

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Brandeis Scholar Antony Polonsky Named Chief Historian of
Poland's new Jewish History Museum**

WARSAW – Antony Polonsky was named the Chief Historian of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Polonsky is an award-winning historian and the Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies at Brandeis University. The museum, a \$110 million public-private enterprise, which covers 1,000 years of Jewish life in Poland, is preparing to celebrate its grand opening on October 28, in Warsaw. Polonsky's affiliation with the museum is part of the museum's Global Education Outreach Program, supported by San Francisco-based Taube Philanthropies, the Koret Foundation, and the William K. Bowes, Jr. Family Foundation, which will establish academic partnerships between the museum and universities and research institutions in North America, Europe, Israel, Russia and Australia.

"It is my hope that this museum will contribute to the preservation and informed appreciation of the history and accomplishments of the Jews of this region and of their descendants all over the world," Polonsky said. "The Nazi attempt to annihilate the Jews and Stalin's efforts to eradicate their culture ultimately failed. There are still Jews in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, and the rich culture the Jews created here remains a source of admiration and inspiration to both Jews and non-Jews, in Poland and across the globe."

An author, editor and scholar on Polish and Jewish history, Polonsky is a founder and vice-president of the Institute for Polish-Jewish Studies in Oxford, UK, and of the American Association for Polish-Jewish Studies in Cambridge, Mass. For the past quarter-century, he has been the editor of the academic journal he founded, *POLIN: Studies in Polish Jewry*. In 2012, Polonsky was awarded the Pro Historia Polonorum Prize for the best recent Polish history written in a foreign language for his three-volume monograph, *The Jews in Poland and Russia* (Littman Library). The Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture provided support for an abridged version of this highly praised work, published last year.

"Dr. Polonsky provides invaluable insight and historical perspective to this unprecedented museum, telling the story of a millennium of Polish Jewish history – part of my own family's story and that of more than 70 percent of the world's Jews," said Tad Taube, a Founding Benefactor of the museum, Chairman of Taube Philanthropies, President of the Koret Foundation, and Honorary Consul for the Republic of Poland in San Francisco.

Polonsky is a native of Johannesburg, South Africa, and studied history and political science at the University of Witwatersrand and Oxford, then taught at the London School of Economics. Once at Brandeis, he taught East European Jewish History, and in 1993, was named the Walter Stern Hilborn Chair in Judaic and Social Studies. From 1995 to 1998, he chaired the Department

of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies. In 1999, he was appointed the Albert Abramson Professor of Holocaust Studies, which he continues to hold jointly at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, in Washington, D.C., and at Brandeis.

Polonsky's full bio is available at [Brandeis University's website](#).

Global Education Outreach Program

The Global Education Outreach Program will deepen the impact of the museum by forging educational partnerships around the world that further the study of Polish Jews across all fields and disciplines. This fall, Taube Philanthropies will bring a delegation of scholars to the Core Exhibition's grand opening, and in the months to follow, the Global Education Outreach Program will support exchanges that bring museum scholars to the United States to give lectures and present and discuss their research.

From May 11-15, 2015, Polonsky will chair an inaugural international conference of scholars at the museum to study the Core Exhibition and evaluate what has been achieved in the past 30 years in the study of the history and culture of Polish Jews, as well as what is missing in the existing historiography.

October 28-30: Grand Opening of the Core Exhibition of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews

The grand opening of the Core Exhibition of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews will be celebrated when dignitaries from Poland and across Europe and the globe convene on October 28. The museum, which stands on the sacred site of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and faces the Monument of the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes, shares the story of the Jewish people in Poland, once home to the world's largest Jewish community from which the majority of Jews living across the Diaspora descend.

Information on the grand opening of the Core Exhibition of POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, including a full schedule, can be found on the [museum's website](#).

Media are asked to [request credentials](#) for the opening by October 15. Please do so via this [online form](#). Any questions should be directed to Samantha Friedman at samantha@westendstrategy.com.

Significance of the "POLIN" Legend

Just this week, the word "POLIN" was added to the museum's name in order to incorporate the legend of POLIN, which tells how Jews fleeing persecution in Western Europe came to Poland, where they heard birds chirping "Po-lin! Po-lin!" The Hebrew word for Poland also means "rest here," so when the Jews heard the birds, they considered it a sign from heaven that they had reached a safe haven where they could develop their spirituality, culture and learning.

ABOUT TAUBE PHILANTHROPIES

Taube Philanthropies was established in 1981 by its founder and chairman, Tad Taube. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area and with an office in Warsaw, the Foundation makes philanthropic investments primarily in the Bay Area and Poland, in scholarship, heritage preservation, arts and

culture, education, and institution-building. Taube Philanthropies is committed to collaborative giving for greatest charitable impact and actively partners with individual donors and other foundations. For additional information please visit www.taubephanthropies.org.

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