



Chess players at the Jewish Club in Łódź. The mural, completed in 1960 by Adam (Aron) Muszka and no longer extant, depicts the Holocaust. Łódź, 1975. Photograph by Chuck Fishman. Used with permission.

# *Gazeta*

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## Message from Irene Pipes

**President of the American Association  
for Polish-Jewish Studies**

**Founder of *Gazeta***

Dear Members and Friends,

I visited Kraków and Warsaw in October. Kraków is the home of the Instytut Judaistyki (Jewish Studies Institute) of the Jagellonian University and the Marcell and Maria Roth Center for Research on the History and Culture of Polish Jewry and Polish-Jewish Relations. Since its founding in 2014 the Center has undertaken a wide range of activities. My goal was together with Professor Michał Galas, Director of Instytut Judaistyki and Professor Monika Adameczyk-Garbowska of the Marie Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin, to establish an annual prize to be awarded annually to the author of the best book written on the history and culture of the Jews in Poland. The prize is named after two pioneers of that subject, Professor Józef Gierowski, formerly Rector of the Jagiellonian University and founder of the Instytut Judaistyki and Professor Chone Shmeruk founder and director of a similar institute at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I am happy that the prize has been established and will be awarded for the first time in 1918.

I was very saddened by the death of Charles Merrill, the obituary is in this issue of *Gazeta*. Charlie was committed to fostering a democratic society in Poland and to improving Polish-Jewish relations. My son attended the Commonwealth School he established in Boston. We often spent time with him and his wife Mary when she was alive and since then with Julie Boudreaux who took wonderful care of him.

With good wishes for the holidays,

Irene Pipes  
*President*



Irene Pipes

# Message from Tad Taube and Shana Penn

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



Tad Taube



Shana Penn

When we examine a topic, context matters. Consider the first article in this issue of *Gazeta*, a review of a new book about the history of Hasidism and its origins in the Polish lands. The authors argue that contrary to the standard interpretation, Hasidism did not arise during a period of crisis in the Jewish community, but of comparative peace and normalcy. Far from being a break with Jewish tradition, they say, Hasidism continued and elaborated on Jewish pietism. By placing Hasidism in different contexts than we might expect, the authors offer quite a different understanding of Hasidism's history and significance for Jews centuries ago and even today.

Other stories in this issue of *Gazeta* also raise issues of context, such as the one about museums and their audiences in the post-Jewish spaces of today's Poland. The author explains that museums can change the intellectual context in which students and others analyze historical events such as the Holocaust, and in that way change how the events are understood. Yet another article in this issue reports on a POLIN Museum conference about the impact of the Russian revolution not only on the Jewish experience, but also on the whole region of Eastern Europe. Here too, changing the context opens new possibilities for understanding.

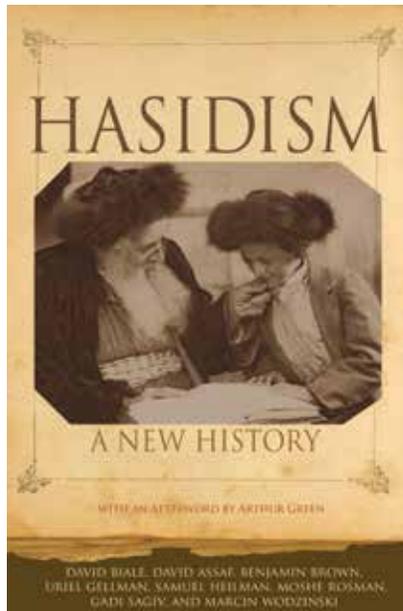
It is not surprising that we have so many articles that address the issues of context, for *Gazeta* itself is an effort to find meaning through changed context. While recognizing and honoring those we lost in the Holocaust, *Gazeta* seeks to acknowledge the remarkable thousand-year history of Polish Jews (and their descendants in the Diaspora) and the revival of the Jewish community in Poland as it regains its place in the world. By placing the years of destruction within the context of such a rich history and culture, we at *Gazeta* hope to open the way to a broader understanding of the Polish Jewish past – and present.

Tad Taube and Shana Penn  
*Chairman and Executive Director*

## FEATURES

# Hasidism: A New History

**H**asidism is one of the most dynamic religious movements in the modern world. Originating in the southeastern corner of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the mid-eighteenth century, it became a mass movement of the Jews of Eastern Europe. Hasidism transformed the Jewish religion in several significant ways. It taught the importance of joy in the worship of God. It also organized itself around charismatic leaders, called *rebbe*s (in Yiddish) or *tsaddikim* (in Hebrew). The followers of each of these leaders were called Hasidim, a word that means “pietists,” but came to mean “disciples of a *rebbe*.” The *rebbe*s founded courts, some of them quite opulent, to which their Hasidim made pilgrimage. In many cases, the leaders founded dynasties, some of which have lasted since the eighteenth century. In these ways, and others, Hasidism created forms of



Cover Image, courtesy of D. Biale.

*Hasidism emerged in a relatively stable period of the history of the Polish Jews, rather than in a time of crisis.*

religiosity that were entirely new in the history of Judaism.

An earlier generation of scholars, such as Simon Dubnow and Gershom Scholem, saw Hasidism as a product of various crises in the Polish-Lithuanian

**David Biale, Ph.D.**

*Emanuel Ringelblum Distinguished  
Professor of Jewish History*

*Department of History and  
Director, Humanities Institute,  
University of California, Davis*

Commonwealth. They held that Israel Ba'al Shem Tov was the founder of a movement that challenged the rabbinical establishment. And they saw eighteenth-century Hasidism as the highpoint in the movement's history.

*Hasidism: A New History* argues against these views. The book is the product of a unique collaboration of eight scholars from the U.S., Israel and Poland. The authors met for four summer residencies in Leipzig, Germany for the purpose of writing collectively. The result is a work of broad scope but with a strong narrative thread that starts in the eighteenth century and ends in the twenty-first.

The authors claim that Hasidism emerged in a relatively stable period of the history of the Polish Jews, rather than in a time of crisis. Israel Ba'al Shem Tov was not a rebel against his community but instead a communal official, a Kabbalist who

wrote amulets. He assembled a circle of followers, who were not much different from other pietists of the day and he did not set out to found a movement.

It was only a decade or more after the Ba'al Shem Tov's death in 1760 that a movement began to form around the disciples of Dov Ber, the Maggid of Mezeritsh, himself a member of the Ba'al Shem Tov's circle. It was also at this time that the first opposition to Hasidism developed, led by Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna. It seems possible that the emergence of this opposition caused the early Hasidim to begin to see themselves as belonging to a movement.

*Hasidim: A New History* also challenges the conventional view by arguing that the real flourishing of Hasidism as a mass movement took place in the nineteenth century, rather than the eighteenth. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Hasidism had spread to Central Poland, Galicia,

*[A]lthough Hasidism claims to be opposed to the modern world, it has adopted innovations of the modern world in order to thrive and grow.*

Hungary and Romania, in addition to its birthplace in the southeastern regions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Perhaps 30-40% of the Jews of these areas counted themselves as Hasidim. It was then that the Hasidic court developed into its full expression. The leadership became overwhelmingly dynastic and these dynasties acquired specific character. Moreover, as a movement that was geographically dispersed, Hasidism was lived by its members not only in pilgrimages to the *rebbe*, but also in the *shtibl*, the local worship room that served each community.

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, Hasidism entered into an age of crisis as urbanization, secularization and emigration drained its followers toward new identities. World War I created a catastrophe for Jews generally in Eastern Europe and for Hasidism specifically. Many courts were forced for the first time to move to cities, especially Vienna and Warsaw. This was the beginning of the urbanization of Hasidism, a phenomenon that continues today.

In the interwar period, Hasidism faced additional challenges from the religious oppression of the Bolshevik regime and the mass abandonment of religion on the part of many Polish Jews. And then came the Holocaust, which destroyed the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe.

Remarkably, the movement regenerated itself with its surviving *rebbe*s and their

Hasidim, creating new homes in Israel, North America and elsewhere. Hasidim today number as many as three-quarters of a million adherents. They have been forced to adapt to life in a democratic, secular United States (as well as other Western democracies), something utterly foreign to their experience earlier. They also needed to develop a response to living in a secular Jewish state, especially challenging since virtually all Hasidic leaders had rejected Zionism when it first appeared on the scene.

The Hasidim developed a new sense of place. Eastern Europe became holy territory with the place names originally associated with dynasties now fixed and irreplaceable. Pilgrimage to these sites grew in popularity alongside pilgrimage to the transplanted courts of the *rebbe*s. Hasidism thus became a global movement with Hasidim using airplanes

*Remarkably, the movement regenerated itself with its surviving rebbes and their Hasidim, creating new homes in Israel, North America and elsewhere.*

where they had earlier traveled on foot, in horse-drawn carriages and on trains. The internet has also served to bind far flung Hasidic communities together, even as the leadership has expressed grave reservations about its temptations.

Thus, although Hasidism claims to be opposed to the modern world, it has adopted many of the innovations of modernity in order to thrive and grow. Indeed, Hasidism must be understood as a product of the modern world, no less than secularism. It is, in fact, one of the most important elements in modern Jewish history. ■

*Hasidism: A New History.*  
David Biale, David Assaf,  
Benjamin Brown, Uriel  
Gellman, Samuel Heilman,  
Moshe Rosman, Gadi Sagiv  
& Marcin Wodzinski.  
(Princeton University  
Press, 2017)

# Museums and their Audiences in the Post-Jewish Heritage Spaces of Present-Day Poland

**Jakub Nowakowski**

*Director, Galicia Jewish Museum*

In 2016, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Museum was visited by a record 2 million people. This number exceeded the 2015 visitor total by 300,000 and the 2001 total by more than 1.5 million.

In Poland, until the fall of communism, the Holocaust hardly existed in public discourse and was not part of the school curriculum. This only changed in the 1990s with the collapse of the communist regime in Poland. A standard Holocaust education has since been incorporated into the curriculum through the implementation of a mandatory study tour to the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum into the public schools' history programs.

Through educational projects run by the Galicia Jewish Museum we see that inclusion of the Auschwitz Museum study tour into the school curriculum has indeed resulted in increased awareness among students of Auschwitz as a site of annihilation primarily



The Ulma Family Museum of Poles Saving Jews in World War II, in Markowa. Image courtesy of the museum.

*[F]or many students their visit to Auschwitz is their only educational moment where topics associated with Jews are discussed.*

of Jews. These observations are confirmed by survey data conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS, in Polish: *Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej*). Thus, while in 1995, only 18% of respondents regarded Auschwitz as “primarily the site of the annihilation of the Jews,” in 2015 this percentage increased to 33% of all respondents. At the same time,

45% of respondents identified Oświęcim primarily as a site of Polish martyrdom. The results of this and other surveys should be read in the context of the historical experiences of Poles who are not Jewish. In the same survey, 23% of respondents stated that they had a family member who had been imprisoned in Auschwitz or one of the other German concentration camps. Among those surveyed older than 65, this percentage increased to 30%. In Poland, and perhaps comparably in Israel, Auschwitz has a distinctively strong personal dimension. The meaning of Auschwitz and the Holocaust for the Poles today

has been discussed in number of recent articles and publications, most importantly perhaps, in the studies by professor Marek Kucia, director of the Institute of Sociology at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

What, therefore, should be the role of Jewish museums in such a specific environment? This is an important question, as for many students their visit to Auschwitz is the only moment during their education where topics associated with Jews are discussed. Students learn about how Jews died without having any idea how they lived and who they were. These observations are confirmed by survey data conducted by the Centre for Public Opinion Research (CBOS, in Polish: *Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej*). For 45% of respondents, the words *Jews, Jewish people* are associated mainly with the phrases *Second World War, concentration camps, Auschwitz, Holocaust, persecution*. Only 6% of those

*Will the story of the Ulma family, however worthy of commemoration, be used as a tool to obscure the darker aspects of [Polish-Jewish] relationships?*

surveyed associated these phrases (as a first choice) with *Judaism, kosher food, or Jewish culture* in general.

The memory of Polish Jews and Polish-Jewish relations is being shaped today by a number of museums, including those opened recently under the new, right-wing Polish government.

An indicator of the chief goals and opinions of the new politics of memory may be the Museum of Poles Rescuing Jews during World War II, which opened in March 2016. The museum was built in Markowa, a small town in eastern Poland. This location is not accidental. In late 1942, the Polish Ulma family gave

shelter to eight Jews who had escaped from nearby ghettos. The Ulmas hid the Jews on their farm for a year and a half until March of 1944 when, as the result of a denunciation from a Polish police officer, all were shot by the German military police.

Although small, the museum is distinguished by contemporary, minimalist and economical architecture, which refers to typical rural buildings characteristic of the eastern regions of Poland. In front of the museum is a square with illuminated tablets listing the names of Poles who were murdered by the Germans for aiding Jews as well as those of the Righteous Among the Nations from southeastern Poland. There is also a memorial dedicated to Jews murdered in the Holocaust. Those Jews who survived are symbolized by the Orchard of Remembrance planted near the museum.

What will be the impact of this institution on young visitors' perceptions of Polish-Jewish

relations during the Second World War? Will the story of the Ulma family, however worthy of commemoration, be used as a tool to obscure the darker aspects of these relationships?

In the last few years, museums dedicated to the history of local Jews have been opened in many towns and villages in Poland, including in Kraków, Oświęcim, Chmielnik, Częstochowa, Będzin, Gliwice and Dąbrowa Tarnowska.

The quality and scope of their exhibitions vary, as does the scale of their activities. Some are open seven days a week, and others only for a few hours a day. Most of them are a visible symbol of the interest of the local community in their own history, a manifestation of the trend that resulted in the opening of other historical museums dedicated to the Warsaw Uprising (Warsaw), the Second World War (Gdańsk) and Emigration (Gdynia).

All of these museums stand in the shadow of the world-

class POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. POLIN Museum tells the 1000-year-old history of Jewish life in Poland in eight distinct galleries, only one of which chronicles the Holocaust in Poland.

What, should be the main goals and tasks of other Jewish museums in present-day Poland?

Should these institutions—being located in a space so inseparable from the Holocaust—focus on detailed aspects of this particular history? Or should they not rather create a narrative in which the Holocaust would be described as one chapter, in the broader picture of the Jewish presence in this part of the world?

In addition to the obvious educational goals, it seems that Jewish museums in post-communist Europe should engage with the contradictory stereotypes present among its visitors. Yet, sooner or later the museums will have

to face not only the country's extremely complicated past, but also contemporary matters connected to the issue of identity and responsibility for the surrounding world. Such matters will need to include questions that address who should take responsibility for commemorating the history of local Jewish communities in the towns and villages where those communities no longer exist.

All of this means that new Jewish museums in this part of the world should not devote themselves only to presenting history. After all, visible fragments of the past exist around us and are direct reflections of the history of Polish and Eastern European Jews. Conceivably, new Jewish museums should devote more effort to restoring consciousness of the existence of those very traces in the landscape of present-day Poland and their significance as part of both Polish and Jewish heritage. ■

## CONFERENCE REPORTS

# Jews and Others: Ethnic Relations in Eastern and Central Europe from 1917 and Onwards

October 2-4, 2017

**Dr. Antony Polonsky**

*Chief Historian*

*POLIN Museum of the*

*History of Polish Jews*

In early October 2017, an international conference on *Jews and Others: Ethnic Relations in Eastern and Central Europe from 1917 and Onwards* was held at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. It was organized by the POLIN Museum, the Leonid Nevzlin Research Center for Russian and East European Jewry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Kennan Institute (Washington, D.C.). Sponsored by the NADAV Foundation, Israel, it took place within the framework of the POLIN Museum's Global Education Outreach Program (GEOP) and was made possible thanks to the support of the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, the William K. Bowes Jr. Foundation, and the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland.

The Russian revolutions of February and October 1917 played a key role in defining the twentieth century by virtue of the processes they launched, the entities they helped create and

the reactions they triggered. The legacies of these transformative events and their aftermath, not least, the collapse of empires and the birth of nation-states, still reverberate in many ways throughout Eastern and Central Europe. The conference held at the POLIN Museum was the second of a series of three devoted to this important topic, timed to coincide with the centenary of the two Russian revolutions. The first conference, *The Hundred-Year Legacy of the Russian Revolution and the World Today: How the Revolution Divided, United, and Shaped a Continent*, was held at the Kennan Institute (Wilson Center) in Washington, D.C. in April 2017 and the final conference will take place in December at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The aim of the conference at the POLIN Museum was to make it possible for scholars to reassess the profound implications of the events of 1917-1918 through a regional lens. While focusing on

the Jewish experience, the participants were also asked to revisit the shared past of the different national groups throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Before the conference opened, participants were taken on a guided tour of the permanent exhibition of the POLIN Museum accompanied by Antony Polonsky, Chief Historian of the Museum, which enabled them to see how these issues were presented in the museum. After opening presentations from Dariusz Stola, Director of the POLIN Museum, Ariel Borschevsky, Nadav Foundation, Jonathan Dekel-Chen, Director of the Nevzlin Centre and Izabella Tabarovsky, Senior Program Associate and Manager for Regional Engagement with the Kennan Institute, a session was devoted to "Minorities in Interwar East-Central Europe: in Search of New Loyalties?" with contributions by Maciej Górny of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Jan Rybak of the European University Institute in Florence

*The conference [was] the second of a series of three devoted to this important topic, timed to coincide with the centenary of the two Russian revolutions.*

and Tatjana Lichtenstein of the University of Texas at Austin. In the evening, there was a lively public discussion of the complex and disputed topic, “Jews and Revolution: Truths and Myths.” Because of illness, Paweł Śpiwak of the Jewish Historical Institute could not take part. The panel was moderated by the journalist Jacek Żakowski of the weekly *Polityka* and the participants were the eminent historian of People’s Poland, Andrzej Paczkowski, the filmmaker Krzysztof Zanussi and Konrad Zielinski of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin.

The second day opened with a session “The Russian Revolution, East-Central European Jewry, New Nation States” with presentations by Ines Koeltzsch of Vienna and Harriet Murav of the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. This was followed by ‘Jews in the ‘New’ Poland: Violence, Antisemitism and New Identities,’ in which the participants were Marcos

Silber of the University of Haifa, Aneta Stępien of Trinity College, Dublin and Grzegorz Krzywiak of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The next panel had as its theme “Jews and National Movements in East-Central Europe before, during, and after World War I,” with contributions from Dariusz Staliunas of the Lithuanian Institute of History, Antony Polonsky (London) and Jolanta Żyndul of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

The final session was devoted to “Jews and Non-Jews in the ‘New’ East-Central Europe,” with contributions from Kamil Kijek of the University of Wrocław and Victor Karady (of the Central European University, Budapest).

On the final day, there were two panels. The first, “The ‘Jewish Question’ in the Politics of Nation-States in East-Central Europe” featured Dovile Troskovaite of Vilnius University, Eglė Bendikaite of the Lithuanian Institute of

History and Claire Le Foll of the University of Southampton. The second was devoted to “The Presence of Jewish Heritage in Current National Narratives and the Historical Memory of East Central Europe” with presentations by Yaroslav Hrytsak of the Catholic University of L’viv, Izabella Tabarovsky, Semion Goldin of the Hebrew University and Kamil Kijek. The conference closed with a general discussion of the issues raised in which the discussants were Antony Polonsky, Dariusz Stola, Jonathan Dekel-Chen, Dariusz Staliunas and Yaroslav Hrytsak. In all, this was a most productive conference. New contacts were made and many important issues were raised and clarified. It is hope that the papers presented will be published and all are looking forward to the final conference in this series in Jerusalem. ■

The full program for the conference can be found at: [www.polin.pl/en/system/files/attachments/program\\_jo\\_bez\\_lanczy.pdf](http://www.polin.pl/en/system/files/attachments/program_jo_bez_lanczy.pdf)

# The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. History-Legacy-Memory

Third Congress of International  
Researchers of Polish History.  
October 11-14, 2017 in Kraków

**Dr. Antony Polonsky**

*Chief Historian*

*POLIN Museum of the*

*History of Polish Jews*

The Third Congress of International Researchers of Polish History took place in Kraków in mid-October 2017. This conference is held every five years and it aims to bring together scholars from around the world who carry out research on Polish history as well as Polish culture, art and science. The theme of this year's meeting was *The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. History – Legacy – Memory* (in Polish Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów. Historia – Dziedzictwo – Pamięć). It sought to examine what was the nature of the 'First Republic,' how was its memory preserved in the years that followed its partition and the extent to which it has influenced the history and present-day politics of Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus which have emerged on its territory as well as its impact on Europe as a whole. In addition, it aimed to investigate to what extent the Polish-Lithuanian state of the early modern period was unique state and to what degree

*More than 250 historians from nearly forty countries gave papers in nearly thirty sessions.*

its history was similar to the histories of the neighbouring nations as well as the states in other parts of Europe and the world.

The conference was under the patronage of the Marshal of the Polish Senate, Stanisław Karczewski, and the Mayor of the City of Kraków, Jacek Majchrowski. Its organizers were the Polish Historical Organization, the Jagiellonian University and the Pedagogical University in Kraków and it was made possible through the support of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Museum of the History of Poland, the International Centre for Culture in Kraków and the Foundation for the Support of Polish Scholarship. The

conference organization, headed by Prof. Krzysztof Zamorski President of the Programme Committee and Prof. Andrzej Chwalba President of the Programme Council worked with remarkable efficiency and everything went without a hitch.

The conference was on a very large scale. More than 250 historians from nearly forty countries gave papers in nearly thirty sessions. In all, its proceedings were attended by more than 1,300 people, many of them university and high school students from the Kraków area. The first keynote speech was given by Antony Polonsky, Chief Historian of the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. He concentrated on the crisis of the mid-seventeenth century which highlighted the weaknesses of the Commonwealth which led, more than a century later, to its partition—the political, social and economic dominance of the Polish noble estate, the

*szlachta*, and the exclusion of other classes from social and political power, the weakness of the elected monarchy and the first use in 1652 of the *liberum veto* and the increasing alienation of non-Catholics, above all the Greek Orthodox Cossacks. It was resistance of the *szlachta*, based on its belief that the greatest danger to Polish liberties was the alleged desire of the Polish monarchy to introduce *absolutum dominium* by force of arms, which led them to oppose the military reforms of King Jan Kazimierz. His defeat in the civil war of 1665-1667 doomed all subsequent attempts to create a large standing army in the Commonwealth and paved the way first to Russian hegemony and then to partition.

The second inaugural lecture was given by Aron Petneki of the University of Miskolc who examined the similarities between the phenomenon of ‘Sarmatism,’ with its stress on ‘golden liberty’ and martial prowess in pre-partition Poland-



Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from the Union of Lublin, 1569 to 1667. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

Lithuania and eighteenth century Hungary. The two lectures were then followed by the award by the Marshal of the Polish Senate of the *Pro Historia Polonorum* prize for the best book written in a non-Polish language. This went to Professor Robert Frost of the University of Aberdeen for his book, *The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385-1569* (Oxford, 2015), volume 1 of the proposed Oxford of Poland-Lithuania. In addition, prizes for their contribution to the development

of the study of Polish past were awarded to Adam Zamoyski and Paul Knoll, Emeritus Professor of Medieval History at the University of Southern California. In addition, the Wacław Felczak and Henryk Wereszycki prize established by the Polish Historical Association was awarded to Peter Rassek of the Institute of History of the Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg for his book *Für ein freies Polen und liberales Preussen: Czatoryskis Deutschlandspolitik am*

*Vorabend der Revolution 1848.* (For a free Poland and a liberal Prussia: Czartoryski's policy towards German on the eve of the Revolution of 1848, Frankfurt-am-Main, 2016). An additional award was given to Istvan Kovacs of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Science. The first prize in the Stanisław Herbst award for the best MA thesis in the field of history was awarded to Arkadiusz Bożejewicz for his thesis *Oblężenie Torunia w XVII i XVIII wieku Perspektywa porównawcza* (The sieges of Toruń in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A comparative perspective), the second prize to Stanisław Witecki for *Księgozbiory w kulturze ksiązeki plebanów diecezji płockiej w czasach biskupa Michała Jerzego Poniatowskiego* (Book collections in the literary culture of parish priests in the Płock bishopric under Bishop Michał Jerzy Poniatowski) and the third prize to Jędrzej Tomasz Kałużny *Średniowieczne powinności wojskowe*

*miast i mieszczaństwa w Polsce Centralnej w świetle nowożytnych lustracji królewskich* (Medieval military obligations of the towns and burghers of central Poland according to the contemporary royal inspections).

The topics discussed at the conference covered an enormous amount of ground ranging from 'Interstate Unions in the History of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth,' 'Self-Administration - Citizenship in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth' and 'Why did a large state in Central Europe, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, fall in the 18th Century?' to 'The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Political Memory of Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia and Israel after 1990,' 'Representations of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in Contemporary Literature, Theatre and Visual Culture, 1945-2017' and 'The History

of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in Textbooks and School Curricula.' The quality of the papers was extremely high and it is hoped that the best of them will be published in due course.

There were also a number of public events connected with the conference. These included an exhibition of the works of Arthur Szyk in the Palace of Fine Arts on Plac Szczepański which was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and attended by Jan Dziędziczak, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was accompanied by a public lecture on *Arthur Szyk's Illumination of Boleslaw the Pious' Statute of Kalisz* by Aleksander Skotnicki, one of the pioneers of Polish-Jewish dialogue in Kraków. In addition, there was a special exhibition in the Main Hall of the Pedagogical University *To Whom Does Poland Belong? Propaganda Postcards from World War I*, and all participants were

taken on a conducted tour of the exhibition *Dziedzictwo* (Legacy), dedicated to the Polish cultural heritage from Middle Ages until today in the National Museum in Kraków. An impressive concert of music from the Polish royal court was held in the Mariacki Church.

Finally a public discussion on the theme ‘The Memory of the Heirs of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: A Shared or Conflicted Memory?’ was held in the International Cultural Centre on the Rynek. This was chaired by the Director of the Centre, Jacek Purchla, a former mayor of Kraków and his deputy, Beata Nykiel. The discussants were Alvydas Nikzentaitis (Lithuania), Robert Traba (Poland/Germany), Neliy Bekus (Great Britain), Henadz Sahanovich (Belarus), Larry Wolff (USA), Yaroslav Hrytsak (Ukraine) and Tomasz Szubert (Poland/Austria). The discussion addressed the important issue of the historical memory of the Polish-Lithuanian

*How, over the last hundred years, have national narratives perceived their own history in the context of their belonging to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?*

Commonwealth among the nationalities that lived within its borders. Until today, no broad comparative studies have been undertaken on this topic while national historiographies lack references to the points of view of their neighbours. In the view of the discussants, there is a vital need, therefore, to define what collective memory is for each of these nations as well as to how research on this should be conducted. A number of important questions were raised. How, over the last hundred years, have national narratives perceived their own history in the context of their belonging to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth? How did the historical

politics of the partitions and, most recently that of the Soviet Bloc, influence these narratives? To what degree has the collective memory of the unwilling heirs been employed for immediate political or propaganda needs? To what extent is this process still taking place? Is it possible to go beyond post-colonial discourse and memory conflicts? How should a common memory, one which unites and not divides, be built? Is this even possible? These are important questions for the future of East-Central Europe and the great achievement of the conference is that they were discussed in a dispassionate and collegial manner by historians from all the countries of the area and also by friendly observers from further afield. ■

The full program for the conference can be found at: [www.coph2017.syskonf.pl/conf-data/coph2017/files/PROGRAM\\_3Kongres\\_ANG.pdf](http://www.coph2017.syskonf.pl/conf-data/coph2017/files/PROGRAM_3Kongres_ANG.pdf)

# Conferences Mark Centenary of Bolshevik Revolution

October and November 2017

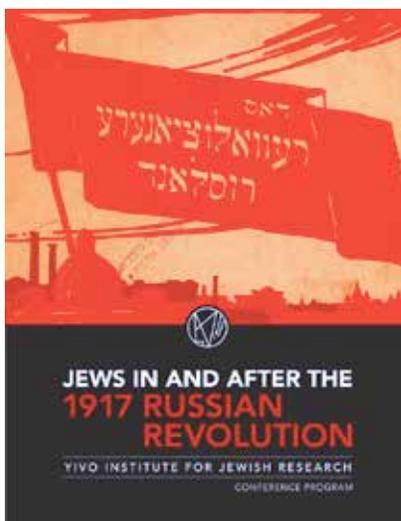
**Dr. Antony Polonsky**

*Chief Historian*

*POLIN Museum of the*

*History of Polish Jews*

It is now one hundred years since the revolution of 1917 overthrew the Tsar Nicholas II and brought the Bolsheviks to power. For Jews, the fall of Tsarist Russia brought what looked like liberation: the end to the Pale of Settlement which restricted the areas where most Jews could live and the abolition of all antisemitic laws, including quotas in education and discriminatory military service requirements. Soviet Russia also became the first country in the world to declare antisemitism a criminal offense. However, the revolution also opened the floodgates for the greatest massacre of Jews before the Second World War in the civil war and its aftermath in 1918-21, resulting in 50,000 to 100,000 deaths. Once Bolshevik rule was consolidated, Jews entered into nearly every sphere of Russian life. However, in time, they were purged from most of these positions and much of the singular



Front page of the program for YIVO's *Jews in and after the 1917 Russian Revolution* conference. Used with permission from YIVO Library.

*Among the issues examined were the social, economic, political, and cultural conditions which made possible the revolutions of 1917.*

richness of Jewish cultural life in Russia was eventually obliterated.

In this issue of *Gazeta* we describe the conference held at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews on *Jews*

*and Others: Ethnic Relations in Eastern and Central Europe from 1917 and Onwards.*

On October 15-16, a related conference on *Ukrainian Jews: Revolution and Post-Revolutionary Modernization* was held in Kiev. It brought together scholars from Russia, Israel, the United States, Ukraine, Hungary and western Europe for presentations on topics ranging from Jewish involvement in the Communist Party to images of synagogues in revolutionary art. One of the central issues raised was whether the leaders of Ukraine - which attempted to establish its independence in the aftermath of the revolution - were responsible for the pogroms of the Russian civil war. According to Vitaly Chernoiivanenko, the president of the Ukrainian Association for Jewish Studies and one of the organizers of the conference, the Ukrainian leader Symon Petliura cannot be held responsible for the pogroms. In his opinion, "Petliura himself didn't

support the pogroms, but he couldn't control the situation.” This view was rejected by Gennady Estraiikh, Clinical Professor of Jewish History at New York University who argued that “as a leader, he didn't stop the pogroms, and in that way Petliura was responsible — just like Hitler is responsible for the Holocaust. A military leader is always responsible for what his soldiers do.”

In New York City, the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research organized a conference in early November on *Jews in and after the 1917 Russian Revolution* (November 5-6). Jonathan Brent, the executive director of the YIVO Institute, was well aware that the issues raised by the conference, including the role of Jews in Stalin's secret police and Jewish communist spies in America during the Cold War are controversial, but stressed that it is important to discuss these subjects even if they make people uncomfortable.

Among the issues examined were the social, economic, political, and cultural conditions which made possible the revolutions of 1917, the different immediate reactions to the Revolution during 1917 and the careers of Jewish revolutionary leaders Esther Frumkin, Leon Trotsky and Raphael Abramovitch. Panels also analyzed Jewish life in the Soviet Union, including Jewish involvement in the secret police, residual underground Jewish Orthodoxy during the Soviet Union and the Jewish literary and musical culture which emerged in the Soviet Union.

In Moscow, the Jewish Museum and Tolerance Center is planning special exhibitions and events to mark the 100th anniversary of the revolution. The exhibit, *Freedom for All? The History of One People in the Years of Revolution*, which opened on 17 October, features documents from Jewish political parties during

the revolution and the writings of Jewish revolutionaries and artists such as Leon Trotsky, Yuliy Martov, Marc Chagall and Vera Inber. Other events include an art exhibit of the works of Jewish revolutionary-era artists, a series of lectures and concert with Jewish revolutionary songs and poems performed in Yiddish.

The issues raised in these gatherings are complex, difficult and disputed. It is a matter for satisfaction that they can be critically discussed in these forums. ■

More information, including the full conference program, can be found at: [www.uaajs.org.ua/en/node/128](http://www.uaajs.org.ua/en/node/128)

# Jewish Heritage Tourism in the Digital Age

October 23-25, 2017. Venice, Italy

**Ruth Ellen Gruber**

*Author and Coordinator of the web site*

[www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu](http://www.jewish-heritage-europe.eu)

*A project of the Rothschild Foundation*

*(Hanadiv) Europe*

The conference Jewish Heritage Tourism in the Digital Age, which took place in Venice, Italy Oct. 23-25, gathered around 90 participants from all over Europe, as well as Israel and the United States. The more than 30 speakers ranged from academics and analysts, to tour guides and other tourism professionals, to museum personnel, Jewish community representatives, and other experts and stakeholders.

Organized by Jewish Heritage Europe along with the Rothschild Foundation (Hanadiv) Europe and Beit Venezia, the conference was a specialized follow-up to the working seminar on managing Jewish built heritage held in Kraków in April 2013, and the cross-disciplinary conference on Jewish cemeteries in Europe held in October 2015 in Vilnius.

We organizers wanted the widest possible range of speakers — both geographically and



Collage of images promoting the conference *Jewish Heritage Tourism in the Digital Age*.

thematically — and it was not an easy task to narrow down a choice of invited speakers. We were therefore delighted that so many other stakeholders and interested individuals registered to attend.

Sessions were hosted at the Venice Jewish Community's function room, Sala Montefiore, and also at the Ghimel Garden kosher restaurant on the Campo del Ghetto Nuovo.

Key areas of discussion were the challenges and opportunities posed by Jewish heritage tourism and travel in Europe, both in places where there is an active local Jewish population and in places where there are sites of Jewish heritage but no organized Jewish community.

Speakers addressed the growing diversity and energy of Jewish and Jewish-themed tourism in Europe, both for

Jews and for others. Some addressed specifics regarding, for example, how to manage tourists, or the creation and viability of Jewish heritage routes and itineraries. There was also discussion of new technology such as mobile apps, interactive museums, web sites, and the like.

Specific sessions at the conference focused on:

- The Interpretation of Jewish heritage sites
- Marketing Jewish Heritage
- Mapping, Trails, and Virtual Tourism
- Managing Visitors
- Tourism as Education
- Festival Judaism
- Jewish Cultural Festivals
- Jewish Quarters/Networks of Jewish Sites

The first night of the conference saw Jewish Heritage Europe Coordinator Ruth Ellen Gruber in conversation with Prof. Shaul Bassi, the co-founder of



Tourists in the Scuola Spagnola, Venice. © Ruth Ellen Gruber

Beit Venezia, to celebrate 25 years since the first edition of her book *Jewish Heritage Travel* and 15 years since her book *Virtually Jewish* were published.

Discussion was lively, intense, and provocative, both during the formal sessions and at coffee breaks and meals.

Participants also had the opportunity to take part in a Jewish heritage tourism experience: a guided tour of

the Venice Jewish Museum (and tour of three of the five synagogues in the Ghetto) and/or a visit to the ancient Jewish cemetery, on the Lido, which dates back to the 14th century. Here they were taken around the cemetery by Aldo Izzo, a retired sea captain in his 80s who has cared for the cemetery for more than 30 years.

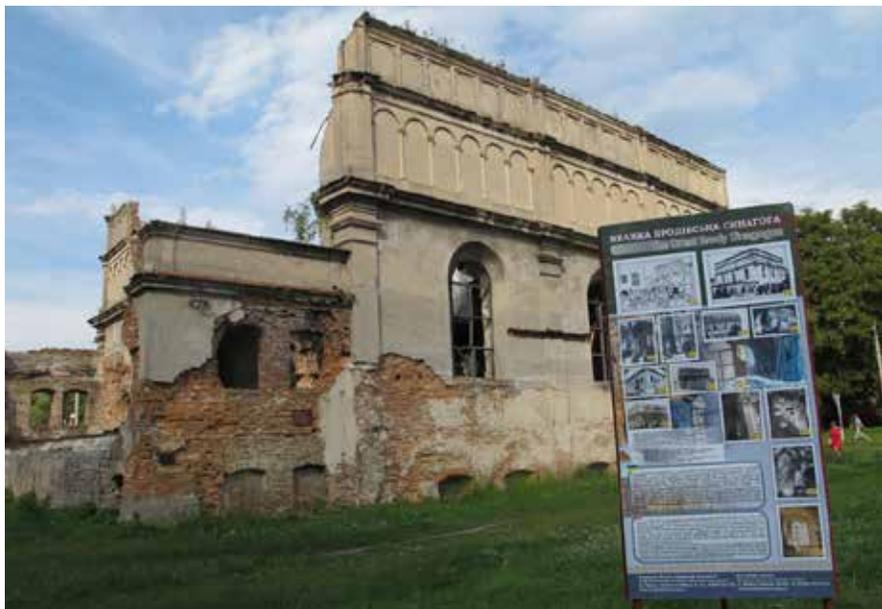
The conference concluded with a wide-ranging roundtable on the challenges of being a tourist attraction in three

cities where mass tourism is reality: Venice, Kraków, and Amsterdam.

“One of the points in the thought provoking final roundtable [...] was exactly the human aspect of heritage and the preservation of the memory in regards to the people and the fragile nature of these human ‘monuments,’” Venice Guided Tours by Luisella Romeo wrote on their Facebook page. “Aldo Izzo gave a lesson to everyone. First, as a person that worked to preserve memory against oblivion and second, as a person that remembers people...” ■

*Reprinted with permission from Ruth Ellen Gruber, Jewish Heritage Europe*

<http://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/>



Signage at the ruin of the synagogue in Brody, Ukraine. © Ruth Ellen Gruber



Ruth Ellen Gruber and Shaul Bassi, at the Venice Jewish Heritage Tourism conference. © Ruth Ellen Gruber

# Polish-Jewish History Revisited: Honoring Professors Gershon Bacon and Moshe Rosman

November 7-9, 2017

**Agnieszka Jagodzińska**  
*Taube Department of Jewish  
Studies, University of Wrocław*

Two leading scholars in the field of Polish-Jewish history, Professors Gershon Bacon and Moshe Rosman, retired this year. To mark this event, their Alma Mater – Bar-Ilan University, hosted a conference in their honor, “Polish Jewish History Revisited.” The conference provided an opportunity not only to summarize the academic achievements of both scholars but also to verify what is happening in the field of Polish-Jewish Studies.

Professors Bacon and Rosman have more in common than just their shared interest in the history of Polish Jews. They both started their studies in the 1970s – at a time when the field of Polish-Jewish Studies was just developing as a previously neglected field of study. They both wrote their Ph.D. theses under the supervision of Professor Andrzej Kamiński and received their diplomas from Columbia University in New York. Both scholars are also



Moshe Rosman and Gershon Bacon.  
Photo by Uriel Gellman

ordained rabbis. Although at different points in time, they both eventually moved to Israel where they taught at Bar-Ilan University and embarked on their respective research on the history of Polish Jews over the next 30 years. Most remarkable in their common paths, they were both the first two scholars allowed to study in communist Poland from the Iron Curtain of the then Soviet Union, and to

focus on Polish-Jewish history and archival research.

Professor Moshe Rosman is a scholar of the early modern period who takes a special interest in history of Hasidism and the history of Jewish women, relations between Polish magnates and the Jews, and historiography. Rosman’s quest for historical Baal Shem Tov led to the publication of the ground-breaking study

on the founder of Hasidism, while his analysis of the postmodern challenges to the Jewish historiography (published in English as *How Jewish Is Jewish History?* and translated into 3 other languages) remains a fundamental methodological guidebook for any scholar in the field of Jewish Studies.

Professor Gershon Bacon, who specializes in political, social, religious and intellectual history of Jews of Poland and Russia in the 19th and 20th centuries, authored or edited several studies which explored various aspects of that history: from the history of Orthodox Jewry in Europe, through the history of Jewish women in Poland, to political and ideological movements in European Jewry. His important book, *The Politics of Tradition*, describing the history of Agudat Yisrael in the interwar period in Poland, has been published in English and Hebrew.

The conference confirmed the observation of the late Professor Jacob Goldberg who said that “there is no history of Jews without history of Poland and no history of Poland without history of Jews.” The twenty-one scholars from Israel, Poland, Canada and Germany that took part in the event made this statement evident. It was encouraging to observe that the papers presented at the conference, inspired by the scholarship of Bacon and Rosman, testify to great diversity and vibrant developments which have taken place since both scholars lay the groundwork in the field of Polish Jewish Studies. ■

The full program of the conference can be found at:  
[www1.biu.ac.il/File/news/filebiu\\_17\\_10\\_19\\_9\\_42.pdf](http://www1.biu.ac.il/File/news/filebiu_17_10_19_9_42.pdf)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

# Polish Government Will Finance Restoration of Warsaw Jewish Cemetery

During a special meeting, Polish Deputy Prime Minister Piotr Glinski informed World Jewish Congress (WJC) CEO and Executive Vice President Robert Singer that the Polish government will invest 100 million zloty (approximately \$28M USD) to restore the Warsaw Jewish Cemetery. This 200-year-old historic landmark contains 250,000 graves and an estimated 150,000–200,000 tombstones within 83 acres of

grounds in various stages of neglect and repair. Restoration of the cemetery will make the gravesites more accessible and dignified for the more than 40,000 people who visit each year.

Mr. Singer welcomed the Polish government's decision on behalf of its President, Ronald S. Lauder, and the WJC, stating: "The World Jewish Congress urges all European governments,

including in Poland, to make every effort to curb anti-Semitism and xenophobia once and for all. It is critical that all minorities, and all people, living on this continent enjoy the basic human right of living in peace and security."

Founded in 1806, the Warsaw Jewish Cemetery at Okopawa Street contains some of the largest numbers of 20th century Jewish burial sites



Warsaw Jewish Cemetery. Photo by Aleksander Schwarz.

in Poland prior to World War II. It is considered the most recognizable of the 1,400 Jewish cemeteries in Poland, and one of the largest in Europe. In 1943, during the Nazi occupation of Poland, the Germans burned the cemetery records and destroyed many of the gravesites, which

contained rich cultural knowledge on tombstones and cultural markers. Restoration and preservation will no doubt yield important genealogical and historical information.

The decision to restore the cemetery was adopted by

the Polish parliament with a nearly unanimous vote of 416 in favor and four opposed. The government is expected to transfer the funds to Poland's Cultural Heritage Foundation, which will implement the restoration in cooperation with the Warsaw Jewish Community. ■



Warsaw Jewish Cemetery. Photo by Aleksander Schwarz.

# Responsibility & Empowerment: A Civic Role for Jewish Museums

Council of American Jewish Museums Annual Conference  
February 25-28, 2018, in Washington D.C.

The next annual conference for the Council of American Jewish Museums (CAJM) will take place in Washington, DC, on February 25-28, 2018. The conference, titled *Responsibility & Empowerment: A Civic Role for Jewish Museums*, focuses on the responsibilities,

challenges, and opportunities these museums face in their mission of public education. The brochure asks participants: “What does bravery look like in a museum, and when is risk unnecessary? What are our ultimate responsibilities—as public centers, Jewish

institutions, and keepers of history?” ■

More information, as well as a registration form, can be found on the CAJM’s website: [www.cajm.net/conferences-events/washington-dc-in-2018/](http://www.cajm.net/conferences-events/washington-dc-in-2018/).

# Annual International Polish Jewish Studies Workshop at Rutgers

March 5-6, 2018. Rutgers University

On March 5-6, 2018, Rutgers University will host the 5th Annual International Polish Jewish Studies Workshop. The title of the workshop is “Centering the Periphery: Polish Jewish Cultural Production Beyond the Capital,” and the two days are divided into six panels, each focusing on a different subject: Geographies; Translations; Traditions; Audiences; High and Low Cultures; and Embodiments

and Spaces. The organizers of the conference, the Polish Jewish Studies Initiative, aspire, according to their website, to “bring together scholars and activists from a range of institutions and disciplines who would like to see Polish and Jewish culture more intentionally and productively intertwined.”

For any questions about this year’s workshop, please contact Nancy Sinkoff,

Associate Professor of History and Jewish Studies and Director of the Center for European Studies at Rutgers University, at [nsinkoff@rutgers.edu](mailto:nsinkoff@rutgers.edu) or Natalia Aleksion, Associate Professor of Modern Jewish History at the Graduate School of Jewish Studies at Touro College, at [natalia.aleksion-madrzak@touro.edu](mailto:natalia.aleksion-madrzak@touro.edu).

# Annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy Coming to Warsaw

August 5-10, 2018

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

Genealogy has become a passionate pursuit for many people, and international Jewish genealogical conferences have grown enormously since the first conference in 1981. For the first time, the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) will hold its annual conference in Warsaw. Outside of Jerusalem, London, Paris, and Toronto, all previous conferences have been in the United States. Therefore, it is a major event for the conference to be held in Poland, which once had the largest Jewish population in the world.

The Jewish genealogical conference in Warsaw has stimulated much interest, and about 1,000 participants are expected to attend. Many attendees will combine the conference with visits to their ancestral towns. Unique at this conference will be the fact that two very important institutions in Warsaw connected to Jewish history,



Visitors consult a map at the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

***For the first time, the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) will hold its annual conference in Warsaw.***

the new POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, will be partnering with the IAJGS. Members of the Jewish genealogical community from

all over the world are expected to attend the conference whether their roots are in Poland or elsewhere.

The conference will last for six days, Sunday, August 5, through part of Friday, August 10. The main language of the conference will be English, and talks in different languages (e.g., Polish) will typically have a translator. Most sessions will be filmed and recorded, and these recordings will become available for purchase

when the conference is over. Some sessions will be streamed live so that people who cannot attend the conference can view the sessions from afar.

Typically, there are as many as eight sessions at any one time, starting early in the morning and lasting until late in the afternoon. In addition to talks, there are workshops, panel discussions, meetings of special interest groups (SIGs), films, and displays by vendors with products relevant to genealogy. The evenings are filled with special programs.

**For the 2017 schedule and program, see:** [http://s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2017/program\\_schedule.cfm](http://s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2017/program_schedule.cfm)

A special Facebook page has been established for those interested in attending the 2018 conference: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IAJGS/>. It serves the dual purpose of providing a place for officials of the conference to make announcements to prospective attendees and

of giving the prospective attendees an opportunity to share information with each other and ask questions.

**The official website for the conference will become active soon at:** <http://www.iajgs2018.org>.

**Taube Jewish Heritage Tours partners with IAJGS to offer group and family tours before, during, and after the conference.**

As a supplement to the conference, various organizations, including the Taube Jewish Heritage Tours, will be handling tours of Warsaw and Kraków and of particular areas of Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and other places for those who wish to visit the communities where their families once lived, to see the historic Jewish centers of learning and culture, and to journey to Holocaust sites to mourn the loss of relatives and all who perished. ■

For information about various tour opportunities during, before and after the conference, please contact: [iajgs2018@taubejewishheritagetours.com](mailto:iajgs2018@taubejewishheritagetours.com) and visit: [taubejewishheritagetours.com](http://taubejewishheritagetours.com)

**To submit abstracts to the 38th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, please see the information below:**

The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies, in cooperation with The Polish State Archives and co-hosted by POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, invites submissions for abstracts for the 38th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy.

The deadline for submitting abstracts is: December 31 (at midnight; Central Time).

For more information on submissions, go to: [https://s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2018/abstract\\_submission.cfm](https://s4.goeshow.com/iajgs/annual/2018/abstract_submission.cfm)

# JCC Kraków Early Childhood Center “Frajda”

**JCC** Kraków officially celebrated the opening of its Early Childhood Center, Frajda, with a ribbon cutting ceremony on October 16. Frajda was made possible through the generous lead grant of Eric and Erica Schwartz of New York City, who spoke at the ceremony about the revival of Jewish life. “The preschool years are the ideal time for learning about Jewish culture, values, and traditions. We are so pleased to make it possible for Kraków’s Jewish families to send their children to a school that focuses on providing this foundation for the youngest members of the community,” Erica Schwartz said.

The Early Childhood Center’s name, Frajda, means “joy” in both Yiddish and Polish. Created in consultation with leading Jewish early childhood education experts from Poland, the United States, and Israel, Frajda’s state-of-the-art facility can serve up to 22 students.



Children play at Frajda, at JCC Kraków.  
Photograph by Jakub Włodek. Used with permission of JCC Kraków.

Three dedicated teachers will deliver instruction this year, and the JCC will provide transportation to students from across the city. The program is headed by Małgorzata Pustul, who directed a public preschool in Częstochowa for 20 years.

The outdoor Taube Family Playground and the Shana Penn Garden, to be opened in Spring 2018, will be

sponsored by Taube Philanthropies ([www.taubephilanthropies.org](http://www.taubephilanthropies.org)) and will augment Frajda’s activities. ■

# Celebrating the Late Bat Mitzvah of Zosia Radzikowska

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

In November 2017, in a festive ceremony at the Tempel Synagogue in Krakow, Zosia Radzikowska, on her 82nd birthday, became an adult Bat Mitzvah. An active member of the Kraków JCC, Zosia participates in Shabbat dinners and many other activities, but a Bat Mitzvah would not have occurred to her had it not been for the Kraków rabbi, Avi Baumol, and his wife, Hadley, who conceived of the idea. The Bat Mitzvah ceremony consisted of a Mincha service, performed by Conservative Rabbi Samuel Rosenberg from Israel, during which Zosia read from the Torah, and a Havdalah ceremony in which she participated with Rabbi Baumol, an Orthodox rabbi. Zosia was tutored for her Torah portion by Conservative Rabbi George Schlesinger of the San Francisco Bay Area, who served as a Taube Visiting Fellow in Krakow last May.

As a young child, Zosia Radzikowska survived the Holocaust with her mother



Zosia Radzikowska speaks to congregants at her bat mitzvah, on the day of her 82nd birthday. Rabbi Samuel Rosenberg stands behind her. Photograph by Darek Gawlik. Used with permission of JCC Kraków.

by using a false identity and leading a Christian life. Her father and other relatives were killed. After the war, she returned to Kraków and went briefly to a Jewish school, but, under the many years of communism in Poland, she maintained no Jewish connection. She became a lawyer and law professor, married, and raised a family.

In 1991, after communism had lost control in Poland, she connected with other Jewish survivors, became an active

member and one of the leaders of Kraków's branch of the Association of "Children of the Holocaust" in Poland, and returned to Judaism. She became active in the Jewish Community Center in Kraków, which opened in 2008. She also sings in the JCC choir, attends the senior club, studies with the rabbi, and edits the monthly newsletter. ■

(Source: <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/a-survivors-bat-mitzvah-in-krakow/>)

## 2017 Jan Karski and Pola Nirenska Prize

On 14 November, the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute presented the Jan Karski and Pola Nireńska Prize to Dr. Eleonora Bergman and Professor Tadeusz Epsztein, scientific editors of the complete edition of the Ringelblum Archive. Piotr Cywiński, director of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum stated that “completing this work required faith, vision, and persistence. The work initiated by Oneg Shabbat consisted of four stages: collecting and writing down materials, burying and finding the Archive, publishing the Archive in printed and digital versions, and the English translation, which has just begun. The fact that all these stages have actually happened is unbelievable. It is the second birth of Oneg Shabbat: the work and the people who created it.” Professor Epsztein emphasized that this extraordinary collection is



Tadeusz Epsztein and Eleonora Bergman, recipients of the 2017 Jan Karski and Pola Nirenska Prize.

Image courtesy of Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute.

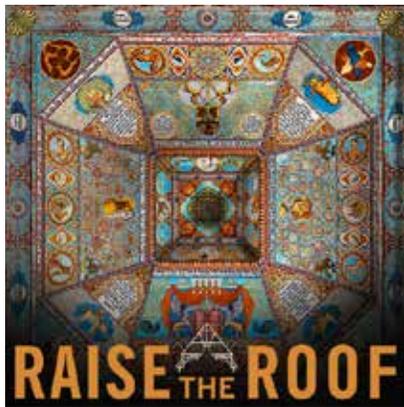
especially important by the fact that the material “tells the story of actual people, of their experience, their suffering.” Dr. Bergman added that “it is not up to us to decide what parts of the collection are important. The fact of the archive itself is what is important for history and for the future of its understandings.”

The Jan Karski and Pola Nireńska Prize, established by Jan Karski in 1992 and jointly administered by YIVO Institute and the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, is awarded every year to authors of works dedicated to Polish-Jewish relations and documenting the Jewish contributions to Polish culture. ■

# Raise the Roof Broadcasts on U.S. Public Television

Trillium Studios is pleased to announce that its award-winning documentary *Raise the Roof* will have its American broadcast premiere on national public television. *Raise the Roof* will be broadcast as part of the Jewish Film Showcase, an exciting slate of three dynamic feature documentaries presented by The National Center for Jewish Film and distributed by American Public Television. The Showcase will begin broadcasting in late 2017 and continue through 2018.

*Raise the Roof* comes to public television after a highly successful international run of more than 150 festival and event screenings, having won six best documentary film awards. The film documents the ten-year journey of artists Rick and Laura Brown, co-directors of Handhouse Studio in Massachusetts, as they inspire more than 300 students and professionals to travel to Poland to rebuild Gwoździec, one of over



The replica of the Gwoździec synagogue roof, now on display at the POLIN Museum. Image used courtesy of Trillium Studios.

200 magnificent wooden synagogues destroyed in the Holocaust.

The original Gwoździec synagogue was built in the 18th century, at a time when these wooden synagogues were at the center of Jewish life in Eastern Europe. Elaborate and sophisticated, unique to their time and place, they flourished for centuries, growing more complex during this period of Jewish prosperity. As the Browns and their team hew the log structure and recreate the painted ceiling, they discover a little-known period of history when Jews and Poles worked

side-by-side to create stunning, mysterious, and profoundly meaningful buildings.

The production company behind the film, Trillium Studios, has at its helm the film's director and editor Yari Wolinsky. Yari has directed and edited narrative and documentary films for clients that include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston University, *National Geographic*, and PBS. He began documenting the Browns' efforts to rebuild the Gwoździec synagogue in 2007. Yari worked on the film with his father, producer Cary Wolinsky. Cary has published historical, scientific, and cultural photographic essays in *National Geographic* since 1977. He has been collaborating with his son on documentary films since 2006.

Visit [www.raisetherooftomovie.com](http://www.raisetherooftomovie.com) to view the movie trailer and press kit and for information about past and future screenings. ■

## 2017 POLIN Award Winners Announced

The third annual POLIN Awards were presented during a ceremony on Tuesday, November 28, 2017. The winner of the 2017 Award was Joanna Podolska, director of the Marek Edelman Dialogue Center in Łódź. Through her work at the Center, Podolska has helped preserve the memory of Łódź's pre-war Jewish community and made Jewish Łódź a "bustling element of the present," according to the POLIN Museum's website. Receiving distinctions were Dariusz Paczkowski, a graffiti artist and activist from Żywiec, and Ireneusz Socha, a musician and composer from Dębica. Paczkowski's work has long challenged anti-Semitism, xenophobia, gender discrimination, and fascism in the public sphere. Socha has worked for almost 40 years to preserve remnants of Jewish life in Dębica. Dariusz Stola, director of the POLIN Museum, said at the ceremony, "The POLIN Award allows us to express our gratitude and



Joanna Podolska, director of the Marek Edelman Dialogue Center, with her 2017 POLIN Award.

Photograph by Magda Starowiejska. Used with permission of POLIN Museum.

appreciation for people and organizations that work to preserve the heritage of Polish Jewish in Poland." Awardees received financial prizes from Tomek Ulatowski and Ygal Ozechov, distinguished donors of the museum. The 2017 Special Award was given to the Association of "Children of the Holocaust" in Poland, an

organization that works to build and connect a community of Holocaust survivors in modern-day Poland. The ceremony featured a concert by Kayah and Marcin Wyrstek. ■

For more information, visit: [www.polin.pl/en/news/2017/11/28/the-2017-polin-award-winners-announced](http://www.polin.pl/en/news/2017/11/28/the-2017-polin-award-winners-announced)

# Searching for the Roots of Jewish Traditions

XIth Congress of the European Association for Jewish Studies.

July 15-19, 2018 in Kraków

The Organizing Committee of the XIth Congress of European Association for Jewish Studies will be held in Kraków from 15th to 19th of July 2018. Sample conference topics will include:

- Ancient Jewish History and Archeology
- Biblical Literature
- Talmud, Midrash and Rabbinics
- Medieval and Early Modern Jewish History and Literature
- Hebrew Manuscripts
- Modern and Contemporary Jewish History
- Jewish Mysticism
- Hasidism
- Yiddish Literature
- Jewish Culture and Arts
- Jewish History in Central-Eastern Europe
- Polish-Jewish Heritage
- Holocaust Studies

- Libraries, Archives and New Technologies; History of the Book
- Jewish Museology
- Karaite Studies
- History and Culture of the State of Israel
- Jewish-non-Jewish Relations; Antisemitism

The conference fees (excluding accommodation or catering) are € 55.00 for EAJS Student Members, € 80.00 for EAJS Full and Associate Members and € 175.00 for non-members.

In order to qualify for the lower congress fee for EAJS members, membership subscriptions must be paid up to and including 2017. Members in arrears should pay membership fees from 2016. Please note also that the Organizing Committee will offer travel bursaries to PhD students and early career researchers from lower than median income

countries who wish to attend. For further information and additional inquiries, please visit <http://eajs2018.uj.edu.pl/> or contact the Organizing Committee: [eajs.congress2018@uj.edu.pl](mailto:eajs.congress2018@uj.edu.pl) ■

# The Poetic Life of Zuzanna Ginczanka

## *Can you be a refugee in your own country?*

On November 21, 2017, Open Republic and Teatr Polski im. Arnolda Szyfmana hosted their XIII Public Debate, focusing on the question: *Can you be a refugee in your own country?* The debate was held in memory of Zuzanna Ginczanka, the Polish-Jewish poet who was murdered in the Holocaust. Preceding the debate was a performance of *Ginczanka. Żar-Ptak/Fire-Bird*, an interdisciplinary artwork that combines elements of theater, music, and visual arts to celebrate Ginczanka's life and work. Originally premiering in January 2016, the piece was created by Kamilla Baar-Kochańska, Dorota Jarema, Paweł Szamburski, Bożena Keff, Robert Bęza, Marek Gajczak, and Gabi von Seltmann. ■



From the November 21 performance of *Ginczanka. Żar-Ptak/Fire-Bird*. Photographs by Gabi von Seltmann. Used with permission.

# POLIN GEOP Conferences and Opportunities

## GLOBAL EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAM NEWS

The mission of the Global Educational Outreach Program (GEOP) is to further international exchange in the fields of Polish Jewish Studies and Jewish Museum studies. GEOP is supported by the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life and Culture, the William K. Bowes, Jr. Foundation, and the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland.

### Call For Applications Now Open: GEOP Research Fellowships for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Candidates

Applications and letters of recommendation for 2018/19 should be submitted by Feb 28, 2018. For more information, and to submit an application, visit: [www.polin.pl/en/news/2017/11/02/call-for-applications-geop-research-fellowships-for-doctoral-and](http://www.polin.pl/en/news/2017/11/02/call-for-applications-geop-research-fellowships-for-doctoral-and)

### GEOP Distinguished Lecturer Series

The lecture *What is Kabbalah?* by Professor Moshe Idel, senior research fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute and the Max Cooper Professor of Jewish Thought at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is now online. To watch the lecture go to: [www.polin.pl/en/event/what-is-kabbalah-a-lecture-in-the-series-old-and-new-questions](http://www.polin.pl/en/event/what-is-kabbalah-a-lecture-in-the-series-old-and-new-questions)

#### Lectures:

##### *What is the Niddah?*

Niddah is the term used in Jewish tradition for a menstruating woman and, by extension, for menstruation, menstrual impurity, laws related to menstruation, and the like. The word derives from a Hebrew root (nidd/ndh) that pertains to “wandering” or “exclusion,” suggesting that a menstruating woman should be excluded from the community. The laws of “Niddah” affect observant Jews to this day. In this presentation, prof. Evyatar Marienberg will explore their

history from the Bible until today, and consider their impact on Jewish life in various ways, including questions regarding the place and role of women in synagogues, rituals, Jewish cemeteries, marital intimacy, reproductive medicine, and Jewish demography.

Evyatar Marienberg is an Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (USA) presented his work on November 23, 2017.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/what-is-niddah-menstruation-in-judaism-a-lecture-in-the-series>

#### 14 December 2017 -

##### **Professor Federico Gobbo:** *Is it Possible for all People to Speak the Same Language? The Story of Ludwik Zamenhof and Esperanto*

While often presented as an utopian dream of the 19th century, Esperanto did survive

two World Wars and it shows a new vitality in the web era. Why did Ludwik Zamenhof devote his life in the definition and launch of this linguistic project? How did he eventually succeed to form a stable community of speakers?

Professor Federico Gobbo of the University of Amsterdam explored the pillars of Zamenhof's thinking and why his linguistic project attracted the Esperanto pioneers. For details, please see: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/is-it-possible-for-all-people-to-speak-the-same-language>

**In January and February 2018 POLIN Museum will host two lectures by distinguished speakers**

On February 1 Elyakim Rubinstein will speak about the path to peace that led to Camp David Accords and its aftermaths.

On February 15 Dr. Sharon Geva will deliver a lecture

on Women in Israel: Myth and Reality.

**Doctoral Seminar 2017/18 and Timothy Snyder lecture**

On October 18, 2017 the third edition of the GEOP Doctoral Seminar was launched. 14 doctoral candidates and their supervisors attended the seminar, and had a unique opportunity to listen to prof. Timothy Snyder's lecture on *Holocaust History and the Future of Europe*. The lecture was supported by the GEOP. The recording of the lecture (in Polish only) is available at: <http://www.polin.pl/pl/wydarzenie/historia-zaglady-i-przyszlosc-europy-wyklad-prof-timothy-snydera>

**March '68. Fifty Years Later - International Academic Conference, March 13-15, 2018**

Please see related exhibit announcement *Strangers at Home – the Events of March '68* in Exhibitions section of this issue. [Page 45](#)

On the 50th anniversary of March '68, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, the Institute of History and the Institute of Sociology at the Warsaw University invite you to an interdisciplinary academic conference.

The conference is organized within the Global Education Outreach Program.

For more details, please see: <http://www.polin.pl/en/conf68>

**CFA: Greenberg Family International Internship Program**

Greenberg Family International Internship Program Interns will spend eight weeks at POLIN Museum, in summer 2018, working on specific projects related to their qualifications and interests, and to opportunities at POLIN Museum. The program is also supported by the Global Education Outreach Program.

Information on how to apply can be found here: <http://www.polin.pl/en/Application-Process>

The deadline for applications is February 16, 2018.

**GEOP supported the conference *Analysing Jewish Europe Today: perspectives from a new generation Third Conference of Emerging Researchers, October 23-35, 2017***

The conference was aimed at analyzing a broad spectrum of issues pertaining contemporary

Jewish Europe, covering topics such as: future perspectives for Jewish Europe, new Jewish identities, political divisiveness in relationship with Israel, the role of Jews and the need of Jewish voices in European civil society, the development of Jewish “spaces” – encounters between Jews and non-Jews in contemporary Europe, as well as anti- and philo-semitism. The conference was organized and sponsored by JDC International Centre for Community Development (JDC-ICCD) with the additional support of the GEOP.

The key-note lecture on the principles behind the post-war gallery at the POLIN Museum was delivered by prof. Stanisław Krajewski.

For the full conference program, visit: [www.jewish-europe2017.splashthat.com](http://www.jewish-europe2017.splashthat.com).

**ASEEES Convention, Chicago, November 11, 2017**

*Revolution of Photography – Photography as Revolution: Jewish Topics in Photography before and after 1917* session by Dr. Michał Trębacz, Dr. Konrad Zieliński, Dr. Iwona Kurz and Dr. Artur Markowski chaired by prof. Antony Polonsky during the 2017 Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.

For the full conference program, visit: <http://www.aseees.org/convention/program>.

**15th Warsaw Festival of Films on Jewish Themes – film screenings, 24-30 November, 2017**

POLIN Museum was the chief partner of the 15th Warsaw Festival of Films on Jewish Themes.

For more information, go to: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/15th-warsaw-festival-of-films-on-jewish-themes-film-screenings>

**Workshops Jewish ABC**

Jewish ABC is a new series of meetings and workshops dealing with basic ideas in Judaism and Jewish culture, co-organized by the Jewish Community Centre, Warsaw.

For details go to: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/jewish-abc>

## EXHIBITIONS

# Chuck Fishman: Roots, Resilience and Renewal — A Portrait of Polish Jews, 1975-2016.

## An Interview with the Artist

September 17, 2017 – January 7, 2018. Derfner Judaica Museum

Currently on display at the Derfner Judaica Museum, in Riverdale, New York, is an exhibition titled *Chuck Fishman: Roots, Resilience and Renewal—A Portrait of Polish Jews, 1975-2016*. As a college student in the summer of 1975, Fishman traveled to Poland to photograph the remnants of post-Holocaust Polish Jewry. He returned several times between then and 1983, capturing images of Jewish life in Communist Poland—a period during which Jews in the rest of the world had little or no access to or awareness of Polish Jewish communities. In 2013, he returned to Poland to bear witness to the revival of Polish Jewish life that he says “would have been unthinkable before.” His work in the exhibition depicts over forty years of Jewish life in Poland, a range from Soviet-era underground practice to current-day renewal that few single photographers have been privileged to capture. What follows is an interview that originally appeared in the exhibition’s brochure, between



Woman knitting outside Majdanek concentration camp, wartime forced labor and killing center. Lublin, 1975.

Image and caption courtesy of Chuck Fishman.

Fishman and Susan Chevlowe, Chief Curator and Museum Director at the Derfner Judaica Museum. The exhibition will be on view until January 7, 2018.

**Susan Chevlowe:** What brought you to Poland in the 1970s?

*Chuck Fishman:* I was a college student in the summer of 1975 when I first went to Poland with a writer to hopefully produce a book on the remains of what we could find of Jewish life

and culture there. The result was *Polish Jews: The Final Chapter*, which was published by McGraw-Hill and New York University Press in 1977. The project also became my first professional portfolio of printed photographs, which I brought to New York City six months later. With it I met editors, agents and professional photographers, who helped shape my future as a “new” photographer. One person I sought out, Roman Vishniac, who had

photographed Jewish life in Poland and Eastern Europe before World War II, was very kind. His favorite photograph from my original 1975 portfolio was *Woman knitting outside Majdanek*, (above) included in this exhibition. (We later exchanged prints.) The original portfolio was exhibited in New York City in the late '70s.

**SC:** What did you find there?

**CF:** Locked synagogues with broken windows; sometimes desolate cemeteries when they could be found; kosher kitchens in Warsaw, Kraków and Wrocław serving a small aging population; some Jewish clubs (Łódź); Friday night or Shabbat services in Warsaw and Kraków; the Yiddish theater in Warsaw—primarily older people on pensions.

**SC:** How did you locate the Jewish communities? What cities did you visit? How did you navigate through the country?

**CF:** Crossing Communist East Germany by train, we

*This first trip in 1975 lasted about six weeks. I had no idea if I'd be able to get my film out of the country.*

started from western Poland in the city of Wrocław. There, through some literature we had, we eventually found the White Stork Synagogue, which was the Jewish epicenter in that city. Attached was also a study house (*beit midrash*) and kitchen. I then felt, for the first time, that I had a responsibility to show the rest of the world what was still left as I was now “on the other side of the iron curtain.” Seeing the enormity and condition of that synagogue, I was overwhelmed with the realization of what I felt I needed to do. We traveled by bus and train, often splitting up so I could shoot unaccompanied, and comparing notes later on. The larger cities we visited included Wrocław, Łódź, Warsaw, Kraków, Lublin, and many smaller towns throughout Galicia. This first

trip in 1975 lasted about six weeks. I had no idea if I'd be able to get my film out of the country. Alone, I took an overnight train from Katowice crossing through Communist Czechoslovakia to Vienna. I kept my exposed film on the bottom of my shoulder bag somewhat “hidden.” Of course, I was nervous at the border crossings where each time military officials would come through the train to check your passport and belongings. If my film was confiscated, I had only memories and (maybe) notes.

**SC:** Why did you decide to return to Poland? What year did you first return and what was your intention for that visit? How many trips have you made since then and what did you hope to accomplish?

**CF:** I returned to Poland three-and-a-half years later in the winter of 1978. My book had come out and I was there as a working, professional photojournalist to photograph the country of the then newly-elected Pope John

Paul II. Again, Poland was a Communist country and there was now interest in the west to see this “off the radar” place. As a working photojournalist, one needed to work with the official “Interpress” government agency for access to most areas. Discreetly and with small prints I made to give away, I returned to the kosher kitchens, synagogues and study houses without any official “guide,” and saw some of the people from three-and-a-half years earlier. Some remembered me, especially when I gave them a photograph of themselves. I also saw, and photographed, children learning Hebrew. My next trip a few months later was during a Passover seder in Warsaw’s kosher kitchen. I met a few young Jews (my age or younger), who were actors in the Yiddish theater. I decided that I would not seek to publish any of these “newer” pictures. Under Communism I didn’t want any of my work to possibly have negative effects on the lives of the few younger people in my pictures.

*This body of work now spans four generations of post-Holocaust Polish Jewry: the survivors being the first generation; their children and grandchildren (the “unexpected” generation); and now great-grandchildren, growing up as Polish Jews aware of their heritage.*

I continued photographing Polish Jews during several working trips from 1978–1983, archiving the negatives and contact sheets. I felt I was helping to capture and preserve, for future generations, the last of a 1,000-year history of Jewish life in Poland. I was in Poland to photograph both of Pope John Paul II’s trips in 1979 and 1983, and spent time with Lech Wałęsa and the Solidarity trade union in 1980. I always, quietly, would seek out the Jewish community to photograph and give small gift prints to those

I had photographed before. I thought I would return to Poland someday, when I was much older and the people in my pictures would be gone and the few younger ones assimilated. My thought was I’d photograph some buildings or remains and then take out my older work from the ‘70s and ‘80s to combine with the newer, and possibly seek publication. In 1989 with the fall of Communism, history took a very sharp turn and very slowly there has been a reawakening of Jewish life and culture in Poland.

After a 30-year hiatus I returned in 2013, then again in 2014 and 2016. It’s a fascinating story of renewal that’s going on there now. I’ve photographed in schools, in synagogues, daily life and events, large and small, including a wedding, ritual circumcision (*brit milah*), funeral, Jewish [Culture Festival], conversions to Judaism of those who have discovered or are just now discovering their Jewish

roots—many aspects of contemporary life today. This body of work now spans four generations of post-Holocaust Polish Jewry: the survivors being the first generation; their children and grandchildren (the “unexpected” generation); and now great-grandchildren, growing up as Polish Jews aware of their heritage.

**SC:** In your *Polish Jews: The Final Chapter*, a great many of your photographs were of places—for example, architecture, Talmudic academies, Yeshivas and synagogue buildings, most of them abandoned, and cemeteries. This is quite different from the photographs we’ve chosen for this exhibition; for example, we have only two cemetery images, one old and one new, and the synagogues are now filled with celebrations of Jewish rituals and traditions. And there is quite an emphasis on portraits. Can you talk about your interest in portraiture over architecture or landscape in relationship to these images?



Chess players at the Jewish Club in Łódź. The mural, completed in 1960 by Adam (Aron) Muszka and no longer extant, depicts the Holocaust. Łódź, 1975. Image and caption courtesy of Chuck Fishman.

**CF:** The book was a collection of all that we could find and document at the time. It was important to show the places and architecture as those could vanish (in fact, the Jewish Club in Łódź did, after I had photographed two men playing chess in front of Adam Muszka’s mural before it was destroyed [above]; the building became condominiums). My primary interest in photography has always revolved around people. I enjoy capturing a specific moment in time when

I feel that certain elements have come together in a frame, the nuances of expression and reality that shape a story, and in turn, move the viewer in some fundamental way.

**SC:** Can you speak to your relationship with your subjects? Were you able to keep in touch? Did you find any of your original subjects when you returned?

**CF:** I have with a few. In fact the picture of Jerzy Kichler with his mom in her kitchen

from 1983 was one that I gave him when we met again in Wrocław at a Jewish wedding in 2014.

**SC:** Can you reflect on *Polish Jews: The Final Chapter*? Does the significance of the book change now that Jewish communal life in Poland is in a state of renewal? How does it remain meaningful?

**CF:** The book's significance continues, albeit with fresh implications, especially when considering the broader scope of historical context. Its immediate importance lies in the fact that it reveals both the conditions and what was left in 1975, seven years after the final government purge in 1968 of Jews from Poland. That action led to the majority of middle-aged or younger Polish Jews with families leaving the country by giving up Polish citizenship, becoming stateless and declaring they would be going to Israel. They went primarily to Israel, Scandinavia and the US. The remaining Jews thought of themselves



Burlesque artist Anna Ciszewska (Betty Q), 28, backstage with her mother Joanna. Anna's Jewish roots are through her mother's father. Warsaw, June 2014. Image and caption courtesy of Chuck Fishman.

as the finale to 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland. In larger terms, I think that, as much as it is an invaluable chronicle of a vanished past, the book serves equally as a cornerstone of, and a counterpoint to, my recent work, affording me the unique opportunity to revisit what was, by all accounts, an epilogue in Jewish history, to thereby redefine the narrative—a stunning about-face in history—and to illuminate one of hope and future possibilities. ■

*This interview is reprinted with permission from a brochure produced in conjunction with the exhibition Chuck Fishman: Roots, Resilience and Renewal—A Portrait of Polish Jews, 1975–2016, at Derfner Judaica Museum, Riverdale, New York, September 17, 2017–January 7, 2018.*

[RiverSpringHealth.org/art](http://RiverSpringHealth.org/art).

More of Chuck Fishman's work is on display on his website: [www.chuckfishman.com](http://www.chuckfishman.com).

# Montages. Debora Vogel and the New Legend of the City at Muzeum Sztuki

October 27, 2017 - February 4, 2018. Muzeum Sztuki, Łódź, Poland

An exhibition titled *Montages. Deborah Vogel and the New Legend of the City* is currently on display at Muzeum Sztuki, a modern art museum in Łódź, Poland. According to the museum's website, the exhibition, curated by Andrij Bojarov, Paweł Polit, and Karolina Szymaniak, focuses on three concepts: first, montage, the avant-garde practice of compiling and combining, present in a variety of art forms, such as cubist collages, constructivist installations, surrealist works, and film experiments. Second, the exhibit examines the pre-war avant-garde of Galicia in which Vogel operated: the Artes Group in Lviv, the Krakowska Group, and her contact with contemporaries like Bruno Schulz, Leon Chwistek, and Władysław Strzemiński. In her lifetime, Vogel worked to bring the visual experience of the avant-garde into Polish and Yiddish writing. Lastly, the exhibit explores the spectacle and

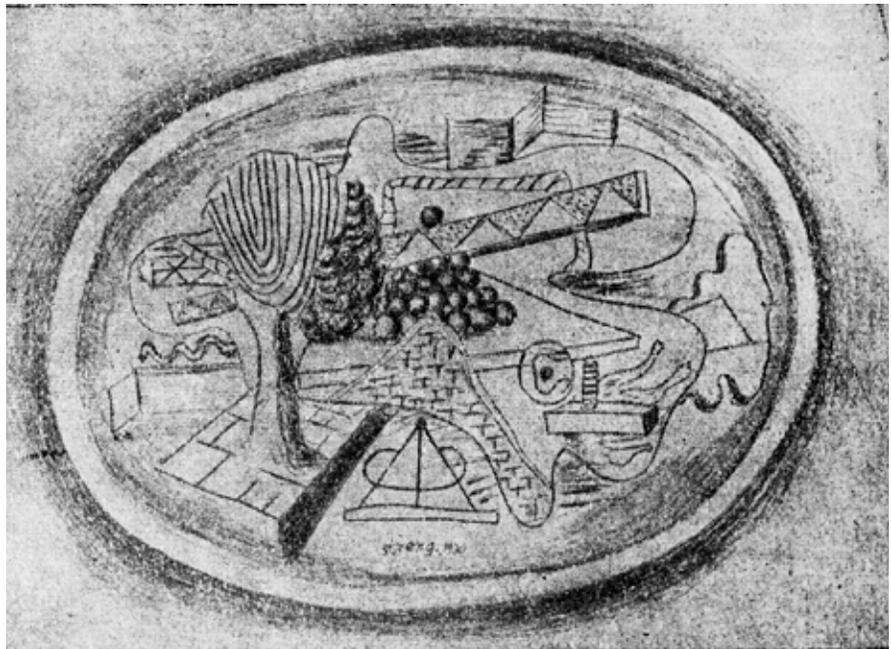


Illustration by Marek Włodarski from Debora Vogel's 1936 book *Akacje kwitną*. Used with permission of Muzeum Sztuki w Łodzi.

conflict of the modern city. Lviv is both the geographical center of the exhibition and the center of Vogel's personal geography: it's where she produced her most defining artworks and where she was murdered, in August 1942, during the liquidation of the Lviv Ghetto. The exhibition includes the work of several of her Galician contemporaries, as well as several foreign influences and artists inspired by her, such as Fernand

Léger and William Klein. The exhibition will be on display until February 4, 2018.” ■

For more information, visit the museum's website at [www.msl.org.pl/en/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/montages--debora-vogel-and-the-new-legend-of-the-city,2472.html](http://www.msl.org.pl/en/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/montages--debora-vogel-and-the-new-legend-of-the-city,2472.html).

# Blood: Uniting and Dividing, at POLIN Museum

October 13, 2017 - January 29, 2018. POLIN Museum

**B**lood courses through the veins of each and every one of us. It is not merely a bodily fluid; it is a universal symbol of our identity and sense of belonging. What is blood? What is its role in culture, religion, social life and medicine? All these issues are raised by the exhibition *Blood. Uniting and Dividing*, which opened at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews on 13 October 2017. The exhibition, which was originally produced by Jewish Museum London, will run until 29 January 2018, and will be accompanied by lectures, workshops, performances, film screenings and curator-guided tours.

The exhibition is a multi-threaded story of an unusual substance which has permeated the tradition and the present of Jewish-Christian relations in its religious, historical and social contexts. It is also a universal story of the source of motifs and values that pulsate



A visitor to *Blood: Uniting & Dividing* takes in *Untitled (Permanent Star)* by Piotr Unklański. Photograph by Magda Starowieyska. Used with permission of POLIN Museum.

inside our bodies: the source which defines our identity but also yields divisions and prejudices. The exhibition asks visitors to consider how they think of blood, both physically and metaphorically.

A special place has been reserved for a sculpture by world-renowned artist Anish Kapoor, whose artworks are on display at MoMA in New York, Tate Modern in London, and Centre Pompidou in Paris.

The spectacular sculpture, titled *Blood Cinema* (2000), will be an autonomous entity, a prologue to the exhibition of sorts, and its visual symbol. It is the first presentation of Anish Kapoor's artwork in Poland.

Joanne Rosenthal, curator of the Blood exhibition in London, said: "The exhibition *Blood: Uniting and Dividing* presents visitors with difficult questions and deliberately avoids offering straightforward answers," says Joanne Rosenthal, curator of the original exhibition in London." The idea that our blood somehow defines us or contains the essence of who we are still holds potency, as demonstrated by the persistence of concepts such as bloodlines and blood communities." ■

For more information on the exhibition's accompanying events please visit [www.polin.pl/krew](http://www.polin.pl/krew)

# POLIN Museum Marks March 1968 Anniversary with Special Exhibition, Strangers at Home

March 9, 2018 - September 24, 2018. POLIN Museum

In June of this year, fifty years will have passed since the beginning of the worst antisemitic campaign in post-War Polish history. We are recalling the causes of that campaign, what occurred and its resultant effects. The POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews has prepared a program entitled “Strangers at Home – the Events of March ‘68”.

This program includes specially prepared workshops for youth, classes within the exhibition, relevant walks around Warsaw, a cycle of lectures, discussions, meetings with those who emigrated, film screenings, a live theatre competition, the publishing of selected interviews by Mikołaj Grynberg and an academic conference convened in conjunction with Warsaw University.

The main event will be a temporary exhibition which will open on March 9, 2018. ■



Postwar Years Gallery, POLIN Museum. Photograph by Magda Starowieyska. Used with permission of POLIN Museum.

For more information, please see: <http://www.polin.pl/en/estranged-march-68-and-its-aftermath>

# Two Arthur Szyk Exhibitions in Kraków: Statute of Kalisz and Haggadah

Szyk's Haggadah: October 23, 2017 - April 2018. Popper Synagogue  
Statute of Kalisz: October 2017. Palace of Fine Arts

*Szyk's Haggadah* displays the 48-page Haggadah Arthur Szyk illustrated and illuminated over six years in the 1930s.

In October, two exhibitions of the work of Polish-Jewish illustrator Arthur Szyk opened in Kraków. The first, organized in conjunction with The Third Congress of International Researchers of Polish History (see Conference Report *infra*). The exhibition, titled *Statut Kaliski*, displayed Szyk's miniature illustrations, including the *Statute of Kalisz*, the set of privileges granted to Polish Jews in 1264, and from which the exhibit received its title. The exhibit, at the Palace of Fine Arts, was only on display for three weeks in October.

Still on view for the public is *Szyk's Haggadah*, an exhibit organized by Austeria and Klezmerhois, with the help of Dr. Aleksander Skotnicki and Paulina Najbar, and housed



Page from Arthur Szyk's Haggadah, 1940. From the Taube Family Arthur Szyk Collection of the Judah L. Magnes Jewish Museum at U.C. Berkeley. Used with permission.

at the Popper Synagogue on Szeroka Street. *Szyk's Haggadah* displays the 48-page Haggadah which Szyk illustrated and illuminated in his signature ornamentation style, drawing from Medieval codices. The

*Haggadah*, produced over six years, was printed in 1939 and bound and published in 1940. The exhibition at the Popper Synagogue was opened on October 23, and will continue to be on view until April 2018. ■

## BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

# Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 30 Jewish Education in Eastern Europe

An emphasis on education has long been a salient feature of the Jewish experience. The pervasive presence of schools and teachers, books and libraries, and youth movements, even in an environment as tumultuous as that of nineteenth- and twentieth-century eastern Europe, is clear from the historical records. Historians of the early modern and modern era frequently point to the centrality of educational institutions and pursuits within Jewish society, yet the vast majority treat them as merely a reflection of the surrounding culture. Only a small number note how schools and teachers could contribute in dynamic ways to the shaping of local communities and cultures.

This volume addresses this gap in the portrayal of the Jewish past by presenting education as an active and potent force for change. It moves beyond a narrow definition of Jewish education by treating formal and informal training in

academic or practical subjects with equal attention. In so doing, it sheds light not only on schools and students, but also on informal educators, youth groups, textbooks, and numerous other devices through which the mutual relationship between education and Jewish society is played out. It also places male and female education on a par with each other, and considers with equal attention students of all ages, religious backgrounds, and social classes.

The essays in this volume span two centuries of Jewish history, from the Austrian and Russian empires to the Second Republic of Poland and the Polish People's Republic. The approach is interdisciplinary, with contributors treating their subject from fields as varied as east European cultural history, gender studies, and language politics. Collectively, they highlight the centrality of education in the vision of numerous Jewish individuals, groups, and institutions across

*Co-Edited by*

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eastern Europe, and the degree to which this vision interacted with forces within and external to Jewish society. In this way they highlight the interrelationship between Jewish educational endeavors, the Jewish community, and external economic, political, and social forces. ■

# Footprints and Footsteps. Jason Francisco Re-Imagines Presence in Absence

## Jewish Heritage Europe

The writer and photographer Jason Francisco has written a powerful text-and-photo essay called “Footprints and Footsteps” centering on his attempts to re-imagine destroyed synagogues (or another building) by closely exploring the space — in many ways now a void — on which they stood. He writes:

*Could I create a process of looking capable of conjuring that which was not there to be seen—a visual method that could counter absence? My strategy involved three simple actions: determining the footprint of the non-existent building; walking that footprint; making photographs that would cast the gaze into and through*

*the walked space so as to create a space of conceptual projection in which the lost structure can dwell in the imagination.*

The issue of how to mark the site of a synagogue or other building is one that has been discussed and debated for decades — one of the sites Francisco explores is



The site of the barn in the Jedwabne, Poland, where, in 1941, 40 local men locked 340 of their Jewish neighbors in a wooden barn and set it on fire. Jason walked around the inside of the perimeter of the barn's site and shot photos in the direction of the opposite border. He then stood in the middle of the barn and took photos in the directions of all four corners. Used with permission of Jason Francisco.

the site of the destroyed Great Synagogue complex in Vilnius, now partially covered by a school. Archaeological excavations are currently under way there, and a conference on how to commemorate the site was held in early September.

There have been various solutions — the outline of the destroyed synagogue in Frankfurt, Germany was traced on the ground. The bimah, the only part of the synagogue in Tarnów, Poland, that survives, also stands in a space that traces the pre-Holocaust footprint. And the destroyed sanctuary of the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin was left open, while the ruined front part of the building was restored: a glass wall separates them. In his essay, Francisco used maps and old pictures to locate the site of three destroyed buildings: the Great Synagogue in Vilnius, the synagogue in Stawiski, Poland, and the barn in



The steps of the Protestant Church in Vilnius, Lithuania, was built between 1830 and 1835. In the 1950s, the building's front steps were replaced with headstones from the city's old Jewish cemetery. Hebrew inscriptions were sandblasted off the stones, but some are still partially visible.

Image and caption courtesy of Jason Francisco.

Jedwabne, Poland where local Jews were herded and burned to death by their neighbors in 1941. He then took photographs of the site from various angles — locating those angles on the map. ■

*Excerpted and re-printed with permission from the Jewish Heritage Europe website: <http://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2017/09/26>*

Read Jason's entire essay at [www.jasonfrancisco.net/footprints-and-footsteps](http://www.jasonfrancisco.net/footprints-and-footsteps).

# On Mother and Fatherland

## by Bożena Keff

The much-anticipated English-language translation of Bożena Keff's masterpiece, *On Motherland and Fatherland* (*Utwór o matce i ojczyźnie*), was published this year by Mad Hat Press. Translated by acclaimed translators Alissa Valles and Benjamin Paloff, the autobiographical, book-length poem is described as a cross between an opera, a tragedy and an oratorio. Through the mixed voices of the Narrator, mother Meter, and the Chorus, Keff tells "the life stories of a Polish Jewish mother who has survived the Holocaust, and her daughter, whom the Mother has trapped in her own suffering. She lived through it, and so her suffering is without doubt, her sense of her place within history goes without question, the proof of her right to existence is indisputable," writes the UK Polish Cultural Institute. "She has had a daughter in defiance of oblivion and the Holocaust, so the child, unlike



Jacket image for *On Mother and Fatherland* by Bożena Keff.

the Mother, has no right to suffer nor to her own separate existence. The daughter seeks her release above all through art. The mixture of anti-Semitic drivel that appears tangled throughout proves that xenophobia is the cement binding the Polish fatherland community together. To construct the motherland differently one needs narratives that express this murky, albeit sturdy,

connection between patriotism and hatred for what is foreign. Bożena Keff's book is an example of an unusual expression of hatred for the mother-fatherland."

In his review of the original Polish edition, Przemysław Czapliński wrote: "[W]e may regard this as the Polish version of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*—in its form, an excellent and utterly unexpected version. Such a comparison is not about imitation, nor about formal similarity, but about something essential for both authors: the child-artist's struggle with the historical experience represented by the parent. A struggle for one's own identity, for the right to one's own life, for a way out of the mausoleum of the Holocaust. A struggle played out in the arena of art." (<http://www.bookinstitute.pl/książki-detal,literatura-polska,7099,piece-about-a-mother-and-the-fatherland--a.html>)

Keff and her book represented Poland in this year's European Literature Night, one of six authors from six countries (including Italy, the Czech Republic, Poland, Latvia, Austria and Flanders), who gathered in London's British Library to read their works.

The original Polish edition of *On Mother and Fatherland* was shortlisted for the Nike Literary Award and the Cogito Literary Award. The book was also staged as a theater production in Wrocław by director Jan Klata.

#### ***About the Author***

Bożena Keff is a lecturer, poet, writer, columnist, and feminist activist, living in Warsaw where she was born in 1948. In addition to three previous books of poetry, she is the author, most recently, of *Anti-Semitism: An Unfinished History* (2013) and (as Bożena Umińska) *Figure with Shadow: Portraits of Jewish Women in Polish Literature* (2001). She contributes

regularly to Poland's leading magazines and has worked as a researcher at the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute and lectured in gender studies at the University of Warsaw.

#### ***About the Translators***

Alissa Valles's poetry volumes include *Orphan Fire* (2008) and *Anastylosis* (2014). She edited and co-translated Zbigniew Herbert's *Collected Poems* (2007) and *Collected Prose* (2010). She also translated Anna Bikont's *The Crime and the Silence*, which received the National Jewish Book Council Award in 2015.

Benjamin Paloff is author of *And His Orchestra* and *The Politics*, and *Lost in the Shadow of the Word (Space, Time, and Freedom in Interwar Eastern Europe)*. His translations include Richard Weiner's *The Game for Real*. He teaches at the University of Michigan. ■

## New Releases and Book Events



### Preserving Jewish Heritage in Poland, Volume 2

The Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland (FODZ) announces Volume 2 of their freely available publication on their many important restoration projects in Poland between 2002 and 2017. A free download of the volume, by Lesław Piszewski, President of the Union of Jewish Religious Communities in the Republic of Poland, is available at the following link: [http://fodz.pl/download/e-album\\_Dziedzictwo\\_2017.pdf](http://fodz.pl/download/e-album_Dziedzictwo_2017.pdf)

### A Diary from the Łódź Ghetto – book launch in the series POLIN Reading Room, November 27, 2017

Rywka's Diary: The Writings of a Jewish Girl from the Lodz Ghetto. Edited by Ewa Wiatr

A diary of Rywka Lipszyc seems to be a classic teenager's diary, and yet the reality in which it was written is far from ordinary, as described by the book's editor, Ewa Wiatr.

The Polish edition of the book was published by Austeria with the cooperation of POLIN Museum. Thanks to the support of the Koret Foundation, the book is being distributed and promoted among Polish teachers. The lesson on this landmark publication is also going to be published on IWitness portal of the USC Shoah Foundation. ■

For more information visit: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/a-diary-from-the-lodz-ghetto-a-meeting-in-the-series-polin>

### Radical, teen, diverse. On the ideas of Jewish modernity on the basis of books by Kamil Kijek and Michał Trebacz, November 30, 2017

A discussion inspired by two books dedicated to Jewish youth and to political differences within the interwar Jewish community took place on November 30, 2017, at the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. The books were *Dzieci modernizmu. Świadomość, kultura i socjalizacja polityczna młodzieży żydowskiej w II Rzeczypospolitej* (in English: *Children of Modernism: Awareness, culture and political socialization of Jewish youth in the Second Polish Republic*) by Dr. Kamil Kijek (University of Wrocław) and *Izrael Lichtenstein. Biografia żydowskiego socjalisty* (in English: *Izrael Lichtenstein: Biography of a Jewish Socialist*) by Dr. Michał Trębacz (head of the Research Department, POLIN Museum). The discussion included both authors and was moderated by Dr. Artur Markowski (POLIN Museum, University of Warsaw).

For details, please see: <http://www.polin.pl/en/event/radical-teen-diverse-on-the-ideas-of-jewish-modernity-on-the>

# Sendlerowa W ukryciu (Sendler In Hiding) By Anna Bikont

**Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2017**

*[Editor's Note: This book will be reviewed in the Spring issue of Gazeta]*

In 2001, a group of American students came to Poland to write a play about a Pole who saved Jewish children during the war. After years of oblivion, Irena Sendlerowa became a media hero and a symbol of all those who had the courage to oppose evil.

To organize the rescue of Jewish children, Sendlerowa and her team needed an efficient system, money and a network of people involved, willing to risk their lives. As Professor Bartoszewski recalled, "it was easier to find a flat to store a weapon chest than to hide one Jew."

Irena Sendlerowa, a woman who undoubtedly did great things, deserving of admiration, and in the most difficult times, emerges slowly in this book among a group of people who have joined together the fate of the rescuers and those who have been saved, those who

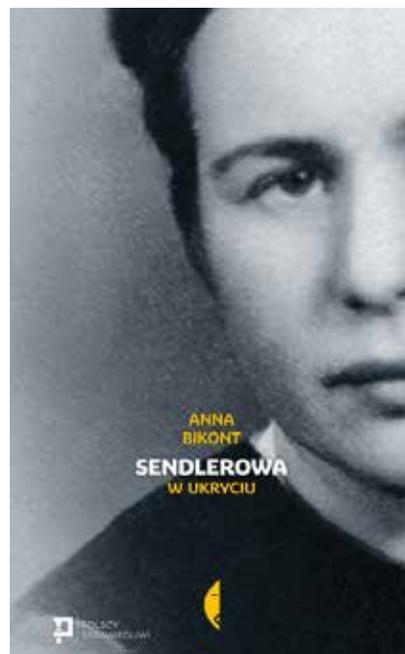
gave shelter and those who sought shelter.

It is a story about extraordinary Polish women and hundreds of children saved by them. ■

*An exceptional, wise, important book - written with great respect for historical truth and with great understanding for people.*

- Dr. Barbara Engelking,  
Center for Holocaust  
Studies, Polish Academy  
of Sciences, Warsaw

<https://czarne.com.pl/katalog/ksiazki/sendlerowa>



Jacket image for *Sendlerowa. W Ukryciu* [Sendler: In Hiding] by Anna Bikont.

## OBITUARY

# Remembering Charles (Charlie) Merrill 1920-2017

Charles (usually known as 'Charlie) Merrill, the son of Charles E. Merrill, one of the founders of the Merrill Lynch & Co banking firm, died on 29 November 2017 at his home in Nowy Sącz. A longstanding member of the Board of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies, he graduated from Harvard, but decided not to join his father's firm. Alarmed by the rise of Nazism, he decided to see its impact at first hand, traveling widely in Poland in 1939, where he developed a strong sympathy for the country and also for its fellow Jewish citizens. He gave an account of his European travels in his book *The Journey: Massacre of the Innocents* (Cambridge, MA, 1996). During the Second World War, he served in the Fifth US Army in North Africa, Italy and Germany, which in the words of the obituary written for the Commonwealth School which he founded, "instilled in him ambivalence

*On December 4, 2017 he was to be awarded the Jerzy Giedroyc prize of the Instytut Literacki. Sadly, he did not live to receive the very well-deserved honor.*

about privilege, a sense of the fragility of civilization and culture, and sympathy for oppressed people." In Germany, he encountered a teenage Jewish survivor of Auschwitz, Bernat Rosner, whom he brought to the United States. With Charlie's support he graduated from Harvard Law School and became General Counsel of Safeway Stores, the grocery store chain founded by Charlie's father. Rosner told this story in the book he wrote with the former Hitler Youth member, Frederic Tubach, *Uncommon Friendship: From Opposite Sides of the Holocaust* (University of California Press, 2001).

## Dr. Antony Polonsky

*Chief Historian*

*POLIN Museum of the*

*History of Polish Jews*

Charlie was an accomplished author of five books and a painter. Determined to find an outlet for his humanitarian principles in education, he co-founded the Thomas Jefferson School in 1946, a small co-educational and international boarding and day school in St. Louis. In 1957, he put his educational principles into action in the Boston Commonwealth School, where, as founder, he served as Headmaster until 1981. Charlie frequently funded the tuition of those unable to do so, following the school's strongly humanistic character, which was reflected in Joseph Addison's school hymn, *The Spacious Firmament on High*, with its evocation of the principles of the Enlightenment. The symbol of the school, the Warsaw Syrena (mermaid) reflected Charlie's Polish interests. These also found expression in his support for the Paris-based Instytut Literacki and his friendship with Czesław Miłosz. Charlie gave an account of how he

saw the school in his book *The Walled Garden: The Story of a School* (Rowan Tree Press, 1982).

As Chairman of the Charles E. Merrill Trust, the charitable foundation named after his father, he helped to endow Merrill College at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He also served for more than fifteen years as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Morehouse College, a historically black college in Atlanta and also served on the Boards of Marlboro College in Vermont and Hampshire College in western Massachusetts. In addition, he provided financial support for the Palacky University of Olomouc in the Czech Republic and for Polish students in the United States.

The father of five adult children, he was married to Mary K. Merrill for more than 50 years until her death in 1999. Subsequently he married Julie Boudreaux, an American

with Polish citizenship who was then working at SPLOT, an independent middle and high school in Nowy Sącz. He bought a small apartment in Nowy Sącz where he now spent a significant part of the year and where he established scholarships for able students at the SPLOT school. In 2002, he was awarded the Officers Cross of the Order of Merit by the Polish government. On December 4, 2017 he was to be awarded the Jerzy Giedroyc prize of the Instytut Literacki. Sadly, he did not live to receive the very well-deserved honor. He will be sorely missed. ■

A short obituary appears on the homepage of Małopolskie Towarzystwo Oświatowe, the organization that founded SPLOT: [www.mto.org.pl/pl/](http://www.mto.org.pl/pl/)



Backstage at the Yiddish Theater. Actress Etel Szyk in hooded shawl. Warsaw 1980.  
Photograph by Chuck Fishman. Used with permission.

If you would like to suggest an article and/or author for the next issue of *Gazeta*, or submit one yourself, please email: [info@taubephanthropies.org](mailto:info@taubephanthropies.org).  
The submission deadline for the next issue is **February 17, 2018**.



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