are designing the exhibition so that it can be adapted to any space, without affecting the aesthetics of the paintings and the researched depictions of place.

Four years ago, when we curated the exhibition *Estranged. March '68 and Its Aftermath* at POLIN Museum, (see *Gazeta* Vol. 25, No. 1, 2018), we knew that only a critical, open, and honest approach to history's difficult moments would provide a complete picture of the 1968 antisemitic campaign. The same interdisciplinary approach informs how history unfolded in a particular place and time, as told through Kirshenblatt's paintings and enhanced by our historical and architectural research for intergenerational dialogue and understanding. ■

**Natalia Romik, PhD**, is an architect, artist, and interdisciplinary scholar whose work explores the architecture of Jewish memory. Her exhibitions include *Architecture of Survival*. She was one of the designers of the



Mayer Kirshenblatt, *Tombstone carver*.  
Courtesy of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett



Mayer Kirshenblatt, *Funeral*.  
Courtesy of Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

*Core Exhibition*. A member of the SENNA architecture collective, she holds a Gerda Henke Stiftung Foundation Fellowship and was the 2022 recipient of a Dan David Prize.

**Justyna Koszarska-Szulc, PhD**, a literary scholar, is a curator at POLIN Museum

and was a member of its core exhibition team. She has received Rothschild and Memorial Foundation grants. Her 2022 dissertation is "Faithful to One's Own Tear." Polish-Jewish Identity Quest in Artur Sandauer's Writings.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Exhibitions at the Galicia Jewish Museum

## *Helena Rubinstein* on Exhibit for the First Time in Poland

October 25, 2022–April 17, 2023

The Galicia Jewish Museum, in cooperation with the Jewish Museum Vienna, is hosting *Helena Rubinstein. First Lady of Beauty*, an exhibition that recounts the remarkable life of this cosmetics industry icon and visionary entrepreneur.

Chaya Rubinstein (1872–1965), later known as Helena, was born in Progorze, near Kraków. The Rubinsteins moved to Kraków soon after her birth, and she grew up in the Jewish quarter of Kazimierz.

Chaya stood out from her peers from a young age. The eldest child of a small-scale merchant, she quickly began caring for her younger sisters and helped her father run his shops. Despite only having a rudimentary education, Chaya was able to learn by keenly observing her surroundings. Her charisma also made it easy for her to make friends.

The family often moved within Kazimierz. It was here that Chaya's mother taught her eight daughters how to take care of their appearance. To her,



*Helena Rubinstein. First Lady of Beauty* at the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków. Photograph by Piotr Banasik. Used with permission

external grace and inner charm gave girls a chance to find suitable husbands and have a better life. Her lessons had a great impact on her daughters—her preferred beauty cream, which was brought by Helena in a suitcase all the way to Australia, became a recipe for monumental success.

When she left Kraków in search of a better life, Chaya became Helena. It was under this name that she established a cosmetics empire, beginning with a tiny salon in Melbourne. After her initial success, she set out to conquer

Europe and did so after just a few years. She was also married and the mother of two sons. At the outbreak of war in 1914, Rubinstein owned salons in Paris and London. Her tastes were shaped by these two major European capitals, where she befriended many artists. She was also interested in fashion and filled her closet with exclusive creations from designers such as Dior, Chanel, and Yves Saint Laurent. Her apartments were filled with works by prominent artists, and Salvador Dali even painted murals for her in her main residence.

Helena's new ambition was to master and dominate the last of the great cosmetics markets. In 1915, she opened her first salon in New York City, where she achieved her greatest success.

When she died in 1965, Rubinstein was the world's wealthiest woman and one of the first to become so through her own efforts. Her cosmetics empire had a global presence and was worth about \$100 million. She owned factories in the United States, France, and Germany. The terraces of her magnificent apartments in Paris and New York were frequently transformed into catwalks for models for her designer friends. She also owned a villa in Provence, France, surrounded by fields of jasmine. However, wealth did not affect her taste in food. She took a second breakfast of chicken thighs or hard-boiled eggs to work in a paper bag. But at lavish parties she served Polish sausage and vodka.

This year marks her 150th birthday, and the 120th anniversary of the launch of the Rubinstein brand. The exhibition at the Galicia Jewish Museum provides a noteworthy opportunity to learn about the life of this singular and inspirational native Krakovian. Visitors will tap into the spirit of the



*Helena Rubinstein. First Lady of Beauty* at the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków. Photograph by Piotr Banasik. Used with permission

era through visual materials, including previously unknown photographs from Rubinstein's years in Kraków. Examples of cosmetics from different times are also featured in the exhibition.

The unique aspect of this exhibition is that the creators give voice to Rubinstein herself, through quotes and from the set of a 1929 advertising campaign. The exhibition's showstopper is an elegant gown designed by

Christian Dior and tailored for Rubinstein in the 1950s.

A comprehensive program of events, including lectures and guided tours to places connected with Rubinstein, will accompany the exhibition. The honorary patron of this exhibition is the mayor of Kraków, Prof. Jacek Majchrowski. ■

# *Glimpses into Antisemitism*, the International HANNAH Project

October 19, 2022–February 10, 2023

The exhibition *Glimpses into Antisemitism* opened on October 19, 2022, at the Galicia Jewish Museum's new gallery, in the building of Kraków's historic High Synagogue. The exhibition is part of a multinational European project, HANNAH: Challenging and Debunking

Antisemitic Myths. It presents short biographies of representatives of Jewish communities from Germany, Greece, Poland, and Serbia, and quotes from interviews conducted for the project.

The project was based on the fact that antisemitism is a

multidimensional phenomenon, and many antisemitic myths and stereotypes still circulate in European societies. Their external forms may change, local variants may appear, but the core remains the same for centuries. The exhibition was created by the Jewish Museum Greece in Athens and the



HANNAH seminar in Płock, organized in cooperation with the Museum of Mazovian Jews. Courtesy of the Galicia Jewish Museum

Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków to give voice to people who have experienced antisemitism—from verbal and symbolic violence through various forms of discrimination and physical violence, to a direct threat to life.

Most of the exhibition's protagonists are people born after WWII, second-generation survivors, but there are also some who survived the Holocaust as children. In stories presented to encourage reflection and to fight against all forms of xenophobia and discrimination, Jews talk about their identities and personal experiences with antisemitic prejudices.

The collection of interviews (some of them available online) bring together a great variety of voices and personal experiences. But in some aspects they are similar, despite geographical distance. Jews from four countries speak about uneasy, complicated relations with their parents, who were Holocaust survivors; about decades of silence, about unravelling tragic family stories, discovering new facts, and preserving memory for future generations. In the background we can see the

*The main goals of this EU-funded project are to support action against antisemitism, promote education about the Holocaust, and contribute to the revival of Jewish life, focusing on the local contexts of Dresden, Hamburg, Athens, Thessaloniki, Novi Sad, and Kraków.*

attempts to rebuild local Jewish communities as well as individual struggles with prejudice and antisemitic stereotypes.

The HANNAH Project is implemented by organizations in Germany (Centropa and Jugend-& Kulturprojekt e.V.), of Greece (Jewish Museum Greece and ReadLab), Serbia (Terraforming), and Poland (Galicia Jewish Museum). The project also produced a curriculum and educational materials about Jewish history, antisemitism, and the Holocaust in those countries,

teacher-training seminars in four countries, an online course and virtual learning environment, a video competition for school students, a social media network, and policy recommendations for combating antisemitism. The main goals of this EU-funded project were to support action against antisemitism, promote education about the Holocaust, and contribute to the revival of Jewish life, focusing on the local contexts of Dresden, Hamburg, Athens, Thessaloniki, Novi Sad, and Kraków. ■

*The HANNAH Project was co-funded by the Rights, Equality, Citizenship Program of the European Union (Agreement Number 963769-REC-RRAC-RACI-AG-2020) through November 30, 2022.*

## *Between Two Worlds: A Temporary Exhibition at the Galicia Jewish Museum Bookstore*

The bookstore of the Galicia Jewish Museum hosted *Between Two Worlds*, from June 24 to September 30, 2022—an exhibition inspired by S. An-sky's book, *The Dybbuk*. The exhibition, created by Monika Krajewska, Warsaw artist and educator, combines papercut artworks with Hebrew texts and collages of photographs and rubbings from grave reliefs. Krajewska has worked extensively with the traditional technique of combining papercutting, symbolic motifs, ornaments, and text. Her illustrated



Papercut by Monika Krajewska. *Between Two Worlds*, an exhibition inspired by *The Dybbuk* by S. An-sky.  
Courtesy of the Galicia Jewish Museum

publications draw on travels in Poland, photographing Jewish monuments and making rubbings of tombstone inscriptions. In addition to

creating the photography albums *Time of Stones* (1982) and *A Tribe of Stones* (1993), she has curated exhibitions and given lectures and workshops on her work in Poland, the United States, Israel, and elsewhere. Some of her works remain close to traditional forms, while others, such as *The Dybbuk*, are her own interpretations of Jewish texts and symbols. ■

For more information, visit: <https://galiciajewishmuseum.org/en/wystawy/between-two-worlds/>



*Between Two Worlds*. An exhibition inspired by *The Dybbuk* by S. An-sky.  
Courtesy of the Galicia Jewish Museum

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Books

## Future Issues of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry*

The next four issues of *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* are in various stages of production. Volume 35 is expected to be published in January 2023 with the theme “Promised Lands— Jews, Poland and the Land of Israel.” It will deal with the influence of Polish Jews, Polish Zionism, and Polish culture in general on the development of the Yishuv (the Jewish settlement in Palestine) and the State of Israel, as well as on the influence of the Yishuv and the State of Israel on developments in Poland. Among the topics covered are early modern support for the land of Israel and the Jewish congregations there, the connections between these congregations and Jewish communities in Eastern Europe and projects for their reform, the early nationalist movement and its constituency, and the representation of the Zionist project in illustrations, posters, and engravings

produced in Poland. We also investigate resonances of the Polish independence movement in Jewish youth movements and the influence of Polish literary modes on the Zionist movement.

In addition, we investigate the support for a rejuvenation of Hebrew and its reemergence as a vernacular language, the images of Polish Jews, both men and women, in the developing Hebrew culture of the Yishuv and State of Israel, relations between Poland and the land of Israel before 1948, the Zionist movement in Poland between 1944 and 1950, and the “Gomułka emigration” to Israel. Further, we analyze the impact of Jewish models of self-government on the emerging political culture of the Yishuv, the continuities of Polish culture in Israel after 1948, and the role from the 1970s of travel to Poland and the associated attempts to re-establish a connection to the former homeland. Finally, the

Antony Polonsky

volume will examine mutual prejudices as well as the present crisis in Polish-Israeli relations.

Volume 36 will examine “Children, Childhood and Childrearing in Eastern Europe.” The understanding of childhood and children’s roles has undergone a significant transformation in recent years, and there has been considerable new research on the ways in which children participated in determining their own lives. This turn to children’s experiences in historical scholarship as well as in literary and cultural studies has led to their increased scrutinization, not only as a means of examining the lives and self-representation of young individuals and the family but also because of the light such research can shed on larger historical questions.

The history of childhood has been a somewhat neglected topic in research on the history

and culture of East European Jewry in general and Polish Jewry in particular. Rather, children have featured in broader studies of education and childbirth which have been discussed through the lens of educational projects, of women's history, and as objects of communal assistance. In this volume, we have endeavored to let children and teenagers speak for themselves and, while aware of the limits of their freedom of action, to assess their degree of agency. We pay close attention to ideas and ideals about Jewish children and Jewish childhood expressed by those with a degree of power over these children's lives—not only their parents but religious and communal leaders, educators, medical professionals, and political activists engaged in mobilizing young people. We have examined how these individuals developed specific agendas on the raising and education of children and what values to instill in them according to their age, class, and gender.

Volume 37 will have as its theme “Jews in Polish and German Lands: Encounters, Interactions, Inspirations.” It

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will analyze the multifaceted topic of the encounters of Jews living in the Polish lands with those from the German lands, their interactions and the way they influenced each other from the late Middle Ages up to the present. Shared history and civilization, kinship,

and economic cooperation, as well as geographical proximity molded this complex relationship. It has been neglected both in the historiography of Polish Jews and in that of German Jews, each of which tends to view its history in a frame set by national territories and boundaries, thus marginalizing the manifold interactions which have shaped both Jewish cultural spaces since the Middle Ages.

The volume shifts the focus to the consequences of these encounters that helped to shape both Jewries. Moving beyond the paradigms which see German Jewry as the model for Jewish modernization and the Jews of the Polish lands as embodying authentic Jewish values, it seeks to investigate mutual influences and interactions. It takes as its inspiration both the approach of “multiple modernities” as formulated by the late Israeli sociologist Shmuel Eisenstadt and Joseph Roth's dictum that almost all *Ostjuden* were once *Westjuden* and almost all *Westjuden* derive from *Ostjuden*. Accordingly, it seeks to question the sharp division we sometimes find



in historiography between these two communities and to overcome the view that they were both characterized by a fixed identity shared by all of their members. The histories of Jews in German lands and those further east were marked by strong entanglements but also by a clear understanding of the differences between the two communities. These two aspects of their shared history cannot be separated from each other.

Two decades since Volume 18 of the yearbook was dedicated to “Jewish Women in Eastern Europe,” Volume 38 will explore issues of gender under the rubric “Gender and Body in East European Jewish History.” A central category in a comprehensive understanding of Jewish history and culture in this region, the developing concept of gender will be put in conversation with analyses of the history of the body, of health and illness, and matters linked to these, such as medical treatment, sport, emotions, sexuality, dress, life cycle, violence, and the way these are reflected in religious thought and practice and in literary and artistic works. Inter-ethnic and

*The volume’s underlying assumption is that ideas and practices around gender had a sustained impact on the Eastern European Jewish community, as they have had on all human societies, and were intimately linked to perceptions and practices around the human body.*

intercultural perceptions of gender will be investigated as will the relationship of gender and the body to social, religious, and political movements. The volume aims to produce an intersectional and multidisciplinary analysis of Eastern European Jewish history and culture and the way developments within this community were related to the larger society.

The volume’s underlying assumption is that ideas and practices around gender had a sustained impact on the Eastern European Jewish

community, as they have had on all human societies, and were intimately linked to perceptions and practices around the human body. This connection was often informed by religious and esoteric traditions related to diet, family life, health, and illness, which in turn shaped the understanding of the role of women and men and their relationship. The volume explores the role of emotions in experiencing gender and the body, both in a positive manner in the form of desires, hopes, and dreams for personal and emotional fulfillment and also in negative manifestations such as rage, dislike, rejection, and hatred of the other. These harmful expressions often resulted in the body becoming the target of physical violence, including sexualized violence, which in recent years has emerged as a major theme in studies of the historical experience of Eastern European Jews. Finally, the volume will illuminate the topic through biographies of individuals committed to the processes of personal and societal emancipation, as well as of those who sought to preserve traditional gender roles. ■

## Two New Volumes from the Ringelblum Archive

Antony Polonsky

The major project undertaken by the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute to publish the material in the Ringelblum archive in Polish as *Archiwum Ringelbluma. Konspiracyjne Archiwum Getta* came to a close with the publication in 2021 of the thirty-eighth volume in the series. A shortened version of the project in English has produced seven volumes so far. Two have just appeared and both deal with important aspects of the impact of Nazi policy toward the Jews in occupied Poland. The first, *Accounts from the General Government*, edited by Aleksandra Bańkowska, provides a wealth of material on the way the Nazis dealt with the Jews in the General Government, the area of occupied Poland which was not directly incorporated into the Third Reich. The second, *Accounts from the Annexed Territories: Warthegau, Reichsgau Danzig-West Prussia, Regierungsbezirk Zichenau, Upper Silesia*, edited by Eleonora Bergman,



Monika Polit, Magdalena Siek, and Ewa Wind, describes how the Nazis first persecuted and then organized the deportation of Jews to death camps from areas directly incorporated into the Third Reich.

The project's publications appear under the auspices of the Oneg Shabbat program created by the Jewish Historical Institute and the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland, with the generous support of Taube Philanthropies and the Claims Conference. All the volumes are available online on the portals of Delet

(Jewish Historical Institute) and the Centralna Biblioteka Judaistyczna (CBJ). Hard-copy versions can be bought from the Jewish Historical Institute. ■

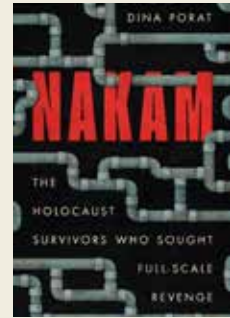
For more information, please visit the following websites: <https://delet.jhi.pl/en/>

Centralna Biblioteka Judaistyczna: <https://cbj.jhi.pl/documents/1186880/0/>

## *Nakam: The Holocaust Survivors Who Sought Full-Scale Revenge*

By Dina Porat

Stanford Studies in Jewish History and Culture  
Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2022



**N***akam* (Heb. vengeance) tells the story of the *Nokmim* (Avengers), a group of young Holocaust survivors who sought revenge following the crimes of the Holocaust. They planned to kill six million Germans by poisoning city water supplies and the loaves of bread distributed to German POWs. Porat examines the formation of the group and the clash between the humanistic values held by its members and their unrealized plans for violent retribution. ■

## *Jewish Primitivism*

By Samuel Spinner

Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2021

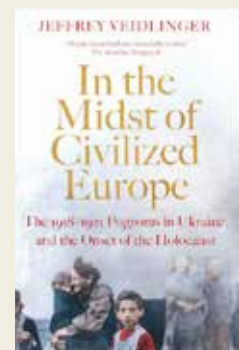
**A** European interest in so-called primitive peoples was adopted by Jewish writers and artists in the 20th century to explore urgent questions surrounding their own identity and status as insiders and outsiders. Jewish primitivism found expression in a variety of creative forms including works by Franz Kafka, Y.L. Peretz, and Else Lasker-Schüler. According to Spinner, these and other Jewish modernists developed an aesthetic that located the savage as something present within Europe, not far away. ■



## *In the Midst of Civilized Europe: The Pogroms of 1918–1921 and the Onset of the Holocaust*

By Jeffrey Veidlinger

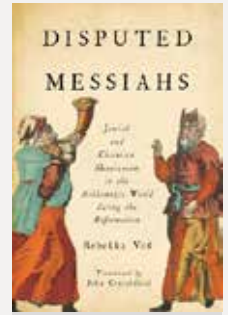
New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Co., 2021



**H**istorian Jeffrey Veidlinger argues that the conditions for the Holocaust were created during the anti-Jewish violence that swept Ukraine immediately after the Russian Revolution. Aid workers in Ukraine warned that Jews were in danger of extermination. Veidlinger describes this genocidal violence using archival materials, including thousands of witness testimonies, trial records, and official orders. These accounts show that various groups of people regarded the killing as an acceptable response to their problems. ■

## *Disputed Messiahs: Jewish and Christian Messianism in the Ashkenazic World during the Reformation*

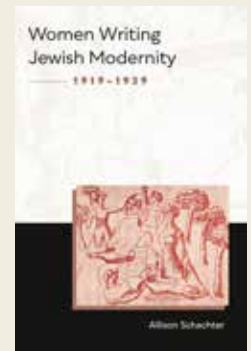
By Rebekka Voss, translated by John Crutchfield  
Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2021



This is the first comprehensive study situating Jewish messianism in its broader cultural, social, and religious contexts within Christian society. It examines how Jews and Christians each reacted to the other's messianic claims, apocalyptic beliefs, and eschatological interpretations, and how they adapted their own views of the last days accordingly. Voss offers a controversial but intriguing understanding of a paradoxical relationship between Jewish and Christian messianism. ■

## *Women Writing Jewish Modernity, 1919–1939*

By Allison Schachter  
Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2021



In this book Schachter rewrites Jewish literary modernity from the viewpoint of women. Focusing on works by inter-war Hebrew and Yiddish writers, she examines how women writers challenged the patriarchal norms of Jewish textual authority and reconceptualized Jewish cultural belonging. Literary modernity was not simply a conversation among men about women, she argues. Rather, women writers changed the terms of Jewish fiction in a manner that transcended the boundaries of minority identities. ■

## *Night without End: The Fate of Jews in German-Occupied Poland*

Edited by Jan Grabowski and Barbara Engelking  
Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2022



This is the English version of a two-volume Polish-language book, *Dalej jest noc: Losy Żydów w wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski* (2018), that sparked great controversy in Poland. The book relates the stories of Polish Jews during the Holocaust and argues that villagers and townspeople sometimes aided the Germans in their genocide. Publication of the book led to a lawsuit claiming that one of the essays, written by Engelking, defamed a village elder in the Podlasie region. The case raised basic issues of Polish collaboration in the Holocaust and received wide media coverage in Poland and abroad. ■

## *Nie chcemy Żydów u siebie. Przejawy wrogości wobec Żydów w latach 1944–1947*

(We Don't Want Jews among Us. Cases of Hostility to Jews in the Years 1944–1947)

By Julian Kwiek

Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Nieoczywiste, 2021



Many Holocaust survivors encountered violence when they returned home and attempted to reclaim their property. Kwiek has identified nearly 1,120 cases of Jews murdered in this period owing to the persistence of pre-war antisemitism and the belief that the post-war government was dominated by Jews. The result was a mass flight of Jews, so that by January 1952 only around 70,000 remained in Poland. ■

## *Wiedza (nie)umiejscowiona. Jak uczyć o Zagładzie w Polsce w XXI wieku*

([De-]stabilized Knowledge. How to Teach the Holocaust in Poland in the 21st Century)

Edited and with introduction by Katarzyna Liszka

Kraków: Universitas, 2021



This collection of essays, edited by Katarzyna Liszka of the Taube Center for Jewish Studies at the University of Wrocław, examines how Polish schools teach the Holocaust. It describes the moral dilemmas that many Poles faced as the genocide progressed. One school of historians has highlighted the involvement of Polish society in the genocide, while a more apologetic group has stressed that a significant number of people offered assistance to the Jews despite the brutal Nazi oppression of the Poles. ■

## *Four Winters. A Story of Jewish Partisan Resistance and Bravery in WWII*

During WWII, more than 25,000 Jews fought against the Nazis and their collaborators from within the forests of Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine. Many of them had witnessed the murders of their families and friends before escaping into the woods. Armed with whatever weapons they could build, trade or steal, Jewish men and women organized and fought against the Nazi war machine that was rolling across Eastern Europe. Award-winning filmmaker Julia Mintz's documentary, *Four Winters*, depicts the heroic deeds and lives of a handful of surviving Jewish Partisans in this compelling documentary, released in 2022. ■



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Awards and Appointments

# KLIO Prize Awarded to Konstanty Gebert

On November 24, 2022, at the inauguration ceremony of the Thirtieth Historical Book Fair in Warsaw, the results of this year's KLIO Prize for authors and publishers of historical books were officially announced. The jury, headed by Prof. Tomasz Szarota, awarded the first prize in the author category to journalist Konstanty Gebert for his book *Ostateczne rozwiązania. Ludobójcy i ich dzieło* (The Final Solution. Mass Murderers and Their Work) published by Agora, Warsaw.

Before Raphael Lemkin coined the term genocide in reference to the Holocaust, the mass murder of whole groups of people, particularly in colonial settings, was widespread. Gebert, in his important and wide-ranging study, traces the history of the genocides of the last 120 years, from the murder of the indigenous inhabitants of Namibia by Imperial Germany, the Armenian genocide



Konstanty Gebert.  
Photo by Mateusz Skwarczyk, Agencja Gazeta. Used with permission

perpetrated by the Turks, the crimes committed in Cambodia by the Khmer Rouge, and those in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, to the extermination of the Uighurs in China today. He asks about their origins and consequences and whether and how we can stop them, so that the slogan “Never again” is not an empty platitude. According to former Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rotfeld, Gebert’s book attempts to answer questions posed by thinkers of the

stature of Raphael Lemkin, Hannah Arendt, and Zygmunt Bauman. “He advances and documents the thesis that the Holocaust was not a one-off and exceptional event in the history of Europe and the world,” declared Rotfeld. “His observations make us reflect on what makes normal people become the perpetrators of genocide. And why immanent evil becomes in the eyes of the perpetrators a moral value.” ■

## Announcing the Brayndl Prize

Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Ronald S. Lauder Chief Curator of POLIN Museum's core exhibition, has received a new honor in acknowledgement of her contribution to the study of the Yiddish folksong. The Brayndl Prize, which takes Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's Yiddish name, will be awarded for an essay that analyzes the performance and/or the transmission of the Yiddish folksong. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the YIVO Yiddish Folksong, an online project, which she conceived and directed. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett has been involved with the digitization of this landmark collection of sound recordings at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

"I am beyond thrilled, humbled, and honored by this prize in my (Yiddish) name," said Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. "I thank Inside the Yiddish Folksong and the Center for Traditional Music & Dance for sponsoring this prize, and Mark Slobin for initiating it, and Michael Alpert,



Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett.  
Photograph by Maciej Jaźwiecki, Used with permission

Walter Zev Feldman, Itzik Gottesman, Ethel Raim, Pete Rushefsky, and Josh Waletzky for supporting the prize and the Yiddish folksong field."

The Yiddish Folk Song Project has made key contributions to the field during the past half-century, and rising interest in the topic led the project's founders to encourage new thinking with this prize. For consideration of the Brayndl Prize, essays should be 6,000-10,000 words and submitted by May 1, 2023. The prize consists of a \$100 cash award, a historic Jewish cookbook from Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's

collection, and publication at [www.yiddishfolksong.com](http://www.yiddishfolksong.com) or in a peer-reviewed journal.

"The time for the Yiddish folksong has come," declared Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "the ground having been prepared by the discovery, revival, renewal, and creative engagement with klezmer music. I eagerly await submissions for the first prize!"

For more information and to apply, please visit [www.yiddishfolksong.com/brayndl-prize](http://www.yiddishfolksong.com/brayndl-prize). ■

## Janusz Korczak Award to Dr. Harvey Cohen

At a ceremony on October 21, Harvey Cohen, MD, PhD, was awarded the 2022 Janusz Korczak Medal from the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada. Dr. Cohen received the medal for his career-long commitment and dedication to children's health and well-being through clinical care, teaching, and research. The medal honors Janusz Korczak, a renowned doctor and author who ran a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw from 1911 to 1942. Dr. Korczak and his staff stayed with their children even as German authorities deported them to the Treblinka death camp in August 1942.

Dr. Cohen is the Deborah E. Addicott-John A. Kriewall and Elizabeth A. Haehl Family Professor of Pediatrics at the Stanford School of Medicine. For the past 12 years, he has also served as the Katie and Paul Dougherty Medical Director of Palliative Care at Packard Children's Hospital. From 1993 to 2006, he was the Arline and Pete Harman Professor and Chair of the Department of



Dr. Harvey Cohen, at right, the Deborah E. Addicott-John A. Kriewall and Elizabeth A. Haehl Family Professor of Pediatrics at the Stanford School of Medicine, was honored with the 2022 Janusz Korczak Medal from the Janusz Korczak Association of Canada. Tad Taube, at left, Chairman of Taube Philanthropies, and Dianne Taube, Vice Chair, nominated Dr. Cohen for the award.

Photograph by Jennifer Hedman-Chase. Used with permission

Pediatrics, and Adalyn Jay Chief of Staff at Packard Children's Hospital. He was nominated for the award by Tad and Dianne Taube.

At the award ceremony, Dr. Cohen said, "Janusz Korczak's heroism and selflessness are unforgettable. He was a renowned advocate for children's rights and

independence. I am humbled to be associated with him as an advocate for children." ■

For more information please visit <https://www.januszkorzak.ca/dr-harvey-cohen-is-awarded-the-janusz-korzak-medal/>.



# The Hoover Institution Library & Archives Welcomes Taube Family Curator for European Collections

**D**r. Katharina Friedla has joined the Hoover Institution Library & Archives as the Taube Family Curator for European Collections. She will oversee one of the largest and most comprehensive parts of Hoover's international holdings and succeeds Maciej Siekierski, Emeritus Curator for the European Collections.

Friedla holds a PhD from the Department of History, Institute of Eastern European and Jewish History, University of Basel, Switzerland. She has studied history and East European and Jewish studies at the Free University in Berlin and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Part of her research brought her to Hoover in 2017, when she worked mainly with the Polish World War II Collection, exploring Polish-Soviet relations, particularly in the context of Jewish refugees.

“My visit to the Hoover Institution Library & Archives was very productive, and I



Dr. Katharina Friedla, Taube Family Curator for European Collections for the Hoover Institution Library & Archives.

Photograph courtesy the Hoover Institution

benefited greatly from its rich archival holdings. I received kind support here, which helped me make real progress in my research,” Friedla states. Her research at the Library & Archives resulted in the publication of several articles and just recently two co-edited anthologies, including *Polish Jews in the Soviet Union (1939–1959): History and Memory of Deportation, Exile, and Survival* (Academic Studies Press, 2021).

Her initial collecting and research projects will include materials on the Polish People's Republic and German Democratic Republic (GDR), anti-communist opposition in Eastern Europe with special emphasis on women activists, and documentation related to World War II. Friedla declares, “I am truly excited and thrilled to join this team and to continue Maciej Siekierski's work.” ■

Read more about Dr. Katharina Friedla: <https://www.hoover.org/profiles/katharina-friedla>

## POLIN Cultural Caretakers Award

At a gala ceremony on November 30, POLIN Museum bestowed its eighth annual POLIN Awards to honor persons and organizations that have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to preserving the heritage of Polish Jews. Katarzyna Łaziuk from Minsk Mazowiecki was acknowledged “for her efforts in organizing commemoration events, educational trips, visits of Israeli youth to the school where she worked until recently, organizing international projects, and nurturing contacts with the descendants of Minsk Jews.” Runner-up awards went to the Sadecki Shtetl Association for promoting Polish-Jewish dialogue and remembrance of Holocaust victims among the residents of Nowy Sącz and the Sadecczyzna region, and to the Krzepice School Complex for its project “Krzepice—Two Cultures, Common Memory.” In addition, a Special POLIN Award was presented to the Cukerman’s Gate (Brama Cukerman) Foundation, which has been



Katarzyna Łaziuk, winner of the eighth edition of the POLIN Award, presented annually by POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews.  
Photograph by Maciej Jaźwiecki, Used with permission

restoring and protecting the memory of Polish Jews in Zagłębie Dabrowskie (Będzin and surrounding areas) and Upper Silesia (Gliwice and surrounding areas).

“Each year, the competition jury faces a particularly difficult task of selecting the finalists,” said Radosław Wójcik, head of the 2022 POLIN Award competition, noting that the four recipients were chosen from 117 applicants. “Among our finalists there are people who act out of the call of their

hearts or a sense of mission, sacrificing a lot of their energy and time. This goes to show that working together to preserve the heritage of Polish Jews and standing together against indifference and oblivion yields results.” ■

For more information, visit <https://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2022/12/02/poland-polin-award>.

## OBITUARY

# Marian Fuks

September 28, 1914–October 23, 2022

Antony Polonsky

**M**arian Fuks, who died last month at the venerable age of 108, was the author of a large number of books on Polish-Jewish history and on the role of Jews in journalism and music in Poland. He was also for many years a leading figure at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, from which he retired only a few years ago. Born in Płońsk, he came from an acculturated Jewish family—his father, Boris, had been a member of the Polska Organizacja Wojskowa (Polish Military Organization), set up by Józef Piłsudski to support his military activity in Poland during WWI. His cousin, also named Marjan, was a leading Polish journalist, dubbed “the first photo reporter of the Second Republic.” Fuks always described himself as a “Pole of Jewish origin.” He was, however, proud of his Jewish background, writing with characteristic irony in his remarkable autobiography, *Mój wiek XX—Szkice do memuarów* (Poznań 2009):



Marian Fuks.

Photograph by Grzegorz Kwolek. Courtesy of the Jewish Historical Institute

“My family belonged to the priestly caste, the Cohanim ... many years later I learned... that they constituted a religious aristocracy within the Jewish world and that they were intelligent, energetic, impetuous and...arrogant.”

His family moved to Praga in Warsaw when he was a child and he was devoted to the city, about which he wrote an impressive monograph on Jewish life, benefitting from its cultural and musical riches.

His father’s business suffered in the Depression and he was not able to study journalism until his twenties, only to have his studies interrupted by compulsory military service. In 1939, he attempted unsuccessfully to enlist in the Polish army and, after the Polish defeat, was arrested by the Soviets and sentenced first to prison and then to a labor camp. He was released as a result of the Sikorski-Maisky pact and, after failing to be accepted in the Anders Army,

joined the Berling Army as a quartermaster in the First Warsaw Armoured Brigade. He fought with this formation until the end of the war, participating in the liberation of Praga, where he learned of the death of his parents and two sisters in the Holocaust, and in the battles of the Magnuszewski bridgehead in the summer of 1944 and of the Pomeranian Wall in February 1945. He brought back from Berlin a hoof from the statue of Frederick the Great, which finally ended up in the Warsaw Museum of the Polish Army.

In his memoirs, Fuks said, “I do not downplay the dramatic fate of Polish Jews in the camps for deportees, in the gulag and in Soviet prisons. Nothing justifies these crimes and they were certainly not intended to save those who fled to the East.”

He went to write that there was “no point in expressing ‘gratitude’ for the Soviet hell, but one should also not forget that this was at the same time luck in misfortune, rescue which came out of a nightmare. The fate of the over 100,000 Jews who returned from the Soviet hell would not have been any easier or more secure in the

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German-occupied Polish lands and few would have survived. Because of this they did not share the fate of three million Polish Jews, victims of the Holocaust.”

After the war, he continued to serve, unwillingly, according to his own account, in the Quartermaster’s Department of the Polish army, rising to the rank of colonel. Service in the army provided a degree

of economic security and by then he had re-married and had two children. (His first wife died in 1986). He was able now to return to his first love, journalism, writing for the department newsletter, *Przegląd Kwatermistrzowski*, and also continued his studies, obtaining a doctorate with a thesis on the Polish military press, *Problematyka polskiego czasopiśmiennictwa wojskowego w latach 1918–1939*. In 1967, he was dismissed from the army as a result of the “anti-Zionist” (in fact, antisemitic) campaign initiated by the Polish authorities after the Israeli victory in the Six Day War.

Initially, Fuks found it difficult to find a new position. However, the Jewish Historical Institute had undergone a major crisis as a result of the “anti-Zionist” campaign. Its director, Artur Eisenbach, was forced to resign and another leading figure, Adam Rutkowski, emigrated to France. Fuks agreed to take the position of director, which he held in 1968–69, until he was replaced by Szymon Datner, and then again, after Datner’s resignation at the end of 1970, until he was replaced by

Maurycy Horn. Between 1971 and 1973 he was principal editor, and from 1974 to 1988 secretary, of the editorial board of the institute's main journal, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, a position he held for twenty years. In 1978 he received his habilitation in the Political Science Department of Warsaw University with his study of the inter-war Polish press, which was subsequently published as *Prasa żydowska w Warszawie 1823–1939* (Warsaw, 1979). In 1993, he was made a full professor.

Fuks was a prolific author. He always intended to produce a revised version of *Prasa żydowska w Warszawie 1823–1939*, and was perhaps better known for his edition of the diary of the chairman of the Warsaw Judenrat, *Adama Czerniakowa—Dziennik Getta Warszawskiego* (Warsaw, 1983), over which he clashed with Polish censors. It has been translated into French, German, and Italian and used in the production of the English edition edited by Raul Hilberg, Stanisław Staronia, and Józef Kermisz. Among his other important books are *Pamięci Żydów Polskich* (Warsaw, 1983) and

*Marian Fuks was a lively conversationalist, even in his old age, and a major figure in Jewish Warsaw. His life reflects the complex and tragic history of Polish Jews in the 20th century. While he suffered much, he always maintained a positive outlook both on his own situation and that of Polish-Jewish relations.*

*Martyrologia i walka Żydów polskich* (Warsaw, 1988); *Muzyka ocalona. Judaica polskie* (Warsaw, 1989); *Żydzi w Warszawie. Życie codzienne. Wydarzenia. Ludzie* (Poznań 1992, second edition, 1996, third edition, 1997); *Pan sobie żarty stroisz? Humor Żydów polskich z lat 1918–1939* (Poznań, 1993), and *Księga sławnych muzyków pochodzenia żydowskiego* (Poznań 2003). One of his major achievements as a

musicologist was that he found the forgotten birthplace of the Polish composer Stanisław Moniuszko, in Belarus, in the lost estate of Ubiel, where, thanks to his efforts, a museum was established and memorial bust erected.

Marian Fuks was a lively conversationalist, even in his old age, and a major figure in Jewish Warsaw. His life reflects the complex and tragic history of Polish Jews in the 20th century. While he suffered much, he always maintained a positive outlook both on his own situation and that of Polish-Jewish relations. He will be sorely missed. He is survived by his wife, Ula Kobiałko, and his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, to whom we express our condolences. ■



The monument commemorating the Ringelblum Archive.  
Courtesy of *The Commemoration of Ringelblum Archive* (Upamiętnienie Archiwum Ringelbluma)



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