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A GUIDE
TO JEWISH

CRACOW

EUGENIUSZ DUDA



WARSAW 1990

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*On the cover: The entrance to the Remuh Synagogue on
Szeroka Street*

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WORTH
READING

FROM THE EDITOR

We have the honor to place in your hands volume 2 in the series 'Library of Our Roots', published by the Jewish Information and Tourist Bureau. We trust that the first book in the series, entitled "A Guide to Jewish Warsaw", has to a considerable extent satisfied your expectations.

This time it is "A Guide to Jewish Cracow". We hope that it will help you to take full advantage of your stay in this beautiful, old city.

Cracow is a city that had for many centuries been inhabited by Jews. In the past there were thousands of them – today several hundred. Once many synagogues were open, today only two, and of these two one is not always open.

One could mention many more differences. But...

Today's Cracow is a city with a very large number of historic monuments, connected with the history of Polish Jews. For a Jewish tourist, even for one who cherishes no special sentiments in regard to this city – it is nevertheless probably the most interesting city in Poland.

HOW TO USE THE GUIDE

1. We begin with a short outline of the history of Poland and the history of Polish Jews, presenting the most essential data related to Cracow and describe the history of Jews in this city (JEWS IN CRACOW).
2. The next part is a description of walks across Cracow, amidst historic monuments, connected with the history of Jews who lived in this city. To this are added descriptions with detailed maps, facilitating sightseeing in Cracow (TRACES OF JEWISH PRESENCE).
3. Additional, but most essential information – are brief biographies of the most famous Cracow Jews – to be found in the chapter, entitled "IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO TURN TO US FOR ASSISTANCE"

We hope that the guide as well as other services rendered by our Information and Tourist Bureau will satisfy your expectations.

SHORT CHRONOLOGIES

SHORT CHRONOLOGY OF POLISH HISTORY

- 966 - Symbolic date of the origins of the Polish State;
- 1025 - coronation of the first Polish king Bolesław Chrobry (Brave);
- 1138 - division of Poland into provinces;
- 1333 - unity regained under King Władysław Łokietek;
- 1358 - Union of Poland and Lithuania;
- 1410 - the battle of Grunwald; great triumph of the Polish sword over Teutonic Knights (Polish-German conflict already has a long history);
- 1447-1492 - the reign of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk; period of immense territorial acquisitions;
- 1548 - beginning of Zygmunt August's reign; time of religious tolerance;
- 1573 - coronation of the first Polish king chosen at elections, (selected by dominant gentry);
- 1683 - King John III Sobieski defeats the Turks at Vienna;
- 1772 - first partition of Poland by Prussia, Austria and Russia;
- 1791 - the Third of May Constitution; second constitutional act in the world (after USA);
- 1793 - second partition of Poland;
- 1794 - Kościuszko's Insurrection; a powerful national effort against foreign partitioning powers;
- 1795 - third partition of Poland;
- 1797 - Polish Legions formed in Italy; a song sung by legionaries became Polish national anthem in 1926;
- 1807 - part of the Prussian partition becomes the Warsaw Duchy (as the result of Napoleonic wars);
- 1815 - part of the Russian partition becomes the Polish Kingdom;
- 1830 - The November Insurrection as the next sudden effort against partitioning powers (one of its aftereffects were limitations placed on the Polish Kingdom);
- 1863 - the January Insurrection;
- 1914 - outbreak of the First World War (many Jews took part in the legions' fights);
- 1918 - end of the war; Poland regains independence;

- 1919-20 - Polish-Russian war
- 1926 - the so-called May Coup d'Etat; beginning of authoritarian rule by Pilsudski;
- 1929-33 - huge economic crisis;
- 1939 - outbreak of the Second World War; first death camps in Poland;
- 1944 - July - Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego (PKWN - Polish Committee of National Liberation) comes into existence - first government in the liberated territory (in practical terms imposed by the Soviet Union); August - Warsaw Uprising;
- 1945 - January 17 - liberation of Warsaw; May 8 - Third Reich capitulates;

SHORT CHRONOLOGY OF THE HISTORY OF JEWS IN POLAND

- 860 - first mentions of Polish lands in Spanish Jews' diaries;
- 10th century - first settlements in Silesia and Wielkopolska (Great Poland);
- 1096 - first large immigration wave into Poland after pogroms in Western Europe;
- 1264 - privileges of Boleslaw Pobożny (Calisian prince) - granted to Jews in Wielkopolska (Calisian Statute);
- 1334 - King Kazimierz Wielki (Casimir the Great) extends the Calisian Statute to all Jews in Poland;
- 1388 - privileges granted to Lithuanian Jews;
- 1551 - leaders of Jewish communities gain wide-ranging judicial and administrative rights;
- 1576 - King Stefan Batory's decree against accusations of ritual murders;
- 1581 - period of Jewish autonomy; The Jewish Parliament (Sejm) of Four Lands came into existence (until 1764);
- 1648-1649 - Jewish pogroms by Chmielnicki's Cossaks;
- 1760 - death of Baal Shem Tov, development of Hasidic movement;

- 1794 - Berek Joselewicz leads a Jewish regiment during Kościuszko Insurrection;
- 1807 - the Duchy of Warsaw constitution granted Jews (at least in theory) equality of citizens rights;
- 1897 - first Jewish workers party, BUND, is founded;
- 1912 - AGUDAS ISRAEL, religious party, comes into existence;
- 1921 - the March Constitution gives Jews the same legal rights as other citizens and guarantees them religious tolerance;
- 1940 - first ghettos are designated;
- 1941 - extermination camp is built in Chelmno on the Ner River;
- 1942 - extermination camps appear in Sobibór, Belżec, Treblinka, Auschwitz, Birkenau; uprising in Białystok ghetto (August 16);
- 1943 - Warsaw Ghetto Uprising;
- 1945 - Central Committee of Jews in Poland formed;
- 1946 - pogrom in Kielce;
- 1947 - Jewish Historical Institute is founded;
- 1948 - Jewish Religious Union comes into existence;
- 1950 - Socio-Cultural Society of Jews in Poland is formed.

JEW IN CRACOW

Jews arrived in Cracow most probably in the second half of the **13th century**, but the first reference in documents about a Jewish street appeared in **1304** (today's St. Anne's Street). At that street were in addition to dwelling-houses also institutions serving the entire community: synagogue, a bath-house, hospital and house for weddings. Behind the city wall, which surrounded medieval Cracow, along the line of today's Planty (park area), was the Jewish cemetery.

The number of Jews inhabiting Cracow in the second half of the **14th century** amounted to several hundred persons, but increased quite markedly, i.e. as a result of the continuing immigration. Not counting handicraft and all kinds of indispensable occupations for the functioning of the community and its institutions, the main occupation of Cracow Jews in the **14th century** were credit operations, dealings in real estate and collection of taxes for the King and gentry. The most outstanding financier among Cracow Jews was at that time **Lewko**. His skill found recognition on the part of King Casimir the Great, who entrusted him with the administration of the royal mint and permitted him to hold on lease the famous salt mines in Wieliczka and Bochnia, the most profitable enterprise of the royal treasury.

The growing economic activity of the Jews in the **15th century** met counteraction on the part of the clergy and the middle class, jealously protecting their interests. The opposition of the rich Cracow townspeople, directed against the growing competition of Jewish merchants brought in its wake a situation in which Jews were in **1485** forced to resign from trading in the city with any type of imported goods or commodity taken over from Christian merchants. The agreement containing this decision, permitted Jews to do business in this city only as regards pawned objects not bought back in time, and they could develop such activity exclusively in their own homes and that only on Tuesdays and Fridays and on market days.

During the course of that century anti-Jewish events took place time and again. There were various pretexts: accusations of ritual murder (**1407**), grudges on the part of debtors (**1423**) and above all conflagrations.

In **1554** Jews were held responsible for having caused conflagrations, which had supposedly started from a fire in their store-houses, that were in a building belonging to councilor Tomasz. After violent incidents some Jews left the city, looking for a safer abode.

Due to the deteriorating situation of Jews in Cracow it was not at all surprising that a Jewish center developed in Kazimierz situated in the close neighborhood of Cracow. King Casimir the Great granted it a town charter.

In **1485** there was already a Jewish bath-house in Kazimierz and in **1488** – a Jewish market. At that time the first large Kazimierz Synagogue was built, existing to this day, called the *Old Synagogue* (the oldest preserved synagogue in Poland).

In **1494**, following a very dangerous fire in Cracow further anti-Jewish disturbances took place, and all the Jews living in Cracow, not counting several persons to whom individual privileges had been granted, were driven out of the city and moved to Kazimierz.

The transfer of Jews to Kazimierz took place at the threshold of the **16th century** – a century marked by considerable increase in the role played by Cracow as a powerful center of handicrafts, local and international trade, and also as a center of intellectual and cultural life, quickly reacting to the ideas of humanism and reformation, adopting Renaissance art at a rapid rate.

Cracow Jews also took advantage of the development of Cracow and the entire country (in many cases they were called Cracow Jews in documents and that is how they defined themselves, which can be seen to this day on inscriptions on tombstones in the old cemetery at Remuh Synagogue). Despite legal limitations they participated in trade and handicraft production. In the second half of the 16th century they monopolized trade between Cracow and Prague, which was partly facilitated by good relations with Jews living in Prague and also by many family ties (many Jews driven out of Prague lived in Cracow). In the first half of the 17th century Jewish merchants were already very much reckoned with in the economic life of Cracow. To the richest and most active among them belonged: **Pinkas Horowic**, **Izaak Jakubowicz** and his son **Mojżesz**, **Wolf Popper**, **Salomon Włochowicz** and **Lewek Markowicz**. It was not different as far as craft is concerned. At the beginning of the 17th century Jewish craftsmen began to organize themselves, setting up guilds. They represented a variety of specialties and were very active. Therefore one can find many complaints about Jewish competition in the guild statutes of Cracow and Kazimierz. Tailors, furriers, capmakers, haberdashers, cobblers, book-binders and goldsmiths complained, not even mentioning butchers, who even embarked on open fight with Jewish butchers.

The epoch of humanism and Renaissance in Poland was also a fertile ground for the dynamic development of the culture of Polish Jews. This period was characterized by increased social mobility, intensified contacts with countries of western and southern Europe; new ideas brought by immigrants found their way to the Jewish town of Kazimierz. The first printed books appeared, brought along by newcomers and afterwards imported in large quantities from abroad, i.e. from the first Hebrew printing house in Central Europe, set up in Prague in 1512. Beginning with 1534 Hebrew books were also being printed in Cracow, because there the first Hebrew printing house was opened, set up by the brothers: **Samuel**, **Asher** and **Eliakim**, sons of **Chaim** of **Halicz**. But the life of this first printshop was very short.

Two successive printing houses still existed in Cracow until the mid - 17th century. Beginning with 1568 worked here the very vital printshop of **Izaak Prostitz** which existed until 1626, and next **Menachim Meisels'** printshop, from 1631 - 1655. The most outstanding works of local scholars and talmudists were printed there. These were unquestioned authorities of the Polish and European Jewry of that time. To them belonged mainly all the successive rabbis of the Cracow community and rectors of the local Yeshivah from the second half of the 16th to the first half of the 17th centuries: **Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles** (ReMu), **Rabbi Natan Spira**, **Rabbi Joel Sirkes** (BaCH) and **Rabbi Jomtow Lipman Heller**.

The flourishing of Jewish culture in this town during that period had a remarkable mass character. Much attention was attached to universal preliminary teaching of children, who were educated by private teachers or by teachers who received their salary from the community, which for this purpose maintained a public school, supervised by a specialized school fellowship named "Talmud Torah". A considerable number of these young people continued studies at higher levels. The rich Cracow community maintained a talmudic yeshivah, whose teachers - **Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles**, **Rabbi Józef ben Gerszon KaC**, **Rabbi Mordechaj Margaliot**, **Rabbi Joel Sirkes** and others attracted students from many towns and cities in Poland and from abroad.

Rabbis and Cracow seniors reigned at that time over Jews from the extensive areas of western Little Poland and represented this region in a central self-managing organization of Jews of Poland and Lithuania - called Diet of the Four Lands (Waad Arba Aracot), which gathered for the first time in Lublin in 1581.

From the **mid - 17th century** begins the decline of the flourishing of the Cracow Jewish community. It starts at the beginning of **1655** with the invasion of the territories of the Republic by the Swedish armed forces of Charles X Gustavus. Hostilities and two years of occupation of Cracow and Kazimierz in **1655-1657** directly contributed to physical ruin. Rebuilding of towns after the war took place very slowly. The population decreased. From the previous approximately 4,500 inhabitants remained after the invasion about 1,800. Many of those, who had left Cracow still before the invasion, did not return, among them mainly foreign Jews, who returned to their native countries. There was no new immigration at all. An exception were Viennese Jews, who came to Poland and also to Cracow after they had been expelled from Vienna in **1670**. Many Cracow Jews also left for Warsaw, which after the Swedish "deluge" had taken over the role of the country's political center. What was even worse, the decline of the significance of Cracow and Kazimierz turned out to be a long-lasting decline, because all the successive wars and internal conflicts which swept across the lands of the Republic in the **18th century** during such periods as: the northern war **1702-1709**, the war of the Polish Succession (**1733-1735**), the Seven Years' War (**1756-1763**), the Confederation of Bar (**1768-1772**) and in the end the period of the partitions of Poland with the first Austrian occupation of Kazimierz in **1772-1775** – did not spare Cracow and Kazimierz and the Jews as well.

In conditions of economic crises relations between Jews and Cracow burghers did not turn out well. The latter fought the competition of Jewish merchants and craftsmen with all the means at their disposal. This long-lasting and stubborn struggle ended shortly before the first partition of Poland with curtailing trade and handicraft activity of Jews and limiting it exclusively to the area of Kazimierz.

In the years **1772-1776** Kazimierz was for the first time occupied by Austrian armed forces, and found itself in **1796**, jointly with Cracow, in the Austrian occupation zone. On the basis of a new administrative division, conducted by the Austrians at the beginning of the **19th century** in territories seized by them, towns and the suburbs of Cracow were incorporated into Austria. In this way the centuries-long separate status of Kazimierz was liquidated as well as the separate administrative independence of this Jewish town.

Until the first years of the **19th century** the Jewish part of Kazimierz was almost the exclusive place where Cracow Jews lived. A few among them, who had already settled in Cracow at the end of the **18th century**, were in **1802** compelled to return to their former abode, following an order given by the Austrian authorities. When Austrian rigor let up a bit, and afterwards, when Cracow and Kazimierz found themselves within the boundaries of the Duchy of Warsaw (from **1809** to **1815**), in turn Jewish house-owners very sharply opposed the idea of Jews renting houses in the Christian part of Kazimierz. Their income from renting houses dropped violently. Following intercession on their part a curse was proclaimed in the Old Synagogue in **1806** and once again in **1812** concerning everyone, who would dare to rent an apartment or a store outside the Jewish district.

All prohibitions on one or the other side were of no avail. The slow process of transfer of Jews to Christian Kazimierz, to Stradom, and soon also to Cracow, started and – despite periodical set-backs – became a permanent phenomenon.

In the first years of the Austrian occupation and during the period of the Duchy of Warsaw only Europeanized Jews were permitted to live in Christian Kazimierz. Further changes in this respect took place during the time of the *Free City of Cracow* (**1815-1846**), the authorities of which defined the legal status of Jews in "statutes regulating the status of Jews in the Free City of Cracow and its Region", published in **1815**. These statutes

smashed Jewish separateness and introduced mechanisms of compulsory assimilation. The former autonomic kahal, eliminated already earlier by the Austrians, but reactivated after 1809, was replaced by a several-member Committee of Jews. The Committee was headed by a Christian chairman and the rabbi, whose competences were limited to religious problems and he was required to possess lay general education. He was also permitted to teach children in their parents' home. Jewish youth got access to lower and higher state schools. All Jews of the Free City were permitted to settle in the whole of Kazimierz, the Jewish part as well as the Christian one, to purchase property and conduct economic activity. In the remaining districts of the City they could live, purchase property and work only on the basis of a special permission. Such permissions were granted mainly to merchants, entrepreneurs and free craftsmen, who knew the Polish language and sent their children to state schools and to those who were granted citizen's rights of the Free City, above all to intellectuals: scholars, artists, inventors. A change of residence was also connected with an enforced style of life, adapted to norms, binding in non-Jewish surroundings.

Half a century had still to elapse, before Cracow Jews obtained full civil rights which they deserved. In 1848 ten Jewish councilors were elected to the Municipal Council, **Rabbi B. Meisels** was elected deputy to the Sejm. In 1861 Jews were given the right of vote (active and passive) to the Diet of Galicia (elected as deputy for Cracow was **Szymon Samuelsohn**, leader of the intelligentsia). Finally a new constitution of the Austro-Hungarian empire was proclaimed, which decreed formal equal rights for Jewish citizens in the entire state. Regarding the local Cracow situation these changes signified i.a. the possibility for Jews from Kazimierz to return to Cracow, from which their ancestors had been driven away less than four centuries ago. The coming years were to show that availing themselves of such possibilities was to a considerable degree limited.

The years 1868-1914, a period called Galician autonomy, were for the Jewish inhabitants of Cracow years of dynamic internal changes. The Cracow Jewish community regained part of the former kahal's autonomy. From that time the Jewish religious community was to guarantee full and unhampered implementation of specifically Jewish religious needs. The range of its activity and internal organization were guaranteed by the community's statutes, confirmed by the authorities of the region, i.e. by the governor, residing in Lwów. The religious community was made up of all the Jews of Cracow and the Cracow administrative district. In 1870 **Szymon Samuelson** was elected chairman of the religious community. He was the leader of a determinedly pro-Polish group in favor of assimilation, called progressive Jews.

Rivalry for influence in the community board was one of the symptoms of the sharp conflict existing at that time in the whole of Galicia between orthodox groups and adherents of assimilation. In order to counteract assimilation tendencies Orthodox Galician Jews set up the countrywide association *Machzike Ha-dat*, headed by Cracow **Rabbi Szymon Schreiber**. Other organizations were also created: the pro-Austrian *Sbomer Yisra'el* (Guardian of Israel) and the pro-Polish *Agudat Achim* (Covenant of Brothers). The goal of this Covenant of Brothers was to popularize among Jews the conviction about the necessity of assimilation with the Polish population, of performing duties of citizens of the state, of encouraging Jews to embark on agriculture and handicraft, to educate Jewish youth in a Polish spirit, to cultivate with special solicitude the teachings of the religion of Moses in the Polish language. In Cracow, where at that time a pro-Polish orientation was distinctly predominant, belonged to the best known adherents of moderate assimilation (i.e. only cultural not religious): **Szymon Samuelsohn**, **Józef Oettinger**, **Jonatan Warschauer**. The most outstanding representatives of the trend in favor of

radical assimilation, i.e. including religious assimilation as well, were in the Cracow area at that time two great Poles of Jewish descent, who became part of the history of Polish culture: **Julian Klaczko** and **Wilhelm Feldman**.

At the end of the **19th century** could be noticed a retreat from the assimilation program. The main reason for such a state of affairs was the growing anti-Semitism, an all-European phenomenon at that time. It was not different in Cracow, where traditional prejudices regarding Jews were still intensified by the defeat of Catholics in rivalry in some of the spheres of economic life. In **1900**, when the Jewish population in Cracow amounted to approximately 26,000 persons (about 27% of the inhabitants of the city), Jews constituted the absolute majority of people employed in trade (over 10,000 as compared with 4,000 non-Jews) and the relative majority (i.e. compared with the number of professionally active people) in many fields of industry and in the learned professions.

At the turn of the **19th century** the first organizational initiatives appeared in Cracow, connected with the national movement in its mature form of political Zionism. However, at the turn of the century Zionism had not yet won significant popularity among thousands of average Jews. But what increased was the popularity of programs, which stressed direct social aid and protection of the poorest among the Jewish population. Such assumptions guided in Cracow the activity of Jewish socialists, belonging to the *Polish Socialist Party*. Active at that time were in Cracow *Po'ale Zion* and *Misrabi*.

Shortly before the First World War, above all social and political division lines, a branch of *B'nai B'rith*, a world-wide movement, was set up, the local name of which was "*Solidarność*" (*Solidarity*).

In the inter-war years of **1918-1939** a dynamic increase in the number of Jews living in Cracow took place.

In **1921** were 45,200 Jews in Cracow, constituting 27% of the total number of inhabitants of the city. Until **1931** the number of Jews increased to 56,800 persons, but their share in comparison with the total number of inhabitants slightly decreased and amounted to 26%. According to data of **1938** there lived in Cracow 64,348 Jews, i.e. approximately 25% of the total number of city residents.

The Jewish population concentrated mainly in two neighboring city districts: Kazimierz and Stradom. But in the whole of Cracow there was almost not a single street where Jews would not be living. They spread during that period mainly in the south-eastern direction – towards Podgórze – and the south-western direction – towards Dębniki. Spatial expansion was connected with the purchase of a considerable number of real estate, also in the center of Cracow and in the Old Town, especially at such streets as: Grodzka, Bracka, Szewska, Floriańska and Szpitalna.

Jewish organizations, developing activity in Cracow during the period between the two world wars, represented almost all the various nuances of political opinions and interests of Jews, including orthodox as well as laicized Jews. Many new organizations made their appearance in addition to those set up already before World War I. Among them were i.a. sections of large political parties, such as the orthodox *Agudat Yisra'el*, the Zionist-socialist *Hitachdut*, the socialist *Bund* and local organizations connected with the latter or independent, whose members were mainly working youth, secondary school pupils and students. Several local Zionist organizations (*Beitar*, *Menora*, *Masad*, *El-Al*, *Brit Jesburun*, *Brit Chajjal*, *Wered*). A Polish language weekly party organ, "Trybuna Narodowa" (National Tribune) was published in Cracow from **1934** until the outbreak of World War II. Young people connected with this movement, belonging to the *Beitar* organization participated in military training, conducted in **1936**, i.e. in the training center of the Polish Army in Łańcut.

The process of laicization of Jewish society made rapid progress in Cracow during the period between the two world wars. According to estimates in the 1930s close to 60% of the Jewish population, living mainly outside of Cracow were laicized. Orthodox Jews, including Hasidim – above all adherents of tzaddiks from Bobowa, Belzec and Góra Kalwaria – lived above all in Kazimierz, connected by close bonds with the landscape of many synagogues and Bet Midrashes, in the midst of the densely built up Jewish town.

The socio-political differentiation of Cracow Jews found its natural reflection in the approach to matters related with the education and upbringing of youth. Young people from non-orthodox families attended the network of state schools, to which all had access, and in addition also exclusively Jewish primary and secondary schools, with a general educational and vocational profile. To these belong i.a. the humanist Hebrew Secondary School named after **Chaim Hilfstein**, the Handicraft School and the Secondary Commercial School. Young people from orthodox families studied in the community religious school for boys – *Talmud Torah*, directed by the superiors of synagogues and in Hasidic prayer houses as well as the *Bet Yaacov School*, founded in Cracow way back in 1917.

The cultural and artistic life of Cracow was during the period between the two world wars enriched by a completely new phenomenon – a Jewish theater with its own permanent small stage and its own actors. The theater was set up in 1926 in the building at 7, Bocheńska Street. It was there that the famous *Ida Kamińska* gave performances, the Turkowows, **Szymon Dżigan**, **Izrael Schumacher** and **Menachem Rubin**, who was the theater director and also played the main roles in Shalom Aleichem's plays "Two Hundred Thousand", "Kune Lemel" performed in 1933 to mark the 50th anniversary of the beginning of this great writer's creative work

2.

Cracow was occupied by German units, belonging to the 14th army of the Wehrmacht on **September 6, 1939**. Soon also appeared in the city the staff of the First Operational Group of the Security Police, commanded by Bruno Streckenbach. There began the first actions full of bloodshed against the civilian population.

On **September 8** an order was issued by Streckenbach to mark until 5 p.m. the following day all Jewish enterprises, shops, restaurants and cafes with the star of David, stalls, and stands with appropriate indications.

That same day SS-Oberscharführer Paul Siebert, head of the department for Jewish matters in the Security Police appointed **Mark Bieberstein** chairman of the temporary Jewish Religious Community in Cracow. According to the intention of the Germans the Community, set up a few days later, was to serve as an administrative organ, which would at once carry out all the recommendations of the German authorities. The successive heads of the department for Jewish matters at the Cracow Security Police Headquarters – Paul Siebert, Oskar Brandt, Wilhelm Kunde and Herman Heinrich – knew how to enforce obedience and compliance on members of the Community.

The so-called General Government was set up in **October 1939** with Cracow as the "capital" and its chief Dr. Hans Frank arrived in the city. So far he had been the head of the German civil administration on occupied territories of Poland. On **October 26**, i.e. on the day when posters appeared in the city with the proclamation initiating Frank's reign, an instruction was published about obligatory employment of Poles and Jews (from 12 to 60 years) and the prohibition of ritual slaughter in Jewish

slaughter-houses. (In **December 1939** obligatory work for Jews was enlarged by the decision, that every Jew from 12 to 60 years had to work for two years in a compulsory labor camp).

On **November 18, 1939** Otto Wachter, governor of the Cracow district, issued an instruction about special signs to be carried by Jews in the entire district: *"all Jews above 12 years of age should carry visible signs, namely a white band with the blue Star of David on their right arm of their outer garments"*. This instruction also contained a definition of the term Jew as the Nazis understood it: *"He is a Jew, who either is an adherent of the Judaic faith and everyone, whose father or mother are or were of Judaic faith"*.

The successive orders issued by the Germans obliged Jews to hand over their automobiles and motorcycles (**December 4, 1939**), forbade them to change their residence (**December 11, 1939**) and to travel by train in the general Government (**January 26, 1940**). During the period directly preceding the setting up of the ghetto in Podgórze, the freedom of Jews to move outside of Cracow had been completely paralyzed, first by a decree issued by Hans Frank *"About limitation of free choice to change the place of residence and stay"* (**September 13, 1940**, in force from **October 1, 1940**), the next decree forbade transportation enterprises to transport Jews and their luggage (**November 26, 1940**) and finally an order issued by the governor general, forbidding Jews to make use of any means of transportation without a special permission (**February 21, 1941**).

In 1940 the Germans embarked on a large-scale campaign to remove Jews from the area of Cracow. On **May 18, 1940** Jews were given three months "voluntarily" to move to other places in the General Government. All those who would undertake to leave Cracow until **August 15, 1940** would be permitted to choose their new place of residence and to take along all their possessions.

When the day of **August 15, 1940** arrived, there still were according to German plans too many Jews in Cracow. Thus, in accordance with their announcement, compulsory displacement started. The last act of the displacement took place in the winter of 1940-1941. Those who had remained in Cracow were shortly afterwards removed to the ghetto.

On **March 3, 1941** a thirteen-point announcement of Wachter, governor of the Cracow district, was published about the setting up in Cracow at once of a "living area" for Jews only, which was to be in Podgórze, a city district situated on the right bank of the Vistula River. This was an area, between the Vistula, the Podgórze Market Place, Krzemionki and the Kraków-Plaszów railway line.

Until **March 20, 1941** approximately 12,000 Jews found themselves in the ghetto. Previously they had been given identity cards. There also were about 3,000 persons there, who did not possess these documents. These people were crammed into 320 buildings, mainly groundfloor and one-floor buildings, abandoned by the Polish population. The area of the ghetto was surrounded by a two-meter-high wall with four gates. The main gate, crowned, just like the wall, by a number of semi-circular decorations, reminiscent of the pediments of Jewish tomb stones, closed the ghetto at Plac Zgody (Square) – today Bohaterów Getta Street – from the side of the bridge spanning the Vistula. It was adorned with a large Star of David and carried the inscription in Yiddish: "Yidisher vohnbetzirk" (Jewish residential area).

With the passage of time all Jewish institutions, such as: the Community, Hospital, Jewish Social Self-Aid, orphanages, and in addition also agencies of the German Labor Office, the post office and others found themselves inside the ghetto. At 18, Plac Zgody functioned the only drug store in the ghetto, conducted by a Pole, Tadeusz Pankiewicz (today the building houses the Museum of National Memory).



The gate to Cracow ghetto

The number of ghetto inhabitants underwent changes during the course of 1941 – first in connection with the fact that Jews were brought into the ghetto from 29 communities near Cracow, which in May had been incorporated into Cracow, and next as the result of deportation from the ghetto in the Autumn of that year of approximately 2,000 persons without documents and permanent employment, who had been caught during round-ups, ordered by the Germans and carried out by the Jewish police (Jüdischer Ordnungsdienst – OD).

From the beginning of 1942, following resolutions adopted at a conference in Wannsee, SS formations took over direct control over Jews.

Mass deportations took place between **June 1 and 8, 1942** from the Cracow Ghetto to the extermination camp of Belzec. On Thursday 4, blood streamed along ghetto streets. The Germans, furious, because too few Jews had left the ghetto with the Monday transport, massacred a crowd, driven to Zgody Square.

The next mass deportation took place four days later on the 8th of June. A total of 5,000 persons were taken out of the ghetto.

The following mass deportation which took place on October 28, 1942, was much worse than the "bloody Thursday" in June. After work detachments had left the ghetto, SS-men started to search each house and also hospitals, orphanages and homes for the aged and disabled. Many persons, especially those who were ill or old, were shot when they were conducted out on the streets.

One of the consequences of the events in **June and October 1942** was a wave of suicides in the ghetto. But on the other hand there was also a growing will to resist. Displacement speeded up the consolidation of several organizations which so far had developed activity independently from one another. In this way the group of the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB) was formed in Cracow. To its joint command belonged i.a.: **Hersz Bauminger** and **Bernard Halbreich** (*Ha-Shomer Ha-Zair*), **Adolf Liebeskind** and **Szymon Dranger** (*Akiba*) as well as **Abraham Leibowicz** (*Dror*). The Cracow ŻOB concentrated mainly on attempts on the life of the enemies and on sabotage outside the ghetto.

In **November 1942** Jewish work details, employed at building barracks for the new camp of compulsory labor, set up in Plaszów, in addition to

the already existing work camp for Jews, named Julag I. Selected as the site of the new camp was the area between Abrahama and Jerozolimska streets, where two Jewish cemeteries were situated, belonging to the Cracow community and the Podgórze community. Both cemeteries were completely destroyed during the course of leveling works, because the organization of compulsory labor had been taken over by the SS. At the beginning of 1943 the cemetery was cut down in size and divided by a wooden fence made of barbed wire into a part A for those who were working and part B for those who were not working. In part A, which now served as a camp for compulsory labor, were kept Jews still needed by the German economy, but in part B were separated those who were to be exterminated first.

In **March** the SS and Police command in Cracow made the decision to concentrate in the new camp Jews from the Cracow ghetto and compulsory labor camps in the neighborhood. The final term for leaving the ghetto was **March 13** (part A) and **March 14** (part B). In accordance with the plan started evacuation of those working in ghetto A. In the deserted ghetto remained only members of the Community and the Jewish police together with their families. Attempts were also made on that day to escape through the sewers which had their outlet at the Vistula. This had i.a. been the way of escape of **Dr. Julian Aleksandrowicz** with wife and small son.

On the following day, on Sunday, **March 14, 1943** the Germans killed within a few hours approximately 1,000 persons, and about 4,000 were escorted to the camp in Plaszów. 2,000 people were loaded onto automobiles, which that same day reached the death camp in **Oświęcim-Brzezinka (Auschwitz-Birkenau)**.

Cleaning up teams worked in the ghetto until **December 1943**, selecting and storing objects, furniture, equipment etc., left behind. In the end the no longer needed ghetto enclosure was taken down and in this way it became once again an open area. That was when the Germans killed the last of their Jewish co-workers.

In its final stage the camp in Plaszów covered an area of about 80 hectares (1 ha= 2.471 acres) between Swoszowicka and Wielicka streets. Being an area guarded by SS-men, Ukrainians and Latvians, it was surrounded by double wire entanglements made of barbed wire with a high-tension system and guard towers, set up every several hundred meters. It was divided into a Polish and a Jewish sector. The Jewish sector was larger, there was a roll-call square, barracks as living quarters, sheds which housed various kinds of craftsmen's workshops, store houses, administrative buildings and sanitary arrangements. Jewish prisoners worked in workshops inside the camp, and also outside, like in the factory producing cables in Plaszów, in the brick kiln in Bonarka, at the airfield in Rakowice and in several firms in Zabłocie.

In the middle of 1943 the Plaszów camp was transformed into a sub-camp of the concentration camp of Majdanek, and beginning with **January 1944** - into an independent concentration camp with sub-camps in Mielec and in Wieliczka. In connection with this, Jews were brought over from many places in the General Government, where the Germans liquidated ghettos and small camps (from Tarnów, Mielec, Rzeszów, Drohobycz, Janów, Szebnie near Jasło), and they also brought over Jews from Hungary. In this camp prisoners were exterminated by hunger, diseases, work beyond their possibilities, beating and executions. They were transported from the camp to armament factories in the General Government (Skarżysko-Kamienna, Starachowice, Pionki, Częstochowa) and they worked also in the Reich as well as in other concentration camps (Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Gross Rosen).

Among the Plaszów murderers distinguished himself above all its commander, Amon Leopold Goeth, who shot many people himself (he

did this also during the liquidation of ghettos in Cracow, Tarnów and Szebnie), thus staging an example for his subordinates, showing them how one should treat the prisoners. After the war he was put on trial before the Supreme National Tribunal. Evidence was provided that he murdered people and ill-treated them. After he was sentenced to death, he was hanged in Cracow on **September 13, 1946**. According to evidence given by witnesses in the trial of Goeth, there were at the beginning of the existence of the camp about 2,000 persons imprisoned there. This figure increases later to about 10,000, amounting at the end to 25,000 prisoners, mainly Jews, about 8,000 of whom lost their lives on the spot. Imprisoned there was a total of about 150,000, mainly Jews, of whom perished on the spot approximately 8,000 persons. It is impossible to establish the exact figure of Jews killed in Plaszów, taken away from there and killed in other places. Thus, lists of Jews brought from Plaszów to Auschwitz, now stored in the archives of the State Museum in Auschwitz, provide most frequently only information about those, who were not killed in gas chambers immediately after the arrival of the transport, but became part of the camp inmates and had been given camp numbers. And thus, on **February 21, 1944** a transport arrived from Plaszów to Auschwitz, from which were selected 260 men as prisoners, the remaining persons (...?) were killed. On **May 24, 1944** arrived a transport of (...?) old men, ill people and children – all of them were killed in gas chambers. On **August 6** of that same year were brought 7,500 Jewish women, placed in a temporary camp (Durchgangslager) in Birkenau. From among them 1,500 women were selected and taken on **September 23** to the camp of Stutthof. On **October 22** were brought 200 Jewish women and around 15 Jews (from the camp hospital), for the night they were left in the bath-house, and on the following day a selection took place, as a result of which 1,765 women were sent to the temporary camp, the remaining were killed in the gas chamber. On **January 17, 1945**, i.e. on the day before the liberation of Cracow, 178 women and two boys – Jews, were brought to Auschwitz, which was already being liquidated.

3.

On **January 18, 1945** Cracow was free from Germans. Gradually began to appear in the city those Jews, who had in various conditions managed to survive the period of extermination. In the first years after the end of World War II the Jewish community in Cracow amounted to about 6,000 persons. Among them were 2,000, who were from Cracow and had lived there before 1939.

Jewish parties and organizations resumed their activity, within the framework of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland.

Religious needs of Jews were satisfied by the Congregation of the Judaic Faith in Poland. For the purpose of religious cult two synagogues were restored: the Temple and Kupa.

In 1948, due to the creation of the state of Israel and the deterioration of East-West relations, general changes took place in the approach of Polish authorities regarding the activity of Jewish Zionist groups. In **November 1949** all Zionist parties in Poland were liquidated. In 1950 the independence of all institutions of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland and its local committees was canceled. In connection with their nationalization ceased foreign material aid for Jews. The Joint withdrew its representative agency. As a result of such moves many activists' and members of Zionist organizations left the country, and in addition also those persons who had close relatives in Israel.

The next wave of emigration of Jews from Cracow and in general from Poland took place in the second half of the 1950s and the peak of departures was in 1957.

The last Jewish emigration wave in the latest history of Poland took place in the years 1968-1969. This was prompted by the breaking of relations with Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967, and directly – by the anti-Zionist campaign unleashed soon afterwards. The phenomenon which yielded the most serious consequences was, that large numbers of young people left at the end of the 1960s. That was the reason why already in the 1970s the Jewish center in Cracow, which amounted at that time to 600 persons (1978), was made up mainly of elderly people.

In Cracow you can find following institutions connected with Jewish social and cultural problems:

Jewish Religious Union in Poland (Związek Religijny Wyznania Mojżeszowego)

The present chairman is **Czesław Jakubowicz**.

Address: Cracow, 2, Skawińska Street; tel. 662 347, 661 756.

Socio-Cultural Society of Jews in Poland - local branch (Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów w Polsce)

The present chairman is **Maurycy Wiener**.

The secretary is **Henryk Halkowski**.

Address: Cracow, 30, Sławkowska Street, tel. 229 841, 333 974, 331 564.

Research Center on Jewish History and Culture in Poland, Jagiellonian University

The director is professor **Józef Gierowski**.

Address: Cracow, 12, Batorego Street, tel. 237 058

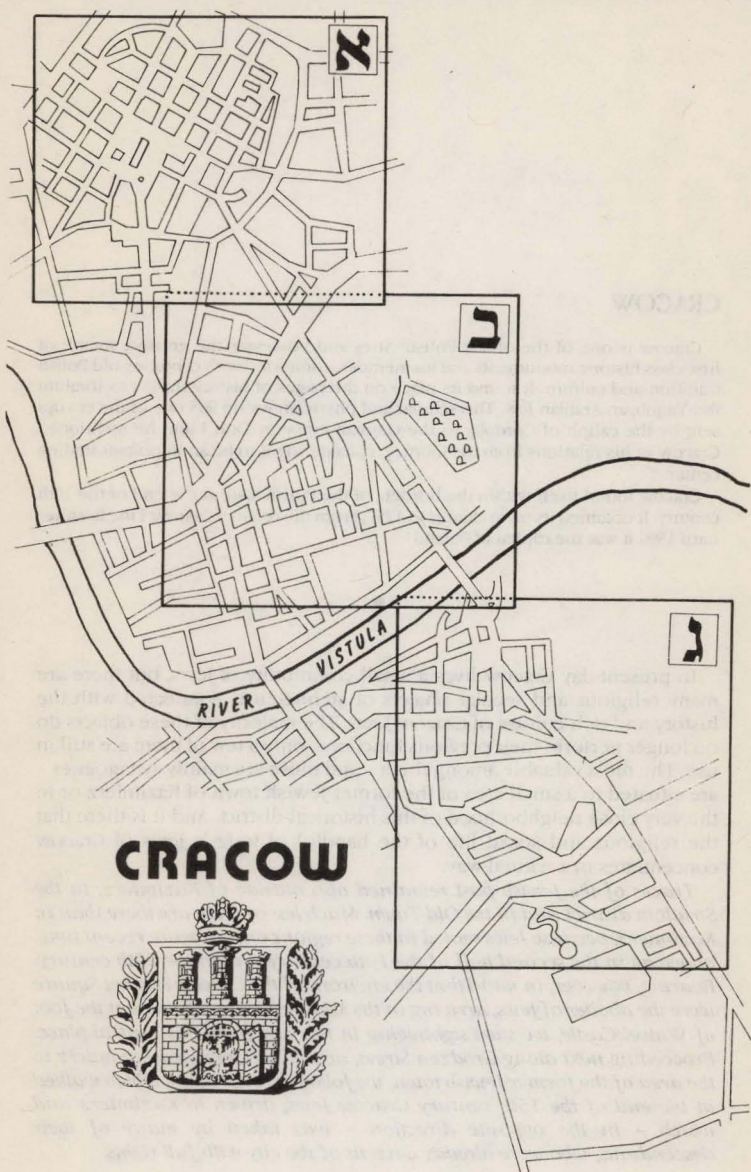
Citizen Committee for the Protection of Jewish Cemeteries and Monuments of Culture in Poland - local branch (Społeczny Komitet Opieki nad Cmentarzami i Zabytkami Kultury Żydowskiej w Polsce)

The present chairman is **Tadeusz Chrzanowski**.

Address: Cracow, 12, Św. Jana Street, tel. 225 398, 335 665.

TRACES
OF JEWISH
PRESENCE

TRACES OF JEWISH PRESENCE



CRACOW

Cracow is one of the oldest Polish cities and possesses the greatest wealth of first-class historic monuments and mementoes, connected with centuries-old Polish tradition and culture. It found its place on the pages of history thanks to Ibrahim ibn-Yaqub, an Arabian Jew. This scholar and physician was in 965 one of the envoys sent by the caliph of Córdoba to the German emperor Otto I and he mentioned Cracow in his relations from the journey, considering it to be an important trading center.

Cracow found itself within the borders of the Polish State at the end of the 10th century. It obtained its town charter in 1257. From the reign of Casimir I the Restorer until 1596 it was the capital of Poland

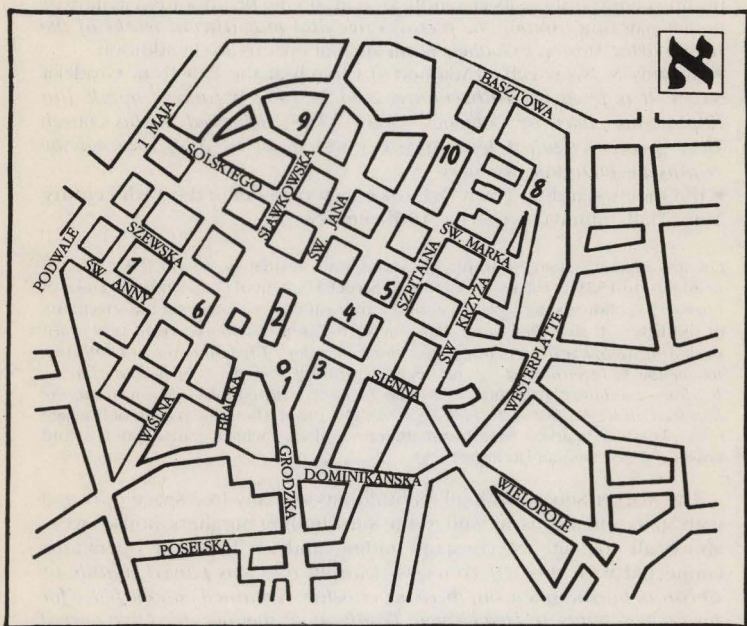
In present-day Cracow lives a small community of Jews, but there are many religious and secular objects of architecture, connected with the history and rich culture of Cracow Jews. The majority of these objects do no longer perform their previous functions, only a few of them are still in use. The most valuable among them – and these are mainly synagogues – are situated in a small area of the former Jewish town of Kazimierz or in the very close neighborhood of this historical district. And it is there that the religious and social life of the handful of today's Jews of Cracow concentrates in a natural way.

Traces of the Jewish past remained also outside of Kazimierz, in the Stradom district and in the Old Town. Much less of them are there than in Kazimierz, because Jews settled in these regions only in more recent time, above all in the second half of the 19th century and in the 20th century. Bearing, however, in mind that the environs of the Cracow Market Square were the abodes of Jews, arriving in the Middle Ages to the town at the foot of Wawel Castle, we start sightseeing in this city from this central place. Proceeding next along Grodzka Street, across Stradom and Kazimierz to the area of the former Jewish town, we follow a road, along which walked at the end of the 15th century Cracow Jews, driven to Kazimierz and which – in the opposite direction – was taken by many of their descendants, who were already citizens of the city with full rights.

WALK



MARKET SQUARE - ST. ANNE'S - JAGIELLOŃSKA -
 MARKET SQUARE - SZPITALNA - MARKET SQUARE -
 GRODZKA - WAWEL HILL - STRADOMSKA - DIETLA.



1. St. Wojciech's (Adalbert's) Church
2. Sukiennice
3. House No. 6, so called "Szara" (grey)
4. Virgin Mary's Church, so called Mariacki
5. House No. 3, "Hipolits House"
6. House, so called, "Pod Baranami"
7. St. Anne's Church
8. Church of the Holy Cross
9. Local branch of TSKŻ
10. "Cyganeria" Cafe

The **Main Market Square** (200×200 m) is the largest and most beautiful square in Cracow. In addition to St. Mark's Square in Venice, it belongs to the most magnificent town planning solutions of this type in the world. This square has for centuries played the role of the city center, throbbing with life. It was laid out in 1257, when **Duke Boleslaw the Chaste** granted it the town charter based on the Magdeburg city charter. The geometrical, checkboard-like arrangement of the Market Square with streets, mainly running at a right angle, is broken up by Romanesque buildings, like the Church of the Virgin Mary, remodeled in its present shape in the years 1392-1397. In this church is i.a. the late Gothic wooden altar, carved by **Wit Stwosz** from Nuremberg in 1477-1489. From the taller tower of this church a bugle call is sounded every hour, transmitted at noon by Polish Radio throughout the country.

In the past the Market Square was densely built up. The Cloth-Hall is standing to this day. This monumental building (in its oldest part in the Romanesque style, remodeled in the 16th century, renovated and put in order in the 19th century), standing in the center of the Market Square is a trading center only in its groundfloor part, on the first floor is a gallery of Polish painting. *Among the pictures are also magnificent works of the Jewish artist Maurycy Gottlieb.* From ancient epochs are in addition:

- the tiny St. Wojciech's (Adalbert's) Church at the exit from Grodzka Street. *It is from the 10th century and in 1454 a fanatic monk, Jan Kapistrano, called by Catholics "God's Whip", delivered in this church fiery speeches against Jews, speeches which, let us add, aroused the required echo among listeners;*
- the lonely standing Town Hall tower, a remainder of the 14th century Town Hall, pulled down in the 19th century.

On this Market Square took place various state festivities, attended by Cracow residents. In 1525, at the exit from **Bracka Street** Albrecht of Hohenzollern, Duke of Prussia, paid homage to King Sigismund I, thus publicly recognizing the suzerainty of the latter. *At that time more than one of the subjects enjoyed royal generosity, including Meir Ezołowicz, a Jew, the main collector of Jewish taxes in Lithuania, whom the king ennobled for his merits, granting him the Leliwa coat of arms. Ezołowicz did not change his Jewish faith, being the only ennobled Jew, who was not baptized, in the history of the First Republic.* The place where the paying of homage took place was marked by a commemorative plaque with the inscription "Hold Pruski 1525", (Prussian Homage 1525).

The Market Square with all its buildings and any free space crowded with stalls and stands, as well as the surrounding burghers' houses were above all the site of constant trading and all kinds of operations connected with this. *Of course, a leading role was played mainly by Christian businessmen, but there nevertheless, remained enough place for Jewish merchants and tradesmen. Traditionally they occupied that part of the Market Square from the Mickiewicz Monument to St. Adalbert's Church, not even mentioning the many shops and store-houses, which they leased from the owners of many burghers' houses at the Market Square itself and adjoining streets. Thus, there were almost always Jewish shops and stores in the house with number 6, called the Gray House, which before had been owned by families of magnates (the Zebrzydowski, Zborowski and Czartoryski). From the mid-19th century this house belonged to the Polonized Jewish family of the Feintuchs, who in 1894 adopted the name of Szarski.*

Their grocery shop had been in this house for over a hundred years (until 1950), and was of such renown, that today's Cracovians never use another definition for this shop, but "u Szarskiego" (at Szarski's).

In various periods in the 17th and 18th centuries Jews had their shops also in the burghers' houses of: the Hipolits, at No. 3, Plac Mariacki, at No. 17, Hetmańska Street, at the Market Square, "Pod Baranami" at the corner of the Market Square and St. Anne's Street, and in addition in no longer existing buildings on the Market Square, namely in the Town Hall and the Municipal Scales.

Before leaving the Market Square it is a must also to pay a visit to **St. Anne's** and **Szpitalna streets**.

St. Anne's Street leads from the Market Square to the university campus. Walking along it we reach **Jagiellońska Street**, where the oldest colleges of the Jagiellonian University are: Collegium Maius, the beginning of which was a house of stone at the corner of both streets, bought for this purpose by King Wladyslaw Jagiello in 1400 (Collegium Maius), after having been overhauled in the years 1949–1964 now houses the University Museum. *At that period the area of St. Anne's Street from the Market Square to the city walls, was occupied by Jewish homes, existing here at least from the second half of the 13th century, intermingled with property belonging to Christians. The thriving University gradually forced out Jewish property. The last of them – including synagogues and other objects of the community – were bought up in 1469, after which Jews moved to the area St. Thomas Street (Now Ludiwk Solski Street) and Szczepański Street, at the north western side of the Market Square.* At the right side of **St. Anne's Street**, in the direction of Planty (park area) is the church under the invocation of St. Anne, built in its present-day shape in 1689–1705, based on a design by Tylman van Gameren. *This is a memorable place, also because it was a special trouble spot, since a pogrom of Cracow Jews started there in 1407, which was in detail described in the Chronicle by Jan Dlugosz and after years commemorated by a special inscription on the charity box in the Old Synagogue in Kazimierz.* From **St. Anne's Street** one reaches **Planty**, which surround the Old Town along the line of the former city walls. *In the Middle Ages there was in this wall, what was called "a Jewish wicket", through which Jews could reach the cemetery, situated on a site, called to this day Kawciory (most probably from the Hebrew word "kevarim" – graves). No traces were left of this cemetery.*

We return to the **Market Square** along **St. Anne's Street**, cross it diagonally, in the direction of the Church of the Virgin Mary and continue to walk towards the **Small Market Square**, to enter at its northern edge **Szpitalna Street**. The street got its name from hospitals for the poor, which still in the 19th century were in the region of Teatr Miejski (Municipal Theater) and the Gothic Church of the Holy Cross. They were torn down in connection with the Theater, built there in the years 1891–1893, based on a design by Jan Zawiejski (a descendant of the aforementioned family of the Feintuchs), who had taken as his model the edifice of the Paris Opera House.

Opposite the Municipal Theater was the "Cyganeria" cafe, which in the years of World War II was set apart exclusively for the use of German officers. On December 22, (or December 24) it became the subject of an attack on the part of the Cracow Group of the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB), led by Juda Lieber. A tablet was mounted into the wall of the building to commemorate this assault. At the same street, at No 24 was, during the interwar period, the well known bet midrash "Abavat Raim", which served as a prayer house for Jews living in the center of the city. The choir of this bet midrash was in the 1930s conducted by the well known Cracow cantor and teacher, Baruch Szperber. In 1947 the building was taken over by the Orthodox parish in Cracow.

During the period between the two world wars Szpitalna Street was one of the most characteristic streets of the city, owing this above all to the great number of second-hand bookshops, belonging to Jews, including such well known persons as the Seiden and Tafel families, who have rendered great services.

Leaving **Szpitalna Street** we once again cross the **Market Square** and enter **Grodzka Street**, which is part of the **Royal Route**, leading across the city to **Wawel Castle**, approached from a broader point of view – it is a small part of the large trading route, connecting Cracow with Wieliczka and Bochnia (salt mine) and with Hungary. Crossing the intersection of **Grodzka Street** and **Dominikański Square** at the left and **Wiosna Ludów Square** at the right, we pass two historic buildings, namely 13th century churches with adjacent monastery buildings, belonging to the Dominican Order (left) and the Franciscan Order (right), and in addition also the palace of the Wielopolskis, where today the city authorities have their headquarters, a fact that is stressed by the monuments to two 19th

century mayors of the city: Józef Dietel and Mikołaj Zyblikiewicz. *Right after the intersection in the backyard of the burghers house at No. 28/30 was during the interwar period a bet midrash, named after its founder, Mordechaj Tigner. It was built in 1913 by Izaak Goldberger and Izrael Messinger. The building exists to this day. After World War II it was for some time used by the Music Theater. At present it is deserted and neglected.*

Continuing along **Grodzka Street**, we pass the following churches: the Baroque Jesuit Church of St. Peter and Paul, the Romanesque Church of St. Andrew (1070–1098) and the Church of St. Martin, belonging to the Evangelical Augsburg parish, which was joined by a considerable number of those Jews, who had decided to be baptized.

In the house at No. 62 existed in the years 1879–1939 a printing house, conducted until 1914 by Józef Fiszer.

The real flourishing of this printing house took place in the 1890s, when Fiszer started at his own cost to publish the periodical "Hazman", edited by Ruben Asher Braudes from Wilno. When this periodical declined (1892) Fiszer called on I.S. Fuchs, the editor of "Hamagid" from Berlin and started to publish this weekly, covering the costs himself (1892–1903). The fame of this printing house soon spread throughout the world. Because of difficulties with censorship in Russia (and the kingdom of Poland), Hebrew periodicals began to be published in Cracow at Fiszer's printing house. Achad Haam (Aszer Ginsburg), the famous Jewish philosopher, arrived for a longer stay in Cracow to print at Fiszer's printing house his monthly periodical "Hashiloach". Peretz came to Cracow quite frequently, to watch over the printing of monthly magazines, published by him. Chaim Nachman Bialik remained in Cracow for a lengthy period. Frishman was printing his works there. This was also true of Mendeley Moche Sfarim, Rawnicki, Dr. Klausner (now professor in Jerusalem, Shalom Aleichem, Sholem Asch and many other Hebrew and Jewish writers came to Fiszer for shorter or longer periods of time in order to work. Gradually all the Hebrew publications moved to Fiszer, such as: Achiasaf, Tusbiya from Warsaw, Moria from Odessa and also the works of scholars from the West, like those of Bacher, Malter from Cincinnati, etc. who were also printing their works here. At Fiszer's the Warsaw preacher Izaak Cylkow also printed his brilliant translation of the Bible into Polish. The period of the flourishing of the printing house ended with the death of Józef Fiszer (1914) and the outbreak of the war (M. Balaban).

*The former Cracow comes to an end at the exit from **Grodzka Street**. It was surrounded by the city walls and at this spot was the Goldsmiths' Gate and the wicket, serving also Jews, on their way from Kazimierz to the Cracow Market Square. Beyond the wall was the suburban settlement of Stradom. From there, from the square with St. Giles' Church (founded in the 11th century and remodeled in the 14th century) unfolds itself the view to the eastern wall of the **Royal Castle on Wawel Hill**.*

A stronghold of the Vislane tribe existed on Wawel Hill at least from the 8th century. Beginning with the 10th century it was one of the duke's residences and from the year 1000 it became the permanent seat of Cracow bishops. From the 11th century came into existence a complex of sacral and secular stone buildings of a defensive character, developed during the Gothic epoch (14th century) and the Renaissance epoch (16th century) and remodeled during the Baroque epoch.

In Wawel vaults are the tombs of Polish kings and meritorious Poles.

It is worth while in connection with Wawel Castle to devote a few words to the most outstanding of Polish sovereigns, Casimir the Great (1310–1370).

Jews also cherished his memory, because he had granted them many privileges (1364, 1367), considering them to be a useful factor speeding up the development of towns and the commodity and financial economy.

Many true and untrue stories were spread about him as is the rule with each outstanding man. One of them, which people think explains his well-disposed attitude towards Jews, mentions the King's love for Esther – the beautiful daughter of a tailor from Opoczno. It is said that Casimir built for her a palace in Łobzowo, situated in the vicinity of Cracow (mentioned too are castles in Bochoznica and in Niepolomice).

He was also supposed to have supported and permitted to bring up in the Jewish faith children born as a result of this relationship, including sons, whom he did not have from his legal marriage. Esther's house in Kazimierz (some maintain even two) was supposed to have been in Kazimierz on 46, Krakowska Street. People also mention an underground corridor which connected it with Wawel Castle. One of the visible signs of this legend is the fact that one of the streets in Kazimierz was named Esther's Street.

Wawel was for Jews an important place. Though kings wielded power over Jews in an indirect way, through the intermediary of voivods, nevertheless in the case of important matters, such as confirmation of general privileges or the necessity to intervene in sudden cases, Jewish delegations, went directly to the king.

From Wawel Hill we walk to Stradom Street.

Stradom was until 1800 a settlement separated from Cracow, though it came under the Cracow municipal council. Later, jointly with Kazimierz and other suburbs it was swallowed up by Cracow. Jews began to settle at Stradom Street only in the mid- 19th century. Earlier they had been forbidden to do so by the authorities of Free Cracow (1815-1846); exceptions existed only for those persons who became assimilated. During the course of the second half of the 19th century the number of Jews living there increased quite rapidly.

At No. 18 stood the house of Salomon Deiches, vice-chairman of the New Religious Community Council, elected for the first time in 1870. The house at No. 22 belonged to the Gumpłowicz family.

The last house on that street (No. 26) belonged to Marcin Feintuch, the protoplast of the Polonized family of the Szarskis (owners of the Gray burghers house on the Market Square of Cracow) and the Zawiejskis.

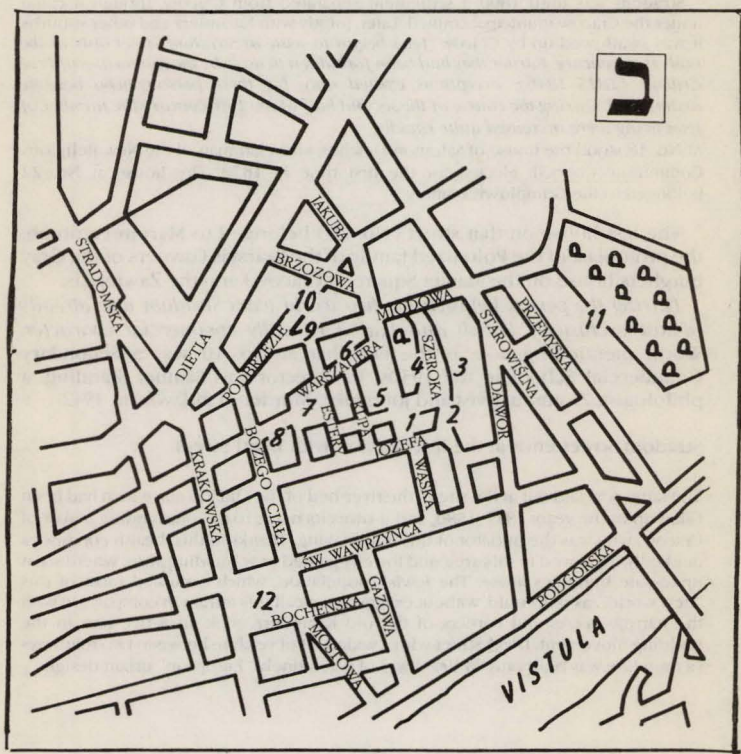
During the period between the two world wars Stradom was already almost exclusively Jewish and had a typically commercial character. Worth mentioning, too, is the fact that at No. 10 was a Secondary Commercial School in the 1930s. Its director was Samuel Standing, a philologist, Zionist activist and journalist. Murdered in Lwów in 1942.

Stradom Street ends at the intersection with Dietl Street.

The latter was laid out at the site of the river bed of the Old Vistula, which had been filled up in the years 1877-1880, and it owes its name to the outstanding mayor of Cracow, who was the initiator of this undertaking. Thanks to this, health conditions markedly improved in this area, and the city gained new building sites, where soon up-to-date buildings arose. The Jewish population, which occupied most of this "new world", as one could, without exaggeration call this terrain in comparison with the narrow nooks and corners of the old Kazimierz, took an active part in the building movement. Dietl Street with a wide belt of verdure between two roadways (a tram line was built only in 1969) was of a genuinely "European" urban design.



DIETLA - STRADOMSKA - KRAKOWSKA - WOLNICA
 SQUARE - KRAKOWSKA - SKAWIŃSKA - WOLNICA
 SQUARE - BOCHEŃSKA - BOŻEGO CIAŁA - JÓZEFA -
 WĄSKA - SZEROKA - CIEMNA - IZAACKA - KUPA - NOWY
 SQUARE - ESTERY - MIODOWA - PODBRZEZIE -
 BRZozowa - MIODOWA - STAROWIŚNA - MIODOWA.



1. Tall synagogue
2. Old synagogue
3. Poper synagogue
4. Remuh synagogue and old cemetery
5. Ajzyk synagogue
6. Kupa synagogue
7. Nowy Square
8. Betmidrash Bnej Euuna
9. Reformed synagogue
10. Hebrew gymnasium
11. New cemetery
12. Wolnica Square

Crossing the intersection at **Dietl Street** and walking on along **Stradom** and **Krakowska streets**, we enter **Kazimierz**.

Recalling what we said before on the subject of the Old Vistula it will be easier to understand the fact that Kazimierz was actually an island, surrounded by the waters of the Vistula and its arms. The town was established in **1335** by Casimir the Great (who gave it his name) on the site of an already existing settlement.

The overwhelming part of Kazimierz belonged to Christian Jews, who most probably were here already in the **14th century**, and a larger number of them who arrived at the end of the **15th century** occupied only one sixth of it. They developed large scale economic activity in Christian Kazimierz only after **1776**, when the Merchants' Guild successfully drove them out of Cracow. Beginning with **1818** they could already without any obstacles settle on the territory of the whole of Kazimierz. During the course of the **19th** and the first decades of the **20th centuries** Kazimierz became transformed, with small exceptions, into a typically Jewish district.

Walking along **Krakowska Street** in the direction of **Wolnica Square**, we therefore pass only houses purchased by Jews. One of the most magnificent of them is at No. **13**, with a Neo-Classical facade, which already at the end of the **19th century** belonged to the family of the **Sussers**. At the groundfloor was during the period between the two world wars Thorn's restaurant.

We reach **Wolnica square** which was the market square of Kazimierz. Considerably cut down in size it had once matched the Cracow square. At any rate its design was similar: with the **Town Hall** in the center and the church situated in one of the corners, which reminded one of the way the Church of the Virgin Mary has been placed in Cracow. The Kazimierz Town Hall is from the **14th century**. In **1830** a state primary school for **Jewish children** was opened there, which in **1837** was turned into an industrial and commercial school. Unfortunately a bas-relief on this building, presenting "Casimir the Great receiving the Jews in Poland" does not longer exist. It was executed by **Henryk Hochman** during the inter-war years, and was destroyed by the Germans during the occupation in **1939-1945**. The Town Hall houses today the Ethnographic Museum.

Not far from there, going along **Krakowska Street** towards the Vistula, we reach **Skawińska Street** which is the prolongation of what marked in the past the southern edge of the Kazimierz market square. In the corner buildings (**2, Skawińska** and **45, Krakowska streets**) is the seat of the **Congregation of the Judaic Faith in Cracow**. This building was erected in **1911** according to a design by **Herman Lamensdorf**.

During the inter war period it was used not only by the Community, but also by several other institutions. In the groundfloor was the **Judaic Library**, named **Ezra**, founded in **1899** by a group of persons, headed by **Dr. Ozjasz Thon**. During the Second World War the collection of books of the library was scattered. On the first floor of the building were the offices of the Community board, and on the second – a large representative room for meetings and the archives. One of the rare volumes in these archives was the **14th century** hand-written Hebrew illuminated Bible (it is now in Israel). The larger part of the building is now occupied by the Clothing Cooperative "Poldam". The board of the Cracow Congregation of the Judaic Faith occupies only part of the rooms on the second floor. In addition to offices there are: a kitchen and dining room, guaranteeing kosher meals for the members of the Congregation.

At No. **8** at that street was in the years **1822-1939 Szpital Izraelski (the Jewish Hospital)**. A general overhaul of the first building of this hospital took place in **1861-1866** on the basis of a design by **Antoni Stacherski** (initiator of the building was **Józef Oettinger**); it no longer exists today in its harmonious, Neo-Classical form. The intensive development of the hospital took place during the inter-war years. Supplied with up-to-date equipment the hospital had also very good personnel. At that time worked there **Maksymilian Blassberg** and **Julian Aleksandrowicz**.

internists; **Adolf Schwarzbart** – laryngologist (author of many scientific works, printed in leading medical periodicals abroad); **Marcel Spitzer** – roentgenologist (author of a work on the subject of cancer, awarded the Józef Piłsudski Prize) and **Bernard Bornstein** – neurologist. During World War II the majority of the personnel of this hospital continues to work in the health service in the ghetto and in the Plaszów camp. Since the end of the war the hospital is used by the municipal health service.

We leave **Skawińska Street** and return to **Wolnica square**, to reach from its southern side **Bocheńska Street**. At No. 4 of that street stands a building erected according to an unknown design, which housed the **Bet Midrash Sherit Bne Emunah** where devout Jews of Kazimierz used to assemble. The building was deserted for many years, but recently it has been renovated and handed over for use to the House of Culture.

There is still one place on that street to which one should pay some attention: the building at No. 7, which from 1926 till 1939 housed the **Jewish Theater** in Cracow.

It was established to a considerable extent thanks to Cracow activists of the "*Bund*" and friends of the Jewish theater (**Mojżesz Kanfer**, **Abraham Seinfeld**, **Fryderyk Freund**, **Maurycy Fiszer**), and also two poets: **Mordechaj Gebirtig** and **Ber Horowitz**. For the inauguration (October 13, 1926) was presented **Alter Kacyzne's** play "**The Duke**", directed by **Jonasz Turkow**, actor and theater director, brought over to Cracow from Warsaw. On the stage of the theater at **Bocheńska Street** guest performances were given by outstanding actors and the best theater troupes of those years. The Wilno troupe played "**Dybbuk**" there and An-ski's "**Day and Night**" and Arcybaszaw's "**Jealousy**". The following actors played there: the famous **Ida Kamińska**, the **Turkows**, **Szymon Dżigan** and **Izrael Schumacher**. In addition the theater had its permanent group of actors, thanks to whom it could for thirteen years in succession amuse and teach its audience, drawing from the abundant resources of Jewish literature. From 1945 the theater at **Bocheńska Street** is in the hands of the amateur theater of railwaymen.

Leaving **Bocheńska Street** we pass along the eastern edge of **Wolnica square**, to its corner where it touches on **Bożego Ciała** and **Św. Wawrzyńca (St. Lawrence) streets**. Here stands the Gothic **Bożego Ciała (Corpus Christi) Church** and monastery buildings, also along **Józefa Street**. We reach it, continuing to walk several score meters along **Bożego Ciała Street**.

Józefa Street was the principal route connecting the Christian with the Jewish Kazimierz. It got its name in commemoration of the stay in Kazimierz of Joseph II, emperor of Austria in Kazimierz. Before that it had the name **Sukiennicza** and afterwards **Żydowska**. The beginning of this street, from **Krakowska Street** to the intersection with **Bożego Ciała Street** did not belong to the Jewish town. It started only from this intersection, and it should be stressed, that this is true only of the 17th century. That was when the area from the northern side of **Józefa** and **Jakuba** streets to **Bożego Ciała streets** were included in the Jewish town.

At the right side of **Józefa Street** stand old monastery buildings (Nos. 9 and 11), which housed the parish school, conducted by the fathers of the Corpus Christi Order. Jews, who wanted to pass along this way to the Christian part of the town or to Cracow, were in the 16th and 17th centuries compelled to pay a certain sum to the school and in addition to give the customary "**kozubalec**" (a payment for a basket with goods taken across) for the school youth, which at any rate was the most frequent cause of noisy street scenes.

The real Jewish town began at the crossing of **Józefa** and **Jakuba streets**. In place of today's house at No. 36 stood still at the end of the 19th century a Renaissance house, erected in 1536 by Giovanni Cini of Siena

and Philip of Fiesole for Jonasz, son of Abraham and which at the turn of the 16th century belonged to the rich Jew Felix. In 1790 it belonged to Eljasz Herszlowicz and the income from it served to support the Tall Synagogue (*Ner Tamid-Eternal Light*).

Among the variety of persons who lived in this place at the turn of the 18th century should be mentioned: Lipman Krengel, the grandfather of Emanuel Krengel, author of the biographical dictionary *Shem Ha-gedolim Ha-sbalem*.

Close to this house was the gate, leading to the Jewish town, watched day and night by guards (*shomre ha-sbaar*), who controlled all those who entered the town. *"Those guards had a difficult job... but the Jewish community also had trouble with them, since they skinned Jewish merchants from other towns and in addition they shut the gate to wedding parties and forced them to pay high fees for letting the bridegroom with the groomsmen and family into the town. In order to avoid this the kahal in its statutes of 1595 established fixed rates to be demanded by the guards of the gates from the bridegroom of another town on the day of the wedding."*

Behind the gate stood one of the oldest synagogues of this district. It exists to this day. It now houses a Historical Monuments Restoration Workshop. We have in mind here the Tall Synagogue, at No. 38. It was built between 1556 and 1563. It is not known whether this was a private foundation or whether the Community founded it. Its name comes from the large prayer room on the first floor. The groundfloor was occupied by shops (today store-rooms), and one reached the prayer room over the staircase from the neighboring house (No. 40).

One finds the closest example of a similar architectural solution in Prague. That building which is also called the Tall Synagogue was built in 1568 close to the Jewish Town Hall and served first as a prayer house for the members of the Prague kahal.

During the Nazi occupation of 1939-1945 the synagogue was completely looted of all its valuable objects of cult. The building fell into disrepair over the course of many years, also after the end of the Second World War. In 1966 it was rebuilt and adapted to the needs of the Historical Monuments Restoration Workshop.

In the vestibule of No. 40, close to the staircase leading to the first floor, has been placed a restored, Late Renaissance charity box, which to begin with was at the western side of the wall, inside the prayer house. From the first floor of this house one enters the former porch of the synagogue and from there the prayer house. This room was covered by a typical Renaissance barrel vault with lunettes, adorned, as well as the walls with stucco decorations. The former interior exists no longer. A modest remainder is only the well preserved aron ha-kodesh at the eastern wall, near the entrance to the large room. There is no dais in front of it, nor are there any wooden, carved or polychromed doors, closing the repository for the scrolls of the Torah (on which there were the signatures of the executors: Zelman and Chaim, sons of Aron). Of the former wall paintings conservators managed to save only a detail of a 19th-century wall-painting, preserved between the windows of the southern wall. These are colorful Hebrew inscriptions, among which is the characteristic verse from the "Genesis" (28:17): *How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. Concealed in this verse is a chronogram, revealing the date of the painting and recalling the fact that the Tall Synagogue was thoroughly renovated in 1863.*

The next interesting object at this street is No. 42, a one-floor building, which from the beginning of the 19th century was the seat of the bet midrash Kovea Itim l'Torah. On the facade of the building is the Hebrew name of the brotherhood in charge of the prayer house and two Stars of David carry Hebrew dates: of foundation (1810) and renovation (1912). At present this is a dwelling house.



The Tall Synagogue

Houses with odd numbers at the end of **Józefa Street**, have been torn down (with the exception of the building at **Wąska Street**) at the beginning of the 1970s. They made up a characteristic funnel-shaped exit of **Józefa Street** in the direction of the **Old Synagogue**, where they turned to the right to what was called **Bawół Square**. In the last house at **Józefa Street** (No. 33) was the oldest Hasidic Jewish prayer house in the town, founded in 1815 (sic!) by **Kalman Epstein**, named after his son **Aron** – the **Reb Aron Klaus**

09 The exit from **Szeroka Street** is closed by the **Old Synagogue**. We turn left and enter **Szeroka Street**.

Szeroka Street was until the 18th century called **High Street** (in Yiddish **Hoykhegass**) and is actually an extensive square shaped like a rectangle, closed by the **Old Synagogue** at the southern edge and by what is called "the house of the **Jordans**" at the northern edge. The longer sides of this rectangle are the eastern and western sides of the street, lined by serried ranks of buildings. An exception is here the western side from **Miodowa Street**, where rises the stone wall surrounding the **Remuh Synagogue** and the old Jewish cemetery.

For centuries Szeroka Street served as the central square of the former Jewish town. During the period between the two world wars and the first years after World War II it was one of the busiest trading places for junk-dealers in Cracow.

At Szeroka Street are the most precious Jewish historic monuments in Cracow: the Remuh Synagogue, the old Jewish cemetery and the Old Synagogue, which houses at present a museum devoted to Jewish culture.

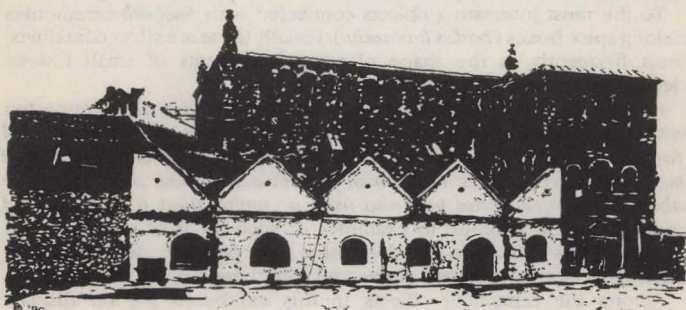
Let us first have a look at the Old Synagogue.

It was built in the second half of the 15th century. Up to the mid-16th century it was made up of the main hall and several ground-floor annexes: the porch from the north-western side, the kahal and ancillary rooms from the western side and a small building, adjoining the main hall from the southern side.

After a fire in 1557 it was rebuilt by the architect Mateo Gucci. Reconstruction work came to an end only in 1570, when the building received Renaissance interior decoration and its solid external form was shaped in accordance with the spirit of the time, when it was important for buildings to have attics, protecting the roof against fire. In the second half of the 16th or at the beginning of the 17th century was still added a prayer house for women (along the entire northern wall of the synagogue). In the 17th and 18th century the Old Synagogue became the subject of much remodeling and various repairs and overhaul. It was also remodeled and renovated in the 19th century. During an overhaul in 1860 the interior of the Old Synagogue received new wall paintings, details of which have been preserved to this day. The shape of roofs over various parts of the synagogue was changed in 1888, and two entries from Szeroka Street to the women's section were given Gothic portals. The Old Synagogue was remodeled again at the beginning of the 20th century – first in 1904 and next in 1913 – according to designs by Zygmunt Hendel, a famous Cracow architect. As a result of reshaping work, conducted at that time the body of the building as well as its surroundings underwent changes. According to designs from that period the level of the terrain around the synagogue was in 1923 lowered to that of the 15th century. That same year the synagogue Board carried out still another intention, namely the remodeling of porches of the frontal annex. The remodeled rooms housed a small museum, where until 1939 were kept historical objects of religious cult and documents.

In September 1939 the Germans turned the Old Synagogue into a store house. Historical relics were confiscated by SS-men in December 1939. Later the store house was closed down and the building was looted, all metal and wooden details were taken away.

An act of German vandalism was the purposeful, vicious removal from this beautiful, historic building... of its Gothic vaulting, as well as both columns and to leave this demolished architectural relic to become the victim of the antics of mobs, people who turned this sanctuary of religious cult and magnificent monument of culture into a latrine.



The Old Synagogue

After the war, in years 1956-1959, the Old Synagogue was rebuilt on the basis of documentation, prepared by J. Jamroz and J. Ptak. The conception of the designers provided for the reconstruction of the object in a Gothic-Renaissance style, as it had been given to it in the 16th century by Mateo Gucci, at the same time fully respecting the characteristic layers of styles of later epochs. Thanks to the excellent quality of building work conducted at that time, and above all the precise reconstruction of stone and metal architectural details (which apparently had been destroyed for ever), the Old Synagogue regained its former brilliance. Still during the course of work, on January 13, 1958, the building was destined to serve as a Museum of the History and Culture of Jews, as a branch of the Cracow History Museum. The Old Synagogue performs this function at present, too. A permanent exhibition has been arranged here, presenting part of the Judaic collections, which the Museum has been gathering since 1958.

On display are today in the ground-floor building historic craft objects, which had in the past been used during religious ceremonies in synagogues and at homes, and also paintings and graphic art, illustrating Jewish customs.

In the rooms at the first floor, atop the synagogue porch, is an exposition, presenting the Jewish district in Kazimierz in the 19th and 20th centuries and the fate of Cracow Jews during the period of the Nazi occupation in 1939-1945.

But it is not the exhibits which make the biggest impression when one enters the Old Synagogue. What is striking above all is the beauty of the architecture of the high hall covered with late Gothic sexpartite vault ribbing, supported by two slender columns, between which arises the open-work structure of the bimah. At the eastern side is the aron ha-kodesh, framed by a Late Renaissance stone portal, topped by a plaque with the image of a crown and the following Hebrew inscription below: "*By me kings reign*". (Proverbs 8, 15). The Old Synagogue has a two-nave system, typical of medieval synagogues, which indicates close kinship with synagogues built earlier in Worms (1034), Regensburg (in the 12th century, destroyed in 1519), Prague (the turn of the 13th century) and in Eger (1375, after 1430 turned into a church).

Synagogue relics from the collection of the Museum are on display in the southern annex of the Old Synagogue. These are the scrolls of the *Torah* jointly with the fabrics and silver, serving as its decoration: *crowns, breastplates, rimmonim and various specimens of the yadaim*. In addition to this are also displayed such liturgical objects as *tallitim* and *teffilin*. An exhibition in the extensive northern women's section illustrates the most important Jewish holidays and ceremonies, those which are of a cyclical nature in the calendar, as well as those which are connected with the most important turning points in the life of every human being.

To the most interesting objects connected with *Sabbath* ceremonies belong spice boxes (*badas li-vsamim*). Usually these are silver containers, most frequently in the shape of several segments of small towers, decorated with tiny bells and small flags.

A very large collection of most original dishes and utensils is connected with *Pesab* (*Passover*). Most characteristic are above all *porcelain and faience plates with six hollows for seder dishes and embroidered small bags with three pockets, into which matzot are slipped. In place of the above-mentioned plates was also used a combination of a plate and matzah bag*. In addition to examples of such kinds of dishes are on display in this exhibition also decorative *seder plates*, made of silver and adorned with artistic scenes, connected with these holiday traditions.

Among the remaining objects in this exhibition are on display: *shofarot*, the sound of which announces *Yamin Nora'im* (High Holy Days) and boxes for an etrog, brought to the synagogue together with a bouquet of lulav during the *Sukkot holidays*; *Hanukkah candle-holders and oil lamps, illuminated Megillat Ester parchment scrolls*, contained in silver, solid or open-work containers of a cylindrical shape, and also *mezuzah* cases.

In the first exhibition hall on the first floor of the Old Synagogue is an exposition, devoted to the Jewish district of Kazimierz. The pictures and photographs on display there are an artistic vision and documentation of the world of Cracow Jews, that is no more. In the last exposition hall are exhibits, devoted to the extermination of Cracow Jews in the years of the Nazi occupation in 1939-1946. This tragic period in the history of Jews is shown here mainly with the help of documentary photographs and German instructions, kept in the collections of the Museum and related to the Jewish population. Such instructions were published from September 1939, they constitute a very precise record of the successive stages in the annihilation of Jews in Cracow and the entire General Government. The exhibition also displays artistic works, reminiscences of occupation experiences. Shown is here a collage by **Jonasz Stern**, the well-known Cracow artist, entitled "Humiliation" as well as a sculpture by **Danuta Łaskawska** from Cracow, called by the author: "In commemoration of Polish Jews".

The Old Synagogue was not only the center of Jewish religious life but also a center of the kahal authorities of rabbis and seniors of the Jewish town. "Wedding ceremonies were performed in its courtyard and orders given by kings, voivods and kahal seniors were read on its bimah, also curses were cast there against recalcitrant citizens. The community gathered here in times of weal and woe and from there they sent their prayers to the Lord, when the plague was approaching or when drought threatened to cause bad crops and hunger". Tadeusz Kościuszko, the leader of the 1794 Insurrection, addressed the Jews from the bimah of this synagogue, calling of them actively to support the rising against the partitioning powers in 1794. Patriotic speeches addressed to Jews were also delivered there by Maurycy Krzepicki, of the Orthodox Jewish Committee (1846) and Rabbi Ber Meisels, the famous Cracow and Warsaw rabbi (1848).

The tradition that important persons paid a visit to this synagogue, was also kept up during the interwar period. Thus, in 1931 Cracow Jews received there Ignacy Mościcki, the President of the Republic.

There exist many old folk legends about the Old Synagogue. *One legend refers to the old age of the building, according to which Jews received permission to erect it from King Casimir the Great, who in addition offered swords to the synagogue, so that they may be recast as candleholders. In order to show their gratitude for the gift and not offend the pride of the sovereign, the Jews hung up the swords for some time inside the synagogue. They did so despite the fact that these swords were adorned with angels which means that they did not take into consideration Jewish tradition.*

One of the traditions of the Old Synagogue was an original ceremony on simbat Torab. In the 18th century, precisely on that holiday, when all Jews had gathered in synagogues, Cracow students forced their way into the town, shrouded in darkness, most probably hoping to obtain ransom. The students stormed the Old Synagogue at the very moment when the Jews for the fourth time had circled round the bimah with the Torab. The ceremony was interrupted and the Jews hurriedly passed the scrolls to each other, in order to hide them in the holy ark. Unfortunately it is not known how this incident ended. Perhaps, as legend has it, there were some contributions made, because a habit had been established in the Old Synagogue to interrupt the procession around the bimah on Simbat Torab in the middle of the fourth encirclement, after which the Jews usually sit in turned over benches, as is the use in time of mourning during the fast of Tish ah be-Av, and after the mourning prayers have been said the ceremony continues.

A more universal tradition, undoubtedly known in connection with several synagogues, was the habit, introduced during evening prayers, testifying to strong ties connecting Jews with the souls of their dead ancestors. In this synagogue the shammas entered the bimah, turned to all the sides of the world, bowed and said in Yiddish: "Excuse me gentlemen". These words were directed to the souls of the dead, who according to folk beliefs filled the synagogue after twilight. The shammas asked them in this way to forgive the disturbance of their peace and asked them temporarily to give way to the living persons and let them say their prayers.

After leaving the Old Synagogue let us also pay attention to its surroundings. The marble monument on the courtyard is to

commemorate the death of 30 Poles, shot in front of the synagogue by the Nazis in 1943. Behind the memorial is a reconstructed detail of the town walls surrounding Kazimierz, permitting to imagine where the **Old Synagogue** was placed inside the medieval town. Behind the wall, though the exact site is unknown, was the first Jewish cemetery of Kazimierz.

The house at No. 22, where one floor had been added in the 19th century, are the remnants of much more densely built up terrains. In the 17th and 18th centuries they belonged to the Jekeles family. One of them, namely **Mojżesz Jekeles**, brother of the better known **Izaak** (called the "rich" one, who was the founder of a large synagogue, named after him **Ajzyk's synagogue**), set up a small prayer house here for his son-in-law, **Rabbi Natan Nata Spira**. **Rabbi Spira** was more inclined to studies of the mystical Kabbalah and he taught in this spirit in his prayer-house. He presented his teachings also in the well-known work, the title of which, *Megillat Amukot*, was universally used. He was undoubtedly an outstanding personality, since the Community entrusted him with the function of rector of the local yeshivah (in the years 1617-1633). The epitaph on the old cemetery also mentions the fact that **Rabbi Spira** was chairman of the rabbinical court in Cracow, though not all historians agree that this was so.

Starting from the **Old Synagogue** we take a short walk along **Szeroka Street**, going first along houses on the right (eastern) side.

Though these houses have to a considerable extent only a short history, nevertheless the foundations of most of them testify to their existence of several hundred years.

The first three of them were built during the past few years, in place of completely neglected houses from the postwar period. The house at No. 18 was in the past called the rabbis' house, since at the end of the 18th century **Rabbi Izaak Lewita** lived there (chief rabbi of the Community and rector of the yeshivah in 1776-1799), and after him his son, **Rabbi Hirsz David Lewita** (chief rabbi of the Community in 1816-1832). both were fierce opponents of Hasidism, the best proof of which was the curse cast by **Rabbi Izaak Lewita** on Hasidim in 1786 and once again – in 1797.

We pass the house at No. 17, supported by buttresses (from the 16th century) and reach the gate of No. 16, inside which is the 17th century building of **Bociana (Storch's) Synagogue**. Being separated from **Szeroka Street** by a deep backyard, closed by a gate, it is better visible from the side of **Dajwór Street**, at which arises its eastern wall with two tall windows of the prayer house.

This synagogue was erected in 1620 by **Wolf Bocian**, one of the richest merchants and financiers of that time. Unfortunately to our days have been preserved only the walls of this synagogue. After the end of World War II it remained deserted until 1965. It is now used as a House of Culture. Information about the no longer existing interior decoration of the object can only be found in prewar guidebooks of Jewish historical monuments of Cracow, written by **M Bałaban** and **Ozjasz Mahler**.

In the western side of the building was a vestibule and atop it a gallery for women. The walls and the barrel vault of the prayer house were decorated with wall paintings, the work of the artist **Schonker**. "*The 17th-century bimah is a specimen of beautiful craftsmanship. The aron ba-kodesh has beautifully carved door-frames, made of oak*", wrote **O. Mahler**. "*On them we see woods, small houses and among them those four animals (lion, eagle, stag and panther), symbolizing man's skill and strength, whose aim is to reach God and achieve his perfection*" – adds **M. Bałaban** in his conclusion.

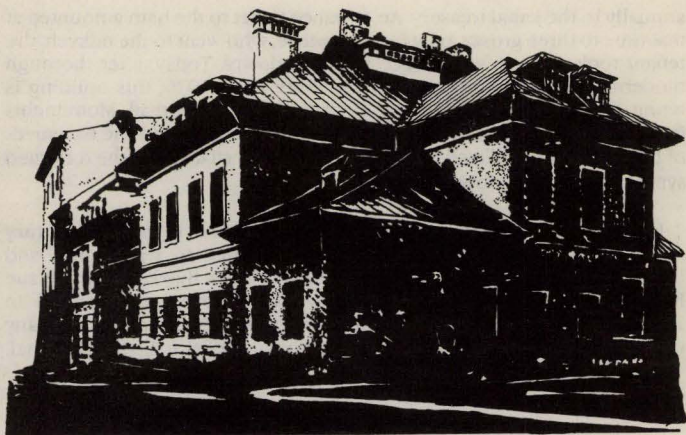
The last of these buildings (No. 6) at the side of **Szeroka Street**, housed from the 16th century the community bath house and the mikveh. The bath house, was called the big one, to distinguish it from the small one, which was near **Nowy Square**. The tenant of this bath house was in 1806 **Jekele Felczer**, called Doctor, and he paid for it 831 Polish zloties

annually to the kahal treasury. An entrance ticket to the bath amounted at that time to three groszy, only from a fiancée, who went to the mikveh, the tenant took a fee in accordance with her dowry. Today, after thorough modernization and adaptation in the years 1974-1976, this building is being occupied by the Cracow branch of the Historical Monuments Restoration Workshop. Relics from the mikveh are kept in the basement of this object. The mikveh which is now in use is attached to the reformed synagogue (24, Miodowa Street).

Houses at the northern edge of Szeroka Street were in the 17th century six separate objects. At that time they belonged to well-known and influential notables of Jewish life of the town. There lived i.a. **Rabbi Jozue Heszel** (chief rabbi of the Community and rector of the yeshivah in 1654-1663) and the physician **Samuel Kac** from Padua, who was for many years in the first half of the 17th century senior of the Kazimierz kahal.



The Storch's (Bociana) Synagogue



The mikveh

Three of the central tenement houses were in the 18th century turned into one house. At that time over a dozen families lived there. Beginning with the 19th century it was the property of the large and influential *Landau* family, whose representative was i.a. the lawyer *Rafał Landau*, the last chairman of the Cracow Jewish Community.

Sometimes this burghers' house was called court of the Jordans and was connected with the knight *Spytek* of *Melsztyn*, but that was not correct. As recently conducted research revealed, the court of the Jordans was in another region of *Kazimierz*. Today's owner of this building is the Cracow branch of the Historical Monuments Restoration Workshop.

Part of the northern section of *Szeroka Street* is a small square with many trees. According to tradition (*so far not confirmed by historians and above all not by archaeologists*) this was the site of the oldest cemetery of *Kazimierz Jews*. At the northern edge of the present square stood in the 18th century a hospice for the poor, torn down at the beginning of the 19th century. That is known for sure. It is also true that the place, we are talking about, was until World War II surrounded by a tall wall. Were the dead also buried there?

Real to some extent is also the legend, connected with this place and weddings on Fridays, which was binding in the one-time Jewish *Kazimierz*. In the 16th century, at the time of Rabbi *Mojżesz Isserles*, called *Remuh*, in a house situated on the site we have in mind, took place on a certain Friday the wedding of the daughter of the owner of this building. Entertainment, combined with music, lasted until the late evening hours, violating the sacred character of what was by then already *Shabbat*. Since the guests of the wedding party did not react to appeals to interrupt the amusement, people turned to the rabbi to intervene in a determined way. When his appeal also remained without effect, the angered rabbi cast a curse on the sinners, who – together with the entire house and all the possessions – were swallowed by the earth.

Connected with the afore-mentioned Rabbi *Mojżesz Isserles* is the *Remuh Synagogue* together with the old Jewish cemetery (40, *Szeroka Street*).

The synagogue and cemetery cover only a small area, amounting to no more than 4.5 hectares (1 ha = 2.471 acres), situated between the streets:

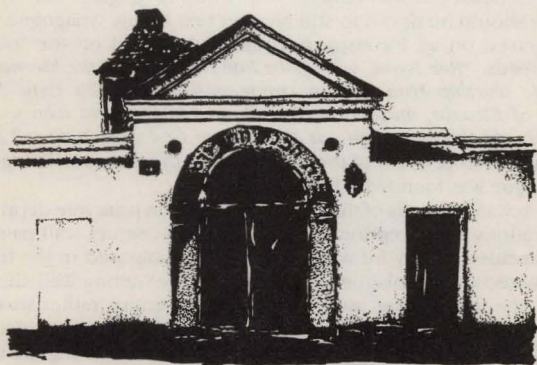
Miodowa, Jakuba, Ciemna, its bystreet (the former Lewkowa Street), running behind the houses lining Szeroka Street and finally Szeroka Street itself.

This is a unique complex of relics of Jewish architecture and sacral art, reaching back to the mid-16th century and constituting today the very center of the religious life of Cracow Jews. Divine service takes place there on Saturdays and High Holy Days, and the cemetery is visited by distant descendants of the dead buried here and by pious Jews, who want to pray at the graves of famous Cracow rabbis. As was the case years ago, also today, the largest number of pilgrims from distant parts of the entire world come to the old cemetery on the 18th of Iyyar (April – May) – at the anniversary of the death of Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles (Remuh), the rabbi to whom most homage is paid.

Visible from Szeroka Street is only the characteristic upper part of the synagogue with the semi-circular window at the eastern side and the low pyramid of the hip-roof. The lower part is hidden by the wall and gate (with the Hebrew inscription: "New Synagogue of the late Rabbi Remuh"), leading to a small internal backyard. Only after opening a wicket door, can one see the rather slender body of the synagogue and the lower, adjoining one-storey-high northern annex with a porch and auxiliary buildings.

This synagogue, which after the Old Synagogue is the second in the Jewish town, was therefore at the beginning called the New Synagogue. It was erected in 1553 at the eastern edge of a building lot, bought at that time by the Jewish Community to lay out a cemetery there. It was founded by Izrael ben Józef (called Izrael Isserl), the grandson of Rabbi Mojżesz Auerbach from Regensburg, and the father of Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles. Taking into account the rather small size of the building it probably served as a prayer house for a narrow group of family members and friends of the founder. To begin with, the women's section was on the upper floor of the synagogue. At present it is on the ground floor and was built at the beginning of the 19th century.

In 1933 the synagogue was subjected to through renovation. Work was directed by the architect Herman Gutman. He changed the roof, covering the building, into a hip roof, provided the interior of the prayer house with a sham barrel arch and modernized the northern annexes.



The entrance to the Remuh Synagogue

During the Nazi occupation the synagogue was looted, all liturgical objects were taken away, together with the entire furnishings of its interior. After the end of the war it was for some time used by the fire brigade. After 1957 it was reconstructed, together with the cemetery and other historic monuments of Jewish culture in Cracow. The reconstruction was financed by the Joint and Cracow authorities. Commissioned by the Jewish Religious community the architect **Stefan Świszczowski** directed the rebuilding of the synagogue. The state in which the building is today is mainly due to the postwar reconstruction, during which efforts were made to restore the former silhouette of the synagogue and the Late Baroque interior decoration.

In the vestibule is simple, up-to-date furniture: a table, bench, bookshelf for prayer books and volumes with codes. Mounted on the wall of the vestibule is a plaque, commemorating the anniversaries of the death of members of the congregation. On the door jamb, leading to the prayer house is a stone money-box for alms with the Hebrew inscription: *"gold, and silver, and brass"* (Exodus 35, 5) and an inscription, in commemoration of **Rabbi Remuh**. The central part of the prayer house under its vaulting is occupied by the bimah, placed on a low dais, surrounded by an open-work, wrought-iron grating, which is a copy of the grating, destroyed during World War II. The carved, two-wing door of the bimah has been taken to another synagogue, probably outside of Cracow.

The Baroque, symmetrically distributed decoration of the door from the early 18th century, presents at the external side a jug, with a luxuriant tangle of branches with leaves, flowers and fruit, and at the inner side are three vertical fields – a basket with flowers and fruit, a couple of jugs, standing on bowls and a menorah with burning candles and a crown atop. At the eastern wall is the Aron ha-kodesh, closed by an Art Nouveau door, covered with a curtain with lambrequin. As a frame for the Aron ha-kodesh serves a stone portal with double pilasters at the sides, the capitals of which are supported by interrupted moulding inscriptions: *"Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and bless the people Israel"* (Deuteronomy 26, 15) and *"By me kings reign"* (Proverbs 8, 15), the overdoor is crowned with a bas-relief with tablets of the Decalogue. On the outer pilaster at the left side of the Aron ha-kodesh hangs a small case for the eternal light (Ner Tamid) with the inscription: *"Eternal light for the soul of the blessed memory of Rabbi Remuh"*. At the right side of the Aron ha-kodesh, atop a row of chairs, standing at the eastern wall, has been mounted a plaque (partly reconstructed) with the following text: *"We assume that the late Rabbi Remuh has been standing here, saying his prayers and telling the Eternal about his sorrows"*. Traditionally, one of the chairs beneath this wall remains empty during religious service.

Attention should be drawn to still another text in this synagogue. It has been engraved on an inconspicuous tablet, mounted on the southern wall and reads: *"Reb Israel, son of the late Józef whom the Eternal gave strength to worship Him and in commemoration of his wife, Malka, daughter of Eleazar, may her soul be bound to life, and who used her legacy to build this synagogue as a House of God. May the Lord award Israel"*. In the Hebrew text of the inscription is the date, indicating when the synagogue was founded – 1553.

The whitewashed walls of the prayer house are in principle deprived of any decorations. An exception are only the 20th-century wall paintings, atop the arcaded gallery for women. They are composed in the form of three small rectangular plaquettes, presenting: the Wailing Wall, the grave of Rachel, the first mother, and Noah's Ark. The entire, rather small and intimate interior is furnished with benches and book-rests, placed in several rows at both sides of the bimah and single rows along the walls.

Directly behind the synagogue is the area of the old cemetery of the Cracow Jewish Community. From the small internal square in front of the synagogue leads a small gate through the wall of the cemetery. A tablet

atop this small gate informs that *"this is the old cemetery, the place of eternal rest of ga'ons, founded by the kahal in 5331", i.e. 1551 A.D.*

In Poland have been preserved only very few relics of Jewish sepulchral art, older than those of the Cracow cemetery. To these belong relics from the turn of the 12th century in Wrocław, and also tombstones from the 1540s at the Lublin cemetery, laid out in 1540, i.e. eleven years before the Cracow necropolis.

The old cemetery was closed in 1800. Despite the fact, that since that time existed already the new cemetery, situated outside built up areas of Kazimierz at that time, nevertheless the dead were still – though sporadically – buried at the old cemetery before the end of the first half of the 19th century. Thus, **Abraham Chaim**, son of **Rabbi Ber Meisels**, first Cracow and later Warsaw rabbi, was buried at the old cemetery in 1843. during the period of the free city of Cracow (1816-1846) it was planned to reduce the area of the cemetery to be used for new municipal investment projects, but fortunately – due to the determined opposition of the afore-mentioned **Rabbi Ber Meisels** – this idea was not put into practice. This was true above all of the tombstones of outstanding personalities. But despite this care it was in the 1930s in a rather bad state. During the period of the Nazi occupation the cemetery was finally ruined: the tombstones were shattered, the cemetery wall taken down. The area, devastated in such a way, became a dumping ground. After the end of the war, there remained at the cemetery no more than over a dozen tombstones, also including the tombstones of **Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles**. In the 1940s the Jewish Community still had a number of new monuments made, to replace the destroyed old tombstones of well-known Cracow rabbis. Archaeological excavations were conducted on the cemetery in 1959. At that time hundreds of stone tombstones and their bits and pieces were found. As a result of this undertaking over 700 tombstones were erected anew. Many of the shattered details, which could not be used for reconstruction were walled up in the internal wall of the cemetery enclosure from the side of **Szeroka Street**. It should be clearly stressed that the overwhelming majority of the tombstones are not standing on their former place. For this reason, and also for some other reasons, mainly connected with conservation, this historic monument should be considered a Jewish collection of stones and stone fragments rather than a cemetery *sensu stricto*.

Generally speaking, one could divide the cemetery area into three sectors:

- Sector I – beginning at the entrance, made up of the ten first rows
- Sector II – made up of nine of the next rows, running from the western wall of the synagogue up to the middle of the cemetery in the direction of the Street
- Sector III – including the remaining rows, characterized by the fact that these tombstones face the west, i.e. the opposite direction then tombstones in sectors I and II

In sector II, in the south-eastern part of the cemetery is a fair-sized hill, towering some 4.5 meters over the remaining part of the terrain, which is completely deprived of any tombstones. At the foot of this hill and in the neighborhood of the western wall of the synagogue is the largest group of the oldest tombstones, from the second half of the 16th century. In addition tombstones from the 16th century can be found in the remaining sectors as well; 17th-century tombstones are mainly in sectors II and III, and 18th-century ones – in sector I. 19th-century tombstones are exclusively in sector I. There is quite a number of them, but some of

them arrived here only after World War II, brought over here from the new cemetery at Miodowa Street.

The oldest, **16th-century** tombstones on this cemetery are tall, massive slabs, almost without any ornamentation, with convex inscriptions, occupying almost their entire surface, which is slightly hollow and surrounded by a rectangular, slightly sectional frame. Straight stone borders separate, with horizontal lines, various verses in large square Hebrew letters. Tombstones of a later period, as a rule in the form of a sarcophagus, are marked by considerable differentiation of form and rich ornamentation, the style of which is connected with Cracow artistic stonework. Inside the frame of the inscriptions, on vertical frontal slabs, adjoining the sarcophagus, appear pilasters, Renaissance plaiting and plant motifs, and on the enlarged pediments – ogees, phantastic dolphins, clasped together by their tails, stylized fruit and flowers, cartouche ornaments, etc.

These sarcophagi, to begin with low tombs, deprived of ornaments, in the shape of half a cylinder, cut lengthwise – became with the passage of time taller, bipartite, with a base in the form of a rectangular box. In the **17th century** appeared on their walls square rosettes, made up of four leaves of the acanthus. But in the **18th century** profuse festoon ornaments, made up of fruit and flowers and convex fleshy, wheel-like rosettes became a quite typical decorative motif of the lower parts of the sarcophagi. At the same time the technique of making these inscriptions underwent changes. In place of the convex inscriptions so far in use, now appeared concave ones, letters became taller and texts were more condensed.

From the very beginning a constant element of tombstone decorations were various symbolical presentations, mainly of a religious, but also secular nature, related directly to the deceased. To the most frequent belong the spread out palms of the chaplain's hands, in the characteristic gesture of blessing and images of pitchers with bowls – connected with the functions of Levites. Side by side with these symbols existed many others, such as the constellation (Fish, Capricorn, Salamander), images of animals (lions, stags, birds), plants and a variety of objects. To secular and non-Jewish symbols belonged scissors on the tombstone of a tailor or the Aesculapian sign of the serpent on the tombstone of a physician.

On the tombstones from the **18th and 19th centuries**, the motifs of stylized decorations become much more modest. More widespread, however, are symbolic presentations (especially on **19th-century** historic tombstones), and these are not only related to the person of the deceased (like a goose feather and an open book, signifying a writer), but rather relate to a more general meaning of death (a broken tree, a broken candle).

Buried in the **first sector** of the cemetery are:

- **Lewek Landau**, died in 1632, merchant; son of Jekutiel Zelman, senior of the Diet of the Four Lands, (**6th tombstone, row 1**);
- **Rabbi Eliezer Damask** (1772–1847), Cracow dayyan, author of responses "Avnei Kodesh" (**1st tombstone, row 6**);
- **Rabbi Izaak Landau**, Levite, chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community and rector of the local yeshivah in the years 1754–1768 (**5th tombstone, row 8**).

Special attention should be drawn in the **second sector** above all to the first row of tombstones, adjoining the western side of the synagogue. Here found eternal rest in the plot fenced off by a small iron hand-rail:

- **Rabbi Mojżesz' Isserles Remuh** (around 1525–1572) – the central tombstone; and
- **Miriam**, his sister, died in 1617;
- **Izrael Isserl**, his father, died in 1568;
- **Izaak**, his brother, died in 1585;
- **Rabbi Józef Kac**, his brother-in-law, author of responses “*Sherit Joseph*”, died in 1591.

In addition, at the left side, almost touching the railing, rests the grandmother of **Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles**, **Gitel**, died in 1552, but at the opposite side, slightly deeper inside – **Rabbi Mordechaj Saba**, called **Singer**, who was rector of the Cracow yeshivah from 1572 until his death, in 1576.

Buried in the same row, where the grave of **Rabbi Mojżesz Isserles** is, are in addition:

- **Rabbi Mojżesz Enzels**, chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community in the years 1688–1694;
- **Rabbi Mordechaj Deiches**, chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community after **Rabbi Enzels** in the years 1694–1706, both have one common tombstone with the characteristic crown at the frontal part:
- **Rabbi Natan Nata Spira** (1583–1633), rabbi, rector of the Cracow yeshivah in 1617–1633, author of the work *Megale Amukot*, published in Cracow, already after the death of Rabbi Spira, in 1637. Buried at his side was his wife **Róża** and his daughter **Dobrosz**. Both died in 1642.

Buried in other rows of the second sector are:

- **Rabbi Eliezer Aszkenazy** (1512–1585) who was rabbi in Cairo, in Famagusta, Cyprus and in Poznań. At the end of his life he settled in Cracow, he was a physician and scholar, author of the book *Ma'aseb Ha-Shem*;
- **Rachel**, the wife of the latter, who survived her husband by eight years;
- **Izaak Jakubowicz** (reb Ajzyk reb Jেকেles), who was senior of the Cracow Jewish Community in the first half of the 17th century and since he was a very rich man (called **Izaak Bogaty**) he founded in 1638 a synagogue, called after him **Ajzyk's Synagogue**; he died in 1653;
- **Rabbi Izaak Spira** – rabbi in Krzemieniec and in Cracow, died in 1582;
- **Rabbi Józef**, rabbi in Piła, author of the book *Ma'aseb Ha-Shem*, died around 1800;
- **Izaak Prosznitz** – famous printer of Hebrew books in Cracow, active there from 1568 to his death in 1613.

In the **third sector**, the tombstones of which are turned towards the west (towards **Jakub Street**), the most important tombstones are in the last row, running along the cemetery wall.

Here were buried:

- **Rabbi Joel Sirkes** (1561–1640), chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community in the years 1618–1640 (before he was rabbi in a variety of places in south-eastern Poland, and also rector of the local yeshivah, outstanding talmudist, author of the work *Beth Chadash* (in abbreviated form called “*Bach*”));
- **Rabbi Jozue ben Józef** (1590–1648), rector of the Cracow yeshivah, author of the work *Meginei Shlomo*;
- **Rabbi Jozue Heszel**, chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community in 1654–1663;
- **Samuel ber Meszulam**, who came to Cracow from Italy, physician of King Sigismund I, died in 1552;
- **Rabbi Izaak Lewita**, chief rabbi in Cracow in the years 1776–1799;

● **Rabbi Jomtow Lipman Heller** (1579-1654), rabbi in Vienna, Prague, and from 1643 in Cracow, where he also lectured at the local yeshivah (from 1648); he was the author of *Megilat Eiva* – an autobiography and i.a. of commentaries to the *Mishnah*.

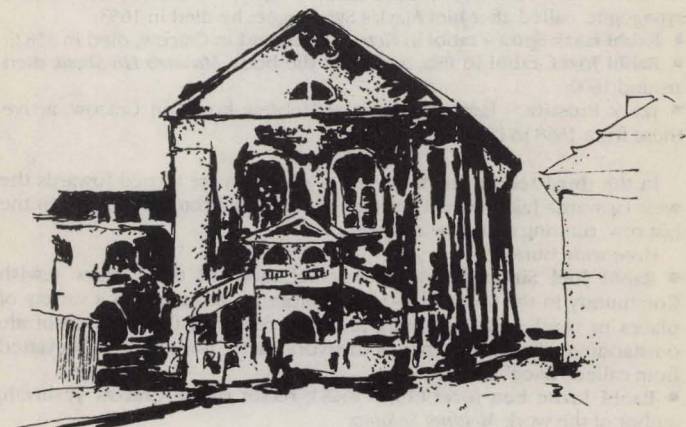
Here we end our visit to the old cemetery. Through the cemetery gate we return to **Szeroka Street**.

After having left the cemetery we turn to the right and behind the house at No. 38 we enter a small street (in the past called Lewkowa, now bystreet of **Ciemna Street – Dark Street Lane**), which runs behind the houses standing at Szeroka Street, along the cemetery wall. We turn once again right, to get a glimpse of the eastern elevation of **Ajzyk's Synagogue** and at the northern side the adjoining buildings of the former *Mizrabi* synagogue. Along the short and small Izaak Street we once again reach **Kupa Street**, from where we perceive the frontal wall of **Ajzyk's synagogue (Isaac)** – at 16, **Kupa Street**.

This synagogue was built in 1638 from funds supplied by one of the richest Cracow Jews of that time, the kahal senior, **Izaak Jakubowicz (reb Ajzyk reb Jekeles)**, whose name was given to the synagogue...

The erection of the next synagogue, the largest in Jewish Kazimierz, aroused objections on the part of the Reverend **Marcin Kłoczyński**, parish priest of **Boże Ciało (Corpus Christi)**, who was the prior of the monastery of the Lateran Canons, and who in a letter to **Jakub Zadzik**, bishop of Cracow, wrote that "*the street on which Izaak builds his synagogue touches on another street where Christians live*" and therefore it may happen "*that priests with the Holy Sacrament may directly pass in front of the synagogue.*" Though **Izaak Jakubowicz** had the permission of King **Władysław IV** to build the synagogue, nevertheless due to the intervention of the parish priest building work was stopped and the solemn inauguration took place only in 1644.

This quite large building gives the impression of being monumental, against the background of adjoining houses. The tall, huge walls of the synagogue with 18th-century buttresses, cut by deeply set window openings and almost without any decorations which would attract the eye, prevented people from guessing its former wealth of interior



Ajzyk's Synagogue

decorations: the vaulting covered with stucco work and suspended chandeliers, as well as fabrics, silver and bronze chandeliers and magnificent ritual vessels.

Ajzyk's synagogue was renovated in 1857 and next in 1924. At the beginning of the Nazi occupation it was thoroughly looted by the Nazis and ruined. After the war there remained only the naked walls. In 1946 it was to be turned into a church. A cross was even hung up atop the empty niche of the former Aron ha-kodesh, but finally this idea was given up. In the 1950s the object was taken over and renovated for the needst of the Artists' Union in Cracow. From the mid-1970s, after the building had been left by the artists, nobody could be found who would use it and in a short time it fell into complete disrepair. In 1983 began the next overhaul of the building, conducted by the Historical Monuments Restoration Workshop. Seen from the outside, especially against the background of its closest surroundings, the restored Ajzyk's synagogue and the reconstructed Mizrahi prayer house, are magnificent.

By mid-1990 no final decision had been made as to what use should be made of this building.

In the close neighborhood, at the intersection of Kupa and Warschauera streets we come across the last of the synagogues, built during the existence of the Jewish town, namely – the Kupa Synagogue (No. 8, Warschauera Street). It was erected in the first half of the 17th century as a foundation of the kahal (*mi-kupat ha-kebillah*). A contribution in this respect was also made by the guild of Jewish goldsmiths, who in 1643 offered the sum of 200 zlotys for this purpose.

The Kupa Synagogue is situated on a terrain that was added to the Jewish town in 1608. Its northern side pressed against the defensive town wall (along today's Miodowa Street), a small detail of which has been preserved to this day at the south-western corner of the synagogue. During the Nazi occupation this synagogue was closed, just like the remaining Cracow synagogues. After the end of World War II it was re-opened as one of the first prayer houses in the town. In 1947 the Jewish community established there a matzot factory. At the end of the 1950s the building is in a good state. But its interior with especially constructed shelves has completely lost its former character. There remained no trace of the bimah, which had been placed in the center of the prayer house and had been covered with an open-work canopy. There are also no traces of the portal of the Aron ha-kodesh, whose niche at the eastern wall is covered with a wooden board. Of the former interior decoration still exist colorful 20th-century wall paintings. They cover the flat ceiling and beams of the gallery (the twelve signs of the zodiac). The only relic from earlier centuries, that has been preserved in the synagogue, is a stone plaque from the 17th century, walled into the embrasure if a window at the eastern side. On it is a bas relief image of the blessing hands of a priest and a jar of a Levite. The sense of these symbols and the unusual location of the plaque are explained by the following inscription hewn out of the stone in Hebrew: "This window was purchased and given as a present to the holy brotherhood of priests and Levites for the glory of God and the glory of the Synagogue, for its enlightenment. *"The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord lift up his countenance, and give thee peace."* (Numbers 6, 25 and 26), added is the Jewish date of 5407 (1647 of the Christian era). This text should be understood in the following way: that the brotherhood of priests and Levites had granted funds for an additional window, which was to provide light for the surroundings of the Aron ha-kodesh.

From the Kupa Synagogue we proceed towards Nowy Square, passing on the way a tall corner building at No. 6, Warschauera and Estery streets. The *Talmud Torah* religious school was there and the *Bet Meir yeshivah*.

Nowy Square, generally called "Jewish square" was before the war and is at present a trading square. The center of the square is occupied by a round covered market hall, called "rotunda", because of its shape. It was built in 1900, leased out to the Jewish community in 1927, which installed in this building a ritual slaughter

house for poultry. This slaughter house was liquidated by the Germans during the Second World War, and the "rotunda" is being used again as a market hall.

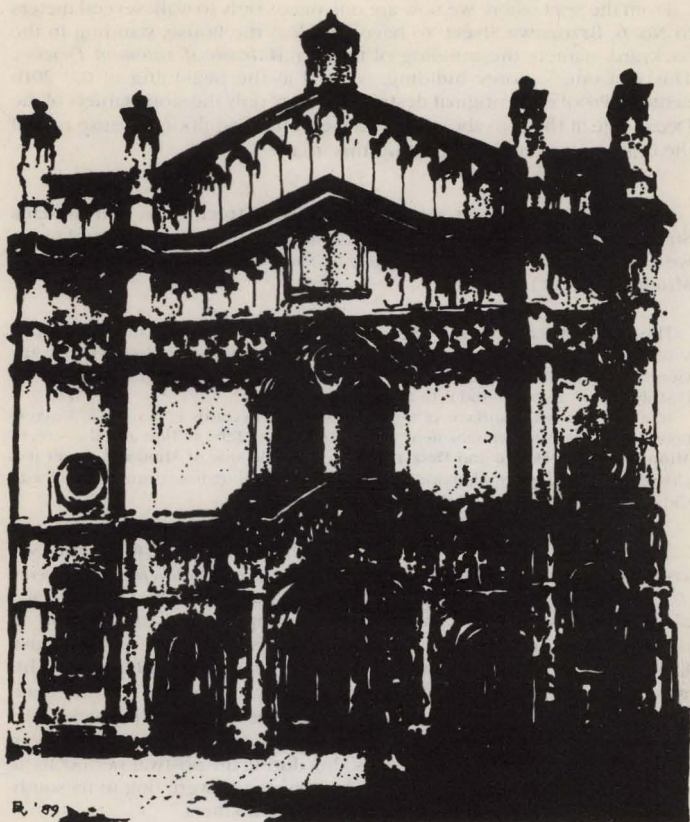
The ground-floor building at the corner of **Nowy Square** (No. 5) and **Meisels Street** (No. 17) is the former *bet midrash Bnej Euuna*, erected in 1886. After World War II it has been used for various economic purposes (there was i.a. a carpenter's shop there). Now it is deserted and very neglected.

After having left **Nowy Square** and gone along a short part of **Estera Street** we find ourselves in **Miodowa Street**. It was laid out in the 19th century, more or less along the former defensive walls of Kazimierz. That is the end of this part of the Jewish section of the town. Here started a new world, differing from the previous one, not only because of its more modern architecture, but above all the different rhythm of social life, consisting in the introduction of reformatory ideas. The best proof of this were in the closest neighborhood also a number of religious and educational institutions, established in the second half of the 19th and in the 20th centuries, namely: the reformed synagogue, called *Templ*, educational establishments of the *Orthodox Zionists Mizrahi* (*Heder Ivri and Tachkemoni*, the *People's and Secondary School of the Jewish Society* (primary, Secondary Hebrew School, Craft School), and also the **Jewish Academic House**.

The reformed synagogue (called *Templ*), 24, **Miodowa Street** 1, **Podbrzezie**, was built in 1860-1862, thanks to the efforts of the Association of Progressive Jews in Cracow. Afterwards it was several times remodeled (in the years: 1868, 1883, 1893-1894, 1924). It is a detached building, erected on a rectangular plan, has profuse architectural decorative items with many Neo-Renaissance elements. The facade, remodeled in 1894 - is triaxial and has two storeys; there is a number of pillars at the sides in the form of pilasters, reaching above the line of the roof and cut by a moulding, serving as a base for a triangular pediment, crowned with the Star of **Dawid**. Beneath the pediment has been imbedded a black marble plaque with the decalogue. Atop the main portal, is a travesty of the text from the first Book of Kings with the year when building was completed (1862). The portal arch carries the words of the psalmist: "*Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.*" (Psalm 100, 4). The opposite wall of the synagogue (remodeled in 1893-1894, according to a design by B. Torbe) is in its central part, that of the *Aron ha-kodesh*, closed by an oval apse and at the side - by passages leading to the gallery for women. A characteristic architectural element of the facade and lateral elevation are bipartite, arcaded stained glass windows, founded (mainly in the years 1894-1925) by members of the synagogue.

In the extensive interior special attention is drawn by the colored decoration if the ceiling and walls of the gallery for women as well as the monumental frame of the *Aron ha-kodesh*. The 36 stained glass windows of the groundfloor and first floor can be well seen only from the interior. Their decoration mainly consists of geometrical, plant and animal motifs.

Weekly sermons, delivered in Polish and German by preachers with academic education, such as **Goldschmied**, **Dankowicz**, **Duschak** and **Landau** were introduced in this synagogue already in the 19th century. The most outstanding preacher of this synagogue was **Dr. Ozjasz Thon**, graduate of theology of the Berlin University, who delivered his sermons in this synagogue from 1898 until his death in 1936. In the synagogal choir sang during the interwar period also women, which was one of the reasons of the strong dislike of orthodox Jews to this institution. Nevertheless some of them used to visit it sometimes just to listen to one of the best Cracow cantors of those times, **Józef Fischer**, whose real occupation was the publication and printing of Hebrew literature.



The reformed synagogue (called Templ)

The Templ at Miodowa Street is one of the two open synagogues in Cracow, (besides Remuh), but services take place here more rarely, especially since 1985, when Abraham Lesman, the cantor of this synagogue died. But even earlier, due to the small group of the faithful who were praying there, Saturday prayers did not take place in the synagogue proper, but in a small hall in the adjoining side-wing. In the building of this annex is also an up-to-date mikveh which is in use.

From the synagogue we continue walking along **Podbrzezcie Street** and stop for a while at the corner house, standing at the intersection with **Brzozowa Street**, which has a tablet with a text in Hebrew and Polish, recalling the fact that in this and the neighboring buildings was a primary school (5, Brzozowa Street), the **Chaim Hilfstein Hebrew Gymnasium** (8 and 10, Podbrzezcie Street) and the **Secondary Craft School** (3, Podbrzezcie Street), conducted by the Jewish Society of the People's and Secondary School in Cracow.

The secondary school taught general subjects in Polish and Judaic ones in Hebrew. A staff of outstanding teachers were: **Hirsz Szerer**, a mathematician and at the same time director of the school; **Juliusz Feldhorn**, Polish philologist, poet and translator, **Chaim Low**, also Polish philologist and writer; **Joachim Metallman**, natural sciences, associate professor of the Jagiellonian University; **Bencjon Katz**, Hebraist, lecturer of this language at the Jagiellonian University.

From the spot where we now are one needs only to walk several meters to **No. 6, Brzozowa Street**, to have a look at the house, standing in the backyard, namely the building of the *Bet Midrash of Salomon Deiches*. This is a one – storey building, erected at the beginning of the **20th century**. Proof of its original destiny are today only the stone tablets of the Decalogue at the top, above the terrace of the first floor, because one of the Cracow cooperatives occupies this house.

From **Brzozowa Street** we reach **Miodowa Street**, cross **Starowiślana Street** and after having passed along a tunnel of the railway embankment, we are in front of the gate leading to the **New Jewish Cemetery (55, Miodowa Street)**.

This cemetery was laid out in **1800** and was during the course of the **19th** century several times extended. During the Nazi occupation it was destroyed by the Germans. **After 1957** it was restored with the help of funds supplied by the Joint Distribution Committee and is to this day in use.

It stretches over a surface of approximately 19 hectares (1 ha = 2.471 acres) between the railway embankment along the Cracow-Tarnów line and the streets: **Miodowa, Siedleckiego** and **Daszyńskiego**. From the side of **Miodowa Street** it is closed by a one-floor brick mortuary, a one story dwelling house and the wall with the cemetery gate.

Beyond the wall, to the right of the gate, is a memorial “*in commemoration of murdered Jews, victims of Nazi genocide in the years 1939–1945*”. Tablets on its walls commemorate individual persons and also entire families of Cracow Jews. Among them is an epitaph in commemoration of **Dr. Rafał Landau**, the last chairman of the Jewish Community in Cracow before the outbreak of World War II and also his wife, **Rachela**, nee Parnes, who died in **1941** in the USSR. A wide main avenue cuts through the cemetery and there are two perpendicular narrower pathways. The former layout of the cemetery has been destroyed, mainly because of graves, dug during the postwar period at the passages between the various sectors. New graves were dug in its south-eastern part, from the side of the railway embankment.

The oldest still preserved tombstones here are from the **1840s**. They have the traditional semi-circular form, crowned with a matzevah, decorated with bas relief related to Jewish sepulchral symbols with inscriptions in Hebrew. In the second half of the 19th century appeared also tombstones with inscriptions in Polish and German – a sign of assimilation tendencies among Jews. The style of the tombstones also differed under the influence of fashion and trends in art at that time, where above all modernism left lasting traces in the form of tombstones shaped like obelisks and columns on pedestals.

Walking along the main cemetery avenue we come across monuments to:

- **Maciej Jakubowicz** (1911–1979), the chairman of the Jewish Religious Union in Cracow;
- **Jakub Drobner** (1827–1896), physician, participant in the January Insurrection;
- **Aron Kirschner** (1849–1908), head physician of the Jewish Hospital in Cracow;
- **Rabbi Ozjasz Thon** (1870–1936), rabbi and preacher of the Reformed Synagogue, leader of the *Zionist Organization* in Cracow and deputy to the parliament of the Republic (the tombstone also commemorates his wife, **Maria** as well as his son-in-law and grandson, murdered by the Nazis);
- **Samuel Stendig** (? – 1942), philologist, lecturer at the Hebrew Secondary School and director of the Commercial School.

In a path running parallel to the wall fencing the cemetery off at **Daszyńskiego Street** are i.a. such tombstones as that of:

- **Józef Sary** (1850–1929), builder, deputy mayor of the city of Cracow in the years 1905–1929;
- **Leon Sternbach** (1864–1940), philologist, professor of the Jagiellonian University;
- **Józef Nussenfeld** (1879–1956), director of long standing of the Jewish Hospital in Cracow;
- **Maurycy Gottlieb** (1856–1879), outstanding painter;
- **Jonatan Warschauer** (1820–1888), physician, philanthropist for the poor Jewish population, connected with the organization of the *Hevrah Kaddishah*.

In the western part of this path and another one, joining it and running in the direction of the cemetery gate, rest i.a. the following Cracow rabbis:

- **Rabbi Szymon Schreiber (Sofer)**, Cracow rabbi in the years 1860–1883, leader of the Orthodox Galicia party „*Machzikej Hadas*”;
- **Rabbi Józef Nechemiasz Kornitzer**, grandson of **Rabbi Szymon Schreiber**, Cracow rabbi in 1925–1933;
- **Rabbi Samuel Szmelkes Kornitzer**, son of **Rabbi Józef**, murdered in Auschwitz in 1940;
- **Rabbi Saul Rafał Landau**, rabbi of the Hasidic party in Cracow in the mid-19th century, died in 1854;
- **Rabbi Kalman Epstein**, one of the first popularizers of Hasidism in Cracow, died in 1823;
- **Rabbi Aron Epstein**, son of **Rabbi Kalman**, leader of the Hasids in Cracow, founder of the prayer house (*shtibl*) at 33, **Józefa Street**, died in 1882.

In that part of the cemetery that is closest to the railway embankment are the newest graves. Here rest i.a.:

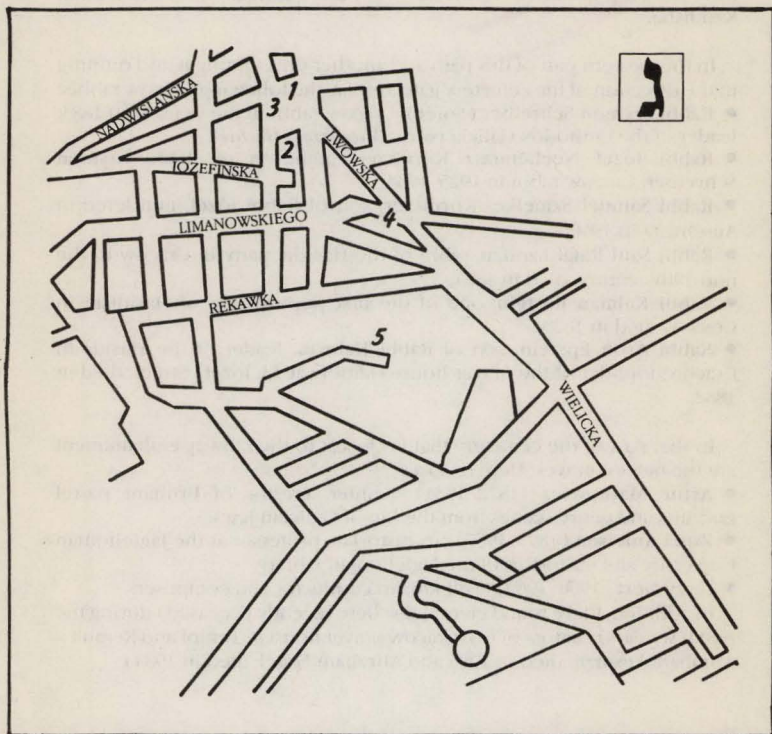
- **Artur Markowicz** (1872–1934), painter, creator of brilliant pastel portraits and genre scenes from the life of Galician Jews;
- **Zofia Ameisen** (1897–1967), art historian, professor at the Jagiellonian University and custodian of the Jagiellonian Library;
- **Jerzy Gert** (1908–1969), well-known conductor and composer.

In addition, there found eternal rest here recently deceased (during the past few years) cantors of two Cracow prayer houses (*Templ* and *Remuh* – **Abraham Lesman**, died in 1985 and **Abraham Fogel**, died in 1984).

WALK



PRZEMYSKA - STAROWIŚLNA - BOHATERÓW GETTA
SQUARE - LWOWSKA - LIMANOWSKIEGO - WIELICKA -
JEROZOLIMSKA - HERMANA.



1. Bohaterów Ghetto Square (former Zgody)
2. Museum - Pharmacy "Pod Orłem"
3. Headquarters of ŻOB
- 4, 5 Remains of Ghetto walls

The new cemetery was the last but one stage of our Jewish historic monuments in Cracow. What still remains is a short walk along **Przemyska Street**, which we reach walking from the cemetery along **Halicka Street**, running near the railway embankment. At No. 3, **Przemyska Street** is the former **Jewish Academic House**. Now it serves as living quarters for students of the Advanced Music School in Cracow.

This house was built in 1924-1926 on the initiative of the Cracow branch of the *B'nai B'rith Solidarity Association* and "*Ognisko*" – the *Union of Jewish Students of the Jagiellonian University*. The designer of this building was **Adolf Siódma** and building work was directed by **Tobiasz Wener**, who also did the interior decoration. In this four-storeyed house were rooms for 2-3 persons, accommodating approximately 140 students, and in addition a large representative hall on the first floor. Besides, there was a library, a studio for artists, a kitchen and canteen as well as the indispensable sanitary installations, such as showers, wash stands in the rooms. In the 1930s exhibitions of the works of the members of the *Society of Jewish Artists* were often organized in the large representative hall. In **October 1939** the Germans set up a brothel there for the army (in a similar way as was the case with the home for the aged on **Skawińska Boczna Street**).

We end our walk on **Przemyska Street** amidst Jewish historical monuments of Cracow. This does, however, not mean the end of our meeting with the history of Cracow Jews, or more accurately – with an essential fragment of the latest history: the extermination of Cracow Jews in the years 1939-1945. Walking along **Starowiślna Street** we leave **Kazimierz** and along the bridge spanning the **Vistula** we reach the **Podgórze district**. The most important events of that period took place precisely there and that is also where we will find traces of these events.

Right behind the bridge is **Bohaterów Ghetto Square** (the pre-war **Zgody Square**), from which Jews from the ghetto were deported to concentration and extermination camps, mainly in **Bełżec** and **Auschwitz-Birkenau**.

The Cracow Ghetto had been set up in **March 1941**. Crammed into it were approximately 15-17,000 persons, on an area, which to begin with, was situated between the **Vistula**, **Krzemionki (Rękawka Street)**, the **Market Square** of **Podgórze** and **Lwowska Street**. Twice, after deportations in June and October 1942 – the ghetto area was cut in size and its liquidation took place on **March 13 and 14, 1943**.

At No. 18 on **Bohaterów Ghetto Square** is the **Museum of National Commemoration – "Apteka pod Orłem" (Pharmacy Under the Sign of the Eagle)**. It was established on the initiative of a group of persons, friends of **Podgórze** on **April 22, 1983** in the premises of the former **Pharmacy**.

In the years 1941-1943 this pharmacy was situated within the walls of the Cracow Ghetto. Despite the fact that the Polish population had been completely removed from this territory, the pharmacy was still conducted by its Polish owner, **Tadeusz Pankiewicz**, together with three assistants: **Aurelia Danek-Cortkova**, **Irena Drożdżikowska** and **Helena Krywaniuk**. The pharmacy served as "*an embassy, a diplomatic agency, representing the free world in this walled in town behind bars... Working without a break in the pharmacy, which for a period of almost two years was on duty all the time, day and night... we participated, together with the inhabitants of the ghetto in all their pains and troubles... After each more important event, after each deportation campaign, the first steps of our friends and acquaintances were directed to the pharmacy... After each deportation we were sincerely glad about every one of those who remained. We drank for luck, to dry tears, to stifle the pain of those, directly struck by fate. At such occasions we learned, who had been taken, who was wounded, who was killed, who lost his nearest and dearest... At each step we came across signs of exaggerated and perhaps even insufficiently justified gratitude. Scores of letters from camps, and after liberation from a variety of countries in Europe, which came and continue to arrive, addressed to us, are proof of the fact, that the friendly feelings formed during the*"

period of co-existence in the ghetto are of a lasting nature" – recalled Mr. Pankiewicz in his book, entitled "The Pharmacy in the Cracow Ghetto".

A permanent exhibition has been organized in the Museum, commemorating events which took place in the ghetto and Tadeusz Pankiewicz himself. In addition are organized various exhibitions, connected with problems, related to the Nazi occupation in Poland in the years 1939-1945.

The Headquarters of the Jewish Combat Organization (6, Bohaterów Getta Square). The house, where the Jewish Combat Organization resided during the period of the existence of the ghetto. A commemorative tablet has been placed on the wall of the facade of the building with the following text: *"In commemoration of the heroes and martyrs of the Cracow Ghetto, murdered by Nazi barbarians. In this house were the headquarters of the Jewish Combat Organization. This tablet was mounted by the civic committee on March 13, 1948 to mark the fifth anniversary of the liquidation of the Ghetto"*.

Bohaterów Getta Square is connected with Lwowska Street, which runs in the direction of Plaszów. In March 1943, the last columns of Cracow Jews passed along that street, escorted by Germans, on their way to the concentration camp in Plaszów.

Exactly at that street (Nos. 25-29) can still be found fragments of the ghetto walls.

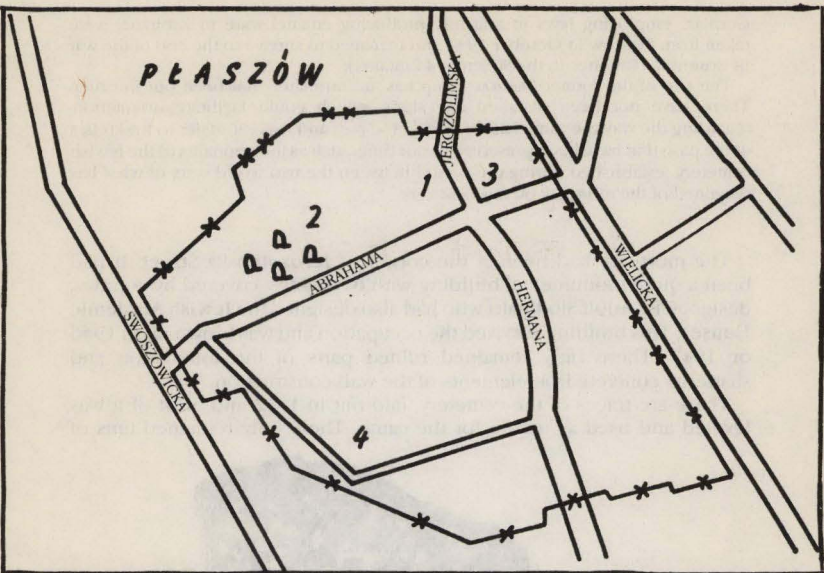
Between Nos. 25 and 29 is a wall, over a dozen meters long, about three meters high, crowned with characteristic arches, reminding one of the semi-circles, crowing Jewish tombstones. In 1983 a commemorative plaque was mounted there, on which is an inscription in Yiddish and Polish: *"Here they lived, suffered and died, murdered by the Nazi hangmen. From here they went on their last way to concentration camps. A detail of the Cracow Ghetto walls, 1941-1943."*

Lwowska Street, former a main street, today – after a change of the transportation system – it is a peripheral street, connected with Limanowskiego Street. At Limanowskiego Street ended the ghetto area and the wall surrounding it turned to the west in the direction of the Krzemionki elevation. A fragment of this wall was preserved in the back of the school building (Primary School No. 2, at 62, Limanowskiego Street). In order to see it one has to enter the gate at the left side of the building to the fenced in grounds of the school. This section of the wall is two meters high and resembles the previous one at Lwowska Street, being also crowned by arches over each section.

We leave the ghetto terrain, walk along Limanowskiego Street, next Wielicka, followed by Jerozolimska (a cross-street of Wielicka), and reach the area of the former concentration camp in Plaszów.

The Plaszów camp, which to begin with was a camp of compulsory labor, was set up as early as at the end of 1942. Finally it covered an area of about 80 hectares, between Wielicka and Swoszowska streets. It was divided into a Polish and Jewish sector. In the larger, Jewish sector, was the roll call square, living quarters, production sheds (where various craftsmen's workshops were), auxiliary buildings, store rooms, administrative rooms and sanitary arrangements. Jewish inmates worked in workshops inside the camp, but also outside, i.e. in the nearby cable factory in Plaszów, the brick kiln in Bonarka, the air field in Rakowice and in several firms in Zablocie.

In the middle of 1943 the Plaszów camp was transformed into a branch of the concentration camp in Majdanek (Lublin), and beginning with January into an independent concentration camp with branches in Mielec and in Wieliczka. In connection with this, Jews were transported to these camps from many places in the General Government, where the Germans liquidated ghettos and small camps, such as in Tarnów, Mielec, Rzeszów, Drohobycz, Janów, Szebnie near Jasło, and also Jews



1. Ruins of the mortuary
2. Relics of the Jewish cemetery
3. Quarry
4. Monument of victims of the camp

from Hungary. Here the prisoners were exterminated by hunger, excessive work, diseases, beating and executions. From there they were taken to work in armament factories in the General Government (Skarżysko Kamienna, Starachowice, Pionki, Częstochowa) and to the Reich, but also to other concentration camps (Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Gross-Rosen).

Among the Plaszów murderers distinguished himself especially camp commander Amon Leopold Goeth, who personally shot many prisoners (he did it also during the liquidation of ghettos in Kraków, Tarnów and Szebnie). Thus setting an example for his subordinates how to treat prisoners. After the war he was tried by the Supreme Court of Justice. Evidence was provided that he had killed and tortured people; he was sentenced to death and hanged in Cracow in September 1948. During the trial of Goeth witnesses testified against him, stressing that during the first period of the existence of the camp there were about 2,000 inmates. Their number increased later to about 10,000 to reach figure of 25,000 prisoners. It is impossible to establish the exact number of Jews killed in Plaszów, of those who were transported elsewhere and killed in other places. Lists of Jews brought from Plaszów to Auschwitz ow kept in the archives of the Stare Museum in Auschwitz, contained most frequently only information about those who were not killed in the gas chambers immediately after arrival, but became inmates of the camp and received numbers. And thus, a transport arrived on **February 21, 1944** from Plaszów to Auschwitz, from among those people were selected 260 male prisoners and the remaining persons (...) were killed. On **May 24, 1944** arrived a transport (...) of old men, sick people and children – all were murdered in gas chambers. On **August 6** of that same year 7,500 Jewish women were brought, who were placed in a transfer camp (Durchgangslager) in Birkenau. From among them 1,500 women were selected and brought to the Stutthof camp on **September 23**. On **October 22**, a group of 2,000 Jewish women and a score of Jews (from the camp hospital) were brought. for the night they were left in the bath house and on the next day a selection took place, as a result of which 1,765 women were sent to the transfer camp, while the remaining ones were murdered in the gas chamber. On **January 17, 1945**, i.e. on the day before the liberation of Cracow 178 women and two boys – Jews – were brought from Plaszów to the Auschwitz camp, which at that time was already being liquidated.

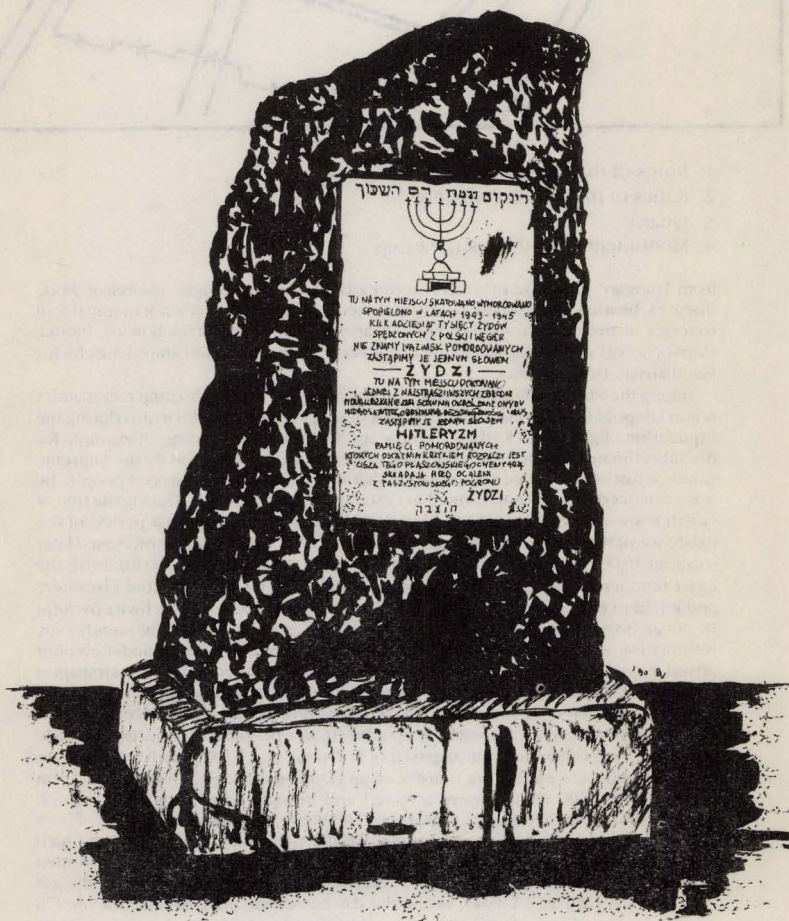
Approximately 2,000 persons survived the evacuation of the Plaszów camp. Among them were about 700 persons who – thanks to the efforts of Oskar Schindler, a

German, employing Jews in a factory producing enamel ware in Zablocie, were taken from Plaszów in October 1944 and managed to survive to the end of the war in Brunnlitz (Brnenec in the Sudeten Mountains).

The site of the former Plaszów camp has, unfortunately not been put in order. There have not been installed any signs, which could facilitate orientation, regarding the way the camp had looked in the past and make it easier to find relics of the past, that have been preserved to our time, such as the remnants of the Jewish cemetery, established during the period between the two world wars of what has remained of the mortuary on this cemetery.

The mortuary had been at the corner of Jerozolimska Street. It had been a quite monumental building with two wings, covered by copulas, designed by Adolf Siódmak (who had also designed the Jewish Academic House). This building survived the occupation and was blown up in 1946 or 1947. There only remained ruined parts of the foundation and shattered concrete iron elements of the wall construction.

There are traces of the cemetery, laid out in 1932 and most of it was leveled and used as terrain for the camp. There only remained tens of



The monument of victims of the camp

graves and the only still standing monument to **Jakub Chaim Abrahamer**, who died in 1932, some 150 meters to the south-west of the ruins of the mortuary.

To the right from where **Jerozolimska** and **Hermana** streets meet, in a limestone elevation are three openings to tunnels. These tunnels had been hollowed out by prisoners of the **Plaszów** camp. They had been built during the last stage of the war, to serve the Germans as shelters in case of an air raid. There is a thesis maintaining that they were to be used as gas chambers and for crematorium ovens.

From this place, walking along **Hermana Street** and a path, running along the ridge of the hill, we proceed to a monumental memorial, visible at the fringes of the hill. This is a monument, erected in commemoration of people of all nationalities, murdered in the **Plaszów** camp by the Nazis. It was founded by Cracow society, designed by **Witold Cęckiewicz**, unveiled on **September 4, 1964**. The inscription on it reads: *"In commemoration of those murdered by the Nazi perpetrators of genocide in the years 1943-1945"*.

Near this monument is another, small memorial, founded by Cracow Jews to stress the fact, that the overwhelming majority of the victims of the **Plaszów** concentration camp had been Jews. On a plaque, mounted at the stone obelisk is the following inscription: *"Here, in this area, have been tortured, murdered and turned into ashes several tens of thousands of Jews in the years 1943-1945, driven here from all over Poland and Hungary. We do not know the names of the murdered. Let us replace them with one word only - Jews. Here at this site has been committed one of the most horrible crimes. Human language has no words to define the atrocity of this crime. Its nightmarish bestiality, ruthlessness and cruelty. Let us replace it by one word - Nazism. In commemoration of those murdered here, whose last cry of despair is the silence of this **Plaszów** cemetery, we, Jews saved from the fascist pogrom, pay homage."*

To Cracow we can return along **Kamieńskiego - Wielicka - Limanowskiego - Na Zjeździe - Starowiślna** streets or **Kamieńskiego - Inwalidów Wojennych - Limanowskiego** streets.

MUST
KNOW

BIOGRAPHIES OF FAMOUS CRACOW JEWS

BAUMINGER HERSZ

Son of Szymon Bauminger, one of the leaders of the Mizrahi party in Cracow; he was head of the Hashomer Hatzair organization before World War II, took part in the September 1939 campaign; was chief of staff of the Jewish Combat Organization (ŻOB), established by the Hashomer Hatzair in Cracow at the beginning of 1942, and one of its commanders; in February or at the beginning of March 1943 he was arrested by the Gestapo and shot in the Montelupich prison.

DRANGER SZYMON

One of the commanders of the Jewish Combat organization in Cracow, editor of the underground paper "Mechaluc Halochem" (this paper appeared in Polish and only its title was in two languages), the organ of Akiba. He was also head of the technical group which produced false documents. He lost his life in unknown circumstances, jointly with his wife, Gusta Dawidsohn-Dranger, also an Akiba activist and member of ŻOB, authoress of the literary underground gazette, written in prison and published in 1946 as "Justyna's Memoirs".

EISENBERG FILIP (1876-1942)

Microbiologist, one of the first to describe bacteria dissociation, an important phenomenon in the production of vaccine; he was a member of the Polish Academy of Learning and director of State Bacteriological Station in Cracow (in the years 1933-1939). One of the Cracow streets was named after him.

FAMILY OF THE FEINTUCHS

Berl and Ryea Feintuch were the ancestors of this family. At the beginning of the 19th century they had moved from Jewish Kazimierz, to Christian Kazimierz. Their son was Martin Feintuch (1805-1866), married Salomea, nee Tittelbaum (1805-1886). He converted to Christianity and was baptized together with his wife in 1846. His son, Stanisław (1826-1898), married Józefa Rosenzweig (1832-1898), was a merchant, had a shop in the center of Cracow in the Gray Burghers' House and from this House comes the name, he adopted later, namely that of Szarski. The oldest of their sons, Henryk (1855-1921) was appointed deputy mayor of Cracow. The younger son of Marcin Feintuch, Leon (1834-1905) had his own firm and changed his name of Feintuch to the more Polish sounding -Zawiejski. His two sons became artists: Mieczysław Zawiejski (1856-1933) was a sculptor and Jan Zawiejski (1854-1922) was a very good architect and became famous as the designer of the Municipal Theater in Cracow, built in 1891-1893. Further descendants of Marcin and Salomea Feintuch were in addition: Kazimierz Szarski (1904-1960), professor of comparative anatomy at the Wrocław University and Jacek Szarski (1921-1980), professor of mathematics at the Jagiellonian University.

FELDMAN JÓZEF (1899-1946)

Son of Wilhelm and Maria, nee Kleinman; historian, from 1937 professor and lecturer at the Jagiellonian University, author of such works as: *Polska w dobie wojny północnej 1704-1709* (Poland during the War with Sweden, 1704-1709), published in 1925, *"Bismarck and Poland"* (issued in 1939), *"Stanisław Leszczyński"* (published in 1948).

FELDMAN WILHELM (1868-1919)

Writer, historian of literature and critic, politician; adherent of radical assimilation of Jews in Poland, to which he gave expression in his articles and separate dissertations, like in *"Advocates of Assimilation, Zionists and*

Poles", and also in his activity in the Cracow secretariat in the organization of the Holy Brotherhood (Hevrah Kaddisha), whose chairman he was for some time; editor of "Krytyka" – a monthly magazine of literary and socio-political reviews (Cracow 1901–1914); when World War I broke out he joined the Legions, and next developed diplomatic activity in Berlin. He converted to Christianity and was baptized on his death bed.

FRIST HENRYK (1855–1920)

Born in Tarnów, came to Cracow and about 1875 opened on Floriańska Street a store with writing materials and picture frames, later he added picture postcards and cards with seasonal greetings as well as reproductions of paintings. This store became transformed into an art gallery, called Polish Painters' Gallery, selling original works by such outstanding Cracow painters as the Kossaks, Malczewski, Fałat, Axentowicz and others. This trading activity, including reproductions was developed during the periods between the two world wars by his sons Henryk, Julian and Józef, who set up "Akropol" – Graphic Works at 23, Grzegórzecka Street.

GOTTLIEB MAURZYCY (1856–1879)

Painter, born in Drohobycz, studied at M. Godlewski's private school for painters in Lwów, at the Academy of fine Arts in Vienna, the Cracow School of Fine Arts (under Jan Matejko) and the Munich Academy. To his most famous paintings belongs "Shylock and Jessica" (1875). He died when he was a mere 23 years old and was buried on the Jewish cemetery at Miodowa Street in Cracow.

HALBREICH BERNARD

A prewar sergeant of the Polish army; was the leader of military disruptive actions in the staff of a combat group of the Hashomer Hatzair organization, one of the commanders of the Jewish Combat Organization in Cracow, leader of the entire series of attacks against "Cyganeria", "Esplanada", "Zakopianka", "Scala" and the officers' mess-room in the National Museum on December 22, 1942. He was killed in action, taken by surprise by the Gestapo on February 19, 1943.

RABBI HELLER GERSHON SAUL JOMTOW LIPMAN (1579–1654)

Son of Natan, the Levite; rabbi of Jewish communities in Vienna and Prague, and afterwards in several small places of south-eastern Poland, later he was appointed member of the Cracow rabbinate (1643–1654) and of the rector's office of the local talmudic college (1648–1654). He wrote a number of works: "Curat ha-Bajt", (Prague 1602), "Tosafot Yom Tov" (Prague 1614–1644), "Torat ha-Asham" and "Maadanej Melech we-Lechem Hamudot" (Prague 1619–1628). Buried at the old Jewish cemetery near Remuh Synagogue, in Cracow.

HOCHMAN HENRYK (1879–1943)

Sculptor, educated at the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts in 1900–1906). Lost his life during the liquidation of the ghetto in Tarnów; creator of sculptures, i.a. of Adam Mickiewicz and bronze commemorative plaques: "Casimir the Great Receiving Jews in Poland" (Casimir Town Hall) and "Queen Jadwiga" (building of the Jewish Community in Cracow). Both plaques were destroyed by the Germans during World War II.

RABBI ISSERLESS MOJŻESZ (about 1525–1572), called REMUH

Son of Izrael Isserl, rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community in the years 1547–1572 and rector of the local talmudic college, author of many works, such as "Torat ha-Ola" and commentaries to rabbinical works, mainly

notes to the code "Shulhan Arukh" by J. Karo, taking into account dissimilarities of Askenazi law. Beginning with the first edition of the code with commentaries by Isserles (Cracow 1578, 1580, printed by Izaak ben Aron Prostitz) these commentaries, (entitled "Mappa") constitute an integral part of this work.

JASIEŃSKI BRUNO (proprietor ARTUR ZYSMAN, 1901-1939)

Writer, leading poet of Polish futurism, representative of the revolutionary left wing in interwar literature: 1926-1929 in France, next in the USSR, member of the C.P.S.U. (B.); gained renown with his novel "Pałę Paryż" (I Burn Paris), 1929 with a grotesque and fantastic vision of the annihilation of the capitalist world.

KLACZKO JULIAN (1825-1906)

Writer, journalist and politician, born in Wilno, settled in Cracow in 1888. As a journalist he supported the interests of Polish *raison d'état*; in his capacity as historian and writer he studied the culture of Italy, and published the results of his studies in the book "Wieczory florenckie" (Florentine Evenings) and in sketches about Rome at the time of Pope Julius II; he was in favor of radical assimilation of Jews, which found its confirmation in his own attitude, since he adopted the Christian faith.

LEIBOWICZ ABRAHAM

One of the members of the united command of the Jewish Combat organization in Cracow; arrested after the attack against "Cyganeria" on December 22, 1942, he was placed in Montelupich prison, shot in Płaszów, after an unsuccessful attempt to escape in April 29, 1943.

LIEBESKIND ADOLF

By education of jurist, son of a well-known Zionist family in Cracow, during the prewar period general secretary of Akiba, the Zionist youth organization, initiator of a farm in Kopaliny near Bochnia, set up in 1941, which under the cover of agricultural courses turned into a center of the Jewish Combat Organization of Akiba, Cracow; one of the members of the united chief command of the Jewish Combat Organization in Cracow, participant of many attacks against Germans, the most famous of which was that against "Cyganeria" in December 1942. He was caught by the Gestapo and died fighting on December 24, 1942.

MARKOWICZ ARTUR (1872-1934)

Painter, born in Podgórze (now a Cracow district); studied in Cracow, Munich and Paris; did oil painting and water colors (genre scenes, portraits, architecture, later also landscapes and still life paintings), mainly devoted to Jewish subjects; member of the association "Sztuka" and honorary chairman of the Association of Jewish Artists in Cracow.

RABBI MEISELS DOW BER (1798-1870)

Chief Cracow rabbi (1832-1856), afterwards Warsaw rabbi, was conservative regarding Jewish matters, was an opponent of Hasidism and of advocates of assimilation; regarding national Polish matters he supported the attitude adopted by Poles towards governments in Vienna (1846, 1848) and in Petersburg (1863).

OETTINGER JÓZEF (1816-1895)

Physician and social worker, born in Tarnów, studied at the Medical Department of the Jagiellonian University; received the diploma of a doctor of medicine in 1843 and the degree of a doctor of surgery in 1850; from 1851 he lectured on the history of medicine at the Jagiellonian

University and from 1873 was professor at that University (he was the first professor at the Jagiellonian University who was of Jewish descent). He practiced medicine at the Jewish Hospital in Cracow. Time and again he was a member of the Cracow Municipal Council. He was one of the cofounders of the Medical Society of Cracow (1866) and was its first deputy chairman, representing the Jewish intelligentsia of Cracow, whose aim was assimilation with Poles, who were demanding equal rights for Jews and religious freedom.

PEIPER TADEUSZ (1891-1969)

Poet, leading representative of the Polish avant-garde of poets, founder and editor of "Zwrotnica", a literary and artistic paper (Cracow 1922-1923 and 1926-1927), which published the most important programmatic statements of this movement of poets.

RABBI SIRKES JOEL (1561-1640), called BaCH

Chief rabbi of the Cracow Jewish Community in the years 1618-1640 and rector of the local talmudic college. Before he was appointed to become a member of the Cracow rabbinate, he acted as rabbi in many small places of south-eastern Poland. This outstanding talmudist was the author of an extensive commentary to "Arbas Turim" by Jakub ben Aszer (1296-1343), entitled "Bet Chadash" (Cracow 1631-1640), who was called BaCH from the initials of this work.

STERNBERG LEON (1864-1940)

Classical philologist; 1892-1935 professor of the Jagiellonian University; from 1893 member of the Polish Academy of Learning; author of critical reviews of many texts of Greek and Roman literature as well as dissertations on Byzantine literature and Polish paroemiology; arrested by the Gestapo together with other professors and scientific workers of the Jagiellonian University during what was called "Sonderaktion Krakau" (November 6, 1939) and sent to the concentration camp in Oranienburg, he died there on February 20, 1940; the urn with his ashes was brought to Cracow and buried at the cemetery on Miodowa Street.

TAUBENSCHLAG RAFAŁ (1881-1958)

Jurist, specialist of Hellenic and Roman law, historian of Polish medieval law, papyrologist; from 1918 professor of Roman law at the Jagiellonian University; during World War II professor at the university in Aix-en-Provence and Columbia University (1942-1947); from 1947 professor at Warsaw University; author of many works in the sphere of ancient law and papyrology.

TELZ NAPOLEON (1866-1943)

Printer and publisher; from 1897 owner of the National Printing House in Cracow, where the daily press was printed, periodicals as well as belles-letters (3,118 titles until 1935); chairman of the Union of Owners of Printing Houses in Western Galicia; lost his life in the Warsaw Ghetto.

RABBI THON OZJASZ (1870-1936)

Rabbi, politician and journalist, born in Lwów; graduate of theology at Berlin University; from 1897 in Cracow, where he was appointed preacher at the Reformed Synagogue; Zionist activist, one of the leaders and theoreticians of the Zionist Organization of Western Little Poland and Silesia; representative of Jews of this region in the Polish parliament during three terms of office (1922, 1928, 1935); in his capacity as a journalist he cooperated with the Cracow Zionist paper "Nowy Dziennik" and with the Warsaw "Chajnt".

WARSCHAUER JONATAN (1820-1880)

Physician and social worker; in 1843 he received his doctor's degree in medicine at the Jagiellonian University after having presented a work on balneology (water therapy); he wrote many articles in the specialized press, above all the Austrian press; he also concentrated on epidemic diseases. Thanks to his effort a hospital for Jews, who had contracted cholera was opened in 1849; he was a member of the Cracow Scientific Society; a member of the Municipal Council of Cracow from 1849; one of the leaders of the camp of progressive Jewish intellectuals, whose aim was to achieve equal rights for Jews and to include them in Polish society by means of a moderate assimilation.

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4. Muzeum Stanisława Wyspiańskiego, 9, Kanonicza Street, tel. 228 337;
5. Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krajowa, 35, Rynek Główny, tel. 229 922, 226 527;
7. Muzeum Pamięci Narodowej "Apteka Pod Orłem", 18, Bohaterów Getta Square;
8. Państwowe Muzeum Oświęcim-Birkenau - Muzeum Martyrologii Narodu Polskiego, Oświęcim, 20, Więźniów Oświęcimia 20, tel. 240 21, 220 21.

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3. Galeria Fotografii – Jaszczury, 7, Rynek Główny;
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3. Teatr STU, 18, Krasieńskiego Street, tel. 222 263, scena w namiocie (stage in tent);
4. Teatr Ewy Demarczyk, 55 Floriańska Street;
5. Filharmonia im. Karola Szymanowskiego, 1, Zwierzyniecka Street, tel. 229 477;
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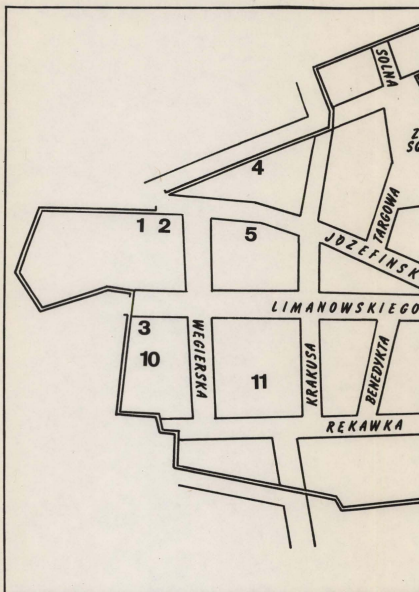
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MAP OF THE CRACOW GHETTO

LEGEND

1. Arbeitsamt
2. Hospital
3. HQ's of the Jewish Community
4. Bath house
5. HQ's of the "Jus"
6. Hospital
7. Prison
8. Jewish police
9. Jewish Students House
10. Madritsch
11. Optima



In recent years an increasing number of Jews from North America, Israel and Western Europe have traveled to Poland mostly seeking contact with their roots and to learn first hand about Polish Jewish culture and history. Because of the language barrier and the difficulties in arranging transportation, accomodation and knowledgeable guides, most visitors limit their travels to the most accessible sites in Poland, often missing some of the most colorful and historic centers of Jewish life.

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