

Nina Roth

The Forced Polish-Jewish Emigration 1969-1973: Thirty Years in Denmark in Retrospect

The article attempts to give voice to the Polish-Jewish political refugees that arrived in Denmark between 1969-1973 after the Danish government had decided to extend political asylum to this group of people. The author draws on a number of sources: eight qualitative interviews; published interviews with and writings of the refugees; and their involvement in cultural and political organizations. The article focuses particularly on the Jewish identity and activities of the Polish Jews and on their encounter with Danish society and the Danish Jewish community. Although the group as a whole has integrated successfully into Danish society and gradually has been accepted by the Jewish community, their stories reveal that they had to undergo an often painful process of reevaluation and redefinition of their Polish and Jewish identities.

Jaff Schatz

The Holy Madness: Polish-Jewish Communists during the Stalinist Years

The article is based on Jaff Schatz' doctoral dissertation that explores a generation of Polish Jewish Communists who were forced to emigrate in the late 1960s and early 1970s due to a wave of state-organized anti-Semitism. For the purpose of his study, he conducted a number of qualitative interviews with members of this generation in Denmark, Sweden and Israel. Schatz tries to uncover the dreams and visions of a generation who already before World War II had supported the Communist cause and survived the Holocaust in the USSR. This article focuses on the peak of their political influence during the Stalinist period (1948-1954) where the Polish-Jewish Communists actively took part in the building a Communist state, and where they controlled the Jewish "sector" in Poland. They were opposed to nationalist expressions of Jewishness and to the ideology of Zionism. However, after the political thaw in 1956 they gradually lost influence and were finally disillusioned in the late 1960s when they were accused of Zionist loyalties and forced to emigrate.

Anders Carlberg

The Last Pogrom in Poland and the Anti-Semitic campaign 1968-1969

The author briefly summarizes the historical background of the wave of anti-Semitism disguised as anti-Zionism that occurred in Poland in the late 1960s and describes the actual campaign during 1968-1969. The campaign was set off in a speech by the head of the Polish Communist Party, Wladyslaw Gomulka, in the wake of the Six-Day War in 1967 where he accused the Polish Jews of constituting a "fifth column." After the student revolt in the spring of 1968, the campaign intensified and Jews were increasingly purged from the Party, the army and the public sector. The majority of the Polish Jews consequently emigrated mostly to the West but also to Israel.

Dasha A. Bergmann

From Prague to Goerløese. A chalutz' stay in Denmark 1939-43

Dasha A. Bergmann (dairy technologist, retired) was one of the 300 children from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, who were allowed to come to Denmark in 1939 with the Youth Aliyah organisation, and to stay one year in order to learn a little agriculture and then go to Palestine. German occupation of Denmark in April 1940 stopped this plan and the youngsters had to stay until October- 1943, when they either fled to Sweden, or were captured by the Germans and sent to Theresienstadt. This extract of Dasha's memoirs describes his experiences as an apprentice of agriculture and of dairying among Danish people in the country and also his escape to Sweden.

Sofie Lene Bak

Altruism and the Holocaust: A Comparative Study of the Persecution of Jews in Denmark and Italy

The similarity between the number of Jews and the degree of assimilation in Denmark and Italy form the basis of this comparative study as does the surprising fact that 85 percent of the Italian Jews survived the Holocaust in Fascist Italy. The rescue of the Danish and Italian Jews was made possible by the help they received from their fellow country men. Here the comparison ends. The Danish rescue operation was over in a few weeks and carried with it relatively limited risks whereas the Italian escape routes were few and the Jews had to be kept hidden for longer periods of time. The help that the Italian Jews received was opposed to the politics and propaganda of the regime. The Italian racial laws acted both to undermine the Fascist consensus and to spread anti-Semitic feelings among loyal supporters of Mussolini. This national divide underscores the individual responsibility that many Italians, especially among the clergy, displayed. In contrast, both the reaction to the persecution of Jews and the rescue operation in Denmark was of a collective nature. The socio-psychological studies of altruism during the Holocaust, however, have mainly focused on the background of individuals in an often hostile environment and may provide an explanatory framework for the Italian situation whereas the Danish collective action still lacks a plausible explanatory model.

Lone Runitz

Holocaust Victims and Danish Post-War Bureaucracy

In February 1947 the Danish Jewish community appealed to the Danish Justice Department to extend temporary visas to 60 "displaced" young Holocaust survivors while they were waiting to be resettled in Palestine. The idea was to give them some agricultural training during this period. The article shows how eight Danish authorities callously managed to stall the applications to such an extent that they became obsolete. No action was taken and the young people had to spend more than another year in a refugee camp till they could finally leave for Israel.