

Jews in Polish Society: Insiders, Outsiders

A One-Day Conference of the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies

in co-operation with the Polish Cultural Institute
at the Polish Embassy, 47 Portland Place, London W1B 1JH

Thursday 10 December 2009 9.00 am to 6.00 pm

Cultural boundaries—political, social, and religious—have been a key feature of life in Poland since medieval times. By focusing on the ways in which these boundaries were respected, crossed, or otherwise negotiated, this conference throws new light on the contacts between Jews and Christians in Poland over the centuries. The line-up of speakers has been selected so as to focus on the idea of Jews as both insiders and outsiders in Poland from a variety of perspectives, including the situation in present-day Poland

The conference marks the launch of

POLIN VOLUME 22

Social and Cultural Boundaries in Pre-Modern Poland

Edited by ADAM TELLER, MAGDA TETER, and ANTONY POLONSKY

Published by the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization

Reservations essential

Please use booking form overleaf

POLSKA! YEAR

This conference is co-sponsored by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland and the Polish Cultural Institute, London, together with the support of the Adam Mickiewicz Institute as part of POLSKA! YEAR. Jewish programming during POLSKA! YEAR is coordinated by the Galicia Jewish Museum, Kraków.

Please note that the programme may be subject to change.

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Conference convenors:

Prof. Antony Polonsky and

Prof. Jonathan Webber

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RESERVATION FORM

Please note: This conference is open to all interested persons; reservations are essential. An early reservation is recommended, since the number of seats is limited. Your reservation will guarantee a place for the whole day, and you can then come and go as you wish; it is regretted that we cannot offer a discount for people who wish to come for only part of the day. The Embassy's security staff will give admittance only to those who have made reservations and so are on the list of confirmed attendees. All enquiries should be directed to the Conference Secretary: Dr Michael Fleming, 66 Esmond Road, London W4 1JF. **E: fleming_m11@hotmail.com T: 07799 875 901**

To book a place at the conference please:

1. Fill in this form
2. Enclose a cheque for thirty pounds (£30) per attendee payable to **The Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies**. (The concessionary fee of twenty pounds (£20.00) is available to senior citizens (OAPs) and full-time students.) The conference fee includes buffet lunch (fish and vegetarian, supplied by a Beth Din kosher caterer) and refreshments during the day.
3. Send to Dr Michael Fleming, 66 Esmond Road, London W4 1JF by **Thursday 3 December 2009**. Please note that no tickets will be sent out.

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone/e-mail _____

Institutional affiliation (if applicable) _____

I will be bringing ____ guest(s), whose name(s) is/are:

Registration fee enclosed:

Regular fee: ____ person(s) @ £30 per person (£ _____)

Concessionary fee: ____ person(s) @ £20.00 per person (£ _____)

Total amount enclosed for conference registration fees: £ _____

The Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies is a registered charity. The price of admission to this event just covers our costs—principally in bringing over speakers from abroad. If you would like to make a donation to help the continued activity of the Institute, please consider using this opportunity to do so.

I/we enclose a donation to the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies (optional) (£ _____)

Grand total amount enclosed for conference registration fees and donation: £ _____

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Thursday 10 December 2009

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Programme

Welcome and Opening

Chair: Mr Ben Helfgott, Chairman of the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies

9.00 a.m. Registration and Coffee

9.30 a.m. Welcome

H.E. Ms Barbara Tuge-Erecińska,
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland

Opening Remarks

Sir Sigmund Sternberg,
President of the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies

Morning Session I

The Historical Context: The Early Modern Period and the Enlightenment

Chair: Prof. Antony Polonsky (Brandeis University)

9.45 a.m. What Made Polish Jews Polish? An Early Modern Perspective

Prof. Adam Teller (University of Haifa)

Jews and Christians in Pre-Modern Poland: A Shared History

Prof. Magda Teter (Wesleyan University)

Jews in the Discourses of the Polish Enlightenment

Dr Richard Butterwick (UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies)

11.20 a.m. Coffee Break

Morning Session II

Moving Towards the Modern Period: The Social Boundaries as Seen from Both Sides

Chair: Prof. Jonathan Webber (University of Birmingham)

11.40 a.m. Changing Relationships between Jews and Non-Jews, and between Jews
Themselves, in Nineteenth-Century Poland

Prof. Marcin Wodziński (University of Wrocław)

Insiders / Outsiders in Contemporary Polish Jewish Writing

Dr Karen Auerbach (University of Southampton)

The State of the Polish-Jewish Dialogue: Reflections of a Participant

Prof. Antony Polonsky (Brandeis University)

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The Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies
(established 1984)

is a non-profit, educational institution devoted to the history and culture of Polish Jewry. It is an associated institute of the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies.

Conference convenors:

Prof. Antony Polonsky and

Prof. Jonathan Webber

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POLSKA! YEAR

1.15 p.m. **Buffet Lunch** (by courtesy of the Polish Embassy)

Afternoon Session I

Insiders, Outsiders: Some Personal Reflections

Chair: Prof. Jonathan Webber (University of Birmingham)

2.15 p.m. **Polish–Jewish Relations: A Personal View**

Mr Ben Helfgott (Chairman, Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies)

Why Not Kraków? Rebuilding a Polish Jewish Community in the Shadow of Auschwitz

Mr Jonathan Ornstein (Jewish Community Centre, Kraków)

Insiders, Outsiders: Reflections on Running a Jewish Museum in Poland

Ms Kate Craddy (Galicia Jewish Museum, Kraków)

4.00 p.m. **Tea/Coffee Break**

Afternoon Session II

Chair: Prof. Antony Polonsky (Brandeis University)

Film Screening

4.30 p.m. **PO-LIN**

Director: Jolanta Dylewska; Poland / Germany, 2008. 82 minutes.

Language: Polish with English subtitles

In 1939, on the eve of the Second World War, three million Jews lived in Poland—10 per cent of the population. That lost world is re-created in this beautifully crafted documentary. A succession of elderly Polish men and women remember Jewish friends and neighbours, and a time when Jewish midwives and history teachers were at the heart of Polish communities.

Archive footage has been culled from all over the world. In the 1930s, many Polish Jews who had migrated to America returned to visit their homeland, bringing amateur movie cameras. These fragile black-and-white images of peasant markets and water-carriers have been skilfully assembled by Polish director Jolanta Dylewska and set to a haunting klezmer-inflected score. This evocation of a land of tsadiks and mikvahs adds up to a memorable record of a world that would be utterly destroyed in the Holocaust.

From reviews:

‘Reaching far beyond the typical “some-of-my-best-friends-were-Jewish” mentality often attributed to non-Jews in pre-war Europe, the interviews show ageing people grappling with sweet childhood memories that later turned dark as their Jewish friends were deported and gone. And the pre-war home movies, which Dylewska first found in a Jerusalem archive, are poignant not only for showing the world that would soon be destroyed but also for their shocking intimacy, since the cameramen were the relatives of those doomed Polish Jews.’

(Caroline Slutsky, *The Jewish Week*)

5.45 p.m. **Discussion of film**

6.00 p.m. **Conference ends**

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Notes on Speakers

Karen Auerbach is a post-doctoral teaching fellow in twentieth-century Jewish history at the University of Southampton. She received her Ph.D. in modern Jewish history from Brandeis University, based on a dissertation entitled 'A Window on Post-War Warsaw: The Jewish Families of 16 Ujazdowskie Avenue'. Her research interests include the Holocaust in Poland; the integration of Jews into Polish society after the Second World War; and post-war Yiddish literature in east central Europe.

Richard Butterwick is a senior lecturer in Polish history at the UCL School of Slavonic and East European Studies, and editor of the journal *Central Europe*. His research focuses on the monarchy, the Catholic Church, and the Enlightenment and its critics in the later eighteenth-century Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, especially during the Four-Year Sejm of 1788–92. He is the author, inter alia, of *Poland's Last King and English Culture: Stanisław August Poniatowski 1732–1798* (1998).

Kate Craddy is the director of the Galicia Jewish Museum, Kraków. Originally from the UK, Kate has lived in Poland since 2004, working initially for the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and the Auschwitz Jewish Centre. She holds a masters degree in Jewish Studies from Oxford University and is currently completing her doctoral thesis at the University of Birmingham on Jewish museums in Kraków. She is a member of the Advisory Board of the Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies and president of the Board of Directors of Fundacja Galicia Jewish Heritage Institute.

Ben Helfgott MBE is the chairman of the Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies. Born in Pabianice, Poland, in 1929, he came to England in 1945 as a young Holocaust survivor. Since 1963 he has been chairman almost continuously of the '45 Aid Society, an organization that has provided continued support and friendship for Holocaust survivors. For more than twenty years he has been chairman of the Yad Vashem Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. He is also a vice-president of the Claims Conference and a member of its executive.

Jonathan Ornstein is the director of the Jewish Community Centre in Kraków, a post he has held since the centre opened in 2008. Originally from New York City, he completed a BA in political science at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and in 1994 moved to Israel, where he lived on Kibbutz Yotvata. Since relocating to Kraków in 2001 he has taught at the Department of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University, founded the Gesher Student Association for Polish–Israeli Dialogue, and has been a member of the board of the Przymierze Jewish–Christian Association for Dialogue.

Antony Polonsky is Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, where he is currently a senior fellow. He is the author of *Politics in Independent Poland* (1972), *The Great Powers and the Polish Question* (1976), *The Jews in Poland and Russia* (3 vols, forthcoming), and co-author of *A History of Modern Poland* (1980) and of *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland* (1981). He is the editor as well as chair of the editorial board of the annual publication *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* and vice-president of the Institute for Polish–Jewish Studies.

Adam Teller, a senior lecturer in the Department of Jewish History at the University of Haifa, is currently a visiting professor at Columbia University in New York. He has published widely on the social, economic, and cultural history of Polish–Lithuanian Jewry in the early modern period, including two books, both in Hebrew: *Living Together: The Jewish Quarter of Poznań and its Inhabitants in the Seventeenth Century* (2003), and *Money, Power, and Influence: The Jews on the Radziwiłł Estates in Eighteenth-Century Lithuania* (2005). He is also a member of the core academic team planning the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, currently being built in Warsaw.

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Magda Teter, a scholar of Jewish history and of early modern religious and cultural history specializing in Jewish–Christian relations, teaches at Wesleyan University. Her publications include *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland: A Beleaguered Church in the Post-Reformation Era* (2006); a second book, *From Bread to Blood, From Sin to Crime: Sacrilege and Jews after the Reformation*, is in preparation. The recipient of many awards, she was a Harry Starr Fellow at Harvard University, and an Emeline Bigelow Conland Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies, also at Harvard University. She directs the Early Modern Workshop project, an online resource for scholars and students of early modern Jewish studies, and serves on the editorial board of the *AJS Review* and the *Sixteenth Century Journal*.

Marcin Wodziński is a professor of Jewish history and literature at the University of Wrocław. His special fields of interest are the regional history of the Jews in Silesia, Jewish sepulchral art, and the social history of Jews in nineteenth-century Poland, especially the history of hasidism and of the Haskalah. His publications in English include *Haskalah and Hasidism in the Kingdom of Poland: A History of Conflict* (2005), and *Hasidism and Politics: The Kingdom of Poland, 1815–1864* (forthcoming). He is a member of the core academic team planning the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, currently being built in Warsaw.

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