

***Bibliocaust Survivors:  
The Fate of the Jewish Book Collections in Poland after 1945***  
**Monika Biesaga**

**Description:** The Second World War brought to an end a thousand-years existence of Polish Jews and their cultural heritage. From over 748 secular Jewish libraries and unnumbered religious and private book collections that existed in Poland before 1939, only fragments remained. Usually, little attention is paid to these Bibliocaust survivors, but like other cultural assets stolen by the Nazis, they have a particular memory value. Using the example of the Esra Public Library and Reading Room, which existed in Cracow for 40 years (1899-1939), Monika will present the fate of the Jewish book collections after 1945, map their dispersion, and briefly describe the research strategy in rediscovering looted books.

**Monika Biesaga** is a PhD candidate at the Institute of Jewish Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland. As a graduate of two faculties – in library studies and Jewish studies – she is working on her dissertation about the history of the Jewish public library movement in interwar Poland. Monika's scientific interests evolve around the history of Jewish libraries, the fate of Jewish books after the Second World War, and the management of Judaica collections. During her academic career, Monika was awarded with the Dina Abramowicz Young Emerging Scholars Fellowship by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York (2017/2018), the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews Scholarship (2015/2016), the Israeli Government Ministry of Foreign Affairs Scholarship (2015), the Rothschild Foundation Fellowship (2014) and an individual grant from the Center of Urban History in Lviv (2015). Currently, Monika is working as a reference specialist in the Rare Books and Music Department at the British Library.