

Project: Jews – Poles. Restoration of identity, bringing memory back.

The main event of the project is the exhibition dedicated to Rabbi Akiva Eger (1761 – 1837), who is the most famous rabbi from Poznan and Wielkopolska. The exhibition presents his life and work, introduces the conditions he lived and taught in, shows the group of his students and his influence on future generations. Akiva Eger held his office in Poznan from 1814/1815 to 1837. This outstanding individual of Jewish community is poorly known to the citizens of Poznan, even if his biographical entry appears in every encyclopedia and his works are still studied. For religious Jews he is one of the most outstanding rabbis of the last centuries, unquestionable authority on the issues of faith and law interpretation.



Fragment of the painting by Juliusz Knorr (1838)
The Museum of the History of the City of Poznan

The project is a continuation of the work of many people who aim at bringing the historical identity back to the inhabitants of Poznan. This includes the memory of Jewish community which lived in this town for centuries and was murdered by Germans during the Second World War.

Since 1998 there has been the Day of Judaism organized in Poznan every year. It embraces various events dedicated to the inter-religious dialogue and promotion of Jewish culture and history.

The exhibition dedicated to Rabbi Akiva Eger is a part of the 11th Day of Judaism in Poznan (the opening of the exhibition will take place on the 14th of January 2008 at 5 p.m. at The Archdiocesan Museum, 1 Lubranskiego Street). It is worth to mention that a few publications on the history of Jews from Poznan appeared, such as the Autumn 2006 issue of *The Chronicle of the City of Poznan*, “Drawing From the Root of the Well-Cultivated Olive Tree” – a 400-page profusely illustrated book which documents the Days of Judaism organized from 2004 to 2008; there were also some exhibitions organized, such as the exhibition of Judaica in the Museum of Applied Art in 2000 and the exhibition on the history of Jews from Poznan in the Museum of History of the City of Poznan in 2007.

The idea of the exhibition refers to the exhibition organized in Berlin in 1937, on the centenary of death of Akiva Eger. Thanks to the catalogue from 1937, the current exhibition in Poznan will partly reconstruct the former one. The items exhibited (the photographs and the original ones) will come mainly from the National Museum in Poznan, Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and Centrum Judaicum in Berlin.

Project partners:

Polish Librarians Association (Poznan)

COEXIST Association (Poznan)

Institute of History at Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznan)

Alliance of Jewish Communities in Poland (Poznan)

Jewish Historical Institute (Warsaw)

Stiftung Neue Synagoge "Centrum Judaicum" (Berlin)

Det Jødiske Museum, DMT Trondheim (Norwegia)

In the frame of the project "Jews – Poles. Restoration of identity, bringing memory back" there are also seminars and workshops organized. On the 15th of January 2008 there will be:

- 10.00 a.m., Biblioteka Raczyńskich: workshop on Jewish customs and traditions for librarians and cultural events coordinators;
- 12.00 p.m., Fine Art Academy – modernization and conversion of Jewish historic buildings into centres of culture (revitalization of the synagogue in Trondheim, project of the reconstruction of the synagogue in Buk).

Additionally the information brochure for the visitors of the exhibition will be published. This publication will include some basic information about Rabbi Akiva Eger and Judaism.

