

## Polin Conference at Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley

An academic conference entitled “Polin: Historical Perspectives, Contemporary Visions” was held November 14-15, 2010 at the Graduate Theological Union’s Center for Jewish Studies in Berkeley, California, co-hosted by the American Association for Polish Jewish Studies. Professor Antony Polonsky, Professor of Holocaust Studies, Brandeis University, and Ina Levine Scholar at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, gave the Keynote Lecture, speaking on “Writing the History of the Jews of Poland and Russia.” A capacity crowd at GTU’s Easton Hall enjoyed the lively presentation followed by spirited comments and questions. Among the 12 scholars in the two-day series of panels and presentations were Dr. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs, Director of the Centre for Holocaust Studies, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, speaking on “Attitudes of Polish Youth toward Jews and the Holocaust”; Shana Penn, Visiting Scholar at GTU and Executive Director of the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture, presenting “The Jewish Question in Poland After 1968: How Does Jewish Identity Come Back?”; and Dr. Naomi Seidman, Koret Professor of Jewish Culture and Director of the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies, speaking on “Legitimizing the Revolution: Sarah Schenirer and the Rhetoric of Torah Study for Girls.”

To wrap up the conference, there was a Roundtable Discussion entitled “The Past Keeps Changing,” addressing the explosion over the last decade or two of important new historiographical work on Polish Jewry as well as the revival of Jewish culture in contemporary Poland. The roundtable participants and their audience focused on the question of how scholarship has changed through cultural activism, and how activism is being shaped by the new historiography.

The conference was co-sponsored by the Taube Foundation for Jewish Life & Culture and the Koret Foundation.