

Socialisms in the Face of the Holocaust

in Central and Eastern Europe:

80 Years to 1945 – Hybrid Research Workshop

7-8 April 2025, University of Haifa

Two radically opposed manifestations of human society reached the climax of their realization in the twentieth century: the utopian vision of socialism and the catastrophic reality of the Holocaust. Eighty years after the end of the Second World War, this workshop, hosted by the **Haifa Interdisciplinary Unit for Polish Studies (HIUPS)**, the **Gotteiner Institute for the History of the Bund and the Jewish Labor Movement**, and the **University of Haifa** aims to untangle socialist responses to the Holocaust within the context of twentieth century Central and Eastern European Jewish history.

Throughout the twentieth century, socialist movements represented one of the most important visions of Jewish modernity. The interwar period saw the growth of the socialist movement through the global proliferation of labor parties, trade unions, cooperatives, and communes. During the rise and reign of fascism in Europe, members of these socialist movements were on the forefront of resistance, including non-Jewish rescuers across Europe and Jewish socialist organizers in ghettos and camps. After the war, the establishment of state socialism in Eastern Europe had a profound impact on Jewish politics and Holocaust narratives.

This workshop will address the following questions: How were the histories of socialism and the Holocaust interconnected? How did socialists—Jews and non-Jews—face the "Jewish question," and especially its culmination with the "final solution"? How and to what extent did socialists attempt to resist the Holocaust? How did socialists understand the Holocaust while it unfolded and during its aftermath, particularly before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain?

We invite scholars working on topics broadly related to socialist responses to fascism and the Holocaust. Though we seek papers geographically located in Eastern and Central Europe, we invite comparative contexts, including topics from Western Europe, the Middle East, or beyond and innovative methodologies and source bases drawing on social and political history, literary theory and studies, political science, migration studies, and memory studies.

Relevant topics might include:

- The reactions of different socialist movements and parties in Central and Eastern Europe to the persecution and extermination of Jews;
- socialist rescuers of Jews;
- relations between the Jewish and non-Jewish socialist movements;
- Jewish and non-Jewish socialists in anti-Nazi resistance;
- dimensions and perceptions of the 'Jewish Communism' trope;
- the Soviet Union in the face of the Holocaust;
- memory and historiography of the Holocaust in socialist countries and movements;
- socialist and Marxist philosophical interpretations of the Holocaust in the twenty-first century.

This workshop will be hybrid, with an in-person component at the University of Haifa and a Zoom option for those unable to arrive from abroad. To optimize the hybrid workshop format, we will ask selected participants to pre-circulate extended abstracts of their paper so that other participants may better engage with the material. Accommodation in Haifa will be provided for in-person participants. Limited financial assistance for flights will be available for participants unable to obtain funding from their home institution.

We invite scholars working at all levels, including graduate students, early career researchers, and established scholars. To be considered for this workshop, please fill in the following form, including a 250–300-word paper abstract, 150–200-word biography, and CV by **25 January 2025**:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScJrmBxqTHdeHSXaEr7G9xYc1nrVORlaBgQPL9Zb4ChNZTVrw/viewform?usp=sf_link

For inquiries and concerns, please contact co-organizers Tom Navon

(tnavon@humanities.haifa.ac.il) and Frankee Lyons (frankee.lyons@gmail.com).