



ANNUAL REPORT

Forum for Dialogue Among Nations





Many of the initiatives of the FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS, a non-governmental organization established in 1998, are aimed at connecting the past to the present and the future of Poland and Polish-Jewish relations. The Forum's mission is to strengthen relationships among individuals young and old, to prevent anti-Semitism and xenophobia, and to teach tolerance.

A year of dynamic development of the Forum's "School of Dialogue," 2011 was highlighted by the participation of 32 schools in 20 towns. The creativity of the young program participants demonstrates their enthusiasm and commitment to preserving the evidence of the Jewish heritage of their communities and ensuring that past is not a foreign country to them. Their projects have an impact far beyond their schools as they engage their parents, neighbors and other inhabitants of their towns in their research and their findings. In their towns they are both preserving and restoring the foundational memories and history; in many cases, they are also altering the futures of these towns.

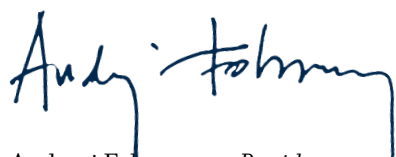
A year of dynamic development

The Forum is integrally involved in stabilizing and promoting dialogue between Poles and Jews, constructing spaces where they may meet and talk openly and frankly, confront their prejudices, and try to understand their differences. For most Polish and Jewish participants, the Polish-Jewish Exchange Program and study visits to Poland are experiences that change their perception of history. For many, the study trip is just the beginning of their engagement in Polish and Jewish issues, an engagement that grows through continuing participation in Forum activities.

We are gratified by the growth of our educational activities and delighted by the confidence placed in us by many American and Polish individuals and organizations that participate in and contribute to our programs. We could not carry out our activities so successfully without the support of so many, and we are grateful for their support and encouragement.

The act of remembering, both individually and collectively, helps us understand who we are and who we are not; it also can guide us toward being who we want to be. The Forum is proud to be a leader in providing the environment, the guidance, and the impetus for helping both Poles and Jews from around the world remember and build on our memories.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Andrzej Folwarczny". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrzej" and last name "Folwarczny" clearly distinguishable.

Andrzej Folwarczny, *President*, FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS



Study Trips to Poland

For American Jews, Poland is not only a foreign country, but it is weighted with a negative past. A study tour hosted by the Forum opens their eyes and changes their lives.

In October and December 2011, two delegations of leaders of the Jewish communities in the United States, Australia, and Israel visited Poland as guests of the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS**. The project was co-sponsored by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

During a unique week-long visit, the Forum hosts meetings with experts on Polish-Jewish issues, including journalists, politicians, academicians, and business leaders. While trip participants study the past in depth, they also learn about the lives of contemporary Poles and the organizations that focus on the development of Polish-Jewish relationships. They hear about the reemerging Jewish life in Poland from current leaders of the Jewish community in Poland and visit sites important to Polish Jewish history. As one of the participants declared: "We always say that it is the people we visit, and the people that the Forum had introduced us to really changed my opinion of Poland."

The trips in 2011 included visits to Warsaw, Cracow, Lublin and Sandomierz and comprehensive study tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau with experts in the field of Holocaust research.





“If you want to see what a new Poland thinks, feels and behaves about its Jews, come to Poland... You will be surprised, you will be deeply moved, and you will understand what it means to be a Jew today, in the 21st century, in a way that you’ve never even thought of your Jewish life before.”

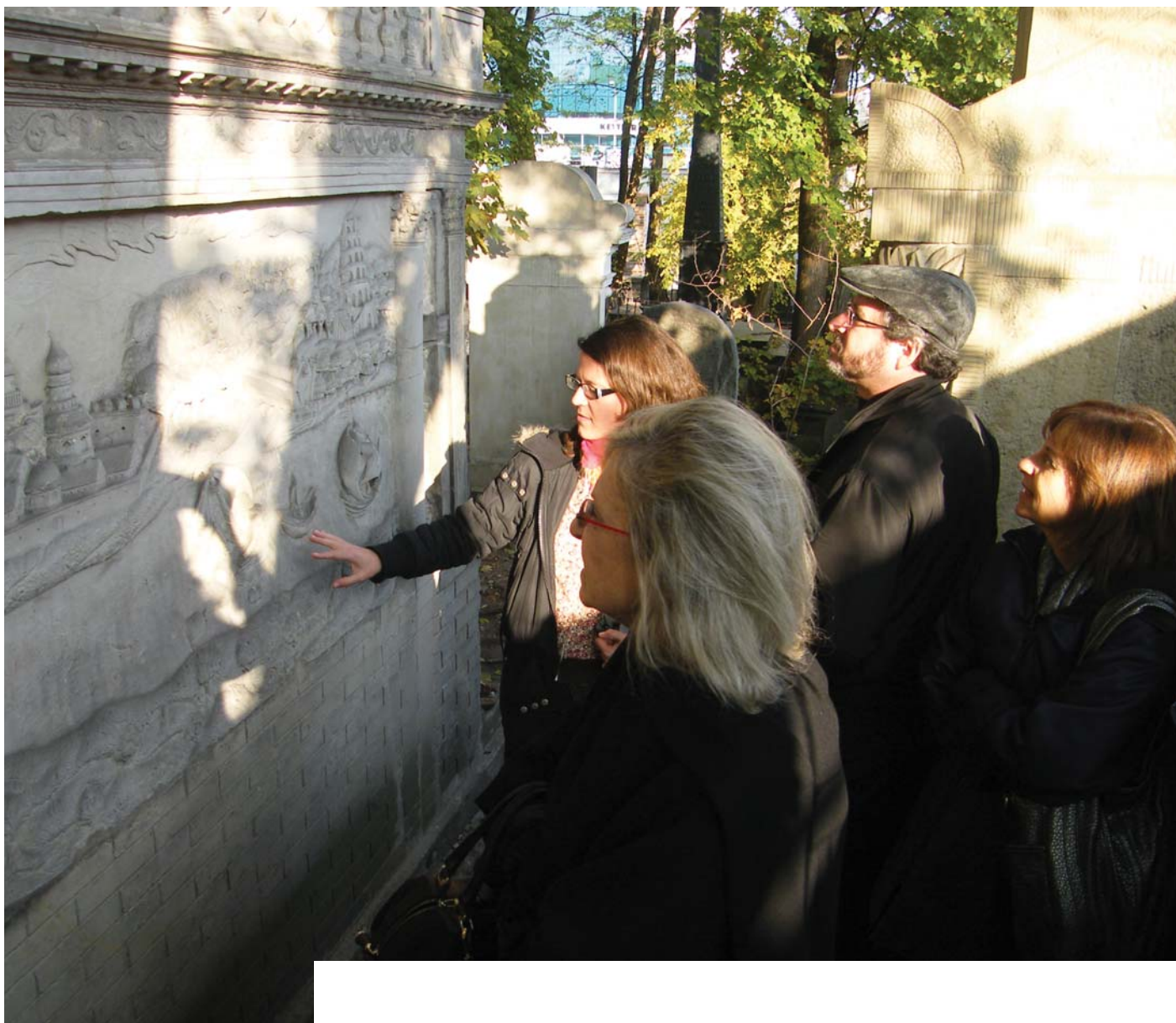
SAM LIPSKI, Chief Executive, The Pratt Foundation

"I knew about Polish history and culture before I arrived, but I didn't know about the current state of Polish-Jewish relations. Most important is, I now see, Jewish life and its possibility as a reality. And the idea of reconciliation is also a possibility. The Forum's work will be essential to this work. I admit I fell in love a bit with everyone's passion, commitment and energy. That Poles care so much, independently of Jewish influence, was very powerful and enriching. It also birthed a real partnership and sense of community." **STEVEN GLANTZ**, screenwriter and author

Integral to each study trip is a visit to at least one town with a school that participates in the Forum's School of Dialogue program. Visitors see for themselves how Poland's future will not repeat Poland's past. In the fall of 2011, trip participants visited Schools of Dialogue in Kutno and Ulanów. Students took them on a tour of locations related to their towns' Jewish history and shared what they had learned about individuals, families, and events. The meetings with these young people who were studying and remembering the Jewish heritage of their towns was a significant highlight of the trip for all participants.

During study visits, the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS** immerses representatives of American Jewish communities in contemporary Poland. It is an honest and complete picture, without embellishments or condemnation. Thanks to this initiative, Poles and Jews meet and reconcile, and each group opens a new chapter in Polish-Jewish relations.





“The experience has been transformational. It has enabled me to learn deeply about the vibrancy of Polish life today, to learn about Poland’s complex and bittersweet history through high-level meetings... The rhythm and pacing of the trip enabled me to realize the richness of Polish history, the different narratives that Jews and Poles have been accustomed to repeating, and the need to revisit and reshape the gap between those narratives.”

ROBERT BANK, Executive Vice President, American Jewish World Service

“I was impressed with the renewed interest in learning about the Jewish past by present-day Poles. I will be an enthusiastic proponent of traveling to Poland and conveying to people in the U.S. my new positive impressions of Poland.”

BRUCE LANE, a member of the National Board of Governors of the American Jewish Committee

The Polish-Jewish Exchange Program, operating for more than fifteen years, is the only exchange program between a Polish non-governmental organization and an important American Jewish organization.

Organized by the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS** and the American Jewish Committee with support from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the program continued in 2011 when delegations of representatives from the American Jewish Committee visited Poland in July, and in September a delegation of Polish leaders spent a week in the United States.

Polish-Jewish Exchange Program

In September 2011, journalists, business and cultural leaders, and social activists visited the United States. The program is a unique opportunity for Polish opinion-shapers to look at Polish-Jewish relations from the perspective of American Jews. During a week-long visit, the delegation visited Washington, Chicago, and New York. They visited the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington and met Holocaust survivors, and also met with leaders of the American Jewish Committee.

When organizing each visit of American Jewish Committee leaders to Poland, the Forum is aware of the lingering legacy of the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. Thus, the trips focus on current relations between Poland and Israel, the latest debates on Polish-Jewish relations, and how these issues shape contemporary Polish culture. Participants meet representatives of both the Polish Jewish community and organizations that preserve, protect and memorialize the Jewish presence in Poland.

For many years the Forum has also been a partner institution in the AJC Goldman Fellowship Program. In the summer of 2011, Caroline Kessler, a Carnegie Mellon University student, assisted the Forum.





“This trip opened my eyes to the Polish-Jewish relations, it made me deeply aware of how much still has to be done in this area. It is difficult to say what impressed me the most. The program of this trip guarantees lots of impressions. It was probably one of the most intensive weeks in my life, rich in experiences, new knowledge, and meaningful and fascinating meetings.”

BARTOSZ HOJKA, CEO at Agora Radio Group



Friends of the Forum

Participants in the Forum's various study missions and exchange visits form a network of people of good will who recognize the importance of promoting Polish-Jewish relations, and become involved in ongoing programs in their own communities and organizations.

"During this trip we became a group. My group creates a community with other groups that would not be established in any other way. Each of us has a feeling that we have some strength together. It is based on private relations among colleagues, sometimes friends, so it is a really valuable thing."

KAZIMIERA SZCZUKA, literary critic

In the U.S., Friends of the Forum was founded in 2007 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to strengthen and support ongoing relationships between Poles and Jews who recognize their common pasts and want to encourage a common future of understanding. In 2011, Friends of the Forum supported Forum's work financially thanks to generous donations from members. Representatives of the Forum took part in events hosted by Friends in New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington, informing U.S. audiences about the current state of Polish-Jewish relations and Forum activities in Poland.

Similarly, a group of influential individuals who understand and care about Polish-Jewish dialogue is growing in Poland. After their visit to the U.S., Polish participants in the Polish-Jewish Exchange Program engage in various initiatives. In March 2011, they gathered for an annual meeting in Lochów near Warsaw. In June, members of the group traveled to Parysów near Garwolin to participate in a tour that highlighted the traces of the Jewish inhabitants of the town. The School of Dialogue program in Parysów was funded by these Polish participants in the exchange program.



“Until I came to Poland on a trip hosted by the Forum for Dialogue Among Nations, I never recognized how much of my own Jewish history is connected to the country of my ancestors. I came back from my first trip to Poland with a commitment to connect Jews and Poles to the history and culture of Polish Jews in the centuries before the Holocaust, and to create bridges for future.”

MICHAEL ROSENBAUM, Chairman, Friends of the Forum, Chicago, IL



School of Dialogue

“If not for these workshops I would never have learned where the Jewish cemetery, synagogue, or the ghetto were. Thanks to this experience I can easily share many interesting facts with other people, people that did not take part in the program. I remember how surprised my dad was, when on the way to school I started to explain to him quickly about the ghetto, Jewish streets... I am happy to have such knowledge to share!” **MARTYNA**, age 17, Radom

Only after the program, they say, places that they pass by daily gain a new meaning. “I got to know a different image of my town,” is one of their most frequent statements. They are also surprised to learn that Jewish culture influenced so much of what they assumed was Polish culture.

“I’ve learned many new things although I have lived here since childhood. We learn about the past during educational trips (e.g. to Cracow’s former Jewish district of Kazimierz) but today I understand that we should start from the streets of Tarnowskie Góry.”

KAZIMIERZ SPOROŃ, Headmaster, Staszic High School, Tarnowskie Góry



Participation in a School of Dialogue program changes the way that students think about the Jews. Marzena from Chełm: “After four weeks of workshops I changed my attitude visibly. I’ve learned stories about the real people.” Similarly Marlena from Końskie explains that she and her classmates have learned how not to see Jews through stereotypes.

The students become the teachers as they prepare walking tours of local Jewish sites for their parents, neighbors, local officials and classmates. In Chełm, Radom, and Kalisz, students organized for their schoolmates city games with quizzes and challenges and prizes for the winners. In Tarnowskie Góry and Wasilków, guided tours were announced and opened to the public. Students from Kutno, Końskie, Piastów, Piaseczno, and number of other schools invited other students to take part in their tour. In Ulanów, Kielce, and Sławatycze, they invited the town’s officials on a specially organized tour. Once students have discovered the Jewish past of their towns, they want to share this knowledge. Often they start to “think big,” like Szymek and Michał from Tarnowskie Góry: “It was a great adventure to take part in this project, to discover traces of the Jewish presence and show them to the others. We had fun and we’ve learned a lot at the same time. We think we did a good job and we are proud of ourselves. We hope that a permanent Jewish Trail in Tarnowskie Góry will be created based on the tour that we prepared.”



Participants in the School of Dialogue program come to an understanding of the important role that Jews played in their hometowns. At the same time, they inspire and motivate interest within their local communities to protect and preserve their Jewish heritage. The School of Dialogue program not only helps to heal wounds of the past but also creates foundations for a better future for both Poles and Jews.

The School of Dialogue is an educational program developed and conducted by the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS**. It aims at broadening young people's knowledge about the historical and longstanding presence of Jews in Poland through self-exploration and commemoration of the pre-war Jewish history of their own communities. Activities are targeted at Polish middle school and high school students. Students participating in the project get to know the history of their town, often discovering blank spots on the map of knowledge of the no-longer-existing Jewish community.

The School of Dialogue is recognized by the Polish Minister of National Education, which has granted the program honorary patronage. This very special distinction confirms the nationwide scale and growing impact of the Forum's educational activities. The program also enjoys growing recognition from both local, national media, and international media. The largest circulation Polish newspaper, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the Israeli Orthodox daily, *Hamodia*, and Agence France-Presse all have published articles recognizing the program in individual towns.



Common Places, Common Ground



What would happen if Jews whose families came from your town visited one day? If they wanted to see the town, the cemetery, the synagogue? Could you help them, show them around, tell them about these places? This is the theoretical question we often ask young people during workshops. Sometimes, such real encounters take place under the auspices of the Forum.

In 2011, **SCHOOLS OF DIALOGUE** in Radom, Kutno, Stawiatycze, Ulanów, and Wąchock hosted descendants of former Jewish inhabitants of these towns. Such meetings give the common history of the Polish students and the Jewish visitors a contemporary dimension. The shared experiences go beyond past history; they lay the groundwork for future relationships on a local level.

IN RADOM, the U.S. Ambassador to the Czech Republic, Norman Eisen, visited Nicolas Copernicus High School. The students shared with the ambassador, his family and Lee Feinstein, the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, the Jewish history they had reconstructed.



IN SŁAWATYCZE, Alan Metnick, a member of an association of descendants of Jews from this town, met young people from the school where a School of Dialogue program was underway. He told them how much he regretted not listening carefully to his aunts' stories about pre-war Sławatycze so that he could tell them more.

IRENE PLETKA CAME TO KUTNO, where her family used to live. Meeting with her and her associates and showing them around the places relating to the town's Jewish history taught the high school students that Polish-Jewish relations are not only for the past or the future but also for today.

IN ULANÓW Cheryl Fishbein, greeted with a raftsmen's song, told young people that her grandfather owned the town's rafting business. They walked the streets of the pre-war Jewish section of the town, and at the cemetery they said Kaddish together.

IN SOSNOWIEC, Mark Sheron, owner of Amtra Ltd.—an international company with a factory based in Sosnowiec—was guided through the town by the students of the Stanisław Staszic High School who participated in the School of Dialogue program. Students took Mr. Sheron on a tour revealing the Jewish history of Sosnowiec and were happy that someone from the other end of the world was willing to hear this fascinating story.

ORTHODOX GUESTS from the Israeli organization of Wąchock descendants and local junior high school students went together to the cemetery. Rabbis explained Jewish customs related to death and dying, and the young people shared what they had learned about the former Jewish inhabitants of the town.



Sharing Experiences through Education



“Seeing a team of people with different backgrounds and experiences so dedicated to advancing the important work of the Forum gave us a deep insight into the Forum’s approach: working on a grassroots level and having at the same time a great vision.”

Anonymous German educator



In 2011 the FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS and House of the Wannsee Conference, a memorial and educational site in Berlin, decided to share experiences in education and prepared extensive programs in Warsaw and Berlin for each other's educators.

In the end of August 2011, the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS** hosted a group of nine educators and co-workers of the House of the Wannsee Conference. Together with the institution's Director of the Educational Department, Dr. Wolf Kaiser, they were invited to participate in an intensive four-day study visit to Warsaw. The program included lectures, workshops and site visits dedicated to the issues of the Polish-Jewish past, the Holocaust, and its post-war discourse in Poland. It was a unique opportunity for the Forum's educators and the delegation from Berlin to discuss challenges and exchange good practices from their work as educators. The project was supported by the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation.

In November 2011, a group of thirteen Polish teachers representing schools that participated in the School of Dialogue program was invited for the study visit to Berlin. The program included visiting places connected to the Holocaust, workshops, and lectures. Participants discussed the situation in Poland and Germany prior to the war and today, and exchanged experiences in teaching Jewish history and Holocaust history in Polish schools. During an intensive three-day seminar, educators visited the Jewish Museum in Berlin, the "Topography of Terror" Foundation, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, and an exhibition in the House of the Wannsee Conference.

"For me it was a time of gaining valuable information provided in an appealing, diversified way, stimulating not only the intellect but also my emotions. It was an opportunity to bond and share experience with other teachers, which will definitely benefit my work."

ELŻBIETA ŻARNOWIECKA, Polish teacher





Forum Educators

“I am a Forum educator because it gives me the opportunity to ensure others do not have the same lack of knowledge I had before I started at the university: I knew very little about the Jewish community in Poland. I now realize that the history of Poland and the history of the Jews are one topic, not two separate ones.” **MAŁGORZATA NOWICKA**

Much of the success of the Forum's School of Dialogue program results from the work of its highly motivated and deeply engaged team of educators. The majority are college and graduate school students who have made a commitment not only to involve themselves intellectually in Jewish studies, but also to work on the grass roots level to improve Polish-Jewish relations. For them, the past cannot be a foreign country. In 2011, the Forum continued to organize seminars and training sessions and recruit additional educators.



FORUM EDUCATORS TEAM

Educators active in 2011

Łukasz Cudny
 Anna Desponds
 Mateusz Dymaczewski
 Anna Geller
 Olga Głowacka
 Beata Godlewska
 Paulina Sobieszuk
 Agata Jałosińska
 Agata Jaworska
 Jagoda Jabłońska
 Agata Jujeczka
 Małgorzata Jastrzębska
 Karolina Kochanowska
 Małgorzata Kruszewska
 Anna Maculewicz
 Magdalena Maślak

Iza Meyza
 Stanisław Niemojewski
 Weronika Niżnik
 Małgorzata Nowicka
 Elżbieta Okuniewska
 Monika Oszmaniec
 Natalia Pamuła
 Magdalena Rychter
 Ewa Stokłuska
 Anna Szyba
 Marta Usiekniewicz
 Małgorzata Waszczuk
 Zuzanna Wiaderna
 Agnieszka Witkowska
 Joanna Zawadowska
 Hanna Zielińska
 Jarosław Ziółkowski

“Being a Forum educator is a great joy, derived from common work with young, fantastic students from across Poland and experienced and creative educators. Discovering the history of so many exceptional places marked with a multicultural past is a fascinating challenge that, in this case, leads to a very important goal: showing young people that it is worth it to be tolerant and open to diversity. I believe that thanks to the School of Dialogue, young people discover their sensibility and good, and that is my biggest reward.” **AGATA JUJECKA**

Impact

“In the Crevice” BY MAGDALENA GROCHOWSKA

Extract from an article published in *Gazeta Wyborcza*, January 28, 2011



Middle school student Piotr Stachowicz takes me to Wąchock's Jewish cemetery. Against the backdrop of muddy grey sky and silent tombstones, the 15-year-old brings to life stories of the town's Jewish citizens: through numbers and names as well as episodes in the shared life of Poles and Jews. Piotr knows that only the matzevot of women have survived until the present day, because they are smaller than those of men. These have been robbed to later be reused as building material. He knows the whereabouts of the mikveh, synagogue, slaughterhouse and butcher's house. He can tell you about the rich and the poor. And that everyone on Wielkowiejska street was Jewish.

The student's story is that of a specific character; it bears the faces of the Binsztoks, the Hechts and the Marmureks; it smells of bakeries and colonial stores. Piotr also knows how this world ceased to be.

In the fall of 2009, Peter along with his class participated in the School of Dialogue educational program, prepared by the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS** foundation.

"I did not know anything about Jews before," he confesses. "My grandparents never talked about them."

"I was surprised by the fact that people are not willing to talk about Jews" says Aron Szlęzak, another program participant. "As if there was this huge void as far as this subject is concerned."

Students completed the program with the help of a young teacher, Katarzyna Szlęzak (not related to Aron). She admits that despite being from Wąchock, upon passing the Jewish cemetery, she would not give this no-longer-existent world a second thought. "It was never a subject to come up in conversations," she explains. "When I asked my grandparents about the Jews, they were surprised that our school is participating in such a program." Many of the students asked: "Aren't there other issues?" But Forum's educators were able to get through to them.

“Poland: Polish youth cares about Jewish cemeteries”

Published in *Hamodia*, July 20, 2011

An Israeli daily published in Hebrew and targeted at the ultra-Orthodox reader published an article on the FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS and the School of Dialogue program. In the article they describe a trip to Poland of two rabbis and their meeting with Andrzej Folwarczny, as well as their visit to Wąchock.

The rabbis met first with Andrzej Folwarczny to talk about the Forum's mission and educational activities. Next, following the traces of their ancestors, they visited Wąchock where they met with students from a local middle school that took part in 2009 School of Dialogue program.

During the meeting, the rabbis told these young people about the pre-war Jewish inhabitants of Wąchock. Then the students guided the rabbis around the town, pointing out where the synagogue, mikveh, and rabbi's house once stood. In the Jewish cemetery, the rabbis said their prayers and explained the importance of remembering the dead. The students and teachers pledged that they will take care of the cemetery.

פולין: נוער פולני ישמור על בתי קברות יהודיים





מדיניות את בני העיר

הרב מנחם ורבר מלינסק

בני העיר בבית הקברות

■ מאת שלום לייכטר
 חובב ירושלים וראשונה
 לשימור אתרים יהודיים ששרדו
 דו בשיתוף פולין, יצא לאור
 תוכנית פנימית והאזינו בצי
 פת קטן.

באתר היישוב עבר הרומי
 רום לראשונה בין הערים,
 שראשו עבר מר ארזי
 שבתאי, חולי בן 40,
 שבתאי עירוב יחסי בן
 העם הפולני למס החרדי.

האנציה מנסים לבני
 ספר תלמידי כפולין, בסגנון
 הפערים מעורבים את התלמי
 דים להבין את ההיסטוריה
 היהודית, בין היתר שיתף
 פעולה עם העיר לשימור בתי
 הקברות ובתי המגורים
 למדינת לארמים היהודיים
 שבקרקע, כמסורת שימורו
 ויבנו את הארץ.

בסגנון הספר, הוסמו
 מאחר לחופש במי בני תור
 ער מהעיר שנים כחוד
 חמישי של יצירה עתידה, הרב
 חיים בייט, שכמו הרב אביגד
 דוד רובינשטיין חיד, תלמיד
 החפץ חיים ומחשובי חסיד
 נזר, היה חלי העיר, והרב
 אברהם מלינס, שכמו ר'
 אשר ליכטנשטיין שית, הוא
 יליד העיר והעיר שואר.

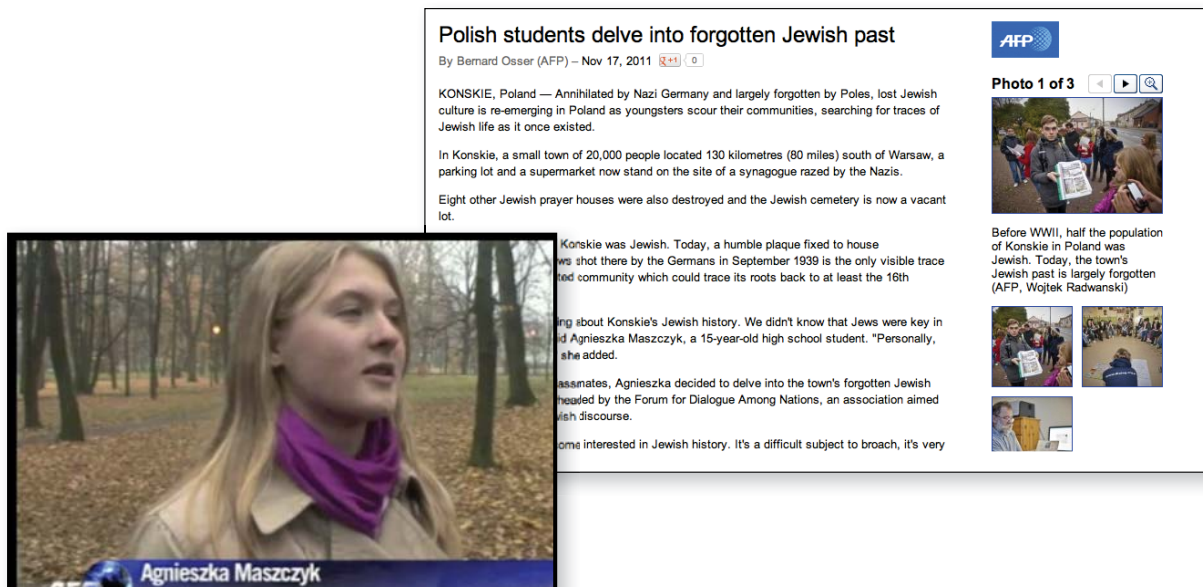
האנציה התקבלו כמאורעה
 בחדר הפולני, בטקס קצר
 הסבר להם על ידי מארגני
 הספר, סגור הארץ
 הפולני, אלא שהיהודים היו
 ופולניו.

הרב מנחם ורבר מלינסק
 הרקע שהביא אותו להקמת
 הארץ, כמסורת עיר, היה בין
 האנציה, כאשר הפערים
 לנשיאות פולין ואז נילת, כי
 כדי לפסול דאם זה מהמסע
 דות 'האסימט' אותו שיש לו
 גם יחיד, הוא התפלא שר
 סבה לפסול מעבודת מאדם
 תחמים, וזה חביא אותו
 להעסק כמנהל, ולנסות דר'
 כיס לפעול אלא.

למחרת יצא הארזים אל
 העיר, שם המנהל להם
 ביות הספר המנהל, מר
 קולובסקי, והפולין, גם ש'
 חלי, שערלה את הספר
 עשרים עני, שזו חיד מוח'
 דה לתלמידי בתי הספר לפגוש
 רבנים, יוצא העיר, והם
 עקרים שהביקור עיב שיתוף
 פעולה.

לאחר קבלת הפנים, נאמו
 הרבנים במי התלמידים, הם
 סיפרו לבני העיר על החיים
 המסורתיים שהתקיימו בעיר
 וזו על קהילה יהודית שורשית
 שיקים חיים יהודיים מלאים
 חיים בימי הדור, ויבנו גם
 יהודים שהתקיימו לצבא הפול
 ו, ולחמו במלחמת העם
 השולט בחד לצד כח.

חיים מלינס אלו המסורתי
 עם הכשר הרבנים, הרבנים
 לא שנו את היהודים בלבד,
 עינו הרבנים, אלא גם את
 מיקים קברו המסורתי של אבי
 מר, הרב יצחק הירשנשטיין



“Polish Students Delve into Forgotten Jewish Past” BY BERNARD OSSER

Article released by Agence France-Presse, November 17, 2011 and copied by numerous international websites and news sites

Annihilated by Nazi Germany and largely forgotten by Poles, lost Jewish culture is reemerging in Poland as youngsters scour their communities, searching for traces of Jewish life as it once existed. In Końskie, a small town of 20,000 people located 130 kilometers (80 miles) south of Warsaw, a parking lot and a supermarket now stand on the site of a synagogue razed by the Nazis.

Eight other Jewish prayer houses were also destroyed and the Jewish cemetery is now a vacant lot.

Before the war, half of Końskie was Jewish. Today, a humble plaque fixed to a house commemorating 22 Jews shot there by the Germans in September 1939

is the only visible trace of the once deeply rooted community which could trace its roots back to at least the 16th century.

“We didn’t know anything about Końskie’s Jewish history. We didn’t know that Jews were key in creating this town,” said Agnieszka Maszczyk, a 15-year-old high school student. “Personally, I’ve never met a Jew,” she added.

Along with 20 of her classmates, Agnieszka decided to delve into the town’s forgotten Jewish past in a project spearheaded by the **FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS**, an association aimed at fostering Polish-Jewish discourse.



Forum Team

Andrzej Folwarczny

President

Founder and President of the FORUM FOR DIALOGUE AMONG NATIONS Foundation, former member of the Polish Parliament and chairman of the Polish-Israeli Parliamentary Group. Former Vice President of the Israel-Poland Friendship Association. Co-editor of the book *Difficult Questions in Polish-Jewish Dialogue* published in collaboration with the American Jewish Committee.

Michał Bilewicz, PhD

Vice President

Social Psychologist, assistant professor at the Department of Psychology of the University of Warsaw. Fulbright Scholar and a visiting scholar at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies. Director of the Center for Research on Prejudice of the University of Warsaw. His research focuses on issues of prejudice, group conflict, anti-Semitism, and dehumanization.

Zuzanna Radzik

Board Member

Theologian, graduate of the Pontifical Theological Faculty in Warsaw and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Assistant at the Institute of Slavonic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences and PhD candidate at the Institute of Applied Social Sciences of the University of Warsaw. Her controversial article, "Basements Still Rotting" led to the closing down of an anti-Semitic bookshop in Warsaw.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Monika Kozuń, Michał Bilewicz, Andrzej Folwarczny, Zuzanna Radzik, Mateusz Hładki, Agnieszka Markiewicz, and Jakub Petelewicz (not shown)

Agnieszka Markiewicz

Program Director

Sociologist, graduate of Georgetown University and the University of Warsaw, where she obtained her MA for the thesis *The Complex Identity of Poles with Jewish Origins*. Prior to her work at the Forum, she worked at the Adam Mickiewicz Institute as a project manager and secretary of the "Polish Year in Israel" project.

Jakub Petelewicz

Educational Expert

Historian. Co-founder, member and academic secretary of the Polish Center for Holocaust Research at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Managing editor of academic journal "Holocaust Studies and Materials." His research focuses on the Holocaust and Polish-Jewish relations.

Monika Kozuń

Project Manager

Project manager and youth educator in human rights and global development. Prior to her work at the Forum, she collaborated with Humanity in Action Foundation and the Polish Humanitarian Organization. Within the HIA Grassroots Activism Fellowship, she worked for the Jewish Community Relations Council in San Francisco, USA.

Mateusz Hładki

Coordinator of Educational Projects

Student of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Warsaw. Since high school, he has been supporting the activities of Amnesty International Poland. He has been serving as its Board Member since 2005 and became its President in 2011.

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