



Report for 2011

General information

We would like to present to you The Prof. Moses Schorr Foundation, a unique non-profit organization in Poland, which runs an educational centre for secular and religious Jewish studies and the country's largest Hebrew language school.

Using a wide range of professional tools, as well as social media, we educate both Jews and Poles about the enormous presence of Jews in the Polish society before the Holocaust, their contribution to culture, political thought and community life, all in a contemporary context, but respectful of tradition. What makes us distinctive is our flexible programming, which allows us to participate in the public debate in Poland, while remaining inclusive for students of all backgrounds and viewpoints.

Our overarching objective is to support the development of an open society in Poland and help counter the rise of xenophobia and isolationism in Europe by using documentary material and scholarly work to re-create the past and bring back to life links between communities that were brutally destroyed by the Holocaust.

We realize that Jewish education in the name of tolerance is not unique in Europe and there are numerous organization throughout the continent, particularly in the East, that seek to redress past horrors through teaching.

Let us give you some examples of what makes us different and persuade you that our means are uniquely effective and interesting to your organization. We are small, but well established institution with a broad range of government and private funding sources, both from Poland and abroad. However the financial crisis raging in Europe and the United States has taken a toll on our financing and we are hoping to find new institutions to work with.

We believe in surprising our students in order to abolish stereotypes. In 2010 we organized a photographic exhibition on Jewish sports in Warsaw before World War Two. It examined the Jewish community's participation in the development of sports culture in the early 20th century and its impact on political and communal life of the era. Thousands of Warsaw residents saw our work, and the exhibition was visited by school trips and tourists. They saw a slice of their own history, and the intrinsic part played in it by their Jewish neighbors, without having to address the difficult questions of anti-Semitism and religious differences.

We quickly respond to public debate in Poland, providing historical context and a fresh perspective on tired subjects that often inflame the Polish media. Days after a violent clash between leftist anarchists and ultra-nationalist youth groups during Independence Day celebrations in Warsaw last November we held a wildly popular lecture on Jewish anarchist groups of the 20th century. There may be many organizations in Poland, that present Jewish folklore and cultural achievements. But only few of them target so precisely the needs of a European society to understand its heritage at a time when economic woes are testing its openness.

We don't avoid difficult questions. Last year we started a two-year series of lectures and seminars on the most pressing questions of the Middle East. At a time, when the Arab Spring has complicated long-standing relations in the region, the access to renowned commentators we provide is invaluable.

Project realized in 2011

Judaism and Jewish Culture.

Lectures organized in cooperation with Jewish Religious Community in Warsaw. At each meeting were present 20 participants. Speaker: Rabbi Stas Wojciechowicz. The topics were as follows:

- „Origin of Jewish Prayer”
- „The Prayer - *Haavodah Shebalev* (God's service)”;
- „*Piyutim* – religious hymns and poetry”;
- „Kabala and its influence on the prayer book”;
- „Devotion in prayer - Chasidism ”;
- „The reform of Jewish liturgy in Europe and North America”;
- „Influence of the Zionism on the Jewish prayer book”.

Celebrating Jewish Festivals : Tu Bi Shvat, Purim, Pesach.

The celebrations were organized together with Hebrew students, who attend classes at the Foundation. On average in each event were present approx. 40 participants.

Trivia competitions about Judaism and Jewish Festivals

The quizzes were presented at the Foundation Internet website: www.schorr.edu.pl. The winners received gifts – books or participation in Hebrew courses. In each competition, on the average, participated approx. 30 people.

„Feminist Beit Midrash” – series of workshops.

A series of monthly workshops, being conducted in the method of *chevruta* (discussion in groups), thanks to private support from Buncher Community Leadership Program. On the basis of chosen recourses and Torah commentaries, as well as modern references, the participants analyzed issues of women and their image in Judaism. Each monthly workshop attended 15 participants. The participants received materials in three languages: Hebrew, English and Polish.

Speaker: Shlomit Naor

Series of lectures „Middle East Politics”.

A series of lectures, focusing on changing political situation in the Middle East. The topics concerned the past of the region, as well as its influence on the current state of affairs. The program funded by Middle East Forum in the USA. Each lecture attended on average 30 participants.

Speaker: Mr Konstanty Gebert

Workshop: Image of Israel in the media.

Two week workshop conducted by Konstanty Gebert. The participants watched documentary movies, produced by Israeli, Palestinian and other filmmakers. They learned about the mechanisms of how the image of Israel is often manipulated. The workshop was financed by The Middle East Forum in the USA. Number of people attending: 15.

Virtual exhibition: „Professor Moses Schorr –A Man of Progress”.

The contents of the exhibition can be viewed on our website: www.schorr.edu.pl/wystawa. The exhibition presents facts about life and work of Professor Moses Schorr - last rabbi of The Great Synagogue in Warsaw, an outstanding personality in the history of Jewish community. The exhibition is viewed monthly by approx. 3000 guests.

Lectures about terrorism.

Two lectures, dealing with the issue of terrorism in different way:
religious: "Reaction to terrorism in Jewish law and Talmud"- by Rabbi Yona Simons;
secular: "Terrorism – a modern plague"- by Grzegorz Cieślak.
Number of participants in both lectures: 20.

Workshop and lecture "(Un)safe mail –how to eliminate risks, resulting from reception of mail and packages".

The participants could obtain practical information about risk of terrorist attack. Number of people attending: 20. Each participant received a certificate.
Speaker: Grzegorz Cieślak.

Dr Monika Czekanowska - „To paint a Biblical narrative – the tale of Judith in Jewish and Christian art”.

The lecture was supported by examples of outstanding pieces of Christian and Jewish art.
Speaker – Dr Monika Czekanowska.

Lecture by Prof. Daniel Grinberg: „Where Jewish anarchists came from”.

40 participants.

Participation in the project „The Night of Museums” – exhibition, related to Prof. Moses Schorr, shown at The Nozyk Synagogue.

Opening of the exhibition „Jewish Sport in Pre – War Warsaw” at Polish Olympic Committee.

Meeting with the novelist Józef Hen – during the educational project - Limud Poland 2011.

Stationary Classes

In each semester (a semester includes 12 meetings, once a week – 3 months on average) we conducted Hebrew classes in ten groups (approx. 100 students in total).

Intensive Classes

In the summer (July - August) the Foundation offers intensive Hebrew classes. The course lasts for 2 weeks, during which the students learn the basics of Hebrew. The studying takes place for three hours a day, from Monday to Thursday. Many students, participating in such courses choose to continue Hebrew learning in the stationary framework during the year. In the 2011 we held 4 intensive blocks of courses, with total number of participants: 50.

Correspondence learning

For those who prefer to study in the comfort of their home we offer correspondence courses. Each participant receives a set of materials: study books and CD recordings.

On – line learning

An excellent offer for those, who cannot attend stationary Hebrew classes, because of place of living, lack of time or lack of learning offer in their region.

Using the e- learning platform you can study in any place, and any time. In the year 2011 170 users were registered on our e-learning platform.

Individual lessons

A flexible form of learning – an offer to those, who cannot attend organized classes in strict time framework. The curriculum and the timetable can be adjusted to the needs of each student. It is also an offer to people with specific, determined expectations and language needs.

Hebrew Conversation

The knowledge and skills obtained in the class can be put to use, and deepened, during the conversations with Israeli native speaker.

New Projects for 2012

In addition to permanent courses we organize unique events and projects that complement our curriculum and build up on our experience.

Exhibition “Gemilut Chasadim”

We are currently preparing an exhibition, which will present the history of Jewish philanthropy in pre-war Warsaw, in order to explore this forgotten but important element of Jewish history in general. The project is co-financed by The Rothschild Foundation.

Using billboards to present archival materials, we will explore the meaning of *tzedakah*, being an important value of Judaism and illustrate Jewish contribution to the development of Warsaw as a young democracy at the start of the 20th century. Our main goal is to teach generations of young Jews, in Poland and abroad, about the great contribution of Jewish ideas to the broader society.

We have already collected a trove of materials – press clippings, photographs and other documents. The exhibition will be divided into several thematic areas: Biblical and halakhic views on charity, chronology of Jewish charitable giving in Warsaw, history of charity in the Jewish community, profiles of Jewish philanthropists, participation in non-Jewish projects.

National commemoration for Janusz Korczak

In 2012 Polish government is organizing a year-long commemoration of the Jewish educator, Janusz Korczak (Henryk Goldszmit). We plan to play a significant role in it, by publishing two books. One will be an anthology of stories and plays written by Korczak, as well as and letters written by Jewish children on the meaning of Jewish holidays. The second one will contain fairy tales written for children by renowned Jewish writers in Poland. Materials for both these publications will be drawn from children's newspaper, The Little Review (Maly Przegląd), created and edited by Korczak. The paper, revolutionary for its times, was launched in 1926 and was wildly popular among Polish Jews before 1939.

Korczak's goal was to use „Maly Przegląd” as a tool to prepare children for adult life in Jewish community. By publishing its treasures we hope to aid the contemporary Jewish community in the process of overcoming the legacy of the Holocaust and communist rule.

There are some 30,000 people in Poland with Jewish roots, and only a fraction participate in organized Jewish life. We need to reach the others and a glimpse of how rich Jewish culture is can be a great tool. We are certain our books can achieve just that.

Hebrew for children

We are planning a new series of textbooks, addressed especially to children, to complement present collection of teaching materials for adults. The books will be full of great stories, games and funny tests, in hope of encouraging children to study. We will be focusing on children aged 8 to 10.

Income and costs

Income 2011	
Income from commercial activity,	123 850,00
including sale of books	9 339,50
Grants	8 000,00
Donations	229 068,75
Rate differences in plus	4 132,31
Interests	5,13
Compensations	16,67
Total income	365 072,86
Costs 2011	
Depreciation	4 050,96
Materials	5 409,98
Services	30 194,73
Salaries:	
from the payroll	191 114,06
from contracts	41 211,50
Benefits for the staff members	43 719,40
The costs of stamp duty	120,00
Prime cost of the books	3 256,60
Rate differences in minus	5 756,28
Grant return	224,61
Costs in total	325 058,12
Profit	40 014,74

Information about loans

In the reporting period for the year 2011 The Moses Schorr Foundation did not give nor get any loans.

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