

Article

# Uncovering Names and Connections: The “Polish Jew” Periodical as a Second-Tier Record for Holocaust Remembrance and Network Analysis in Jewish Genealogy

Amanda Kluveld <sup>1,2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Maastricht University, 6211 SZ Maastricht, The Netherlands; amandakluveld@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> International Institute for Jewish Genealogy and Paul Jacobi Center, Jerusalem 39151, Israel

**Abstract:** This paper explores the *Polish Jew* journal as a pivotal second-tier record for advancing Holocaust studies and Jewish genealogy. Traditionally underutilized in academic research, this periodical provides a unique repository of names and narratives of Holocaust victims, filling crucial gaps in primary record collections. The investigation centers on the journal’s potential not only to contribute names to existing databases of Holocaust victims—many of whom are still unrecorded—but also to enhance genealogical methods through the integration of network analysis. By examining *Polish Jew*, this study illustrates how second-tier records can extend beyond mere supplements to primary data, acting instead as vital tools for reconstructing complex social and familial networks disrupted by the Holocaust. The paper proposes a methodological framework combining traditional genealogical research with modern network analysis techniques to deepen our understanding of Jewish community dynamics during and after World War II. This approach not only aids in identifying individual victims and survivors but also in visualizing the broader interactions within Jewish diaspora communities. This research underscores the significance of *Polish Jew* in the broader context of Holocaust remembrance. It offers a novel pathway for the future of Jewish genealogical research, advocating for the strategic use of second-tier records in scholarly investigations.

**Keywords:** Yad Vashem; *Polish Jew*; Holocaust studies; network analysis; Jewish genealogy; diaspora dynamics; second-tier records; integration



**Citation:** Kluveld, Amanda. 2024.

Uncovering Names and Connections: The “Polish Jew” Periodical as a Second-Tier Record for Holocaust Remembrance and Network Analysis in Jewish Genealogy. *Genealogy* 8: 93. <https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy8030093>

Received: 7 May 2024

Revised: 24 June 2024

Accepted: 10 July 2024

Published: 22 July 2024



**Copyright:** © 2024 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## 1. An Under-Explored Second-Tier Record

This article explores the significance of the periodical *Polish Jew*, published during the Second World War by the Polish Jewish immigrant organization [American Federation of Polish Jews \(1941\)](#), as a critical second-tier record for both Holocaust remembrance and Jewish genealogy. The impetus for this research is the correspondence in 1969 from various agencies involved in the legal and other handling of World War II regarding the importance of the wartime editions of the monthly *Polish Jew*. More concretely, it involved the *Zentrale Stelle der Landesjustizverwaltungen Ludwigsburg* (Central Office of the State Justice Administrations Ludwigsburg) sending in January 1969 a letter titled Polish Jew-Der polisher Id to the *Internationaler Suchdienst* (International Tracing and Service: ITS) in Bad Arolsen, marking the beginning of a series of correspondences spanning several months.<sup>1</sup> The sender, a *Rechtsassessor* (legal assessor), acknowledged in the letter that his organization was reluctant to part with their material, which indicated the high value placed on the sent items. The insured shipment of 2000 DM and the request to return everything as soon as possible evidenced the worth of the periodical *Polish Jew*.<sup>2</sup> The monthly journal proved to be of immense importance for the work of several official bodies dealing with the aftermath of the crimes of the Nazi regime. Established in 1958, the Central Office, which was responsible for the prosecution of Nazi crimes, found the journal to be a valuable resource in identifying the locations, witnesses, and victims of massacres and the so-called

Holocaust by bullets (Einsatzgruppen murders) and mobile gas chambers (gas vans) that had taken place in Poland but are scarcely described.<sup>3</sup> As the correspondences continued to unfold over months, it became clear that ITS, established as part of the International Division of the Red Cross to assist in the tracing of War missing persons and victims of Nazi persecution, also found the journal to be of great value. The periodical *Polish Jew* contained many names of victims of the Holocaust, as well as the names of displaced Polish Jews who had been expelled or fled to the U.S.S.R., among other places.<sup>4</sup>

The *Bayerische Landesentschädigungsamt* (Bavarian State Office for Compensation), which was founded in 1949 and responsible for providing compensation to victims of Nazi persecution and their families, was thus also interested in the periodical, as it offered valuable information for identifying and documenting the victims and survivors of the Holocaust. The journal contained names, stories, and other details of Polish Jews during the Second World War, which were crucial to the restitution and reparation process. Using the journal's information, the Bavarian State Office for Compensation could assess claims more accurately, restore the rights of individuals, and help provide financial compensation. It also helped the organization reconstruct historical events and support the broader goal of justice and remembrance for the victims of Nazi persecution.

Despite the importance of the journal, attention to this source by historians, genealogists, or Holocaust memorial sites such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (U.S.H.M.M.) and Yad Vashem is minimal. Among historians, any analysis of the periodical yet needs to be included. For genealogical research, the journal also has remained unexplored. This might have something to do with the fact that magazines such as *Polish Jew* are so-called second-tier records. Coined by renowned genealogist Sallyann Sack in her editorial for AVOTAYNU in 2016, the term second-tier records refers to sources that, while not vital records like birth or death certificates, and while thus often unconventional and difficult to find, offer rich context and details that can bridge gaps in personal histories.<sup>5</sup> The *Polish Jew* periodical epitomizes this classification, providing a wealth of information that transcends the listing of names and dates of Holocaust victims (murdered, refugees, and survivors). It paints a picture of community networks, aid organizations, and individuals' active participation in rebuilding shattered lives during and after World War II.

Sack noted that second-tier records went unappreciated and remained unknown. In the editorial mentioned above, she advocated for a second-tier digitization project that eventually took shape in the Documentation of Jewish Records (DoJR) worldwide project.<sup>6</sup> The DoJR, supported by the L'Dor V'Dor Foundation, systematically digitizes Jewish archival materials globally. Its primary goal is to facilitate genealogical research by preserving and making accessible a wide range of historical documents that are often overlooked or inaccessible. This includes community records, letters, and personal documents, enabling a more nuanced reconstruction of family histories and community dynamics. DoJR's efforts serve genealogists and support academic and remembrance work, providing a tool for historical recovery and cultural preservation.<sup>7</sup>

While concerted efforts have made first-tier records more accessible, genealogist Marlis Humphrey says these collections may still pose challenges due to "incorrect filing, ambiguous labeling, loss, or concealment".<sup>8</sup> A study by the L'Dor V'Dor Foundation indicates that only 15 percent of records referring to Jewish ancestors have been identified, with the remaining 85 percent often hidden in plain sight and rarely labeled as Jewish. This article explores through an analysis of the periodical *Polish Jew* the importance of second-tier records for Holocaust remembrance and the future of Jewish genealogy. It attempts to do this by approaching this source in two ways. One, as a source of names—more specifically, names that may be part of the one million names of Holocaust victims that have still not been found and therefore are not yet in the databases of organizations such as Yad Vashem, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (U.S.H.M.M.), or the Arolsen Archives (former ITS). This approach is referred to here as more or less traditional because it builds on the conventionally existing intertwining of Holocaust research and remembrance on the one hand and Jewish genealogy on the other. Both have been reinforcing each other

for decades, and this should not be understood only symbolically. Jewish genealogists have made tangible contributions to Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names. For example, the list of 5000 Jews executed in Kovno or Kowno (now Kaunas) during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, initially compiled in 1944, was brought to light by aforementioned Jewish genealogy pioneer Sallyann Sack.<sup>9</sup> These names were incorporated into Yad Vashem and the U.S.H.M.M. through her efforts.<sup>10</sup> Yad Vashem's (n.d.) database, in turn, enables the rediscovery of families, sometimes including survivors who have provided information about others who perished. However, as demonstrated by Sallyann Sack's case, genealogical research beyond Yad Vashem can uncover names crucial to its mission.

This article highlights the importance of the periodical *Polish Jew* for Jewish genealogy and Holocaust remembrance and research, intertwining with their quest to uncover names, forge connections, and memorialize lost lives through physical monuments or the metaphorical family tree's visualization. Jewish genealogy is instrumental in this mission, diligently tracing family lineages, linking relatives, and revitalizing the names etched on memorials. The names in *Polish Jew* include survivors, such as refugees who lived in places such as Mauritius, Iran, Rhodesia, and the U.S.S.R.<sup>11</sup> In the latter country, many Jews were also expelled, or they ended up as prisoners. Among the names of these groups are those that cannot yet be found in Yad Vashem's online database or names that are linked to a location in some other way than the journal. The *Polish Jew* periodical, therefore, serves as a crucial piece in the intricate puzzle of Holocaust historiography and remembrance, as will be discussed in this article. The second way to explore and analyze the monthly magazine offers new avenues for research and memorialization. This article also aims to reassess the journal's dual role in enriching Jewish genealogy and enhancing our understanding of Holocaust narratives and experiences. It, therefore, discusses how the journal *Polish Jew* can be a starting point for an innovative step within Jewish genealogy, namely the combination of genealogy and network analysis. By integrating traditional genealogical methods with modern network analysis, we can uncover new layers of insight into the vibrant cultural fabric of Jewish life in Poland before the War and trace the transformative journeys of those who contributed to and were affected as described and shaped by Polish Jews. It explores how *Polish Jew* provides insight into the cultural integration and community life of Polish Jewish immigrants in the United States during the War, their perceived and actual information position, and how they assessed their agency.

## 2. The Monthly *Polish Jew*

As far as we know, not many copies of the periodical *Polish Jew* exist, and the organizations that own the yearbooks of the American Federation (with the editions of the past year's *Polish Jew* 1940–1945) are not all easily accessible. Alternatively, some loose copies of the magazine are available online only at the National Yiddish Book Centre in Amherst, Massachusetts, and the Arolsen Archives. This means that access to the periodical is limited. The quality of copies online at the Arolsen Archives' website is only sometimes good. Incidentally, the quality of the material was already a concern expressed by the correspondent to the above-mentioned agencies as early as 1969. This was one reason they sent original copies of *Polish Jew* despite the usual reluctance to lend original material. This dispatch also included a summary, translated into German, of the articles that the agencies considered most important to their tasks. This dispatch also included a summary, translated into German, of the articles that the agencies considered most important to their tasks. The monthly *Polish Jew/Poylisher Id* was a publication of the American Federation for Polish Jews. Initially established as the Federation of Russian-Polish Hebrews in 1908, the organization aimed to support Polish community members in New York by any means and bolster local landsmanshaft's efforts.<sup>12</sup> By 1920, it had modified its name by removing "Russian", and in 1926, it transitioned from "Hebrews" to "Jews". In response to the growing need for support in Poland, it established the World Federation of Polish Jews in 1935, focusing on relief and economic help for Polish Jews.<sup>13</sup> In 1933, the Federation published its monthly magazine, *Poylisher Idn (Yiddish for Polish Jews)*, which journalist

and Zionist Zelig Tygel edited. From June 1941 onwards, the name was *Poylisher Id/Polish Jew*. The magazine then appeared in a Yiddish and an English edition. People could buy the periodicals for 10 cents each. The American Federation then attached a more concise and later equal-sized English-language edition to each Yiddish-language edition. The publishing company bundled two sets of twelve issues each year and provided them with a preface in a bilingual Yearbook. When one opened the book, one saw the Yiddish-language yearbook, and when one turned it over, the back cover became the front of the book, and one could read the English-language installments.<sup>14</sup> The magazine and the yearbook are now almost completely forgotten.

The *Polish Jew* periodical published in 1941 (Figure 1), highlighting its role as a crucial second-tier record for Holocaust remembrance and Jewish genealogy. This publication served as a vital resource for documenting the names and stories of Holocaust victims and survivors, contributing significantly to the preservation of Jewish heritage (<https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170825>, accessed on 25 April 2024).



Figure 1. Front page of the *Polish Jew* periodical.

This is not true of another publication during the war of the American Federation for Polish Jews, which collaborated with the Association of Jewish Refugees and Immigrants from Poland to release *The Black Book of Polish Jewry* (*Polish Jew* 1943a), a 400-page report published in 1943 that gathered data from various sources, including *The Polish Fortnightly*

*Review*, the restricted *Gazeta Żydowska*, refugee testimonies, and international news agencies.<sup>15</sup> It comprised two parts: the first detailed the systematic annihilation of Jews under the Nazi regime, and the second described the long history of the Jewish community and its many contributions to Poland. The publication provided preliminary figures on the Holocaust's toll and identified key extermination camps like Treblinka, Bełżec, and Sobibór.<sup>16</sup> However, it lacked details on some death camps and the final fate of many ghetto deportees, although this information was already available.<sup>17</sup>

### 3. Reporting the Destruction of the Polish Jewry

In 1942, a year after the publication of the first edition of the magazine, the American Federation for Polish Jews evaluated at their annual convention that the issues of *Polish Jew* contained articles dealing with every phase of the Polish Jewish situation. It presented information that is highly needed by those who are concerned about the welfare of Polish Jewry. "During the past year, we have received many letters from abroad, which indicate that the paper has acquired a stronghold in parts as remote as England and Palestine. During the coming year, we hope to institute many new departments to make the publication of still greater service".<sup>18</sup>

*Polish Jew* reported on how Jews were slaughtered and destroyed in Poland. It did so through eyewitness accounts that reached the American Federation for Polish Jews, among others, through the Polish government in exile in London. In the process, the public was not spared and was treated to atrocities not usually found in American newspapers.<sup>19</sup> It should be kept in mind that in 1940, 1941, and partly in 1942, the authors of the magazine *Polish Jew* described the Holocaust without the extermination of the Jews being known as such. The realization that Jews were not victims of the War but removed were deliberately exterminated became more and more apparent with each issue of the magazine. An example is the article *The Action in Sosnowitz*. From a reliable source, the contribution stated to have received news about the murder of Jews that took place between 26 August and the end of October. On 26 August 1942, all Jews from Sosnowitz were ordered to assemble 65,000 people, old and young, men, women, and children, to gather in the large square next to the Jewish Hospital, as they all had to be given identification cards. For two days and two nights, the Jews had to stand in the square until the selection of 5000 Jews, who were supposedly chosen for forced labor, began. Other groups were returned to the city, but many deemed unfit for hard labor were transported away without anyone knowing where they were taken. Other Jews were taken to the house at Tarnower Str. 11. There, they were shot. Small children were thrown from the 4th floor onto the street below. On 25 October 1942, a census of the Jews in Sosnowitz took place. Their number was 18,000; earlier, there were about 30,000 Jews.<sup>20</sup> Another article provided a harrowing account of the atrocities committed against Jews in Poland during the Holocaust, mainly focusing on the tragic events that occurred in the Chelmno woods. It starts by explaining the gruesome daily routine of Jews who were forced to dig graves for the bodies of their community, only to be killed themselves. Eyewitnesses who managed to escape these horrors revealed the horrific details of this and other massacres.<sup>21</sup> Their attempts to inform the outside world about the carnages in the Chelmno woods were initially futile, underscoring the isolation and helplessness experienced by the victims.<sup>22</sup>

Overall, *Polish Jew* published reports from the Polish underground highlighting the systematic mass murders of Jewish people—men, women, and children alike. Just like other Jewish magazines and weekly newspapers, as well as the Yiddish Daily Press, the periodical details the extreme and intensified brutality faced by the Jewish population and recounts specific incidents, such as the execution of prisoners in Lublin and the murders within the Warsaw Ghetto.<sup>23</sup> *Polish Jew* also reported on Treblinka. *Polish Jew* wanted to inform Polish Jews in the United States about what had happened in the area where they were born or where their families had remained after they had emigrated.<sup>24</sup> In addition, it wanted to provide information about Jews who were fleeing and displaced. In particular, this included Jews who had ended up in the U.S.S.R. either through imprisonment, flight, or

expulsion. Stimulated by the community of Polish Jews in the United States, the magazine increasingly published names of displaced persons. In some cases, the magazine described the patterns of flight and displacement of a particular group, which can also be a valuable addition to Yad Vashem's database.<sup>25</sup>

#### 4. Names of Displaced Jews

In August and September 1943, *Polish Jew* published a list of Polish Jewish refugees in the U.S.S.R. with 330 names (from names beginning with A). In December of the same year, the periodical printed a list of children who arrived in Teheran on 31 July with 20 names and a list of Polish Jewish refugees now in the U.S.S.R. with 260 names (names beginning with K-Z). It also provided a list of Jews who had fled to Jamaica. In February 1944, *Polish Jew* published a list of 105 names of Polish Jewish refugees now in East Africa and Rhodesia and a List of Polish Jewish refugees in the colony Santa Rosa in Guanajuato, Mexico, with 27 names. A month later, it provided a death list of Jews from the ghetto of Warsaw and, in April 1944, another list of 450 names of Polish Jewish refugees in the U.S.S.R., followed by a similar type of list in May and June 1944 with 170 names and another one in July/August with 100 names and 50 names in September/October 1944. In that month, Polish Jews also printed a list with 120 names of Jewish refugees in Mauritius.<sup>26</sup> In total, the Central Office found 1594 names of Polish Jews. Of these, a small but still substantial number cannot be found in Yad Vashem's Shoah victims and survivors database. Most of the Soviet refugees mentioned, for example, are found there, but some names of the lists published in the *Polish Jew* editions of 1944 are missing. The names on the list of Jews who fled to Tehran are entirely missing from the Yad Vashem databases, although names of Jews who fled to Iran can be found there. The list of Jews who escaped to Santa Rosa is also missing, and the list of Jews who fled to Rhodesia can be found in the Yad Vashem database, but the names on this list match the names of Jews who fled to Tehran. In addition, the journal published a list of names of Jews who allegedly survived the battle of Minsk.<sup>27</sup> Yad Vashem, in collaboration with its global partners, has embarked on a monumental project to document and preserve the histories of those who faced anti-Semitic persecution during the Holocaust. The records currently account for more than 4.9 million of them, but according to the estimation of Yad Vashem, there were approximately 6 million Jewish victims. Even if the number of victims is closer to 5 million, there are names missing. This extensive archive not only includes those who perished but also the survivors and individuals whose fates remain unknown. Among these, according to Yad Vashem, the identities of roughly one million victims are still not uncovered, and as time advances, the urgency to uncover these lost names grows. It is a crucial and ethical obligation for the community to continue this quest to reclaim and honor the identities of those who were lost. Some of these missing names can be found in *Polish Jew* and the yearbooks of the American Federation for Polish Jews, which underlines the importance of these second-tier records that, after 1969, have never been used again for this purpose.

#### 5. The Destruction of Polish Jewish Culture

*Polish Jew* outlined the devastating impact of World War II on Jewish literature and the press in Poland. It describes the extensive losses suffered, with the destruction of Jewish cultural, educational, and historical resources. Prior to the War, it stated, Poland boasted a vibrant Jewish community reflected in a rich array of publications and libraries, all of which were systematically obliterated. The Nazis not only eradicated physical institutions—libraries, bookstores, archives, and museums—but also destroyed the literary heritage by burning countless volumes of books and manuscripts in both Yiddish and Hebrew. The printing infrastructure that supported Jewish newspapers and literary publications was thoroughly dismantled, with equipment being shipped off to Germany. The remnants of this once-thriving cultural landscape are now mere memories, with distant communities like New York lacking complete archives of past publications. The scope of this tragedy is immense, revealing a cultural annihilation so severe that the Jewish literary

and press legacy in Poland has been almost entirely wiped out, leaving a gaping void where a vibrant community once existed. By documenting and detailing the destruction of Jewish literature, press, libraries, and other cultural resources, *Polish Jew* sought to ensure that this profound loss was recognized and remembered. Additionally, the magazine intended to underscore the importance of preserving what little remained of this heritage and inspire efforts to restore and revive Jewish cultural and literary traditions in Poland and beyond. The underlying goal was to honor the legacy of the Polish Jews by acknowledging their contributions and the tragedy that befell them, fostering a commitment to remembering and learning from this dark chapter in history. “Our losses are so horrifying that one must simply tear [one’s garments in mourning]. Of Poland’s over 300 Jewish writers, poets, and journalists, barely 100 have survived”. Most are found in the Soviet Union. A second group arrived in America by various means, numbering 33. In Israel, there are several Jewish writers from Poland. “In Shanghai, ten remain, two have found a place of rest in Canada, one in London, and one serves in the Polish army. About 46 Jewish writers and journalists from Poland, there is precise information that they perished—a part during the fighting in the Polish ghettos and a part were exterminated in the concentration camps or died in detention chambers”.<sup>28</sup> The editorial continued with a message about the second group of writers about whom it is known that they remained in Nazi-occupied Poland; there are no precise reports of their fate, and “God forbid opening one’s mouth to the devil”—there is significant doubt as to whether they are alive.<sup>29</sup> Another group, which we have marked as ‘lost’, numbers about 17 writers, about whom there were reports that they escaped from Nazi Poland to the areas taken over by the Soviet army in September 1939. Their names, however, do not appear on the lists that have come from the Soviet Union, and they have not given any sign of life, so one cannot know at all what has become of them, the writer of *Polish Jew* continued. The same lists of displaced Polish Jews in the U.S.S.R. that the World Jewish Congress provided are still used for the database of Yad Vashem. This means that the names that *Polish Jew* was missing are still missing. The difference is that *Polish Jew* knew these names were missing from the list and which names were specific. It is questionable whether, so many years after the fact, we still have this knowledge so ready to hand, and possibly there too, this is an essential second-tier record. Among the names, the American Federation for Polish Jews did not know where they were at the time; for example, the Lodz-born writer Zishe Bagish wrote stories and modernist poetry in Yiddish. He is said to have been murdered in Auschwitz, for which there is no proof, nor is it clear what happened to him. There is no record of him in the Yad Vashem database. Since Yad Vashem also pays much attention to the lives of people before the Holocaust, we do find information about another Polish Jewish writer, Urke Nachalnik. We came across him in an educational text from Yad Vashem describing the lives of victims. Urke Nachalnik (Itzhak Baruch Farbarowicz 1897–1939) is described as a former underworld figure, and several essential novels have been translated into several languages.<sup>30</sup> However, we do not learn what exactly happened to him, and we find no further information about him in Yad Vashem’s database.<sup>31</sup> Again, then, *Polish Jew* seems to fill a knowledge gap.

## 6. Building a Community

Help was to be provided for the displaced Jews from Poland, many of whom were in the U.S.S.R. Right from the beginning of the War, *Polish Jew* reported on various aid initiatives for those who stayed behind, fled, or were expelled. In particular, the Women’s Association Ezra of the American Federation for Polish Jews was involved.<sup>32</sup> They tried to raise money for goods through benefits, luncheons, dinners, and tombolas. This happened in New York but also in Detroit, Philadelphia, and Chicago, and *Polish Jew* reported on it.<sup>33</sup> Ezra represents a significant contribution of Jewish American women during World War II, focusing on support for their counterparts affected by the War in Europe and building on an already rich tradition.<sup>34</sup> Collaborating with the United States Treasury Department, among other organizations, the Division successfully raised nearly \$300,000 through the War Bond Loan Drive. This financial contribution was recognized by the

War Finance Committee of New York, which awarded a citation for the group's effective participation in the Fourth War Loan. These collective efforts of the Women's Division underline a structured and effective response to the wartime atrocities, underscored by a strong sense of duty and community solidarity. Their work during this period exemplifies the significant role of organized groups in humanitarian efforts during critical historical moments. In addition to their fundraising efforts, the Division organized various events to generate further support. These included a Rummage Sale and a Rummage Sale Tea Party and donor dinners and luncheons, such as one scheduled at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. These activities demonstrate the Division's practical approach to securing funds necessary for relief and rehabilitation efforts. Furthermore, under the broader umbrella of the American Federation for Polish Jews, the Philadelphia Ezra concentrated on immediate and long-term support for European Jewry, aware of the ongoing and future challenges. This subgroup was particularly active in mobilizing resources and spreading crucial information, notably by distributing *The Black Book of Polish Jewry*. *The Black Book* was one of the Federation's successes and was widely described in the magazine. Because of the context we learn from *Polish Jew*, this publication can be viewed in two ways. Influential Americans sponsored the book. These were mostly, but not all, Jewish. The most important name was Eleanor Roosevelt, and the other was Albert Einstein.<sup>35</sup> The ability to name these key individuals appeared to demonstrate both successful integration and effective networking skills. The other side of the story is that *The Black Book* was highly reluctant to publish what happened to the Jews. Information that was widely available at the time, such as the gas chambers of Auschwitz, is not mentioned in it. This had to do with anti-Semitism in the United States as well as the fear of being seen as communist propagandists. *The Black Book* relied heavily on *Polish Jew*. This meant that it also addressed the significance of Jews in culture, economics, and science. This is, on the one hand, a sign of emancipation and pride and, on the other, a deeply sad fear that if the excellence of Polish Jews was not brought to attention, the mass murder that took place of Jews that what we have come to call more belatedly the Holocaust might receive even less attention than was the case at that time anyway.

These accounts reveal that the Polish Jewish community was searching for a shared identity that would resonate with the American mentality and society, both perceived and real. The shared identity was one of unity and vitality. Polish Jews had contributed to Poland's culture and economy and had done so for a long time. This was already evidenced by an essay by Heinrich Heine, who had written about the Jews and was published proudly in the magazine. This was supported by lists of names of influential Polish Jews who had fled or been killed. The narrative of *Polish Jew* is also that of integration into American society, not only by adopting the association structure of non-Jewish Americans and charitable organizations but also by explicitly advertising in *Polish Jew* events for buying war bonds at a time when advertising from the government was most intensified. This brings us to another important point: *Polish Jew* as a source. Beginning with a single name and preface by its president, increasingly during the war years, we learn more about the persons behind *Polish Jew* and the Federation with its various sections, contacts, and, at the end of the War, even its members. During the year 1944, there were more and more advertisements. These were not ads advertising goods, restaurants, or the like, but they were ads of solidarity and remembrance. By the end of the War and just after its end, *Polish Jew* counted many pages with only names: of families, names of companies, often with family names, and the location of these companies. This makes it possible through network analysis to map the emancipating and integrating movement of Polish Jews in the United States during the War, as well as their information position and cultural and social references. This is also interesting in genealogical terms. After all, it gives an extra layer to the research of descent. What happened to families after they emigrated to the United States, and what was their cultural, social, and other frame of reference during the War? A great deal of this is unintentionally revealed in *Polish Jew*. It is also made clear how a



unity that did not originally exist was shaped and how people wanted to do this not from victimhood but from an embraced, assumed, and perhaps actually felt vitality.

## 7. Network Analysis

In the expansive field of genealogical research, particularly when contextualized within the histories of Jewish immigrant communities, network analysis emerges as a crucial tool that not only elucidates familial ties but also enhances our understanding of broader societal integration processes. Utilizing the *Polish Jew* periodical, enriched with detailed reports and initiatives by entities such as the Women's Division of the American Federation for Polish Jews, this methodological approach offers a novel pathway to explore the complex narratives of Polish Jewish immigrants in the United States during and after World War II. *Polish Jew* unlocked a world of union and connection among a very diverse group of Polish Jews who might never have had anything to do with each other in their country of origin due to differences in worldview, standing, and culture of town or country. Many lists of officers of the Federation appeared in *Polish Jew*. The lists were sometimes pages long. This, combined with the advertising companies mentioned earlier, provided the opportunity to map networks of Polish Jewish families in terms of location and function. This, combined with the authors and editors of *Polish Jew* and the topics and locations mentioned in this magazine, as well as the names of those who were displaced, can make network research very lively and add something to Jewish genealogy. Network analysis integration in genealogical studies allows for a comprehensive mapping of social connections that extend beyond traditional genealogical data. By examining the multifaceted relationships highlighted within *Polish Jew*, researchers can visualize how Polish Jewish immigrants forged new community bonds, interacted with existing social structures, and established pivotal roles within American society. Therefore, this journal serves as a repository of names and familial links and a vibrant canvas depicting the social dynamics of integration and community resilience. The contributions of the Women's Division, for instance, illustrate the proactive role of women in facilitating community cohesion and cultural continuity, which are essential aspects of the immigrant experience. These women organized educational programs, social events, and fundraisers, effectively weaving a tight-knit fabric of support that helped new immigrants navigate the complexities of their new environment. Through network analysis, we can trace how these activities linked individuals and families together, fostering a collective identity and mutual support system crucial for their integration into American society. By applying network analysis to the narratives and data in *Polish Jew*, researchers can undertake a genealogical study that does more than reconstruct family trees—it can also illuminate the pathways of cultural integration and community influence. Such an approach allows for a deeper appreciation of how individual lives were interwoven with communal developments, how leadership dynamics within the community evolved, and how Polish Jews contributed to and were shaped by broader societal trends. Moreover, this analysis can extend to tracing migration patterns, identifying key figures in community networks, and understanding the flow of information and resources. Each of these aspects contributes to a richer narrative of the Jewish immigrant experience, highlighting not only survival and resistance but also the active construction of new community structures in the host country. In proposing this combined approach of traditional genealogy and network analysis, this study aims to provide a holistic view of the Jewish immigrant community, contributing valuable insights into acculturation and societal integration processes. This innovative methodology not only enriches our historical knowledge but also enhances our understanding of the enduring impact of immigration on the cultural and social landscape of America.

## 8. Conclusions

In conclusion, this study of the *Polish Jew* periodical has highlighted its crucial role as a second-tier record within the context of Holocaust studies and Jewish genealogy. By mining the depths of this underutilized source, the research not only recuperates

forgotten names and narratives of Holocaust victims and survivors but also innovatively employs network analysis to reveal intricate patterns of familial and community ties. This approach provides a more nuanced understanding of the Jewish diaspora's social dynamics during and after World War II, illustrating the transformative power of such records in constructing a more comprehensive historical narrative. The importance of *Polish Jew* extends beyond its utility as a mere repository of names; it serves as a vital conduit through which the fragmented stories of displaced Polish Jews can be reassembled, providing a fuller picture of their experiences and the networks they formed. As this study demonstrates, integrating traditional genealogical methods with network analysis not only enriches our understanding of individual and collective identities but also enhances our capacity to memorialize the Jewish experience during the Holocaust more comprehensively.

Furthermore, *Polish Jew* legitimizes a call for broader recognition of second-tier records in scholarly research, particularly in areas where primary sources are scarce, damaged, or incomplete. The strategic use of such records, as exemplified by *Polish Jew*, offers significant potential to advance Holocaust remembrance and the study of Jewish genealogy. It underscores the necessity of preserving and incorporating these documents into mainstream research and educational frameworks to ensure that no victim or survivor's story is untold. In addition to the insights provided by *Polish Jew*, a comparative study with the magazine *Aufbau*, which targeted German-speaking Jews from Central Europe, could further enrich our understanding of Jewish diaspora publications during and after World War II. *Aufbau* served a similar target group as *Polish Jew* but focused on a different cultural and linguistic demographic. This comparison could be valuable for future research, offering a broader perspective on the role of periodicals in preserving Jewish heritage and fostering community among displaced populations. Re-evaluating the contributions of periodicals like *Polish Jew* within the broader discourse of historical and genealogical research leads to the rediscovery of lost voices and serves to expand Jewish genealogy and embrace a more holistic approach to history that recognizes the value of diverse narratives in constructing a more inclusive and accurate record of the past. As we continue to uncover and utilize such secondary sources, they will undoubtedly become indispensable tools in the ongoing effort to understand and memorialize the complex legacies of the Holocaust and the resilient spirit of the Jewish people. *Polish Jew* provides an insight into the emancipation process of Jews in the United States who joined the American Federation for Polish Jews. Such information is essential for Jewish genealogy. A network of advertisers, active directors of the society's chapters, and the writers and heroes of Jewish culture point to the way Polish Jewish families in the United States shaped their identity. It gives us the opportunity to explore and get to know a family that was based not on blood ties but on descent and a mode of self-presentation while the world of Polish Jews in Europe was destroyed.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Institutional Review Board Statement:** Not applicable.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Data Availability Statement:** Data from Arolsen Archives and Yad Vashem. No data created.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declares no conflict of interest.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170461>, accessed on 24 April 2024. DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170823>, accessed on 22 March 2024.
- <sup>2</sup> DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170461>, accessed on 24 April 2024. DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170462>, accessed on 24 April 2024. DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170463>, accessed on 24 April 2024.
- <sup>3</sup> See (Vice 2021).
- <sup>4</sup> DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170462>, accessed on April 24, 2024. DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170463>, accessed on 24 April 2024.

- 5 See (Sack 2016).
- 6 See (Sack and Kluveld 2024).
- 7 See (Humphrey 2019).
- 8 [https://www.ushmm.org/online/hsv/source\\_view.php?SourceId=30766](https://www.ushmm.org/online/hsv/source_view.php?SourceId=30766), accessed on 21 March 2024.
- 9 DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170462>, accessed on 21 March 2024; DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170463>, accessed on 21 March 2024; DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170464>, accessed on 21 March 2024.
- 10 See (Kapiszewski 1999).
- 11 See (Heller 1997).
- 12 See (*Poylisher Id* 1942).
- 13 See (Apenszlak and Kenner 1943).
- 14 See (Mahler 1944).
- 15 See (Brown-Fleming 2016).
- 16 *Poylisher Id* (1942), 7, <https://archive.org/details/nybc201313>, accessed on 23 March 1924.
- 17 See (Wyman 2007).
- 18 DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170474>, accessed on 19 March 2024.
- 19 (*Polish Jew* 1943c): “In Nazi Poland. Eye Witnesses Describe Nazi Mass Murders”, *Polish Jew*, April 1943; I. Schwarzbart (1942), “The Crimes Committed by the Germans Against the Jewish Population in Poland”, *Polish Jew*, September 1942; (*Polish Jew* n.d.) “The Massacre at Mikuliczyn (near Stanislov)”, *Polish Jew* (n.d.).
- 20 DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170471>, accessed on 19 March 2024.
- 21 See (Wyman 2007, p. 28).
- 22 (*Polish Jew* 1943e): “The Indiscriminate Slaughter in Poland”, *Polish Jew*, February 1943; (*Polish Jew* 1943f): “The Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. Jews Massacred in Cold Blood. Polish Government Report”, *Polish Jew*, January 1943; “Women’s Division”, (*Polish Jew* 1942): *Polish Jew*, November 1942; Jacob Apenszlak (1942), “The Burgomaster of the Ghetto”, *Polish Jew*, November 1942.
- 23 See (*Polish Jew* 1943d).
- 24 DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170711>, accessed on 19 February 2024.
- 25 See (Arolsen Archives n.d.).
- 26 (*Poylisher Id* 1942): (New York: The Federation, 1942), 60 <http://archive.org/details/nybc201313>, accessed on 25 April 2024.
- 27 (*Poylisher Id* 1942): (New York: The Federation, 1942), 17 <http://archive.org/details/nybc201313>, accessed on 22 February 2024.
- 28 [https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/pdf-drupal/en/education/biographies\\_polish\\_jews.pdf](https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/pdf-drupal/en/education/biographies_polish_jews.pdf), accessed on 24 April 2024.
- 29 In the Yad Vashem database we find one (1876) but this is a family member not the writer. This was a grain Merchant born 3 years earlier: <https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/names/10851595qwe3->, accesses on 1 June 2024.
- 30 “Women’s Division”, *Polish Jew*, November 1942.
- 31 See (*Polish Jew* 1943b).
- 32 See (Grinstein 1959).
- 33 DeepLink: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170703>, accessed on 23 February 2024.
- 34 See (Werner 1942).
- 35 [https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/topic/1-2-7-2\\_9010900?s=magazine](https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search/topic/1-2-7-2_9010900?s=magazine), documents: 821707068, 82170769, 82170770, nt/821707718217077282170773, 82170774821707758217077682170777, accessed on 25 April 2024.

## References

- American Federation of Polish Jews. 1941. Poylisher Id. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170825> (accessed on 1 June 2024).
- Apenszlak, Jacob, and Jacob Kenner. 1943. *The Black Book of Polish Jewry: An Account of the Martyrdom of Polish Jewry under the Nazi Occupation*. New York: American Federation for Polish Jews [etc.].
- Apenszlak, Jacob. 1942. The Burgomaster of the Ghetto. *Polish Jew*, November.
- Arolsen Archives. n.d. Incarceration Documents/1.2 Miscellaneous/1.2.7 Persecution Actions, Especially Outside the German Reich. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/archive/1-2-7-2> (accessed on 1 June 2024).
- Brown-Fleming, Suzanne. 2016. *Nazi Persecution and Postwar Repercussions: The International Tracing Service Archive and Holocaust Research. Documenting Life and Destruction: Holocaust Sources in Context*; 11. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, in Association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Available online: <http://d-nb.info/1115740156/04> (accessed on 25 April 2024).
- Grinstein, Hyman Bogomolny. 1959. *The Efforts of East European Jewry to Organize Its Own Community in the United States*. Philadelphia: [publisher not identified] M. Jacobs, printer.

- Heller, Celia Stopnicka. 1997. *On the Edge of Destruction Jews of Poland between the Two World Wars*. Detroit: Wayne State Univ. Press. Available online: <https://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/books/detail/edge-destruction> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Humphrey, Marlis. 2019. Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide: An IAJGS Strategic Initiative by Marlis Humphrey. *AVOTAYNU. The International Review of Jewish Genealogy*, 3–6.
- Kapiszewski, Andrzej. 1999. The Federation of Polish Jews in America in Polish-Jewish Relations during the Interwar Years (1924–1939). *Polish American Studies* 56: 45–68.
- Mahler, Raphael. 1944. Book Review: The Black Book of Polish Jewry. *Jewish Social Studies* 6: 402–5.
- Polish Jew*. 1942. Women's Division. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170481> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943a. Black Book of Polish Jewry. DocID: 82170540. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170540> (accessed on 1 June 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943b. Detroit Activities. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170536> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943c. In Nazi Poland. Eye Witnesses Describe Nazi Mass Murders. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170538> (accessed on 1 June 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943d. List of Polish Jewish Refugees Now in the U.S.S.R. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170566> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943e. The Indiscriminate Slaughter in Poland. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170530> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Polish Jew*. 1943f. The Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto. Jews Massacred in Cold Blood. Polish Government Report. Available online: <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/82170513> (accessed on 24 April 2024).
- Polish Jew*. n.d. The Massacre at Mikuliczyn (near Stanislov).
- Poylisher Id*. 1942. New York: The Federation. Available online: <http://archive.org/details/nybc201313> (accessed on 2 April 2024).
- Sack, Sallyann, and Amanda Kluveld. 2024. Tracing Jewish Ancestry and Beyond—Exploring the Transformative Impact and Possibilities of the Documentation of Jewish Records Worldwide (DoJR) Project. *Genealogy* 8: 34. [CrossRef]
- Sack, Sallyann. 2016. Editorial: Proposal for a Second-Tier Digitization Project. *AVOTAYNU. The International Review of Jewish Genealogy* 3.
- Schwarzbart, Ignacy. 1942. The Crimes Committed by the Germans Against the Jewish Population in Poland. *Polish Jew*, September.
- Vice, Sue. 2021. 'Beyond Words': Representing the 'Holocaust by Bullets'. In *Trauma & Memory: The Holocaust in Contemporary Culture*. Edited by Christine Berberich. London: Routledge, pp. 93–105.
- Werner, Alfred. 1942. Heinrich Heine on the Polish Jews. *Polish Jew*, November.
- Wyman, David S. 2007. *The Abandonment of the Jews: America and the Holocaust, 1941–1945*, New ed. New York: The New Press.
- Yad Vashem. n.d. The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names. Available online: <https://collections.yadvashem.org/en/names> (accessed on 15 July 2024).

**Disclaimer/Publisher's Note:** The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.