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# Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

## Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner in the News

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29 Sivan 5768

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### Poland Gets First Orthodox Rabbis Since WWII

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- By MATTHEW WAGNER

As part of a concerted effort to revive Polish Jewry 60 years after it was nearly wiped out in the Holocaust, nine students were granted rabbinical ordination Sunday in Warsaw by Polish Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich.

This is the first time Orthodox rabbis have been ordained in Poland since World War II, said the organizers of the ordination ceremony. Neither the newly ordained rabbis nor Schudrich are indigenous Poles.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, chief rabbi of Tel Aviv and a Holocaust survivor born in Poland, called the ordination an "historical event." "There is no greater revenge than this against the Nazis and their helpers, who hoped to execute the Final Solution," said [Rav] Lau. "The Jewish people and its rabbis are alive and well even here in Warsaw."

**However, Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, head of the Ateret Yerushalayim Yeshiva and rabbi of Beit El, said in response that while the local community should be**

supported, the main goal should be to convince Polish Jews to immigrate to Israel. "Our place is not in Poland," said [Rav] Aviner. "The Polish people are anti-Semites. That is why the Nazis chose them as collaborators. Even after the Holocaust, the Poles continued to kill Jews. Look at what happened in Kielce in 1946. The real revenge is not to rebuild the community there, it is to be here in the Land of Israel."

However, the rabbis who took part in the ordination saw the reestablishment of the Polish Jewish community as a positive development.

"This was a ceremony of historic proportions," said [Rav] Shalom Ber Stambler, a Chabad rabbi who established a yeshiva in Warsaw two years ago. It was the first yeshiva to be established in Warsaw since the Holocaust. [Rav] Lau praised Chabad for its activities in Poland. "The spirit of the [Lubavitcher Rebbe,] Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, whose yahrzeit will be commemorated next week, still lives," said [Rav] Lau. "The candles that he lit in the world are still burning today in Warsaw, not far from where thousands of Jews found their death during the Holocaust. For centuries, Poland had been a world center of Jewish studies, laying down the code of proper Jewish conduct."