



Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry, Volume 15: Jewish Religious Life, 1500-1900

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This volume highlights new research on Jewish spiritual and religious life in Poland before modern political ideas began to transform the Jewish world. It covers a range of topics. Three articles deal with rabbinic scholarship in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and a fourth presents accounts of Purim festivities at that time. The eighteenth-century studies focus on Jewish spirituality. Four articles deal with the Frankist movement, the main topics being Frankist propaganda; non-Christian Frankists; Jonathan Eibeschuetz and the Frankists; and the influence of Frankism on Polish culture. There are four articles on hasidism-on the tsadik and the ba'al shem; the childhood of tsadikim in hasidic legends; the fall of the Seer of Lublin; and the hasidism of Gur-and one about Nahman Krochmal. Of the contributors to the core section on Jewish spiritual and religious life, four are Polish. Three contributors are working in Germany, where Jewish studies is likewise re-establishing itself. Other contributors are scholars from Canada, Israel, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Some are themselves religious, others are secular; taken together, their contributions further the study of Jewish religious traditions in Poland, a topic central to an understanding of Jewish society and history in Poland but one which has long been considered marginal by the academic world. As in earlier volumes of Polin, substantial space is given to new research in other areas of Polish-Jewish studies. There is an extensive survey of the papal Holocaust papers, as well as contributions relating to education for girls, to Auschwitz as a site of memories, and to aspects of Jewish literature, politics, society, and economics. A young Polish scholar from Jedwabne has contributed a moving article on local reactions to news of the massacre of the Jews of that town. The review section include two separate essays with contrasting opinions on Yaffa Eliach's monumental study of Eishyshok.

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