To stay or go?
Jews in Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust

The conference deals with possibilities for and perspectives of Jews in Europe in the immediate aftermath of the Holocaust. In view of the scale of the Holocaust, post-war political turmoil, a pervading sense of emptiness after the death of the nation, the persistence of anti-Semitism in general as well as repeated incidents of brutal anti-Semitic violence following the liberation, many Jews were faced with the following question: should they return to their places of origin and start anew or should they emigrate from Europe? Did Jews find their place in post-war European societies? Was the attempt to rebuild Jewish life, institutions and culture successful and if so, to what extent? Who decided not to participate in this endeavour and why? These are the main questions of the conference. Its aim is to examine the situation in individual countries. However, the ultimate goal is to establish clearly similarities and dissimilarities in the situations of Jews after the war in Western and Eastern Europe.

Concept and organization:
Helena Datner (Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw)
Katrin Steffen (Nordost-Institut Lüneburg)
Katrin Stoll (German Historical Institute Warsaw)

The conference will be held at the German Historical Institute Warsaw

Conference languages:
English/Polish
Simultaneous translation will be provided

Thursday, 8 December 2011
10.00 – 11.30: Visit of conference participants to the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw (optional)

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Commemorating the 4th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising
Photo: Jewish Historical Institute Warsaw
Monday, 5 December 2011
9.30 – 10.00: Welcome address: Director GHIW (Edmund Mühle), Director JHI (Paweł Śpiewak), Directeur Noudot-Institut Lüneburg (Joachim Tauber)
Introduction: Helena Onner (Warsaw), Katarzyna Steffen (Lüneburg), Katarzyna Stoll (Warsaw)

Keynote Speeches
10.00 – 11.00: Frank Golczewski (Hamburg): The post-war period: a completely new world? [delivered in Polish]

Chair:
10.00 – 11.00: Keynote Speeches

Chair:
11.30 – 12.00: Break

9.00 – 9.20: Andrew Ston (Munich): “How can you possibly live in Germany?” Jewish politics and the question of Jewish life in post-war Germany
9.20 – 9.40: Elizabeth Anthony (Winchester): The First Wave: The return of Jewish Concentration Camp Survivors and Refugees to Vienna in the immediate post-war period
9.40 – 10.30: Commentary: Ruth Leiserowitz and discussion
10.30 – 11.00: Break
11.00 – 11.20: Łukasz Krzysztofowski (Warsaw): Homecomers: Jews and Gentiles in post-war Radom [delivered in Polish]
11.20 – 11.40: Eva Kaczmarska-Perłak (Warsaw): Assimilation to Polishness as an adapting strategy of Polish Jewish Holocaust Survivors [delivered in Polish]
11.40 – 12.00: Magdalena Bata (Kraków): “Jęczmiel Pęcjoł” or “Nusech Pęcjoł”: literary discussions of the Jewish presence in Poland against the background of the revival of Yiddish cultural life in the years 1945-1949 [delivered in Polish]
12.00 – 12.45: Commentary: August Graboki and discussion
12.45 – 13.45: Commentary: Dorota Szewc and discussion
14.00 – 16.00: Break
16.00 – 16.20: Julia Mauger (Paris): The Exodus of Jews from Eastern Europe through France and French Occupation Zones
16.40 – 17.00: Isaac Hershkowitz (Ramat-Gan): Rabbis as “Shapers of Identity”: Agents of the Past in the post-war European DP Camps
17.00 – 17.45: Commentary: Fedor Tjch and discussion
17.45 – 18.10: Break

Section II: The Jewish Communities after the Holocaust
Chair: Katarzyna Steffen (Lüneburg)
18.10 – 18.30: Gerhard Greenberg (Washington D.C.): Orthodox Jewish Religious Considerations
18.30 – 19.00: Commentary: Isaac Hershkowitz and discussion

Tuesday, 6 December 2011

Section II: The Jewish Communities after the Holocaust
Chair: Katarzyna Steffen (Lüneburg)
9.00 – 9.20: Andrea Sisto (Milan): “How can you possibly live in Germany?” Jewish politics and the question of Jewish life in post-war Germany
9.20 – 9.40: Elizabeth Anthony (Worcester): The First Wave: The return of Jewish Concentration Camp Survivors and Refugees to Vienna in the immediate post-war period
9.40 – 10.30: Commentary: Ruth Leiserowitz and discussion
10.30 – 11.00: Break
11.00 – 11.20: Łukasz Krzysztofowski (Warsaw): Homecomers: Jews and Gentiles in post-war Radom [delivered in Polish]
11.20 – 11.40: Eva Kaczmarska-Perłak (Warsaw): Assimilation to Polishness as an adapting strategy of Polish Jewish Holocaust Survivors [delivered in Polish]
11.40 – 12.00: Magdalena Bata (Kraków): “Jęczmiel Pęcjoł” or “Nusech Pęcjoł”: literary discussions of the Jewish presence in Poland against the background of the revival of Yiddish cultural life in the years 1945-1949 [delivered in Polish]
12.00 – 12.45: Commentary: August Graboki and discussion
12.45 – 13.45: Commentary: Dorota Szewc and discussion
14.00 – 15.10: Arnaud Bozzini (Brussels): Identity (re-)construction and political engagement: Jewish activists and the Communist Party of Belgium after World War II
15.10 – 16.00: Commentary: August Graboki and discussion
16.00 – 16.30: Break

Section III: Attitudes of the political Establishment and Civil Society towards the Jews
Chair: Joachim Tauber (Lüneburg)
16.50 – 17.10: Katarzyna Kupferblum (Prague): Germans or Jews? German-speaking Jews in Poland and Czechoslovakia after 1945
17.10 – 17.30: Regina Fritz (Vienne): The myth of “Jewish revenge” – post-war Anti-Semitism in Hungary and the Pogroms of 1946
17.30 – 18.30: Commentary: Katarzyna Steffen and discussion

Wednesday, 7 December 2011

Section III: Attitudes of the political Establishment and Civil Society towards the Jews
Chair: Andrzej Ziółkowski (Warsaw)
9.00 – 9.20: Natana Sondier (Tel Aviv): Culture and Memory: The role of Jewish Cultural Property
9.20 – 9.40: Matthias Bardowski (Gießen): How was the issue of “abandoned” Jewish property in Poznań and Wrocław dealt with after World War II? Conflicts as a result of new laws, post-war daily life, demands for the return of property, and of political principles [delivered in Polish]
9.40 – 10.30: Commentary: Marcin Zaremba and discussion
10.30 – 11.00: Break
11.00 – 11.20: Beata Przymuszała (Warsaw): Polish-Jewish Relations in the DP Camps
11.20 – 11.40: Katarzyna Persson (London): Polish-Jewish Relations in the DP Camps [delivered in Polish]
11.40 – 12.00: Bożena Szaynok (Warsaw): Remorse of the Churches? Changes in European Christian attitudes towards the Jews immediately after the Holocaust [delivered in Polish]
12.00 – 13.00: Commentary: Marcin Zaremba and discussion
13.15 – 15.00: Break

Section IV: Early forms of Holocaust Documentation, Research and Commemoration
Chair: Imke Hausen (Hamburg)
15.00 – 15.20: Natalia Aleksievs (New York): Philip Friedman and the emergence of Holocaust Scholarship
15.20 – 15.40: Johanna Schüller (Posdam): Genia Silke – A pedagogue at the Central Committee of Polish Jews (CKZWP) and the Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH) in post-war Poland
15.40 – 16.00: Bożena Przyminska (Poznań): Ways of interpreting the Externalization of the Jews in the 1940s: “The Organization of rage” by Michal Borwicz [delivered in Polish]
16.00 – 16.50: Commentary: Katarzyna Stoll and discussion
16.50 – 17.15: Break
17.55 – 18.15: Nishek Benninga (Jerusalem): Holocaust Testimony as Sources for (a) Cultural History of the Holocaust
18.15 – 19.00: Commentary: Katarzyna Stoll and discussion
19.00 – 19.15: Break
19.15 – 20.00: Summary and final discussion

Chair: Helena Danner