



BIOGRAPHIES AND POLITICS

**THE INVOLVEMENT
OF JEWS
AND ACTIVISTS
OF JEWISH ORIGIN
IN LEFTIST
MOVEMENTS
IN 19TH AND 20TH
CENTURY POLAND**

**POLIN MUSEUM OF
THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS
1-2.12.2019**

DAY I, DECEMBER 1

9:00-9:30 Conference registration

9:30 Welcome

10:00-12:00

SESSION 1: How Jewish are Leftist Ideas? How Leftist is Jewishness

Jakob Stürmann, Free University of Berlin
Pavel Axelrod – Eastern European Socialist and “Role Model” for Jewish Socialists during the Inter-War Period?

Alexandra Kemmerer, Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public and International Law, Heidelberg/Berlin
Poland's Forgotten Eagle: Rosa Luxemburg – Martyr, Icon, Marginalized Theorist of Revolution

Katarzyna Chmielewska, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw
The Family Communist Rhizome

Chair: **François Guesnet**, UCL

10:00-12:00

SESSION 2: Internationalist Politics, Transnational Biographies, Local Activism

Zoé Grumberg, Sciences Po, Paris
Yiddish-Speaking Jewish Communists from Poland in Paris: Social and Political Trajectories from the 1920s to the 1960s

Ebony Nilsson, University of Sydney
A ‘Pied Piper of Discontent’ Among Workers and a ‘Broken-Hearted Communist’: The Transnational Lives and Politics of Polish-Born Jewish Left-Wing Activists in Australia

Daniel Walkowitz, New York University
The Bund Milieu: The Polish-Jewish Left-Wing Diaspora, From Łódź and Białystok to Paterson, New Jersey

Chair: **Dobrochna Kałwa**, University of Warsaw

12:00-12:30 Coffee break

12:30-14:30

SESSION 3: Social and Cultural Activism

Sylwia Kuźma-Markowska, University of Warsaw
Being a Jewish Birth Controller in Interwar and State-Socialist Poland: The Story of Herman Rubinraut (Henryk Babiniak)

Andrea Feldman, University of Zagreb
Circle of Vera Erlich Stein: Jewish Activists in the Interwar Yugoslavia

Vassili Schedrin, Kingston University
Solomon Mikhoels: Unwritten Autobiography

Chair: **Artur Markowski**, POLIN Museum

12:30-14:30

SESSION 4: Antifascism Facing the Holocaust

Stefan Gąsiorowski, Jagiellonian University, Cracow
Saved by Socialism? PPS Threads in the Life of Michał Borwicz (1911–1987)

Michał Trębacz, POLIN Museum
Szmul Zygielbojm. Bundist in Polish London, 1942–1943

Maria Ferenc, University of Warsaw / Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw
Shmuel Breslaw: Unacknowledged Intellectual Leader of Hashomer Hatzair in the Warsaw Ghetto

Chair: **Stephan Stach**, POLIN Museum

14:30-15:30 Lunch

15:30-17:30

SESSION 5: Exclusion and Inclusion in Leftist Jewish Biographies

Dariusz Zalega, Independent Scholar
Zygmunt Glücksman: Activist of the Jewish Left, Leader of the German Socialists in Upper Silesia

Wojciech Goslar, Foundation of Social History, Cracow
Jew, Worker, Anarchist: The Experience of Exclusion in Late Nineteenth-Century Austrian Galicia on an Example of Maurycy Jeger's Biography

Anna Ładowska, University of Wrocław
Dina Blond as a Second-Generation Activist in Bund

Chair: **Urszula Chowanec**, UCL

15:30-17:30

SESSION 6: After the Holocaust Towards a Brighter Future?

Magdalena Senczyszyn, Institute of National Remembrance, Szczecin
Aba Kowner and Icchak Cukierman: Two Views on the Future of Zionists in Communist Poland in 1944

Anna Nedlin-Lehrer, University of Freiburg
The Founders of the Dror Kibbutz Lohamei Hagetaot (Ghetto Fighters Kibbutz) and the Formation of Their Group Identity

Eryk Krasucki, University of Szczecin
References to the „World of the Past” in Biographical Sources Concerning the Elite of the KPP Leadership with Jewish Roots

Chair: **Zofia Wóycicka**, German Historical Institute, Warsaw

17:30-18:00 Coffee break

18:00-20:00 KEYNOTE LECTURE

Karen Auerbach, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Jewish Biographies, Leftist Politics, and the History of Emotions

DAY II, DECEMBER 2

9:00-11:00

SESSION 7: Negotiating Religion and Socialism

Gershon Bacon, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan
Orthodox Jews, Ambivalent Leftists: The Case of Poalei Agudat Yisrael in Interwar Poland

Yitzchak Schwartz, New York University
Pious Radicals? Biographical Sketches of Lived Religion Between Poland, Ukraine and New Jersey in the Am Olam Agricultural Colonies, 1881-1924

Ada Gebel, Shaanan College, Haifa
Rabbi Dr. Yitzhak Breuer, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Orlean, and Karl Marx: Did All Three Follow the Same Path?

Chair: **Yvonne Kleinmann**, Aleksander Brückner Center for Polish Studies, Halle

9:00-11:00

SESSION 8: Jewish Perspectives on the History of the Left – Marxist Approaches on Jewish History

Piotr Laskowski, University of Warsaw
The Monument of Failed Dreams: Mojżesz Kaufman as a Revolutionary and a Historian

Tom Navon, University of Haifa and Yad Ya'ari
Raphael Mahler: The History of Polish Jewry from a Marxist-Zionist Perspective

Tomasz Siewierski, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw
In the Merging World of History and Politics: Feliks Tych (1929-2015): Scholar and Participant

Chair: **Katarzyna Person**, Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:30

SESSION 9: Responsibility

Stanisław Krajewski, University of Warsaw
How Jewish Were My Communist Ancestors? Revisiting the Question of Jewish Responsibility

Katarzyna Rembacka, Institute of National Remembrance, Szczecin
Leonard Borkowicz's Ideological Choices and His Autobiographical Settlement with Communism

Katarzyna Kwiatkowska-Moskalewicz,
Marcin Moskalewicz, Agora Publishing House, Poznan
University of Medical Sciences
Helena Wolińska and Włodzimierz Brus: A Political Biography

Chair: **Dariusz Stola**, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

11:30-13:30

SESSION 10: Emancipatory Empowerment and Leftist Politics

Emma Zohar, Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin
Communism, Gender and Emotions in the Autobiographies of Bina Garncarska-Kadari and Ester Rosenthal-Schneiderman

Jan Rybak, University of York
A Revolutionary Woman's Self-Emancipation: Malke Schorr's Childhood and Youth in Lwów

Magdalena Grabowska, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw
Edwarda Orłowska: Activist, Politician, a Feminist?

Chair: **Agnieszka Mroziak**, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw

13:30-14:30 Lunch

14:30-15:50

SESSION 11: Different Generations? Different Biographies?

Jaff Schatz, Independent Scholar, Lund
Determinants, Contingencies, Chances: The Paths to the Interwar Communist Movement

Łukasz Bertram, University of Warsaw
Youth, Underground and Power: Polish Communists of Jewish Origin and the Tensions of the Revolutionary Habitus

Chair: **Krzysztof Persak**, POLIN Museum

15:50-16:30 Coffee break

16:30-18:00 Round Table: Jewish Leftwing Activism and Family History

Participants: **Alex Sobel** (Leeds, UK) & **Leopold Sobel** (Lund, Sweden), **Ewa Herbst** (Edgewater NJ, USA), **David Slucki** (Charleston, USA)

Chair: **Antony Polonsky**, POLIN Museum

18:30-20:30 FILM SCREENING of "Tonia and her Children" by Marcel Łoziński with introductory remarks by Przemysław Kaniecki (POLIN Museum): *Tonia Lechtman's personal archive in the collections of the POLIN Museum*

Conference organizers



ALEKSANDER-BRÜCKNER-ZENTRUM
FÜR POLENSTUDIEN



CENTRE FOR
HEBREW AND JEWISH STUDIES



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Illustration on the front cover: Rally of the General
Union of Jewish Workers 'the Bund'.
Photo: National Digital Archive