

# Gazeta

Newsletter of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies  
1583 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 547-7701

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Fay and Julian Bussgang, Editors

## Letter From the President

Dear Members and Friends:

*We are about to have our own website so that now you will be able to find information about our activities. You can preview the site by going to the web page <<http://preview.brandeis.edu/polin/>>. We welcome your comments and suggestions.*

*The Littman Foundation, our publishers of POLIN in London, has informed us that they will print any volume of POLIN "on demand." In case you are missing some of our journals and would like to order one, do let us know. We have been doing well this year with sales.*

*On April 18, we showed, with the association of The National Center of Jewish Film at Brandeis University, the film Hiding and Seeking. A reception followed to commemorate Genia Shrut, whom we all very much miss. Genia had been a consistent supporter of POLIN. She and her sons Neal, Roger, and Glen subsidized Volume 6, which was dedicated to her parents and her two brothers who were killed by the Germans. Volume 17 will be dedicated to her memory.*

*Phyllis Myers has accepted to join our board. She was most helpful in organizing the launch of Volume 16 of POLIN at the Polish Embassy in Washington on March 11. Ambassador Przemysław Grudziński and his staff were most hospitable and helpful.*

*We look forward to a full season next fall. It would be of great help if you would send in your annual dues as soon as possible.*

Irene Pipes

**PLEASE RENEW  
YOUR AAPJS MEMBERSHIP!**

## Exhibition on Jews of Częstochowa

An exhibition about "Jewish Life in Częstochowa" opened in April in the city of Częstochowa, organized by Jerzy Mizgalski, historian at the Pedagogical Institute in Częstochowa, with the assistance of the Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw. Much of the material came from town archives researched by Mizgalski. Starting in July, the exhibit will travel to a few other Polish cities.

Helping organize the exhibit was Professor Elizabeth Mundlak from Venezuela, who, as a child, was saved by Christians during the war. Mundlak secured assistance from two American businessmen, Sigmund Rolat and Alan Silberstein, who agreed to sponsor the project. Rolat was born in Częstochowa, and the parents of Silberstein, his cousin, also lived there before the war.

Częstochowa, located near Silesia, is known in Poland as a place of pilgrimage for its 1382 painting of The Black Madonna, Queen and Protector of Poland, at the Basilica of Jasna Góra. In the early days, in 1858, Częstochowa was only a moderate size town, with Jews constituting half its population. As the city grew, however, Jews made up a somewhat smaller percentage. Just before World War II, Częstochowa was home to 30,000 Jews, about one-third of the city's population. Today, amidst the total population of 260,000, there are only some three dozen Jews living in Częstochowa.

The Jewish cemetery has been fenced in and restored under the leadership of the mayor. Mizgalski teaches a course on Jewish history popular with local students.

For more information about the exhibit and related events, contact Stan Steinreich at 212-786-6077. See also <<http://jta.org/>> and under "Search," type in "Mizgalski."

## Jewish Genealogical Conference in Israel

The annual International Jewish Genealogical Conference will be held in Jerusalem July 4-9, 2004. For further information, see <<http://www.ortra.com/jgen2004>>.

## Father Stanisław Musiał, 1938–2004

The National Polish-American Jewish-American Council issued the following statement on March 8:

"Members and friends of the Council were deeply saddened by the passing of Father Stanisław Musiał, SJ, a pioneer and leader of Catholic-Jewish dialogue and Polish-Jewish reconciliation.

A man of uncommon wisdom, compassion, and courage, Father Musiał was a friend to the Council and to many of its members, who found strength in his example.

Born on May 1, 1938, in Łososinie Górnej, Poland, Father Stanisław Musiał began his religious training in Stara Wieś in 1952. He studied philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Society of Jesus in Kraków, and theology at the Bobolanum Theological Faculty and later in Rome and Munich. He was ordained as a priest in 1963.

A long-time member of the editorial board of Poland's weekly newspaper *Tygodnik Powszechny*, he also directed Kraków's Apostleship of Prayer Publishing House in the years immediately following the Solidarity revolution in Poland. He wrote numerous articles in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, *Midrasz*, and *POLIN* on anti-Semitism, Catholic-Jewish relations, and issues between Poland and world Jewry.

As a member of the Episcopal Commission for Dialogue with Judaism, from the time of its creation in 1986 until 1997, Father Musiał played a key role in organizing and facilitating a Geneva meeting among international Catholic and Jewish leaders, which led to a 1987 agreement resolving the conflict over the Carmelite Convent at Auschwitz. He was one of the strongest and most forthright voices in the Polish Catholic Church for tolerance and mutual understanding and was intensely devoted to combating anti-Semitism and xenophobia.

Active in numerous academic and human rights forums, Father Musiał was a member of the board of the Geneva-based United Nations Watch and Kraków's Judaica Foundation Center for Jewish Culture, as well as closely involved with the Auschwitz Jewish Center in Oświęcim.

Father John T. Pawlikowski, OSM, Ph.D., founding member and honorary co-chairman of the Council and president of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ), said today: "Father Musiał was a genuine pioneer in Christian-Jewish relations in Poland and beyond. He spoke to issues in the dialogue with honesty and integrity. He challenged us all to confront the history of anti-Semitism. We shall miss his voice, which was silenced far too soon."

## Cantor Malovany Honored

On January 26, during his visit to Washington, D.C., President Kwaśniewski inducted Joseph Malovany, Chief Cantor of the Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York and cantorial music professor at Yeshiva University, as "Knight Commander of the Polish Legion of Honor."

The ceremony took place at Blair House, which often hosts state visitors to Washington. Cantor Malovany has a beautiful and powerful spinto tenor voice, and his recordings of Jewish music have been extremely popular.

Malovany was born in Israel in 1973, but his father Naftula Malovany, was born in Pułtusk, Poland. Cantor Malovany has taken many trips to Poland, where he has given performances to enthusiastic crowds. In 1998, he gave a concert at the Royal Castle in Warsaw for the benefit of the planned Museum of Polish Jews.

## Polish-Jewish POWs during WW II

Benjamin Meirtchak of the Association of Jewish War Veterans of Polish Armies in Israel has recently published a new book, *Jews-Officers and Enlisted Men in the Polish Army, Prisoners of War in German Captivity 1939–1945*.

Meirtchak has dedicated himself to documenting the participation of Jewish soldiers in the Polish armies during World War II. His previous books are *Jews-Officers in the Polish Armed Forces 1939–45* and a five volume series: *Jewish Military Casualties in the Polish Armies in World War II*. These latter volumes list names of Jewish casualties—officers and soldiers, resistance fighters, and prisoners of war—with as much of the following data as is known: date and place of birth, fighting unit, date and place of death, and place of burial.

Meirtchak has been honored by the Polish government with the "Commander's Cross, Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland."

More information about the new book is available at: <http://www.zchor.org/meirtchak/meirtchak.htm>.

## AAPJS, POLIN and Gazeta

The American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies is dedicated to documenting and preserving the history of Polish Jews. *Gazeta* is the newsletter of the Association and appears approximately three times a year to report on topics that may be of interest to our members.

Paid-up members of the Association receive the annual volume of *POLIN* and *Gazeta* automatically. Those who do not wish to receive *POLIN* can subscribe just to *Gazeta* by filling out the form on page 7 of this issue.

## Commemoration of the Łódź Ghetto

Initiated by its president, Dr. Jerzy Kropiwnicki, the city of Łódź has organized a commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto. Honorary patronage is held by the President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, and by the Prime Minister, Leszek Miller. Among other participants are the President of the State of Israel, Moshe Katsav, the President of the Republic of Austria, Thomas Klestil, the President of Yad Vashem Institute, Avner Shalev, and the Mayor of Berlin, Klaus Wowereit.

The program of the year-long commemoration—began in October 2003—includes a series of workshops, films, documentaries, exhibitions, and concerts. The commemoration of the final liquidation of the ghetto, which also includes a reunion of survivors and of the 1968 emigration generation, will be held from August 28 to August 30, 2004. For a complete program of events, see <<http://www.ghetto.Łódź.pl/>>.

Between the wars, Łódź had the second largest Jewish population in Poland and in all of Europe, second only to Warsaw. In 1939, there were an estimated 230,000 Jewish residents, about 35 percent of the city's population.

In December 1940, the Germans set up a ghetto in the northern part of the city. By June, more than 160,000 people were jammed into a 4.13-square-kilometer area. In autumn 1941, some 20,000 Jews from other parts of Europe were transported to the Łódź ghetto. Soon after, 17,000 Polish Jews were brought there from the surrounding areas. More than 200,000 Jews were eventually herded into the ghetto. Due to overcrowding and lack of food, many residents died of disease and malnutrition.

The Łódź ghetto was essentially a huge work camp for the Third Reich. Inhabitants were kept occupied sewing uniforms, caps, shoes, and rucksacks for the German army.

In January 1942, deportations began to the extermination camp at Chelmno-upon-Ner. More than 57,000 people were gassed there in the first five months of deportations. There were no deportations in 1943, but they began again in earnest in June 1944.

The Łódź ghetto lasted until August 1944; it was the last ghetto in Poland. Most of the 72,000 Jews who remained until the end were killed in the gas chambers in Birkenau. The last transport is reported to have left for Chwytów on Aug. 29, 1944, from the Radegast Station. During the commemoration, there will be a symbolic march to this railroad station from the former ghetto area.

## Symposium at the Polish Embassy

by Michael Steinlauf

On March 11 of this year, the Polish Embassy in Washington, D. C., in collaboration with the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies, sponsored a symposium to mark the publication of Volume 16 of *POLIN*. This volume, devoted to Jewish popular culture in Poland and its afterlife, includes articles on a broad range of cultural activities in prewar Poland associated with the texture of everyday life, including klezmer music, Yiddish theatre and folksong, Jewish postcards, wedding entertainers (*badkhonim*), and the popular Yiddish press. It also examines the present-day versions and uses of this culture in Poland, Israel, and North America.

The proceedings began with greetings from Ambassador Przemysław Grudziński and Mrs. Irene Pipes, president of the Association. Professor Antony Polonsky, editor in chief of *POLIN*, then presented a touching tribute to Rafael Scharf, to whom the volume is dedicated. Scharf, who passed away as the volume was going to press, was a pioneer in the revival of interest in the Polish-Jewish past and an inspiration to *POLIN*.

Professor Michael Steinlauf, of Gratz College, who co-edited the volume, then addressed the needs which inspired it, among them the extreme idealization of Polish-Jewish civilization in the aftermath of the Holocaust—that is, the need to rediscover some of what clothed the spirit of this culture in everyday life.

Two contributors to the volume then spoke. Dr. Ellen Kellman, lecturer in Yiddish at Brandeis University and a scholar of Yiddish literature, discussed the culture of autodidacticism that swept up many young working class Jews in interwar Poland. Bret Werb, music specialist at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, discussed and played recorded examples of the popular Polish-Jewish comic genre known as *szmoneces*, including a satirical song about the project, entertained in Polish government circles in the late 1930s, to resettle Polish Jews in Madagascar.

The final speaker was Professor Michal Buchowski, who is the first holder of the Distinguished Visiting Professorship in Polish Studies at Columbia University. Professor Buchowski, an anthropologist from the University of Poznań, analyzed the uses and meanings of the current fascination in Poland with the Jewish past.

The symposium concluded with lively exchanges between the speakers and the audience, some of whom shared memories of the culture to which the afternoon was dedicated.

The event was organized by Mrs. Phyllis Myers.

## “Hiding and Seeking:

### Faith and Tolerance After the Holocaust”

In connection with the Yom HaShoah observance on April 19, the National Center for Jewish Film at Brandeis University presented a documentary film *Hiding and Seeking: Faith and Tolerance After the Holocaust*, by film directors Menachem Daum and Oren Rudavski. The event was sponsored by the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies in memory of our board member Eugenia Shrut. Rabbi Joseph Polak of Boston University Hillel introduced the film and paid tribute to Genia Shrut, as did Mrs. Irene Pipes, President of AAPJS.

The film is a documentary of Daum's trip to Poland with his wife and grown sons. They visited the town where Mrs. Daum's father had lived and was hidden by a Polish family during the war, along with his two brothers, for over two years. Daum's sons, who are Orthodox and live in Israel, came on the trip reluctantly, believing that they would find nothing of interest to them in Poland, a country they considered totally anti-Semitic.

When they arrived in the town (Działoszyce), they searched for and found an elderly couple, the Muchas, who, along with Mrs. Mucha's parents, had risked their lives sixty years earlier to save Mrs. Daum's father and his brothers. The couple had been disappointed all these years that none of the three brothers had ever contacted them after the war, not even to send a postcard.

The sons were quite moved to meet this family, and Daum had great satisfaction in showing his sons that not all is black and white. While there may have been Poles who behaved badly during the war, there were others who took great risks and showed a great deal of kindness.

On a second trip to Poland, the Daum family participated in a ceremony at which the Polish family was honored as Righteous Among the Nations of the World. The Daums set up a fund to provide for the education of the family's grandchildren, as a means of thanking the couple for what they had done and to make up for the fact that there had been no contact all these years.

A discussion followed the film, led by Board Member Lilka Elbaum, who helped organize the event, Honorary Consul of Poland in Boston Marek Leśniewski-Laas, and Rabbi Polak.

For many of the viewers, the lack of gratitude shown by the three men saved was surprising. However, others, especially survivors, understood how people wanted so badly to forget all that had happened to them during the war that they avoided all contact with any reminders of their former lives.

## Concert at the Polish National Library

The Association of Jewish Veterans of World War II in Poland organized a special remembrance concert at the National Library in Warsaw for those who had fought and died during the war. The program included the award of the statuette “Arnold” named for the late Dr. Arnold Mostowicz. The award recognizes individuals who have fought against chauvinism, xenophobia, and ethnic antagonisms in the new Poland.

Music at the concert consisted of Jewish songs by the well-known singer Bente Kahan and Jewish dances by a ballet group.

## Beit Warszawa Growing

Beit Warszawa is a liberal congregation formed three years ago by American Jews living in Poland together with a group of young Polish Jews.

They began by meeting in people's homes for Shabbat dinners and celebrating holidays together. Since then, they have grown to about 400 members and recently moved into a spacious, modern building at ul. Wiertnicza 113, in the Wilanów District. They are now affiliated with the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

Some 150 people attended their last Hanukkah celebration and 50–60 people participate in their weekly Shabbat gatherings. Visitors are welcome. For more information, see <[www.beit-warszawa.org.pl](http://www.beit-warszawa.org.pl)>.

In 2002 the High Holy Days were officiated by Anne Persin, a graduating rabbinical student from Cincinnati, who brought Beit Warszawa an old Torah scroll donated by a Jewish community in Mississippi. This Torah was a very precious gift for the Beit Warszawa community.

## Polish Association of Jewish Studies

*Polskie Stowarzyszenie Studiów Żydowskich*, Polish Association of Jewish Studies (PAJS) was formed in 1995 in Kraków and currently includes some ninety members from all over Poland.

PAJS promotes and popularizes scholarly research on Jewish history and culture in Poland, cooperating with Polish and international organizations and associations.

PAJS promotes conferences and publications on Polish-Jewish studies. Dr. hab. Krzysztof Pilarczyk of the Jagiellonian University is the president. Other officers include Dr. Eleonora Bergman, Dr. Alina Cała, Dr. hab. Ewa Halber Geller, Prof. Dr. hab. Daniel Grinberg, Prof. Dr. hab. Jan Lewandowski, Dr. Roman Marcinkowski, Dr. Wacław Wierzbieniec, and Dr. Marcin Wodziński.

## David Peleg Appointed Israel's New Ambassador to Poland

Shevah Weiss, Israel's Ambassador to Poland, ended his three-year term in Poland in January 2004. His newly appointed successor is David Peleg, an experienced career diplomat who has served in many key positions, such as chargé d'affaires at the Israeli Mission to the United Nations, Foreign Ministry Deputy Director General for Central Europe and Eurasia, and Representative, Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations in Geneva.

In welcoming Peleg, Prime Minister Leszek Miller said, "I hope that your mission will contribute to a further development of relations between our countries and mutually advantageous cooperation." Miller emphasized that Poland attaches great importance to cooperation with Israel and noted that Poles and Jews have a long common history. Miller expressed hope that Poland's upcoming EU accession would contribute to a further development of bilateral relations, including economic ones.

Peleg was born in Israel, but his grandfather came from Suwalki, Poland.

## Museum Collaboration

A recent exhibit of the Polish Military Museum (PMM) in Warsaw was dedicated to illustrate the role of clergy attached to the Polish Army. To supplement the exhibit with a display of the role of Jewish clergy, Yad Vashem in Jerusalem presented the Museum with a Torah that had been used by the Israeli Army. The Torah was displayed along with artifacts relating to Greek Catholic and Evangelical churches.

The last official Jewish chaplain of the Polish Army was Rabbi Colonel David Kahane, who later became the Chief Rabbi of the Israeli Army. His memoir, *Lvov Ghetto Diary*, was published by University of Massachusetts Press in 1990.

The PMM had previously collaborated with Yad Vashem when it contributed artifacts about Jewish soldiers in the Polish Army to an exhibit in Jerusalem.

## Web site Commemorating Baral Family

As a tribute to his family from Kraków, many of whom perished in Auschwitz, Steven Baral of Seattle, WA., has published a Web site with over one hundred photographs of those who survived the war. His father survived as a member of Schindler's list. This "album" is posted on the Internet at <[www.baral.com](http://www.baral.com)>.

## Sara's Blessing

Edwin Langberg, who grew up in Drohobycz in a prosperous, educated Jewish family, and had been a student of Bruno Schulz, found his life changing overnight with the outbreak of the war. He first experienced the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland and then the German occupation, following the 1941 German attack on the USSR. The son of a doctor, he was regarded by the Soviets as a bourgeois enemy of the people, and as a Jew, a candidate for extinction by the Germans. His bravery and determination saved his life.

Silent about his experiences for fifty years, he recently published his fascinating personal account, *Sara's Blessing* (Emethas 2003), describing his courageous journey during the war through the German and Soviet lines. He eventually joined the Air Force of the Soviet-controlled Polish First Army, commanded by General Zygmunt Berling. In 1948, he fled to Germany, then to England, and arrived in the U.S. in 1949. Langberg earned a Ph.D. degree from Princeton University and had a professional career as a scientist.

The book can be ordered on the Web at <[www.emethas.com](http://www.emethas.com)>.

## No Federal Income Tax for Restitution

Many people are unaware that on June 7, 2001, Congress passed and President Bush signed into law, as part of the "Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act" (the "2001 Tax Act"), a provision that no Federal income tax will be required on restitution or any related interest received by victims of the Nazi regime, or eligible persons' heirs or estates. This provision, contained in Section 803 of the 2001 Tax Act, applies to amounts received on or after July 1, 2000.

The exemption covers compensation (and interest) for assets that were stolen or otherwise lost during or immediately after World War II. This includes any proceeds of insurance under policies issued on eligible individuals by European insurance companies immediately before and during World War II. This provision is valid through the year 2010.

The leading sponsor of this legislative provision was Senator Peter Fitzgerald of Illinois, assisted by the Claims Conference.

Among the states that have a similar provision applicable to such an exemption from state income tax for Holocaust victims or their heirs are Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, New York, and Pennsylvania. Legislators in other states need to be urged to follow suit.

**Contributions of Polish Jews:  
Abraham Jacob Stern (1769–1842)**

by Michael N. Geselowitz, Ph.D.,  
IEEE History Center, Rutgers University

If you look at the *Jewish Book of Lists*, or any of the numerous Web sites with similar topics, you will often see the adding machine listed as a Jewish invention. The reference is inevitably to the Polish-Jewish inventor Abraham Stern. Although Stern did not actually invent the adding machine, he is, nevertheless, an interesting person worth knowing.

Stern was born in the shtetl of Hrubieszów in the district of Zamość, probably in or around 1769. A watchmaker by trade, he was brought up in an Orthodox household but soon became enamored by the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) movement. Stern moved to Warsaw, where he quickly became a prominent member of the intelligentsia. He obtained a job at the Censor's Office and devoted himself to a wide range of activities, from writing poetry in Hebrew to calendrical and mathematical calculations. Frustrated, with the use of mathematical tables, he decided to apply his mechanical skill to building a calculating machine (many enlightenment figures, most notably Charles Babbage in England, were working on such devices).

Stern's first machine, in 1814, could execute the basic arithmetic functions, while in 1817, he built a machine to do square roots. In 1820, he built a final model combining these functions. In the meanwhile, the Warsaw Scientific Society (*Societas Scientiarum Varsaviensis*), predecessor organization to the Polish Academy of Sciences, had been founded in 1800 to advance the sciences and arts in the region. In 1820, they invited Stern to come and demonstrate his invention, perhaps the first Jew to be invited before that body. The great Polish painter Jan Antoni Blank (1785-1844), of the Faculty of Fine Arts of Warsaw University, immortalized the visit in 1823 in a portrait that showed both the man and the machine.

Although Stern's devices did not directly influence the further development of calculating engines in the nineteenth century, he did serve as a mentor to the great Haskalah figure Selig Slonimski, whose own calculating machine eventually won an award from the Imperial Academy in St. Petersburg.

**A New Book:  
*We, from Jedwabne***

Anna Bikont, noted writer and reporter, is the author of a new book of recollections of people from Jedwabne entitled *We, from Jedwabne (My z Jedwabnego)*. It is to be published in Poland this spring by Prószyński i S-ka, a major publishing house in Warsaw.

A preview of excerpts from the book, which appeared in the March 2004 issue of *Midrasz*, a Polish-Jewish monthly sponsored by the Ronald S. Lauder Foundation in Warsaw, are quite revealing.

Bikont presents extensive interviews with Poles and Jews from Jedwabne, recounting their experiences and observations. Some of the Jewish former residents now live in Israel and provided their recollections of the events. The interviews in Poland were primarily with people who saved Jews. These people showed great courage in speaking freely about the mass murders that took place and were described by Agnieszka Arnold and Jan Gross.

The Bikont book serves to confirm that the pogrom was committed by local residents, a fact that had been challenged by those claiming that the accusation was false and a dishonor to the people of Jedwabne.

**Notes from the Other World**

Dr. Leszek Allerhand of Zakopane recently published a book entitled *Maurycy Allerhand: Zapiski z tamtego świata* (Notes from the Other World) about the life of his grandfather, Professor Maurycy Allerhand (Wydawnictwo Edukacyjne, Kraków 2003).

Maurycy Allerhand (1868–1942), married to Salomea Weintraub, was a well-known, distinguished professor of law in Lwów. He had studied law in Vienna and returned to Lwów after receiving his doctoral degree. In 1917, he was appointed professor of law at Jan Kazimierz University. In 1919, he was appointed to the Codification Commission of the new Republic of Poland. He was the author of a number of legal textbooks. In 1929, Allerhand became president for a short time of the Jewish Community of Lwów. He was also active in B'nai Brith.

When the German Army entered Lwów, he took notes about what was happening. His grandson recovered the notes and reproduced them in the book.

Professor Allerhand was killed in the Janowska Street Camp in Lwów in August 1942. The dangerous wartime experiences of Leszek Allerhand himself are described in the book *The Last Eyewitnesses: Children of the Holocaust Speak*, Northwestern University Press, 1998.

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**NPAJAC Conference:  
The Use of the Term "Holocaust"**

On April 21 the National Polish-American Jewish-American Council held a public conference in Washington, D.C. on the use of the term "Holocaust." In announcing the conference, the NPAJAC stated, "Many Poles have characterized their own national experience under Nazi occupation as part of the Holocaust and have striven to characterize all Polish victims of World War II as 'Holocaust victims.' Most Jews consider the Holocaust to be a distinctly Jewish tragedy of unprecedented proportion and view this broadening of the use of the term 'Holocaust' as diminishing the centrality of the Jewish experience during the Holocaust. The question here is how to recognize the wartime suffering of Poles, while distinguishing it from the unique targeting of the Jewish people for extermination by the Nazis."

A number of scholars at the Conference addressed the issue, and an emotional discussion followed. Several attendees from the Polish-American community felt that the suffering of Polish people during the war and the loss of three million Poles (including military, resistance, and labor camp casualties) entitles them to the use of the term as much as it does the Jewish people to describe their suffering and loss of life.

On the other hand, Jewish individuals stressed the uniqueness of the Jewish experience, since over 90% of the Jewish population of Poland was annihilated.

The word "Holocaust" is derived from the Greek "holo" (whole) and "kaustos" (burnt), thus meaning something wholly burned or destroyed. In the late 1950s, this word came to describe the destruction of European Jews, many of whom perished in crematoria or whose corpses were burned in funeral pyres.

The teaching guidelines of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum provides the following definition, "The Holocaust refers to a specific event in 20th century history: the systematic, bureaucratic annihilation of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and their collaborators as a central act of state during World War II." See <[www.holocaust-trc.org/uhmmmguides.htm](http://www.holocaust-trc.org/uhmmmguides.htm)>.

The conference resulted in an exchange of views but no agreement was reached on what constitutes the proper use of the term Holocaust.

In order to avoid ambiguity, some Jews have adopted the term "Shoah," which is a Hebrew word meaning "annihilation" and is used by Jews to refer exclusively to the Jewish tragedy.

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**To: American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies**

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### Mission to Poland

The Museum of History of Polish Jews is organizing a mission to Poland from Monday, June 28 through Tuesday, July 6, 2004, departing for Warsaw either from New York or Los Angeles.

The Museum scheduled for completion in 2007 will be dedicated to the long history of Jewish life in Poland.

The program includes bus tours of Warsaw, Kazimierz Dolny, Majdanek, Lublin, Kraków, and Auschwitz. Also planned are meetings with Polish dignitaries, including Lech Kaczyński, Mayor of Warsaw; Christopher Hill, United States Ambassador to Poland; Marian Turski, Chairman of the Jewish Historical Association in Poland; and Marcin Świącicki, former Mayor of Warsaw who serves as President of the Polish Committee to support the Museum.

Additional information is available from Eva Wierzyńska, Museum of History of Polish Jews North American Council, Tel.: 212-961-0059, 845 West End Ave., Suite 4B, New York, NY 10025, <museum@interaccessin.com>, or, for the West Coast travelers, from Rachel Andres, 323-965-5541, <rachelandres@comcast.net>.

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### Day of Judaism in Poznań

January 17 is celebrated in Poland, under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church, as the countrywide Day of Judaism. In honor of this occasion, a well known artist in the city of Poznań, Janusz Marciniak, arranged an exhibit of his work (paintings, photographs, computer animation, and sketches) relating to Jewish culture and the Holocaust. The exhibit, presented in the Poznań Municipal Gallery "Arsenal," was entitled "Only a lilac bush remains" (*Pozostał tylko krzak bzu*), referring to the one remaining flowering bush at the destroyed Jewish cemetery.

Marciniak also arranged a dramatic floating display called "Atlantis" in the local swimming pool, formerly the site of the great Poznań Synagogue on Stawna Street. The Germans converted the synagogue into a pool. Marciniak's floating display was a lighted Star of David shining in the water in the darkened hall. Ruth Gruber described the event in the JTS News.

Marciniak is a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznań and author of a book which condemns anti-Semitism, entitled *Co Żydzi zrobili* (What Have the Jews Done?), Wydawnictwo Pograniczne 2001. The book won a literary award in Poznań.