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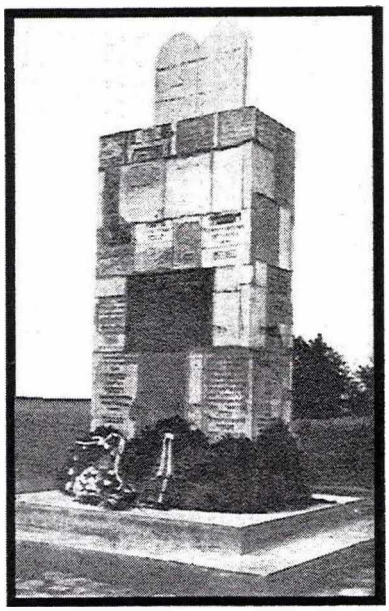
# The Zamosc Memorial Book

**A Memorial Book of a Center of Jewish Life Destroyed by the Nazis**

***Published at the Fifteenth Anniversary (1942-1957) after The First Slaughter of the Jews of Zamosc***

Edited By

***Mordechai V. Bernstein***



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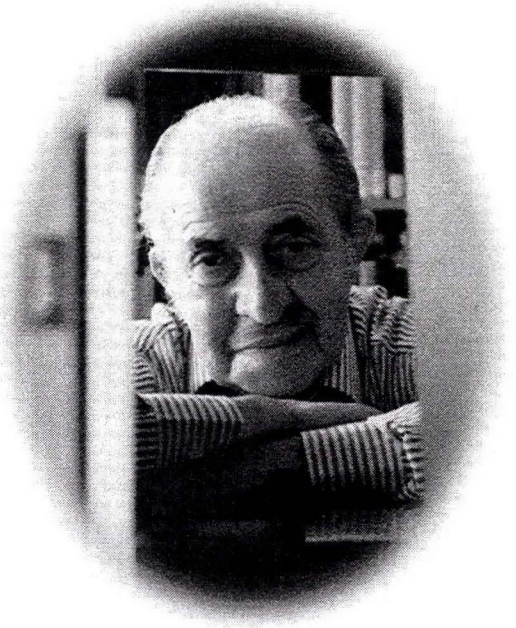
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# Dedication



## Majer (Mark) Swiatlo

**(1915 - 2003)**

Walking the fifth floor of the Wimberly Library at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, one is surrounded by Mark Swiatlo's legacy in his role as its Judaica Curator. Starting as a volunteer in 1988 – at the age of 73 – Mark Swiatlo traveled to three continents to retrieve most of FAU's 80,000 or more volumes related to Judaism and Jewish populations. An indefatigable *zammler*, Mark accumulated a collection of more than half the recognized Holocaust Memorial Books *(Yizkor Bikher)* ever published, making FAU's collection one of the more complete in the world.

In my capacity as a translator of *Yizkor Bikher*, it was inevitable that our paths should cross. This meeting was facilitated by a personal need to visit South Florida periodically, to look in on aging in-laws. Mark and I recognized each other as kindred spirits. Though a generation separated us, we became fast friends, and I found his encyclopedic knowledge to be of inestimable value in ferreting out subtleties of language, not only in Yiddish, but also in the several other Eastern European tongues in which he was fluent.

In Mark I found an unswerving ally for the imperative of translating *Yizkor Bikher* into English. It paralleled his own drive to get the testimony of Holocaust survivors translated into English. He, too, recognized the longer-term need to assure that these histories should not be allowed to languish behind a language barrier.

Mark passed away on May 17, 2003. He is one of the increasingly rare individuals, who earned the respect of being recognized as irreplaceable. This book is dedicated to him, as an example of the type of endeavor that was so near and dear to his heart.

*We, who were forgotten by Creation and perhaps abandoned by its Creator, must demonstrate our faith in both. That faith preceded us and will follow us in history. We, who inside the barracks and the darkness saw all those leading to death, all endeavours dictated by the enemy, dominated by death, we still proclaim with every fibre of our being, our belief in the Jewish tradition, namely that everything about life is in life, be it frail and vulnerable.*

– Excerpt from the keynote address given by
Prof. Elie Wiesel in the Valley of the Communities
during the closing ceremony of the Conference 11/4/2002

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**The following members of our extended family of *landsleit*, friends and well-wishers, provided financial contributions to help make the publication of this book possible. Their generosity assures the preservation of this heritage for future generations, by which they have earned a large measure of our collective gratitude.**

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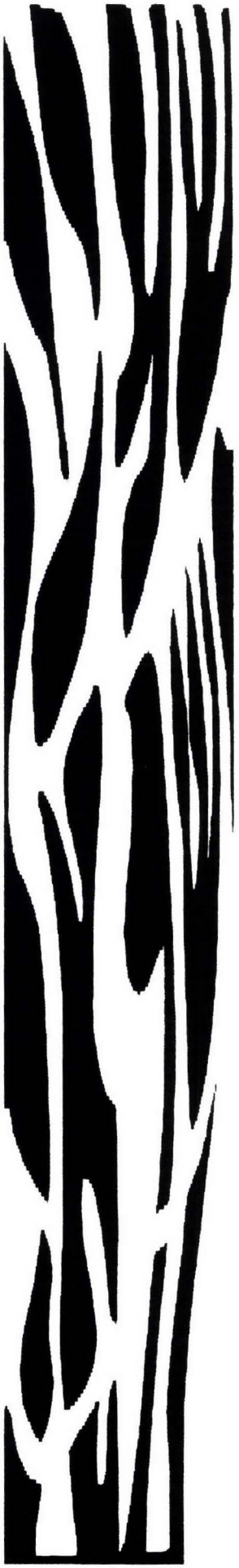
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# Zamosc

# זאמאשטש

# The Central Committee For Pinkas Zamość

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# Translator's Foreword

Although this translation effort is the fourth in a series, *Pinkas Zamość* represents my first attempt to venture beyond the region of my *maternal* ancestry in Belarus. With the creation of ***The Zamość Memorial Book***, I address, for the first time, the region of my *paternal* ancestry, which takes me into present-day southeastern Poland, at the periphery of Galicia.

This effort has confirmed – yet again – that the process of translating Holocaust Memorial Books is a continuing source of education for me personally. This, despite my earlier trepidations, when I felt that repetitively re-visiting the same history would deteriorate into becoming routine. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am reminded of a quotation used by my maternal grandfather's uncle, ***Rabbi Yehoshua Freidin***, as the source for the title of his first book of sermons, *Evven Yehoshua* (The Rock of Joshua). It is from the Book of Zechariah (3:9):

> *See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes [facets] on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.*

In his foreword, Rabbi Yehoshua explained that his choice of this metaphor was motivated by his feeling, that the sermons he had published, provided *multiple facets* by which one could view the various texts that he had chosen as his subject matter. I have come to discover, that each volume from the archive of Holocaust Memorial Books that I have translated, represents such a facet, each casting a different light, upon the Jewish communities of the Pale of Settlement, and the terrible fate that overtook them.

By coincidence, I have been fortunate in coming upon a city with a unique pedigree in the firmament of Eastern European Jewry. Zamość enjoys a special place, for the reputation of its community, which was nurtured for centuries, that causes its scions to proudly claim it as a 'Mother City to All Israel.'

Zamość can boast a retinue of Torah scholars and sages that is second to none, yet this did not strike me as the core of its significance to Eastern European Jewry. From the vantage point of the 21st century, it is its role in nurturing the *Haskala*, or Jewish Enlightenment, and in elevating Yiddish to a high literary plateau, that struck me as being of primary importance. Zamość was an island of rational intellectual thought processes in a sea of Hasidism, where faith, and subservience to charismatic rabbinical personalities, held sway over reason and self-determination. Indeed, the *Rebbes* of the Hasidic movement knew that they were not welcome to enter Zamość, and did not do so until well into the 19th century. It was in Zamość, that Yiddish was given the loving care, that raised it from the level of a Germano-Slavic creole of the Jewish masses, to a world-class literary language. Zamość boasts a century of literary pioneers, such as *Aleksander Zederbaum, Yaakov Eichenbaum, Dr. Shlomo Ettinger*, culminating in *Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz* who, by any measure, could qualify as the Shakespeare of the Yiddish language.

The advances in thinking made by the *Haskala* have endured, to shape modern Jewish life. They have made possible the outstanding contributions of Jews the world over, as they broke the bonds and cast off the yoke of the hardscrabble life in the Pale, and entered the mainstream of the world community. The developments, that brought the Yiddish language to such a high plateau, suffered a more cruel fate. With the destruction of the Yiddish-speaking Eastern European community, the vital taproot of those who could build on the labors of *Mendele Mokher Sforim*, *Sholom Aleichem*, and *Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz*, was excised and cauterized, relegating the Yiddish language to the margin. The brilliant flare of *Isaac Bashevis Singer's* Nobel Prize was an after-prominence – not a manifestation of resurgence and continuity. This implication of the Holocaust calamity is what impels those, like myself, to assure that vital literature, originally written in Yiddish, not be allowed to languish in neglect behind a language barrier. The association, of translating *Pinkas Zamość* into English to this imperative, is therefore all the more poignant.

*Pinkas Zamość* is not the only Yizkor Book that was written about that city, nor was it the first. In his Foreword, the Executive Committee member, ***Wolf Kornmass***, takes care to identify the precedence of an Israeli volume, written in Hebrew:

Kornmass identifies the debt of the committee to this first book, but indicated that it lacked comprehensiveness. The Argentine effort *absorbed this first book in its entirety*, and added to it from other sources. Accordingly, unlike the case with Volkovysk, I took the decision to confine my attention to the Argentine volume alone, and not translate the first Hebrew volume as part of this effort.

In preparing this translation, all the comments regarding rules and conventions followed in prior books continue to prevail. A continuing challenge lies in melding the editor's use of italics, boldface and special characters with my own. Once again, I ask for tolerance in coping with my specific choices. Unlike prior books, I have discovered that the writers and editors of *Pinkas Zamość* were not bashful about using footnotes and endnotes. Since I have provided extensive footnotes of my own, I have used the preface 'Author's Footnote' or 'Editor's Footnote' to indicate those elements that are actually part of the original text, and not original with me.

Another word is in order regarding bibliographic compilations. I have not translated several rather comprehensive bibliographies that have been incorporated into the body of *Pinkas Zamość*. The original editorial staff did this in the name of completeness, and one can stand in awe when confronting both the effort and scholarship required to do what they did. In this respect, an English translation, which would be very time consuming, adds little to the record. These bibliographies are of primary interest to scholars, whose command of Yiddish and Hebrew should be sufficient to enable them to use the records for reference.

In addition to the personalities associated with the *Haskala*, and the development of the Yiddish language, it is worth taking note of two stellar personalities associated with Zamość. They are:

- ***Rabbi Yaakov Krantz***, who is known as the ***Dubner Maggid***. He was a rabbinical leader who was immortalized by his consummate skill in instructing his flock through the use of parables. Though he took his name from a earlier 18-year tenure in the pulpit at Dubno, he spent his last 15 years as a spiritual leader in Zamość, and was laid to rest in its cemetery at the end of his life.

- ***Rosa Luxembourg***, the firebrand left-wing activist, born in Zamość, who appeared on the world stage during the early 20th century as a fighter for socialism and communism, and met her end at the hand of right wing extremists in Germany, during the unsettled years after the First World War.

The contrasts between these two, is a further testament to the richness of this 'Mother City to All Israel,' showing that her nest could produce excellence across the widest spectrum of human thought and endeavor.

I wish to extend thanks here, to a number of people, for helping to make this work possible. First, my thanks go to *Yeshaya Metal,* Staff Librarian of YIVO in New York City. *Yeshaya* has been a mainstay to me in ferreting out subtleties in Yiddish usage, with his various dictionaries at the hand. I am particularly indebted to him, for the reading of my translation of *Mordechai Shtrigler's* poetry, to assure that I did not lose the poet's intent in translation. I also wish to thank *Dr. Thomas Zoltan Fahidy*, Dean-Emeritus of Engineering at the University of Waterloo in Canada, for contributing a translation from Russian, and to *Leon Szyfer* of Toronto, Canada, and *Tomasz Panczyk*, now of Rohnert Park, California, for similar duties in Polish.

Spring 2004

*Jacob Solomon Berger*

# Foreword

**Wolf Kornmass**

We have come to the conclusion of our P i n k a s Z a m o ś ć .

It has taken a full seven years to gather, select and bring together the pain and tears of our slaughtered brothers and sisters; seven years have passed before we were able to realize our objective – to place a memorial for all generations to come, for our annihilated community of Z a m o ś ć .

We began to think about a Memorial Book seven years ago, even before our *landsleit* in Israel began to plan a volume [of this nature]. When this idea reached us, we decided to wait. Only after we received the volume, *Zamość, in its Glory and its Destruction*, which was published in Israel, did we decide to takes steps to action and to realize our project.

Under no circumstances will we minimize the [contribution] of the Israeli Yizkor Book (on the contrary, we took a number of works from there, and inserted them into our Yizkor Book), there were, however, two substantive reasons why, after we became acquainted with the contents of *Zamość, in its Destruction and its Glory*, that we took the position that it was nevertheless important for us to put out this current volume.

First, the referenced book of eye-witness and remembrance was published in Hebrew, and most of our survivors and our entire family of *landsleit* around the world, are not comfortably familiar with Hebrew, and will not know what is being set forth therein.

Secondly – The Israeli volume did not fully utilize *a l l* the material that is available about Zamość, and there was a need to round out and complete the history of our home city.

Those who will initially acquaint themselves with the contents of *Pinkas Zamość* will immediately see how much important material, whether about the history of the community, or about the Holocaust, has been added by us.

Also, in our volume, despite its large size, specific details yet are missing, but it contains those details, that it was possible to successfully extract from all corners of the world.

If there are materials that remained in someone's possession that we could have used, and did not find its way into this volume, it is not our fault. Literally, hundreds of letters were sent out, to places where all we had was merely an address. Over the course of years, we [persistently] asked for and demanded material.

I wish also to recall, that much material was sent to us by *landsleit* that we did not utilize. This occurred in those instances where the submitted facts proved to be repetitive, when someone else had already submitted it before. For this very reason, it was necessary to edit content out of some writings, if these facts had already been covered by someone else.

We made an effort to assure that a l l points of view that had an influence in our city would find their place in this volume. If someone should feel that "their" point of view was not done justice, let that person know that this was not done intentionally. Everything sent by e v e r y o n e was utilized in some fashion or another.

It is because of this reason, that we wanted to accommodate e v e r y t h i n g and e v e r y o n e ' s views, that out *Pinkas* grew to such size. We were thinking of a 400-page book, and it emerged more than three times that size!

The *Pinkas* is now before its readership, and everyone, with great satisfaction, should be able to attest to the fact that there is nothing "redundant" in it. Every chapter, and every section has its own justification, and needed to be included in our Yizkor Book.

Fate decreed that the sacred mission of technically bringing *Pinkas Zamość* into the world fall on us, the Zamośćhers of A r g e n t i n a . In that connection, we are totally aligned with our Zamość colleagues in the world, first in the United States and Israel, against whose numbers we are not so large. Also, we are not particularly replete with wealthy people.

It just so happened that it was us, despite our small numbers, and not having a large *landsmanschaft,* and far from being an organization with means, had the great privilege of being the most active in setting up this memorial to our home city that was cut down.

We had unending difficulties. Not everyone had a supportive attitude to our initiative. It took a great deal of energy until we were able to convince Dr. Yaakov Shatzky ע"ה and others, that they should consent to participate in this undertaking.

If our work is crowned with praise, first and foremost we must pay tribute to the harmonious and collective cooperation of the entire *Pinkas* Committee, not only the Central Committee, but also the many sub-committees and the special committees. Everyone, in his own way, with boundless commitment, carried out the tasks that this truly risky undertaking demanded.

I will not mention specific names here. They all figure in the list of the *Pinkas* Committee. I will make an exception only for our so-called "foreign ambassadors."

These are our friends – the tireless worker Israel Zilber, who was always ready, at every behest, to help either materially or technically, and our friend, Izzy Herman (Itcheh-Leib Herring), who followed our activity from the first day onwards, since we began the preparation of the *Pinkas.* These comrades from the United States were seconded by Chaim Shpizeisen ע"ה from Israel. He was literally fevered with the concept of this *Pinkas*, led and united the *landsleit* from the four corners of the world. Despite himself being a *Bundist*, he aroused all the organizational activists from Zamość (Zionists and Religious people), convincing them to support the *Pinkas* with their efforts. And wishing him many more years, a large portion in the creation of our *Pinkas* is also due to our comrade, Jekuthiel Zwillich, who after Shpizeisen's death, carried out the entire agenda of generating assistance and researching the required material. Let it also be recorded here, that he carried out the painstaking assembly of the names of our martyrs for the necrology in our *Pinkas.*

In speaking of those who helped with the creation of the materials, I cannot skip over without reminding us of the work of the *landsleit,* Moshe Freilich (his comments and insights in connection with the writings about the *Neustadt*), Mendel Finkman, Aharon Ebersfeld, and Zelik Kap for their recollections and insights in the chapter on professional movements.

Finally, I want to recall that our substantial effort surrounding the creation of *Pinkas Zamość* was coordinated by our Editor, Mordechai Bernstein, who did not stint on energy, to assure that this *Pinkas* would contain whatever greater amount possible of original material. In this way, I wish to emphasize that it is perhaps the Editor, who is most responsible for this volume being so comprehensive, insofar as it covers [material about] everything and everyone that made an impact, was creative, lived, and fought in Zamość.

It is certain that we would have been fortunate, were we able to publish *Pinkas Zamość* in concert with a Jubilee of our community; how great would have been our joy if we could have brought this volume as gift to a productive, thriving settlement....

To our great pain, this is not a Jubilee Book, but rather a Yizkor Book, a Book of Lamentation, a new *Megillat Eykhah*, after hundreds of years of Jewish productivity, that was eradicated along with those who were its creators and activists.

Perhaps we will find a small morsel of solace in that this very *Pinkas Zamość* will assure that the memories of our dear fathers, mothers, wives and children will never be forgotten; that we will forever remember their martyrdom; that together with a sacred tremor following our recalling them, we will carry with us a deep and eternal curse towards their murderers – against the *Amalekites* of our Generation, the Nazi Bandits and their hirelings and willingly murderous lackeys.

***Pinkas Zamość*** appears at the tragic 15th anniversary of the annihilation of our dear home city. On the occasion of this bloody Yahrzeit, we declare and swear:

Never, never to forget the sacred memory of our martyrs.

Never, never to forgive their torturers and murderers.

# The Genesis of Zamość

*Page 18: A Map of the Settlements around Zamość in the 17th Century.*

*Page 19:* *Left: The Founder of Zamość, Jan Zamoyski*
*Right: The plaque over his grave in the College*

*Page 20:* *The geographical surrounding of Zamość. Dotted lines show the trade routes of the Middle Ages.*

*Page 21:* *Zamość, according to a plan from Cologne, in 1618.*

Before we approach our central purpose, to relate the history of the rise and bloody fall of the city that was a Mother to Israel, the Jewish Community of ***Z a m o ś ć***, we consider it appropriate to tell of the beginnings of that city in general: by whom and when the city was erected; the various phases of the development of Zamość; the era and the details of the rise and expansion of the settlement; the environs and neighboring settlements; about the roads and transportation arteries that ran through Zamość. It is important to take note of the ***t e r r i t o r y ,*** which was the basis for the establishment of a Jewish presence in this city. Many of the details of our Jewish history in that location are intimately bound up and tied to the general conditions of that place. Many of the occurrences within the Jewish settlement in the area become understandable, when placed against the backdrop of the general history of the city.

The following details have been taken from a variety of Polish sources, and especially from the work of S t a n i s l a w H e r b s t , *Zamość* (Polish), which appeared in 1955. We took a variety of reproductions from the same source, pictures and maps of the city, that illustrate the underlying data, facts and portrayals.

The Committee

It is over a thousand years already, that the routes of world commerce pass through the location of present day Zamość, to the other parts of the world. That land, between the Bug and the Vistula, was an attractive objective. The commercial routes of the Middle Ages passed through these places, the transit-caravans from ***Kiev***, (the commercial center of the East) passed through these places on their way to the West.

The commercial route that stretched from the border line of Polesia through ***Ludomir*** (Volodymyr-Volyns'kyj) and ***Ustyluh*** turned towards the Bug, went to the Vistula, and reached to the Baltic Sea. This route then branched out, and went off in a variety of directions – to Hrubieszow, to Szczebrzeszyn – from there, further on to the San [River], in order to provision Krakow and Prague with merchandise.

At that time, Zamość was not yet on the map.

The invasion wars of the Tatars and Lithuanians ensue along these routes. World transportation comes to a halt. However, a local production capability begins to take form; cities begin to grow; the wide plains become covered with agricultural points of production – estates of the nobility surrounded with peasant villages that spring up. The land becomes worked on, settled, exploited, and bears fruit.

The cities that were so established, the influx of population, causes a further development of agriculture – new tracts of land are continuously taken under human control, to meet the needs of the populace.

The vast areas surrounding present day Zamość were wild and uninhabited. A few isolated locations had small

settlements, for the most party, these being castles of the nobility, or Christian monasteries.

The settlement of ***Goraj*** dates from the year 1420.

The village of ***Skokówka*** is first mentioned in 1450. That village (along with neighboring settlements) are bought by the ***Zamoyskis*** in 1517.

These very Zamoyskis obtained land from a Siradze family of horsemen, and the founder of this Zamoyski landholding, ***Tomasz*** from ***Lazin*** was in the area already from the beginning of the 15th century. It was on this Zamoyski estate, that a fortress was constructed at the confluence of the ***Labunka*** and ***Topornica*** [Rivers]. This castle keep became the residence of the landed estate owner, ***Stanislaw Zamoyski***, in the year 1535. Here, in this first Zamoyski castle, ***Jan Zamoyski*** was born, who would later become the Chancellor of Poland, the founder of the city of Zamość.[1]

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[1] The following obituary appeared in the New York Times of July 12, 2002:

**Jan Zamoyski, 90, Partisan and Polish Aristocrat, Dies**

**By PAUL LEWIS**

Jan Zamoyski, the head of one of Poland's richest and most powerful noble families, whose life reflected his country's turbulent and destructive political fate in the 20th century, died on June 29 in Warsaw. He was 90.

In May 1939, just months before the invasion by Germany, Count Zamoyski succeeded his father as the 16th master of Zamość, in southeastern Poland. This made him the country's biggest landowner, with nearly 500,000 acres of farmland and forest, sugar refineries, paper mills, sawmills and distilleries, a palace in Warsaw, and major collections of pictures, illuminated manuscripts and early books.

A year later, after he had served as a lieutenant in the Polish Army during its futile defense against the Nazis, Count Zamoyski was back in Zamość but leading a double life. Under German orders, he ran his vast agricultural estates to feed the occupying Nazi army. But he also worked secretly with the Polish underground resistance.

In 1941, under the Nazis, Zamość was renamed Himmlerstadt, and the occupiers began replacing Poles with German colonists, who were given any blond-haired Polish children younger than 8.

Count and Countess Zamoyski tried to help their fellow Poles. About 500 children were saved from deportation and hidden on his estates, according to Adam Zamoyski, a relative now living in London. Valuables were sold to bribe the Nazis, and the count provided secret hiding places for resistance fighters, for people on the run from the Nazis (including Stefan Wyszynski, who became a cardinal and the Roman Catholic primate of Poland), and for escaped Allied prisoners and downed airmen.

After the Soviet Army captured the region in 1944, it showed its distaste for aristocrats by imprisoning the count for a year and confiscating his possessions, even though he was by then a colonel in the Polish underground resistance to the Nazi occupation, according to obituaries in two leading Polish dailies.

After being forced to take a series of menial jobs, he was arrested by the Communists in 1949 and sentenced to 25 years' imprisonment on trumped-up charges of collaboration with the Nazis and of espionage for the West.

Released in 1956 after Stalin's death, Count Zamoyski again worked at various lowly jobs before becoming Swissair's Polish representative, a position that made him independent of the Polish Communist authorities and allowed him to travel.

Born on the family estates at Klemensowo on June 12, 1912, the count was a direct descendant of an earlier Jan Zamoyski, who as Polish chancellor in 1578 commissioned the Paduan architect Bernardo Morando to build a perfect Renaissance city at Zamość.

Count Zamoyski was educated in Poland and France and started on a musical career at the conservatory in Nancy, in eastern France, before his father sent him to study economics in preparation for taking over the family's agricultural estates.

Before the Zamoyski palace in Warsaw was bombed in the Nazi invasion, the count had hidden its artistic treasures in the cellars. He was eventually able to begin transferring them to monasteries and museums for safekeeping.

In that time, the land was already covered with a variety of routes, landowners of large estates, and people who owned thousands of peasant workers. Each individual built his own fortress – the residence from which they oversaw their territory. It was from these castles that the one-time commercial transactions were carried out (especially involving grain); the relationship of one territory to another; the administration of local affairs, and the relationship to the central government institutions of the country. Apart from that original Zamoyski castle, the residences of the nobles ***Firlej*** (Lubartow), ***Tarnowski*** (Izbica-Tarnogrod), ***Gorka*** (Szczebrzeszyn) were also to be found in the vicinity. These old-time magnates were role models for the young, very capable and dynamic aristocrat, Jan Zamoyski, who at the age of 37 had already become the Polish Chancellor.

In the year 1578, Jan Zamoyski married the daughter of the magnate ***Radziwill***. He was, at that time, already a mighty suzerain over six large landed estates. With the consent of the magnates of the period, he decides to construct a modern fortress-castle, in the spirit of the Renaissance that prevailed during that era. This fortress needs to be located at the mid-point of his widely branched Zamoyski regime, in the village of ***Skokówka***, on the border with the tracts that lead in various directions.

According to the plan of the young magnate, it is evident that he wanted to build not only a palatial residence for himself, but, indeed, a large, administrative and commercial center. The layout of the area, and the plan reveal that he had the perspective in his eye that this new settlement, which was to be named ***Nowy Zamość*** (because ***Old Zamość***, was the place where the progenitor of the Zamoyskis, Tomasz of Lazin lived at the time) would have to become the most important center of the area. That location was the midpoint of the communication routes of that era, that led to Krasnystaw, Szczebrzeszyn and Tomaszow.

The planned settlement had to also be a mighty fortress, in the style of the latest achievements in the security system of that time. It also needed to be an example of urban design, of esthetics and practicality, and needed to stand out from the standpoint of architectural craftsmanship.

The act of establishment of the city is traced to April 3, 1579 and was held in the town of ***Jaroslawiec.***

On April 3, 1580, Chancellor Jan Zamoyski issued rights and privileges to those who would take up residence in the new city. This set of privileges, that was institutionalized two months later by the central Polish authority, released all the settlers of any levies, assessments and taxes for a period of twenty years; triennial marks were established; rights to transfer goods to Rus and Volhynia[2] were established.

The first thought of the Chancellor Jan Zamoyski was to build a new type of castle, which would not be similar to those from the Middle Ages – instead of having a security system of water-filled moats, it would be a Renaissance residence – around which an urban populace could come to grow, and [to this end] he selected the hilltop of the village of ***Zdanów***.

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After the count's release from prison, Adam Zamoyski said, he continued to oversee this transfer of family treasures to Poland's museums and churches and helped raise money abroad for the restoration of Zamość.

In the 1980's, as normal political life became possible again, he also helped re-establish the prewar National Democratic Party as a conservative party, shorn of the anti- Semitic reputation it had acquired in prewar days. In 1989 he won a seat in the Senate in Poland's first free elections in 50 years, serving a single term.

For many years he fought, with little success, for the return of Communist-confiscated lands and property to their original owners.

His wife, the former Countess Roza Zoltiowska, died in 1976. He is survived by four daughters, Elzbieta Daszewska, Maria Poninska and Agnieszka Roznowska, all of Warsaw, and Gabriella Boguslawska, of Oslo; and a son, Marcin, who managed to buy back about 1,500 acres of the family estates near Zamość that he now farms.

The count was buried in the Renaissance cathedral at Zamość, next to the city's founder, his kinsman and namesake.

[2] Also rendered as *Wolyn* in Polish, and *Volyn* in Ukrainian.

On July 1, 1578, Zamoyski consummates a deal with a prominent architect, who was ***Bernardo Morando***, who was born in Padua. Morando, at that time, was already known in Poland. He began his career by building the Warsaw Palace, imbedding the work that was begun by G. V. Kvarda. Morando also owned the brick making franchise in the city of Warsaw. Jan Zamoyski already had known Morando – in 1673[3], Morando accompanied Zamoyski on his mission to Paris.

The agreement was consummated in Lemberg,[4] where Morando was located, and discharged several responsibilities as royal architect. On October 3, Jan Zamoyski settled on the building plan that was presented.

A city arose, that integrated planning and convenience with unusual beauty. The security needs of that important settlement were also taken into account. The center of the town, the market, *Rynek*, which occupied an area 100 meters wide and 100 meters long, along with the covered passageways and sideways covered by roofs[5]. The well-planned quarters around the *Rynek* created an unusual panorama, which was only further enhanced esthetically by the unique decoration of the buildings.

In order to maintain the fortress-like character of the new settlement, three city gates were incorporated into the security system: the ***Lemberg*** [Gate], ***Lublin*** [Gate] and ***Szczebrzeszyn*** [Gate] – communication exit points in various directions.

Apart from the general urban plan of the city, Morando also looked after the special representative municipal buildings, such as the [main] fortress castle, the church, municipal building, and arsenal.

Construction of the castle keep was already underway in the year 1579. The adjacent arsenal was built out in 1582. The construction of the Roman Catholic church began in 1593. The 'Academy' building was begun in 1590. Finally, the municipal building was begun in 1591. The rest of the constructed skeleton of the city arose later, which was surrounded by a system of moats and fortifications.

An audit of the construction work conducted in 1591 tells, that at that time there were 275 houses in Zamość, of these 217 were within the city's fortifications, and the remainder on its periphery.

Zamość, at its inception, had a mercantile character. Witness to this are 41 foreigners, who owned houses, among them Armenians, Persians, Greeks, and as will come out in more elaborate relating of detail, Jews from Spain. Among the citizens of the city, there were at that time about 100 craftsmen. It is necessary to separately recall a group of fur workers (eleven men) and weavers (twelve men). With the help of Zamoyski, the Armenian, Murat[6] Jakubowicz obtained a monopoly on the manufacture and trade of sapphires, carpets, Turkish tapestries[7], and indeed, did open a factory for these luxury items. The publications of the Zamość 'Academy' had a truly great reputation. It stood out as one of the best of its era. In its well-organized set of publications, important works appeared, whose technical merit could be favorably compared to international publications of the time.

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3 Likely a misprint, since this would be anachronistic. The intent was probably 1573.

4 What was also known as Lvov, and is today Lviv in Ukraine.

5 Called *podcienie* in Polish, meaning sideways covered by the roof, something like a porch. Called a *potchineh* in Yiddish.

6 Possibly the Armenian name, Murad.

7 Called *karabinden* in the Yiddish text, these tapestries are very likely from the city of Karapinar in Anatolia, where such tapestries were woven in medieval times, and even to this day. In fact, today they are still referred to as 'Anatolian Karapinars.'

Morando died in Zamość in 1600. In the final years before his death, he was the Burgomaster of the city. After his death, the rapid-paced construction of the city abated. Not all the projects of the founders of the city had come to fruition yet. It is only in the first 20 years of the 17th century that a further development of the city can be discerned. A further building up of the city is undertaken, and the completion of the principal buildings that had been initiated.

> In the year 1622, work on the municipal building is started up again.
> In 1639, the 'Academy' building is finally completed.
> In 1640, the Franciscan church is built, which later, in the 19th century becomes converted into a municipal theater.

The castle keep itself is built in the 18th century, by the architect Columbani.

In the middle of the 17th century, during the period of the Cossack rebellions of Bohdan Chmielnicki, known as *G'zerot Ta"kh Ve'T"at* [8] , Zamość suffered proportionately less. The fortified city was able to defend itself against the attackers. The city however does suffer from a series of heavy fires.

In the year 1666, Zamość and its environs had 253 houses suitable for dwelling, not counting the municipal government buildings, and also not the houses of worship. In this count, were 63 houses of stone wall construction.

During the First Partition of Poland, in 1772, Zamość came under Austrian rule. In the year 1774, the head of the Austrian regime, King, Josef II, settled in Zamość, and lived in a fortified house on the marketplace. Zamość then becomes the administrative center for that region, which then encompassed the area of Galicia and Ludomierz. During this period (in 1782), the Zamość 'Academy' is liquidated.

During the period of the Napoleonic Wars, Zamość becomes one of the most important strategic locations. The city holds out on two separate occasions against massive attacks – in the years 1809 and 1813[9]. The importance of the fortress becomes developed, which is continuously renewed, and new points of defense are added to it.

In the later years, also in the first period under Czarist rule, the fortress occupied quite an important position in the vicinity of Zamość, and gave the city a distinct military character.

Incorporating the larger part of the city into the strategic military defense perimeter, caused the peripheries of the city to be built up and joined. The increase in the population did not find [living] space in the city proper, which was drawn into the system of fortresses. Among these peripheral areas, the ***Nowa Osada*** deserves special mention, which was known among the Jews as ***Neustadt.***

This area of the city was planned out in the year 1822, following the same plans as the city; in symmetrical quadrilateral streets, with a four-sided marketplace in the middle. This new settlement took the form of a chessboard on both sides of the Lemberg highway, which subsequently became one of the most important Jewish points in Zamość. More about the tragic end of this *Neustadt* will be related later, in the appropriate place.

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8 From the Hebrew designation of this as a harsh decree, called by the numerical Hebrew years that correspond to 1648-9.

9 From a discussion of a 1/16 scale model of a Polish Voltigeur of 1809: The 17th Infantry Regiment of 1809 was NOT part of the Polish Legions that fought with Napoleon from very early on but an indigenous unit raised in the Polish homeland from the men of the town of Zamość. It later took part in the battles of Mohylew [sic: Mogilev] and Beresina [sic: Bereszin] in 1812, then in the defense of the town of Modlin and it's home town of Zamość after which it disappears from the annals.

Later, after the Polish rebellion of 1861, the fortress was torn down. The important fortifications are razed. The Czarist authority does not want to have a fort in a Polish city. The events that took place during the rebellion revealed that the Poles utilize such places against the occupiers. Only traces remain from that former fortress, which serve as a memorial relationship that Zamość once had to the military.

After the razing of the defense fortifications and the city gates, the city began to develop. For military and strategic reasons, Zamość did not have a place on the railroad network. The closest railroad station was in **Rajoweic**, which was on the railroad line from Lublin to Chelm that was built in 1877, 54 kilometers away. It was first in 1915, that a rail line was built between Rajowiec and Belzeč (by the German-Austrian occupation authorities). This line included Zamość. A line was built from **Zawoda** to **Ludomir**, which cut through Zamość.

As recorded in the referenced book, ***Zamość*** by St. Herbst, the population growth in Zamość during the past 100 years is as follows:

| Year | Residents |
|---|---|
| 1822 | 4,709 |
| 1865 | 6,222 |
| 1897 | 10,963 |
| 1909 | 14,213 |
| 1931 | 24,273 |
| 1939 | 27,358 |

*Page 22:* *The Zamość City Plan from the year 1939, with the historical buildings indicated*

*Page 23:* *The General View of Zamość with the Municipal Building in the Middle.*

*Page 25:* *A Covered Passageway ('Potchineh'), Number 30 on the Armenian (Ormianska) Street. The sales stand for pots belonging to Buzheh (Baruch) Tepper.*

*Page 26:* *A fragment of the 'Solny Rynek' a view from the Municipal Jail.*

*Page 27:* *The various Gates of the Marketplace*

*Top Left:* *From the wall at Mickiewicza 4* *Top Right:* *From the Wall at Mickiewicza 6*

*Bottom Left:* *From the wall at Staszica 17* *Bottom Right:* *From the wall at Staszica 31*

*Page 28:* *Entrance to the covered passageway of the Brukovaner Gasse to the Armenian Street. In this portion, were located the businesses of Hannah Paletz, Hodel Lubliner, Chaim Brenner.*

# Regarding the History of the Jews in Zamość

**By Israel Levin** (Jerusalem)

*Page 30:* *A bird's eye view of Zamość, in the middle is the Municipal Tower with the city clock*

When I begin to tell the story of my city, she stands before me as if she were alive; I see her with the eyes of my youth. I left her [many] years ago, and I was ten years old at the time.

Standing on her ruins, on the graves of the thousands of Jews, I want to carry on a conversation with myself, before I will begin to tell her history.

She was beautiful, my city of Zamość; her streets and houses were fine and clean, they looked modest. A special grace flowed down upon her from the high tower, that stood in the middle of the city – just as if it wanted to delineate to her residents their very special elevated importance. There was no elaboration of beauty, only a simplicity that captivated all onlookers. It was a Jewish center, an integrated source of grace, woven into Polish Jewry. Her Jews were simple folk people. One could find there every walk of life representative of Polish Jewry. There were rich Jews there, merchants, people of substance, and poor people, salaried laborers, workers, *balebatim*, cultured sorts, those of a sentimental spirit – but also porters, wagon drivers, muscularly built, there were religiously observant rabbinical circles, hearty Hasidic groups, and a large variety of organizations, also the *Haskala* thrived here in its time. Also, the *Bund* was not absent from the Jewish Street – and the *Halutz* movement from the working classes in the Land of Israel made the lives of the city [dwellers] more worthwhile.

All of this flowed together into a general portrait of life, which created a fully-colored dynamic way of life.

Now everything has been destroyed. Jewish Zamość no longer exists. From her nearly fifteen thousand Jewish residents, no one has remained. A child can count the number of those who were saved. They come from the upheaval in their city to weep over the graves of their parents, or to liquidate their possessions. The sword that cut down European Jewry reached here as well. After a short, somber life in a ghetto, the Jews were taken out into the forests and murdered out there.

Yes, there were broad and deep forests all around, that surrounded Zamość. I remember, while still a child, enjoying myself by running around there, in those forests, during the summers. The joy and gladness of the parents of Jewish children was great indeed, when their children would vanish among the high orchard-like trees during the summer months.

It is in these very forests that the Jews were butchered. They were cut down by means of automatic machine-gun fire, and buried in mass graves. A portion of them were dragged off on death marches, far away in the death factories and extermination camps. Only one large grave remained in Zamość, where thousands of bodies remain hidden.....

## One [10]

In the year 1939 – according to the general census taken that year – there were 3,250,000 Jews in Poland, which came to 9.4% of the general population.

In that year, between 13 and 15 thousand Jews lived in Zamość. The exact amount is unknown. The last count I found is from the year 1931 – at that time, Zamość had more than ten thousand Jewish residents (exactly 10,265). The percentage that the Jewish population of Zamość entailed, as a fraction of the entire Jewish population of Poland, did not come to a full one-half of a percentage point. What kind of importance could such a small point have? What is the basis of the praise accorded to Zamość by such personalities as N. Sokolov, I. L. Peretz[11], and others?

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[10] Author's footnote: Statistical data is taken from a variety of sources, especially from *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia 1942*, from the chapter 'Statistics' pp. 23-36.

[11] Author's footnote: In Peretz's *'Memories'* all works.

But Zamość was like that already, she was a sort of mirror of Polish Jewry; from her history, from community affairs; from the construction of its cultural institutions; one could learn about the general life of the Jews in Poland in a condensed form.

Also, a different picture is seen from a statistical point of view than what may be a first impression. It is understood that a quantitative scientific analysis can only be based on the real, exact figures, which are brought into juxtaposition with other calculations. Here, we will present a number of examples:

**Zamość was a Jewish city.** In accordance with established assessments, the general level of the population of Zamość in 1939 was not higher than 25 thousand residents. That means, by a careful [sic: conservative] count, the number of Jews was more than 50 percent, and in any case, no less than this. Let us, indeed, see what did this [percentage] look like in other larger and more important communities in Poland? (Not mentioning already the really small towns).

In **Warsaw** – the Polish capital, the large [sic: Jewish] community there numbered 365,000 souls, but it was only 29.4% of the general population.

**Lodz** – the second largest city in Poland, the city of commerce and industry, had 220 thousand Jews (at the time of the outbreak of the War) – this was 34.9% of the total of the general population.

**Lublin** – that large and important city, whose significance to the autonomous Jewish way of life in Poland cannot be merely dismissed in a couple of lines, had 38,971 Jews in the year 1931, which means 34.7% of the general population.

It is possible, that the absolute number of Jews in Zamość will show us in a completely different light. Who can with steadfast certainty aver, that in the year 1939, that there were many mid-sized cities where Jews comprised 50% of their populace? There were large Jewish communities in the tens and hundreds all over the world. Communities where the number of Jews found there was more than one hundred thousand. There were 18 such communities in the year 1939, and they were concentrated: 5,935,000 Jews, which implies approximately 35% of the general total of the population in those cities. New York, with her 2,600,000 Jews did not comprise more than 29.3% of all its residents.

It is true, that in periods [of history] a long time ago, the number of communities in which the Jews were more than fifty percent of the city was large. It is recognized, that in Poland, the Jews were the foundation of the community development of the city. In the year 1900, the Lublin Jews still comprised 51.3% of the general residential population; from an historical perspective, that community, which numbered 24,280 souls in 1900, was stronger, from a Jewish-nationalist standpoint, from that same community later in 1931, which numbered 38,937 souls.

Even if the absolute numbers of the Jewish communities in Poland, mostly kept growing until the Great Catastrophe, there was always a constant decrease in the percentage of Jews versus the general population. It is close to the truth, that the same process was at work in Zamość in the course of the past one hundred years. But up until the end of the existence of the community, it was able to maintain its numerical superiority.

And it is here that the secret to the of the persona of this Polish city lies. When whoever came here, his feet trod on Jewish streets, on a Jewish cultural matrix. Her Jewish residents were not spread out, they all lived securely, concentrated in the center of the city, even if they also found themselves in the various newer neighborhoods. The beautiful Synagogue rounded out the social-national framework of the community, more so than the Catholic Cathedral, that had been constructed by the founder of the city, whose castle was found on the 'Academy Street,' as the general symbol of sovereignty.

[Here is] a separate interesting chapter in the growth of Jewish Zamość. As an example, we will present some specific figures:

In the year 1856/7 there were no more than 2,490 Jews in Zamość,

In the span of about 40 years, until the end of the 19th century approximately, the number grew to 7,034.

From that point forward, the absolute number of Jews continually rose. After the First World War, in the year 1921, the number of the Jews in Zamość was 9,383. Ten years later – 10,265. As previously mentioned, the number of Jews, on the eve of the Second World War, was between 13-15 thousand.

The growth of the Jewish population in Zamość exceeded the general growth in other Polish communities. The history of the Jewish community in Zamość, in connection to the general development of the history is highly correlated. The strong advance in the second half of the 19th century is particularly characteristic. During this period, the Zamość community tripled in population; **Warsaw** grew from 41,062 to 219,141 and continued to grow; Jewish **Lublin** grew from 8,588 to 24,280; **Lodz** starting from a small community, which in the years 1856-7 numbered no more than 2,775 Jews, was transformed into the second largest [Jewish] community in Poland and in the years [from] 1887-1900 rose

to the high number of 98,677 [Jews]. During this time, it happens that the greatest growth in world Jewish population in general, and in Europe in particular [takes place here]. But not all communities safeguarded this very same progressive development; in a minority of communities there were even signs of decline (for example: **Bialystok** which in 1921 has 39,602 Jews, had, in the general census of 1931 39,165); A number of communities came to a steady state point, among them, also Lublin.

**Zamość, however, is counted among those communities in Poland whose population growth did not decline, and whose development was not stifled.** It was the opposite; the number of Jews in the years from 1931-1939 bears witness to the growth and was **not diminished because of the general restraint of the residents,** something that cannot be said even of Lodz, and also not about other communities, with Warsaw at their head.

## Two

*Page 33:* *The covered passage ways by the Brukovaner Street (last May 3); On the right used to be the spice business of Abraham Rantz; Left; [Belongs to] Baylah Itkeh's*

*Page 35:* *The Right Staircase to the Town Municipal Building.*

*Page 37:* *The southern part of the Rynek. The printing shop of Hernhaut was here, and the businesses of Ben-Zion Lubliner, Hessia Goldstein (Peretz's sister), Itcheh Meir Kohn (former Rosh Yeshiva in Zamość)*

The history of the Jews in Zamość is interwoven with the general history of the Jews in Poland. There are, however, many points in the 'political' history – if it is possible to express one's self that way – where it is worth taking special note, which has a special relationship to Zamość.

Zamość was built by ***Jan Zamoyski*** in the year 1550. He surrounded the city with a great and strong defense system, and transformed it into a mighty fortress-city. This very fortress endured for 300 years. I. L. Peretz, in his memoirs, recalls the destruction of that fortress. As a generalization, Jews would appear in every newly founded city in Poland. As we will subsequently see, they sided with the forces of historical lawmaking which gave a sound basis to the social-commercial position of the city, which, incidentally, was an organic part of the general social-commercial system of Poland. Zamość, however, was off limits to Jews. It appears that the founder forbade Jews to settle there during his entire life. It is certain that the classic causes of Jewish persecution in Poland also had their influence here, which already had a long tradition of anti-Semitic manifestations. It appears that the religious-economic hostility of the Catholic Church, was not compatible, at the time of the establishment of the city, with the need for Jewish participation in the economic development of the city, and it caused the gates of the city to be closed to the Jews, [with the Church] having the nobleman Jan Zamoyski as a tool in their hands.

It was the time of the offensive of the Jesuits, who saw in Zamość a bastion of Catholicism, and with the direction of the Vatican, they wanted to use this base to attack all the royal [sic: secular] forces which had gained in power, together with the Protestant Reformation in the West. To this, were added other factors which aligned with their view of the Jews, because of commercial animosity, which they covered up with 'religious' motives. This reactionary offensive, which developed during the reign of the last Jagiellonian [king] – Zygmunt August – was brought to fruition by that very king, and through the powerful Hungarian monarch, Stefan Batory (1576 - 1586). This wave destroyed every dam during the rule of Zygmunt III [Vasa]. The characteristic manifestation was the wave of blood libels which increased with frequency, beginning at the end of the 16th century – both in the form of blood libels about 'desecration of the Host,' that Jews defile the bread of the sacrament, and in libels that Jews carry out ritual murders. These libels were very well thought out and set up. In the year 1598, a judgement, based on cruelty, was handed down in Lublin, regarding a blood libel, which was a signal [to initiate] a long litany of bloody and barbaric depredations against the Jews.

Zamość was built up during this era of hatred. It is no wonder, then, that its gates were closed to Jews during the initial period of its establishment. It is necessary to underscore the fact that Zamość was no exception at this time, nor was it the first city in Poland which did not admit Jews within its perimeter. Warsaw was among such cities for a long time; from the year 1527, when the Duchy of Mazovia gave way to the Polish crown. Among the other conditions that were set for this submission to the crown, was to forbid Jews to settle there.[12]

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12 In 1526 the last duke of Mazovia died without an heir, thus putting Warsaw, along with the whole of Mazovia, under the direct rule of the Polish king in Krakow.

But the laws of history and economics are iron laws, that do not let themselves be bent even by the dark instincts of religious hatred. We have already noted previously, that the Polish cities were unable to increase their development and growth, did not have the means to achieve an economic growth spurt without a Jewish presence and its attendant financial resources. Both the king and the nobles knew this economic importance only too well, and they exerted themselves from time-to-time to assist the Jews; that they should contribute from their livelihood to the development of the municipal institutions, its economy and its commerce. Indeed, they would often do this, not only contrary to the will and direction of the priests and Jesuits, but also against the the efforts of the non-Jewish municipal elements and merchants, or against the Germans who had penetrated into Poland from the Rhenish mountains. For this reason, Catholic Zamość could not long remain closed to the Jews, who assumed a rightful place in the development of the city, and its commercial relationships – a fact of life that stood out prominently during the course of later centuries.

The genesis of the Jewish community in Zamość is shrouded in darkness, and it is not possible to accurately establish the exact year of its establishment. What is known to us with certainty, is that in the year 1588, Sephardic Jews settled in the city, who obtained a special privilege from the ruler of the city. It appears, however, that the first large synagogue was constructed by Ashkenazic Jews about in the year 1596.[13] The question continues to remain open as to from what date one can speak of the Zamość community as being organized, and established on a stable base. It is clear, however, that the community had organized itself by the beginning of the 17th century. Many stories from the Chmielnicki period, about the Jews of Zamość, have come down to us (one of them is recalled by **Peretz** in his memoirs). That *Scourge*, who inundated Poland, and brought its Jewish communities to ruin, also besieged the Zamość fortress, together with his Cossacks. The new and strong fortress stood against him, and he left there in disgrace. It is told, that the Jews of the city then saved themselves by hiding in the Great Synagogue, which was the darling of the Jewish city, until the Nazi Holocaust.

It appears that the community grew rapidly, because, as previously mentioned, until the first half of the 19th century, it was very small. Size notwithstanding, it was counted as an important community. It is first mentioned in the documents of the Four Lands[14] in the year 1677, in a form that bears witness that it was already a secure community from an economic standpoint.

From that date on, the number of documents from the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* in which Zamość is mentioned, grows continuously. This source of material is very valuable in learning about the history of the community and its life. From there, we learn of the important place that Zamość occupied, from an organizational standpoint, in the autonomous sphere of Polish Jewry; about her financial condition which was based on the contributions given by Jews of Zamość to the budget of the autonomous institutions; about the merchants and the financial people who were there, what their influence wrought, even at quite a distance; and finally – about its great Rabbis and their great influence on education in the spiritual innovations of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, and in its *Bet Din*. We note this here just as a bullet point to identify the millstones of the history of Jewish Zamość. In later chapters, we will have the opportunity to cover this material in greater detail.

The radiant autonomy of the Polish Jews dissipated with the decline of Poland. Along with the larger part of the kingdom, Zamość fell under Austrian rule, at the time of the third partition of Poland; Zamość found itself under the hell of Russian rule from 1816 to the end of the First World War (in between, there was a small break during the Napoleonic years, and the existence of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw). Along with other Polish Jews, the Jews of Zamość took part in the uncertain intrigues against Czarist rule. Documents about the active part of Zamość convey to us the essence of the period of the second Polish rebellion of 1863.

In 1912, Zamość, along with the entire Chelm Region was taken away from the then-Russian-occupied part of Poland, and – especially with the influence of the Russian-Orthodox Church – was annexed to Russia itself.

It didn't take long, and the storm of the First World War broke out all over. The Jewish community of Zamość was also sucked into this maelstrom. And an unusual thing occurred in contrast to the surrounding communities, only very few Jews from the city fled deep into Russia because of the conflagration of the war. Thus, the numbers and the framework

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13 Author's footnote: Regarding this matter, our *Pinkas* contains a special work by Dr. Yaakov Shatzky, see page 35 and further.

14 Author's footnote: *"Pinkas Va'ad Arba Aratzot"* by Israel Halpern, published in Jerusalem in 5705 – 1945. Sign שנ"ט, page 157. From this point on, this source will be designated as *"Pinkas."*

of the entire community was spared. Zamość was occupied by Austrian military divisions, but not for long. By the end of the war, the Jews of Zamość returned to the Polish nation, this time not to the Polish Crown, but to a Republic, which in fact was a dictatorship under Pilsudski in concert with the large landed estate owners. It is also worth mentioning that the storms that caused such an upheaval in Eastern Europe as a result of the First World War, did not have an impact on Zamość: the Red Army offensive, which had spread – through the outbreak of the Russian Revolution – and reached up to Polish soil, also reached the outskirts of Zamość, the cannon shells fell on the city. The retreat from Warsaw also caused the retreat from Zamość.

The religious and cultural movements of the 18th and 19th centuries, which defined the historical backdrop to the history of the Jews in that time, did not pass the Jewish streets of Zamość by. Its Rabbis and religious leaders took quite an active part in the discussions surrounding the Sabbatai Zvi[15] movement, and in the initiatives against the Jacob Frank Sect[16] from Podolia; a portion also did not avoid the mystical influence, which like lightning in the electrified air, lit Jewish hopes for a solution [to its plight] and was given a permissible place for making its mark by the *Baal Shem*, and which laid out the path for *Hasidism*.

Even if Jewish Zamość was not drawn into the strong Hasidic current, this message captured the hearts of a part of the Jews of Zamość and was taken up by them – not heeding the open antagonism of the side of the *'Mtnagdim*,' which was strong, with the Rabbi of the city at their head.

With the rise of the *Haskala* in Zamość, as attested to by Peretz, here were the most prominent – after Warsaw – and here all the beautiful fruits of this movement blossomed, with their own special local color, which came forth because of its own special history. We will yet return to these two periods, and separately tell about the essence of the important personalities – each one in his own area – that Zamość gave birth to. And since we are talking about this already, we must delineate the very important part that the nationalist movement played in the life of this Jewish city, the Hebrew education, the youth movements and training camps of the labor groups in the Land of Israel. Also the '*Bund*' movement – the movement of Jewish workers.

For approximately 20 years, the Jews of Zamość, along with the rest of Polish Jewry, lived in the stifling atmosphere of the 'Free Polish Republic.' In 1939, at the beginning of the Teutonic assault in Europe, and in the world, the city fell. A short time after the outbreak of the war, a tank company, and infantry from an Austrian division of the Nazi military, entered the city. Their first act, was to raise the swastika flag in a ceremonial manner high above the municipal tower. On this very spot, which was the liveliest artery of the community and commercial life of Jewish Zamość, the final decree was implemented. For a week's time, until the settlement of the borderlines, Zamość found itself under Russian rule.

After the first German military occupation forces, came the *Emissaries of Destruction* from the SS and the Gestapo. A few Jews made the attempt, and it was possible for them to cross over into the Russian zone of occupied Poland. A portion of them wandered off into far-distant Russia; part of them returned to the Nazi zone, because of shortsightedness, and came back to their city. In general, the Jewish community of Zamość stayed in place. This era of terror contains within it the painful secret of all the Jews of Poland. The city was located in that area, that the Nazis used to arrange the concentration of the Jews; not far from Lublin itself, whose terrors were a matter of prominent conversation, also in the chain of Nazi bestialities. It appears that the Jews of Zamość were the first to be killed. Not all of them had the 'privilege' of benefitting from the 'scientific' technology of exterminating human beings; in the

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15 A Jewish mystic and pseudo-Messiah, founder of the Sabbatean sect, b. Smyrna. After a period of study of Lurianic kabbalah, he became deeply influenced by its ideas of imminent national redemption. In 1648 he proclaimed himself the Messiah, named the year 1666 as the millennium, and gathered a host of followers. In 1666 he attempted to land in Constantinople, was captured, and to escape death embraced Islam. Nevertheless, the influence of the Sabbatean movement survived for many years; it had secret adherents in the 18th cent. and was revived under Jacob Frank. The name is also spelled Shabbatai (Shabtai) Zevi.

16 Last of the Messianic imposters, he considered himself the second person in the Trinity (son). Though he was soon excommunicated, he was still able to live in regal splendor, since the Rabbinate was too weak to crush him. Frank then converted to Christianity while still professing to be the Messiah. His daughter, Eve, carried on the family tradition of proclaiming her father the Messiah until her death in 1811.

forests around the city, in the cradle of nature of Poland, they were shot to death by the murderers.

This was the manner in which a vital Jewish community was transformed into a mass grave, into a ruined heap in the midst of the destruction of Polish Jewry, of all European Jewry. Together with this fate that was forced upon them, what history decreed to be the fate of Polish Jewry, the end of the community of Zamość was also brought about – an end from which there is no continuation, but only an inscription on a stone memorial.

But the slaughter in the forests did not choke off the voice of the Jews of Zamość. Polish Jewry fought, stood up and resisted, and showed the world at large, all of humanity, the military model of a sacred battle, the most marvelous in the history of the human race. These were the ghettoes of Warsaw, Vilna, Bialystok, and many others, which raised the wonder of resistance from the graves – at the threshold of death, when the sword of annihilation already hung over them, and there was no place to flee. And it is understandable and natural, that among the ranks of those very heroic fighters, there was no lack of the children of Jewish Zamość, who fell by the walls of the Warsaw Ghetto.

# Three

*Page 40:* *A Map of the Territory of The Va'ad Arba Aratzot. In the middle of the area "Tesha Kehillot," the Nine Communities, that belonged to Zamość.*

The origins of the Zamość community coincides with the rise of Jewish autonomy in Poland. In accordance with a royal administrative division of responsibility, the hegemony of the *'Va'ad Arba Aratzot'* was founded on the areas of administration of justice and education, and levied its taxes – both for its own needs, and for the royal treasury. The division of the land into sections, in areas, serves several purposes, apart from the organization of tax collection. The management in the councils followed these divisions, as did the membership of the various courts.[17]

When Zamość was still a small and weak community, the framework of the autonomous organization was already solid and crystallized. Zamość could not be independent, and it was attached to the **Chelm-Belz** Region, which took its name from those two important communities in that area. The Zamość community was one of the previously mentioned 30 central communities.

But Zamość did not find itself as a second-tier community for very long in the organizational framework of the *Va'ad*. We have previously seen that she quickly achieved economic and financial importance. This fact manifested itself in the proclamation of the independence of the Zamość community, from a financial standpoint, within the organizational framework of the autonomy. She broke off from the Chelm-Belz region, and became a region of its own, around which many daughter communities concentrated themselves; it was in this fashion that Zamość entered upon the royal road of becoming a great Jewish center.

It is hard to specify when this initial event took place; however, it is almost certain that it took place in the first years of the 18th century. The financial organization of the communities in a region were very rigorous, and it was not easy, at the time of allocating funds in the area, to solve all problems. Conflicts arise between the Chelm-Belz region and the Zamość region that go on for decades. These disputes, from time-to-time, reached to the highest courts of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*.

The first problem concerned the payment of debts. It was not only once that a body of the communities was forced to make cash loans to meet the needs of the organization and its institutions. The money was borrowed from a variety of sources, among them also the Polish nobility. Just as everyone enjoyed the benefits of the loan, so did every part of the organization find it necessary to carry the burden of the debt, and paying it. The Chelm-Belz Region (at the time that Zamość still belonged to it), borrowed a sum of 4,000 Polish Gulden from the Nobleman Olenski. When Zamość broke off from this region, a dispute broke out over the part of the debt that had been allocated to Zamość. This controversy was not stilled until it was brought before the *Bet Din* of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*. At a session of the court in Yaroslav, in the year 1711, the decision was handed down: Zamość is required to pay a third of the amount, and the other side

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[17] The *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, or Council of the Four Lands, was formed in Poland in 1581. This started an institution that represented the high point of Jewish autonomy in the diaspora. This Council represented the Jewish communities in the different parts of the Polish commonwealth. Its reason for official existence, as far as the Crown was concerned, was financial. Centralizing Jewry made tax negotiations and collections easier. Its reasons as far as the Jews were concerned were different. It enabled the Jews to have more control over their own lives. There were two regular councils, one of laymen who dealt with technical and financial subjects of concern to the Polish Jews and one of Rabbis who examined important Halakhic questions which needed to be decided.

two thirds.[18] The evidence indicates, however, that this judgement was not carried out, and that the dispute continued, because first of all, 12 years later, in 1723, the *Va'ad*, in its session in Riczevol, confirmed its prior judgement once again.[19]

A more serious and protracted dispute broke out over another matter, and this gives us a clearer picture of the relationships between the remaining communities of the former Chelm-Belz region on one side, and the continuously growing Zamość community on the second side.

We have previously indicated that the division, into areas and regions, was primarily determined for the financial income from [collecting] taxes. Following a central budget, apart from the royal taxes collected, sums were also collected for the internal needs of the apparatus of the autonomous organization, which were derived from various sums of money levied on the separate areas and regions. If the size of the amount was undoubtedly dependent on the number of the Jews in the given area, it was not entirely determined by this count. Many factors were taken into consideration, and exceptions were considered.( The head tax was excluded, which was identical for **each Jewish individual**). The central community (or communities) would collect the money not only from its *own* Jews, but also from the Jews of its daughter communities of the area, or region, according to the internal protocol, which had been established for the area.

The Chelm-Belz Region would gather this sum from many smaller communities. When the central council discovered that, for the common good, Zamość needs to be broken off from this area, and this community needs to be made independent in the management of their finances, this community also demanded 'daughter communities' for itself, from which it could derive a part of the required taxes. The controversy that arose between Zamość, and the region from which it broke off, was a battle caused by the heavy burden born by each side. The size of the financial levy would depend on the outcome of this contest.

It is important to appreciate that this controversy had already broke out from the first year that Zamość had been declared as an independent financial entity. For this reason, it then appears to be natural. This controversy went on for **thirty years**, and was finally resolved by compromise, which came from a judgement from the highest court. This indeed became a very important document, which makes it possible for us to pause [and observe] a whole set of interesting details concerning the internal organization, the relationship of opposing sides to one another, and the management of the central council. From this document, we present the following details: [20]

November 10, 1731, at a session of the *Va'ad* in Yaroslav, the following judgement was announced as a result of the compromise; The Zamość region will include the communities of: **Laszczow, Bilgoraj, Frampol[21], Krasnobrod, Ulanow-Rozwadow, Zolkiewka-Wysokie, Modliborzyce**. The impairment to the Chelm-Belz region, and the increased burden of expenses was not small, because the region had a whole network of communities that was taken away, which had previously belonged to it. Zamość therefore assumed the obligation to pay the Chelm-Belz Region and annual subsidy of 2,900 Florins, which amounted to 5,800 Polish Gulden.

Generally speaking, the organizational network of the Zamość Region stayed the same as when it was established and remained so until the dissolution of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*. Only a short time before the liquidation, small differences arose, attributable to the financial crisis during the census of 1764, when **Modliborzyce** and **Bilgoraj** were transferred to the organizational network of the Lublin Region.[22]

A special council was empaneled in 1765 to deal with the question of disbanding the Jewish administrative councils in Poland, based on the explicit decision of the Sejm.[23] A list of outstanding taxes comes down to us from that time, by community, a list of very great importance.[24] Among the referenced communities and the listing, Chelm-Belz and

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18 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תקנ"ג, page 269.

19 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תק"צ, page 293.

20 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תרכ"ז, page 318.

21 The text shows Francopol, which appears to be a misprint.

22 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, op. cit. Remark 3.

23 The Polish Legislature.

24 Author's footnote: Pinkas, Sign תתל"ד, page 443.

Zamość, along with its 'daughter' communities – *Ordinazia Zamoyska* – are treated as two separate bodies. There were 10,196 Jews in that *Ordinazia Zamoyska*, the lowest number among the other communities reported in that document. The grand total of all the Jews in all regions was 385,579 taxpayers. The Jews of *Ordinazia Zamoyska* were responsible for a levy of 50,708 Polish Gulden out of the general assessment of 2,314,350 Gulden. The percentage of debt is therefore a great deal bigger than the percent of the Jews. In general, the debt of the *Ordinazia Zamoyska* was indeed larger than the debt of the other regions, except for Chelm-Belz. That Region carried a levy of 126,918 Gulden against its 21,499 Jews. In that document, there is also recorded a debt that Zamość owed to the central *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* – a sum of 4,531 Gulden (the Chelm-Belz Region at that time owed the central council – 9,555 Gulden).[25]

We have to note here however, that from the details from other sources, especially in the aspect of representation in the institutions of the autonomous organization, Zamość and Chelm-Belz were treated as one entity. We must recognize that a series of points are unclear here. We will only pause to address matters in which we are certain. It is known that in the ranks of the Va'ad Arba Aratzot, there existed a body referred to as the "Nine Communities[26]," to which the following belonged: a) Ljuboml (Libevna), b) Chelm, c) Belz, d) Olszyc, e) Sieniawa, f) Warsaw, g) Sokol, h) Tyszowce, i) Zamość.

What sort of role did Zamość play in this body of "nine communities?" We only know, that at a specific point in time, Zamość stood at the **head of the nine communities**. We learn this from documents dated in 1753.[27] It was the time of the great debate in the general Jewish community, when in the Rabbinical camp an extensive discussion opened up about **the accusation against Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, that he was a follower of Sabbatai Zvi.**[28]

At that time, **Rav Yitzhak** was in Zamość, who was descended from a noted family, being the son of Rabbi Moshe-Chaim, the Senior Rabbi of the *Bet Din* of the Lemberg Jewish community, and a son-in-law of Rabbi Abraham Lubliner, a leader of the *Arba Aratzot*. In 1753, the Rabbis issued a decree, which placed anyone who supported Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, under excommunication. At the head of the signatories one finds the name of the previously mentioned Rabbi Abraham from Lublin, and right after his – which tells us about his important place – 'the junior, Rabbi Yitzhak, residing in the sanctified community of Zamość, **head of the nine communities**.'

A meeting of the Central Council took place in Yaroslav that year. There, as well, there was as **a delegate of the nine communities:** 'the junior, Shlomo, residing in the sacred community of Chelm,' and we are caused to wonder by this, that the matter did not elicit a separate Zamość participation, and indeed, we find there also, '**the junior, Abraham HaKohen from Zamość**,' from the *Ordinazia*, and a faithful member of the House of Israel, in the *Arba Aratzot*, author of the book, *Sefer Bet Avraham*.[29] It might be that this fact has to inform us of the important place that the Zamość community occupied at that time.

In the end, Zamość rose quite high. After a certain time, the entire region (from its representative character, and not for financial reasons) was called by the names of Chelm and Zamość together. Instead of the constant term, **Chelm-Belz,** which is endlessly repeated, we begin to find the identifier, **Chelm-Zamość**. In the year 1762, ten delegates were sent to a session of the *Va'ad,* which consisted of: 4 elders from the regions of Greater Poland; 4 from Lesser Poland; 1

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25 The basis for these assertions is very unclear, and possibly questionable, assuming the facts to be correctly transcribed. The Zamość communities comprised 2.64% of the taxpaying population of Jews, and were responsible for 2.19% of the total levy. Although the average per capita levy was 6 Gulden a head, the corresponding figure for Zamość is only 4.97 Gulden a head.

26 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, – Index – *Tesha Kehillot*, page 555.

27 Author's footnote: *Pinkas* – Sign תשכ"ב, pp. 391-5

28 In 1750 Rav Yaakov Emden began a struggle against Rav Yonatan Eibeschutz, accusing him of being a follower of Sabbatai Zvi. This public battle forced Polish Jews to rethink the problems of Sabbateanism.

29 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשכ"ב, pp. 396-7.

from the community of Resza, and one from the "Chelm-Zamość Region."[30] Two years later, only 7 delegates were sent to the session, and there were: 3 from the country, from the Russian Region; 3 from the Volhynia Region, and 1 from the Chelm-Zamość Region.[31]

But this was at the threshold of disintegration. The sun of the effective Jewish autonomous governance in Poland was beginning to set. The councils were disbanded a short time afterwards, and at the door appeared the specter of the era of the disintegration of Poland itself. The blows with fell on her [sic: Poland] struck with equal force against the Jewish populace and under the hell of the occupation of the neighboring monarchy, the small bit of light that had illuminated the small Jewish world was also locked out.

## Four

A short time after the founding of the community in the Zamość, it was already possible to find substantial Jewish merchants and financiers there, who not infrequently provided help to all of Polish Jewry.

The foundations of the economic buildup of Polish Jewry were laid down from the very beginning of imbedding themselves into the economy of the country. Many facts bear witness to the fact that already, by the end of the 12th century, Jews had a great influence in financial matters. Very few became landholders, while others became administrators of the estates of the Polish ruling classes, but their prime objective was, and remained, the economic development of finance and commerce.

It was in their hands that the export of the local agricultural produce lay, and the import of finished industrial products – especially textile merchandise – from the west; there were also merchants who had connections in the Orient, from which they brought in dyes, silks, and cotton. They had relationships with Danzig, Constantinople, Breslau[32], Kafa[33] (in the Crimea by the Black Sea), Genoa and Venice[34]. They were also the ones who collected the taxes, border fees and salt mines. The primary function – the monopoly over the sale of strong beverages in the area. By the end of the 15th century it was possible to see: on the one hand, the rise of small business in the hands of the Jews (to begin with, the typical tailor), a variety of craftsmen, butchers, who began to take over the characteristic position in community life. On the other hand, we observe the rise of a whole cadre of **Jewish finance magnates**, who would lend money at interest to the kings and dukes ( the history regarding this detail has been partially forgotten, that the Jewish moneylenders belonged to a broader class of non-Jews of this type, and that this line of work was under no circumstances a specifically Jewish occupation).Many of them became popular, such as: Moshe and Yaakov of Krakow, Yoskeh and Shakhneh of Lemberg, Dov from Przemysl, and others.

We can find information about great merchants and financiers in Zamość starting from the second half of the 17th century, and we continue to encounter them in a variety of instances up to the dissolution of the autonomous Jewish organization of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*.

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30 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תת"ט, page 437.

31 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תתל"ב, page 442.

32 The German name for the city of Wroclaw in Silesia. The city has many names, attributable to the frequent changes in sovereignty.

33 This name was used while under Genoese rule in 13th century.

34 It is of interest that the original text uses the Turkish name, '*Venedik*.' This may have resonance with the Sephardic Jews who lived in Zamość. After the expulsion from Spain in 1492, Sephardim settled all along the Mediterranean, and were made welcome in Turkey. Turkish was one of the languages that contributed to the Judeo-Sephardic language of Ladino. This may have been such a borrowing, which could have been picked up in the course of transacting commerce, or communicating with kinfolk.

In 1677, the names of the '**merchant brothers Daniel and Anders Devessen from Zamość;**' and it appears that they had important commercial ties with distant places outside the country. Among others, they had connections with the merchant, **L o u i s S e r i r i** from Amsterdam.[35] In the cited year, an opportunity presented itself to make use of that connection for the general welfare. In 1672, the Turks invaded The Ukraine and Podolia, taking Jews as prisoners. The *Va'ad* at Krakow decided to send emissaries out of the country to collect money to redeem captives; the principal trip was to the community in Amsterdam. It appears that, on the first trip, a sufficient response was not forthcoming, because in the year 1677, the Krakow *Va'ad* was compelled, yet again, to make its way with a second letter, this time, again, especially to Amsterdam. After clarifying the sorrowful situation, regarding the poverty that held sway in Poland after the invasions and wars, the letter continues with a passionate call for people to be generously forthcoming. In order to carry out the transfer of the money in a practical manner, the *Safra DeMata Lublin* writes in the name of the Rabbis of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, and presents: that the monies should be given to the merchant, **Louis Seriri** of Amsterdam, who will give a **check** for this amount. The check was to be sent to Poland, and it will be honored by 'The brothers Daniel and Anders Devessen of Zamość.'[36]

A very interesting document was guarded in the city archive of Breslau, which testifies to the fact that towards the end of the 17th century, a Jew from Zamość lived there, a financier. A number of 'Jewish Leaders' were sentenced to jail there as a result of a financial accusation by **Christophe Bresler**. On September 29, 1691 they were set free on the basis of a promise to pay Bresler all of his demands one week after they were set free. They presented themselves for purposes of obtaining the money, to the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* – indicating that if they did not pay these sums on time, not only will they will be arrested, but also every Jew in Poland who would deign to enter Breslau. It appears that they were unable to meet their commitment, in the course of one week, they proved unable to come up with the needed sum. An understanding was reached: the time of payment was postponed until March 16, 1692. On December 10, 1691, this obligation was signed (in order to guarantee that everything would be done according to the commitment), by 7 people, who were designated '**as Jews from the Kingdom of Poland,**' from various communities. Among the first 5 signatories, described as '**Leaders,**' can also be found the name, '**Aharon Yaakov of Zamość.**' [37]

It appears that the central council made use of these monies of the people from Zamość more than once, in order to cover its budget. In the annual budget of 1731 there is an expense item in the amount of 267,021 Polish Gulden , from which there is a debt to '**Heirs of Hirsch from Zamość 900.**'[38]

An important financier was **Itchkeh ben Leib of Zamość.** He lent money for a period of a half century, during which time it grew vigorously because of the interest that he would charge. At the beginning of the 18th century, (1700-1710) the 'government of Zamość' owed him 1,000 Polish Gulden. In the controller's documents in the year 1756, the central *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* among its burdensome and never-ending debts, can be found a sum of 3,832 Florins (7,664 Gulden), which it owed to 'Itchkeh the son of Leib from Zamość,' on the eve of the dissolution of the autonomous [Jewish] regime, and in the year 1765, the municipality of Przemysla owed him 256 Gulden in principal and 94 Gulden

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35 Antwerp had developed in the sixteenth century as the focal point of activity for ex-Spanish and Portuguese Conversos in northern Europe, the emerging new financial center of Europe. After the city was occupied by the Spanish in 1585, the community moved to Amsterdam, initially as a *Converso* community, but with time, Jewish activity rose more openly to the surface. By the early seventeenth century we will find a strong Jewish community, initially Sephardic but in time also Ashkenazic, that will be present in Amsterdam.

36 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign שמ"ז page 147, and the signs, שנ"ח שנ"ז, pp. 153-157.

37 Author's footnote: *Pinkas,* Signs: תע"ז תע"ח, pages 224-226.

38 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תרל"ט pp. 322.

in interest, which had accrued during the years. [39] Can the sort of people, like Itchkeh the son of Leib, be indicative of the wealth of Zamość? – arriving at such a conclusion would be hasty, because we must first elucidate the financial circumstances of the general Jewish population in Zamość, and other places that might show this to be the case; we must take a glance at the general financial economy for the community. In this regard, there is nothing we can state with absolute certainty, because we do not have sources. [In fact] we find only the opposite indicators, from the impression that we obtain from the previously mentioned merchants ans financiers. The real fact, that the Zamość community was compelled, as we have seen, to take a loan from her own magnate, at the beginning of the 18th century, is stark evidence against this. We can also not forget the large debts that Zamość owed at the time of the dissolution of the Jewish Councils in Poland.[40] Decades prior to this, it was difficult fo the Zamość community to put together the necessary sum, that had been levied against the community by the central council. In the accounting of the income and tax [revenues] of the year 1726, of all the Jews in Poland, we find that the Jews of *Ordinazia Zamość* received a relief – in the amount of 500 Gulden.

Nevertheless, the evidence shows, that among the Jews of Zamość, there were great figures in commerce and finance. They would frequently help out the Jewish community of Poland at large, but on the other hand, they would make it hard for them, taking even higher rates of interest for these loans. This, however, is not evidence to suggest that this community was well off. Individuals gave their money to the community at interest, as they did to other creditors. That well-to-do individuals were found in Zamość, merely indicates that this was a place for economic activity where one could raise one's self up, and which, among other places, also made use of Jews.

The foundations of the social-economic character of Polish Jewry, which had existed up to the 16th century, were not only not wiped out, it was the opposite, they became even stronger. The Jew assumed the role of the middleman in almost every sector of the land of Poland. He was the middleman between the Duke or King, and the peasant, who held the taxes; he was the middleman between the producers and the marketplace, such as a merchant. His central role from a social perspective manifested itself in financial matters that had previously not been connected to these other activities. A little at a time, his role became interwoven into the fabric of the Polish economy, until he became an organic part of it, a part that without it, the rest could not function. He had to support the trade flows of the local merchants, in every location where that merchant sought to set up business, or in the market-cities, where he attempted to set up merchants; he had the open enmity of the German merchants against him, who had come from Rhenish locales, whose enmity and casual regard for the security of the Jews was with them already 'traditional.' The Jew was tossed into the maelstrom of the wheels of history comprised of the historical-social conflict between the monarchy, the nobility and the church – and not infrequently, these forces would strike him – the Jew.

Apart from merchants and financiers, there were also merchandise jobbers. The function of these jobbers also came forward later, during the Russian regime, having a role, among others, in a network of villages as early as the 19th century, until they were removed from there. For a long time, they functioned as major financial institutions, who needed to be the basis for support of the communities, and they are remembered in this way:

"And they were **vastly wealthy**...
– Possessors, they held large estates.
– Driven out of all Poland.
– Pursued legally. Attack in a probe, the court says, whatever the Nobleman commands, and one litigates against such a Jew, who does not, for instance, go away for a term, for example –
– ... "All-Poland" ... one at a time, driven into the city.
– Who is left? One Y. M...[41]

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39 Author's footnote: Pinkas, Sign תשמ"ט, pp. 414-415; Note 3, in that sign, page 415; Sign תשכ"א, page 420.

40 Author's footnote: See prior in Chapter 3,pp. 40-42.

41 Author's footnote: The reference is to *Yehoshua Margaliot*, who was the contractor who provided the fortress with all its necessities, and was of sufficient stature that he had special privileges

– But he is still Y.M.!
But the possessors were "seeded" with nobles, behaved like the nobility, came and brought with them the customs of the nobility."[42]

## Five

After this short overview of the economic and social condition, we will take a brief look at the cultural and spiritual condition.

The Rabbi of a community occupied a very important place in the autonomous framework of Polish Jewry. In fact, the entire power of the Jewish autonomous governance was in the hands of the Rabbinate of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot.* They were the representatives of the entire Jewish populace to the outside world; they were the responsible agents for obtaining and paying the royal taxes; to all intents and purposes – in the Jewish body politic itself, they were the ones who determined the cultural and spiritual visage of the Jews; no corner of the lives of the people did not feel their influence, nor was free from their directed involvement, and their legal power.

Many documents from the period of the Jewish autonomous regime take note about the Rabbis of Zamość, among others. The material we find there is of great importance not only for the history of the city and its Rabbis, in its own right, but – and this is no less important – it helps us to correctly establish the relative importance of Zamość and its Rabbis in the entire interplay of this force. And after a fundamental examination we come to the conclusion, that Zamość occupied a primary and distinguished position in the autonomous Jewish regime. Together with the leading Torah scholars from other very important communities, the Rabbis of Zamość would involve themselves in the spiritual and social lives of Polish Jewry; they had the oversight in setting out various roles in the communities; about publishing books; they would be both the supporters and protagonists; one had to take both their letters of praise and their critiques into account; also, in periods of great spiritual upheavals, when the Jewish camp was shaken up from the stormy new doctrines – the Rabbis of Zamość were among the first to join the ranks of the requisite protagonists.

Nearly a century after the founding of the Jewish community in Zamość, we learn, from the documents of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, about the first Rabbi. It seems certain that there were Rabbis from the time that the community was first established, but it is first, in the year 1687, that we see the first documentation about a Rabbi from Zamość in papers, and in this instance, his name is signed to an order that emanated from the central council. A very difficult matter was brought before the council in that year from the community of Opatów (Apta). The ghetto of this community, which encompassed the area of one street, had become too crowded to absorb the Jews of the community itself. However, a massive stream of refugees began to stream in from all corners of Poland into Opatów (Apta), and flooded this community. There was a fear, that the Christian populace, which guarded its position jealously, that the borders of the ghetto not be enlarged, would unleash its anger regarding the Jewish influx upon the local Jewish residents; it was under this circumstance, that the Opatów (Apta) community came to the session of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* in the year 1687. The council then released a proclamation which favored the permanent settlement of the Jews who were passing through, within the boundaries of the ghetto in Opatów (Apta). Under this proclamation, are the signatures of the **'Officers of Ruzhany, Leaders...of the Primary Communities of the Four Lands**...' and to the side of the chairmen of the important communities from **Krakow, Lvov, Przemysla, Tiktin, Lublin**, we find the signature of: '**Rabbi Hirsch son to my honored Sir, and Father, Our Teacher and Rabbi, Rabbi Shimshon Katz ז"ל from Zamość.'**[43]

It is necessary to understand that Rabbi Shimshon Katz was also renown in his generation. But was he a Rabbi in

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from the 'Platz-Major," the commandant of the fort. The entire Margaliot family was known as a family of wealthy people.

42 Author's footnote: I. L. Peretz – Memories and Letters. Volume 18 All Works, 'Yiddish' Verlag, Buenos Aires, pp. 79-80.

43 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תל"ג, pages 206, 207.

Zamość? – we know nothing of this sort. One thing is clear, that this particular Rabbi of Zamość, Rabbi Zvi-Hirsch ben Shimshon, came from Rabbinical lineage, the scion of an especially well-regarded family. In the same year in which he signed the previously mentioned proclamation, we also find his name on another document, which places him in the first rank to mobilize the most senior autonomous power of the central council of the four lands. It appears that it was not only once that the council confirmed his role as the highest authority, but it underwent a longer development in the judiciary. In the year 1687 (at the session in Yaroslav), the Rabbis signed an admonition to the Rabbis of the communities, that they should not take the behests of the Bet-Din of the council lightly, and not to mix into these issues. At the side of the fully authorized leaders of the large and important communities, we also find the name of 'Zvi Hirsch HaKohen from Zamość.[44] '[45]

It appears, that immediately after him, the Rabbinate of Zamość was assumed by the important Rabbi, Aryeh-Leib, known as the author of the book of questions and answers, "**Sha'agat Aryeh, V'Kol Shakhal.**" [46] He came from the great community of Lublin. During his long life, he occupied the Rabbinical Chair in a row of very distinguished communities, such as **Tiktin, Krakow**, and even **Brisk D'Lita.**[47] We find him [mentioned in Zamość in two time periods, approximately 40 years apart. In the year 1689 he is, among others, a signatory to a letter of endorsement and encouragement to publish a Rabbinical volume, and he signs himself "Aryeh-Leib, residing in the sacred community of Zamość." [48] In the year 1723/4 he takes part in the council session in Jaroslaw[49]. And on the approval of a Rabbinical volume that was published there, he is signed as: 'The junior, Ary'-Leib, residing in Zamość יצ"ו " [50] [51]

This Rabbi is mentioned a third time in documents from the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, from which we can see a specific side of the activities and top level oversight of the central council. Rabbi Yehuda of Lvov was taken on as the Secretary of the community. It appears that there were those who opposed this appointment, and wanted him removed forcibly. In the year 1730, the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* issued a letter of protection, which formalized the nomination of Rabbi Yehuda as the Secretary of the community in Lvov. Among those who formalized this, can also be found "Aryeh of Lublin,

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44 Author's footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תל"ו, pages 207-208.

45 The literature provides evidence of a *Rabbi Shimshon Katz*, whose son *Yitzhak* was the son-in-law of *Rabbi Judah Loewe*, the famous *Mahara"l of Prague* who is presumed to have created the *Golem*. The fact that the name Katz is shown in its abbreviated Hebrew form, כ"ץ, correlates with the appellation '*HaKohen,*' indicating a claim to descent from the priestly family of Aaron.

46 Translated from the Hebrew as: The Roar of the Lion, and the Voice of Lion. A play on the name of the Rabbi, *Aryeh-Leib*, which is the Hebrew-Yiddish appellation for someone named after a Lion.

47 Referring the city of Brisk – then in Lithuania

48 Author's footnote: Pinkas: Sign תנ"א, pages 213-214.

49 It is highly probable that Jews first came to Jaroslaw during the reign of King Casimir the Great, as it is from this period that the oldest tombs in the cemetery date. The first verifiable report is from 1464. Jewish settlers in Jaroslaw, unlike their counterparts in neighboring Przemysl, came up against obstacles set by the rulers of the town. However, it was Jaroslaw which became the center of Jewish self-government in the time of Commonwealth of Poland, and from 1630 until about 1750 it was the seat of *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* (the Council of the Four Lands).

50 Author's Footnote: Pinkas, Sign תקצ"ג, pages 294-296.

51 The literature credits *Rav Aryeh Leib ben Asher Gunzberg*; of Metz, (1695-1785) with the writing of *Sha'agat Aryeh*. This is not consistent with a reference to such a person in the year 1689, as indicated in the text. Resolution of this matter is left to other researchers, who wish to review the original excerpting process from the *Pinkas* itself. The Hebrew acronym stands for '*Yivneh Tzion Vi-'Rushalayim,*' a wish for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

residing in the sacred community of Zamość ."[52]

At this opportunity, we need to note the fact of the very broad role played by Zamość in Rabbinic literature. We will, truthfully, return to this matter in later points, but here we will only underscore that we have in our possession a letter of permission to publish the book of Reb Pinchas, through his son, Reb Yekhezkiel, a letter that was published at the session of the council in Yaroslav in the year 1711.[53] From the foreword to the book, we learn that this Reb Yekhezkiel lived in Zamość . It appears, that in his day, he was a wealthy merchant. By his own admission, he says that he was a 'big businessman.' In the end, his business went bad, and he lost his fortune. And when a Jew becomes a pauper, he turns to book publishing.

Rabbi Shlomo was a prominent and important personality, who lived in Zamość for decades and wielded influence there. He was born in Zamość at the beginning of the 18th century. During his long life, he occupied the Rabbinical Chair in a whole array of communities: he was the Bet-Din Senior[54] in **Chelm**, and its environs; Also, he was the Bet-Din Senior of **Zamość** and its region. In the end, he was the Bet-Din Senior and the Headmaster of the Yeshiva in **Lvov** and its environs. His name appears in the documents of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* in the year 1742. The Yaroslav council session of 1739, decided that the communities should appoint *Gabbaim*, who would collect the imposed levies for the support of the community of Safed [in The Holy Land]. Apparently this initiative fell apart, and meanwhile, alarming communications began to arrive from the community in Safed. In 1742, at its session in Tyszowce, the council decided to apply itself energetically and to demand that the communities pay their obligations and in the future to be more prompt and in fact, set the amount for the future, that will have to be collected by the Gabbaim appointed at that [council] session. Among the signatories to this concordance was also '**Shlomo of Zamość , delegate of the Poznan Region**.' [55]

Rabbi Shlomo is recognized as the author of the book, "**Mirkevet [Ha]Mishnah**" concerning Maimonides.[56] He was strongly respected by everyone who knew him, but it appears that he found no peace in unfamiliar places. His signature on the previously mentioned proclamation to help the Safed community was a symbolic longing for the Holy Land, that had already existed in the depth of his soul. The echo of the great Ashkenazic *aliyah* to the Land of Israel, led by Rabbi Yehuda the Hasid at the beginning of the 18th century, still reverberated through the air about European Jewry. Yearning for the Final Redemption grew stronger, and became entrenched even with those who had been shaken by the false messianic message of Sabbatai Zvi. Rabbi Shlomo did not rest, and could find no rest, until he personally was able to fulfil this vital commandment. In the decade of the 70's in the 18th century, ten years after he demanded help for the Jews of Safed, being at that time already of advanced age, he took the decision to make aliyah to the Land of Israel. However, he did not reach the goal to which he had aspired. Dying in Salonika without seeing the Holy Land. He was the first Jew from for the Holy Land who made the attempt to go to the Land of Israel, the first practical Zionist from Zamość. (Concerning his death in Salonika, see the work of B. Mandelbaum, Position, "Mirkevet HaMishnah").

This journey of an individual must not be seen as something of an isolated incident, it is a fact that illustrates the discomfiting of European Jewry in general, and of Polish [Jewry] in particular. We stand in a era where a storm swept through the religious life of Polish Jewry. More than the personality of the previously mentioned Rabbi, the personality of Abraham Cohen wove itself into this movement, who was active in the second half of the 18th century. In his story,

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52 *Pinkas,* Signs תרכ"ג and תרכ"ד pages 315-317.

53 Pinkas, Sign תקנ"א, pages 265-268.

54 This is my personal choice for translating *Av Bet-Din*. The *Av Bet-Din* was usually just a different facet of being the Rabbi of the community. However, if the original writer uses this judicial identifier, as opposed to *Mara D'Asrah,* I will use the translation shown.

55 Author's Footnote: Pinkas, Sign תרנ"ז, pages 333-335.

56 Found in the literature as Rabbi Shlomo Halma.

and life's path, and what he went through, one can see the playing out of the an entire historical epoch. But this will not be comprehensible to us, if we first do not take a glimpse – at least a short one – at the epoch itself. In the middle of the 18th century, Zamość finds itself in the middle of the cauldron of conflict over the persona of Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, and a short while later, in the middle of a severe battle against the Frankist sect. The role of the sages of Zamość will remain incomprehensible to us if we do not take cognizance of the platform on which these conflicts took place. By this I mean that in the role of the Zamość community towards the messianic mystique, can be found the key to the root of the sharp opposition to the Hasidic movement that manifested itself at a later time.

## Six

The history of the Jews in Poland is one long chain of conflict with various forces which wanted to tear apart the Jewish settlement, tearing it out by the roots – from the inception of this settlement up to the Great Destruction.

The Polish merchant hated the Jew because of his capacity, because of his skills in the area of commerce; the aristocrat, the nobleman, hated the Jews because he was compelled to make use of his money; the peasant, because he saw in him, the Jew, a middleman to collect taxes, those [who stood behind him] who oppressed him, who made his life harder; the urban bourgeoisie generally saw in the Jew a 'foreign element,' a competitor, and the Catholic church fired all of its missiles against the Jews, arousing the darkest instincts of the masses, because it saw, in the very existence of the Jews, a contradiction in terms for the very basis of its faith. Periodically, economic circles, who could not confront the Jews because of competitive reasons, would don a religious mask, for the simple purpose of their [competitive] complaint against the Jew. The internal battles between interests and groups; the conflicts between the ruling monarchy bodies and the [lesser] nobility; the various machinations of the fanatical church – all of these struck the Jew. The Jew lived in a poisoned atmosphere of hate, and quite often it would come to blood-libel accusations, to open killing, to torture, to bloody excesses on the part of an aroused rabble.

A terrifying desolation coursed through Polish Jewry in the year 1648 (The decrees of *Ta"kh VeTa"t*), when Bohdan Chmielnicki's Cossack Hordes flooded the land. The clash of the rich nobility and the Cossack juggernaut was indeed a strong one, but didn't last very long. It was first, after the negotiated peace, that Polish Jewry was drenched in blood. Tens of thousands of Jews were murdered by various methods of execution, many communities were destroyed, and part of them were entirely wiped off the map of Jewry. Most significantly – the spiritual outlook was shaken, and it created a fertile ground for a variety of mystical and messianic fantasies. All year long, the beaten and exhausted souls occupied themselves with the mystical teachings of the *Zohar* and of the *Kabbala* of the **Ar"i** (the great Kabbalist, Rabbi Isaac ben Shlomo Luria, Ashkenazi, born in Jerusalem in the year 5294 - 1535, and died in Safed in the year 5332 - 1572). Mysticism became integrated with the religious sentiment and Jews there deepened their yearning their eternal yearning for a solution and a redemption from their state of impurity. The victory of the *Zohar* and the *Kabbala* of the Ari over the souls of the masses was deep and complete. Using them as intermediaries, the Jew harnessed the cosmos and created metaphysical paths in which he found the correct reason for his hapless condition in the earthly world. And in this electric atmosphere, it was sufficient to just throw in the spark of a messianic promise, in order to ignite the raging storm of the great vision of the Final Redemption, and an [unswerving] belief in it.

And the Sign did not permit much time for its arrival, it came from the East, from the wagon of the secretive mystery; the gestalt of the messiah appeared as Sabbatai Zvi. His path was facilitated by the lore of the believer, the fanatic **Natan Ha'Azati** (Nathan of Gaza). For his practical teaching, he utilized the line of reasoning from the Ari concerning 'concentration' and the 'synthesis;' about the forces of light and darkness, which struggle against each other; about the buds, the sparks of light and the impure matrix that is woven between them; about sin on one side, and the need to liberate these 'buds' from their imprisonment by the 'matrix'. Nathan of Gaza made a place in that entire Kabbalistic system to organically insert the **Soul of a Messiah**. To him, the Messiah ceased to be an anonymous persona, but rather assumed the actual form of Sabbatai Zvi, the man, who had revealed himself in a vision. An seeing as the Kabala was a part of the psychic world of the Jews of that time, this teaching fell on fertile ground, and put down roots and became accepted

This evolving movement spread with lightning speed over all the lands of Central Europe, Turkey, Greece, the Land of Israel and Egypt. In the year 1665, this messianic message reached Poland. The following year was, indeed, the high

point of the messianic movement, which was already headed for its inevitable fall.

The eradication came. True, Sabbatean forces were still well-entrenched across the breadth of all far-flung locales, and in Poland in general, they penetrated the visionary darkness and attempted to provide an explanation of the conversion of the 'Messiah' by mystical means and in artificially created ways, that no person could comprehend. But the Rabbinically world refreshed itself, and intensified its war, without remorse, against the ranks of this particular movement. The result of the denouement of this rudderless movement caused it to become generally weakened, by placing itself in opposition to the will for further Jewish survival; It demanded power to place itself on the watch to strengthen Jewish life. There was, however, a deeper reason for the battle with the Sabbatean forces: Professor **Shalom**, the great researcher into Jewish mystic movements, who researched all the depths of the Sabbatai Zvi movement, and showed us the fact, that already in the first place – in the subtly formulated doctrine of Nathan of Gaza – there were many bases, which , from a religious standpoint stood in contradiction to traditional Judaism, that there were already highly evident Christian elements. And when the Frankists came afterwards, and on their standard, carved a categorical opposition to the Talmud, and also gave an audience to a belief in a sneaked- in '**Trinity**', they wee no more than sprouts from the seeds that were in the first of these teachings; The eventual conversion of the members of this sect to Christianity, was only a logical conclusion of their mysterious teachings.

But before we take a quick look at the activities of the Frankist sect – whose impact was rather minimal in Zamość – we will stop at the great controversy surrounding Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz. Also, this controversy left reverberations behind in our community, and became quite an event in the lives of the Jews, which split the Jewish camp into two warring and hostile sides.

Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, the Rabbi of Prague, was one of the giants of that generation. About the year 1750, he was invited to take the Rabbinical Seat of **Altona**, and other sister-communities. This was the location of the fanatical Rabbinical leader, **Rabbi Yaakov ben Zvi Emden**, some of whose characteristic approaches are reminiscent of the Gaon of Vilna, The Gr"A (Gaon, Rabbi Eliyahu). Rabbi Yaakov, called **Yaav"tz**, inherited a strong animosity for the ranks of the Sabbateans from his father, Rabbi Zvi Ashkenazi, and fought them without any weakness, or so much as a tremor. A short while after Rabbi Yonatan appeared in Altona, the ire of the Yaav"tz fell on him, because of amulets that Rabbi Yonatan was distributing among the residents, amulets which were supposed to protect them from death that stalked them. The zealot, Rabbi Yaakov Emden openly accused the great Torah scholar, that he was guilty of being a secret believer in Sabbatai Zvi. After a whole set of personal clashes, this matter led to a split in the European Jewish camp. Each side excommunicated the other, each side inflicted double portions on the other. A third party mixed into that stormy whirlpool, that had no direct stake in the issue – the national authorities of Denmark and Germany. The *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* took a position regarding Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, and publicly issued a proclamation that excommunicated anyone who would besmirch the great Rabbi of Altona. Despite the fact that one can see the official position of Polish Jewry stood in favor of Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz, does not mean that Rabbi Yaakov Emden did not have any followers. We shall soon see.

Rabbi Yonatan remained in his rabbinical post in the community of Altona until his passing – in the year 1764. However, with his passing, no rest came to the relentless warrior, Rabbi Yaakov Emden. Rumors came from Podolia about a new movement, whose founder was called **Frank**. His teaching was a variant of the mystical system of Sabbatai Zvi, which continued to harbor a mix of foreign concepts from Christianity. Externally, towards the non-Jewish street, he began an attack against the Talmud, and internally, withing the confines of Jewish life, within the circles of his adherents (in a large number of communities), he began to practice secret rituals, where he sanctified sexual promiscuity, and degraded conventional morality and chastity. When their dissolute ways became visible, they had arrayed against them both the anger of the governmental authorities and the ire of the Jewish Rabbinical authority. In the year 1756, at its session in **Brody**, the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* put them in excommunication, and locked them out of the Jewish body politic. It was then that the Frankist sect seized at the ineffectual direction of drawing close to an external enemy, in order to strike at their brethren from within. A peculiar undertaking began, with the help of the hostile Catholic Church, which ended by the leaders of the sect and most of their followers assuming the Christian faith. The 'sponsor' of the conversion of **Frank,** head of the sect, when he received the holy baptism in Warsaw, was the Polish King himself. This, however, did not save him from the heavy thoughts of the Church, and under an order from

the Vatican, Frank was incarcerated in the fortress of Chestochowa. He was imprisoned for 13 years, the years 1760-1772. Leaving his jail, he continued to disseminate far-fetched absurd teachings about a mysterious incomprehensible doctrine. In the meanwhile, Poland was carved up by its neighbors. In the year 1768, Frank and his followers attempted to approach the new rulers, the Russians, saying that they wanted to adopt the Russian Orthodox faith. They attempted to convince the leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, that their leader, Frank, languishes in prison because of hatred of the Catholics, who perceived that he, Frank, is sympathetic to Russian Orthodoxy.... **Baruch of Greece**, however, destroyed their argument, who because of his business dealings had found himself in the Russian capitol, and clarified to most of the appropriate circles, that the Frankist sect is nothing more than an evanescent band that touts its beliefs only as a front, in order to mask itself.

The waves from this storm did not pass the Zamość community by, either.

Rabbi **Abraham Cohen**, it appears, was born in Zamość, as a son of Rabbi **Yitzhak**, who was the Rabbi of the community. He had previously occupied the pulpit of the community of **Tarlow**, and it becomes evident that he wrote his book, '*Beit-Avraham*' there, which received special praise. From that time on, he was known as 'The Beit-Avraham' (after the title of his book) and his title as the *Bet-Din Senior of the sacred community of Tarlow* stayed with him later, even though he had already filled many other posts. In 1753, his father, Rabbi Yitzhak, was still Rabbi of Zamość. A year later, we find already, that Rabi Abraham is asked by the Zamość community to assume the Rabbinate of that place, apparently to inherit the seat of the Rabbinate from his father – and he was at that time already renown as a Torah scholar and a writer.[57] In that year, he took part in the session of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* held in **Constantine**. One of the questions that was on the table for deliberation concerned the publication of the *Shas*. Years before, the central council had already decided to recognize the version of the *Shas* printed by the publisher **Profess** in **Amsterdam**, and in order to provide support for the distribution of this version of the *Shas*, prohibited, by an act of excommunication, the publication of any other *Shas* for a period of 25 years. A short time after this decision was taken, another Shas appeared from the publisher **Reb Meshullam-Zalman ben Reb Aharon of Zulzbach**. At the Constantine session of the year 1754, an embargo was placed upon the Zulzbacher Printers. Among the signatories on this call for excommunication can be found also, 'The Junior, Aharon Cohen of Zamość.'[58]

From that time on, Rabbi Abraham assumes an active part in the life of Polish Jews, as one of the central figures among its Rabbis.[59] He rises in his popularity and activity. From his personal life, we know that he married the daughter of the Bet-Din Senior of Lublin, in the year 1758.[60]

This was the period of the great controversy over Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz. We have already previously mentioned that the official position, which the central council of the Four Lands took up, came out on the side of Rabbi Yonatan. Among the signatories to this letter, which excommunicates those who slander Rabbi Yonatan – of the year 1753 – one finds the signature of '**The Junior, Yitzhak Residing in sacred community of Zamość, head of the Nine Communities**.' (Yitzhak of Zamość, the most senior of the nine communities).[61] But Rabbi Abraham did not follow in the indicated way, according to the leaders of his land, and also not in the path of his distinguished father. He shows himself to be a hard-bitten protagonist against **all** manifestations of the messianic mystique, and Sabbateanism, whose origination shook the destiny of Judaism. For this reason, he arrived at a negative position regarding Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz; from the second side, we see him as a fiery disciple of Rabbi Yaakov Emden. He remains in letter

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57 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תרפ"ט, pages 372-374; Sign תשכ"ב, pages 391-395; Sign תשס"ח, pages 422-424.

58 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign: תשל"ח, pages 403-404.

59 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas* – Sign תשע"ג – page 429.

60 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign: תשע"ה – page 430.

61 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשכ"ב – pages 391-395.

correspondence with him, exchanging advice, often coming to the use of close and friendly terms of relationship. As a consequence of the messianic fantasy, Poland became inundated with a flood of amulets and secret writings, which were inseparably bound to the persona of Sabbatai Zvi from the time of the messianic arousal about him, even if their source and origin harkened back to an earlier time before him. In one of the letters sent out by the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, in order to combat this epidemic of amulets – and in the instance of opposing the spread of what had come from Germany – among others, is also the signature of '**The Junior, Abraham Cohen of Zamość, Arbiter from the Ordinazia Region, a loyal member of the House of Israel and the Four Lands. Author of the book, Beit Avraham.**' [62]

In the month of Kislev of 5514, Rabbi Abraham put out a special directive and a letter to the Jews of Poland. He makes clear that this letter is directed against the Sabbateans, and recalls the Rabbis of Germany with warmth.[63]

It appears that this letter was directed at **Rabbi Baruch Martz Yavan** (from Greece), as he points out two years later in one of his letters to the Yaav"tz. When he wants to praise the stand of the '*Gaonim* among the Rabbis of Poland' who stood in the battle against the plague of amulets, he tells of the 'embargo' letter, that 'Rabbi Abraham Cohen of Zamość' made famous.[64]

Avery characteristic fact has come down to us from another letter from Rabbi Baruch of Greece, which is presented word for word, in '*Edut Yaakov*' Page 59, side 2, from the 36th day of the *Sefira* in the Year 5515; he writes to Rabbi Yaakov Emden:

> 'Not only single members, but also large communities, such as the sages in the sacred community of Zamość, a city replete with wise men and writers, requested from me that I provide them something of his glory, and send him some of his books.'

It is certain that the reference here is to the books of Yaav"tz against Rabbi Yehonatan, and the Sabbateans in general. Rabbi Abraham's position reveals itself also in his relationship to other 'protagonists.' As is known, Rabbi Yehonatan wrote a book called '*Lukhot HaEdut*,[65]' in order to vindicate himself from the accusations of Rabbi Yaakov Emden. In the year 1757, **David Oz** came out against him with a sharply written pamphlet and he refers to the book as '*Lukhot HaOn* [66].' Rabbi Abraham wrote a letter that sang the praises of this pamphlet, which was called 'The Book of Smashing the Tablets of Sorrow.'[67]

In the meantime, 'The Terrible Incident of Podolia' occurred – as Rabbi Yaakov Emden referred to a missile launched against the Frankists. In the year 1757, he gave permission to the leaders of the struggle in the Four Lands to utilize **all means** against the growth of the Sabbatean wildness, also through **'dedication to the authority to the point where they should be burned**.' From this answer, we understand that it arrived as an answer to a question from 'Rabbi Abraham Cohen of Zamość.' [68]

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62 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשכ"ג, pages 396-397.

63 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign, תשכ"ה, page 398.

64 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשמ"ב, page 408.

65 The Tablets of Testimony.

66 The Tablets of Sorrow

67 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תש"ם, pages 419, 420.

68 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשמ"ז, pages 421,422.

It appears that in that year, Rabbi Baruch of Greece took concrete decisions from this position. In a special letter to Yaav"tz, he admits to his approach to the Catholic Church, to the ministers and the king on August 3. As a result of this approach, he achieved a judgement of '*Koret*' (a cutting off) against the Frankists, who had attempted to save themselves by converting to Christianity. In this manner, he conveys that he had forwarded this judgement to the 'Rabbinical Leaders' of Lublin, Lvov; '**To the Faithful Rabbi Gaon, Our Teacher, Abraham Cohen-Tzedek, moved to Zamość from the sacred community of Tarlow**...' and also to two Rabbis in Podolia.[69] We can also apprehend that Rabbi Abraham himself intervened with the Church and the King, against the Frankists.[70]

Kabbala-mysticism was not alien to Zamość, even before it manifested itself as part of the messianic movement. It was the opposite: personalities arose from the people who were beloved of the broad masses of the populace, who surrounded them with legends for folk-tales about miraculous events. A very interesting document about this can be found in the book '*Toledot Adam*[71]' by **Rabbi Eliyahu Baal-Shem**:

> '...and I heard from the renown Rabbi, Our Teacher, Aharon Zvi Hirsch Katz, the loyal adherent of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* in Poland, about the respected Rabbi Joel Baal Shem. In the year 5408 (1648) during the storms, when many fled by ships, and the hooligans pursued them in small boats, and they had just about caught up to them, this renown individual had a table with him with a variety of signs (prepared in advance) and he took the tablet and hung it on the ship, and she proceeded to go away with a supernatural speed, and vanished from the sight of the hooligans. And this was told to me by the Rabbi, the *Hasid*, with complete certainty. Also, his son-in-law, the famous...Uri of Zamość, the son of the previously mentioned Rabbi Joel, told me, in his father's name, that this thing happened in this way.'[72]

The Rabbi referred to here is none other than the **Rabbi Zvi Hirsch of Zamość**, who signed one of the documents of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* in the year 1687.[73] He appears as a fiery believer in the miracle-tales of the great, well-received Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem (who it appears was a resident of Zamość) and became a member of his family by giving the hand of his daughter to him as a wife. Because after the great tragedy of 1648, and the result of the blows that were rained down on them, the hearts [of the people] were open to the mystical vision, which had an influence, and they sought solace in the bosom of fantasy. Jewish Zamość could not emerge untouched and whole from contact with the mysterious stream, also the 'Adherent of the Four Lands' did not emerge untouched as well. But the result of the great spiritual pain along with the eradication after the substantial messianic movement, when mysticism became united with Sabbateanism, Rabbinical Zamość joined the battle camp with mysticism, which manifested itself as a danger to the Jewry of that time.

The era of the decline of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* begins.

A condition of equanimity is yet far off. The incited rabble; the Church; the economic competition; the foreign armies that inundated the land, struck the Jewish body politic, wounded it, and tormented it unrelentingly. But the era of the *Va'ad* was a great era in the life of Jews in Poland: great in its economic development; in community growth; in the spiritual and cultural condition. It was an era of creativity, of activity and growth in all sectors.

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69 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשס"ח, pages 422-424.

70 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תשע"ח, page 430.

71 Tales of Man

72 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, additions , explanations and corrections, pages 524, 525.

73 Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign תל"נ, pages 206, 207.

And in that stormy chapter of life, Zamość served as literally a source of renewal on the life of *Yiddishkeit* in the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot.* To this overview. We will provide one notable example.[74]

In the year 1753, on the 10th of August, a special royal document was signed in Yaroslav, from which we learn about the following details: On July 20, Kasimiersz Gronowski arrived from Granow, the ruler of the region of Radom, the commandant of the royal artillery, etc. He was an observer from the Royal Treasury, as a commissar to the session of the *Va'ad* in **Yaroslav**. However, he found nobody there, save the community leaders of Przemysla, and the old-faithful (the Jew) Abraham, the son of Joseph of Lissa, the most senior of the leaders. That commissar writes as follows:

> 'Immediately after I had sent two letters to Zamość, where are found, according to the words of the Leader, all the Jewish leaders, nobody came...'

He angrily postpones the session until September 10 of the current year, in order that the Jews not complain that he is only giving them short notice to present the figures.

What interests us in this instance, is the position that **Zamość** occupied here: It is a **center**. In the period of crisis and conflict with the authorities, it appears that there were also financial difficulties in covering the taxes that were levied, and so the Rabbis of the central council gather for a **consultation in Zamość**.

The sunset of this era came during difficult and oppressive years. It appears that economic conditions also became unsettled, and on the field of spiritual culture, the sounds of the war of words against Sabbateanism and Frankism thundered. It is almost the time when the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* ceases to function, Poland is partitioned among foreign powers, and together with the entire Jewish settlement in the land, Zamość enters a new period in its history.

The wave of persecutions, the slaughtering and the economic squeeze on one side and the disheartening resignation because of the failure of the messianic hopes on the second side, fell like a blow on the masses of the Jewish people, drove them into a desolation, into a hopelessness. A very small number, proportionally, once again attempted to find refuge in the fortress of the Talmud and attempted with more effort, to strengthen Jewish life, in order to facilitate a new mystical spiritual renewal, in which there would be no form.

At the end of the 18th century, a new, mighty movement spread out like a beacon among Eastern European Jewry – Hasidism. This movement came armed with effective psychological factors and took control of the souls of the masses. First and most direct, it gave the simple Jew a God, an anchor from whom he could draw comfort in those dark days. There was indeed a great deal of religious mystical ecstasy in the new system, but from a psychological standpoint it also drew on many elements that acted on the individual with love, with full-hearted feeling. Through the understanding from the mystical emotional-philosophy, where the *'Tzaddik'* assumes a very visible role, every believer was indirectly connected with his Creator, and was able to pour out his overburdened heart. The thick barriers and the fear of the weighty volumes of the religious literature fell away. God was no longer in the Halakha, in the dry legal formulations – only in song, in prayer, in belief.

This great wave cascaded over all Jewish settlements and reached Zamość as ell. Even such a traditionally Rabbinic community such as Zamość could not oppose the new movement. New winds began to blow. The foundation of Hasidism in Zamość was then folded into the city – this part of the settlement was a separate colorful strand in the generally colorful picture of the community.

However, the triumph of Hasidism didn't last very long. From the north, from Lithuania, a proclaimed war came from Vilna, from the mouth of the Gaon, Rabbi Eliyahu.

Zamość was a very observant city. Her Rabbis, the deep Talmud scholars, were zealous on their watch posts to guard

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[74] Author's Footnote: *Pinkas*, Sign ת"ש, pages 381, 382.

the framework of faith. Before, we have already seen their uncompromising battle with Sabbateanism, and other manifestations that grew out of that movement. It is true that it is necessary to view the war against Hasidism in Zamość, as an undivided part of this entire conflict, which came out of Vilna, and carried over into all Jewish settlements.

But there is no doubt that a related reason was the existing traditional opposition to mysticism, and first of all, Sabbateanism. There is no doubt in that specific elements of mystical ecstasy were transferred from the large messianic movement to the new, upcoming movement – *Hasidism*, elements that are rooted in the distant past, even before there was a Sabbatean movement proper. The fact weighs heavily, however, that in Hasidic doctrine, there was no mention, no indication of the concept of a Messiah, and especially in the identification of a single individual as a Messiah. However, the zealous watchdogs didn't make any distinction and didn't delve into details, they were frightened by the essential possibility that there could possibly be a connection, some relationship, in another form, to the messianic movement. Jewry foundered once already because of an aversion to sounding the alarm about the danger. And in their will to avoid a repetition [of the past], they came out with their entire might against the new movement. Rabbinic Zamość presented its struggle against Hasidism in this manner, its opposition to Hasidism was a natural continuation of its opposition to Sabbateanism, and its various manifestations.

First, the beginning of the movement in Zamość was choked off. You have to imagine that the sharpest means were employed as directed by the Lithuanian center. When the first blow fell, Zamość was on guard to make sure that this Hasidic movement should not be awakened. The members of this 'cell' were hounded and a permanent atmosphere was created around them. The visit of '*Tzadikkim*' into the city was prohibited . From time to time, recourse was had to the assistance of the [secular] authorities. The community was protected in a 'Rabbinical' manner.

This stance, subsequently was modified. It is possible that the reduction of Rabbinical zealotry undermined the uncompromising opposition; it can also be, that the specific character of the Zamość community was the primary reason. That which the mother community wanted to achieve, wasn't completely suitable for the neighboring communities. The smaller communities, that ringed Zamość, were filled with the new movement, which a little at a time, clandestinely, and without fanfare, also penetrated Zamość itself. A while later, it occurred to everyone that they are here – the *Hasidim*. Various sects of *Hasidim* set up their own houses of worship, and 'Tzadikkim' would start coming to visit the Hasidic community and *Hasidim*, often, not in secret, would travel to their *Tzadikkim*. Nobody any longer sounded the alarm, or cried out. The essence was that two large groups crystallized out [of the movement] – the ***Belzer** Hasidim* and the ***Gerrer** Hasidim*. The latter were the ones who were more characteristic of Zamość. There Hasidism was more *balebatish* (i.e. in some sense, 'refined.'). They also upheld the position of the scholars. By the middle of the 19th century, Hasidism had taken a recognized place in the Zamość community, no one was any longer concerned. And it happened thus, that while in other placed there reigned an open hostility between *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim*, in Zamość, that often led to quite loathsome fighting, peace and tranquility reigned in Zamość. 'In the middle of all this, our city excelled – says one of her residents – all its children love peace and unity: the *Hasidim* are not onerous to the *Mitnagdim*, and the *Mitnagdim* do not put pressure on the *Hasidim*.'[75]

Very characteristic was also the fact that the Zamość community did not experience any infighting and arguments between its various parties. There was never any initiative – religious, spiritual, cultural, that could not be adopted, and tolerated. Zamość, however, never lived through a major spiritual crisis. Her way of life was easy-going, and her Rabbis, who were prominent in the scholarly world, always were able to leap over the boundaries of scholastic pedantry.

A typical persona of the prominent Rabbinical Jews in Zamość can be found in **Rabbi Yaakov Krantz**, who is known as the **Dubner Maggid**.[76] He was born in Zhetl, in the Vilna region in the year 1740. At the age of 18, he left his

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75 Author's Footnote: *The Story of Zamość* by David Shifman in *HaMelitz*, 1878, page 390.

76 Author's Footnote: Regarding the *Dubner Maggid*, we cite here in the *Pinkas*, a special essay by Y. Y. Trunk, pp. 153, etc. [The title, '*Maggid*,' literally means 'Speaker.' It was accorded to

birthplace, and traveled to Mezrich[77]. He would hold lectures there in a circle of his friends and acquaintances. His popularity grew, and he was engaged as a 'Maggid ' by that community. After having spent a certain amount of time in **Zolociv**, he moved to **Dubno** (he was there for 18 years), where he acquired the name of 'Dubner Maggid,' which became very prominent in all Jewish areas. After that, he served in **Wlodawa**, in **Kalisz**, in **Chelm**, which at the time was a very prominent pulpit. Finally, in 1789, he came to Zamość. There, he entertained the community with his wonderful sermons, for a full 15 years until his death, on December 18, 1804. 'He had a marvelous faculty for devising parables and stories, in order to make his sermons understandable. His parables drew on day-to-day life, based on the condition of the Jews of that time... until he was crowned with the title of the leader of all orators, the Father of Parables among the Jews. [78]' His innovative thoughts were printed posthumously. There is no doubt that many of his parables and sermons, which were published at the initiative of his son, Rabbi Yitzhak Krantz, and his disciple Rabbi Berish Flamm[79] were created and delivered [first] in Zamość.

I. L. Peretz has left us an artful portrait of a Rabbi of Zamość in his memoirs about the personality of Rabbi Moshe Wohl.[80] (Peretz gave form to his personality in his story 'Four Generations – Four Deaths'). He was a prominent Torah scholar, and greatly revered. The gentry feared him, and he would impose the burden of his obedience, the demand of the Torah, on the 'well-to-do,' the well-endowed members of the community. But this fear was mixed in with respect and love. In the same measure with which he would not compromise on the respect he demanded – respect for the Torah – he was also able to draw close to the members of his community, and care for them. He understood, and took into account, the new winds that were blowing in from Western Europe. And when he heard that a small-minded Hasid had excommunicated the enlightened scholar **Yaakov Reifman**, he nullified the excommunication. The story goes on to tell further, that a great misfortune fell upon that Hasid. This was a great personality, one who related well to the masses, with a big heart and a formidable intellect at the same time.

We have, however, skipped over a very important period, and we must turn back to a personality who was one of the most important links in the chain of the era, that connects the 'olden times' with the 'modern' – the Haskala [The enlightenment]. We refer here to the outstanding personality of **Rabbi Israel Zamość**.[81]

**Rabbi Israel Zamość** was a 'great Rabbinical Torah scholar, and an outstanding thinker in all fields of learning,'

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people who excelled at oratory, and who often became itinerant preachers. – JSB]

77 Shown as Mezerici on modern maps of Ukraine.

78 Author's Footnote: From '*Knesset Israel*,' page 543 and onwards.

79 R' Avraham Dov Berish Flamm ז"ל born 5564 (1804) - died 24 Tevet 5633 (1873) . R' Flamm is considered to be the leading disciple of the famed Dubno Maggid, R' Yaakov Krantz ז"ל although, in fact, the two never met. (The Dubno Maggid died in the year R' Flamm was born.) R' Flamm was, however, the leading student of the Maggid's/ preacher's fragmentary writings, and it was he, together with the Maggid's son, R' Yitzhak Krantz, who edited these and prepared them for publication.

80 We are including here in the *Pinkas*, fragments of Peretz's memories about him.

81 ISRAEL BEN MOSES HALEVI OF Zamość SEGAL (1710—1772), a.k.a, Israel of Zamość, scholar and writer. Segal was born in Bóbrka, studied at the rabbinical academy in Zamość, and lived for some time in Berlin, where he was one of the teachers of Moses Mendelssohn. After returning to Eastern Europe, he spent the remainder of his life in Brody. He was an early opponent of Hasidism, and one of the first authors to include Haskala ideas in his writings. He emphasized the importance of knowing science and mathematics in order to understand the Talmud better.

writes the Jewish chronicler.[82] He was born in Bóbrka [Boiberik in Yiddish], approximately in 1700. He moved to Zamość while still quite young, and it was here that he grew up and became educated. In this culturally rich environment, his talents developed along many dimensions, and in the course of time, he becomes involved in the study of the Torah. The Bet-Din Senior of Zamość leaves us an important bit of information in his letter of consent to his book, *'Netzakh Yisrael'* – he write there, that Rabbi Israel had occupied himself with giving direction during the entire time he was in Zamość – he was a teacher in the Yeshiva of the community. Slowly, Rabbi Israel grew in popularity, as a man with great knowledge and great skill. While still young, he had a reputation for being very well-versed in secular studies, in magnitude equal to his expertise in Talmud and the religious literature. He was 37 years old at the time that Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem of Zamość gave his consent to his book, *Netzakh Yisrael*, and he portrayed him as a man in whom Torah and wisdom were woven together. He writes about him: 'It went heavenward, and water came down reaching the sea, the waters of the Talmud to the sea of exalted and praiseworthy wisdom, also containing many expositions and innovative insights, in this basic book from which the Jew can obtain wisdom...etc., etc....'

In the year 1740, Rabbi Israel left his city, and went to **Frankfurt**. Here, he printed his book, '*Netzakh Yisrael.*' From there he went to **Berlin**, and became a renown teacher in wide circles. **Moses Mendelssohn** of Dessau, the founder of the Enlightenment movement of the Jews, was among his students. But even Berlin was not his last posting; he went to **Brody**, and he died there on 17 Nissan 5532 (April 20, 1772).

While he still was in Zamość, he wrote a book, which he did not have the pleasure of publishing until the end of his life – this is '**The Book of the Windows of Heaven**.' According to the definition in the introduction in '*Netzakh Yisrael*,' this was a work of 'geometry, astronomy, about all things, with clear examples from beginning to end...'

Many outstanding Rabbinical personalities, in may locations were educated in secular studies, and from that standpoint, Rabbi Israel was certainly a specific case of a larger general population. But there is no doubt , that a very special impression was made upon him by the colorful culture of the city and community where he worked, and where he was active. And it is certain that he gave his support to the creation of the special character of Jewish Zamość, the place of his birth and where he grew up. It is well known how great his influence was upon the Father of the German Enlightenment, and in this manner, Zamość made a direct contribution to the creation of this great movement. In leaving Zamość, Rabbi Israel lived in many communities, where he was active. But he always remained a 'citizen' of his [home] town, and it was in this way his name was commemorated in the history of his people: **Israel Zamość**.

And it came to pass, that 100 years after Rabbi Israel, the teacher of M. Mendelssohn in Berlin, had left Zamość, the Enlightenment came to Zamość as a spiritual movement.

## Seven[83]

*Page 68:* *A building on the* Rynek *known by the name* 'Dem Kassierer's Haus *[The Banker's or Treasurer's House].' (The owner of the house in Czarist times was the Treasurer of the municipality). The first chairman of the Jewish Educational Organization lived in this house (a branch of Tz. Sh. O), of the I. L. Peretz School, Gedalia Jonasgartel*[84] *(Gedalia Becker). The bakery was also here. Shmuel Deutschgewand also lived in this building, in whose house, followed political people would hide out (communists, professional agitators, etc.)*

Despite all this, Jewish Zamość stood firmly on its secure base. It appears that the process of decline in the number of

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82 Author's Footnote: From '*Knesset Israel*,' page 690 and further.

83 Seemingly numbered '*eight*' by mistake.

84 Further instances of this name indicate that the entry un the picture has a minor misspelling, which has been corrected here.

Jews stopped in the first quarter of the 19th century, when the community started to recover. Zamość retained its role as a central community, and served as a focus for many other smaller communities in that vicinity. From time-to-time, it would come to the assistance of its smaller, daughter-communities. As an example, on Thursday, 25 Elul 1878, a large fire broke out among the Jewish houses in **Krasnystaw.** In the {newspaper] *HaMelitz* of that year, (No. 21) **David Shifman** tells that the Jews of Zamość gathered foodstuffs together, clothes, and other effects, from the first outbreak – two fully loaded wagons – and beside this, also donated funds. He finished his description with: 'Would that other cities in the area would also behave in this manner, and first of all, the large community of Lublin. May the Lord repay the children of Zamość for their efforts, and purify them with a favorable inscription and sealing in the Book of Good Life.'

In "*The Story of Zamość*," (*HaMelitz*, 1878, from page 414 on) David Shifman bemoans the declining morale of the social institutions of the community. He attributed this decline to the depredations that were endured during the persecutions. He draws an analogy between the condition of the institutions in his time (mid-19th century) and that of prior generations. And these are the institutions that he enumerates:

**A) Hevra Kadisha** – He falls upon the coarseness and insensitivity of this group, with an outbreak of anger, which had replaced the fine people which had been active there at one time. He writes that there is no order there. No acts of *Tzedakah* are performed there, the price of a burial had been jacked up, and at the core: the leadership provides no accounting to the larger community, [regarding] their annual balance.

**B) Hevra Talmud Torah** – The basis for the existence of this group was the income from those who would [make donations to] receive an *aliyah* to the Torah reading, during the holidays of *Shavuot, Shabbat Bereshit*, and the High Holidays; "the people would donate generously." These financial contributions made the existence of this group possible. Its purpose was primarily to participate in the administration of the Talmud Torah of the city, where a large number of young people went to school – whether from the local community, or whether from the surrounding smaller towns. This group is accused in this correspondence of abandoning its missions; in failing to provide sufficient oversight to the institution; in dereliction of its fiscal leadership. Here, he underscores, that the leadership do not provide the community with an accounting.

**C) Hevra Tikkun Sforim** – The funds for this group come frm the contributions of wealthy individuals and also a large portion of the populace. The mission of this group is quite a lofty one: to administer the library of the *Bet-HaMedrash* of the city. This library, which belonged to the public, was an invaluable treasure of the Jewish community of Zamość. There were over 4000 volumes in it, mostly religious books, but there were also scientific works, and there was no lack of 'secular books' – from all fields of endeavor, that the Jewish spirit had created across the span of all time and generations. And when the visitors and students who came to the library grew in number, it became one of the most important centers of culture, from whose well springs, young and old alike took sustenance. It was not only for those thirsting for knowledge from Zamość alone, but rather, it was a wellspring for all the surrounding communities. It was therefore natural that a special community body would be found that would be concerned with: integrity of the books; binding them when necessary; looking after enlarging the collection of books; enriching it with new publications. Here also, Shifman accuses the group of neglecting its work, lacking an effective oversight, a dereliction that has led to a shrinkage in the number of books in the library.

**D) Hevra *Shas*** – It was here that the correspondent saw the greatest decline in morale and culture. While it is true that the group has a large membership, but in contrast to past times, when **Torah Scholars** were members, today, there are wealthy people, financially well-to-do people, not because of their respect for the Torah, but for the honor of belonging to the group. From the entire rich tradition [of this group] only one tradition remains – the **Feast** on the night in *Tevet*, when the cycle of studying the *Shas* is completed. This feast was organized in the residence of one of the members of the 'Hevra *Shas*.' It is true that funds were collected, but new books are not purchased; no salary is paid to the designated [Talmud] lesson learner; no annual accounting is given [to the community].

Even if we accept the iconoclastic critique of the Zamość institutions of his time, published by the correspondent to *HaMelitz*, the *Maskil* from Zamość, we must not jump to a hasty conclusion – it is possible that he idealized the

circumstances of past times, and perhaps exaggerated the shortcomings of his own time, which generally was the nature of the *Maskilim.* What was entirely characteristic, was the fact that he spoke out so sharply against the absence of ...a **mikva** within the city boundaries, and that this led to very undesirable situations, when Jewish daughters were frightened about going out of the city boundaries to the mikva...

**Aleksander Zederbaum**, himself born in Zamość, who was the editor of *HaMelitz*, accepted David Shifman's '**The Story of Zamość**,' and printed it in *HaMelitz*, with the following editorial comment: he hoped that the his home town would awaken from its dreamlike state, and return to the state that it enjoyed in former times.

There is no doubt, that once the various upheavals subsided, that the community began to restore itself, and dedicated itself to the work in the community institutions. It is necessary to show respect for the great place occupied by, and the completeness of the social institutions that were in Zamość. Firstly, the majority of the evidence shows that there were organizational faculties, and concern for the general good. When one becomes familiar with the various institutions, it is possible to see there was a rich social fabric of activity, a voluntary realization and development from a broad sector [of the populace]. The 4 institutions previously mentioned by Shifman, were a handful among a [much] larger number. These four, more-or-less, were related to **religious** life. But David Shifman himself enumerates yet a whole other array of groups, whose objectives were primarily social. Despite the fact that he says very little about them, the mentions them in passing, but also only to level criticism, that they are neglectful, it is important for us to become familiar with them. Indeed, let us enumerate them:

**E) Hevra Sandek** – This group had as an objective the oversight regarding each expectant mother, whether rich or poor, and when required, not only oversight, but it also provided material assistance in those cases. For those with lesser means, the group provided everything that was required for the ceremony of *Brit Milah*, as it was conducted by everyone in Zamość.
**F) Hevrat Tehilim** – This group was unique from a social standpoint. The teachers of the children; the 'Rabbis' from the *Heders*, when they would grow old, and they were retired as teachers, they would join the *Hevra Tehilim* and they would live out their years [supported by] the contributions that were donated for them to say prayers and recite Tehilim on behalf of the sick, or, God-forbid, the deceased body.
**G) Hevrat Nos'ei Mita** – A group concerned with showing respect for the dead., especially the poor, who may not have had many acquaintances during their lives, who would come and pay their respects on the last journey.
**H) Hevrat Bikkur Kholim** – This was a wonderful institution, both with what it did, and its relationship to people. The objective of this group was to look after every Jewish person who was ill, poor or rich. David Shifman knows to tell, that the group would send two seasoned representatives to each sick person, free of charge, who were supposed to assist the sick person during the course of his illness. In time, a new institution developed, that encompassed all aspects of what needed to be done for the sick – this was the Hevra **Linat HaTzedek**. It was a private institution, that funded itself from the dues paid by its members. Its objective was to provide medicinal assistance to everyone who was needy. The group was connected with all the doctors and with both of the city's pharmacies. By means of a draft from this group, the sick person obtained the attention of a physician at either a reduced rate, or entirely free of charge, depending on the financial condition of the patient. This same group obtained prescriptions for the patient at the pharmacies, with discounts or entirely free of charge. The sick could also obtain a variety of medical instruments by putting up a security deposit. These functions made this organization a first-class social factor in the life of the community. It was a sort of People's 'Illness-Bank,' from which everyone benefitted. The dues paying members had only the rights of administration. An administration was elected at annual general meetings, which was held accountable for the activities of the organization for the span of the entire year.

We need to complete the list of institutions that David Shifman presents:

**I) The Hospital** – This institution is the only one that the *Maskil* has no words with which to praise it. As he tells it, the institution was built over 100 years before he wrote the report, that is to say, in the second half of the 18th century. **Rav Sender**, the son of the **Great Dr. Berish** founded the institution. For a number of years before '*The Story of Zamość*' was written, the hospital was supported by the magnate, **Yehoshua Margaliot**, who invested a lot of money in it, and rebuilt it to a highly modern institution. This Mecenas passed away in 1887.

And yet, this very institution did not survive. For more than a century, the Zamość community carried out one of the most important missions by supporting the hospital. However, budget difficulties caused it to cease functioning. It ceased to exist, and the beautiful buildings that were constructed for its use, went over to a new institution that was also important.

All these activities were carried out by the elected officials that stood at the head of the Jewish community of Zamość. This direction, whose beginnings are rooted in the first days of the foundation of the community, back in the days of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, continued to exist, even under different conditions and altered forms, up to the Nazi occupation.
When an independent Poland was formed, after the First World War, and when the statute of Jewish self-determination was implemented, the status of the community and the election system there were 25 people who headed the Zamość Jewish community: ten in the **administration** of the community, and fifteen in the **Advisory Council.** The latter was an advisory and decision-making position, the first being the executive role. These 25 people were elected in a general election. All Jews aged 25 and above had an 'active' right to vote; 'passive' rights from age 30 and up. Balloting was done on tickets, and the community administration selected the Rabbi. The administration levied taxes in accordance with a special assessment, and also set a tax for ritual slaughter.

The venerable and highly expert city school was under the direct control of the administration, the place for large community gatherings, and also the *Bet HaMedrash.*

All of these activities demanded no small amount of costs. According to what is reported by David Shifman, the Zamość community laid out ten thousand rubles a year – which for those times was a comparatively large amount of money, especially when you take into consideration that this sum does not include the various donations and generous contributions of the entire Jewish population.

Just as in other walks of life, there was continuous progress in the community institutions; we have already seen, for example, that in *Hevra Linat HaTzedek*, there was an institution that served the entire populace, and that such institutions acted at the side of the community institutions, and loyally served the general population in many areas. Among them, it is especially important to cite the following:

**Hevra Gemilut Hessed** – It was supported through membership dues. This group would provide 'grants of charity' in small amounts to the needy, who would pay the amounts back in small amounts, without any interest.
Among the administrative institutions, the following two were of special importance:

**A) The Cooperative Loan Bank for Mutual Credit** – A bank, whose seed capital was provided by the stock of the members. In order to join the bank, the prospective member was required to deposit a set amount which gave him the right to take a loan, which was [up to] ten times the amount of his deposit. The interest charged was significantly lower than the interest in the money market. The member was accepted by a decision of the management. The leadership of the bank was elected by the members, at a general meeting that took place once a year. It was a very people-oriented institution, which filled an important role among many sections of the community.

**B) The Merchant's Bank** – A wealthy industrial institution and a very substantial one, in contrast to the previously mentioned institution, and as a result, this institution lacked a common touch. It served the commercial interests of the large merchants. There were, indeed, elections there, but the controlling interests were the very rich, and they held sway there with unchecked power.

It is also necessary to recollect **TOZ**,[85] the organization that safeguarded the public health; the missions of this

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[85] Abbreviation for *Towarzystwo Ochorny Zdrowia*, or *Society for Preventative Health.* Formed with the establishment of the Polish Republic, with a national mission to promote improvement in sanitation and hygiene as a deterrent to disease.

institutions spread to especially cover the health of children from the poorer classes. (About TOZ, we will have more to say, more than once).

This work, by **I s r a e l L e v i n** first appeared in the book, '*Zamość in its Glory and Destruction*' which the '*Committee of Zamość Émigrés in Israel*' published in the year 5713 (1953) in Israel.

In translating this work for our *Pinkas*, we passed over a number of parts, which are covered in an array of works by other writers, which cannot be extracted from there.

For this reason, we were unable to include the last chapters from the work: 9,10,11 & 12.

# The Sephardim in Zamość

**by Dr. Yaakov Shatzky [86]**

## 1. The Creation of Zamość

*Page 71:* *The cornice from a house on the Stolny Rynek, Zamenhofe Gasse Number 1*
*Page 72:* *The innermost door of the Kassierer's Haus.*

The city of Zamość was founded in the year 1580. In the territory occupied by the old Polish feudal family of the Zamoyski magnates, there was a small town which was later called Old-Zamość. This town was destroyed as a result of the frequent invasions by the Tatars; in its place, a village arose that was called Skokówka. It was in this town, that the renown member of the Zamoyski family was born, the future Chancellor of Poland, founder of the city of Zamość, the greatest exponent of art and culture that old Poland had in general – Jan Zamoyski (1542-1605).

In 1571, Jan Zamoyski takes control of the larger part of the immense fortune bequeathed to him by his father. Zamoyski spent his years as a student outside of the country. He studied in Strasbourg (for a short while) and for five years (1561-1565) in Italy. There, he became acquainted with the most prominent humanists and scholars who had concentrated themselves around the old university at Padua. Zamoyski paid attention to the spiritual life of that city, to the humanistic spirit that reigned in the university, which took in even Jews as students – a rare occurrence in the 16th century. When he compared the spirit in Padua to the anti-humanistic spirit in the old Jagiellonian University in Krakow, he fell upon the idea of building a sort of 'Polish Padua' in one of his lands, a city with an 'Italian Flavor,' as he expressed it, not only by similarity in architecture, but also by similarity in culture and education. In the beginning, he even brought Italian scholars, to spread the spirit of what then held sway over a part of Europe. Zamoyski ideal was [to create] a university that would give the youth of the ruling classes a humanistic education, and a fundamental preparation for the political life of the country, and not just simply a theological and scholastic exposure which Krakow provided, and which the new generation of the nobility had at that time strongly criticized.

In 1578, Jan Zamoyski signed a contract with the Italian architect Bernardo Morandí.[87] At the outset, it was actually a project to construct a castle fortress in the village of Skokówka. A year later, a city began to spring up around this castle. Zamość was officially proclaimed as a new city on April 3, 1580, and in the territories of the Zamoyski family. The new city immediately obtained the blessings of the Pope and the King. According to the plans of the founder, Zamość needed to be equipped with a new commercial and cultural center, first-of-all for the extensive holdings that he alone possessed. The system of defenses that he built there around the city, was designed to serve as a magnet for those he had in mind to attract to come and settle there: first of all, people with capital, such as merchants and craftsmen. Zamoyski gave all new residents a tax holiday for the first 25 years of residents. The colonists, who were prepared to take up residence and work parcels of land, he exempted from personal service, and also from giving a part of their produce to the landlord.

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86 Dr. Shatzky provides a series of 46 footnotes to his essay, which will not be reproduced in their entirety. If they provide some specific clarification of interest, they will be included here as well. Interested readers should consult the original text for further details.

87 Shown as *Bernardo Morando* in the general literature.

On June 12, 1580, the King, Stefan Batory awarded a privilege to the city which permitted Zamość to hold three market fairs a year, the right to have warehouses for the goods that will be brought there from other parts of the country *prawo skladu.*[88] For the period of the fairs, a special market court was designated to deal with al conflicts and complaints arising from the fair, that are a normal outgrowth of commercial transactions. Merchants who wanted to merely pass through Zamość, and not pay a transit tax, had to assume the obligation of displaying their wares for three days in Zamość proper, in order to enable the local residents to buy those things that they wanted. Among those merchants, there were those to whom Zamość appealed so much, that they decided to settle there. During the first period of Zamość as a city, such a decision was relatively easy to carry out. For this reason, various social groups began to crop up around Zamość, according to specific national and religious indicators. They were protected by very generous privileges granted to them by Jan Zamoyski. This was necessary, in order to decide to take the risky step – creating a new home for one's self in a new city, which required the liquidation of businesses and homes that were owned by the new citizenry in far off places, even outside Poland.

The first new citizens of Zamość were Armenians. They came from far off Turkey. They settled on one street in Zamość, apparently first allocated to them by the municipal government itself. On April 30, 1585, Zamoyski grants them a privilege that exempts them from paying any taxes for twenty years. Two years later, one finds stories about affluent Armenians in Zamość. In 1589 they constituted themselves into their own religious parish, with a magistrate and their own judicial court. The Armenians brought with them the art of working '*safian,*' a sort of colored leather[89], that had always been imported into Poland, indeed from Turkey. Apart from this, they, in accord with the privilege granted by the Magnate, obtained the right to deal in wine, mead, hard liquor and beer.

Greeks settled in Zamość in 1589. They, also, obtained a document that guaranteed them, first-of-all, freedom of religion. As Greek-Catholics, they immediately built their own church, thanks to the financial help from Zamoyski. They also faced no obstacles in commerce. There most internal maters they dealt with in an autonomous fashion, and had their own judges and even security guards, which patrolled the street that they inhabited.

In 1594, Czechs settle in Zamość, also on the basis of a guaranteed privilege.

It was in this manner that a number of national groups, a little at a time, came to settle in Zamość, governing themselves according to their own customs, and being active in a variety of fields of economic life, in agreement with the right and guarantees worked out by each group with the owner of the city. Each ethnic group guarded its privileges like the apple of an eye, and always rose to defend it, in the event that anyone from another group wanted to push the envelope of their market fair-guaranteed industrial activity. The large number of travelers who came to visit Zamość in its heyday, did not stint on their words of praise of this well-endowed city, with her various nations, languages, religions, with the autonomous right that each group had, and with the street-delineated territories in which each resided. A Zamość market fair had the appearance of a colorful tapestry, with people of different tongues and nations. Each group carried out its commercial business and work in an unimpeded fashion. In a short time, Zamość attracted new immigrant groups from Germany, England, Muscovy, Turkey, Persia, Greece, Italy and Hungary.

By contrast to other cities in Poland, where craftsmen protected the Christian-Catholic character of their guild, and did not admit anyone of a different belief – tolerance ruled in Zamość from the outset. In 1590, the hat makers obtained their own 'order' *Porzadek cechowy*, that guaranteed them a monopoly for their production and sales in the city, except at market fair time, when foreign hat makers also were permitted to bring and sell their handiwork. It was, however,

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88 "*Prawo skladu*" was a warehousing statute that required every merchant passing through the city to display his merchandise for sale for a certain period of time. There was a total "*prawo skladu,*" requiring the merchant to sell everything. There was also a partial "*prawo skladu*" forcing the merchant to sell a certain part of his merchandise. Polish cities were being given "*prawo skladu*" starting 1274. Its importance was already fading in 15th century, and disappeared totally in 18th century.

89 From '*safian*' meaning Moroccan leather.

forbidden to do 'scab labor,' meaning work by a non-member of the guild. In paragraph XXXV of the 'order' it is stated that 'people of other nationalities may also engage in hat making.'

The city grew quite rapidly both in length and in breadth. In 1591, Zamość is comprised of 301 buildings, 1596 – a full 400, all, by the way, built in an Italian style.

This Polish miniature of Padua, planted in a Sarmatian land, as a result of the caprice of a Magnate, inspired all contemporary travelers. The city is written about and celebrated in song.

An Italian who visited the city in 1953 [90] write like this:

> This city is beautiful, and its appointments are an authentic Italian taste. It has good houses, mostly made of stone.

That same Italian was greatly excited by the rich library that Zamoyski donated to the local academy, which he founded in the same year (1593).

Contemporary people were amazed at the pace with which Zamość was built. The poet, Klonowicz [91] even penned a Latin song about how Zamość grows before his very eyes.

The citizens of Zamość felt much more free there than in other cities of Poland. Zamoyski gave them the same rights that the nobility had. Firstly, they were exempt from paying taxes for importing merchandise. He even made it possible for them to send their children to the academy of Zamość, which was opened with great fanfare in 1593. At this grand opening, Jan Zamoyski gave a speech and said the following:

> I deplore those teachers, who stuff the minds of the youth with unnecessary speculative studies, which in place of real clarification drives them into an abyss, not broadening, but the opposite – choking off education and truth.

Zamoyski's ideal was a democratization of education in the sense that the nobility as well, and not only the magnates, would take advantage of education, that first and foremost, must have a practical value. To this end, Zamoyski, for the first time in Polish history, brought special teachers imported from Italy, into the fabric of education.

The juxtaposition of this cadre of teachers in the Zamość academy was very colorful. People from various lands, and even [different] faiths (except, as is understood, Jews), taught there, despite the fact that they could not remain in Zamość for too long a time, because there was no cultural life here similar to that found in the university cities from which they came. Even the Poles, who had studies in Italy and then became professors in Zamość, generally could not remain for long there. There were many drunkards among them, as one contemporary describes, and even underworld types.

There was a printing house active in the sphere of the academy, which by coincidence, later played a role in printing anti-Semitic works. There was student-housing, and many Christian women made a living from running boarding houses for students that came from out-of-town.

In the course of time, those who did not engage in business, and didn't have a trade, made a living from performing a variety of services, messengers, working around the academy. But this was a very small minority.

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90 This is very likely a typographical error, since the context suggests it should have said 1593.

91 Sebastian Fabian Klonowicz (1545 - 1602)

Zamość became a city of commerce because of the trade in oxen, which were brought from Volhynia and Podolia, and transported to Silesia and Germany. Jews played an important role in this commerce, even though at that time, they were not yet permitted to live in Zamość.

The last ones to receive a privilege to live in Zamość were Jews. This happened in 1588. This right was obtained by Jews who were not Polish, but Sephardic. This, in itself makes the History of Jews in Zamość exceptional and interesting. In order to understand this, it is worthwhile to briefly tell about Sephardic Jews in Poland, and about Jan Zamoyski's interest in them.

## 2. Sephardic Jews in Poland

History does not support the widely held notion, that after the Expulsion [of the Jews] from Spain (1492), that Poland gradually became a place of refuge for Spanish Diaspora [Jews].Spanish Jews appeared in Poland, from time-to-time, mostly as diplomatic emissaries or as highly prominent physicians. These were short sojourns, made on special request. True, it did happen that guests who came this way, remained behind, and several even found their place of refuge in Poland. The small number of gravestones that have survived are so few that there really cannot be any talk about a larger influx of Sephardic Jews to Poland.

These few privileged people from Spain, where generally from a higher social class; several were even aggrandized, becoming close to royalty and were privileged to become interwoven into a romantic legend, that the fantasy of the masses fed upon. However, to date, no historical documents have come to light, that would substantiate larger Sephardic Jewish groups in Poland.

The oldest record is of a Spanish Jew, a physician, R' Yitzhak, who in 1470, about 20 years before the expulsion, was a member of a Persian diplomatic mission to Venice. In 1473, this physician-diplomat was in Kafa (in Crimea, today called Feodosija), which was a colony of Genoa. Yitzhak the Spaniard also made diplomatic trips to the Moldavian Voievode Stefan, and from there, to the Polish King Casimir IV, who, as it happens, was located in Lithuania. Jan Dlugasz, the Polish chronicler, writes about him, actually taking him for a Greek, at the same time that he is referred to as "The Physician Yitzhak" of Spanish nationality, in a letter from the Shah of Persia, by faith a Jew, and a great diplomat.

A second Sephardi, R' Yaakov Anselmi, this time from Venice, shortly before the loss of the colony at Kafa, settled in Poland with his family and relatives.

In their distant and highly risky mercantile travels, Polish Jews often encountered Jews from Spain. It is not known if they derived any support from Spain. Jews are also described in the travel memoirs of Poles who visited Spain, but not any who were Polish.

In the 15th century, the Jews of Constantinople were the only merchants who imported any merchandise into Poland from oriental countries. Lemberg became the central point for this trade, and was so well known for this, that this city is to be found on Spanish maps of the 14th and 15th century as an important commercial center.

In the years 1467-1481 Sephardic Jews import colonial goods into Poland, such as spices, eastern wines, etc. In the years 1515-1600 the names of 12 Turkish Jews are listed who ran large import businesses between Turkey and Poland, and even owned special warehouses, where they employed Polish Jews.

Even though these were mostly Spaniards, they are not Spanish Jews. Jews did not travel directly from Spain itself to Poland after the expulsion. Those that came later, and a part of which actually did settle [in Poland] were not more that small groups, not sufficient to even form their own community. They were exiles from Spain in an indirect fashion. These were children or grandchildren of exiles from Spain, mostly born in countries outside of Spain. They were substantial merchants, bankers, but mostly physicians, who by virtue of their profession, and perhaps their origin, found favor and quickly achieved prominence in Jewish and even non-Jewish life in Poland.

The Polish students at Italian universities did not come in contact with Jewish students only one time, especially in the city of Padua, where Polish Jews studied, and more than one of them came back with an idealized stereotype of a Sephardic Jew, which to them represented the embodiment of Renaissance culture. Jewish physicians in Italy, and among them many exiles from Spain, had patients among the higher Polish nobility. This perhaps led to the fact that not one Polish magnate wanted to bring back a Jewish doctor to Poland from Italy.

It is Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584) who best articulates the reputation of the Spanish Jew in Polish literature during the 16th century, when he praises the renown author of the 'Dialogues Regarding Life,' (published in 1535), Don Isaac Abarbanel, *Leone Hebreo*, by whom he was influenced.. It is therefore not surprising that the Italian Princess Bona [Sforza], when she came to Poland to become the wife of the Polish King [Sigismund], brings with her the Sephardi Shmuel bar Meshullam, a senior physician (who was in Poland during the years 1532-1547), and the Italian Ashkenazi R' Shlomo of Odina (who practiced in Poland 1548-1564). Years after the expulsion, it was written in Spain, that it was not a surprise that Jewish-Spanish physicians were in special demand at royal palaces and noble estates. One of the Spanish physicians, in 1575, characterized the Jew as a type of person that 'by character and temperament seemed to literally be divinely ordained' to be a doctor.

It is therefore also no surprise, that the couple of Jewish physicians, of Spanish origin, largely invited to come into Poland, quickly took themselves to, and created dynasties of Jewish physicians that played an important role in Jewish community life in the country.

R' Yitzhak ben Abraham was such a physician, probably born in Spain, obtained a privilege from the King, Jan Albert [sic: also sometimes rendered as John Albrecht], in 1501, that relieves him of any obligations to pay taxes. King Alexander does the same in 1502. In 1504, he is living in Krakow. He is the senior physician to three Polish rulers. He is freed from having to stand trial in any court except the king's. He is given a standing sinecure for his consultations, and was even trusted with diplomatic missions. He travels to Constantinople in 1507. He died approximately in 1508. His son-in-law was the Sephardi, Dr. Gershon Rappaport, known in the literature as the Physician of Porto, *Rofe de Porto* (the grandfather of *Baal Eytan HaMizrahi*). Dr. Shlomo Klifora, or Kalahara came to Poland at the same time as Dr. Shlomo the Ashkenazi. He came to Poland along with his father Joseph, and brother Moshe, later a writer. He was the son of Spanish-born Jews. He himself was born in Amsterdam, and indeed, studied medicine there. He took up residence in Krakow in 1560. In the year 1570, he is appointed by the King, Sigismund-August [sic: Sigismund II] as the physician for 'special medical knowledge, and practical application.' He is freed, along with his wife and children, from paying any taxes. His virtues and integrity are praised in the renewal of his privilege by the King, Stefan Batory, which was issued in 1578. He even obtains rights to conduct trade, and finds himself to be very capable in this field as well. Along with his son, Abraham, and a Sephardic Jew, Shlomo Habibi, he conducts a substantial business in salt, and exploits the newly discovered salt mines in 'Red Russia.' He is also something of a banker, and lends money at interest.

Balaban writes that Dr. Shlomo Kalahara was well acquainted with the *ReM"A*[92] and carried on lengthy conversations with him on matters of the faith, which were often referenced in the *ReM"A's* responsas. This was the era in Poland, when heated discussions were taking place between the adherents of the *Rambam*[93], which included the Spanish Jews in Italy, and his protagonists.

> Thanks to this organization – Balaban writes – the *REM"A's* outlook on the world was changed, and made him more tolerant with regard the activities and "easements" that began to appear with the

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92 Moses ben Israel Isserles (c. 1525-1572), considered the "Maimonides of Polish Jewry," was one of the greatest Jewish scholars of Poland. Born in Krakow, he was the great-grandson of Yekhiel Luria, the first Rabbi of Brisk. Isserles died in Krakow and was buried next to his synagogue. Thousands of pilgrims visited his grave annually on *Lag b'Omer*, until the Second World War.

93 The Hebrew acronym for Maimonides (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon).

onset of the new era on the Polish-Jewish horizon. This is the source of the *REM"A's* liberalism in many of his responsas.

The world-famous Marrano physician, Alatus Lusitanus (1511-1568) came from Portugal. King Sigismund-August asked him to become his personal physician through a special emissary, at the time when the former had already taken up residence in Ancona. However, he did not accept the invitation. However, the son of his cousin, who was named Moshe ben Eliyahu Montalto, took up residence in Lublin, where he died in 1637. Moshe Montalto built a synagogue in Lublin at his own personal expense, where services were conducted according to the Sephardic tradition. He had a son who studied medicine in Padua, and later became a senior physician in Poland. As his grandfather, Eliyahu Montalto was a physician (died in France in 1616), we have three generations of prominent Sephardic physicians in Poland.

Such families of Spanish origin, which had generations of doctors in Poland, were not rare. It suffices to recall the family of Khazak, which changed its name to Fortis de Lima, and inter-married with the Kalaharas, and many others. Because they were important, by virtue of their calling, social standing, and integrating themselves into Jewish life, the historical documentation relating to community of Sephardic Jews in Poland is not meager. There were, however, also Sephardic merchants, bankers, substantial entrepreneurs, often of an adventurous stripe. There is also documentation about the Volkhoviches of Italy. One of them, Shlomo Volkhovich, even signs his documents as *Salomo Szafaradi*. He was a commercial agent, by royal appointment, and therefore a Jew of substantial means. There were however, probably no lack of Sephardic Jews of middling means. Perhaps, in locally documented town books, there may in some places be traces of their existence. It is possible, that as a tiny minority, they were 'assimilated' by the *Ashkenazim*, and vanished into the roiling life of the majority life of Jews in Poland. In the main, one cannot speak of great masses of Sephardic Jews in Poland in general, especially not of a *direct* immigration from Spain or Portugal into Poland, analogous to the influx that went to Italy, France, Turkey and later (already as Marranos) to Holland.

However, because of a local political conjunction, of all places, in Turkey, in one city in Poland, in Lemberg, a colony of Sephardic Jews began to take shape which in a larger measure, influenced the rise of the Jewish settlement in Zamość. The high moral and social importance that the Sephardim earned for themselves in Polish literature, and in the eyes of the nobility, played no small part in the strong good fortune that Sephardic Jews enjoyed in Poland, and gave rise to patronage from the magnates and ruling classes, which simultaneously, the Jews, who had been locally rooted for generations, never enjoyed.

This intensive contact between Poland and Sephardic Jews, dates from [the time of] Don Joseph Nasi (passed away in 1572), who by virtue of his standing in the Turkish regime as a diplomat, banker and literally a global merchant, obtained many concessions to carry on businesses in Poland. Don Joseph Nasi took up residence in Turkey in 1552. He converted from being a Marrano back to Judaism, and began, a little at a time, to play a controlling role in the imperial politics of Turkey, in the time of the rein of the Sultan Suleiman II (1566-1520) and his son, Selim II (1566-1574). Joseph Nasi helped to consummate the Polish-Turkish Tractate of 1561, which guaranteed peace for Poland for a period of time, for the price of not interfering with Turkish expansion in Europe. What role Joseph Nasi played in these negotiations is not entirely clear. On the face of it, his political compensation appears to have been quite meager, if the Sultan saw fit to bestow upon him so many favors and concessions. In the year 1562, the Sultan Suleiman permitted the import of wine into Constantinople, even for the use of Jews and Christians, but there were no restrictions place on the transit [of the wine] for sale in other countries. Being that the newly conquered territories produced a great deal of wine, and the surrounding countries were heavy consumers, this became a very large business. The chief diplomat and banker Joseph Nasi received a *firman* (a concession) to export wine from the island of Crete to Moldova, and from there, to Poland. He was able to secure broad commercial concessions in Poland, with the help of the Turkish Sultan. In the letter from the Polish King, it is stated, that these sweeping concessions, to import goods into Poland without taxes, is granted to Joseph Nasi because the Sultan had made a personal request of him to do so. He thinks of this privilege as an expression of his gratitude for the favors that the said Joseph Nasi did on behalf of his ambassadors in Turkey. This was in the year 1567. In the meantime, Joseph Nasi gave the Polish King a loan of 150,000 ducats, a truly large sum for those times. When the king subsequently declared to a special messenger of Don Joseph Nasi, that he was as yet unable to repay the debt, he extended his commercial concessions as an act of good faith. It was in this

fashion that contact was maintained for something less than eleven years, between the Polish King, and the Jewish banker-diplomat in Turkey.

As a direct result of the sweeping, extra-territorial commercial concessions that had received diplomatic sanction, Turkish Jews appeared in Poland, all agents of Joseph Nasi, and began to deal, on a tax-free basis, in wines and other oriental products. The central point for all of these businesses was Lemberg, because many Greeks and Armenians lived there. The coming of the Jewish merchants elicited a strong dissatisfaction not only on the part of the Christian merchants, who sensed the danger of competition, against which they could not defend themselves, but also on the part of local Jews.

In 1567, two agents of Joseph Nasi, the Turkish Jews Haim *HaKohen* and Abraham Da Mossa, receive the exclusive rights to import wines into Poland. Abraham's brother, Moshe Da Mossa, is designated as the intermediary with the headquarters in Lemberg. The local city council there, along with the merchants association protested vigorously against this sweeping commercial concession which had been received by those Turkish Jews. That they were released from having to pay any import duties, and had the right to transit their wares *prawo skladu* while other merchants were required to restrict their sales to local city residents for the first 14 days, and only later in other venues – placed the economic security of the Lemberg merchants, who dealt in wine, in danger, and among them Jews. Foreign merchants had never had such privileges in Poland before. The Lemberg merchants did not want to recognize these concessions and deals under any circumstances.

The Turkish Jews themselves could not do very much. The truth is, that the King personally intervened, and reminded the Lemberg city council that what these Sephardic Jews had received, was an expression of the gratitude that Poland feels towards Turkey. Therefore, every act of sabotage against these very merchants would be thought of as effrontery and rebelliousness. The King also warned that he would severely punish the guilty parties that would place themselves in opposition to this arrangement, and prevent the carrying out of the privileges, that he had personally granted to these Jews.

The citizens of Lemberg came out with other statements. Seeing that any arguments regarding business were of no avail, they came out with patriotic complaints, and began to spread the word that these Jews were really not merchants, but were acting as real Turkish spies. When these false accusations were also found to be useless, the city appealed to the Sejm which happened to have gathered in Pietrkow. After long discussions in that location, it was decided to annul these diplomatically-based mercantile concessions. The King, however, refused to affix his signature to such an act, and consequently, the concessions remained in force.

Jan Zamoyski, as the Royal Chancellor, understood that Poland could not go back on its word, that had been signed and sealed in an official document [of state]. He therefore worked strenuously to assure that these Jews would be able to travel freely, and conduct their business in accordance with the agreement received by Joseph Nasi. In Lemberg proper, the Sephardim felt very badly. This time, the local Jews went hand-in-hand with the Polish citizens, because that is what their [economic] interests dictated, despite the fact that the latter were anti-Semitic, but in this contrived situation the Jews were exactly in the same danger from being overrun, just like the non-Jews.

The animosity toward to Turkish Jews in Lemberg became very strong. They, personally, felt this quite rapidly. Moshe HaKohen Da Mossa, the Lemberg intermediary, writes in a letter to his brother, that the Lemberg merchants want to literally ruin them. Also, that the Jewish merchants in Lemberg show very little love for their fellow co-religionists from Turkey. On a specific point, they are even more contentious than the non-Jewish merchants. Because of this, Da Mossa could not find enough words to praise the relationship that Jan Zamoyski had with him, and his colleagues. In this letter to his brother in faraway Turkey, Moshe HaKohen writes as follows:

> Where it not for the sympathy and good will of the Lord Chancellor (meaning Jan Zamoyski), who shows me respect, and receives me in his home, not like one receives a merchant, but like a kinsman, the Lembergers would eat us up alive.

It would appear, that the commercial mission, carried out by the Da Mossa brothers, had an effect, enabling other Jews from faraway Turkey to come to Poland, and also achieving success in their business. In March 1568, the Turkish Sultan sends a letter to the King of Poland with the protest that one of 'his own,' a Jew, is being strongly harassed by the local merchants, despite the fact that he has an explicitly granted concession to carry on business. He requests that this Jew and his group not be disturbed, since he belongs to those who earn his support, just as is the case with Joseph Nasi, a 'Model of a Prince of the Jewish Nation.' It is in his nature, writes the Sultan, to recognize those who distinguish themselves with 'their loyalty and dedication to our throne.'

From what we can tell, this was a rather new Turkish-Jewish expedition, which worked in Lemberg, but it was confronted with such an intense level of difficulty, that the Jew Gianamore was compelled to testify to the Sultan and the latter demanded the satisfaction of his rights. In 1570, Joseph Nasi sends a special emissary to the Polish King, in connection with the King owed him. The King had no payment ready, and because of this, he demanded an extension to the concessions, not mindful of the great dissatisfaction that these concessions elicited from the Polish citizenry, and no less from the Jewish merchants.

The agents of Joseph Nasi, again carried on their business under the hail of clamor and explicit acts of sabotage, they had great difficulties with credit, and they had to lend money in Lemberg. The gentile weekly moneylenders, however, skinned them alive. They were too afraid to even approach Jewish moneylenders.

"The dogs," – as Moshe HaKohen referred to the Lemberg Jews – they really 'barked.' The town magistrate and the gentile merchants protested vigorously, bu the King carried out his will: commerce continued on the existing basis. Drained by the conflict, the Lemberg city fathers were forced to cease their attacks, and hoped that these foreign, uninvited Turkish Jewish merchants, would sooner-or-later be broken economically. The Sephardic merchants began to feel the hostile atmosphere towards them more and more strongly. Isolated from the Lemberg Jewish community, which distanced itself from them, having no command of the local language, without friends – they felt themselves to be in dire circumstances. They understood that they had to immediately do something that was concrete, because they could not be protected from far away, at a time when they were confronted with hatred and anger up close.

The agent, Moses HaKohen, writes to his brother in faraway Turkey:

> I have stopped worrying, because my one salvation is God. When I can have a garment and a slice of bread, nothing bothers me at all, because I know what is going on in the world. Wherever I turn, I will manage to earn my little slice of bread, and in the end I will make *aliyah* to Jerusalem, in order to live there. All your friends are now your enemies, they want to annihilate you, stone you.

These very Sephardic Jews lived in this kind of an atmosphere, conducted their business, and carried on a battle for less than eight years.

The Chancellor, Jan Zamoyski, exerted himself to help by whatever means he could. In 1580, when he built the city of Zamość, the thought occurred to him to invite these Turkish Jews to take up residence there, and in this way, become the foundation of the Jewish settlement there. From the [archival] sources, it is not clear whether this was his own [personal] idea, or whether it was presented to him by the Sephardic Jews. The condition was, however, that [indigenous] Polish Jews would not be admitted [to live] there. The Chancellor, who yet from his student years in Italy held a high opinion of Sephardic Jews, did what was very strongly close to his heart in this instance. In any event, the Sephardim in Lemberg stressed very strongly in their letter, that Zamoyski's explicit intent is not to permit indigenous Polish Jews to be admitted to Zamość. Zamoyski also reckoned by this, that the Sephardic Jews will, by living in the city, be able to once again be able to import goods into Poland in general, and into Lemberg in particular. In 1587, that is, one year before Zamoyski issued the official concession for the Sephardic Jews, which would allow them to settle in Zamość, Moshe HaKohen Da Mossa traveled there and subsequently remained there. This most certainly came at the behest of the Chancellor. He, personally, strongly approved of the concept of a Sephardic Jewish colony in Zamość, which is not far from Lemberg, but far from Jewish and probably non-Jewish competition.

In a letter to his friends in Turkey, dated 1587, from Zamość already, Moshe HaKohen advised already:

> I tell you, that the large estate owners and Kings constantly look after, and especially in Poland, are concerned that their subordinates not suffer any form of injustice, whether the individual is a Jew, a Gypsy or a Tatar.

Another such hyperbole, which came as a result of an unexpected rescue from the doubly painful plight in which he found himself in Lemberg, he further writes in the following manner:

> The Lord Chancellor wants to colonize his newly-founded city. This city, like the city of Lemberg, has many virtues, because it is located in the center of the land, in an attractive area, not more than four miles from a port that leads to Warsaw and Danzig. Here, there are sufficient open places on which to build houses and also a sufficient number of fields, which in Lemberg happen to be quite expensive. Also, it is the Chancellor's wish that only Frankish (meaning Sephardic) Jews shall settle here. From the outset, he wants no indigenous Jews to settle here. The local residence there have many privileges. The Lord himself is a very fine man, even stones have love for him, and self-evidently – people. He showed me personally a great deal of consideration, and he set aside a place for me, so that I will be able to build a house. This has to cost me 400 Gulden, but it will be a beautiful house! As soon as I sell off my wines, I will certainly approach the task of building a house for myself. If, among you, there can be found those who entertain the idea of establishing residence in Zamość, they will find places for themselves and come to enjoy all personal freedoms. This is not only for our own, but in general, for every person in Turkey.

We are unable to establish with certainty what impact this very interesting letter may have had. In any event, one can see that a small number of Sephardic Jews did come from Turkey, just as Armenians came there and took up residence in Zamość.

One thing, however, is clear, that at the time Moshe HaKohen wrote this letter to his co-religionists in Turkey, he already had Zamoyski's consent [to the plan]. He, and other Sephardim that found themselves in Lemberg, were previously invited by Zamoyski as individuals. The fact that several of them received such broad concessions in order to attract them to settle in the new city, in a large measure was an influence that helped the founder of the city to enlarge the number of Jews, but only Sephardim. Protected from the competition of local and foreign [merchants], that is to say, Polish Jews and the Christian merchants, the Sephardic Jews hoped, once again, to conduct their business as they had in Lemberg, and utilize Zamość only as a place of residence.

This notable invitation to Zamość occurred at the same time that the business of the agents of Joseph Nasi in Lemberg was going significantly downhill, and no diplomatic salvation from the high protector in Turkey arrived, and seemingly was not able to arrive. Drowned in debt, the Sephardic merchants had no funds with which to redeem their goods, which they had been forced to put up as collateral. Moshe HaKohen has actually been arrested at one point for not paying his debts. The protests of two noblemen did not help, who in Zamoyski's name asked that he be set free. True, Moshe HaKohen was set free after four days, but the situation did not improve. This took place after he was already living in Zamość, and had come to Lemberg in connection with his business.

It was in this fashion that the Sephardic colony in Lemberg was seized with the concept of changing its place of operation, hoping that this would also change their fortune in business.

This conjunction, literally presented to the small Sephardic group on platters, led to the enactment of the official act that created a Jewish settlement in Zamość, that should consist of Sephardic Jews only, an act that was one of its kind in the History of the Jews in Poland.

# 3. The Sephardic Settlement in Zamość

*Page 87:* *A Portion of the Architectural Decoration on Ormianska Number 30.*

*Page 94:* *Examples of Architectural Decoration*
*Top:* *A Frieze Under the Window of a House on the 'Rynek', Ormianska 24.*
*Bottom:* *A Frieze on the House of the 'Potchineh' at Staszica 31.*

The thought of settling in Zamość, which the Sephardic Jews, who by chance were living in Lemberg, seized upon, and thought of as a bulwark against persecutions and predations against them – is in many respects analogous to the history of the Sephardic settlement in the town of Glickstadt, not far from Hamburg. This town was established in the year 1618 by the Danish King, Christian IV. He also gave the Sephardim a very comprehensive concession, which attracted a large number of Sephardim to that city who sought their fortune. Thereby, the idea was to carry on commerce with Hamburg, so long as it would be possible, and if that [sic: Hamburg] commerce would become more and more disrupted, then Glickstadt would become the point of refuge for the Hamburg Sephardim, just as Zamość became so for the Sephardic colony at Lemberg.

The Zamość Concession of 1588 was conceived in this spirit, in which the feudal magnate Jan Zamoyski provided with a generous hand only for Sephardic Jews. As the oldest concession of its kind, obtained by Sephardic Jews at the time of the establishment of any new city, this document deserves a very special description.

Zamoyski begins his concession document with the concrete statement that he was asked 'in the name of several Jews of the Spanish and Lusitanian (meaning Portuguese) nation,' to grant them permission to take up residence in Zamość, just as he had granted permission to other groups.

He tells that he had a consultation with the city magistrate, and reached a decision to grant the Jews the same rights and freedoms that other groups enjoy. The Jews only need to be Spanish and Portuguese, even though they may come from Italy or Turkey. 'They will have the freedom to bring in and take out all manner of goods and implements without exception.'

These Jews may not be asked what their faith is, or what they are obligated to observe with regard to 'Jewish Laws and Customs.' These Jews may not be ridiculed, harassed, or caused damage, and in general they have to feel as secure in the city as a nobleman or a senator feels for himself in the land.

A street is allocated to the Sephardim where they can build houses (*die Schustergasse*) and also a side street that leads to the small marketplace, *die Zaltsgasse*. They may hold property and build houses on these streets, and may think of these houses as 'their own property' for themselves and their heirs. These houses may be mortgaged, sold, re-built, etc. 'In all other respects, they must live in security, and in the pleasure of owning their own homes. They, as well as their children, may not be ridiculed, and their right to freedom in earing their livelihood may not be impaired.'

They are also given permission to build their own synagogue, but until they are of sufficient capacity to have a house of worship constructed of stone, they are afforded the right to gather in a private home to pray. They may have their own books, either printed or handwritten. They may bring in teachers for their children and also they (meaning the teachers) may also have books that are necessary. The Jews are given permission to take building materials from Zamoyski's forests, and bricks as well as lime and stones, as much as they need – without charge.

In case the Jewish colony in Zamość should grow so large, that the two streets allocated to them at the outset become crowded, they may expand. 'If in time, so many of this nation is in-gathered that it shall become impossible to live within the walls of the city that have been designated for them, they shall have the permission to buy other property in the outskirts of the city, outside of the city [proper], with the right to build houses there.' Jews will not have to pay any more for those houses than other citizens of the city.

Zamoyski declares himself prepared to donate a place for a cemetery, under the condition that the Jews themselves will enclose the cemetery with a wooden fence.

With regard to commerce, which for everyone was the principal test by which to decide to settle in the new city, this Privilege offers the following concessions:

The Sephardim obtain the right to open up stores on the main marketplace, in the Rathaus, and other locations. They are given permission to deal in jewelry, pots and pans, fine clothing, items of gold and silver, as well as medicines and perfumes. They may import these goods from wherever they want to, and they may sell them directly, or indirectly at fairs.

Of interest is the paragraph concerning the right of Jewish physicians in Zamość. This concession document states that those 'who are educated in medical science, have a license, and also the title of Doctor in Zamość, may practice medicine, healing the sick, without restriction. They may maintain pharmacies in an unimpeded fashion, preparing prescriptions and selling them. They may engage in practical medicine without impediment, on condition that the Zamość bathhouse will not have any part, because a part of such income naturally belongs to it.

They may wear any kind of clothing that they please, and they may not be compelled to affix any external identifying labels to their garments, that would enable them to be identified as Jews, and 'in order to protect themselves, they may carry the same weapons that other citizens may carry for the same purpose.'

The Sephardim may build bathing facilities in their own homes for the members of their own families, closed to being rented out.

Regarding matters of commerce, there were a series of limitations that were instituted that were a direct outgrowth of the guarantees that other groups, such as Armenians, Greeks, etc, had received from Zamoyski. Because, for example, since dealing in Eastern and Southern wines was a privilege of the Armenians, and the commerce in foodstuffs, such as bread, meat, and chickens was guaranteed to the Czechs, the Sephardim, consequently, had to forswear participation in these businesses. An exception was made for wine, which was sold in large quantities.

The Sephardic Jews may engage in crafts, except for millinery, manufacture of pots, and shoemaking. They also cannot be butchers. These trades already had guilds, who guarded their interests of these craftsmen.

They may slaughter animals for their own use. They are given permission to sell meat considered unfit for personal consumption [sic: *trayf*] at the weekly market-fairs, as well as to other towns and villages in 'my domain,' *Panstwa mojego*, meaning on the territory that was Zamoyski's own.

The point about the organization of the Jewish community in Zamość is very interesting:

> The above mentioned Jews of the Spanish and Portuguese nation will not be thrown under the authority of other Jews. They will, by themselves, elect leaders and create a community of Portuguese and Spanish Jews, to which a Jew from a second [sic: other] nationality will not be permitted to join without prior permission. Such (a decision) must be concurred in by the heads of the synagogue or by a majority of Portuguese and Spanish Jews. The name of each Jew must be recorded in the *Pinkas* of the synagogue. (The Jews) will have the power to select their leaders in accordance with their own customs. These leaders will have the power to adjudicate all disputes, judgements, punishing the guilty and those who have broken the law, to excommunicate, and even to expel.

In regards to city taxes, the Sephardic Jews do not come under municipal jurisdiction, but still have to pay taxes that Zamoyski himself will establish.

City residents cannot bring Jews before the municipal court. In any matter, whether civil or criminal, the non-Jewish

plaintiff must first come before Zamoyski himself.

> I promise – Zamoyski declares in this Concession – to be just. I will designate an experienced and ethical judge, who is not tainted by suspicions, and in matters regarding their disputes with Christians will render judgement, both in civil and criminal matters.

The Privilege secures the right of the Sephardic Jews to travel. If one of them needs to leave Zamość, he may do so without constraint, on condition that he pay off all of his debts, if he owes anyone money. He may sell his house, and take his entire wealth with him.

Zamoyski further declares, that the Jews of his city, Zamość, will have the same rights as the Jews of Krakow, Posen, Lublin, and other cities in Poland, and as 'Senators and Nobility of the Polish Crown.'

In order to give this Privilege the weight of the law, it is recorded 'word by word' in order that 'my heirs will carry it out for generations [to come].'

> I promise and guarantee, that they may build houses on the designated places, and increase the city's businesses.

As previously mentioned, this unusual privilege, was the only one of its kind received by Sephardim in Poland, even if it often occurred in other countries in later years.

Generally, this was a liberal privilege. The accounting was done without the homeowner. In general, the homeowners who were the potential residents of Zamość, came from Spanish roots. How many Jews in Turkey responded to Moshe HaKohen's letter that praised the good intentions of Zamoyski, in connection with Sephardic Jews, is hard to establish with confidence. The evidence suggest that a small number of Jews did indeed take up residence in Zamość. We find a couple of names of Venetian Jews, and even from more distant places. This Privilege is for the Sephardic colony in Zamość, which at its center, had an interest in having a secure fallback position, a refuge, in order to conduct business with less risk than in Lemberg – just as the Sephardim in Glickstadt wanted to do, in relation to Hamburg – was a bit late. Don Joseph Nasi was no longer alive. The later Sephardic agents who we learn, came to Poland on their own accord, no longer found diplomatic protection for themselves. Jan Zamoyski dies in 1605, and with him, the last person prepared to intercede for the 'Turkish Jews' disappears from the scene.

The Sephardic Jews that took up residence in Zamość, conducted their business largely in Lemberg. The same Moshe HaKohen Mossa, incidentally, the first Jewish resident of Zamość (since 1587), figures in 1596 in Lemberg proceedings as a principal in commercial disputes with an Armenian merchant, that is to say, barely nine years after settling in Zamość. In 1597, it is noted that two Sephardim from Zamość, both from Venice, Shlomo Markus and Abraham Mizrahi, sell a house to one Isaac Metcalf, who was supposedly an English Jew. In 1598, the local Sephardim are mentioned in connection with their debt of 80 Gulden for the benefit of constructing the Rathaus.

Despite the fact that the Privilege explicitly states that it is forbidden to insult Jews, and do anything that would cause them a loss, the local Academy takes on a monetary bequest, which a professor left for a 'loan fund' (*mons pictatis*) which is to lend money against collateral to everyone except Jews. This fund was established in 1607. That means it was in total, nineteen years after the Sephardim settled in Zamość.

The Concession of 1588 enumerates four lines of work in which the Sephardic Jews may engage. But in 1621, the Jeweler's Guild published amendments, according to which Jews may undertake this line of work on an equal footing with non-Jews. Such an amendment was certainly not intended for Sephardic Jews, because such an issue could not be included in an amendment, because by the terms of the Concession, this was a clearly delineated matter. What this means, is that in 1621, there already were non-Sephardic Jews in Zamość.

Of further interest is the story of a Jewish doctor (not a physician, but rather an academic doctor, whose name is regrettably not given). On May 13, 1631, students of the Zamość Academy kidnaped his daughter, a child of eleven

years of age, and forcibly converted her to Christianity. At that time, the new leader, the younger Zamoyski was in charge. This incident was in direct contradiction of a guaranteed right, according to the Concession of 1588, and therefore without a doubt occurred to a non-Sephardic Jew. All of this, it happens, takes place after 1605, that is to say, after the death of Jan Zamoyski, the founder of Zamość. When a general decline in the city is felt, the Academy, which was to have competed with Krakow, becomes shrunken and descends to the level of an unimportant center of learning. The 'nations' that had guaranteed amendments and privileges complain that they are harassed, and they are constrained in regard to their freedom to engage in commerce, which was originally granted to them. The Armenians, the Greeks and the Scotsmen do this. Many of them abandon Zamość altogether, and settle in other cities. The Italians go away to Krakow, the Greeks to Lemberg, the Armenians fight on for a period for their rights, guaranteed in the privilege. The Polish gentry is bursting with envy. They want to become the total masters of the city. The concession of the wine trade affected the Sephardic Jews in an especially strong manner. There was no one to whom to sell jewelry and silk garments in Zamość, what the city needed was provided by the Polish Jews from neighboring places, which incidentally also belonged to the Zamoyskis.

Whether large or small in number, the Sephardic Jews looked about them, and observed that the 'Garden of Eden' that Zamość was not what they had thought it would be. Competing with the Armenians in Zamość was no simple matter. Nowhere did they take up any of the trades, so the privilege of engaging in a craft was of minimal value to them. The merchants from outside of the country, in general, did not feel comfortable in the Polish surroundings. Jan Zamoyski would receive letters from them, especially the English merchants who had taken up residence in Zamość , and had very large stores there, just as they did in other cities, that the nobles were not paying their bills, and when they go to collect the money that is owed to them, they are beaten. A foreign merchant cannot get justice in court, and as a result they feel they must leave the country, if the Chancellor himself cannot personally protect them.

If Christian merchants were unable to get protection from Zamoyski, it goes without saying that the Jews certainly could not, even those of Spanish origin, of whom he had such a high opinion.

In this manner, one can come to the conclusion, that even before the Sephardic colony in Zamość was founded, it was already at the verge of disintegration. But how long the Sephardic settlement lasted in Zamość , until it finally disappeared, is to date not readily established One thing is certain: around 1600, the names of Sephardic Jews vanish from the records in Lemberg.

It is recorded, for example, that the Zamość Synagogue was built in 1595. It is even told that the *Bimah* was donated by one R' Shmuel Barzel. If this is more than a folktale, it would mean that a small group of Sephardim (we cannot speak of a large group of Sephardim in any case), built this synagogue, which later became an object of study by art historians in Poland.

There are no traces of a Sephardic cemetery in Zamość, and not a single name of a Sephardic Rabbi has been handed down to us. From all of this, we are left with the conclusion that more or less, the entire history of the Sephardim in Zamość came to an end during the first fifty years after its establishment.

The travelers who visited Zamość after the 1648 Chmielnicki pogroms mention no Sephardic Jews at all. By 1648, Zamość was already a large Jewish community of only Ashkenazim, which became even larger during the period of the Chmielnicki decrees, when Jews from the surrounding small towns sought refuge in the fortress and were saved from death in this manner, despite the fact that many fell victim and died from disease and hunger.

Because of this, one can demonstrate with great certainty, that by 1630, the Sephardic Jews of Zamość vanished. This does not mean that the Ashkenazic community began to function only after the Sephardic community disappeared. By all the evidence, we have to conclude that Polish Jews entered there originally as merchants, who lived in the closest of the nearby cities and towns, which belonged to the Zamoyskis. In neighboring Szczebrzeszyn, in 1594, the chief land estate manager was Yaakov ben Natan. In almost all of the large properties of the Zamoyskis, Jews played the leading roles as estate managers and merchants. In his private cities such as Tomaszow, Turobin and others, Jews can be found directly from the founding of these cities. They did not have the sort of sweeping concessions of the type granted to the Sephardim in Zamość. The evidence suggests that they went in there to fulfil the functions which were then needed, and

consequently became more integral to the general structure of the municipal economy without privileges, where the Sephardic Jews did this with privileges.

The time that the Sephardim were in Zamość needs therefore to be thought of as a unique episode, which in the final analysis had no lasting influence on the later development of the Jewish community in Zamość, and left behind no traces of its existence, apart from relevant notations in the text of the Privilege, which a Polish Chancellor, a 'Lover of Spain,' threw to this community literally as if by a magnate's caprice.

Addendum:

## The Zamość Concession of 1588
## (Copied from Jutrzenka 1861, No. 43, pp 433-435)

The entire original Polish text is presented here. It is not translated into English, since that is beyond the scope of this effort. Interested readers are referred to the original text.

### Footnotes

The interested reader is referred back to the original text for the footnotes of the author.

# The Schul in *Altstadt*

**By Engineer David Davidovich**
(Tel-Aviv)

*Page 95:* *The Great Synagogue in Altstadt. View from the North Side.*
*Page 96:* *The Plans of the Synagogue. Right from the Top; Left from the Ground*
*Page 97:* *The Interior of the Synagogue. In the Middle is the Artistic Bimah.*
*Page 98:* *A Cross-Sectional Plan of the Synagogue*
*Page 99:* *The Ornamentation of the Soffit of the Synagogue*
*Page 100:* *The Entrance to the Polish.*
*Page 101:* *The Plan of the Portal from the Polish*
*Page 102:* *Examples of Building Artwork in Zamość*
*Top:* *Window Decoration from the 'Kassierer's Haus.'*
*Bottom:* *A Frieze Under the Window at Zamenhofe 1.*

The Zamość Synagogue was counted as the most interesting Jewish architectural creation in all of Congress-Poland; the synagogue was built at the end of the 16th century,[94] and because of the style of its construction, it must be counted among the type of the renaissance-synagogues, the earlier ones that were spread throughout a variety of congregations in Poland, beginning in the middle of the 16th century and later.

Professor Szyszko-Bohusz, the renown researcher of medieval Polish architecture, gave us an accurate portrait of this synagogue in his substantive research work, 'Materials Pertaining to the Architecture of Jewish Synagogues in Poland:'[95] in the fully developed complex of the modern day synagogue in Zamość, the elements that are organically fused, which belong to the earlier parts, the core – are the main building and the two side 'Women's Synagogues,' on the south and north side, that are united with it. The modern day 'Polish' also belongs to an earlier period. It is possible that the 'Polish' was re-built, but in any case, the original was very similar to the present day one. It is possible that over the 'Polish' there was a 'Women's Synagogue.' The remaining parts, that are attached to the main building already belong to later periods. Very significant modifications took place, not only to the exterior appearance of the building, but also in the entire interior of the synagogue.

The 'Polish' of the synagogue recalls the vestibule in the walls of the marketplace (the 'Rynek'). It has an vestibule, a very wide and castle-like soffit construction with lintels. The '*Polish*' is more than a meter deep into ground level, the entrance to the large prayer hall being on the east side, and whose floor was even lower, where it was necessary to go down several steps; from the west side, stairs lead to a small sanctuary for prayer (a *shtibl*). In the very small corner of the corridor of the *Polish*, is the entrance to the courtyard; in the western part is the entrance to the 'Talmud Torah,' in the eastern side, to the 'Women's Gallery.' Between the two sections of the '*Polish*' are the stairs that lead to the choir gallery.

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94 Author's footnote: According to Balaban, the synagogues in Zamość and Szczebrzeszyn were built simultaneously, at the end of the 16th century, bu the actual date of their construction is not known. Also, the dispensation, that the Zamość Synagogue was built with the help of the Chancellor, Jan Zamoyski, the owner of the city, is not sufficiently well-founded. Z. Gloger depicts Jan Zamoyski as a model of a refined Polish man, and a man of great wealth, who built this synagogue for the Jews. He notes however, "*as is related in a legend*, Zamoyski built the synagogue in Zamość." *Z. Gloger: Budownictwo drzewa i wyroby z drzewa w dawnej Polce*. Warsaw 1907, in the introduction to the chapter 'Synagogues,' page 22.

95 Author's footnote: The study by: *A. Szyszko-Bohusz: Materijaly do architektury bóznic w Polsce*. Krakow, 1926, is dedicated to the synagogues in the center of Poland and the essentials of the synagogues belonging to congregations on the line along the banks of the Vistula (the centers: Kielce, Lublin, Warsaw). See D. Davidovich "*In Memory of Prof. A. Szyszko-Bohusz*" in *Gazot*, Tammuz 5710 (1950).

The essential part of the construction, which is of interest from an architectural and artistic standpoint, is the great prayer hall, whose construction art is estimated as belonging to the 17th century. The synagogue is nearly square (12.22 meters by 11.57 meters); in size and style, the synagogue reminds one strongly of the synagogue in Szczebrzeszyn (13.43 meters by 11.35 meters). However, the wall decorations in Zamość are different. Here, as in Szczebrzeszyn, there are double lintels in the corners of the building. However, the corners here are finished differently. Here, the corners are made of pilasters, which are matched to the boundary with the soffit construction. From an architectural standpoint, this is better finished than [the synagogue] in Szczebrzeszyn. In the side walls (North and South) there are 8 alcoves in the walls (4 to a side), which unite the large synagogue hall with the 'Women's Synagogues.' Over these openings, there are tableaus, whose borders are especially beautifully decorated. The carved Holy Ark occupies the place of the central pilaster on the East Wall, between two Ionic columns. Today, light comes in through only two windows that are on the eastern wall.[96] The two windows that had previously been on the west wall, were perhaps connected with the 'Women's Synagogue.' The four side windows, after many of the modifications that were made, serve today as see-through separation devices to the side chambers of the 'Women's Synagogues.'

Inside the main prayer hall, as recently as a few years ago, there still stood two wooden galleries along the length of the west wall for the *Heder* boys.[97] References to these galleries can be found in Z. Gloger's '*Wooden Buildings and Woodworking in Polish Buildings of Old.*' Traces of these galleries were wiped out over a period of time. It is very difficult to say what the outward appearance of the synagogue was like before, based on what it looks like today.[98]

Apart from the barrel-like construction of the building, it is an example of Renaissance architecture, which was adopted by the Polish synagogues of that era. There are a series of other important artistic features to be noted regarding the Zamość Synagogue – and a specific instance from the first – from which one can see a strong evidence of the Italian Renaissance.

Among all the well-known Renaissance synagogues in Poland, the Zamość Synagogue serves as the first example of the appearance of architectural embellishment of the inside walls of the synagogue. Here one can see the arcade, which is so characteristic of these fortress-like synagogues, which were built starting from the middle of the 17th century. The wall decorations described by Szyszko-Bohusz as 'Tableaus where both framed edges which stand out because of the profusion of decoration,' does not have the motifs of the connecting rows – the external decoration which is interesting in the fortress-like synagogues – which was transferred to the interior of the house; there is also nothing of the 'trifurium' of the Christian temples: those embellishments have in them an exceptional delicacy, and an architectural flavor that complement the wide upper spaces between the high windows and between the apertures that tie together the [main] synagogue and the lower 'Women's Synagogues.' The two tableaus, with the fine decorations, which are on both sides of the pilasters, that is: four on each of the walls (including the Eastern Wall), have the appearance of a parallelogram, whose upper horizontal line is not in the same line, but evolves into its center in a semi-circle which goes out from the side of the line, and at the edges is formed into a fire with a rose in the middle. The plastic motifs of the

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96 Author's footnote: Today?...M. Tzanin ("On the Destruction of Polish Jewry" – *Davar* January 28, 1948)) writes about the tragic end of this synagogue. After his visit to Poland, among other details, he writes: "When the Jews of Zamość were driven out and into the ghetto, the pillaging assault of the city residents rose higher. In a matter of only a few hours, only bare walls remained in the synagogues." See also: M. Tzanin "Concerning Stones and Landings," Tel-Aviv 1952,pp. 54-55. We provide an excerpt of Tzanin's description in the section of the Pinkas that deals with the destruction.

97 Author's footnote: According to the definition of Szyszko-Bohusz *Chórki*, which means a small choir, or a place for choirs. Places of this sort were kept up in a variety of synagogues in Poland such as: Vishogrod, Gombin, Lemberg, and they were certainly designated for the *Heder* boys or for singers in the Cantor's choir.

98 Author's footnote: See the study of Szyszko-Bohusz previously referenced, pp. 21-23.

line of the frame is distinguished by its braided ornamentation, which recalls the appearance of an arabesque[99], and separately it stands out against the lower line of the frieze, which then spreads itself over both frames between the pilasters of the walls of the entire building.

Also, the decorations of the soffit, made in the form of decorated bands, which stretch from the edge of the lintels, in the center from the girds, and between the pilasters and girds – are the product of artistic hands. It is necessary to specially cite the folksy decorative motif that stands out so much, which shows itself in the corners of the building – the flower vases with the two roses by the side. The use of this specific decorative device following the style of the Italian Renaissance on the bending-sides, is characteristic of the Zamość Synagogue.

The iron *Bimah* is among the most original and beautiful in Poland; the Bimah reminds one of the appearance of a colossal Torah crown, and octagonal crown skeleton, which comes together in the top part of the *Bimah*; also that [top] part terminates in a Torah crown in miniature, but in a very realistic rendition. The ornamentation of the topmost part of the *Bimah*, is very delicate, and is wrought in motifs of floral growth (leaves, twigs) and on both sides, there are two tableaus with the names of the donors.[100] The base of the *Bimah* is made from geometric motifs which are interlaced with roses, with reliefs of acacia leaves, this Bimah was constructed in the year 1788.

There is a large Hanukkah menorah found in the Synagogue, with 9 branches, entirely typical of those found in Polish synagogues.

Regarding the 'Polish,' it is worth remarking about the beautiful gate that served as the entrance into the Synagogue. The gate is made in the form of a stone portal, put togther from two baroque sides whose crowns bear two semi-circular arcs. On this portion, in the frieze, the following sentence appears: 'how awesome is this place, it can be no other than the House of the Lord, and this is the gateway of Heaven,' and in the center, the more prominent part, the sentence: 'this is the gateway to the Lord, the righteous enter it.' The door is covered with a cris-crossed iron webbing which calls to mind [the motif of] the Krakow Synagogue, named 'Isaac Yekeles Synagogue.'

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99 {to be found in] The Sephardic Synagogues in Toledo, today the Christian Church of 'Santa Maria La Blanca,' and 'El Tarnsita.' G. K. Lukomski: *Jewish Art in European Synagogues*, London 1947, Page 34.

100 It is told that the *Bimah* was given to the synagogue as a gift of R' Shmuel Barzel. It is possible that this name is indicative of the Sephardic origin of the donor. However, it cannot be confirmed, that the small Sephardic community constructed this synagogue. See the memoir of Dr. Yaakov Shatzky, "Sephardim in Zamość" in this *Pinkas*, p. 69 and on.

# The *Pinkas* of the *Hevra Kadisha & Gemilut Hasadim* [101] of Zamość

By Ephraim Kupfer

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Notes:
Dots that are enclosed in brackets [...] designate text that is not completely clear.
Plain dots ... indicate omitted explanatory material
The page numbers shown are those from the *Pinkas* (numbered by me).
We have not altered the spelling in the source documents. Words with errors in them have been left as is. We have only bold-faced words shown in quotation marks.

## Introduction

*Page 105:* *The Frontispiece of The Pinkas of the Hevra Kadisha & Gemilut Hasadim of Zamość*
*Page 107:* *A Page of the Amendments from the Pinkas, from the Year 5447 (1687).*

The *Pinkas*, from which we present these extracts, was conveyed to the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland by the officer of the Polish partisan army, Enzel Joachim on September 5, 1949. The Pinkas consists of 150 pages, that measure 30 by 25 [102], the first 22 sides are written on parchment, and in general (except for the pages 43-44, 49-50), are in good condition. It covers the activities of the *Hevra-Kadisha & Gemilut Hasadim* in Zamość from the year 5447 (1687) to 5645 (1885). The following matters are recorded in the *Pinkas:*

A. Amendments of the year 5447, additions and refinements to the amendments of the years 1700, 1723, 1731 and 1740, a text of amendments, that were approved by the administrative authority of the Zamość Region, as well as minor refinements that were adopted at annual meetings.

B. The voting protocols of the years 1710-1865.

C. Agreements between the *Hevra* and the community, between the *Hevra-Kadisha* and the later-established *Hevra* of visitors [to the sick][103], as well as [agreements] between the *Hevra-Kadisha* and specific individuals.

D. Protocols of purchases, of estates that were taken over, and accounting of the larger inflows of money.

E. Lists of funds raised to carry out renovations and accountings of the renovations so carried out.

F. Protocols for accepting and discharging appointees.

G. Handwritten records of newly accepted members, from the 'Initiates.' At the end of their period of being candidates, and recording of [the birth of] children.

H. Membership appointment protocols to various positions, and debates on the amendments regarding the acceptance of members.

I. Acceptance and resignation of members.

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101 The Society for Burial and Charitable Deeds.

102 Although the text does not say so, it is safe to presume that this is in metric units, likely cm.

103 Known commonly as either *Hevra Bikkur Kholim*, or The Bikkur Kholim Society.

J. Protocols concerning community affairs (apparently recorded in the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra-Kadisha* in order to underscore their importance).

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The excerpts presented here include:

1 The full text of the first amendments of the year 1687, which by contrast with the amendments of later years, introduce the additions and refinements brought forward, but we omit those items that are repeated ('in order to strengthen the point').

2 From the protocols of the previously mentions points C, D, H, I the content is brought forward, omitting the explanatory detail.

3 From the text, which are mentioned in points B and G we present, for illustrative purposes only, an illustration of the special characteristic, as well as a listing of funds raised.

From this we can see, that in the selection of the texts for publication, we held it to be necessary to publish first and foremost, those sections that can serve to support the illumination of the social relationships and way of life of the Jews in Poland.

Before we approach the illumination and social relationships and way of life of the Jewish settlement in Zamość, base on the material from this Pinkas, it is necessary to make a number of general observations.

From the material in the *Pinkas*, one concludes that the *Hevra-Kadisha* in Zamość operated as an independent institution with no dependency on the community. After conducting an internal re-organization (about which we will speak later), the amendments of the *Hevra* were institutionalized [sic: confirmed] by the feudal authority of the Voievode.[104]

Belonging to the Zamość *Hevra-Kadisha* (at various times until the beginning of the 19th century) [were] all the Jewish settlements in the surrounding area, that belonged to Zamoyski's territory, such as, Tarnogrod, Tomaszow, Szczebrzeszyn, Krasnobrod, Turobin, Jozefów, etc., such that the territorial ambit of the institution must be taken into account in order to analyze the statues and protocols.

The frontispiece of the *Pinkas* is dated from the year 5448 (1687) [105]. The first amendments with which the *Pinkas* begins, are seen with the date ו. ב. א. מ. ת. (5447), seeing that the Pinkas was established at the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Jewish settlement in Zamość. As is possible to see from the introduction to the amendments of 5447, and from a part of the paragraphs of the amendments, the *Hevra-Kadisha* had existed for along time in Zamość and had its amendments. It is therefore necessary to clarify, why the later amendments are constantly referred to, since they come to strengthen the already passed amendments of the year 5447 ('to strengthen the prior amendments'); as opposed to the 5447 amendments, prior amendments are less frequently mentioned, in order to demonstrate the fact that they are not correct. This becomes clear, when we study the re-organizational character of these 5447 amendments, which had as an objective to completely alter the face of the *Hevra*.

What did this reorganization consist of? It is known, that ibn the first period of the appearance of a city, until the contours of an economic base became visible, that is the craftsmanship and trade, there was no discernable social differentiation, and therefore, there was a certain equality instituted among the populace (especially in the city of

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104 A Polish national administrative division, like a district, province, etc.

105 The actual Hebrew lettering bears the insertion of a tiny '*tzadi*' in the date sequence. This is a common form of wordplay on the date abbreviation. In this case, it is to create the Hebrew word '*titzmakh*' which means, 'may it grow,' as a good-luck sign.

Zamość, whose founder, Jan Zamoyski had the ambition to see it built according to the model of the Italian Renaissance), and accordingly, the community organizations, such as the Hevra-Kadisha and the *Gemilut Hasadim* in that period, had a community character. As it is possible to see from paragraph 'ג of the amendments of the year 5447, the Hevra-Kadisha and the *Gomlei Hasadim* were, until the previously mentioned reorganization, institutions of the masses. Under the original statue, direction of the institution was not permitted to be in the same hands as the authority of the congregation. In order to protect it's community appearance, the direction of the Hevra, indeed, was found in the hands of the common people, who in most cases were not people of any means (the poor people).

At the end of the 17th century, Zamość had already grown to become an important provincial center with an established Jewish community. The city was already socially differentiated, it contains people of means and poor people, and a fully formed feudal regime holds sway. It is at this time that the reorganization of the Hevra-Kadisha and the *Gomlei Hasadim* is approached, with the line of approach of eliminating the common people, initially just from the leadership. When paragraph 'ג of the amendments of the year 5447 is examined, an interesting revelation surfaces, that it is especially the somewhat simple 'unsophisticated' and insufficiently pious, on whom the 'commandments are a burden,' who carry out the work and the obligations of the *Hevra*, and they do not find the authority of the *Gabbaim* of the common people to be a problem. It is only the elegant Jews, the 'men of appearance,' who do not find it possible to carry out this *mitzvah* under the direction of such *Gabbaim*, and it is for them that the amendments of 5447 are brought into being, which are required to strengthen the *Hevra* (to create a firm foundation more than was previously in existence). The currently new amendments follow two directions:

1. The installation of an oligarchy of the rich with a strong hand, who will prosecute every protest against the leadership, and it was to this purpose that paragraphs 'ג ,ט and י"ב are conceived;

2. Placing core emphasis on funding; it is implicitly understood that members who are empty-handed, lose their worthiness. This is the objective of paragraphs א ,ד ,ה ,ו ,ז ,טו and יז.

But as previously said, the amendments of the year 5447 had the purpose of only removing the leadership from the hands of the ordinary people. About 20 years later, in the year 5469, after the Polish-Swedish War, at the time that the city of Zamość found itself under the rule of the Jesuit-students and folk leader Hetman Mazepa[106], which brought with it the impoverishment of the masses (the denouement of the poor is spread on the face of the camp), and simultaneously strengthened the rule of the nobility and its supporting classes, it became timely in Jewish life to also limit the degree to which the poor were taken on as members in community institutions (the *Hevras* were the only place where Jews could express themselves through social organization). It was at that time that the decision was taken to create improvements to the amendments of 5447.

Paragraph 'ד takes away the possibility of a Jew without means to become a member of the *Hevra*. If the amendments of 5447 only gave the stimulus to elect solely the rich and elegant Jews as *Gabbaim*, then paragraphs ב ,ג ,ה guarantee an oligarchical rule by the wealthy.

Fifteen years later, in 5783, complementary amendments are written. Paragraphs 'י and 'יא of these amendments warn against the influx of poor members. In order to further assure, that the leadership will remain only in the hands of the wealthy people involved in public activity, the paragraphs 'יב ,ט ,ו ,ד are written, but the most important of the amendments of the year 5783 is paragraph 'א, which institutes the voting protocol of a two-tier-system and de facto, takes away the power of the vote from the members without means, as well as the right to occupy any position, even by someone who at one time was someone of substance, but is currently a member who lost his wealth.

Paragraphs 'כד ,יא are characteristic of these current amendments, which are concerned with assuring that the record

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106 Mazepa, Ivan Stepanovich (1644 - 1709), Hetman (leader) of the Cossacks in the Russian Ukraine, who turned against the Russians and joined the Swedes during the Great Northern War (1700-21).

for posterity should be under the exclusive control of the wealthy *Gabbaim* and Heads.

It is understood, that in order to preserve the non-folk character of an institution, which is ultimately based on its members, who also can become financially ruined, there are very few explicit paragraphs, then it is necessary to devise a variety of means, in order to preserve the non-folk character of the institution; it is for this purpose that the oath in amendment 'ג is appended.

A consequence of this, is that the reorganization amendments of 5447 did not provide the *Gabbaim* from the 'poor masses' any relief from financial accounting. If those amendments contented themselves with the creation of paragraph 'יג, about monthly financial reporting, now, in the year 5783, after years of experience by a leadership in the hands of the 'important people,' the custom in financial matters became diminished, and the current amendments set out four paragraphs: 'יח. יט. כג. כד in order to protect against misuse.

I was in this manner, that a Jewish community organization, in the course of 40 years, arrived at the complete elimination of common people from community life, through reorganization, expansion and 'improvement.'

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Up to this point, we have examined the development of the state [of the institution] in light of the internal social relationships. Now, we will see how the amendments played out in the activities of the *Hevra*. Most prominently, we can illustrate this by the following facts: the amendments of 5469 limit the acquisition of new members to one a year, but so good was it in the year 5485 as in the year 5642, that many rich members are taken in, who have the ability to pay larger sums. In contrast to this, members who had become poor, are thrown out after having been members for 15 years in the *Hevra*, who because of their condition of need, beg to have their previously paid in dues refunded to them. But for a 'Donor of a substantial sum,' all sins are wiped clean off the slate.

And in this fashion, the 'King of the Speculators,' R' Yudel indicates, after paying in a 'Pretty Sum,' that he is enrolling his son, on the condition that a resolution is passed to accept other children. By contrast, regarding the physician, Zvi Hirsch, the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra* work out that he should have no voting privileges. It is in this manner that the social differentiation in Jewish life mirrors itself in the ranks of *Hevra* activities.

It would not be right if we did not make visible the extensively branched activities of the Hevra, which set up for itself an important self-help institution in the ranks of Jewish life, and specifically, it is necessary to underscore its activities in the sphere of looking after the sick. As it is possible to see from the *Pinkas* material, the Hevra had a mission, apart from guarding and tending the sick – also to provide them with a physician, that it had under its wing. It also concerned itself with medicaments and financial aid for the sick among the poor, and even for the preparation of fruit jellies for the sick [for use] during the winter season.

As can be seen from paragraphs (צ1, כב5) the *Hevra* took over specific responsibilities from the community, such as: the management of the *Hekdesh*.[107] The *Hevra* also took over the *Mikva*.[108]

In connection with these very missions, the *Hevra* acquired many opportunities to fill its coffers. As we are able to see from these documents, it demonstrated sufficient skills in this connection. Not content only with income from assessments and membership dues, when it became necessary, it would solicit a larger number of wealthy members, and in this manner took in the requisite amount. Paying no heed to the restrictions of the amendments, it sold burial plots up front. By extracting funds for burial in advance, it indicated a will to become the heir to unclaimed wealth and businesses.

From time-to-time, the *Hevra* became the creditor of the community, as we see from the protocols (Group 8).

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107 A combination halfway house and inn for lodging transients and people who were ill.

108 The bath facility used by observant Jews for purposes of ritual purification.

It remains for us to imagine the relationship of the *Hevra* to the community. As we indicated above, the *Hevra-Kadisha* came about as a self-standing institution. In its struggle to maintain its institutional character, it created amendments that opposed the centralization tendencies of the community. From this, amendments emerged such as – the leader of the community could not simultaneously be the head of the *Hevra*, as also the amendment, that the Rabbi of the city cannot be a member, and involve himself in the affairs of the *Hevra*.

After the re-organization of 5447 (1687), and in later supplemental amendments, the leaders of the community, or past leaders of the community belonged to the privileged cast, which acquired the monopoly of leadership. And this forces us to make the conclusion that the later paragraphs were written wit the objective of shielding the *Hevra* from the interference of the community, and are driven by the ambitions of the *Gabbaim* and Leaders who wanted to be the sole leaders of the *Hevra,* and control it by themselves (The position of an accountant is encountered for the first time in the election protocol of the year 5595 (1835)).

There is more: As we see, at specific moments, when the community is in dire straits, the *Hevra* comes to the assistance of its fraternal class-institution. This happened in the year 5542 (1782), when it was necessary to silence the protest against the community tax levy (to soothe the voice of oppression), and in the year 5585 (1815), when it was necessary to rescue the reputation of the community, already in a state of decline.

At the middle of the 19th century, the aristocratic *Hevra-Kadisha* ceases to be competent in carrying out several voluntary functions such as: attending to the sick, and even carrying out part of the work in attending the dead. For this reason, the new *Hevra* adopts name, 'Visitors [to the sick] and Pallbearers.'

From the few protocols that can be found in the *Pinkas* in connection with the *Hevra* of 'Visitors,' it is possible to see, that the single concern of the old *Hevra-Kadisha* was to constrict the development of the newly established *Hevra.* Amendments are passed, with the help of the Rabbi of the City, which guarantee a monopoly over the income of the old *Hevra-Kadisha*, and force the *Hevra* of the 'Visitors' to become economically dependent on the old *Hevra-Kadisha.*

To the extent that it touches upon incidents that are characteristic of the way of life, mirrored in these documents of the *Pinkas*, they are exactly like the incidents of the protocols [themselves], and are not specifically [characteristic of] Zamość. It is sufficient to indicate that the amendments of 5449 display the signatures of the *Brisker Rav*, and of Yehoshua Heschel of Brod. For sure, they took as a model, the forms of the community organizations in their own ancient Jewish towns, but this does not say that we are drawing general conclusions regarding the question of the internal way of life, or regarding social relationships. Naturally, there are nuances. In Zamość, the *Hevra* concerns itself with the conservation of fruits for the sick, or a custom such as the pledge in order to arrest a plague, in which the *Gabbaim* of Brisk Koyavski would resign their positions with the *Hevra-Kadisha*, as opposed to Zamość, in which the *Hevra* removed the *Shammes* from his position.

In the introduction, we exerted ourselves to uncover the central nerve of the historical development of community life, which is mirrored by a *Pinkas* of a highly active community institution [found] among Jews in a Polish city. This does not eliminate the possibility that there were other reasons for the creation of this or that amendment, in the referenced *Hevra*, which will be the objective of the researcher to discover, and the extent to which they can bring to light new material.

> The author provides extensive footnotes at this point. The interested reader, who wishes to pursue the references, is referred to the original text.

## Group I Amendments[109]

### Year 5447 (1687)

(6-3 ז"ר)

**A**

The *Pinkas* begins with the words, '*This is the history of man and his purpose.*' After a discourse on the importance of the mitzvah of 'visiting the sick,' escorting the deceased and burying the dead, it says further: for this reason, the undersigned have agreed to create the *Hevra* even more than before, and to carry out all the details of the amendments set forth below.

**Texts:**

Amendment A) The Pillar of Charity: Each and every member of this sacred *Hevra* is required to give two large [donations] on a monthly basis, and it was the custom to collect on a monthly basis, but recently, it became apparent that only at every half year everyone would donate for six months at one time, customarily on *Hol HaMoed* of Passover before the election, and *Hol HaMoed* of *Sukkot*, with the custom being on Yom Kippur Eve to pay up, and whoever didn't pay up on Yom Kippur Eve, was to fulfil his obligation on *Hol HaMoed Sukkot*, and in no case to have the obligation unpaid. The *Gabbai* has the power to prevent the individual from having his candle placed in the sanctuary for Yom Kippur, and for Yom Kippur Eve, and also on *Hol HaMoed* Passover, he may not put one down until he has paid as described above. And also the power to drive him out of the *Hevra*, if he does not pay, and the Senior *Gabbai* is responsible for doing this, and announcing it in the *Bet HaMedrash*, before the balloting process, on Yom Tov, the First day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover, in order that all the members of the *Hevra* understand, that they should not come to the [election] meeting empty-handed, but rather with a clutch of their money in their bags.

B) Visiting the Sick: The officers and the *Gabbaim* are required on a daily basis to visit the sick, regardless of whether the sick is rich or poor, may the Lord save us, and also in the sanctuary of the congregation, to supervise with great care, with regards to all the needs of the sick person, and they have the right to deputize members of the *Hevra*, in accordance with an assessment base on their own understanding. And if it becomes apparent in their sight, that the sick person is growing increasingly feeble, they shall declare so by utterance, and it shall fall to the *Shammes* among them, to sit beside the sick person, or they shall hire some other man, if the *Shammes* does not have the ability to do so, and the same shall be done for a sick woman, and if a man of means is the sick person, he shall pay for the person sitting with him out of his own pocket. And if he be a poor man, the *Gabbaim* shall pay on his behalf, in accordance with what they judge by sight, and in the case of someone seen to be dying, all or part of the officers are required personally to be present and standing at the time that he expires.

C) Discharging the Mitzvah Regarding the Deceased: If such an individual from the community should require services, the officers and *Gabbaim* must lead all activities, the first of which is to take security for the burial plot, and afterwards, they are to engage in the digging of the grave, and no member of the *Hevra* has permission to lift a hand or a leg in attending to the needs of the deceased without the prior knowledge and permission of the *Gabbaim*, and for the opening of the grave site, let all the people stand available, and everyone who is a member of the *Hevra* is required to involve himself, despite the fact that the *Kohanim* in the *Hevra* cannot participate because of the ritual uncleanliness of contact with a corpse, they are able to participate in the construction of the coffin, each in accordance with his own particular skills, and this is because we have seen that the fate of laxity is such that members of the *Hevra* do not come to attend to the needs of the deceased, for grave digging, or ritual purification of the corpse, because each individual is depending on his fellow member [to do this work], and simply turns away to deal with his own affairs. Then one [representative] of the City, and two members of the family that are at hand, in this moment of crisis, and the Mitzvah is carried out

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109 In what follows, reference is made to several forms of money in circulation. It is not always clear what these currencies are. The text refers to '*gedolim*' in Hebrew, which means 'large ones.' The context suggest that this is some coin of the realm that was considered substantive. In a subsequent summary, the author parenthetically refers to the '*gedolim*' as *groschen*. Since the *grosch* was rather the lowest coin in the realm, it is not clear why this term of reference was chosen. I have chosen to simply translate this as a 'measure.' Additionally, 'gold pieces' are mentioned. It is not clear *which* gold pieces these are. Finally, the 'Old Thaler' is mentioned, which is quite identifiable.

by the younger element with little understanding, and who have no concept of how to guard the dignity of the deceased, and the *Mitzvot* become ridiculed by them, and typically engage in levity at the cemetery, and other inappropriate things that are derived from such conduct, as we have seen in the Place of Justice, the evil that takes place there, in which there is quarreling and arguments, with insults being hurled about, about all manner of details for which there is no more place here to enumerate in further detail. And we have found and seen two reasons that give rise to all these things, one of which is the increase in the membership of the *Hevra*, where each individual has come to rely on his fellow member, and because of this everyone defaults on his obligation, and second, because the *Gabbaim* are too soft, and are young, and they are unable to instill fear of retribution in the membership, and punish them if they fall short in their obligation to perform service at the needed hour, and the reason that leads to this is the prior Amendment, which had been not to appoint a *Gabbai* of the *Hevra* anyone who already holds a post, and thereby, qualified people are pushed to the side, and they are replaced, in kind, by people of lesser worth, who have been saddled with the responsibility to be a mediator, but don't know the difference between left and right, and are unqualified, then having himself, or a relative, appointed as a *Gabbai*, but is only interested in the honor of having the unique title, only to be called, '*Gabbai*,' but discards all else according to his own taste. Therefore, we have come here to amend the finances, and to remove this impediment, so it no longer will exist as a barrier and trap to sinning, God forbid, and we have agreed that it is appropriate to appoint as a *Gabbai* of this *Hevra*, even someone who holds a different post in the *Hevra-Kadisha*, in order that people of standing, truthful people, and God-fearing people, whose hand and arm has an extent that will enable them to reach out and punish everyone who defaults on discharging their obligation to carry out this Mitzvah, or the people who do not take their responsibility seriously, and ridicule the dignity of the deceased by their deeds. In order that there be no dereliction of duty, in connection with what we have just described, we have agreed that the membership of the *Hevra* will be divided into four 'Watches,' by a lottery conducted by the officers and the *Gabbaim*, with the faithful, after every Passover holiday, on an annual basis, and everyone will keep the list of the people who were selected in the lottery in his possession, on a special roster, and the *Gabbai*, during the month, will supervise the people in his section, that are responsible to be involved in case any misfortune should arise. In that month. And the newly initiated for the period of three years, are required to be involved in, the serve, work and attend with each and every *Gabbai*, in respect to everything that is demanded of them, and in any event, regarding all the needs of the deceased, the newly initiated shall be responsible for frequently being involved, whenever there is someone sick, or God forbid, someone in the community dies, on a monthly basis for the entire three years, and whosoever deliberately avoids such service without cause, and will not come during his appointed term, the *Gabbai*, during his turn, will apply the full measure of force, and pressure, as he pleases, and in the instance that he shall be very occupied with his own livelihood, or under pressure, or incapable of participating, he is responsible, in any respect, to pay for a substitute to take his place, who will engage in his place in grave digging, at the cost of six measures in the warm season, and nine measures during the winter. However, in the case of those people, who were not physically present in the city [at the time], they have only to pay three measures, for each occasion on which they were unable to participate in the month they were designated for, and in this connection, the Officers and the *Gabbaim* must themselves be aroused to generate enthusiasm among those who are coming up to their terms as set by lottery, that the Mitzvot are carried out according to their precepts, and the Officers and *Gabbaim* in general, and especially the Senior [*Gabbai*] during the time of his monthly appointment, has the exclusive right to use all powers and energies to appropriate assets for security if anyone is derelict in his duty, without question. Such is all the more so, and *a fortiori*, if a person habitually, God Forbid, habitually gets into an argument or dispute at the cemetery, or in other places, and of these especially at the feast of the *Hevra-Kadisha*, all or in part, or if he should utter something inappropriate about one of the members of the *Hevra*, or about any matter that pertains to the *Hevra*, they literally have the right to take a rod and lash to punish him, as they please, immediately at the place where this evil man transgressed, without any consideration of fac for him, or his family, and his comeuppance shall not be allowed to tarry, but should bring the hand of justice to him swiftly and immediately, and it shall be consummated as swiftly as it is spoken, so that all the masses know that they should be guarded about what comes out of their mouths, and to guard their tongues from expressing the torments of their souls.

D) Burial Funds: The permission is in the hands of the Officers and the *Gabbaim* to assess an amount for the burial plot, and the lumber boards for a coffin, based on an estimate derived from their knowledge, as to whether the deceased was a man of means and wealthy, and whether they solicit the view of the Senior sitting for the month, or the remainder of the community leaders, is in their hands.

E) On holidays when contributions are made, or on Yom Kippur when *Yizkor* is read, the Cantor shall not recite *El Moleh Rakhamim* for any [sic: deceased] person who is a member of the *Hevra*, and by extension, any other person, who has not previously made a [financial] pledge, however, regarding the issue of payment on his behalf, there is a difference between the members of the *Hevra* and the rest of the community, whereby a member of the *Hevra* will pay seven measures for an *El Moleh Rakhamim*, and the remainder of the community is required to pay fifteen measures.

F) The recitation of *El Moleh Rakhamim* by mourners, during the period of mourning, has to first be cleared with the Officers and *Gabbaim*, and before this arrangement is clarified, with respect to the above terms and conditions, the Cantor will not recite any *El Moleh Rakhamim*.

G) A person called for an *aliyah* to the *Sefer Torah* on the High Holidays shall donate at least three measures to the *Hevra*, and even if he has not made a contribution, he is obliged to contribute as indicated, for each time he has an *aliyah* to the Torah. The Cantor will recite a *Mi Sheberakh* on behalf of the Officers and the *Gabbaim* on each major festival and the High Holidays. On the *Hol HaMoed* of Passover and Sukkot, the Officers and *Gabbaim* will gather, and call to them other men from the membership, to review and clarify all matters requiring amendments in this *Hevra-Kadisha*.

H) On the second day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover, there shall be an election of the *Gabbaim*, by the customary balloting used during the meeting of the entire *Hevra*, and whoever does not attend the meeting will not be placed on the ballot, and everyone who has not appeared for the past six moth will also not be placed on the ballot, as described above. And all newly inducted members, during their first three years, will not be eligible to be placed on the ballot, and these newly inducted members will not be permitted to be *Gabbaim*, and the protocol for this election shall be by written ballot, according to custom, and five candidates will be elected from the ballot box, and canceled ballots will be as it is in community elections, and in the same elections, four *Gabbaim* will be elected, with the admonition that they dedicate their thoughts to the Lord's Name, with whole-hearted dedication and fear of Your Lord.

I) Those of the candidates that had never previously held a post in the *Hevra*, and was not already a *Gabbai* in this *Hevra*, are not eligible to be appointed as a *Gabbai*, and if no single one of the five candidates are so qualified to be appointed as outlined above, then no more than one [is selected].

J) The stipend to the *Shammes*, which is given to him by custom on a weekly basis, shall consist of a steady meal, week in and week out, on Holidays and the High Holidays, and if they fall in the middle of the week, he shall be given a double portion in that same week, but if the first day of the Holiday or High Holidays falls on the Sabbath, he is not entitled to the doubling of his portion.

K) It is beyond the power of the *Gabbaim* to extend financial credit on a charitable basis to any person in the world, whether singly, or a group, even with security, and even to the richest of the magnates, whose credit is unquestionably good, and with this, they have no permission to lend money to any individual in general.

L) In order that there not be any obstacle or entrapment into sin for us, by which many of the masses, and immature people who carry on and ridicule God's holy *Mitzvot* that stand as pillars of the world, who in their haste to anger, in which their cries and groaning rise to assault the *Hevra Kadisha*, and behave like demented people in respect to the original members of the *Hevra*, and say wholeheartedly, that they no longer want to be members of the *Hevra*, and the *Mitzvot* are ignored by them, recognizing that the only thing that has come to their hand has been their rage, which out of great anger and hostility, they get infuriated by their own follies, the folly of their own utterances, which is replete with sin, accusation and wickedness, and which causes sin upon sin, may they never come into God's own righteousness, and in the end, when their anger abates, and in the intemperance of their hearts, that [see that] they were not within their proper boundaries [of behavior], and they regret the harsh speech that emerged from their mouths, that fell upon all, therefore, we have agreed to institute a special scrutiny, that in the event there should be found any such person that should so distort his lips to utter any malevolent speech of such a kind, his franchise in the *Hevra* will be taken away from him, and he will have no recourse to make amends, even that he should be willing to eat dirt, beg and plead by prostrating himself hand and foot, but rather will be ejected from the *Hevra-Kadisha*, regardless of his station,

whether great or small, and also a fine will be levied without mercy, in the amount of two Old Thalers, and this will not relieve him of his obligation to pay the rest of what he owes to the *Hevra,* and for this reason, all living souls, and flesh with a spirit in it, should a man that become filled with seething and roiling, he shall consider himself warned that he should not give free license to his tongue and heart, and not be hasty to utter something that is inappropriate, and if, in the opinion of the *Gabbaim,* before an assembly of the entire *Hevra*, such a man shall not be considered removable from the *Hevra* entirely, until at least, his transgression is atoned for, his position shall be [reduced] to that of a member who is a newcomer, as if he had joined the *Hevra* on that day, both in connection with duties and [in] eligibility to stand for election, and shall not be appointed as a *Gabbai* for a three year period, and all the remaining details said about him, except for the fine described above.

M) Each sitting Senior of the Month, when his monthly rotation is completed, is required to gather all the other *Gabbaim* of this *Hevra*, and they have to make a just accounting of all income and expenses that took place during his tenure as a Senior, and everything that is owed to a *Gabbai,* will be determined on the basis of an accounting, and they are required to immediately give him a note, written out by the Secretary, and they must sign it. And any individual who does not have such a note will not be eligible to receive even so much as one cent from the accounting.

N) There is a sick evil that we have seen under the sun, and this is the instance where righteous people are taken to burial, and after the cemetery is left, there is no one to comfort or be comforted, and they go to their eternal rest without leaving behind anyone who will concern themselves with setting up a minyan, in which ten men to a quorum will be available to pray during the seven days of mourning. And it is therefore, that the members of the *Hevra* are responsible to pray in a minyan for all the seven days of the deceased, as described above, and the responsibility falls especially on the *Gabbai* of the month, to go there with the men who are under his control.

O) In the question of taking collateral [sic: security] for a burial plot, while the deceased is yet not interred, the permission and the authority is in the hands of the officers and the Gabbaim to estimate according to their perception alone. And the leaders of the community do not have permission to arrogate the right to add or detract, and only as they estimate, that is how it shall be, and the same applies to taking security for a fine from anyone who opens his mouth to speak in a derogatory way on this Hevra Kadisha in general, and from those who impinge upon the dignity of the Gabbaim, even if such an individual is not a member of the Hevra, the leaders of the community have no permission to arrogate to themselves anything in this regard.

*(The fifteenth Amendment is not recorded in this Pinkas)*

Q) A proper and correct amendment is that no person shall have permission to institute anything new in the cemetery, whether to put up a headstone, or the fence off a grave site with a picket fence, and things of this sort, without prior permission of the *Gabbaim* of this *Hevra,* and he is required to contribute to charity no less than three gold pieces on fencing off any grave, and lo less than an Old Thaler for setting up a grave stone, and for this, members of the *Hevra*, will be generous in connection with this donation, and have to give at least a Gold Thaler and a measure for the fencing, and four gold pieces for putting up a gravestone, and this should specifically be with the knowledge of the *Gabbaim.* as described above.

R) From here to the end of the page, we have allocated space where no member of the *Hevra* shall sign. Because, we have set this space aside to write some other additional details about the members, that will be required from this time and going forward to amend whatever amendment that will be needed at a given time at the behest of the agreement of the *Hevra Kadisha* at a full membership meeting.

S) Today, at the behest of the full membership meeting, an amendment was renewed for this time in the present, that at the elections of every *Hol HaMoed* Passover, two leaders shall be selected from the membership, those who will be related to all the pronouncements, orders, and behests to all meetings in which the officers and *Gabbaim* will attend, to all matters large and small, that relate to that *Hevra*, they shall be called for those purposes as well, and there shall not be anyone among the nominees to the position of *Gabbai* of this *Hevra* anyone other than Leaders, and that these *Gabbaim* shall be Leaders, each in his appointed monthly rotation, and the Heads shall not act in such a leadership capacity at all, and because of this, all matters pertaining to income and expense shall be in the hands of the *Gabbaim* and not the Heads, and the accounting shall be before them.

T) This, and another matter we have seen, and we recollected instances, where if either a man or a woman desires to by for themselves a burial plot while they are still alive, the Heads and the *Gabbaim* are required to deputize an additional four important people from the membership of the *Hevra*, and the matter transacted on the basis of their combined understanding.

U) Haste brings on errors, and what has been written before with the consent of the full assembly, as a new amendment to add and clarify that two additional Heads are needed for all matters large and small, was written in error, that was literally said to be written at the time of the assembly, that the two Heads shall deal with large matters only, referring to the sale of a burial plot while a person was still alive, and the remaining things that ensue from that. Or the taking of security for a large matter, meaning from forty five gold pieces and up, is considered a large matter, however from forty five gold pieces and below and other routine matters that occur in the usual course of events, the Heads have no involvement at all, but only the Officers and the *Gabbaim* alone will transact all the detail according to their custom from time immemorial, and it is forbidden to diminish their authority in this connection in any way.

All the amendments and explanations in the previous pages are issued by us at a full meeting, and are the words of the undersigned, with felicity, good will, truth and forgiveness of sin.

Done while we were the *Gabbaim* in righteousness of this *Hevra*, and it is on our word that everything has ben set on a foundation of gold pillars with the consent of the entire *Hevra Kadisha*, as described above.

Signed by Naphtali Hertz son to my honored Sir and Father, The *Hasid* Our Teacher, The Rabbi Elkhanan ז"ל.

## Year 5469 (1709)

(24 - 23 ז"ו)

**B**

Not all periods are equivalent, and therefore, amendments that were passed some time ago in the first days that were good and proper for the times, thorough and suffused with the content needed by that generation of that period, are amended in order that their foundations not be moved or undermined, by everything that has been said below by the people selected from the entire body of the *Hevra*, which is a doer of good deeds, to make the amendments in the first instance, and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra* and the remaining ones who belong to the *Hevra*, made today.

A) The previous amendments that were enacted on (*the date is not clear*) by the select [sic: committee] drawn from the entire membership with the respected participation of Our Teacher, the Rabbi *Gaon* Shmuel Zvi Hirsch, נר"ו, Senior of the *Bet Din*, and head of the Mesivta of Brisk, are set forth in any event for review at large. And they are , that annually, the nominators shall select one individual in the place who will fill the vacancy among the *Gabbaim* or the Heads, and his position shall be the equivalent of a *Gabbai* and Head, with a donation to be made that is set and cannot be canceled without exception.

B) The nominators shall not appoint a Head of the *Hevra* unless, he has been married for twelve years, and already has been a *Gabbai* of the *Hevra*, or a community leader or a *Gabbai* of a large charity, ora *Dayan*, and not for their own sake.

C) (*This amendment reviews a portion at a time, the changes in the amendments of the year 5447, with the promise that says:* '...and the nominators do not have the permission to appoint two *Gabbaim* in the *Hevra* that have never before been *Gabbaim* in that *Hevra*, because their authority is limited to appointing only one [such] *Gabbai* and two at the same time.').

D) The *Hevra Kadisha* is not permitted to admit more than one new member a year, and no more, and they shall be responsible for the admission of this person, and in any event, his donation shall be four Old Thalers, as a special donation, apart from the seven measures that are given by custom.

E) There is a complete prohibition against the sale of a burial plot during the live of anyone, even if that person is prepared to offer an unusually large sum of money, and no head shall be paid to such an individual, or his desire fulfilled.

F) (*The amendment gives the Gabbaim the right to allocate Torah honors during the High Holidays in the second Bet HaMedrash*).
G) Official appointed annually are to be immediately inscribed in the *Pinkas*, as to who are the Principal Leader and the *Gabbai*, and their place shall not be passed over.

H) Nominators shall not appoint a *Gabbai*, excepting that he have been a member for six consecutive years after his admission to the *Hevra*, and it is not necessary to say, that he should have been married at least six years, even if he was admitted as a member before being married, and this shall be put into the box, and the box will be placed near the Head, with the key to the box in the hands of the *Gabbai*, and the box shall be the place for safekeeping for things such as [precious] stones, and the key should not, [God] forbid be in the hands of a new *Gabbai*.

These amendments were created on the date mentioned previously, and are added to improve and strengthen the previous amendments, mentioned above, and as of this day, the amendments below have been added as well.

I) The previous amendment that was felt (!), to bolster those who fate had decreed would go to the cemetery, and in order to assure that he does not go unaccompanied, he is obligated to donate six measures during the summer and nine measures in the wintertime, and we have seen that this is a great [financial] burden that comes to being compromised, and consequently we have lightened this burden, and would that it be that these [revised obligations] will stand, in these time when even the farthing strays from the pocket, for all who do not want to go to their rest unaccompanied, he will be required to donate three measures in the summer and the winter donation is the same, and this is especially, if he gives this from his own good will, in a pleasant manner, and if he does not comply promptly, then the *Gabbai* of the month is obligated to take security in the form of twelve measures, and this will be counted toward the income received by the Senior *Gabbai* during the month of his service.

J) The security that will be given for burial funds will not be kept for more than thirty days. And if the refusal shall come from the side of the individual that will not settle up with them, then the *Gabbaim* are obliged to place the assets of security in the control of a *Bet-Din*, which should then sanction their sale according to the estimated value that will be established in accordance with the amendment described below.

K) Regarding the contributions that are referred to in the older amendments, where the *Gabbai* has permission to take security for them, without the consent of the Heads, up to forty five gold pieces, and in this day, when our multitude of sins that the world returns upon, and the specter of poverty is on the face of the populace, we have eased this matter, such that it is not within the power of the *Gabbai* to take [such security] without the involvement of the Heads, even up to the amount of thirty pieces of gold, and from thirty gold pieces and up, the involvement of the Heads is mandatory, and even thus, should one *Gabbai* insist that he wishes to be a part of the decision along with the Heads, because it is my thinking to take more than thirty gold pieces, even if the Heads do not agree to his involvement, they are obligated to hear out this *Gabbai*, and include him among the Heads in the gathering described previously, and therefore *Gabbaim* are not permitted to settle with the individual without the participation of the Heads, and at the level of sixty gold pieces and up, the Rabbi of the community in our city is obligated to participate, and his voice is equivalent to that of the Heads.

L) Should that misfortune, that we hope does not come, befall a member of the *Hevra*, as described above, and the heirs wish to immediately deliver readily to the hands of the *Gabbaim* sixty gold pieces, and there are no monies due, the *Gabbaim* and Heads have no power, as described above, to take any form of security, not even one cent, except insofar as specified above, he is released from all burial fees. However, should all of the *Gabbaim* and Heads be in agreement to take more than sixty pieces of gold, they are, under such circumstances, obliged to add the Rabbi of the City to their group [for this consideration], and whatever they say, shall then be done. And all that mentioned above, concerning contributions, regarding the participation of the Honored Rabbi נר"ו, involves a specific permission given to the Highly Revered Rabbi, and *Bet-Din* Senior נרו', our Rabbi and Teacher, Nachman נרו', among us, who since his early youth had been accepted as a member of the *Hevra*, and for all his days, his endeavors were truthful, whole, and suffused with charity, and the result of his work was transformed, as it were into a [sweet] fig, from which he, and he alone may derive nourishment, and not for the benefit of any other Rabbi who might succeed him, and would not be permitted to

participate in matters of the contributions to this *Hevra*, as outlined above, and we have taken upon ourselves with threat of excommunication and levies upon us, and those who follow us, [God] forbid, not to permit the inclusion of any other Rabbi to this *Hevra*, subject to the severity of punishment by many fines, and by removal of eligibility to stand for office of the *Gabbaim* and Heads, it shall not be mentioned or recalled even, that a Rabbi be admitted to the *Hevra*, and [God] forbid accepting any Rabbi into the *Hevra*, under threat of punishment and fine.

M) (*A repetition of the obligation of the sitting monthly Senior Gabbai to render an accounting for his tenure*).

N) For the entire year, the expenditure for distribution of food for any purposes associated with the benefit of the *Hevra* of the *Gabbaim* and Heads, shall not exceed one hundred gold pieces, and included in this will be the outlays for Passover and *Shemini Atzeret*, shall in total be one hundred gold piece, as described above.

O) Expenditures on the remaining matters within the *Hevra*, up to forty pieces of gold, regarding what a *Gabbai* might spend during his monthly turn, will be other that [the funds described] above, subject to the cognizance of one other *Gabbai*, and from forty pieces on up, the cognizance of yet a third person, a *Gabbai* or a Head.

P) (*Repetition of the amendment about ineligibility*).

Q) All remaining amendments that precede, those that are not superseded by [sic: by contradiction], those amendments remain in force in all respect of their details, specifics and generalities.

R) The fine for violating the previously referenced amendments, both new and old, excepting cases where the *Gabbaim* and Heads nullify the charge, where there is no substance to the charge, the fine shall be ten Old Thalers, and the 'crown of dignity' shall be taken from the perpetrator, and he shall not have any place for three consecutive years, and no capacity to stand for office this *Hevra*.

These amendments, and on the following page after this one, were copied word for word, from the body of the amendments, under the eye of the Rabbi, our Teacher, wondrous *Gaon*, His Honor, Rabbi Shmuel Zvi Hertz, and the Honorable Rabbi, Our Teacher, Uri, and Our Rabbi and Teacher Yusha Heschel of Brod, and the Rabbi, Our Teacher Rabbi Lieber.

In regard to the matter of allocation of honor that the *Hevra Kadisha* has accorded to me, in associating me with the amendment 'committee,' regarding that prior Rabbis, where there was an obligation upon the *Gabbaim* and the Heads that if they wanted to take more than sixty pieces of gold, to add me to their body, as mentioned on the prior page, I personally, and of my own volition, give up this previously mentioned honor, and the permission rests in the hands of the *Gabbaim* and the Heads to take sums even in excess of sixty pieces of gold, as was the power and authority in their hands in prior times, and also the limit that they have set as previously mentioned, on the prior page, as to the position of any new Rabbi, which they decreed on the prior page, not to accept him as a member of the *Hevra* as previously mentioned, and recalled at great length, is in full force and strength, and I lend the force of my arm's strength without holding back to all that has been said on the prior page in that amendment, as if they are the very words of the signer himself.

Today, 18 Iyyar 5476
Signature of the younger Nachman residing in the Community of Zamość

## Year 5483 (1732)

(39-38 ז"ר)

**C**

We have come together to clarify issues of the prior amendments of the *Hevra Kadisha*, what requires modification in accordance with the times we live in. Also, what needs to be added to the amendments that were enacted in the first days, which provided constraints and boundaries and flexibility given to us by our predecessors to constrain ourselves further, to set up oversight, in order that the foundation on which we stand not be weakened, and we who sign below

were selected from the entire *Hevra Kadisha* to be the 'committee' to create such amendments, and everything that we will say will and write will become law, and here are the amendments.

A) In the matter of voting, as mentioned in the prior amendments, that there should be a vote for each individual that is a member of the *Hevra*, whether of small or large standing, without exception, but we have seen that there are many pitfalls that arise from this, that we are not in a position to document, because it is not appropriate to do so here, and therefore, we have created a boundary and limitation, that a ballot will not be given to anyone who doesn't contribute a sum of at least two Old Thalers annually. Nevertheless, anyone who is among the Seven City Elders, or a *Gabbai* of a major charity, or a *Gabbai* of the *Hevra*, and it goes with out saying, a Leader in the *Hevra*, or a *Dayan*, even though he is not derelict in his taxes, and was so derelict [at one time], will be due a ballot just like other members of the *Hevra*. Only that he will not be able to hold any appointment in the *Hevra*, in any position, unless he donates the sum as outlined below, and those very people that do not contribute in the amount of two Thalers annually, they too shall not be able to hold any appointed position whether in the *Hevra* or in the community, and they shall have a restricted ballot, to select one among them by vote, and he will be submitted from this vote to stand in the balloting of the *Hevra* st large.

B) With regard to revoked membership, up to three and four [years] and no reinstatement at all, and up to the third year of the sentence, will be treated like the third and fourth year, and this will be viewed as appropriately unqualified for positions in the Association, and canceled members are totally forbidden to vote, and in general from holding any position in the *Hevra*, even if the members so removed as cited above, were Leaders or *Gabbaim*, even a Senior *Gabbai*, and in general, Canceled members also include their associates for one year.

C) The conduct of the electors are required to take an oath and swear that no amendment will be passed regarding elections and appointments, and after the setting of the appointments, the Heads and the Gabbaim will gather, and also take the oath and swear that they will not pass any amendments that affects them, until the end of their tenure.

D) The electors are not permitted to appoint a *Gabbai* or a Head, in this place, anyone who has not made a donation of thirty gold pieces annually, except for Krupki, and the remainder of the contributions, but someone who was a *Gabbai* or a Head in the *Hevra*, even if he gives only twenty gold pieces, excepting Krupki as mentioned above, he is permitted to stand for an appointed position. And it is especially important that he have four recommendations, and his own recommendation can be one of them. And he who gives less that twenty pieces of gold, and at the time of the elections wishes to complete his contribution up to the level of twenty gold pieces, or to the level of thirty in order to receive a ballot, or be eligible for appointment, such intent will not be considered helpful to him.

E) Anyone who has any appointment as one of the Seven City Elders, or a *Gabbai* of a major charity, is not permitted to hold a position in this *Hevra*, but a Dayan may hold a position in this *Hevra*.

F) (*This amendment repeats the prohibition against electing to the position of Gabbai, anyone who has not yet held that position. The current amendment adds that a newly elected Head must also be an esteemed teacher*).

G) The electors are required to elect one *Gabbai* from outside the City.

H) The rules governing newly recruited members are outlined below.

I) The Heads and *Gabbaim* of this *Hevra* are not permitted to serve for more than three consecutive years from today on, and what was the case previously, no longer matters. In the case of the Heads, they will have this privilege, that if they obtain three opinions, apart from their own, it is permissible for them to serve even for a fourth year, and if the opinion of all is agreeable, even for a fifth year.

J) Regarding anyone who wishes to become a member of the *Hevra*, the *Gabbaim* and Heads have no right to give him anything in writing, or promise to accept him into the *Hevra*, one a person who is moved by the heart to be someone who is willing to perform acts of charity, and exerts himself in a straightforward manner and takes initiative to involve

himself in the work of the *Hevra*, for at least two years, and at the end of the two years, if the Heads and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra* see then, that he is a prominently active individual, and his orientation is Godly, then they have permission to admit him to the *Hevra*, but in any event, this does not detract from any prior amendments, especially in the matter of [required] contributions, in which he should donate at the very least, four Old [Thalers] and in the matter of a newly inducted member, as explained there, there must be unanimous consent, and one [negative vote] can deter acceptance.

K) From this day forth, a new person who joins the *Hevra,* is forbidden to sign up near the top or the middle of the page of signatories, as we have seen with our own eyes, and thereby pushing their signatures into any place that they choose, but rather, the signature of such a person shall be last, under the signatures in their [proper] places, corresponding to his time in the *Hevra,* and in front of the *Hevra* as described in previous amendments.

L) When the period of initial membership draws to a close, and the balloting day is reached, such an individual is not permitted to be nominated for the position of Gabbai or Head, or in any place, until after three elections, in general.

M) (*Confirms the prior amendments regarding the taking of security*)

N) (*Confirms the prior amendments regarding fees for burial*)

O) If a manservant or maid falls sick in the home of one of the *balebatim*, the *Shammes* does not have permission to accept such a sick person for care in the *Hekdesh* without the cognizance of the Senior *Gabbai* sitting for that month, and even the *Gabbai* does not have permission to order him to accept the patient, until the master of the house provides funds for sustenance for a period of two weeks.

P) After the Shavuot holiday, the *Gabbaim* are required to cook up all manner of preserves[110], which they are to have ready at hand, for purposes of ministering to the sick, and this is a specific charity on behalf of the poor, and a boon for the well-to-do, for their financial contribution, and in the event that someone does not have money readily available for this, the responsibility falls on the *Gabbai* to provide funds out of his own pocket in whatever is the appropriate amount.

Q) *The prior amendment regarding monthly accounting is repeated, with the addition* (and should there be income in excess of expenditure, whether from dues, taking of security, the sitting *Gabbai* is required to turn over the excess to the *Gabbai* that comes after him, and no note will be passed in the instance if some *Gabbai* has an unusual debt before him, that is standing, in which case half the excess shall be applied, and the other half will be given to the succeeding *Gabbai*, and at the end of the year, there shall be a just accounting among them, to determine if any among them have an outstanding financial obligation, they will then determine what is the right thing to do regarding such debt).

R) (*Repeat of the amendments regarding the safekeeping of the Books of the Hevra*)

S) *Repeat of the Amendment concerning El Moleh Rakhamim*

T) It is totally forbidden for a Senior *Gabbai* of the month to permit the setting of a grave stone or a marker without the cognizance of a second *Gabbai*, and this setting of the stone or marker is to be recorded in the *Pinkas*.

U) The Senior *Gabbai* of the month is not allowed to disburse to any qualified pauper, or any bona fide charity, an amount in excess of two gold pieces, without the cognizance of a second [*Gabbai*], and for five gold pieces, the cognizance of a third [*Gabbai*] is required.

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110 The language regarding this process is that of 'frying,' because the fruits picked during this early time of the summer, were reduced by frying in a large skillet. The product, a jelly or a jam, was called '*eingemakhtz*' in Yiddish. It was used to help sweeten the palate of people who were ill, and provide some sugary nourishment.

V) (*Repeats the prior amendment concerning the payment of membership dues. The present amendment obligated the Gabbaim to record the inflow of such funds*)

W) We have discovered a deviation which we have chosen to isolate, because we have seen no good in the fact that each and every individual inscribes whatever he pleases on a grave stone, and extols the deceased more than is necessary, and it is certainly not complimentary to the deceased that praise for him exceeds that which is appropriate, and consequently, there is a total prohibition to inscribe anything on a grave stone, without the cognizance of the Heads and the *Gabbaim*, and they shall record [the inscription] on paper, and in accordance with this record, this will how the stone will be inscribed.

X) The fee to the *Shammes* at this time will not be more than gold pieces טו"ב (*in the amendment, the fee to the Shammes for standing watch over the deceased is set*), and the obligation falls on the *Shammes* to notify the Senior *Gabbai* if there is anyone sick within the city, or outside of it, regardless of whether he is rich or poor, and the *Shammes* is required to visit the cemetery every three days to determine what needs to be done there, and if the Senior *Gabbai* orders that he attend to some sick person, he is obligated to go, and his fee will be decided by the sitting Senior *Gabbai* according to time and place.

Y) It is entirely forbidden to offer a blessing for the sick, or to change names[111] in the *Bet HaMedrash* without the cognizance of the sitting Senior *Gabbai.*

Z) It is not within the power of any *Gabbai* to retain control of the *pushka*[112] for any form of debt, and at the end of his monthly rotation, he is obligated immediately to send the *pushka* to the Gabbai that succeeds him, and at the end of the year, at the time that elections are held, the Senior *Gabbai* is obligated to surrender the *pushka* and the key to the lockbox to the [Head] Elector, and the Elector is to turn them over to the first Gabbai that is elected, and any *Gabbai* that transgresses and hold onto the *pushka* to settle a debt, shall be fined two Thalers. And it shall be written in the Pinkas that it shall be entirely and totally prohibited to then give him any position in the *Hevra.*

A1) There shall be a separate ledger to record each burial plot of each and every individual [in the possession of] the sitting Senior *Gabbai.*

A2) The matter that has been said and repeated, but not seconded, but must be strengthened further. The *Hevra* is not to have more than two Heads.

A3) All the prior amendments, from the day of the establishment of the Hevra, which were set down to strengthen the Hevra, especially the amendments that were created by the Rabbi *Gaon* Our Teacher and Rabbi Zvi Hertz, and four other people that worked with him, are signed off, and are also signed by the Rabbi, and Great Beacon Our Teacher and Rabbi נר"ו, regarding the question of him passing on the honor accorded to him as recalled there, all of these, we affirm, and view with favor, excepting in the case of any amendments that stand in contradiction to those amendments, then it is necessary to follow the most recent, and it is not possible to alter any of these amendments, because everything has been done in accordance with the needs of the time and the place. And that which is recalled in the older amendments, with regard to the four fundamental enactments [already] in the hands of the *Gabbaim,* to add the sitting Senior *Gabbai* or other leaders of the community as they desire, to accept a wealthy man of means into the *Hevra* in accordance with the new amendments, this is the amendment that there should be no more than two Heads of the *Hevra*

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111 Among the many subterfuges, grounded in superstition, was the process of name changing, to ward off the 'Evil Eye,' and the Angel of Death, thought to be lying in wait for an ailing individual. By 'officially' changing a person's name, the thought was that these supernatural malefactors could be 'thrown off the track' because they would be unable to find whom they were intending to claim.

112 The alms box, or any such box, kept to receive small coin donations, usually in the foyer of the *Bet HaMedrash.*

according to the new amendment. Therefore it is forbidden not to mention that no person, who is a Head or Leader of the community, shall be added [to the membership] in connection with any issue, large or small, and this shall be only for the *Gabbai* in concert with the Heads of the *Hevra*, possessing all power and might and strength in connection with all matters pertaining to the *Hevra*, simply, that all the power and strength is in their hands to be used against those who speak out critically against the *Hevra*, to punish them with all manner of punishments and fines, as pleases them. [All this is done] without prior consultation with any Leader or Rabbi, as recorded in the prior amendments. These amendments, in their enumeration and counting, were created over a period of three years, and for so long as they [in turn] are not amended, these amendments shall remain in force, even after three years. For all to see we have come to sign on this day (...) 5483.

Signature David Ben HaGaon HaGadol
Signature Yehoshua a son to my Master and Father Rabbi Joseph
Signature Zvi Hirsch a son to my Master and Father Our Teacher and Rabbi Joseph ז"ל from Krakow
Signature Yitzhak son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Baruch

## Protocols for Selecting People to Write Amendments

### D

Today is Tuesday, 3 Iyyar 5489, and according to the agreement of the entire membership of the *Hevra*, at the time of the election meeting, when the time comes for the Honorable Heads, Our Teacher and Rabbi Joseph, and The Honorable Head Our Teacher, Shmuel from Warsaw to vacate [their posts], the Officers and *Gabbaim* shall be obligated to assemble the *Hevra* to select members of a 'committee' to generate amendments, and to make emendations for the benefit of the *Hevra*, without any delay whatsoever.

And therefore, today, the hour has come to fulfill what was written down here, as described above, and to select the amendment writes according to the behest of the *Hevra*, called by the assembly and selected by ballot, and three have been elevated from the balloting as favored for this task: The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman, His Honor, Our Teacher and Rabbi, R' Moshe Rap, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman the Exalted one Our Teacher and Rabbi Shlomo, the son of Our Honorable Teacher Shimon Deputy to the Kohen, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman son of the Rabbi, R' Eliezer of the deceased Teacher, Rabbi Shmuel Deputy to the Kohen. They selected as amendment writers the following: The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman, the Honorable Rabbi Our Teacher and Rabbi David, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman the Honorable Head Our Teacher Shmuel Barash, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman as Our Teacher and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Krakower, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman the Rabbinical Torah Scholar, Our Teacher Avli Katz, and The Honorable and Distinguished Gentleman the exalted, our Teacher and Rabbi Shlomo, son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Shimon Deputy to the Kohen, and all that these amendment writers shall do for the benefit of the *Hevra* will be so, and nothing shall be allowed to fall on the ground today being the 26 Adar 5491.

And the people creating the amendments shall be diligent in completing all that is required, and they shall not go past the coming Adar II, that approaches us, with goodness, 5491.

## Year 5491 (1731)

(44-43 ז"ז)

Those amendments that we have in hand from the year 5491 are almost entirely not legible. We will make an effort to convey the text of whatever there is that can be read.

Recorded under section nine in the donations during the tenure of the Head and *Gabbai*. The *Gabbai* cannot serve for more than three consecutive years, and a Head can serve for up to five consecutive years. Accordingly, we have decided to clarify this matter, in order that there be no dispute over this, that the appointment of a Head and a *Gabbai* shall be of equal duration, and in this regard shall be for only three years, although a special honor has been given to the Rabbi, Out Teacher and Rabbi David, to serve an additional three years from this day on.

B) Totally illegible

C) Recorded under section eighteen, that if, during his tenure, a *Gabbai* shall have income exceeding expenses, it is his responsibility (.....), shall fall to the first *Gabbai* to settle his outstanding debts, in order not to close the door in the face of those who wish to give to charity.

D) Not legible
E)
F) We uphold the prior amendment that it is forbidden to the *Gabbaim* to accept more than one new member annually.

G) *A note on having newly recruited members go around with the pushka during Yizkor Services.*

H) The *Gabbaim* are required to clarify and reconcile their account throughout the year, in such a way that the accounting is crystal clear, in order that the election process not be delayed and come late.

I) A stake is put in the ground that cannot be removed, an amendment that forbids the sale of a burial plot to any person while he is alive.

J) Any erasure found in the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra*, or anything new found in the *Pinkas* without the signature of the *Gabbaim*, stipulating the day and year, shall have no force of valid obligation.

K) Not legible

L) The matter of the fee for a burial plot had already been debated, and it was revised in several amendments of this passage, to lighten the amount as explained in the prior amendments, and yet all of this was of no avail to the wise men in the creation of their amendment, because in the case of a number of people, who did not have their desires fulfilled, were complaining in terms that literally were against the *Hevra*, and therefore, in order to diminish this criticism, we have found yet another way, a way that is the same for all people, should it be the wish of the *Gabbaim* and the Heads to take [funds] in this amount, and upwards, being, from a member of the *Hevra* from sixty gold pieces and up, and for someone outside the *Hevra*, ninety pieces if gold and up, and it is the right of the party in question to select two people from the *Hevra Kadisha* to add to the [deliberation of the fee] by the *Gabbaim* and the Heads, and whatever this group has to say that is what will be done.

M) Not legible
N) About the roster of the graves in the cemetery
O) Not legible

P) On the duties of the *Hevra*, the responsibility falls to the Senior *Gabbai* to spend the night with a poor person who is sick, for one night without compensation, and if it is required to spend more time, he will be paid the fee of six measures for a night, and the monies associated with this fee shall be paid by the newly recruited members. We have come here to affix our signatures on the First Day of the Passover Holiday, 5491. (Seemingly referring to *Hol HaMoed* Passover)

| | |
|---|---|
| Signature | David the Rabbi |
| Signature | ..... |
| Signature | ..... |
| Signature | ..... |
| Signature | ..... |
| Signature | Shlomo, son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Shimon Deputy to the Kohen |

# Year 5500 (1740)

(50 - 49 ר"ת)

**E**

Today is Sunday, 26 Nissan, and it is recorded with the agreement of the full assembly of all the members of the *Hevra* to select five [people] by ballot, and these five people will then select five [other] people to develop amendments, and if the five previously mentioned desire to select some individuals from among themselves, they may not pick more than two. Along with three from outside this group, [the following] were elected by ballot, Reb Lieb, Reb Baruch, Reb Chaim, Reb Hirsch, Reb Mendel.

As of this day, we have come to scrutinize the issue of the previous amendments, that had been articulated and approved several times, and currently, we have come to clarify the core as distinct from the incidental non-binding covenants which are sacrosanct, on this Wednesday, *Rosh Chodesh Eve* of Iyyar 5500.

A) (*A repetition of the prior amendments about visiting the sick, the current amendment especially obligates the newly recruited members to stand watch for the sick*).

B) Since one Mitzvah is capable of causing yet another Mitzvah, so at the time that they shall visit the sick, the responsibility is placed on the *Gabbaim* to remember the sick, to confess, and to hear his will at his home. And if they wish to hear his will before the *Gabbaim* and the Heads, that is all to the better. And if they do not wish to hear his will in front of them, the designated parties from the *Hevra* are required at the very least who the people are to whom the sick person is communicating his will, in order that no error or conflict arises from this process.

C) If during such a visit, the *Gabbaim* should see that he is a poor person, and that he required assistance, the sitting *Gabbai* has authority to provide assistance up to two gold pieces, and from two to four pieces of gold, it shall be with the cognizance of the [other] *Gabbaim*, and above that, it is required that all this be with the cognizance of the Heads, and should some sick person be taken to the *Hekdesh*, it is put upon the *Gabbaim* to oversee his care, and see to all his needs, food and drink, and also with regard to matters of medication, and medical equipment, and if the *Gabbaim* see that he has need of a physician, such a physician, associated with the *Hevra*, shall be called by the *Gabbai*, and sent to do all that he can.

D) (*A repetition of the prior amendments about the preparation of jellies and preserves*).
E) (*A repetition of the prior amendments about taking security in lieu of burial fees*).
F) *A repetition of the amendments about the extent of discretion and rights of the part of the Gabbaim in setting burial fees.*

G) Regarding the matter of fees for burial, the *Gabbaim* and Heads will conduct themselves as follows in the instance, God forbid, if a member of the *Hevra* should pass away, if the individual be a person of middling means, and the heirs come before the Heads and *Gabbaim*, and wish to pay burial fees in the amount of sixty gold pieces, ready cash immediately, the *Gabbaim* then have no power to take any security, but if according to the perception of the Heads and the *Gabbaim*, and to the knowledge of all, they agree that he is a man of wealth, and not of middling means, and they wish to take more, despite all this, they do not have permission to take more than one hundred pieces of gold, ready cash, and in the event that [the heirs] do not wish to pay ready cash, then they can take security, that will have a value equivalent to the amount that is due, and if the heirs want to obtain a specific [contiguous] burial plot for purposes of interring the deceased, and to raise the funds, in this instance, the *Gabbaim* are obligated to take security up to the amount that is sufficient, apart from the burial fees as specified above, and the same rule will apply whether it applies to a man or a woman, to all members of the *Hevra.* And when the deceased shall be a man or a woman outside the Hevra, and was a man of middling means, if the heirs wish to pay ninety pieces of gold, ready cash, they do not have to give security, and if to the eye of the Heads and the *Gabbaim*, he was a man of means, then they shall give one hundred sixty pieces of gold, and should they want to specify a contiguous burial plot, they should work this out with the *Gabbaim*, and this matter has no limits, except that the *Gabbaim* are obligated to take a note from the heirs on this matter, apart from the burial fees themselves. All this process is done in this manner, if the deceased was a member of the local community, and has discharged all financial obligation to all rosters, and all members of the community.

Therefore, if [the deceased] should be a guest, or even someone who is a member of the local community, but has not paid off all taxes to each roster, and even if is the case that he is in debt, but dies with no sons [sic: heirs], but left behind a blessing or that the heirs live in another city, and none of the heirs live in this sacred congregation, or an unmarried young man or woman that leave behind an estate, such that the man inherits his wife's estate, and had not yet had children with her, this situation has no constraints about it, except by the perception of the Heads and the *Gabbaim* that were in that time, and who are [in that position] in this day.

H) And even if the heirs plead before the Heads and the *Gabbaim*, that the fees mentioned above, from the place described, will be difficult for them, and all are willing to pledge not to deduct from their inheritance five hundred pieces of gold, ready cash, they are not required to give more than thirty pieces of gold, if the deceased is not a member of the Hevra, and outside of the Hevra, and additional fifty percent. And if the heirs have not paid in five hundred gold pieces, and plots have been set aside, then the heirs are obligated to pay half ready cash, and half when the estate is transferred, and there is an additional option in the hands of the heirs, if they wish to designate two additional people to be added to [the assessing group], then the *Gabbaim* are obligated to select two people from the Hevra that are satisfactory to the heirs, and if there were previously [people] designated from the Hevra, and if they desire to implement what they have said but have it written down, then it shall be so, in order to eliminate any dishonest speech coming form the lips, and in order that this not be contingent on an oath, we have written this amendment for the benefit of heirs, and it is not necessary to say that this applies [equally] if the deceased is a member of the sacred congregation, and pays taxes as described above, in section 7, and none of this has any limit.

I) And if the heirs be men of bad character, and refuse to comply with any of the conditions cited above, and will stubbornly refuse to put up security, and have no regard for the dignity of the deceased, and the obligation of burial that has been placed upon them, and because of this, it can come to a circumstance of an abandoned body, then a complaint can be brought before the *Hevra*, under these circumstances, it is forbidden to permit the body to remain unburied according to the faith of our teaching, even if the heirs refuse, and persist in being stubborn, despite all this, it is forbidden to leave the body overnight, all that is required, is the permission of the *Gabbaim* to dig a grave in a special aisle for his burial, and if some of the inheritance has been set aside, then the designees of the *Hevra* shall take a lien from the *Bet-Din* against his estate, and if he has no estate, but the heirs have assets from their father, and do not want to give from them, then the heirs will not be given permission to recite the *Kaddish* or *El Moleh Rakhamim*.

**F**

A text of amendments can be found in the *Pinkas*, which were institutionalized by the Master of the Zamość Province, Graf Zamoyski (enforced with the force of the approval of our Lord and Great Ruler, the Official Pan Voievodirum, Praised be to Him).

The amendments are, in total, from the first and the amendments aimed at improvements. However, the writer has ordered them according to issues: the amendments pertaining to electing electors are separate from amendments, dealing with *Gabbaim* and members. The only thing new, is paragraph fifteen, which says the following:

At the time we hold elections, we have accorded a privilege to the Rabbi..... of our congregation...to send via new members and the *Shammashim* to request the Honorable Rabbi....that he should come....personally, and to remove all the ballots frm the ballot box, eve though, it has been previously set forth that he is totally forbidden form participating in the affairs of the *Hevra*....and because of this, we retain the prior custom to provide an honorarium to the Honorable Rabbi, on the occasion of each *Shabbat HaGadol*, from the funds of the *Hevra*, after the sermon, and also on *Shabbat Shuva*, after the sermon, in the amount of One Old Thaler, ready cash, apart from fish, as is the custom on these two Sabbaths....

(*A Yiddish Translation of this last paragraph follows*)

## Year 5585 (1825)

(135 - 134 ר"ת)

**G**

On this day, the ruling heads of this sacred community saw fit to strengthen the amendments that had been set out by the founders, which had not been revised in two years, for purposes of putting a reliable stake into the ground.

A) The amendment that was put down in this Pinkas, regarding that every individual that is one of the appointed members of the community, is forbidden to be appointed to any position in the *Hevra Kadisha*, and providers of charity, as cited above, at this time, we have strengthened this amendment, that no individual shall have any say, because in our myriad obligations, the glory of the community has been taken from the Jewish community in this country, and they are to be called *Dozorcziks*[113] [114], and therefore they have no jurisdiction over the community, as was the case in times gone by. Therefore, along with all of this, they have jurisdiction of the community, and therefore the prior amendment falls on the *Dozorcziks*, as they are now called, and because of this, let it also be known, that the *Dozorcziks* do have the jurisdiction of the community before them. It follows from this, that if the nominators should require some connection to facilitate a new appointment, they are required to associate the *Dozorcziks* to themselves. This should be as it was when they enjoyed the glory of being named leaders of the community.

B) Nominators shall not delay the election for more than three days.

*The following amendments, C and D repeat prior amendments.*

Attesting to this, ....the Rabbis, and appointed heads of the *Hevra Kadisha Gemilut Hasadim*, led by The Rabbi, Bet Din Senior, prepared this day 30 Rosh Chodesh Iyyar 5585.

Signed by Yitzhak ben the Man who was a true Gaon, Our Teacher and Rabbi Joseph Yokhna, today Gelernter
Signed by Abraham Meshullam Ehrlich and other signatories.

(142 ר"ת)

**H**

It is now several months that our city has been under siege[115], and because of this the members of the Hevra have been dispersed to the towns surrounding us, and therefore there was not be [the usual] election during the past *Hol HaMoed* Passover. As explained on the other side of the page, thanks to God, each of the men of our city has returned to his proper place, and we have said to everyone, in order that no single amendment in this *Pinkas* will be allowed to fall to the ground, we the undersigned, have gathered together, all the members of the *Hevra*, to carry out an auspicious election according to the amendments, and we have resolved to prepare and amendment that will serve as a stake in the ground, not to be moved forever, theat the *Shammashim* of this *Hevra*, the First *Shammes*, and the Second *Shammes*, are forbidden to accept any burial fees from a deceased person, and only [those funds] that the Hevra [itself] will budget for their use as a weekly stipend, and it is forbidden to the *Shammashim* to engage in any deception or wrongdoing, to receive burial fees or any proceeds for the boards or burial shrouds or any profit in the world, from those things that are required for this ritual, only the Hevra [itself] may purchase boards, and the other necessities of burial – and this amendment is created with the consent of all the members of the Hevra, with the full force of the [other] amendments that are etched into this *Pinkas*, and it is forbidden to change it. As witnesses to this, we have come to affix our signatures on the first day of *Rosh Chodesh* Kislev, 5593, Zamość.

*This is followed by 24 amendments*

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113 *Dozor Bozniczy* is Polish, for Communal Leadership, or a *Va'ad Bet HaKnesset*. It consisted of three people, who, jointly with Rabbi, must work out a budget that meets the needs of community.

114 *Author's footnote:* On January 1, 1822, the [prior apparatus of the] community officially ceased to exist, and the *Dozor Bozniczy* were designated in its place.

115 *Author's footnote:* On the October 21, 1831 (at the end of Heshvan), the garrison at Zamość capitulated (being the last one, after Warsaw and Modlin).

# A Summary of Contents from the Yiddish Texts

Group I

## Amendments of the Year 5447 (1787)

### A

Amendment A) It is agreed to pay the monthly membership dues, of two large measures (groschen), every half year. It is accepted that the *Gabbai* may levy sanctions against all non-payers, such as: not permitting the setting of candles on Yom Kippur in the synagogue; not being allowed to participate in the election of the *Gabbaim* – up to [even] expulsion from the *Hevra*.

B) The *Gabbaim* are charged with visiting the sick, and taking an interest in their condition, and they are given the right to deputize the members of the *Hevra* to accompany them to [visit] the sick. The *Gabbaim* must hold the *Shammes* responsible, or hire a guard, who will stand watch over those who are seriously ill. These previously mentioned obligations of the *Gabbaim*, apply equally whether it is a wealthy or a poor person who is sick, with no distinction made regarding gender.

C) This amendment institutes a process in connection with dealing with the dead. It says further: It has strongly been established that because there had previously been an amendment not to elect men as *Gabbaim*, who hold an appointed position in the community, it followed that *Gabbaim* were appointed from the ranks of the poor, who have no authority. The members did not submit to their authority, and the work became neglected, to the extent that the necessary work was carried out by younger, frivolous people, for whom the *Mitzvot* play no role, and they do their tasks in a frivolous manner, which is an insult to the dead and living alike. A[nother] reason for why the work is being neglected is, that the Hevra has too many members, to the extent that one tends to rely on the other. Therefore, we have decided, that *Gabbaim* will only be elected from the 'upper crust' of the *balebatim*, even if they already occupy a position on behalf of the community. They will have a strong hand to institute discipline. Each of the four *Gabbaim* will be allocated a group of members, who must submit themselves to his command, in the area he supervises. Those who will not make themselves available to do such work without a reason, must pay into the treasury six measures in the summer, and nine measures in the wintertime. Sanctions will also be instituted against any individual who will start an argument, or say inappropriate things about the Hevra, or its members.

D) Gives the right to the *Gabbaim* to set the sum of a burial fee for a deceased person of means, from whom a larger sum of money should be taken. In this instance, they may take counsel with the leaders of the community.

E, F, G) speak about the fee for the recitation of *El Moleh Rakhamim* and a *Mi Sheberakh.*

H) Established the second day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover as Election Day. The balloting is to be carried out in this manner: from the box where the names of all the members are placed, the names of five electors are drawn, who have no family connection with one another, and they appoint the *Gabbaim*.

I) Only one Elector, who has not yet held a community position, or previously was not appointed as a *Gabbai*, may be appointed as a *Gabbai.*

J) Sets the salary for the *Shammes*.
K) Forbids lending funds of the *Hevra.*

L) Decides to remove anyone from the *Hevra* who had expressed himself in a state of distress, that he regrets having joined the *Hevra,* as well as fining him for Two Thalers.

M) Obligated each *Gabbai* to give a full accounting at the end of his month of duty.

N) On the issue of conducting prayer services during the *Shiva* period, in the home of a deceased person with no immediate family.

O) Concerning the taking of security in advance in place of a burial fee, as well as security for the fine levied against

one who speaks out pejoratively against the *Hevra*, or its *Gabbaim*; leaders of the community have no right to mix into such an affair.

P) Sets the fee for a headstone or a fencing around a grave site.

Q) Sets down the election of 'Elders' (Heads) in addition to the *Gabbaim*, from the *Hevra*, with whom the *Gabbaim* must take counsel concerning all important questions.

R) Sets down, that in the event a grave site is sold to someone who is still alive, that the *Gabbaim* and the 'Elders' must take counsel with four additional respected members of the Hevra.

S) Established the competence of Heads and the *Gabbaim* in trial proceedings, that the Heads are not to interfere in the business of the *Gabbaim*, and not constrain their rights to this point.

## Year 5469 (1719)

### B

The introduction says: 'Since not all periods of time are equivalent, the prior amendments were appropriate for those better times, and now, when the incomes of the populace are very depressed, the amendments must be aligned with the current circumstances, and for this reason, we establish the following amendments:'

A) It is established that the Electors will also select a deputy ('in place') who can deputize for the prior *Gabbai* or Head;

B, C) Prohibits the Electors from selecting *Hevra*-Elders (Heads), people who have not yet served in the capacity of *Gabbai*, or community leader, or a *Dayan*. Only one of the four *Gabbaim* can be selected from the ranks of the newcomers.

D) It become prohibited to acquire more than one new member a year, who must then pay an initiation fee of 4 Thalers apart from normal dues;

E) It becomes prohibited to sell a burial plot to anyone who is still alive;

F) Gives the right to the *Gabbaim* and the Heads to organize a minyan for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in the second *Bet HaMedrash*, and to allocate *aliyot* to the members of the *Hevra* without charge.

G) Requires that election procedures be documented immediately during the election process, every year.

H) Only a person who has been a member for at least 6 years, and married for at least 6 years, can be a candidate for *Gabbai*.

I) According to prior amendments, the member who had personally not taken part in the work to be done at the cemetery, was required to pay 6 measures in the summer and 9 measures in the wintertime. Now, because of the deterioration of the material condition, the fee is reduces to three measures both for summertime and wintertime;

J) Security, taken by the *Gabbaim* in lieu of a burial fee, must be sold within 30 days. In the event that no sale is made under the previously documented terms, it is evaluated by a *Bet-Din*, and then sold [at the assessed value].

K) Because of the deterioration in the economic circumstances, the rights of the *Gabbaim* are limited, such that if they wish to take a fee in excess of 30 Gulden, they must consult with the Heads;

L) An old custom is re-affirmed, not to accept the Rabbi of the city as a member of the Hevra, and also to prohibit him from interfering with the affairs of the *Hevra*. The present amendments make an exception for the current Rabbi, R'

Nachman, who was a member of the *Hevra* before he became the Rabbi [of the city];

M) Obligates the departing *Gabbai* of the Month to give an accounting on the day he turns over his position to the following *Gabbai*, and to turn over funds to him forthwith, that have been accumulated in the treasury;

N) Limits the *Gabbaim* to outlays of no more than 100 Gulden a year for expenses involving festive repasts.

The amendments are signed by the Rabbi of Brisk, Rabbi Zvi-Hirsch and four other members.

Below the signatures to the amendments, there is an addendum by R' Nachman, indicating that he resigns his right to provide counsel, for which the amendments had provided for him by exception.

Afterwards, he writes that no other Rabbi after him should be accepted as a member of the Hevra.

## Year 5488 (1732)

### C

A) Seeing as the previous electoral system, by which every one of the members had the right to become selected as an Elector, did not work well, in ways that cannot be written down, we therefore decided that a candidate for Elector can only be a person that pays minimum annual dues of two Thalers. Even those, who have been community leaders, or a Gabbai or a Dayan, and have become impoverished , and cannot pay any dues – and would otherwise be qualified to serve as Electors in the selection of *Gabbaim*, or be selected as a *Gabbai* – cannot do so. All those members who cannot pay [the full] two Thalers, together select one spokesperson who represents them as an Elector-Candidate, whose name is put into the lottery together with the dues paying candidates of [greater] means;

C)[116] Institutes an oath for the Electors and also for the selected *Gabbaim* and Heads, that they will not overturn the amendments;

D) Established that only someone who pays an annual fee of 30 Gulden a year can become a Gabbai or a Head, apart from their usual obligation. Former *Gabbaim* can be re-elected, for a fee of only 20 Gulden, and then only, if they get four out of five votes of the Electors;

E) Anyone, who holds a position as a community leader, cannot be a *Gabbai* of the *Hevra* at the same time.

I) Heads and *Gabbaim* cannot continue in their position for more than three years running.

J) After two years of working with the *Hevra*, the *Gabbaim* can approve the acceptance of a candidate as a 'new member', after which he is to pay into the treasury the amount cited above, of four Thalers;

K) The newly accepted member does not have the right to be the first signatory on any document of the *Hevra*, and can only be the last one;

N) When a servant becomes ill, then the master of the house must pay for two weeks of support in the hospital (*Hekdesh*); only at that time, does the *Gabbai* have the right to admit the sick person to the hospital.

P) During the summertime, the *Gabbaim* are obligated to prepare jellies and conserves for the sick, which in the wintertime are sold to sick people of means, and for the poor – are given away without charge;

Q) If, in a given month, incomes should exceed expenses, 50 percent of the surplus is then applied to the outstanding deficit of the *Gabbai* of the prior month.

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[116] No reference is made to a section B). There are a number of such 'skips' in this section.

X) It is established that only the *Gabbaim* have the right to specify the inscription on a gravestone;

Y) It is decided to initiate a book, in which the locations of the burial site of the deceased is recorded by name.

By and large, in the remaining amendments, the prior amendments are repeated. In 5491, the obligation of the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra* to take counsel – with the community leaders, on demanding a larger sum for a burial fee, is eliminated. It is emphasized that now, when the position of 'Heads' was established in the *Hevra*, the *Gabbaim* no longer need to take counsel with the community, only with the Heads.

## Summary of the Protocols for the Selection of an Amendments-Commission
### In the Year 1729
### D

At the election meeting of 5489 (1729), it is decided that as soon as the Heads return from Warsaw, from the Hevra of R' Joseph Yozl (see Protocol 4. B.) , and R' Shmuel (seemingly, who traveled about community affairs), the *Gabbaim* are charges immediately to call a general meeting, in order to establish an Amendments-Commission, which is to improve the old amendments.

Only two years later, in 5491, did it become possible to implement the previously mentioned decision. Three men are selected, who constituted the totality of the Amendments-Commission.

## Amendments of the Years 5491 to 5500 (1731-1740)
### E

The first amendments of this group do not bring out any special changes in the management, or the work of the *Hevra*. A portion of previously passed and specifically improved [amendments] are repeated, such as paying out the prior sitting *Gabbaim* the entire shortfall out of a month that had a surplus on the side of income.

The highest amount of a burial fee is set at 60 gulden for a Hevra member, and 90 gulden for a non-member, and 160 gulden for someone who is really wealthy. The previously mentioned maximum amount is a restriction on the *Gabbaim* only in regard to local residents, who pay normal taxes to the local rosters, that is, all forms of taxes. For those who have not paid all manner of [local] taxes, or for someone who has died, but is not a local resident, as well as for the heirs, who are not residents of the city, no maximum sum is imposed as a constraint; the *Gabbaim* have the right to take what their own judgement suggest [is proper].

In the instance when the *Gabbaim* demand more than 60 gulden as a burial fee from a local taxpayer who is a member of the *Hevra*, or more than 90 gulden from a non-member, the heirs have the right to co-opt two members of the *Hevra* to the *Gabbaim* and Heads, who must also agree to the level of the burial fee. Those two, who are co-opted, must be from those members who at one time held some position in the *Hevra*.

The *Gabbaim* are charged with the responsibility of visiting the sick, to be active in supporting them, and in their presence, have the sick person make known a Last Will and Testament. If the sick person does not want to relay a Last Will and Testament, in the presence of the *Gabbaim*, the *Gabbaim*, must at minimum, know who are the people in front of whom the sick person will leave his Last Will and Testament.

## The Year 1825
### G

Year 1825. Seeing as an absence of order reigned in the *Hevra* for a number of years, and there were no elections, it was agreed to strengthen the prior amendments.

A) the amendment, which has been repeated many times, that those who occupy a position in the community, cannot simultaneously hold a position in the Hevra, in order not to admit the idea, that because the leaders of the community had been degraded by the authorities to be called *Dozors* (see the accompanying page), it also follows, that when the

*Hevra* Electors wish to admit [them] to the *Hevra*, that the prior amendment is once again in force, also in regards to the *Dozors*. And it also follows from this, that should the Electors wish to admit a new person as a *Gabbai*, they must take counsel with the community *Dozors* as in prior times, when these former people were called 'The Elders of the Community.'

B) The Electors do not have the right to hold up their conclusions for more than three days.

**H**

November 1831. It is now several months that our city has been under siege, and a number of *Hevra* members are dispersed to surrounding towns, and because of this, annual elections have not been held in the past Passover, therefore – now, when each and every one has returned to their proper place, an agreement is arrived at, to hold elections (the election-protocol was held on 4 Kislev), it is agreed to prohibit the *Shammashim* from taking money for burying the dead. A weekly stipend is set for the *Shammashim*, and all expenses that are connected to doing the right thing for the deceased, are channeled through the Hevra.

## Footnotes

Except for those used to clarify the translated text, the remaining footnotes are left for the interested reader to investigate in the original Yiddish.

Group II

# Election Protocols

## The First Recorded Election-Protocol of 1710[117]

(25 ז'י)

**A**

These are the Heads and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha* of the doers of good deeds that are in service currently in the Year, 5500 (1740)[118]

The Senior Heads, R' David son of the Rabbi *Gaon* of the community of Brisk, in Lita [sic: Lithuania], יצ"ו [119]
The Head, son of our Rabi & Teacher Yehoshua Briff
The Heads, all of the *Gabbaim*
The Head, Our Rabbi & Teacher Berish son of Eliezer/Elazar
The Head Our Rabbi & Teacher, Shimon Segal
The Head, Yozef son of the Rabbi and Saintly Grandfather
The Honorable Head, Avraham Zerakh, son of Eliezer/Elazar
In place of them all, according to the new amendment, Or Rabbi & Teacher Mendel son of Eliezer/Elazar all the above having been done in accordance with the rules and regulations, on Thursday, 24 Nisan, 5470 (1710).
Signed by David, son of the Rabbi Gaon of the Sacred Community of Brisk in Lita
and Signed by Yehoshua Heschel son of our Rabbi & Teacher Yehuda, of Blessed Memory from Brod
and Signed by Yehoshua son of my Master and Father R' Joseph Finsh

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117 There is a certain amount of ambiguity in the acronyms given below. In cases of doubt, a most plausible choice is given. In the event that the ambiguity lacks resolution, commentary is provided accordingly.

118 There seems to be an inconsistency of 30 years in the date that is in the title and the date in the text. A reasonable explanation might be, that this information was not formally documented in the *Pinkas* until 30 years after the fact.

119 This acronym is ambiguous. If it refers to the people in the sentence, then the acronym is *'Yisrael Tzaddik Ve'Yashar*,' meaning a righteous and straight Israelite. If it refers to the city of Brisk, then the acronym is '*Yiboneh Tzion Vi'Yrushalayim*,' expressing the hope for the reconstruction of Zion and Jerusalem. Either may be correct.

and Signed by Ary'[eh] Leib son of my Master and Father from Zalkovi
and Signed by ....

## Year 5488 (1728)

(28 ו'

**B**

These are the Heads and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra-Kadisha*, Charitable Doers of Good Deeds that were designated on the third day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover 5488, by the Electors.

The Heads

The Noble Rabbi, His Honor, Our Teacher David, son of the *Gaon*, Our Teacher and Rabbi Yehuda Leib, of Blessed Memory

His Honor, our Teacher and Rabbi Itzik son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Baruch Brin, of Blessed Memory (ceded his privilege to the Honorable scholar, the son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Aryeh Leib Kharat, This was in front of the entire *Hevra*).

The Gabbaim

The Leader, Son of the Rabbi, R' Shmuel Segal

The Leader Son of Our Teacher, Rabbi R' Zvi Hirsch, Sage R' Abraham.[120]

The Leader, Son of Our Teacher, Rabbi R'Yudel Son of Yitzhak/Yaakov/Yosef חרי"ם[121]

The Leader Son of Our Teacher, Rabbi R' Moshe Fuchs (This was done outside of the framework of the amendments. Therefore, according to a ruling, The Honorable Son of Rabbi R'Moshe son of Eliezer/Elazar Fuchs, was appointed from outside the city, as explained in the ruling).

And in place of everyone, in place of the Heads and in place of the *Gabbaim*, with all respect, what is owed to all of those who were appointed, as cited above, and should they not be in their place, then his place will be taken by the Head, Our Teacher and Rabbi Leib Briff, and they will be subject to a large fine should they transgress any of the things mentioned above (The Honorable Teacher and Rabbi Leib Briff was appointed in a manner outside of the amendments, and therefore this action has no force, as explained in the ruling).

All the honor and improvement of power that had been given to the The Honorable R'Shmuel Deputy to the *Kohen*, from prior years (1), to allocate to him the honor to deal with those exigencies pertaining to the cemetery on a month-to-month basis, now, we the electors at this time, allocate this honor to the Honorable, Rabbi and Teacher Menachem Mendel Braff, who will take his place.

As evidence of our approval, we have come here to affix our signatures on the fourth day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover 5488.

Signed Joshua Heschel of Brod

(In view of the fact that the election of this period referred to above, took place on *erev Yom Tov* after midday, and there was not enough time for the electors to consult the recorded amendments in the *Pinkas*, and to set everything on its proper foundation using the detailed contents of the amendments, firstly, they created two new *Gabbaim*, which had never been done before, and which is forbidden entirely, and only one new *Gabbai* can be created at any time, and they continued to violate the amendment, which prohibits them from appointing a *Gabbai* from outside the city, and thirdly, a person was appointed to a position who was not qualified to hold a position at this time, in view of the fact that he had not completed a full three years of his initial membership, which caused an upsurge [of protest] from the rank and file of the membership, and they were alert to this matter, and consequently, with everyone's agreement, seeing that it was expressly forbidden, entirely, to violate even in the smallest degree, any of the provisions of the amendments, and

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120 The Hebrew phrase here is '*Khakham Rabi Avraham*.' It is important to take note that the honorific title of '*Khakham*' (literally : Wise One) was employed by Sephardic Jews since early medieval times as a way of designating their community spiritual leader. The appearance of this, and similar honorifics using '*Khakham*,' is further testimony to the enduring character of the Sephardic legacy in Zamość.

121 The Hebrew is left here because of uncertainty regarding the possibility that this is either '*Khakham*' (a Sage) or *Khatan* (a son-in-law). Either is plausible in this context.

the entire group gave vocal assent that all actions of the electors that went counter to the amendment itself shall be made null and void. The *Pinkas* has been brought for safekeeping and remembrance on Monday, 25 Nisan 5488.)

## Election-Protocols of 5515 (1755)

(63 ו)

**C**

To good luck and blessing [here] are the appointed Heads of the Hevra-Kadisha of this year, 5515.
The Heads
The Rabbi R' Abraham HaKohen
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman Our Teacher and Rabbi Leib Khariv
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman, Rabbi R' Hirsch Son of the Rabbi Eliezer/Elazar
The Gabbaim, Leaders, the three Gabbaim given in the order they were determined by lots
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman, Rabbi R' Abram Sage, Rabbi Shammai Braff came out first
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman, Our Teacher and Rabbi to Israel, Zusman son of R' Briff came out second
The Honorable Distinguished Gentlemen Our Teacher and Rabbi, Yitzhak son of the Honorable Rabbi, and Bet-Din Senior of the Sacred Congregation of Tarnogrod, came out third
The Honorable, Our Teacher and Rabbi Moshe, son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Yitzhak Brook
To take all of their places, the Head, The Honorable Our Teacher and Rabbi R' Hillel son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Yitzhak son of Rabbi [no name implied]
The Gabbaim of the Bet HaMedrash
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman Our Teacher, Rabbi R' Yirmi Son-in-law of the late Teacher and Rabbi R' Neta בר"בק[122]
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman, The Sage, Rabbi R' Yudel חר"א [123]
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman Our Teacher and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch son of The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman Our Teacher and Rabbi Azriel Katz
The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman, Our Teacher, Yudel son of The Honorable Distinguished Gentleman Yudel
All of this was recorded on the day cited, and we have all come here to sign [accordingly].

*Addendum in Polish*[124]

This is to approve the election of Community authorities, Burial Society and Armor Makers Guild. Taking into account, that new people (without previous experience) were elected, I am ordering that in future no more than one person without previous experience to be elected and he has to pay property tax as do the others. Also, there are not to be elected people related up to the third degree both on father's and mother's side. The elections must follow the rules stated in the 16th paragraph of the Hebrew version, and 18th paragraph of the Polish version, of the Law laid down and signed by His Honor, the Governor of the Lublin Province in the castle of Zamość on April 8th, 1755.

A. Zdienicki

## Annulled Elections

(57 ו)

**D**

In view of the fact that in the elections of *Hol HaMoed* Passover of this year 5509 (1749), the electors went outside of the constraints and boundaries of the amendments etched on the board of the *Pinkas*,, there was an abrupt move from our leader, the acting officer in charge, who exercised his power and because of this, the election was nullified and the actions of the initial electors, and hereby today, to good fortune, a new election, today being Tuesday, 22 Tammuz 5509 (1759) [Year is erroneously reported as 1759. The Hebrew date cited was 1749. – JSB].

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122 The reference is not clear. It would appear to be a 'son of' suffix.

123 Either a '*khakham*,' or a '*khatan*.'

124 Translation into English is courtesy of Tomasz Panczyk.

(60 ו)

The election-protocol of 5719 (1759) ends with the following words:
Everything said above, was done and concluded in accordance with the rules and tradition in accordance with the new and old amendments, and with the concurrence of the electors, excepting that should it be found that any of them is required to complete paying his dues, then he must pay, and as an amendment, we have come here to affix our signatures.
The following addendum is found under this protocol:
*Poniewaz te Elekcya uczynili preciwko porzadku, wiec z Wladzy Jurisdykcyi Zamkowcy ta sie annihiluie. Datta zb. Apr. 1759*[125]

*A. Kochowsky*

(141 ו)

**E**

With the Help of the Almighty,
Because of our many sins, the condition of our city has been torn down, and we are under siege, therefore it has not been possible for the *Hevra-Kadisha* to have its elections on time, during *Hol HaMoed* Passover, in accordance with the amendments. However, we will complete this with the awareness of all the members of the *Hevra-Kadisha* who have remained here. We are to cast lots at this time to select two *Gabbaim*, and two heads, and a Treasurer until the Lord shall cause the current circumstances to end in the favor of our city, and all men will return to their places. In order that all the members of the *Hevra* not delay in assembling, during the month following the they in which they return, they shall have an election, and appointments in accordance with the amendments set out in this *Pinkas*. For the time being, from the lottery.

| *Gabbaim* | Heads | Treasurer |
|---|---|---|
| Rabbi M' Aharon Zelik Krein | R' Nehemiah Netel Kharash | R' Fishl Herr |
| Rabbi M' Zvi Hirsch Klorfeld New | R' Netta Kessel | |

Also, in view of our many sins, there were bad diseases in this period, and many people became sick in body. Therefore, it has been concluded with the awareness of all the members of the *Hevra-Kadisha* who are found here, to remove the *Shammes*, R' Anshel from his position. And we have received Shlomo son of the late Mordechai ז"ל, who will take his place, until the Lord will have mercy on us, and all the people of the *Hevra-Kadisha* who are now dispersed among the towns in our vicinity, return, or then they shall do according to their will.

All this has been done and concluded with the consent of all the members of the *Hevra* that are to be found here. 25 Nisan 5581, here in Zamość.[126]

**Other Footnotes**

Group III

## Members Accepted Out of the Normal Amendment Procedures

(36 ו)

**A**

Despite the fact that according to the previous amendment, as explained in the open *Pinkas* for all to see, that there is a total prohibition to admit more than one [new member] to the *Hevra* each year, there has come to hand a proactive

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125 Because this election has been done against the order (law), and having the power of jurisdiction I annul it. April 1759, A. Kochowski

126 Author's Footnote: Protocol C. was written in the year 1831. It sets down concretely, that because of the siege of the city (in relation to the battles that took place near Zamość during the Russo-Polish War of 1830-1831) the normal *Hol HaMoed* Passover elections could not take place at the annual meeting. They agree that temporarily, through a lottery, to select 2 *Gabbaim*, 2 Heads and 1 Treasurer. Because of the plagues that hold sway (referring to the cholera epidemic, which at that time reigned throughout Europe), those of the remaining members who were left in the city, decided to remove the *Shammes*, R' Anshel from his post (as a boon).

mitzvah created by the times, and the hour demanded it, with the instance before us that we require the purchase of accessories that run into hundreds – and we have gathered to us all the members of the *Hevra*, and we have admitted a number of people to the *Hevra*. And every one of them advanced their initiation fees – and because of this we have taken upon ourselves a total prohibition against admitting any new people to the Hevra – and in connection with the constraint that our forefathers set out for us, not to sell to any person a burial plot while he was still alive. Because of the intensity of the request that he made, the venerable and feeble M' Shmuel Briti, to sell him a burial plot – we could not turn him away empty-handed. – And he paid two *Adumim* to take possession of a burial plot as previously mentions. — Entered into the Pinkas on Tuesday, The fourth day of Hol HaMoed Passover 5488 (1728).

(10 ו)

**B**

The Honorable Teacher and Rabbi, Shemaya asked of us in the *Hevra Kadisha* and Charitable Works, to admit his son, as Mr. Judah Leib to the previously mention Hevra, even though it is against the amendment that was anticipated by the Honorable Rabbi, our Teacher Itzik Brook, with all that the previously mention young boy came out of prison, as was known to all the membership, and was trained in 'magic,' and accordingly we accepted him as a new member as a young boy – and he had advanced his initiation fee in accordance with the amendment.
Today is Monday, The Last Day of Passover (*Akharon*), 5506 (1746).

Shmarya Shmaya

(17 ו)

**C**

Everyone is cherished, and everyone is clear regarding the sacred duty of the new member.
Seeing as new young members are being admitted into the Hevra, we have missed out on a great mitzvah, and for this purpose, we have put in greater obligation into the amendment, that from this day forward, that the amendment remains firmly anchored in place, that no added members will be admitted, except according to the amendment, and the admission of favored children.
— (there follow 13 names of the children of prominent people) ---
As witnesses, we have come to affix our signatures. Today ----- the Year 5544.

Group IV

## Various Conditions for Accepting Members

(28 ו)

**A**

Our cherished and respected Rabbi, R' Dov Ber son of Our Teacher and Rabbi Zvi Hirsch, the physician, has come before us several times, knocking at our door, and the officers and *Gabbaim* in concert with the honored officers who are Heads of the *Hevra Kadisha*, in reception of his words, that it was his will to serve for free, without any compensation at all, in connection with any calamity, may it not arise, that in the event there shall be any sick man, or sick woman who do not have the means to pay for a physician, and if he wishes to attend, doing all that is required, with God's help, free of charge, certainly then, his intent is to do this in the Name of Heaven, in that he wants no compensation, and no appointment in the world within the *Hevra Kadisha*, and therefore, in this connection we have nodded in assent, and we have eased the amendment that is recorded in our *Pinkas*, and we have accepted the Honorable R' Dov Ber, previously mentioned, to be one of the members of the *Hevra Kadisha*, with all privileges except, in accordance with his own word, not to participate in any election or accept any position within our *Hevra*, and in consideration of the fact that his intentions are in the Name of Heaven, we have come here to affix our signatures on Thursday, 5 Kislev 5488.

(28 ו)

**B**

The Honorable and exalted Head, prominent broker, Our Rabbi and Teacher Yudel son of the late Honorable Rabbi and Our Teacher Joseph Yudel came before us, the selected committee of the amendments – and asked for his young son to be admitted as Joseph Yudel into the *Hevra Kadisha*, before the institution of the new amendments on condition that it be done prior to the implementation of the constraint in connection with the acceptance of children into the Hevra, and he advanced the initiation fee in a handsome amount. –
Today is Monday, 5 Iyyar 5500.

## A Short Introduction from the Protocols

### III

### A

Year 1718. The protocol firmly establishes the fact that the amendment not to admit more than one member a year has not been observed, but rather that special members were admitted for a fee of several hundred gulden, and because of this the *Gabbaim*, with the agreement of several respected members of the *Hevra*, decided to take several new members, and each paid a specific amount in advance.

The protocol stresses, that not having looked at the exception thus made – that the old amendment remains in full force. It says further, that not looking at the prior decision, grave sites would not be sold to a living person – an exception was being made for R' Shmuel who pays two Red Gulden.

### B

Year 1746. An exception is made for the child, who was released from prison, to admit him into the *Hevra*, out of the normal process, because his father had previously paid the required fee.

### C

Year 1784. The protocol firmly establishes, that since it was necessary to provide funds for an important matter, the *Hevra* decided to admit a whole row of children from wealthy families.
The old amendment about not admitting more than one member per year – remains in force.

## A Short Introduction from the Protocols

### IV

### A

Year 1728. Under the direction of Dov Ber the physician, who knocks at the doors of the *Gabbaim*, and proposes to serve the poor who are sick, at no charge, it is decided to relax the amendments in his case, and to accept him as a member of the *Hevra*. However, it is discussed with him, that he will keep his word, and not seek voting privileges, and also no position in the *Hevra*.

### B

Year 1740. The magnate, R' Yudel approached those who were called upon to devise new amendments for the Hevra, and put a demand in front of them, to accept his young son in the *Hevra*, after new amendments were approved. But, from the outset, he speaks out that his request is that a specific limitation should be established regarding the matter of accepting children in the *Hevra*. It is further said that he had, in advance, paid in the initiation fee, which was a sizeable sum.

### Group V

## Recording of Children

Text

### A

My hand is heavy on my sighs regarding the misfortune of sons that I was not fortunate to raise, and I called in God's name, and it was for this boy that I prayed, my only son, Eliezer, who cleaves to my side, and may this little Eliezer become great, like R' Eliezer, the great Torah sage, a doer of good deeds, and even while he is yet young of age and delicate in years, and has not yet attained the age of education, I admit him to the mitzvah of this Hevra Kadisha, and of him may this event cause it to be said that 'fortunate is the man who fears God and in his Mitzvot, let him desire God's teachings and Mitzvot for all of his days, and may that be for a long life, good years full of comfort. And his father affixes his signature. Today is the fourth day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover, 5460 (1700).

Eliezer son of R' Shmuel Segal

### B

The distinguished wife of the exalted leader Our leader, R' Yehoshua Heschel ben Yerukham, in her womanly wisdom, had built a place for them in the cemetery, and it occurred to the two of them to do well before the Lord, and wish to

admit their two sons, the first is the young, clever and important boy, Mr. Shlomo, and the second, Asher Adin Mottel Berisa, may they both grow to embrace God's teachings, mitzvot and good deeds, Yerukham was called, may he live, that both shall be called members of the *Hevra Kadisha*, for the length of their days, for years to come, and in consideration for this, they have committed themselves to build a portal gate at the entrance to the cemetery at their own expense, and the status of all of their sons from the time that they become married will be as initiate members for a period of three years, and after that they can participate in voting, and all things that pertain to all members of the *Hevra*, and from this day forward, they are inscribed and sealed into the Hevra, just like any other individual who buys a membership in this *Hevra,* and this is a general rule, and all of its details, and this is said before God, and I affix my signature before God.

Shlomo son of Our Leader, R' Yehoshua Heschel

## A Short Introduction from the Texts

**V**

**A**

Year 1704. A father bemoans the fact that his children are dying. Because of this, he decides to enroll his only child, Eliezer, in the *Hevra.*

**B**

Year 1705. At the proposal of the wife, with the consent of the husband, two children are enrolled, one of which is still in the cradle. The parents assume the obligation of building a vestibule at the cemetery.

## Group VI
## Expelled and Fined Members

Text (p. 6)

**A**

Today is Wednesday, 7 Iyyar 5500 (1740), and the Honorable Zvi Hirsch, mentioned above, requested of us that we return the previously mentioned Torah Scroll to him, that he had donated on behalf of his son, in view of the fact that his means had declined, and he has no means of sustenance. And therefore, we complied with his wishes, and we turned over the Torah Scroll to him, and his son was expelled from the *Hevra*, and he no longer has any privileges in the *Hevra*, and should he subsequently desire to rejoin the Hevra, his position will be the same as that of any other new applicant that wants to join the *Hevra*, and such is the word of the officers, heads and *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha.*

Signature of Moshe Yehuda son of the Honorable David

(P. 42)

**B**

I, the undersigned, due to the extenuating circumstances of my income, whereby I cannot even find the money for household expenses, and having reviewed every angle, and having found no solution to the issue of supporting my household, and having requested of the honorable appointees of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and the *Gabbaim*, to return to me my initiation fees, that I had given in honor of the Hevra, as previously mentioned, and to substitute any important personage in my place, and to publicly take my place in the *Hevra*, and my signature will be evidence among the list of signatories of the members of the Hevra, and this signature will be null and void, as if I had never placed it on the list ever before. And should any writing be found with my signature, among the signatures of the appointed leadership, it shall be considered null and void, as a shattered potsherd, and it shall not serve to demand any favor whatsoever on my behalf, because the *Hevra Kadisha* has already turned over the complete amount of money, as attested by my signature, and I have already received my payout of that money. And also, they have the right to receive whatever person that will be suitable in their view, and adequate to be nominated, and I have herewith come to affix my signature. In the presence of all the appointed leaders of the Hevra Kadisha, and Society of Good Deeds, of my own free will, without coercion, and only with total agreement, today is the First Day of *Hol HaMoed* Pesach 5500 (1743).[127]

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[127] There is likely a misprint in the English date, since this appears to be 1740.

(P. 27)

**C**

If the heavens above are to be plumbed, as would the foundations of the earth below, there has not been seen or heard, and there is no recollection, among the ancients or the contemporaries, about the likes of a bad deed and sin that has been committed — — —

The portion of *Vayera*, 5476 (1716) – – It is not enough that he didn't come to show respect for the *Gabbaim* – – – And was there anyone more exalted than our Patriarch Abraham, who abased himself before a common person – – – and he didn't so, paying no regard to come to the *Gabbaim* because of this, it was decided on Shabbat, and on Sunday, when the *Gabbaim* saw that he had still not come to pay respect, and they reviewed their options, and sent their *Shammes* to call him and tell him that he should come to them, and he responded with shameful things, which it is not given us to record in writing, and filled his mouth with all manner of strife about the deceased, and in the stubbornness of his heart, as evidenced in this language, even if this lay for a full week, or days and years, and didn't want to say it, and yet he allowed his mouth to be entrapped into uttering this filth – – – and it was for this reason that the Gabbaim gathered the entire membership of the *Hevra Kadisha* to take note and to reveal this breach of conduct – – – and the first thing that came as an utterance from their mouths, was to erase his name from the page of the *Pinkas*, and he shall be expelled from the *Hevra Kadisha* forever, and even after his death, he should pay according to his means – – – measure for measure – – –

Today is Tuesday, 22 Heshvan 5476 (1716).

Immediately following this protocol, the following addendum appears:

As it evolved, the ruling described above was completely nullified, in its entirety, and with a sincere heart from the Honorable Officers, *Gabbaim*, and Heads – – – from this day forward, there shall not be heard any nastiness or shameful remarks in connection with this matter – – – because of the huge fine that was paid to the *Hevra*.

**D**

On the same page, a subsequent protocol appears from the year 5472 about a person – – – who shot off his mouth while being out of line – – – against the dignity of the appointed officers of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and it is decided to record his ugliness in the Pinkas – – until such time as he appears before the honorable officers to appease them, and if he does not come to so appease them, – – – the honorable appointed officials of the *Hevra Kadisha* are to gather to themselves the honorable officers and heads of the community, and judge him – – – –

Today is 20 Kislev, 5472 (1712).

After this protocol, there is an addendum:

– – – And the officers and Gabbaim forgave him that which he did, and he gave a large gift.

## Introduction of the Protocols

**VI**

**A**

Year 1740. R' Zvi requests that the *Hevra* return the Torah Scroll, which he donated at the time his son was accepted as a member. He gives the motivation for his request by saying that he has become impoverished, and had no means of sustenance. The *Hevra* decides to be responsive to his request, however at the same time to expel his child from the *Hevra*.

**B**

Year 1743. The undersigned firmly avers, that he has done everything in order to find means by which to support his family, but he now has no other alternative. The *Hevra* accommodated his request to return his initiation fee, which he had paid in advance to the *Hevra*. But, simultaneously, he resigned from the membership, and he writes below that nobody forced him to resign.

**C**

Year 1716. The protocol begins by firmly setting down that such an occurrence had up until that time never been heard of. It can be seen from that introduction, that the matter concerns a specific person, did not present himself to the

*Gabbaim* to undertake the burial of a deceased person. To the messenger from the *Hevra* he says that the corpse can even rot and start to stink – he will not come to the *Gabbaim*.

At a meeting of the *Hevra Kadisha*, a decision is taken by the *Gabbaim*, to expel this resistor from the *Hevra,* and to erase his name from the *Pinkas*. The additional inscription recalls that judgement, and informs us that the *Hevra* levied a fine against that individual, which he will have to pay, in proportion to the act that he committed.

**D**

The Gabbaim decide in the year 1812 to fine a surly member, who sought to oppose the leadership of the *Hevra* – unless he apologizes to them. The addenda say that the Gabbaim forgave him and he donated an appropriate gift.

## Monies and Revenues of the *Hevra*

Text (p. 33)

**A**

For purposes of remembrance, we have recorded that today is Sunday, 25 Iyyar 5481 (1721), we have arrived at an understanding with the exalted officer, head and outstanding Torah scholar, Our Teacher, R' Yitzhak, son of Our Teacher, R' Abraham Afta, respected above all others, at the time of the interment of his son-in-law, the outstanding Rabbi, Out Teacher and Rabbi, Chaim, son of Our Teacher Ovadiah a *Tzaddik* of Blessed Memory, for the amount of ten red [gulden], and there was an unusual condition that he be free of all other expenses, even in regards to the setting of a gravestone, and it was in this matter that our distinguished personage, as identified above, was amenable that the *Hevra Kadisha* shall not expend from these burial funds previously mentioned for any reason other than for the purchase of lands that becomes available for sale due to [financial] distress, in order that they be a memorial to his previously mentioned son-in-law, and therefore, under oath and by swearing, we accepted that we would not touch these funds, previously mentioned, for anything except land, as previously mentioned, and even if other heads and *Gabbaim* succeed us, this prohibition is total, against changing the use of these funds for any other purpose, and because of this we were explicitly clear in explaining before about this land. Even if a time comes that for each and every *Gabbai*, if in the course of discharging his duty, that expenses exceed income, despite that, they will retain this indebtedness, until another source of income will be developed, and it is therefore forbidden to touch even one cent of this, and we have come here to bear witness to this fact.

David son of the Great Rabbi and Gaon

(P. 71)

**B**

On this day, the Honorable R' Duber[128] son of the late R' David, of blessed memory, called R' Yeklish by everyone, came before the appointed officers of the *Hevra Kadisha* and Doers of Good Deeds, and this is the year 5555 (1795), and donated a third of the house that is well-known by its characteristics and appearance, from the right side, being an entrance to the unkosher abattoir of the gentiles, and on the second side, the house of Our Teacher R' David Lunder *HaKohen*. [This house] had come to him by inheritance from his late brother, The Honorable R' Aryeh Leib, a Tzaddik of Blessed Memory, in view of the fact that he [the deceased] had no issue of his own, and he has so donated, a gift in toto, in all high-minded manner, in accordance with the maxim of our ancient sages, a third [value] of this house, for its entire length and breadth, from its border on the ground to the heavens above, to the *Hevra Kadisha* and *Gemilut Hasadim* Society, to be found here in our community, on the basis that he will be held free from paying any burial fees for his brother, the Honorable Aryeh Leib, of blessed memory, as previously mentioned, and also for his little son that remains after him, except for whatever he had already paid to the *Hevra Gemilut Hasadim*, having at hand a total of one hundred and twenty six Polish Gulden, which he will have to disburse in connection with the wedding contract of the wife of his brother, the Honorable Aryeh Leib, of Blessed Memory, as previously mentioned, and it was expressly discussed completely at the table, that he will have a burial place after he passes away, he should live to one hundred years, in respect of him, without any further monetary requirement, with the understanding that the burial expenses and the setting of a gravestone shall fall on the appointed officials of the *Gemilut Hasadim* who will be serving at that time,

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128 The ensuing evidence suggest this may likely be an elision of the name Dov Ber.

and for all the life of the Honorable R' Duber, previously mentioned, the *Hevra Kadisha* and *Gemilut Hasadim* Society will derive no material benefit from the one third interest in the previously mentioned house, making no use whatsoever of it, and it is not necessary to add, taking possession of it, or to derive any rental income from the one third of the house, previously mentioned, and placed against this, all repairs to the house, and repurchase, all of this falls upon the Honorable R' Duber, previously mentioned, for his entire life. Only after his death, until one hundred years, then, a final decision will be taken, and a one third interest in the previously mentioned house will be activated.... to the Gemilut Hasadim, and the wife of Out Teacher, R' Duber, previously mentioned, has no power to raise the dowry money for her marriage contract that is due to her from her husband, the previously mentioned R' Duber, from that one third portion of the previously mentioned house, because her husband has set that aside for her from other sources, [the funds] to satisfy the dowry requirements of her marriage contract.

All that has been previously said was accepted by the Honorable R' Duber, previously mentioned, from his own good will, and the appointed officials also accepted for themselves, and their successors, to fulfil everything that has been previously said above, and that it is to be a watch post for generations to come, and the Honorable R' Duber has personally come to sign, along with the distinguished leadership of the appointed officials, who also came to sign this Pinkas, in order that this stand for many days to come, and it is so done and concluded, on Wednesday, 20 Av 5555.

The Junior, Dov Ber Gentzler

It will take effect, as previously mentioned, that in view of the fact that R' Duber does not have the money to provide for the dowry of his father-in-law, and the custom of the leadership of the *Hevra Kadisha* was to look the other way with favor, and all helpful means will be in place, as previously mentioned, even in the matter of the marriage contract of the wife of R' Dov, previously mentioned, and seeing that ti was done according to the rules, the decision on the one third of the house was decided on without alteration, at the Bet Din, 17 Wednesday, *Rosh Chodesh* Heshvan to the just of heart.

The Junior, Joseph son of the *Gaon*, Bet Din Senior

Today is the day that the stand was taken as described below, and that everything outlined above has been completely cancelled, and it remains in this respect, in total force..... the house that belongs to R' Duber and his wife .... is entirely subordinated to the *Hevra Kadisha* and *Gemilut Hasadim* and *Bikkur Kholim*, for the sum of one hundred gold pieces. And any time that this amount is not paid, the couple is obligated to give interest to the treasury of the *Hevra Kadisha* in the amount of five gold pieces annually...

(P. 174)

**C**

Done at the meeting of the appointed officers before the election of 5558 (1798)

Pursuant to the observation made by ourselves, the *Gabbaim*, that the benefits accruing from the business belonging to the *Hevra* that was left to us by the late Rabbi R' Mendel Ber and his spouse, and seeing that there is no income being derived from this for a number of years. Therefore, we have agreed to sell it, and apply the monies from the sale to some sacred purpose. That it should be a remembrance of generations forever — and from these monies, we had a new [Torah] crown made, which is the property of the *Hevra*, as previously mentioned. Wednesday, 5611 (1851).[129]

(P. 86)

**D**

On the day that is transcribed, all the members of the local *Hevra Kadisha* gathered, and we let it be known that there was no issue surviving the deceased woman, Genendel Sapir to be an heir of this previously mentioned woman. Therefore, in accordance with the force of the amendment that is explained in the Pinkas, we took the two (הזנו"ם),[130] that were left behind by her, one in the house of Mr. Novinsky, and the second in the house of Mr. Sardetzky who are well-known for their distress, as explained in the *Pinkas*, and that it was known that they would belong from this day forward to the local *Hevra Kadisha*, with no change whatsoever in the world, and no stranger may enter withing the

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129 The difference of some fifty years in these two dates is not made clear.

130 The author expresses his own ignorance of the abbreviation given here. The context suggests something of value that may have been used to decorate a house.

boundaries, with all the power of Honorable individual who explained this, on Friday of Matoss, Rosh Chodesh Av 5617 (1557), here in Zamość.

## Introduction to the Protocols

VII

**A**

Year 1721. Yitzhak of Apt pays ten red gulden as a burial fee for his father-in-law, with the condition that this money will be directed towards the purchase of land to enlarge the cemetery. The *Hevra* agrees that the *Gabbaim* have no right to access these funds in order to recover their outstanding expenses from this money.

**B**

Year 1825. R' Yeklish gives away one third of the house, which came to him by way of an inheritance from his brother R' Leib – as burial money for his brother Reb Leib and his child. The Hevra gives R' Yeklish 126 gulden, for him to pay out the marriage contract of the widow of his brother. This agreement is also confirmed through the Rabbi of the city, as a sitting party. (However, it appears that this R' Yeklish did not give away this part of the house in good faith, as it is emphasized in the text), because in three years' time the agreement is cancelled, and R' Yeklish gets this part of the house back again, and obligates himself to pay the Hevra 100 Gulden as burial fees for his deceased brother. Until he pays that 100 Gulden, he has to pay interest to the Hevra Kadisha treasury, in the amount of 5 Gulden a Year.

**C**

Year 1851. The business that was acquired from the deceased R' Mendel-Ber and his wife produces no income. The Hevra decides to sell it, and to use the money to have a Torah crown made, as a memorial to the deceased.

**D**

Year 1857. The Hevra decides at a meeting, to confiscate the unclaimed property of the deceased childless woman Genendel Sapir, on the strength of a prior amendment (we have not been able to find any such amendment concerning the property of deceased people who were childless and without heirs).

Group VIII

## Help and Loans from the *Hevra Kadisha* to the Community

Texts (p. 33)

**A**

We have made note of this as a remembrance on this date, being Monday *Rosh Chodesh* Sivan 5487 (1727), we voluntarily gave from the charity of our hearts, seeing as we are obligated as the *Hevra Kadisha*, to donate and have the *mikva* repaired from the monies of the heirs of the widow of the preaching Rabbi, זצ"ל, in the amount of ninety gold pieces. And it is forbidden to us to change this, because we have accepted under oath not to touch these funds, previously mentioned for anything, and those funds previously mentioned, were given into our hands by the Rabbi, our Teacher, R' David son of the Rabbi, that should always be available at any time that there should arise an immediate financial need. And those occupied with this mitzvah to repair the *mikva* will give a promissory note to the Rabbi, Our Teacher R' David, previously mentioned.

As witnesses, we have all come here to sign on the day referenced above

(P. 35)

**B**

We say to the doers of good, may the strength and energy of the members of the Hevra Kadisha continue.
In our congregation, to show respect for the Torah, so that there be a crown upon it, where up to this point, the diadem that had been in the Bet HaMedrash of our congregation, where in the old days when times were good, and provided for a number of such crowns, and in the duress of these times, where we have become severely impoverished, strangers have come and desecrated them, and one of the crowns from among the crowns in our congregation came into alien hands in a sale from hand to hand. And the means of the community were impaired, and they could not find the means to redeem it – – – until the time that the Lord aroused the philanthropic hearts of the *Hevra Kadisha* – – – and they found the means to buy this crown for the Bet HaMedrash of our community – – – the condition goes on to say further, which crown should be the first one used every Sabbath, and the monies of the mitzvah for the Crown for the Torah

shall always be sold in the synagogue by the Shammes who sells the matzo, and the buyer will take a half, and the other half will be turned over to the Esteemed Rabbi, Our Teacher David, who has been selected at this time by the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha* and the Heads, to be the Treasurer for these funds, that are allocated for the maintenance and repair of the synagogue of our congregation – – – and the congregation does not have the power – – – to control this crown, to either put it up for security, or sell it, God forbid – – –

Is this not according to the words of the officers and heads of the sacred community of Zamość, 21 Adar 5488 (1728)

Signed by Moshe Yehuda Zvi, ben Joseph

We also express and give force, with great strength and might, and with fortitude, and decree with the force of excommunication, obloquy and imprecation, and curse any such person who might think to do something and seize these sacred ornaments that belong to the *Hevra*, among them the previously mentioned Torah crown, either for purposes of using it as security or selling them, God forbid. Such a person shall be punished severely in the most extreme manner, bitterly, and be fined, and no excommunication shall be lifted, regardless of who this person shall be, either from within, or outside the Hevra, and his transgression is not to be erased, but shall be remembered against him, for as long as he stands, both him, his sons, and the sons of his sons, and there will be no just person to say that such a person is from the Hevra, that his name be erased from the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra*, and when he dies, the members of the *Hevra* will not deal with him, and it is also agreed by all of us, that all of the ornaments of the Hevra will be placed under the hand and the purview of the Esteemed Rabbi David, son of Rabbi, and this is entered in the Pinkas to be remembered, on the fourth day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover 5488.

(P. 50)

**C**

We record here, for generations to come after us, in order that they know R' Yitzhak of Jozefów, in passing (– –) and paid in the sum of monies for his burial for a great need, or to building of a synagogue which was in need of repair. And it appears, and at the time that (– –) to provide support for the community treasury, and to quiet the outcry of the burden of making donations, and in order to lighten the burden of the poor among our people (– –) and therefore with the agreement of the appointed officers, we have given the monied previously mentioned in the amount of eight hundred Polish gold pieces, from those monies. And in consideration for this (– –) the community [sic: pledged] the income from the winter house that is between the bath house and the abattoir (– – – – )

And all this has been done by seven of the good men of the city, and the appointed leaders of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and to this end, we have come to affix our signatures Iyyar, 5542 (1782).

**D**

We record for purposes of remembering that we have received below, the signature from the local *Hevra Kadisha Gemilut Hasadim*, the amount of ten red gulden, Rendlich Holland, for a very important purpose, and we, the undersigned take responsibility, to repay this previously mentioned amount, when the *Hevra Kadisha* requires it for a specified need. [For] the local cemetery, from the community treasury, without complaint, or any remarks in the world, and it is explicitly stated that we have pledged for this, all the local sacred ornaments to cover this obligation. All that is previously mentioned, we have come to bear witness, and affix our signatures, on Sunday, 2 Iyyar 5550 (1790).

Signed Yekhiel son-in-law of R' Mendel Segal HaKohen, The Junior Yehoshua Harenstein, The Junior, Hirsch Kahanna.

And this is Thursday, 26 Iyyar, the officers and community disbursed ten red gulden as previously mentioned, for a very important purpose, and from this point forward, they have no complaints.

Signed by the appointed officers of the *Hevra Kadisha*

**E**

Today we have become aware of a community need, and we have seen something requiring great correction, that the oven in the bath house has collapsed on the foundation – – – and there is no money available with the officers and the esteemed Gabbaim of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and we have gathered, the appointed officers of the *Hevra Kadisha*, with the honorable officers and heads of the community and the leaders of the community, and we have come to an agreement to lend the total sum of seventy five Polish gold pieces, in the hands of our esteemed leader – – – – that remains as

having been left by the late lady – – –, in accordance with the remaining property of the late R' M[?].[131] six per hundred per year, and we have obligated those who will come after us that if at any time there will be a need to repair the sacred synagogue, and the women's gallery, the general community is responsible to pay the principal and interest either from the community treasury, or the account of the appointed officers of the local *Gemilut Hasadim* – –

Today is Tuesday, 5 Av of this year, 5555 (1795) here in Zamość

## A Short Introduction to the Protocols

VIII

**A**

Year 1727. The *Hevra* obligates itself to provide funds for the repair of the *mikva* in the amount of 90 gulden from the funds they received from the heirs of the widow...

**B**

Year 1728. Because the community has become impoverished, and had to sell or pledge a Torah crown (it seems that one such crown had fallen into non-Jewish hands), – the *Hevra Kadisha* decides to buy it back. At the same time, the Hevra puts into excommunication anyone who would move to sell or pledge anything from the sacred ornaments that belong to the *Hevra*.

**C**

Year 1782. The Hevra assists the community treasury with 800 Polish gulden – from the funds that the *Hevra* took as burial fees from Yitzhak of Jozefów who was traveling through, in order to lighten the burden on poor taxpayers, on whom the community had levied heavy taxes and as a result elicited a strong protest against them. For this assistance, the community obligates itself to pay the *Hevra* the income from a house.

**D**

Year 1790. The community borrows 10 Holland Rendlich from the *Hevra*, and pledges sacred ornaments to the *Hevra*. The community assumes the obligation of paying the debt when the Hevra will repair the entranceway to the cemetery. – The community paid back the debt several weeks later.

**E**

Year 1795. It was necessary to effect repairs at the *mikva*. However, the *Hevra Kadisha* did not have available funds for this. After a collective counseling of the community and the leaders of the *Hevra*, it was decided to borrow money for this repair from the funds left by a deceased woman that was left to effect repairs of the synagogue. The *Hevra* and the community assume the obligation to pay the debt with interest.

Group IX

## Protocols Regarding the Established Hevra of "Visitors"

Texts (p. 111)

**A**

An agreement was reached by all the members of the *Hevra* to create a standing amendment, that from this day forward, as recorded below, and the *Hevra* of Visitors and *Gemilut Hasadim* is prohibited from taking more from any deceased person, God preserve us, than six Polish gulden.

– However, the discretion is in the hands of the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha* and *Gemilut Hasadim* to agree with the membership of the *Hevra* to take up to thirty gold pieces, but no more – even if there is an agreement between the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha* and all the members of the *Hevra Kadisha*, to support this amendment, and the *Gabbaim* have come to sign the *Pinkas* – in Zamość, fourth day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover 5607 (1847).

**B**

On today, as indicated below, at a gathering of the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*, with the agreement of the Rabbi of the city, the *Bet-Din* senior, and the concurrence of the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*, it was agreed with everyone

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131 Author's footnote: the payment of interest for the use of money, which has been designated for appropriate purposes, was an accepted fact in those times, when taking a percentage was very normal practice among Jewish creditors (*Yoreh Deyah*, sign 160, סי"ח יהו'), see that reference, "Havat Da'at."

that the local Hevra of Visitors and Pallbearers, of our community, they have permission to form a community to pray in a *shtibl*....in order that the members of this group shall all be together and have cognizance of the affairs of the Hevra, for the good of the people of our city, and the *Hevra* of Visitors assumed the burden of these amendments.

A) The membership of the *Hevra* of Visitors are required annually, each year, to make a donation of fifteen rubles to the Great Synagogue of our community.
B) (Regarding the provision of candles for the Bet HaMedrash).
C) The previously mentioned Hevra is responsible to provide one hundred overnight watches at the local hospital during the year ... without any compensation....this is apart from any such overnight visitations that is requires of every person in the city as part of his responsibility.
D) They are not allowed to take any more than ten percent of what the *Hevra Kadisha* is supposed to receive....
For example if the *Hevra Kadisha* is to receive one hundred gold pieces, they may not have more than ten gold pieces...
E) They may not bring in a cantor here from another place.
F) Every member of the *Hevra* of Visitors is required to go and spend the night, in accordance with the written instructions that are sent to him by the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra* of Visitors, and in the instance that he is unable to do this himself, he is obligated to pay one gold piece for one overnight watch....
G) On *Rosh Chodesh*, Yom Kippur and on Festival Holidays, if the members of the *Hevra Kadisha* have need to gather whether in public in the *shtibl*, or to gather in order to clarify matters pertaining to the city, whether on a weekday, or on the Sabbath, the Hevra of Visitors are required to attend to meeting at the *shtibl*....
All these amendments were done with the cognizance of the local Rabbi of the City, of our community, with the concurrence of the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and the agreement of the members of the *Hevra* of Visitors...
To witness this, the *Gabbaim* have come here, the mediators from the *Hevra* of the Visitors, and the members of the *Hevra* of Visitors, to fulfil all the amendments recorded above.

Published on Wednesday, 22 Shevat 5626 (1866)
Signatures: Five from the Hevra Kadisha Gabbaim
and Twenty from the Hevra of Visitors

**C**

With the concurrence of the Rabbi *Gaon*, may he live for long days, the local *Bet-Din* Senior, and with the concurrence of the Heads of the group and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*, we the undersigned, affirm yet again the amendments that are explained above. That it is forbidden for the members of the local *Hevra* of Visitors and *Gemilut Hasadim* to receive from any decedent, God protect us, a sum greater than ten percent of what the *Hevra Kadisha* will take. And it is completely prohibited for them to take any monies for themselves, but only can be taken by the officers and the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*. And when they receive the money, they will then give the *Hevra* of the Visitors their share.

As witnesses, we have signed our names, Zamość, fourth day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover, 5628 (1868).
Signatures:

## A Short Synopsis of the Protocols

IX

The First Protocol

1. Written in 1847, limits the rights of the newly-established *Hevra* of 'Visitors,' to not taking more than six gulden for their work in connection with a deceased person. The *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra-Kadisha* have the right to permit them to take up to thirty gulden.
In the year 1866, a fresh agreement is created between the *Hevra Kadisha* and the *Hevra* of 'Visitors' under the oversight of the Rabbi of the city. Various financial obligations are levied against the *Hevra* of the 'Visitors,' such as candles for the *Bet HaMedrash*, an annual payment of 15 rubles. In this process, their rights are limited to take no more than 10 percent for the burial of the deceased, of the sum taken by the *Hevra Kadisha*. Two years later, the right of the *Hevra* of 'Visitors' to take that 10 percent for a deceased person is taken away, and they must obtain that sum through the *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Kadisha*.

*(Author's added Footnotes)*

Group X

# Accounting Protocols and Donor Lists

Texts (p. 90-93)

This was the day that we hoped for, which the repairers of the House of God began to make whole that which had been damaged from many days of warring... the mediators clarified....the Honorable R' Shmuel our Teacher, son of the late R' Meir ז"ל, our Teacher, and the Esteemed Sage, the Grandee Our Teacher R' Tevel, together with the renown sage, Our Teacher, R' Yitzhak the Bet-Din Senior of Dubenki, in whose hands the work will be prepared... and you should not think that they are doing this work on faith, but once it was complete... the activists previously mentioned clarified the fact, embroidering it on a cloth, and wrote with a sharp pen, all of the donations, expenses to all the volunteers called out by name, and they shall live, because this precious donation came from the treasury of the *Hevra Kadisha* and *Gemilut Hasadim*, and to this effect, we have inscribed this accounting into the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra.*

And the work will begin on *Rosh Chodesh* Tammuz 5543 (1783), and the work is to be completed...on *Rosh Chodesh* Kislev 5544 (1784).

Monies left behind, by the Honorable Sage, the late Grandee, Our Teacher, R' Yitzhak from the sacred community of Jozefów, who passed away here, and the appointed officials of the *Hevra Kadisha* have allocated, is a sum of one thousand ten gold Polish gulden.

Burial funds from the Honorable late Wolf Marsha (Morsha?), which has been under the hand of the Sage, and Grandee Zvi Hirsch, for purposes of major repairs, in the amount of two hundred forty-seven Polish gulden, may the glory of the king be raised.

Rent from the shtibl that belongs to the *Hevra Kadisha*, sixteen gold pieces.

*Gabbai* of the Month R' Shmuel twenty three gold pieces

From the previously mentioned *Hevra*, a total of one thousand two hundred ninety-six gold pieces.

From the treasury of the officers of the community, one hundred eighty-two gold pieces.

Additionally they paid for brick in the amount of seventy-two gold pieces.

Other... by the officers of the community, a sum of one hundred fifty-four gold pieces.

From the Israel fund, under the hand of the Sage, Sender בר"שס, with the direction of the officers of the community, a sum of eighteen gold pieces, and also what was sold to R' Berel for the right to be called to the third aliyah in the small synagogue of the elder Nathan, for the sum of thirty gold pieces.

The grand total by the officers of the community was four hundred fifty-seven gold pieces.

## Contributions

From the Rabbi, *Bet-Din* Senior, thirty pieces of gold

From the Rabbi of Dubenki, Our Teacher, R' Yitzhak, eight pieces of gold

Son-in-law of R' Leibl, seven pieces of gold

Servants of R' Hirsch, seventeen pieces of gold

R' Elijah בר"ם seventeen pieces of gold

R' Tuvia ב"ה one hundred seventy pieces of gold

R' Baruch בר"ל two pieces of gold

Wife of R' Yudel the Tailor, two pieces of gold

R' Manli Katz, one hundred three pieces of gold

R' Abraham Tzelzitzer, one piece of gold

From the wife of R' Hillel, eighteen pieces of gold

R' Abraham Itzik, son-in-law of R' Moshe, 4 pieces of gold

R' Akiva, חר"ם, two pieces of gold

R' Wolf Farber, fifteen gulden

R' Yeshaya בר"פ, two pieces of gold

R' Wolf the goldsmith, two pieces of gold

R' Chaim בר"א Tailor, two pieces of gold

R' Moshe בר"א Tailor, two pieces of gold

Know to the collectors, thirty-four pieces of gold

R' Hirsch Berish, Twenty-one pieces of gold

R' Meir חר"ם a Teacher, eighteen groschen

R' Itzik בר"ד, two gold pieces

R' Yaakov בר"פ, eighteen gold pieces

R' Feivel, seven gold pieces

R' Baruch, a Teacher, one gold piece

From his son-in-law, R' Moshe, eighteen gold pieces

His son, R' Yaakov eighteen gold pieces

R' Hirsch Grabwitzer, ten gold pieces

R' Azriel בר"ם Katz, four gold pieces

R' Shmuel חר"ם, בר"א, two hundred gold pieces

R' Shimon, the Hatmaker, five gold pieces

Widow of R' Wolf Marsha, seven gold pieces

R' Nathan בר"ם Katz, seven gold pieces

Wife of R' Matityahu, one hundred gold pieces

R' Moshe, son of the Rabbi of Lublin, seven gold pieces

Son, R' Berel, seven gold pieces

Daughter Yetta, eighteen gold pieces

R' Azriel Magrovitz, three gold pieces

R' Isaac the Physician, two gold pieces

R' Shmuel בר"שס, four gold pieces

R' Yehoshua, Tailor, ten groschen

R' Leibl Farber, seven gold pieces

R' Itzik חרמ"ץ, two gold pieces

R' Hertz Ber, Teacher, one gold piece

His son, R' Wold Ber, ten gold pieces

A worker at R' Isaac the Tailor, fifteen groschen

R' David the Tailor, four gold pieces
His son-in-law R' Chaim, seven gold pieces
R' Pinchas ברג"ס, one gold piece
R' Nachmi HaLevi, three gold pieces
R' Nathan חר"ם Zatz, two gold pieces
A worker at R' Nisan the Tailor, eighteen groschen
R' Lieb חר"ה Mafta, eighteen gold pieces
R' Aharon, one gold piece
R' Abraham Groinem, seven gold pieces
R' Joseph Dov, three gold pieces
R' Hertz בר"א, one gold piece
R' Nahum from Janowica, two gold pieces
R' David the Physician, two gold pieces
R' Leib חר"א, three gold pieces
R' Moshe חר"א, a Tailor, seventy-one gold pieces
R' Hirsch Feiness, one gold piece
R' Sender חר"א Mottel, fourteen gold pieces
R' Jonah חר"א, fourteen gold pieces
Rabbi Meuchman, eighteen gold pieces
R' Shimon הר"ה three gold pieces
R' David, a Tailor from outside the city, 3gold pieces
R' Shmuel Physician, four gold pieces
R' Itzik חר"א two gold pieces
R' Meir בר"ם, fourteen gold pieces
R' Baruch חר"ל son of the Maggid,18 gold pieces
R' Meir Moirkowitz, seven gold pieces
Mekhazek Shedlesk, two gold pieces
R' Itzik בר"ל a Decorator, three gold pieces
R' Sender חר"ה from Zdarin, two gold pieces
R' Mendel Tailor, one gold piece
The woman, Zipporah, wife of R' David Katz, eight gold pieces
R' Joel son of R' Moshe three gold pieces
R' Itzik, בר"ל three gold pieces
R' Itzik a Glazier, eighteen groschen
R' Mikhl the Tailor, four gold pieces
R' Chaim, fifteen groschen
R' Heschel, eleven gold pieces
The woman, Feiga from Gravitz, two gold pieces
R' Isaac the Goldsmith, two gold pieces
R' Moshe Katz, three gold pieces
R' Peretz, חר"א, fourteen gold pieces, apart from what he spent on the repair of the women's synagogue
R' Yossel Malkhvin, two p gold pieces
R' Zalman, two gold pieces
R' Abraham Yiddl, fifteen groschen
R' Zelig the Glazier, ten gold pieces
R' Yisroel חר"א seven gold pieces
The Rabbi of Tomaszow, four gold pieces
R' Gershon from Tarzhemik, two gold pieces
R' Chaim b 'Zdanów, eight gold pieces
R' Hertz חר"ם, Katz two gold pieces
R' Joseph son of the Rabbi of Reinitz, seventeen gold pieces
R' Berish בר"ר twenty groschen
R' Yaakov בר"א from Voslovitz, 170 gold pieces
Reizl, wife of R' Yudel, seven gold pieces
R' Mendel Ber, and R' Bunim, seven gold pieces
R' Yaakov the storekeeper, two gold pieces
Daughter of R' Yudel, eighteen groschen
R' Henoch, בר"א, one gold piece and twenty groschen
R' Mordechai from Ziusmir, 1 gold piece and six groschen
R' Joseph בר"י Teacher, eighteen groschen
R' Shmuel בר"ם בר"י, three gold pieces
R' Berish from Klodz, one gold piece and six groschen
R' Chaim Brick, eighteen groschen
R' Chaim חר"א, fifteen groschen
R' Wolf Grandik, 26 gold pieces
R' Yekli חר"ה, six gold pieces
R' Itzik br:h Riklish, one gold piece
His son, R' Hertz, two gold pieces
R' Moshe the Baker, one gold piece
R' Barki Katz, six gold pieces
R' Moshe, the Baker, one gold piece [duplicate?]
R' Yossel the Tailor fifteen groschen
R' Wolf from the slaughterhouse, three gold pieces
The Rabbi of Nemirov, seven gold pieces
The doctor, R' Moshe, two gold pieces
R' Lejzor בר"א from Vislovitz, seven gold pieces
From the mother of the previous, who left a will before she died, that a donation should be made for synagogue repair on a large scale. One hundred gold pieces
R' Yossel הרד"ם, one gold piece
R' Avigdor the Decorator, two gold pieces
R' Itzik ברמז"ר seven gold pieces
R' Wolf Ber הרד"ם חר"י, one gold piece and six groschen
R' Mendel חר"ו, three gold pieces
R' Meir Zatz, one gold piece and twenty-six groschen
R' Abraham בר"ם, seven gold pieces
His son-in-law, R' Leib and his son-in-law Pinchas, one gold piece and eighteen groschen
R' Itzik the three gold pieces
R' Leibel Grandik, seven gold pieces
His son R' Shmuel seven gold pieces
His son-in-law Shimshon seven gold pieces
R' Leibel חר"א and his son-in-law, twenty-five groschen
R' Wolf the Baker, three gold pieces
Wife of R' Yeshaya Segal, eighteen groschen
R' Hirsch Riklish, one gold piece
Minyan from Persil, eight gold pieces
R' Itzik from Janowic, one gold piece
R'Ebush & R'Lieb Tailors from Persil, 3 gold pieces
R' Joel חר"א, six gold pieces
R' Mordechai בר"ן, seven gold pieces

R' Hirsch Ashekanzi, a Teacher and his son, three gold pieces
R' Shmuel בר"ז, Teacher, three gold pieces
R' Arish, two gold pieces
R' Mordechai, פ"ק., eighteen gold pieces
R' Shlomo Dov, six gold pieces
R' Shlomo Zatz, two gold pieces
R' Isaac the Tailor, one gold piece
R' Moshe Yudel, seven gold pieces
R' (....) Seven gold pieces
R' (....) From Krasnobrod, twelve gold pieces
R' Moshe, six gold pieces
R' Itzik the Tailor, one gold piece & 13 groschen
R' (....) The Physician, and his son R' Chaim, fourteen gold pieces
R' Moshe the Shokhet, two gold piecesR' Wolf from Ozerow, one gold piece
R' Hertz from Brod, twenty-seven gold pieces
R' Yossel the Wagon Driver, one gold piece
R' Abraham Itzik, son-in-law of R' Moshe, two gold pieces
R' Moshe Warug, twenty-three gold pieces
R' Berish the milliner and his assistant, 28 groschen
R' (....) Tailor, one gold piece and fifty-six groschen
R' (....) Two gold pieces
R' Mikhl, two gold pieces
R' Hertz from Guria, twenty-two gold pieces
And his partner, R' Berel, twenty-two gold pieces
R' David בר"ם eighteen groschen
R' Gedalia two gold pieces
R' Abraham בר"ם twelve gold pieces
R' (....) Bet-Din Senior of Brestetsky, 34 gold pieces
His son-in-law, R' Shaul, seven gold pieces
R' David, Tailor בר"ם, two gold pieces
R' Isser בר"ם one gold piece
R' Berish, two gold pieces
R' Moshe חר"ק..... twelve gold pieces
R' Itzik בהר"ב and his son the Rabbi of Szczebrzeszyn, twenty-nine gold pieces
R' Shmuel the Milliner, one gold piece
R' Arush, twenty groschen.

## A Short Summary and Comments About the Accounting Protocol For Carrying Out the Renovation of the Synagogue in the Year 1783

The protocol communicates that the direction of the work was entrusted to the *Gabbaim* R' Shmuel and R' Tevel, the sun of the Rabbi of Dubenki. The work, which lasted for five month, was not accounted for with them,, because there was trust in them. After the end of the renovation, they presented an accounting of the incomes and expenses. And since the principal funds for the renovation came from the *Hevra Kadisha*, that is the reason that this accounting is outlined in the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra*. From the treasury of the *Hevra Kadisha*, 1296 gulden flowed into the renovation funding. From the community treasury, 457 gulden. After this, there is a list of the individual contributors.

As can be seen from the list, almost all the Jewish residence of the city took a part in this initiative, down to the very poorest. There are donors who gave 10 groschen, and two together gave eighteen groschen. There are no bachelors in the list, from which we can conclude that all the donors were family men (the few women, that can be counted as donors, are widows, or — under the oversight of their husbands).

In the general total of 186 donors, can be found 33 independent craftsmen (17.7%): Tailors – 14, Doctors – 5, under which there is one person with the title, Doctor, Milliners – 3, Bakers – 2, Decorators – 2, Dyers – 2, Glaziers – 2, Goldsmiths – 2. Servants: Tailors apprentices – 2, milliner's apprentice – 1, wagon drivers – 3; Servants in R' Hirsch, no number given, one Jew who worked in the slaughterhouse, 1 *Shokhet* and 3 Teachers.
The donations by size, distribute themselves as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Over 100 Gulden | 5 |
| Between 25-100 Gulden | 25 |
| Between 10-25 Gulden | 7 |
| Between 5-10 Gulden | 36 |
| Under 5 Gulden | 113 |
| Total | 186 |

# The Maggid of Dubno

**By Y. Y. Trunk** (New York)

In the history of Jewish culture, the emphasis has been mainly placed on the history of Jewish literature, and its development. It has been accepted as an historical axiom, that Jews are the People of the Book, and their entire creativity manifested itself, so to speak, in written form. The dialectic of the Jewish intellectual development has been sought in the dialectic of the Jewish book. It was believed that the currents of the intellectual Jewish epochs could be found in the worldliness or sacredness of the Jewish book. As if to say, by comparison, that we did not have any other national Jewish life except the intellectual Jewish life, therefore, it was in the intellectual life of Jews that the full history of Jews was sought. – It was this line that Graetz pursued, for example. The intellectual Jewish life meant – throughout – the Jewish book. The *Sefer*.

The oral Jewish tradition has practically been ignored by Jewish historians. The attitude towards the oral tradition, in the history of Jewish culture, has been like the relationship of a stepmother. It stems from the fact, that Jewish cultural history sought for the development of Jewish intellectual thought in the path of the development of the w r i t t e n word. The written word was, indeed, the dominant and most stylized level of Jewish creativity. The w r i t t e n word was closer to academic scholarship, and to the abstract aristocracy of the soul, more so than the spoken word. To distance one's self from life, and to live on the paper pages of volumes, was a major and continuous tendency in the history of Jewish intellectual development. Perhaps, it was easier to believe, that in this paper-based atmosphere, it would be possible to rescue one's self from the storms of the era. On paper, one can hope to isolate one's self permanently. The s p o k e n word, no matter how ecstatic and lofty it might ring, is nevertheless still entirely wedded to real life, and cannot isolate itself from the day-to-day flow of events. The living word demands the l i v i n g , a c t i n g h u m a n b e i n g , who will articulate it. It takes a complete part in the pulsing warmth of action. The orator cannot forego his interaction with life itself. The writer, sitting at his desk, real life can sometimes be no more that grayish, like a reminiscence or an illusion. Nothing more than an abstract presentation. The window of the academic workroom that would look out onto real life, is closed most of the time. The written word exalts in its solitude of intellect. S o l i t u d e is the atmosphere of the art of writing. The atmosphere of the spoken word is c o m m u n a l , and the feeling of communal interaction. In the s p o k e n word, intellectual processes assume the burden of [dealing with] the living human being, and with his needs.

It is clear as the day, that the history of Jewish intellectual development did not stop only at the experientially instructive pages of books. It played itself out, to no less an extent, in the middle of living events of Jewish activity, that is to say in the middle of the roiling events of daily Jewish life. The history of oral Jewish intellectual development, is certainly no less interesting and no less important than the history of written Jewish intellectual development. One only has to remind one's self of the Prophets of Biblical times, to see how great the power and influence of the s p o k e n word was, for the development of Jewish history, and for the development of the historical line of Jewish spirituality. Most of the Prophets spoke in the courtyard of the Temple, and in the open places of the city in Judah and [The Kingdom of] Israel. Most of the documented prophecies were only sermons, which were put down on paper. Jeremiah, for example, later dictated his moving prophecies to his disciple, Baruch ben Neriyah. The same was true of other prophets. Prophets, who documented what they said, were the rarer ones. Such, perhaps, were the prophets in Babylon, for example, the Second Isaiah[133], and Ezekiel. They were prophets that documented what they said, because their prophecies 'emit the odor of the pen.' The notion that Amos wrote down his prophecies, flies in the face of reason. Also, in later times, we find folklore tellers and preachers to be very active, the translators in the synagogues, and other public speakers, whose sermons, over long periods of many generations, were collected into all manner of *Medrashim*, and folios. The translators translated and freely told the written stories in the Torah to the Jewish masses. They added tales and images from folk life and from folk fantasy. These stories have remained with us in the various translations and folios, for example, the wondrous folk tales of T a r g u m S h a y n i . "And it was the custom from the days of Ezra, to translate what was read in the Torah, in order that they understand what the words had to say."... "The essence of the

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133 It is generally accepted, by Biblical scholars, that the 'single' Book of Isaiah, was very likely the work of at least two different people.

translation is to communicate to the womenfolk and the unlettered, who have no facility with the Holy Tongue." (*Rashi*, Megilla 21). The *Targum* was preached orally throughout, and was not read from the written source (**Yerushalmi**, 20. The reader stands, Halakha א' Rambam, Tefila, 12). Philo of Alexandria, in his book, **The Life of Moses**, writes, that the custom to preach, and to speak in the synagogues, comes from the time of Moses himself, and it continues to this day, meaning until the time of Philo. Josephus Flavius in his essay, **Against Apion** (17.2), presents Jewish oratory as being quite an ancient practice. In the Gospels, one often finds images of The Nazarene periodically preaching in the synagogues. We have even recognized the names of Talmudic preachers, for example, such renown preaching personalities as Ben Azza, or Ben Zoma. " R' Levi said, among the preachers, there was to be found, Azai and Ben Zoma" (**Bereshit Raba, 5**). " Because of Ben Zoma, the preachers have all ceased." R' Huzpit the Translator, one of the Ten Martyrs, was a popular oratorical figure among the Jews, and it was said of him, that pearls fall from his mouth – "פה מפיק מרגליות." In **Yalkut**, we find the name of a great preacher, Levi bar Siti. "Take things with you, good writers, good preachers, such as Levi bar Siti." (**Yalkut Hoshea**, sign 533). Levi bar Siti was known as a complete storyteller. His personal characteristics were famous. It appears that the Talmudic *Aggadot* [sic: Legends] were publicly told in front of the people. The Sages, of Blessed Memory, explicitly commented on the sentence, "And so shall you say to the House of Jacob, and tell the House of Israel." It is possible that this is the source of the appellation, '*Maggid*,' {sic: one who tells]. '*Amorah*' also means to say: "אמר". Basically, the Talmud consists of recorded protocols that emerged from spoken disputations and speeches. Even if we do not let ourselves be drawn to the historical appearance of the ***Zohar***, and if we move off to the time of the Sephardic era of R' Moshe de Leon, it is almost certain – that R' Moshe de Leon was nothing more than an editor and compiler of this wondrous book of poetry. He either had it in hand, or found it in a cache that only he had access to, or in some other *Genizah* [133] (Is it not the case that, not long ago, old texts were discovered in the famous Cairo *Genizah*. This *Genizah* was found in 1898 in the Synagogue of Ezra the Scribe, in Cairo). Extremely old Kabbalistic writings, that date from the Alexandrine period, and even before the destruction of Jerusalem. They were put together by Jewish mystics. It is certain that there is, in the ***Zohar***, sermons by exalted Essenes, and from the first of the Jewish-Christians. The language of the *Zohar* looks like the language of the common people of the times before the destruction. This also provides support to believe that the ***Zohar***-texts were spoken in front of a gathering of the people, by mystical dreamers. We have the language of those Jewish mystics in the language of the *Zohar*, who awaited the coming of the Messiah , and the redemption of the Land of Israel, and who did battle against the Roman legions on behalf of His kingdom. And it is in this fashion, that we also find, during the entire later period of the Diaspora – alongside the great Jewish writers – a chain of Jewish preachers. From many of them, that is, from those old preachers who also were writers, we have the books of sermons which they, themselves, wrote. It is only the books that were written in Hebrew that are known to us, and were counted for the educated world and the intelligentsia. The sermons that were given by the folk preachers, which were spoken in the local language [sic: Aramaic, etc.] and for the simple [sic: uneducated] people, were not written down. And if it is true – that those very compilations were lost to the remainder of the world, and what remains of them – as an indicator – are single examples in the cabinets of a few libraries. The received wisdom, that the course of Jewish history flows in the Jewish book, and not in the Jewish street, that is, among the simple day-to-day Jewish people, crystallized as a certain axiom with the entire Jewish writing intelligentsia.

Even a modern historian like Graetz had constructed the spirit of Jewish history only making use of the ideas from the history of the Jewish book. It is because of this reason, that those simple sermon books for the common people, may not have proceeded along the same way as the Jewish [literary] book. They were still tightly bound up with Jewish daily life – and ignored by the historians along with the ignored day-to-day Jewish life.

The [works of the] preachers of the medieval period, and of the periods that followed them, were, as was said, bequeathed to us in the form of recorded speeches. Most intended to be left in this way. Jewish writers. Throughout, they wanted to have their sermons united with the written word. They directed the living word to the style and mode of the written book; Simply, they edited out everything from their later sermons that were written down, that had a

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133 The Hebrew word for a 'place of concealment.' Used to designate repositories for old, worn out sacred books that did not require burial, but which could not be routinely discarded or desecrated by conventional destruction.

relationship to the portrait of the active and animated life of Jews. They considered life to be a barrier to remaining in contemplation of what would come in future generations. Also, orators such as Demosthenes, and Cicero, created a written literature out of their oratory.

I believe that the sobriquet, "People of the Book" is more appropriate to the Greeks than to the Jews. This alone says much for the Greek and Roman awe and respect for the nobility of the written mode of communication. The written mode of communication was utilized less by the Jews than by the ancient Greeks and Romans. The ancient Jews has less reverence for the written word than the Greeks. It suffices to compare two immortal works like the *Tanakh* and Homer, to see where there was reverence for the [spoken] word, and where there was reverence for writing.

Under the direct influence of the Arabs, and under the indirect influence of the ancient Greeks, the devotion to the written book began to grow among the Jews of the Middle Ages. In the intellectual circles of Jews, the book began to assume the role of the Alpha and Omega of Jewish life, and Jewish existence. This, in the normal course, had no small effect to minimize the intellectual recognition and devotion to the vibrancy of Jewish life, and the living Jewish person. It is therefore no wonder, that it is so difficult to reconstruct the images of historical Jewish activity, from the meager sources that have been left to us – how that life was lived in the long centuries of early Jewish history. It is only now, in the modern Jewish literature, together with the artistic renaissance of real Jewish life, and together with a concern for the living Jewish person, that attempts at such reconstruction have been made, such as , Sholom Asch's, *The Witch of Castile*, and *Kiddush HaShem*, and Y. Opotashu's *A Day in Regensburg*.

The later preachers went even further in the direction of reverence for the written word. The turned away absolutely from Jewish life, and the entire substance of their preaching was built into the booty of the rulings and commentaries of the written literature. The literature became the only foundation. In its form, and it is own way, took absolute control and surveillance over the preached word. The sermon, blundered away entirely into the forest of Jewish writing. It became exactly as analytical, hair-splitting and casuistic as the rabbinical texts. The official sermons of the rabbis in the synagogues – the sermons for the masses – became clever demonstrations of Talmudic sophistry, and were really intended only for highly erudite people. In Poland, the rabbis even sermonized about plain Halakhic matters. The masses of ordinary Jewish people, would gather on the Holidays in the synagogues to hear sermons from the rabbis. The rabbis, wrapped in their prayer shawls, would stand on the high balustrades, and spoke in highly analytical dialectics. Simple, ordinary Jews, however, had no understanding of these sermons from the Rabbis.

Along with this scholarly and book-oriented eloquence, folk preachers also spoke to the needs and aspirations of ordinary, unlettered Jews. These hearty folk preachers, however, remained in the shadows.

Modern times, especially due to the new Yiddish literature, and the revolutionary Jewish labor movement, pushed the realistic and ordinary Jewish man into the headlines of Jewish history. In those previous times, it had not yet occurred to the consciousness of the Jewish masses that these positive relationships to Jewish life would be the means of conveying the Jewish story. The preachers, who had remained inside of the Jewish masses, and were spiritually tied to the Jewish masses, declared upon themselves the bitter verdict, that they do not belong to the dialectic way of Jewish cultural history, and that they must, exactly like the real body of Jewish life, anonymously vanish from the historical fabric.

That such preachers existed, and that they were together with the Jewish masses, both in times of happiness and times of sorrow, is certain. We know little about them, and their traces are faint.

In the history of Jewish literature, we now even know that there was a substantial number of women authors, who wrote booklets in translation from Hebrew [sic: into Yiddish], for [use by] women and for the uneducated masses.

It was not only with the goose quill pen, but also the s p o k e n Jewish word was a part of the activity of observant and God-fearing Jewish women. Deep inside the workings of Jewish life – where everything had not yet been cast in the mold of the genteel abstraction o f the book – there, all manner of forces, all the classes, and from [people from] all walks of life in the Jewish populace, took part in the creation of the spiritual framework. There, relation to Jewish

life, Jewish values and ethical living, stood out with pride, as also the relationship to the Jewish God. Notwithstanding the fact that the incomprehensible Torah scholars stood on the first landing with the Master of the Universe, He, nevertheless, also accepts the entreaties and the words that emanate from simple Jewish hearts. In the spoken and written translated Hebrew, we still heard the breath, the hopes and yearning of the living Jewish masses. The simple Jews lived in those deep, heartfelt words in *Yiddish-Taytch,*[135] just as if they were living in an exalted and stylized manner in the new Yiddish literature. We know, for example of the *Rabbanit, Darshanit*[136] *Rivka bat R' Meir*. She even had a small book published, called **Mineket Dvora**[137]**, Tradition collected from the Gemara and Sermons in the Ashkenazic**[138] **Language (Seder-HaDorot** 69 '**נ**). Generally, she preached only in the women's places of worship[139], before women listeners. Also Rabi Yaakov Maza, in his **Memoirs** (Published by Yalkut, Tel-Aviv) indicates that his grandmother, Gittl, was a lady preacher, and she explicitly preached in the women's place of worship. Possibly, the renown Sarah bat Tovim may have originally appeared in the places of women's worship, and there, in front of the women, read her wondrous supplications – those delicate Yiddish outpourings of the heart, which tell us so much of the striving and the needs of the Jewish woman. It appears that the sobriquet of *Zogerin* does not mean someone who repeats things, but really a lady preacher, a Jewish woman with an oratorical capacity, who preached the Tradition, and in a God-fearing way, preached before the women in these places of worship for the women. *Zogerin*[140] is the translation from the Hebrew of the word Maggid – *Zoger*.

And in this brief treatment, there is insufficient place to go through the entire long, and interesting history of the spoken and written Hebrew-*Taytch* word. It is a pity that this subject has throughout, been neglected by our prominent historians. No, the W o r d in Yiddish did not play a small part in the history of Jewish cultural life. The *Maggid* of Dubno was, so to speak, a figure in counterpoint in the story of the Jewish word. He belongs to our era. His appearance has a special interest also in regard to the history of Yiddish literature. Principally, he belongs to the history of its ideas and renaissance-like minds. The renaissance-idea, and the historical priority that Jewish reality obtained through the blossoming in the literature, and through the revolutionary Jewish labor movement in life – and in that very great historical process, the *Maggid* of Dubno was almost a pioneering personality. Despite the fact that his pioneering was largely u n k n o w n , both for the *Maggid* of Dubno himself, and for the environment in which he existed.

When one wants to write the spiritual history of the modern Jewish renaissance, the *Maggid* of Dubno – in his fashion – must be stood in his proper place.

## 2

In the following chapter, I will give a short biographic characterization of the *Maggid* of Dubno. First-of-all, I wish

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135 The translated Hebrew text, rendered in the vernacular Hebrew.

136 Feminine declension of the Hebrew for Rabbi and *Darshan* (a preacher)

137 Literally, Deborah the Nursemaid, implying a source of [sic: spiritual] nourishment

138 Very likely a contemporary way of referring to Yiddish.

139 It is difficult to specify a precise meaning for *Veiberschul.* A literal translation would yield 'Women's Synagogue.' History is unclear as to whether separate physical buildings were constructed for the use of women. What we do know, is than every synagogue usually had sections allocated exclusively for the use of women (called the *Ezrat Nashim* in Hebrew). In larger synagogues, as in the main synagogue in Zamość, these were substantial enough to accommodate separate services and events, that might not involve the men, or the use of the main sanctuary.

140 In the *Dereczin Memorial Book*, we encounter a variant of this sobriquet, rendered in Yiddish as *Zogerkeh.* The sense of that usage, however, appears to be someone who may have repeated the prayers being recited by the men. In this text, the author uses the sobriquet of *Vorzogerin* to describe such a person.

to make the effort, to depict the real spiritual portrait of him, and to present the products of the pioneering efforts of the *Maggid* of Dubno, on behalf of the viewpoints and the objectives of modern Jewish culture.

It is completely self-evident that the *Maggid* of Dubno did not undertake any innovative means in going in a new direction on behalf of the culture of the Yiddish [sic: spoken] word. He was only an innovator in style, and in the manner in which he related to Jews, and to the Jewish way of life. Even though he had a complete sense and understanding for Jewish reality – he, the Maggid of Dubno, absolutely did not have a revolutionary innovative impulse within him, like the *Hasidim*, for example. The *Maggid* of Dubno was planted, with both feet, firmly in the old Rabbinic culture. He lived with the sentiments of the conservative Jewish way of life, and did not want to stir from there, nor diminish it by a hair. It was specifically along the path of the conservative, observant pathway, that the *Maggid* of Dubno wanted to approach the [sic: ordinary] Jewish person.

As a member of the generation of the burgeoning Hasidic movement, he did not even apprehend the powerful – historic – closeness between himself and *Hasidim*. For – Hasidism also began to see all the qualities to be found in the living Jewish person, all the levels and all the exaltations of Jewish existence, and of Jewish history. Only that Hasidism was temperamental and revolutionary. In an entirely critical manner – though very carefully – it began to minimize the value of the written book, in contrast to the worth of the l i v i n g J e w . Hasidism was throughout antagonistic, and throughout belligerent, towards many accepted concepts, and opposed to many customs that had been taken as holy. In conflict with the conservative Rabbis [who led the] *Mitnagdim*,[141] the *Hasidim* wanted to diminish the role of the written Rabbinical word. T h e J e w, that is, a l l J e w r y , – that was the historic outlook of Hasidism. Hasidism began to carry out its idea, that the living Jewish person is t h e p r i n c i p a l v e h i c l e f o r c a r r y i n g J e w i s h S p i r i t u a l i t y . That in him, in a single Jew, there resides everything that is historic, of historic-spirituality, and of the Jewish story of survival. And the entire value of Jewish writing – according to Hasidism – is no more than a secondary accompaniment on the historic journey of the Jewish person. All the profound forces lie within the body of the single Jewish person – dialectical – mysteries of Jewish existence in the world. This new and revolutionary [idea] was the fundamental principle of Hasidism. The Hasidic movement no longer looked at the individual from a visionary and mystical point of view. The *Hasidim* began to insert the ways of life of a microcosm – from the wondrous "little world," meaning the Jewish person, into the mysterious arguments about a super-cosmos. Kabbalistic pan-theism.

The *Maggid* of Dubno was a realist in his relationship to the Jewish life in the real world, socially-realistic, and ethically-realistic. He stood entirely on the platform of the theological dualism of ancient Jewry. He did not see man in terms of a mystical construct in the world. In the higher aspects of human life, he saw the harmony of the means and moral imperatives as concerns himself and his fellow man. And in regards to the absolute – he was simply the one who submitted himself to the Creator of the world. The [Maggid of] Dubno did not fly off into the heavens with his people, and did not place him in the middle of the planes of mystical pan-theism. He had the deepest of affection for the plain Jewish person, but he did not exalt him pantheistically. As a great and ironic preceptor of human beings, the Maggid of Dubno looked at man from the viewpoint of his unchanging human vulnerabilities. As a religious d u a l i s t , he approached man, not as a mystical world-phenomenon, but rather as, God's creation, a creation that has put upon it only moral duties, and in his vulnerable helplessness, barely has the power to discharge some part of those duties. Man sins more out of his weakness than out of any evil in his nature. The love of fellow human beings, and compassion for their helpless fate, is the highest principle for the ethical person. Only a rare righteous person can, as-it-were, vanquish his human frailties and discipline himself into submission to the Creator of the world. Human submission means, according to the *Maggid* of Dubno, awareness of the insignificance and incidental nature of the human being, in the context of the great deeds of the Creator of the world. And even if a great [gifted] individual is able to cross over the boundary of the great world-submission, meaning, a great awareness of the world, he must still know that he cannot place his own victory over human frailty as an axiomatic demand for people in general. The inner s e l f - a t t a i n m e n t for the i n d i v i d u a l is not a possible path for everyone to take. One must show compassion

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141 Literally, '*the opponents*,' in this case of the Hasidic movement. Referring to the Rabbinical establishment of Eastern Europe, led from the Jewish learning centers of Lithuania.

for the human being, and forgive him lovingly, because, in the end, the human being cannot ultimately conquer his instincts, and the impulses of his blood. All of man's fate is to struggle against his own inclinations. What is man? A wraith [tossed about] on the stormy winds of the world.

In regard to this detail, the *Maggid* of Dubno belongs to the [ranks of] the psychological-ethical researchers. To the ranks of those who understand human thinking. It is precisely through this understanding of human beings, that he arrives at a people-oriented love for his fellow man, to that great global compassion for people. The human being – these are the daily human activities, small concerns and small activities.

It is these small activities that occur day-to-day, that the *Maggid* of Dubno to as [a basis for] parables, whether for the characterization of humanity, or for describing the fate of humanity. The simple life, the daily activities of a human being, provide the inner reflected image of human thought, from his core. It is only there that the person can be understood, and in understanding him – offer him compassion and love him. In the context of the small mid-week day, we see the man more readily than in the abstract conceptual portrait of the book. In our activities, we reveal ourselves in a truthful manner, just as we reveal ourselves in our thoughts, that the sum total of all human existence is not more than an image taken from a dream, and a play of shadows of the blind. We go about our activities with a sense of security that we have talked ourselves into, that the possessions of the world that we have in our hands are really something of substance. No. From the world, we have nothing more than the wind of our desires. Profound human submission and ethical imperatives – this is the single reality and single concern of our lives. Truthfully – when we fall away from these, our own, world imperatives, and when we are seduced by the enticing call of the egoistical impulses in our blood – whom do we resemble then? Those blind foolish beggars, about whom the *Maggid* of Dubno tells this wonderful parable:

> A Jew, who was a jokester, was walking in the street, and he encountered a group of blind beggars. They were standing alone, without their seeing guide. The 'gentile-thinking' Jew thought to make sport of them. In a loud voice, the Jew addressed the blind beggars:
> – Here is a Gulden for you, and divide it so that each of you gets ten groschen.
> In reality, this jokester of a Jew didn't give anyone a Gulden.
> A quarrel broke out among the blind beggars, and a conflict. Each of the blind thought that some other blind person had taken the entire Gulden for himself, and does not want to give anyone else their share. The blind beggars bruised and beat each other; the jokester stood at a distance and split his sides laughing because of his 'gentile' caper.
> Until the seeing guide of the blind beggars arrived, and began to explain to them, that all of them are tearing at each other without reason, over nothing. The truth was that nobody among them had received a Gulden. That 'gentile-like' Jew had just derived a laugh from them at their expense.

The blind beggars are all of humanity; the 'gentile-like' Jew is the Evil Impulse [within us all]; the seeing guide is the wise man.[142]

Yet another tale, about a parable comes down to us from the Maggid of Dubno. These are among the parables that are not found in his books. They are [found] among Jews, transmitted orally. They give us, as it will be possible for us to demonstrate later, a key to the style of the epic form of the parables of the *Maggid* of Dubno:

> The Truth once went about in the streets bare-naked. No person wanted to admit the naked truth over his doorstep. Whoever encountered the truth would run away in fear. The Parable was adorned in beautiful garb, dyed in brilliant colors. The Parable asks: Tell me, Reb Truth, why are you wandering about in the streets, looking so glum and afflicted? Truth answers: it's bad, Brother Parable, I am old, very old, and nobody wants to know me. Says the Parable: it is not because you are old that people

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142 *Parables of the Maggid of Dubno*, A. L. Pearl (Aleph Katz), side 12. Verlag Aleph, Warsaw 1937.

do not love you. See, I am also very old, and despite the fact that I grow even older, people love me even more. I will trust you with a secret about people. They love that every thing should be adorned, and set on a pedestal. I will lend you such colored garments like mine, put them on, and you will see how people will love you.

And so, Truth listened to the advice of Parable, and decked himself out in the garb of the Parable. Since that time, Truth and Parable go hand-in-hand, and people love them both.[143]

## 3

Rabbi Yaakov ben Ze'ev Krantz, known as the *Maggid* of Dubno, was born in the year 5500 (1839)(he died in 5565 [1804]), in the *shtetl* of Zhetl near Vilna. His father was a great scholar, and a son-in-law of the renown Rabbi Nahum, the Bet-Din Senior of Kobrin. The oratorical talent of the *Maggid* of Dubno showed itself while he was still young. At the age of eighteen, he preached from the Bimah of the synagogue in the city of Miedzyrzec (Siedlce Canton of Poland). The Yeshiva of Miedzyrzec was renown throughout Poland, and the young Yaakov Krantz came there to study. The Jews of Miedzyrzec were great fans of sermons. They immediately recognized the great preaching talent of "The young man from Zhetl." They asked him to preach. The "young man from Zhetl" preached to the Jews of Miedzyrzec, and was enthusiastically received. In the end, he became the preacher of the city of Miedzyrzec. He was the Maggid there for barely two years. He immediately became well-known in all corners of the Jewish world, as an exceptionally righteous man, and as an exceptional preacher. He [then] became the *Maggid* of Zolkowa, and later in Dubno. There, he was the *Maggid* for a full eighteen years. After that, he became a *Maggid* in other cities, in Wlodawa, Chelm, and in Zamość . In Zamość , he was the *Maggid* for fifteen years, and he died there.

The *Maggid* of Dubno traveled to preach in various Jewish communities in Russia, Poland, the lands of the Austrian Empire, and Germany. In Berlin, the renown Moses Mendelssohn came to hear him. Mendelssohn characterized the Maggid of Dubno as the "Jewish Aesop," but this comparison is not a good one. The *Maggid* of Dubno was not a fabulist, and in his parables, never made use of examples from the lives of animal creatures.

In Zamość, the *Maggid* of Dubno was the Head of the Yeshiva. Even a difficult passage from the *Tosafot*, he would explain to the sharp, scholarly young men, with a nice parable from Jewish life, outside of the walls of the *Bet HaMedrash* (Rabbi Yitzhak Flamm in the introduction to **Sefer-HaMidot**).

The simple masses of Jews felt themselves much uplifted through the parables of the *Maggid* of Dubno. In the images that reflected the daily Jewish life in the street, in the marketplace and in the store – also in the simple lives of the Jewish family – the *Maggid* of Dubno saw the symbols of the moralistic movement of the world. He lifted the poverty and needs of the Jewish masses up to the level of bright heights of spiritual gentility, and to the great wisdom about life derived from rational processes. The activities and tales of ordinary Jewish life, became analogies for the eternal truths of the Torah, in the mouth of the *Maggid* of Dubno. Even after the death of the *Maggid* of Dubno – his son, Rabbi Yitzhak Krantz writes in the introduction to **Ohel Yaakov** – Jews would throng to the synagogues en masse, in order to hear the parables of the *Maggid* of Dubno, which he, Rabbi Yitzhak Krantz, and other succeeding preachers, would tell from the [parables of the] *Maggid* of Dubno.

But it was not only for the simple masses that the tales of the *Maggid* of Dubno were deep reservoirs of uplifting. In the earthy and modest righteousness of his words, and in the acute apprehension of the human condition, which stood out in his tales of real Jewish life, the sages and *Gaonim* of the period also perceived the accompanying symbolism of the highest concepts of the Jewish intellect.

The degree to which the *Maggid* of Dubno drew the great morals of the Jewish spirit close to the t o n e and f e e l i n g of the simple Jewish person, is told by his disciple, Rabbi Berish Flamm (the future *Maggid* of Miedzyrzec) in his introduction to **Sefer-HaMidot**:

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143 *op. cit.*

On one occasion, the *Maggid* of Dubno came to Yaroslav. The local Rabbi, Rabbi Hirsch Wohl, known as Rabbi Hirsch Meitzess, received the *Maggid* at his home, gave him a separate room, where the Maggid would be able to sit quietly and study for the entire period of two to three weeks that he had contemplated staying in Yaroslav. At the home of the Rabbi of Yaroslav, there was a son-in-law, living on support while he studied, Rabbi Yaakov Einstein, the future Rabbi of Lemberg. The scholarly son-in-law had a friend, Reb Herscheleh, who later became the Rabbi in Banhard. The son-in-law, Rabbi Yaakov, along with his friend, spent a great deal of time with the Maggid of Dubno. Every time that he preached at the synagogue, they accompanied him, in order that they could hear the sermon. When it came time for the Maggid of Dubno to give his last sermon, he said to these two exceptionally gifted young folk: it is better that you do not accompany me on this day. It would be a sin for you to take the time away from your studies. When the young folk replied: ...why, specifically does this apply to this occasion, that you do not want us to hear you?' – the *Maggid* told them, that with every one of his parting sermons, he always brings his listeners to intense tears. The reason being, that he wants to awaken the Jewish soul to submission and to the teachings of tradition; and since these two young people have faint hearts, he wishes to spare them the weeping. The young people replied: Have no fear, *Rebbe*, we are not ordinary Jews. We will not cry. What then followed, I will leave for Rabbi Berish Flamm to tel in his tortuous Hebrew. Rabbi Berish Flamm relates what Rabbi Yaakov Einstein told him personally about that highly notable scene. Let the reader himself see with what an awesome trembling respect the students of the *Maggid* spoke of the *Maggid* of Dubno:

> After the Mincha Prayers, when the *Tzaddik* ascended the pulpit that was in front of the ark, I immediately began to weep. When I saw him ascend, and I looked into his face and saw his expressions, I was seized with fear and trembling, and even before he opened his sacred mouth, and my comrade stood next to me stubbornly trying with all his might, and stood for about a half hour and did not cry, and afterwards, when he began to cry, he cried with a bitter heart, for about fifteen minutes to the point that he became dangerously ill, because he was a frail and delicate person, and seriously weakened.

The Vilna Gaon, who in his time was the greatest authority among the leading Torah scholars, demonstrated an exceptional sympathy and vulnerability to the *Maggid* of Dubno and his activities. While I am here, I would like to remark about one of the historical errors: the posture of the *Mitnagdim* toward the *Hasidim* has often been characterized as a conflict between the dry rationalists against the Jewish irrationalists; a war between Jewish l a w and Jewish f e e l i n g . In regard to this detail, a revision most certainly must be made in the historical record. Above all, a revision is required with regard to the historical record in connection to the person of the Vilna *Gaon*. But the Vilna *Gaon* stood at the point in the conflict with Hasidism. No, in ideological conflicts one can never clearly demonstrate the boundary between t h o u g h t and f e e l i n g . On the side of J e w i s h f e e l i n g , we find many rationalists such as, for example, the author of **Tanya**, who sought the synthesis between rationalism and mysticism; the Vilna Gaon stood on the side of J e w i s h t h o u g h t , who wanted to synthesize his casuistic rationalism with the *mythos* of the plain folk life of the simple Jew, and with the sanctified love of that simple Jew. The *Maggid* of Dubno was the ideal person for the Vilna *Gaon* to effect that synthesis. Even though the *Maggid* of Dubno undoubtedly belonged to the class of the leading Torah scholars of his day, he was nevertheless able to wondrously synthesize his modesty and folk-righteousness with sensible directives from the Torah. He applied himself to see, in the way of the lives of simple Jews, the hidden methods and the compassionate thoughts of the Creator of the world. The Vilna Gaon thought of the *Maggid* of Dubno's visit to him as an occasion of great spiritual pleasure. The Vilna Gaon literally waited eagerly to absorb the stories about Jews from the mouth of the *Maggid* of Dubno.

There is a folk tale about a meeting of these two illustrious Jewish personalities, of that era. This story throws the character of the Vilna *Gaon* and the character of the *Maggid* of Dubno into sharp relief, from an ideological point of view:

The Vilna *Gaon* is, as is known, was very sedentary, not leaving the bounds of his house, sitting always by himself in his room, the windows closed, and the shutters closed, even during the daytime, and being occupied day and night in Torah and work.

In those years, the reputation of the *Maggid* of Dubno was in ascendance. He was the wondrous preacher, and the great debater. So the Gaon sent for the *Maggid* of Dubno, asking him to come and engage in debate.

The *Maggid* of Dubno came, saw the behavior of the *Gaon*, how detached he is from the world, and doesn't even leave the four walls of his own home.

The *Maggid* of Dubno remained with the Vilna *Gaon* alone.

– Is it a trick to be the Vilna *Gaon*, at the time that one sits closed off and isolated, in the innermost of rooms and being occupied with Torah? – the *Maggid* asked of the Vilna *Gaon*. To go out into the streets among the people, to engage n the experiences of life in the world, to engage in bargaining, and then still remain the Vilna *Gaon* – now *that* would be a good trick.

The *Gaon* listens to the *Maggid* of Dubno, and provides a short, sharp reply: I am not a magician that I do tricks. If at one time, the *Maggid* of Dubno had – as a result of his efforts and travels to various Jewish communities – did not come to the *Gaon* in Vilna, the greatest Talmudic authority of his day wrote a letter to the *Maggid* of Dubno, which is touching in its modesty and sense of longing for the folksy *Tzaddik* from Dubno, and his tales Jewish daily life.
I cite, in total, for the reader here, the letter from the Vilna *Gaon* to the *Maggid* of Dubno. I present it in the original Hebrew, as it was printed in an old *Haggadah* (*Seder Haggadah shel Pesach, im payrush hadash, Z e r a G a d ,* Vilna, 5612 (1852),

With the Help of the Lord, Monday, *Parshat VaYeshev* 5551 (1790)

Greetings to our honorable brother, the Rabbi and *Gaon*, outstanding in Torah, and renowned by praise and adulation the honorable Rabbi, our Teacher Yaakov the Rabbi and Preacher of the sacred community of Dubno.

After a greeting according to protocol to my dear one, I beseech him that my heart would be gladdened if he would come to my side, and it is a dismay to my eyes that he has not been to see me now for thirteen years. Now, I have come to arouse him: To the soul of our honorable brother, and to his good fortune, Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman, a *Tzaddik* of Sacred Memory.

With the Help of the Lord, Monday, 14 Sivan *Tikkun*[144] (5556- 1795)

A multitude of greetings to my dear friend, the honorable wondrous Rabbi, the speaker of righteousness and of the true way, the honorable Rabbi, our Teacher Yaakov, may his light burn brightly.

I will tell, if it please, to my friend about events that the Lord has caused to me in His goodness. My soul has been depressed by the onset of serious illness that He has seen fit to send to me. Let my friend come to my home, and let him not tarry to restore my spirit and to amuse me as he has done from time to time. When he sees this writing, let him accelerate his travel plans, and let him not be late.

These are the words of one who loves him, and is true to him, and who looks forward to his arrival in peace, Eliyahu ben Shlomo Zalman, a *Tzaddik* of Sacred Memory.[145]

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144 A re-arrangement of the letters in the year 5556, to produce the word *Tikkun,* which in Hebrew signifies to repair, or make good. A reference to the Jewish imperative to engage in *Tikkun Olam*, i.e. to make the world a better place that when we found it.

145 The Vilna *Gaon* passed away two years later, in 1797. Regarding the posture of the author about how the Vilna *Gaon* 'really felt' about the Hasidic movement, the issue is well summarized by Rabbi Dr. Stanley Nash, Professor of Bible and Hebrew Language, at Hebrew Union College in New York City: He says:

## 4

Despite the fact that the *Maggid* of Dubno was exceptionally popular in all areas of Jewry, nevertheless, he wrote very little. It appears that he believed the writer's pen places an intellectual barrier between him and ordinary Jews, to whom his heart always burned with an indebtedness and love. He did not want to lift himself out of [contact with] the Jewish masses by using a n y t h i n g . He always saw in them the living, deep reservoirs, of all the highest forms of Jewish spiritual elevation. He fled the isolation of the book-oriented writer. Jews tell: the *Maggid* of Dubno was once asked why he did not compose a collection about Torah, the prophets, or sermons, which would contain [sic: preserve] his sermons and simple explanations. [For], this was the practice of other *Gaonim* and preachers; to which he said: I will reply to this with a parable:

A wealthy man was preparing to make a wedding for his child. Many guests came to the wedding feast, rich Jews and poor people. They eat and drink, and make merry. The difference however, is: the invited rich guest, sitting at the table, eats the delicacies and drinks the beverages in a certain order. First he eats fish, afterwards, he takes a little bit to drink, and afterwards, soup with noodles, meat and *tzimmes*. At the end, he also drinks a small glass of wine. The poor person stands to the side, and quickly wolfs down the leftovers from the dishes. The poor person cannot, unfortunately wait on any sequence. He mixes the fish with the soup, meat with the herring, hot with cold, in order to be able once again to snap up what is thrown at him.

The same is true of me. The great Vilna *Gaon* sits constantly at his sacred desk, [engaged in] Torah and worship. He can partake of the wisdom and acuity that is presented to him in sequence and with order. But I, a Jew, that wanders through towns and cities – must content himself with what is thrown to me from time to time. Here, a simple explanation comes to mind regarding a line from [the prophet] Habakuk, and immediately afterwards a parable concerning the dialogue between Balak and Balaam, or altogether, a sermon on the portion of Noah. Also, all of these things must be done in a sprightly fashion, emphasizing them without any order, and then preparing one's self to once again get ready to go out on the road to travel.[146]

It happens that most of the parables and sermons that we have from the *Maggid* of Dubno, were only small and short items, which he had, from natural discourse, brought out as a synopsis of his sermons. I am even persuaded to accept the supposition that the synopses of the parables were written by the *Maggid* of Dubno in Yiddish. Whereas, in **Ohel Yaakov**, they are provided by the editors as very dry, and in an officious Rabbinical Hebrew. It is not the language of the *Maggid* of Dubno. In the **Sefer HaMidot**, the one little book that he most certainly wrote by himself, there the *Maggid* of Dubno expressed himself in a better and in an epic, emotion-filled Hebrew. In any event, being a written author, and the calling of the pen, did not lie among the ambitions of the *Maggid* of Dubno.

Even though he constructed his sermons both from the Jewish written word, and from Jewish life, he p e r s o n a l l y held himself o n l y as a part of the simple, unadorned Jewish reality, and identified himself with it both in spirit and destiny. Throughout, he wanted always to remain in the midst of the substantive events of Yiddish writing. Also, in connection with this specific detail, we find a folktale about the *Maggid* of Dubno, and it too, characterizes in a sharp and outstanding way, the entire style of life of the *Maggid* of Dubno:

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The issue of establishing the posture of the Vilna *Gaon* on a number of issues--*Haskala, Hasidism*, etc.--seems to be as major an area for dispute as establishing how the *Rambam* really felt about certain things. I don't think there is any contradiction between the *Gaon's* affections for the *Maggid* and his participation in imposing various *cherems* against *Hasidism* that he did not like. Also, I can well understand how people with Hasidic leanings would pounce upon a story of this type--how the ascetic and withdrawn *Gaon* was finally stirred to learn an important lesson from a *Hasid*. It all sounds slightly apocryphal, and tendentious, as for that matter does the whole exaggerated picture of the *Gaon's* asceticism.

146 Parables of the *Maggid* of Dubno, A. L. Pearl, Warsaw, 1937

One fine Sabbath, the *Maggid* of Dubno stood in the pulpit and was speaking. The synagogue was packed with an audience that swallowed every one of his words. Pearls fell from the mouth of the Maggid of Dubno, brilliant thoughts. The *Maggid* of Dubno, raised himself in his feeling, to the divine levels in the heavens, and to the golden footstools of the greatest of the *Tzaddikim*. Suddenly, he heard a cross word coming from on high. He examined his deeds, and he felt, that with this, that he had drawn near to the golden footstools of the *Tzaddikim*, he had actually come down from his actual position.

In order to repair this attempt at elevation that he had made, within which lay his downfall, the *Maggid* of Dubno undertook to go into exile.

The *Maggid* of Dubno vanished anonymously for a couple years, among the great anonymous mass of poor Jews and wandered all over the Jewish world, like a common pauper. Along with other poor Jews, he wandered from town to town, dressed in rags, with a walking stick in his hand, and a knapsack over his back. He spent the night in charity accommodations, accepted pennies from Jews of means, and on the Sabbath, along with other poor stricken folk, sat at the rearmost tables of Jewish *balebatim.* He hid his popular and beloved identity from everyone. He endured the wants, exigencies, and degradations of the poverty-stricken Jews. In this bitter Jewish assembly, with coarse, anonymous and poor folk, he purged and purified himself spiritually. He immersed himself and raised himself in his incomparable love of [his fellow] Jews. He extracted new strengths. His wealth of new Jewish life-experiences, he transformed into the form of new tales. From these anonymous wanderings of the *Maggid* of Dubno through the lowest depths of Jewish life, we obtain a booty of tales, tales which are models for higher ethical concepts about the order of creation, and about human life. But there are also found portraits of the Jewish way of life of those former times. Verily, these parables are a bona fide treasure for the culture - and the circumstances of Jews. There, we see all the various classes of the Jewish community. The head of the community, wealthy leaders, teachers and their assistants, wagon drivers and Jewish hotels, settlers and land estate managers, the strong and the controllers, workers and tradespeople, servants and poor people, door-to-door beggars, and the crippled, delicate young people, *balebatim*, *Shammashim*, marriage brokers, grooms, brides, parents of the wedding couple. There we see the wealthy Jews, that ride around in heavy, fully packed vehicles to Leipzig and Danzig, for the great fairs. Through these parable-stories, we are even able to gain a glimpse into the economic status of the Jewish populace of that former time,[the status of] Jewish merchants, and storekeepers, Jewish shopkeepers and traders, Jewish wagon drivers, Jewish carriages and Jewish horses, and also about the one time garb of Jews, the jewelry, and precious things of Jewish wives. During the years of voluntary assimilation among the dispersed Jewish peoples, the *Maggid* of Dubno acquainted himself with the haughtiness and might of Jewish magnates and community leaders – and he has very few good words to say on their behalf. In his stories, the top ten thousand come out under a major shadow. The years of the wanderings of the *Maggid* of Dubno have remained as an image in the memory of the Jewish masses. Later on, many stories and anecdotes circulated throughout the Jewish world about this sacred and wondrous time, when the beloved Maggid of Dubno was one of the unrecognized and anonymous Jews. As to their epic style, their acuity, their reflection of the wisdom of life, and the deep love for the simple, poor Jewish folk, these oral tales stand – as a monument to these people – certainly not from the tales, which the *Maggid's* son, Rabbi Yitzhak Krantz, and the *Maggid's* disciple, Rabbi Berish Flamm, constructed out of the residual vignettes and synopses. No, they supersede them. It is especially the oral tales, with their character, that give us a key and a revealing look into the stories that have been committed to writing, which are woven in, like examples and parables in the sermons of the books of the *Maggid* of Dubno. There, they are dry and without force, documented by editors. The oral tales have survived in their fuller simplicity, and the wondrous and pithy epic form, with which the *Maggid* of Dubno would tell them for the masses of attentive Jews.

These tales are divided into two parts: oral tales that the *Maggid* of Dubno told in the midst of a sermon, or related in an encounter situation that he panned to participate in. In these specific stories, there is a lot of sarcasm, a lot of irony, and in addition, satirical portraits of the powerful and wealthy Jews. The haughtiness of wealthy Jewish people, in contrast to the simple, spirituality of the poor folk. There are, however, tales that Jews tell about the *Maggid* of Dubno. In these stories, eager for his fantasies, they attempted to stress in the presentation, the wondrous modesty and the good-hearted persona of the Jewish folk base. The modest man, who did not take heed of his own scholarliness (in all, the *Maggid* of Dubno was also a Head of a yeshiva), took no heed of his own importance, and the regard shown him by the Vilna *Gaon,* and by the other great Torah scholars of his day, he nevertheless held as his most sacred duty, and as

the highest ethical calling, to go among the simple, poor people, to become one of them, to lighten their needs and exigencies – indeed, this very self-effacing s c h o l a r and Jewish intellectual, took the impoverished life of the simple Jew as a model for the greatest ideals and spiritual concepts. Poor Jews felt themselves uplifted by the base of the *Maggid's* teachings, who constantly strived to be one of them, a Jew among the Jewish masses, to speak to Jews in their day-to-day language, in a manner that is simple and comprehensible to them.

In his o w n s p i r i t u a l i t y , the *Maggid* of Dubno identified himself entirely with the spirit of the Jew from the ordinary masses.

**5**

The concept of equality stands out among the great ideals and spiritual values of democracy: E q u a l i t y w i t h collective humankind. There are two ways to achieve spiritual equality. First: pantheistic self-effacement and pantheistic goodness. It is the dimension of elevation, in which every single individual sees in the general populace a dimension of existence of the highest worlds and highest being. Love of fellow man as a pantheistic *mythos* – this was the self-effacement and the love of a fellow Jew [that characterized] Hasidism. Hasidism does not possess the love for the poor and powerless individual, but rather [a love for] the divine substance in man. Love of the God-mythos in man. The love of a fellow Jew, manifested in Hasidism, was at its heart, the unrequited ecstasy for the love of God. Second, there is however, another way, a realistic s e l f - e f f a c e m e n t , a realistic love. A love of fellow man, that comes from a recognition of human fallibility. What is Man, but that which you put upon him... etc. What is often said, what is Man in the great cosmic scheme of things? What is this drop of water in the endless and storm-tossed oceans? Throughout life, Man fonds himself in a state of helplessness. He is constantly powerless against the impulses and instincts of his very being. Those very impulses and instincts that make up the majority of the fabric of the human being. Complete powerlessness against one's very own being – that is man. Not in the fantastic divinity of the human being, but rather in the primitive and animal underworld of humanity – there is where one must find human impotence in dealing with his own impulses. Every attempt, made by a human being, to free himself from the animal hell within him, is worthy of high praise. Man – is firstly sinful, and engaged in heroic struggles with sin. In the end, one cannot expect too much from Man. One must be adamant with him. It is necessary to believe rather his g o o d n a t u r e than in the reality of his ethical achievements. Being good to a person, because he is powerless against the world. Being good to a person – because man is tragic in his helplessness, and helplessness is the dialectic of human existence. Such a goodness is more ironic than ecstatic; more resigning than demanding. Many great moralists traveled along this path. Not along the path of the godliness of Man, but along the path of trying to understand Man. This is the essential difference between the righteousness of man as practiced by the *Hasidim*, and that of the general class of the righteous *Mitnagdim*. With regard to this specific detail, the *Maggid* of Dubno was fully in the camp of the righteous thinker of the *Mitnagdim*. In his relationship to people, and in his practice of charity, he was very discreet, and hid the sad irony of someone who understood humanity [so well]. In his parable about the blind, he tells of his relationship to people and their helplessness. We have yet another parable in this genre. A parable about someone who is deaf, and someone who is lame:

A deaf person and a lame person, who went from house-to-house, went into partnership. The lame person sat up on the deaf man's back. Both went around all over the city, from house-to-house begging.

On one occasion, the two partners pass a house, where a wedding was in progress. The lame person heard the musicians playing. He had a desire to dance. But how can he dance, since he has no legs? Pity the deaf man, who didn't even hear the music. – Dance a little, jump a bit, I'm happy – the lame man shouted to the deaf man. The deaf man – hears neither the lame man, nor the music. What does the lame person do? He takes a bottle of strong drink out of his pocket, and he gives the deaf man a swallow. The deaf man partakes of the drink, gets a bit happy, and his legs begin to dance. The lame man gives him another swallow, and yet another swallow. The deaf man began to dance with all his might. The lame person, who was sitting on his back, raised himself up and down. And so, in this manner, they both danced. The lame person, because of the music, and the deaf man because of the liquor.

How ironic this is for the thoughts of people! How ironic this is for the play of the illusions of his will and the illusions of his possibilities! No. One cannot demand too much of Man. He needs to be loved for his faults This is the moral core of the preaching of the *Maggid* of Dubno. His tales have only meant to illustrate the character and the condition of

human a c t i v i t y . Loving Man in the state of his unaided poverty!

When the *Maggid* of Dubno stood in the pulpit, wrapped in his prayer shawl, and spoke to Jews, he did not frighten them with the fires of Hell, as did the later, renown *Kelemer Maggid*. The *Maggid* of Dubno offered solace to Jews. He wanted to set them on the path of righteousness with the deepest love. On the r i g h t w a y . This is the path of inner tranquility and the world happiness of the u p s t a n d i n g h u m a n b e i n g . Righteousness – this was the single a c t i v i t y for Man, which is attached to a c h i e v e m e n t .

The *Maggid* of Dubno conducted himself like a holy ascetic and demanded the most stringent of discipline from himself. But this only – and throughout – pertained to him alone; to his own person. From others, he demanded less. As much as a Jew was able to do good, the *Maggid* of Dubno would elevate this to the highest 'golden' state of Jewish [good] works, and had a positive relationship to it. Eliciting such occurrences for Jews, the *Maggid* of Dubno thought to be his highest calling. The full hearts of the simple Jews opened to him in their efforts. In the midst of a congregation of simple attentive Jews, he would tremble with inner reverence.

Apart from the great demands that he made of himself, and apart from the profound insights and compassion in connection with others, we have yet another portrait that Rabbi Berish Flamm wrote in the introduction to **Sefer-HaMidot**. Rabbi Berish Flamm portrays a typical day in the life of the *Maggid* of Dubno. It is very much like a characteristic portrait of the day in the life of a Jewish *Tzaddik*. It is an unforgettable portrait, whether for a cultural-historian, or a writer of *belle lettres*, who wishes to write about those times and about those Jews. I do not want to translate the text to Yiddish, and prefer to leave it in the sacred, untrammeled, but reverent holy tongue of the original, as written by Rabbi Berish Flamm, so that the reader may enjoy all of the nuances:[147]

> His time and minutes were limited to the *Tzaddik*, of blessed memory, and he did not want to squander time to record in writing all of his the new ideas, as would be the usual custom, and to explain it all for every reader. And he did not record each and every one, in order that it be a memorial to himself, his goodness, his devotion and piety, for he rose, like a lion at the middle of every night (also on the Sabbath and Holidays), and went to the *Bet HaMedrash* to pray at midnight, and wept with a bitter soul over the destruction of the Temple of our Lord. Afterwards, he would study until the hour of dawn drew nigh, when he would go to the mikva for purification, and then when the light of day arrived, he would don his *tallit* and *tefillin*, and he would continue to wear them until after the [afternoon] *Mincha* service. And he would pray in the manner of the *Tzaddikim* of old, of whom it was said, 'L e t t h e p e o p l e s e e [in] y o u a [veritable] s u n .' And when he donned his *tallit* and *tefillin*, he would turn himself into the wall, and despite the fact that he was a man of considerable physical stature, he would bend his entire height, and stood bowed [in this manner], until he had completed his prayers, not raising a hand, and not moving a leg, facing neither right nor left, like a slave who is standing before his master. And the seat that was in front of his visage on the eastern wall was always as like a stream of water flowing before him, and this was done faithfully also on the Sabbath and holidays, to the point that for every minute out of all the minutes of the day, his eyes would be pouring forth water [sic: tears]. And after the morning *Shakharit* prayers, he would learn a *Mishnah* lesson, and *Gemara* until midday.
> And afterwards, he would go to take some food, and would do so while wearing tefillin, with his face covered, until he arrived at his home. And there he would uncover his face, and eat his meal in this way. Afterwards, he would return to the Bet HaMedrash, and study with the Yeshiva. And his custom was on every day, in the midst of his study, to walk from the Yeshiva to the prayer stand on which lay a *Siddur Kol Bo*[148] and he would recite several chapters from the Psalms, with much weeping, and he would then return to the Yeshiva and study a lesson that was his, with them (*Baal HaTurim*). And he did this every single day of the year. And he took no notice of what this was all about. And when this 'holy ark' of a man departed this life, and they escorted him to his final resting place in the cemetery, the *Shames* of the *Bet HaMedrash* said, that he thought he knew what his weeping was

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147 We will not abide by this restriction. The translation into English follows.

148 An especially comprehensive edition of the prayer book. *Kol Bo* in Hebrew literally means 'everything in it.'

all about. The departed, of blessed memory, had secretly ordered him, that if he is informed of anyone in the city who has become distressed, that he should be informed. Now the city of Zamość is city with a large population, is it not, and many they continue to increase. And he would then advise him every single day, that so-and-so was sick, may the Lord spare us, or such-and-such a woman was having difficulty in delivering a child, and similar incidents as they came to pass. These things were said by the *Shammes*. And when he was occupied with the study of the *Gemara* and the *Tosafot*[149] commentaries, his [intellectual] power and strength was readily apparent, as was his wisdom and understanding, because many times he would explain a particularly difficult *Tosafot* by using a weighty parable.[150]

We have already related how the *Maggid* of Dubno wished to spare the sickly and weak scholars from hearing his sermons – sermons that elicited tears, and spiritual human emotions of being moved, from the listening audience, and the need for taking stock of one's own self. But as much as the *Maggid* of Dubno wanted to spare others, he made the greatest demands of himself, and spared himself of nothing. In order to deepen his own understanding, he took upon himself the burden of suffering an anonymous exile. This also belongs to the ethical characteristics of that old Jewish way of life. The modern man has accustomed himself to the notion, that it is entirely possible that double bookkeeping can take place between the demands of the mind, and the experienced reality of personal life; That the w o r d has nothing to do with the deed. Than no one needs to look into another's personal books, and that s p i r i t u a l l y , it is permissible to allow oneself to be led by people whose life is a screaming contradiction to the ideals that they disseminate. The refined man of culture accepts words at face value, as if they are as good as gold. This has had no small impact on the frightening deterioration of modern culture.

Those Jews, in former times, knew nothing of this double bookkeeping. The truth of, and the deep responsibility of a person for, his word and thought, was held very high and was profound to them. Man yet had a sense of the importance of his ability to understand. He, the person, that is, is not a bare windmill, which rotates in the wind and doesn't grind any flour. No matter how talented or oratorically gifted a *Maggid* among the Jews might be, if the substance of his personality and his deeds, are not in alignment with his words, he was not allowed to ascend the pulpit to speak before a Jewish audience. In the *Pinkas* of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot*, there is a special amendment against immoral preachers. This amendment is signed on Monday, 9 Ellul, 5383 (1623).

The larger the persona of the *Maggid* of Dubno grew, the louder his name rung out among the Jewish masses, the more rigorously and attentively he conducted his own personal self-scrutiny, and weighed his deeds and his deepest feelings and thoughts. If he felt a moral necessity to abruptly abandon the ringing heights of his reputation, and anonymously blend in with nameless people – he would do so immediately. But this did not suffice for him. He did not document his sermons and parables. He did not hold himself worthy of writing books. Books would have exuded the odor of popularity and fame. The *Maggid* of Dubno saw his life's goal only in the context of a living, loving relationship with Jews.

With himself, in the focus of his efforts, he did take an accounting. A demanding accounting. He kept, so to speak, a diary. Not to be published. He wrote it up only for himself. For himself to take account, and for himself to occupy the quiet, self-effacing personal expressions of a man with his kind of soul.

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149 These are one of the two major commentaries that accompany the plaintext of the *Gemara*. The majority of the other commentary, is that of *Rashi,* who did not, however, complete his work for the entire Talmud.

150 *Sefer HaMidot* of our Teacher Rabbi Yaakov Dubno.... 1862, Introduction, page 4.

## 6

*Page 174:* *A Fragment of the 'Rynek,' an entrance between the covered walkways.*

I have striven to abbreviate the contributions that the *Maggid* of Dubno made to Jewish culture, and the history of its condition, in the form of short sketches.[150] It will be a labor that will attract gratitude for the one who would undertake to broaden and deepen the development of this material. Developing it either from the perspective of that former era, or from the perspective of that onetime Jewish personality and the Jewish masses. I would like to indicate further about one important fact – and this is related to the history of Yiddish literature and its continuity.

Yiddish literature has one principal critical tendency: this very tendency served as the formative concept of our great writers. It was very pronounced in the case of I. L. Peretz. To this day, it remains as the [essential] h i s t o r i c c o n c e p t of Yiddish literature. Through every substantive literature, a specific h i s t o r i c c o n c e p t runs through it like a red thread.

This very tendency was a radical challenge to the entire to-date ideological outlook of the minds of Jewish history. The new Yiddish literature took upon itself to push r e a l Jewish life, and the living Jewish masses, as the principal vehicle of historical Jewish development. It was up to the new Yiddish literature to demonstrate that J e w i s h s p i r i t u a l i t y is only, so to speak, the c o n c e p t u a l superstructure over the vital continuity of the Jewish collective. The Yiddish authors attempted to portray the Jewish person, and through him – meaning the Jewish person – portray the J e w i s h I d e a l . It was desired to give the historical concept of Jewish history an historical [physical] body, and a corporeal vehicle for its conveyance. The J e w i s h P e r s o n carries – psychologically – the J e w i s h I d e a l . The concept of Jewish history does not swim through the air like some disembodied abstraction, and like some astral manifestation. The principal tendencies of the new Yiddish literature were: to bring out the Jewish person out to confront the idealistic demands of Jewish history. These are the great contributions of Yiddish literature, and its historical a c h i e v e m e n t s . The most important task of the history of Yiddish literature would specifically have been to research, and to discover and unearth, the well springs and pools from which this very exceptionally positive and important and o v e r - a r c h i n g tendency emerged.

In connection to this matter, the personality of the *Maggid* of Dubno – as well as others, who had similar personalities – were muted in the context of our cultural history, with an incomprehensible casualness. To this day, the incorrect interpretation continues in our cultural history, namely that: c u l t u r e i n Y i d d i s h has to do with popular folk culture, and the genesis of h u m a n i s t i c Yiddish literature must be sought only in folk-primitives, such as Purim plays, and the general 'close-to-the-people' Yiddish literature – in the literature for women, and the Yiddish of the unlettered. This interpretation originates from the atavistic feeling, that Yiddish is some sort of an unrefined, living handmaiden. Never mind that we, the radicals – hold this handmaiden in higher regard in both taste and status. A culture in Y i d d i s h is indeed the embodiment of the struggle of the people against the 'top ten thousand' of the 'aristocratic' culture. But there is nothing if not an injustice in the one-sidedness in the dialectic of history. History, indeed, consists of uncompromising battles, but it also consists of internal c o m p r o m i s e s . Especially in the dialectic, these compromises partially play no small role in these battles. The syntheses are not any less important than the antitheses. Perhaps even more important. The syntheses are in part even more revolutionary than the antitheses, insofar, that they push the history further, and open up new perspectives. Throughout it is true: the humanistic tendencies and the deep historical feel, that Jewish l i f e is the essential vehicle of Jewish history, assumed a radical and colorful form in the lower classes of the Jewish people. A form that took a position against the o f f i c i a l Jewish spirituality, a form of a will to show the values of the true goodness of the people. The spirituality of the uneducated Jews. But it is also true throughout, that up in the spheres of the official spirituality, not everything was held to be n e g a t i v e with regard to the lower classes. We find a more complete [view] among the official Jewish intellectuals, who had a more profound look and an assessment: that is, that the well springs of all Jewish spirituality flow entirely in the living Jewish reality and in the living and middle-class Jewish person. In the history of the general

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[150] I shudder to think what the writer considers a 'comprehensive' review ! -JSB

Jewish theology, revolutionary tendencies, and a revolutionary calling, to the simple Jewish person and to the Jewish street, manifested themselves not only once. These tendencies in Jewish theology also belong to the history of Yiddish literature. By and large, such tendencies are found in the mystic theology. Jewish mysticism had barely become pantheistic, when it was forced to see the living, real person within the ambit of the stuff of creation. Hasidism went even further. In many Hasidic books, we find a sanctification of the living language of the Jewish person. A r e v e r e n c e for Yiddish. The ecstatic Rabbis wove entire passages of Yiddish into the Hebrew of their books. In their divinely aroused ecstasy, they held the s p o k e n Yiddish word to be on the same plane as the sanctified language of the Yiddish book. We find examples of this in the classic books of the Hasidic literature, as in the **Bet Aharon** of Rabbi Aharon Karliner, the **Kedushat Levi** of R' Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev, and the books of R' Nachman of Bratislav. Even though R' Nachman did not write his books personally, his scribe, R' Nachman's student, R' Natan, followed the style and the manner of R' Nachman's level. It would be an act of the greatest justice to issue an anthology of the wondrous ecstatic pieces of Y i d d i s h in the Hasidic literature.

In the ranks of theses very synthesizers, and seekers of accommodation between the Holy Writ of the Torah and the reality of the living Jewish person, between abstract Jewish thought and real Jewish life – stood the *Maggid* of Dubno. He wanted to see the realization and embodiment of the lofty and abstract concepts of Jewish spirituality in the deeds of simple Jewish folk. 'Israel and Torah are one and the same' – was the conceptual view of the *Maggid* of Dubno. Love of his fellow Jew, was for him, the equivalent of love for the Jewish God. In this respect, he was completely one of the most important pioneers of the new Jewish humanism. The new Yiddish literature – in its faithfulness to principle – also sought to generate a synthesis between the h i s t o r i c Jewish spirit, the real Jewish spirit, and the living Jewish person. I would not want to count the *Maggid* of Dubno among those writers, whose inclination in the Yiddish literature was o n l y to see the naturalistic condition of life, the day-to-day realism of Jewish life. A Jewish realism, without an ideological perspective for the existence of Jews in the world. The *Maggid* of Dubno certainly had no taste for this kind of a Judaism. The *Maggid* of Dubno belongs – historically – to the class of Jewish writers, who wanted to see Yiddish literature and the elevation of the dialectic of Jewish history. [They believed in] the spiritual levels of the Jewish person. I am referring here to Peretz and the [entire] Peretz school. Peretz was the golden link in the chain, that stretched [starting from] the Maggid of Dubno. But with Peretz, the circle of development bent back on itself. The *Maggid* of Dubno sought the line of Jewish thought, that extends – in the depths – to the Jewish person. Peretz began to search for the line from the Jewish person that extends – in the depths – to Jewish thought. The *Maggid* of Dubno wished to see the Jewish p e r s o n a l i t y in the form of the Jewish c o l l e c t i v e . Peretz began to wanting to see the form of the Jewish c o l l e c t i v e , in the elevated form of the Jewish p e r s o n a l i t y .

# Historical Data & Facts

Isolated episodes of the history of Zamość can be found sown and strewn in a variety of places – in diaries, memories and studies. The compilers tell retrospectively, about occurrences that have a relationship to Jewish community life in Zamość, that cannot otherwise be found in the works of our *Pinkas*. These specific details often round out specific chapters of the Jewish history of our settlement. Many times, they are also illustrated to the details being presented.

Once again, we bring here a series of facts and data to [support] the history of the Zamość community, extracted from a variety of sources. A reference is given for each source.

## A. The Decrees of 1648 In Zamość

There remains a detailed chronology of eye-witness accounts from the terrifying chain of slaughter of the mid-17th century, which is known in Jewish history as the Decrees of 1648 & 1649, from one individual who was in the midst of these events that transpired, from Rabbi Nathan Neta ben The Holy One, Our Teacher and Rabbi R' Moshe. This chronology, under the title, *Yevayn Metzullah*,[151] has become one of the most important sources regarding the history of that bloody epoch. It has been shown that the facts, data, and even numbers, that are presented in *Yevayn Metzullah*, agree with documents from non-Jewish sources. *Yevayn Metzullah* was first printed in the year 5413 (1663) in Venice (Italy). What this means, is that it appeared in the heat of the moment, when the events were still warm, and had not yet become cooled off by forgetfulness.
We, again, bring here that part of *Yevayn Metzullah* that has a bearing on Zamość. Therefore, we also include a fragment regarding a settlement from which the invaders came to Zamość.
Our excerpt is from the collected telling, The 1648 Decrees which appeared in 1938 in Vilna, published by the Yiddish Scientific Institute [sic: YIVO]. This collection includes the work of:

1) Dr. Yaakov Shatzky - The historical-critical introduction to *Yevayn Metzullah* of R' Nathan Neta Hanover;
2) Dr. Ze'ev-Wolf Latzky-Bartoldi – A translation of the *Yevayn Metzullah* of R' Nathan Neta Hanover's *Yevayn Metzullah*;
3) Dr. Y. Israelson – Nathan Neta Hanover, his life and literary activity.

Our excerpt is actually from Z. W. Latzky-Bartoldi's translation. We have modified nothing. Not in the style, not in the orthography.

### ...The Decree Against the Sacred Community of Narol

And from there, they went off to the sacred community of Narol and besieged the city. Tens of thousands of Jews and thousands of nobles were gathered into that place, and not one of the Greeks[152] were there. And there were three towns there, one next to the other, and Jews wanted to flee from there, but the ruler of the city did not allow them to, and said to them: Let us put up a resistance, let us war against them, as was done against them in other fortified cities. And after the enemy had besieged the city, they sought to make an accommodation with the city residents, and Jews also

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151 Translated, it is '*The Muck*.' It would not stretch a point to translate this as 'In deep sh**.'

152 In *A Dictionary of International Slurs* by Abraham Roback (Sci-Art Publishers, 1944; reprint by Maledicta Press, 1979), the following observation is made on page 142, about the Yiddish word *yovn*: "A Greek." According to the Hebrew, but in Yiddish the word signifies a *Russian Trooper*, a roughneck.

wanted to do so; but the ruler of the city did not permit this, and battle was engaged in for three days continuously, and a large number of the Cossacks were killed. Afterwards, the Oppressor, Chmiel (Chmielnicki)[153], may his name be obliterated, sent a large army, like the sand at the sea shore, and on 17 Heshvan 5409 (1649) the city was captured, and first and foremost, the ruler of the city was executed; his name was Lashch, and he was skinned alive, and all manner of torture known to the world was inflicted upon him; afterwards, Jews were slaughtered in the amount of twelve thousand souls, by all manner of gruesome deaths. A large number were drowned in the water[154], several hundred Jews had locked themselves in the synagogue, so they broke down the doors of the synagogue, and first slaughtered all of the Jews, after which they set fire to the synagogue with all the dead inside. A slaughter of the type that took place in N a r o l had not happened anywhere else in Poland, and a large number were taken by the Tatars[155] into captivity. They burned the three towns, and turned them into mounds, analogous to Sodom and Gomorrah. A woman told me, who had remained alive among those who were slaughtered, that several hundred women and children had been left alive, and a small number of men. They had no form of food for five days straight, and were forced to eat the flesh of human beings: they would cut off the limbs of the dead, and roast them over a fire and eat it. Fully thousands of the dead were eaten by dogs and swine. After this, the survivors in Narol send representatives to P r z e m y s l with several hundred gulden to bring linens and burial shrouds and then buried the slaughtered dead. May God repay them for their acts.

## The Decree Upon the Sacred Community of Zamość

And the three left that place, the Oppressor, Chmiel, may his name be obliterated, with his entire host, the Tatars and the Greeks, a sizeable army, comparable tot eh sand at the seashore. And they laid siege to the sacred community at Z a m o ś ć . And the city is a fortress, like no other, with a double wall and a moat with water all around.' And as soon as the enemy drew near to the city, the residents of the city burned all of the houses that were near the wall, in order to prevent the enemy from concealing themselves there, and they did not permit the enemy to approach the city closer than a distance of a half mile, and that is how it remained for many days. And it was during this time that they spread out through all the neighboring communities and perpetrated enormous slaughter, in **Tomaszow, Szczebrzeszyn, Turobin, Hrubieszow, Bilgoraj, Goraj, Krasnik** (sic: Lubelski), they butchered thousands and tens of thousands of Jews. Also, in the country of V o l h y n i a , in the communities of **Ludomir, Ljuboml', Lutsk, Krzemieniec**, and their neighboring communities, they carried out huge slaughtering, and killed thousands of Jews, and in Krzemieniec, one of the enemy took the blade of a *Shokhet,* and used it to slaughter several hundred Jewish children and asked his companion whether it was *Kosher* or *Trayf.* His companion answered: *trayf,* and he threw one of the corpses to the dogs, and seeing that, he took another slaughtered child, took it to the slaughterhouse, opened up the body and asked the same question. His companion then answered, yes, this is *Kosher.* He then cut up the body as is usually done with goats and sheep, and he carried it on a spit through the streets of the city and shouted to the crowd in a loud voice: who would like to deal in goats and sheep? May God take revenge for their spilled blood.

In the dense overcrowding near B i k h o v , the wild beasts pursued several wagon loads of Jews, and slaughtered everyone. They did the same with other communities, in a manner that it is not even possible to describe in writing, they brought more than seven hundred communities to ruin, all cities and towns up to the River Vistula. And they laid siege to the city of Z a m o ś ć for many days, but could not capture it, because there, there was a German ruler by the name of W e i u r , with a six thousand man army, also Germans, and they shot down from the ramparts with mortars, and killed many of the enemy. However, disease raged within the city walls, and there was a great famine and many thousands of Jews died.

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153 The leader of the Cossack rebellion of 1648 was the Hetman, Bohdan Chmielnicki (Chmielnicki). Despite being educated in his youth by Jesuits, he did not embrace Roman Catholicism, but early in life became a champion of the Greek Orthodox faith, to which most of the Cossacks and the Little-Russian peasants belonged. This may further account for the use of the sobriquet 'Greeks,' to characterize the Russian rabble that persecuted the Jews.

154 Narol is on the River Tanew, which may have been the water referred to in this narrative.

155 History records that Chmielnicki entered into a secret treaty with the Tatars.

Seeing as an extended amount of time had passed, the enemy hit upon a stratagem: to create a snake out of fire by means of magic, and to release it into the air, and this would be a sign for them: if the snake turns its head to the city, then they will capture the city at that time; but if the head of the snake turns towards them, then they will have to flee. And it was in the middle of the night, and they perceived the snake in the air, standing for a period of a half an hour, with its head facing the city, and afterwards, it turned towards toe Cossacks and the Tatars, and they understood that this was a bad omen, and a tragedy awaits them. They immediately sent emissaries to the residents of the city, and permitted them to say: is it not better for you to arrive at a compromise with us, similar to the great city of L v o v did, rather than starve to death.

And as soon as the residents of the city heard this, they couples action to what they had heard, and negotiated with the enemy for a sum of twenty thousand gulden. Afterwards, the Tatars and the Greeks drew near to gate, and brought with them a host of prisoners to release. The Jews of the city then rescued several hundred captives. May God pay them back their just desserts.

And from there, the Oppressor Chmiel, may his name be obliterated, went with his host, with his Greeks and Tatars, and turned towards L u b l i n , of the four large communities of Poland, whose like in Torah scholarship, greatness and charity was not to be found anywhere else in the country. And the residents of the city fled across the River Vistula.

## B. A Jewish Lady Cook from Zamość for the Jewish Trade Guests in Breslau in the Year 1697

In the historical periodical Z i o n , which is published in Jerusalem by the Israeli Historical Society, in Volume A-B of 5714 (1954) (19th Year) there is a work by the well-known researcher of the history of the Jews in Germany, Rabbiner Dr. D o v B r i e l i n g , about the commercial ties between the Polish Jews, and the Jews of Breslau in the 1690's (Hebrew citation of the same title given – JSB). Among the list of very important and interesting details about the visiting Jewish traders, we also find a detail, that it was permitted to the Jewish traders to bring a J e w i s h C o o k for the Jewish traders.

From a set of documents cited by Dr. Brieling in the work, he illustrates the constraints that were imposed on Jewish traders, and especially just ordinary Jews, in coming to the fairs in Breslau.

The constraints came in connection with a complaint by the Christian traders, that the Jews were in violation of the well-established rules about their circumstances in the city. The city leader of that period, from Holland, ordered that a formal registration be implemented for all Jews that find themselves at the Elizabeth Fair (November) of the year 1896.[156] This very list encompasses 125 Jews who then resided in Breslau. In accordance with the instructions the list showed the following count of Jews sorted into the following five categories:

Category 1 – Jews who live in Breslau on the basis of protection by the government institutions or important people – 26 Families;
Category 2 – Merchants and Moneychangers – 19 Men;
Category 3 – Jobbers – 30 Men;
Category 4 – Jewish-citizens, appointed people, *shokhtim*, cooks, and others, – 27 Men;
Category 5 – Encompasses a group which is designated as the swindlers and those who do not conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

The city administration prohibited admission to the w o m e n and c h i l d r e n from a set of categories, even on the Fair days. Also, any who happened to be found there, were to be driven out. No manner of intervention helped at all, the city administration would reject every request. In the time of the Krutzim Fair (September) of the year 1697, the Jewish leaders came with a request, that at the very least, Jewish lady workers should be admitted, the cooks, who

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156 This appears to be a misprint. More likely the intent was to say 1696.

were to cook for the guests at the Fair. At that time, the city administration gave the following permission:

> ... the Jews of G l o g a u may bring to the Fair their own cook. For all other Jews, the standard was established that of the three cooks, one would be from Z a m o ś ć or Lissa, one from Z ü l t z and one from Krotoszyn.

Which is what the document says that Dr. Brieling presents:

*Original Text in German, which also has the added phrase "...as the Shammes his wife."*

It is to be understood that the c o o k s were allocated for each of the cities who had their merchants at the Fair, from which it follows that Zamość occupied the s i n g l e place for Jews that was outside the German sphere.
It would be very interesting to have the list of the visitors from Zamość that attended the Breslau Fairs.

M. B.

## C. A Terrible Incident in Zamość in the Year 1727

In the *Vossische Zeitung*, Number 107, 1727, published in Berlin, I found the following notice, which tells a frightening story from Zamość. Because of the rarity of this newspaper, and also because of the historical importance of the fact(s), I render the text here in the original:

*Original German Text from the Newspaper*

From the text, it is clear that in Zamość, in the first half of August 1727, a Jew and a Christian were sentenced to hanging for robbing a church. Later, the magistrate Zamoyski saw fit, apparently at the pleading of the community, to allow the Jew to be given a Jewish burial. His condition, however, was that they also must take down the Christian from the gallows[157], which they did not do. As punishment, the magistrate ordered that the Eldest Rabbis should be arrested, meaning, perhaps, the community elders, and ordered other Jews to disinter the Jewish grave, and once again hang the body on the gallows. This was carried out.

All sources that have a connection to Zamość are silent with respect to this story. A notice, however, can be found apparently taken from a German periodical, whose name was not given, and which is dated: Lublin, 22 June 1727. That is to say, almost at the same time, about such a matter in Zamość:

> On the 19th of this month, in Zamość, five Jews were sentenced to be hung for a theft. Seeing that they had taken on the Catholic religion, they were only decapitated, and buried in the cemetery.

This public notice can be found in *Szkice i opowidania historyczne*, vol. II Poznan 1863, pp. 212-213 by *Jarochowski*.
It is clear that both of these notices concern themselves with the same terrible incident. Six Jews and one Christian were sentenced for robbing a church. The six Jews were sentenced to death, and five of them hoped, that by converting to Catholicism, they will be able to save their lives. So they were not hung, but only decapitated, but buried in the cemetery. The Jew who did not want to convert, was hung, which was considered to be a shameful punishment.
It would be worth trying to find out more details about this frightful incident, which is nowhere else recalled.

(YIVO Archives, New York, Volume 43, 1952)

**Y. Sh.**

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157 The original German text suggests that the order of the magistrate was to bury the Christian offender first: *"...dass sie erstlich den Christen begraben sollten,....."*

## D. From the *Pinkas*, "The *Hevra Tzedaka-Gedolah*" In Zamość

In the monumental work of Professor S i m c h a A s s a f , Sources of the History of Education in Israel, in Volume 4, p. 138 (Tel-Aviv, 5708 (1948) ), there is found a document (paragraph 120), which is an excerpt from the *Hevra Tzedaka-Gedolah* of Zamość. Once again, we bring word for word the text of the original and also the translation into Yiddish.[158]

### 120. From the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra Tzedaka Gedolah* in Zamość, found in the Library of Jewish Scientific Studies in Warsaw, 106

The officers and *Gabbaim* of the *Hevra Talmud-Torah* presented their words to the officers, the *Gabbaim* of the *[Hevra] Tzedaka-Gedolah*, in the matter that while the *Hevra Talmud-Torah* is in alignment that the burden falls upon them to continuously provide students for Torah studies, and that their income is not sufficient to pay for the instruction of the children of the poor, from whom Torah will [indeed] emerge, there is nothing with which to pay the teachers. And so they had a custom, each Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and on the Three Holidays (Sukkot, Passover and Shavuot) to take out a Torah scroll from their synagogue and call the members of the *Hevra* , and those who were non-members [to an aliyah], in order that through donations and pledges, offered by people who were called to the Torah, monies would be generated from which the previously mentioned purpose could be funded. Also, the Hevra had the custom of calling people to the Torah two times, once when the Torah was read in the Bet HaMedrash, and the second time when it was read in the synagogue. On the first time, the *Hevra* would conduct the reading under the *fordshtibl,* [159] of the small *Bet HaMedrash*. On this day, the Gabbaim of the *Talmud-Torah Hevra* came to the officers of the *[Hevra] Tzedaka-Gedolah*, and paid in a substantial sum of money for the privilege of reading the Torah first in their *shtibl.* They paid the full amount, and from then on, will not be able to be removed from this position, or they will have to pay the prevailing rate every year. In order that this remain as a permanent record, and that the truth [of what took place] not be diminished, we have written this down with a pen and in lead, in the Pinkas of the officers and Gabbaim of the *[Hevra] Tzedaka-Gedolah*, and we have accepted upon ourselves, and those who will come after us, to fulfill what has been written above, on Friday, the Third Day of Hol HaMoed Passover Sukkot, 5429 (1768).

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It is clear from this document, that there was a Pinkas of the designated *Tzedaka-Gedolah Hevra*. As to what exactly its functions consisted of, we do not know. Here, only its obligation in its relationship to the *Hevra Talmud-Torah* is discussed. This document has come to light only through the circumstance that it discusses the e d u c a t i o n o f t h e p o o r , about which Professor S i m c h a A s s a f was assembling documentation for his monumental work. This excerpt was brought to him from Warsaw, prior to the Holocaust. Who knows what happened to this *P i n k a s* . In any event, the Zamość *Pinkas*, which is written up by Ephraim Kupperman in our *Pinkas* (see pp. 103 ff.) Is not the one of the *Hevra Tzedaka-Gedolah.*

In a footnote to this specific notice, the editor for Professor Simcha Assaf, ע"ה, makes mention that this specific excerpt was send at the time by Dr. Y. Heilperin (today a professor of the University of Jerusalem).

And so, we inquired of Professor Heilperin about this matter. It is appropriate to record his reply here:

> ... I had the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra [Tzedaka-]Gedolah* of Zamość in my hands, in the Tolmaczka Library many years ago, and I no longer remember what it looked like. From what I can remember, it had the Codex Number 105 ( printed as 106 in Assaf's work) and it had approximately more than a hundred pages. Apart from that excerpt that I sent to Assaf (which went into his book, Sources of

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158 In what follows, only one English translation is provided.

159 The author indicates some uncertainty about the word that appears here. However, from prior text, this appears to refer to a sort of vestibule that was an architectural feature of some buildings. Possibly also should be rendered as a *fodershtibl*, or *foderhoyz*.

the History of Education in Israel) I made note of a number of other details for my own purposes, that relate to the outlays of this *Hevra*. Only one detail among those line items noted by me possibly has a local interest, and that is: among the expenditures of the *Hevra* for the period 20 Sivan to 20 Tammuz 5538 (1778) the following line item is found.:

**"For the release of captives, those people of our congregation who were imprisoned in the Rathaus, six pieces of gold [sic: gulden]."**

**M. B.**

## E. The Libel Against the Zamość Jews in 1870 and Illuminations from the Memoirs of [I. L.] Peretz

In his memoirs[160], Peretz relates that a bound soldier was once found in Zamość, that had stood guard over the strongbox in Polk. The strongbox had been broken open, and the inside box with the money in it had vanished. The soldier, understandably, was arrested, and he declared that Jewish thieves had done this. The Russian commandant demanded that the magistrate provide a full list of professional Jewish thieves in Zamość. Several Jews were arrested, and they were in danger of being sentenced to death. The Jews of Zamość immediately began to exert themselves, to have the innocent released. Peretz does not say how many Jews were arrested at that time.

In a contemporary German-Jewish periodical, there is however a judgement regarding this episode. First of all, we find out that this took place in the year 1870, and the number of those arrested was eight.

Peretz tells, that after all the individual and community pleading didn't help, at one of the gatherings, it was decided to let the outside world know about the libel against the innocent Jews in Zamość.

The outside world at that time, understandably was out of the country, and along with that, it implied notifying those important Jewish personalities that had access to the corridors of power. Such privileged Jews at that time were: [Sir] Moses Montefiore in London, and [Isaac] Adolphe Crémieux in Paris.

The question that stood on the day's agenda of those meetings in Zamość, was how does one reach those prominent ombudsmen, because sending a letter through the postal system was a great danger.

In his own impressionistic fashion, Peretz tells that the community decided on a means, that someone will go in harm's way, by crossing the border in Tomaszow, all of three miles away, and go from there to Lemberg, where there is a Assessor, Löwenstein, and then send a telegram from there to Sir Moses Montefiore in London and to Crémieux in Paris...

Peretz tells further, that such a Jew, and elderly man, was found, who made the dangerous journey to Lemberg, and conveyed the letter to the Assessor Löwenstein, for purposes of causing Montefiore or Crémieux to make the effort on behalf of the hapless Jewish victims of the military libel.

The historical authenticity of Peretz's memory is well established. What is pertinent here, is an analysis of the reason why, that from Zamość, the people specifically chose to go to Lemberg, and specifically to an Assessor by the name of Löwenstein. How is it that, in Zamość, there should even by cognizance that a Rabbiner of this sort is even located there, who was no world figure? Why not [go to] Aharon Jelinek (1820-1893) who since 1865 was the Rabbiner in Vienna, and had a world-recognized name, and was close to the throne of [Kaiser] Franz-Joseph?

First let us see, who this Assessor was, whom Peretz calls Löwenstein. He was named Bernhard Löwenstein. He was

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160 Author's Footnote: I. L. Peretz, "*Complete Works*", "*My Memoirs*". B' 13 "Yiddish" Verlag, New York, 1920.

born in Merzrich (Poldlice) in 1821. In 1862 he was appointed as Rabbiner and Assessor of the German (Progressive) Synagogue in Lemberg, where he passed away in 1889.

It was possible to know of his existence in Zamość, through the local prominent businessman and community leader, Edouard Luxembourg, whose wife Lena, was a sister of the Rabbiner Löwenstein. This very same Luxembourg figures in Peretz's memoirs under the initials E. L.

Peretz tells, that Luxembourg was a German and owned his own building in the city. He even recalls his daughter, who was hunchbacked. This young woman is Rosa Luxembourg, the future-to-be-famous communist.[161] Rosa Luxembourg's grandfather, who was a merchant who dealt in forest products [sic: lumber], had 14 children. Also know to us is Edouard's or Abraham's brother Mottel. Both were enlightened people, and figures who often appeared in the printed lists of exponents of the one-time Hebrew books of the *Haskala.*

It appears that Edouard Luxembourg organized the risky journey of the old man, to his brother-in-law in Lemberg, and it was from him, in the city, that they became aware of the existence of such a Rabbiner in Lemberg.

That this intervention had an effect, we learn from a notice in the previously mentioned German-Jewish periodical. There, the following is related:

> Eight Jews were sentenced to death, because according to eye-witness testimony of several Russian officers, they wanted to rob the military safe. But thanks to the intervention of the *Alliance Israélite [Universelle]*, these eight Jews, who were sentenced to death, were freed and declared innocent.

We learn from the notice that specifically, it was Crémieux who assisted in this matter[162], and that the Rabbiner Löwenstein carried out his mission. The Luxembourgs themselves left Zamość in 1873, and took up residence in Warsaw. In the same year, the Rabbi of Zamość, Rabbi Moshe HaLevi Wohl, passed away, who had also exerted himself considerably to free the arrested Jews. In 1877, Joshua Margolis died, who was Peretz's uncle, who also had intervened in the same issue.

The analysis of this episode, shows again how important and authentic the memories of I. L. Peretz are, as a source for the history of Zamość. It would be worthwhile to bring these memories out with a pro-active historical apparatus.

**Yaakov Shatzky**

(YIVO Volumes, New York, Volume 34, 1952)

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161 Rosalia Luxembourg was born on March 5, 1871 in Zamość in Russian-Poland, daughter of the lumber merchant [*Holzhändlers*] Eliasz Luxembourg and his wife Lena (Line) (née Löwenstein).

162 History tells us that Isaac-Adolphe Crémieux was, for a number of years, the President of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle.*

# The *Haskala* in Zamość

**By Dr. Yaakov Shatzky**

## 1. Historical Development

Before Peretz left his birthplace, the old Zamość *Haskala* [sic: Enlightenment] was still lodged in the consciousness of individuals. Older Zamość residents had preserved the memory of the names of the fathers of the local Enlightenment. Among these fathers, were a number who went on to fame in Berlin, in the Mecca of the development of reason, and they no longer returned home.

Peretz himself recalls one of them in his memoirs. That was R' Israel ben Moshe Zamość (1700-1772). Peretz is knowledgeable enough to tell, that R' Israel was Mendelssohn's Rebbe, and in his day, it was held in Zamość that it was better not to talk about him at all, neither good nor bad.

This neutral position towards one of the most colorful and representative leaders of the old Zamość Enlightenment is very characteristic. This shows, that even in Peretz's time, there were still living specific sympathetic memories about that Yeshiva-*bokhur*, who came to Zamość from small *shtetl* in Eastern Galicia, became a Headmaster of a Yeshiva, and an exceptionally close friend to the teachers of the city. In 1740, he went off to Berlin, where he became friends with the personalities of the emerging Enlightenment movement, became Mendelssohn's Rebbe, became friends with Lessing, and the philosopher Nicholas. Lessing has a very high opinion of Israel Zamość. He wrote that he was a profound and sharp-minded Jew. He carried on an open dialogue in German with Nicholas – a language that he, like many other Eastern-Europeans Autodidactics, quickly mastered. This dialogue, incidentally, was the only one that this member of the Enlightenment carried on in German; his [preferred] language in which to write, was Hebrew.

The Enlightenment of Rabbi Israel Zamość is far from being militant, he expresses himself firstly in opposition to casuistry, and in taking a negative stand toward Hasidism. In this respect, many opponents from the Enlightenment agreed with him, and because of this he was not compelled to specifically declare himself as an explicator. In his interpretations and reviews, which he published in 1773 titled, N e z e r H a D e m a ,[163] his anti-Hasidism is brought out prominently. In his other writings, he was careful ans sought, in a controlled fashion, to create a bridge between faith and reason.

The two greatest scholars in Zamość gave their approval to his book, N e t z a k h Y i s r a e l , which was published in Frankfurt-Oder in 1741. He was able to achieve prominence thanks to this book.

About 1745, Rabbi Israel Zamość leaves Berlin, and takes up residence in Brod, which at that time was an important center of scholarship. He died there in 1772.

The first forerunner of the Galician Enlightenment, who lived in Zamość for a specific length of time, is recalled by Peretz with affection. Rabbi Israel put Zamość on the map of the fledgling *Haskala* leadership. He left the world, not as an outcast from the core foundations of Yiddishkeit, but rather as a harbinger of a new direction, which was received favorably also on the part of many pious Jews of that time.

A little before Rabbi Israel Zamość (in 1732), another local spirit leaves the city, and wanders all the way to Brin (Mern) where he converts and becomes a printer (in the years 1754-1760), and of all things, specifically of Jewish books. As a convert, he is known by the name Franz-Joseph Neumann. His publications played a specific role in the history of Jewish book production, but he personally had no role even in Zamość, and he has been completely forgotten. There were also pious Jews and scholars among the forerunners of the Enlightenment in Zamość. They saw no danger in worldly education, and fought Hasidism, although they explicitly did not become *Maskilim*. One such individual was

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163 The Crown of Tears

the Zamość Rabbi, Israel ben Moshe, who later (1725) died in Salonika on his way to the Holy Land. This Rabbi would attend the Fairs at Leipzig, buy and read German books, and attend concerts. He had an antagonistic posture towards Hasidism, and the members of his generation looked upon him as an Enlightened *Mitnaged.* His renown M i r k e v e t H a M i s h n a h (1751) is justly thought of as book that served to clarify, and was vigorously accepted by *Maskilim.*

The author of M a k h a n e h R e u v e n was also from Zamość, a small book with complex logical discussions about the *Shas*, which was published in 1777 in Livorno. He was called Reuven Zelik ben Eliezer. His father was one of the very wealthy men of the city, and when his businesses went downhill, he, as a young man of 20, decided to move away to Berlin. There, he became an instructor at a Yeshiva of the magnate, Eliyahu Frenkel. It was in his house, that Reuven Zelik wrote the previously mentioned small book, which has in it, something of an Enlightenment approach, even though it is strongly conservative.

People from Zamość, who by chance left their homes, and became partly or fully members of the *Haskala* movement in the outside world, were rather rare. Remaining at home, these individuals stood up for the right to a general education, and argued that this did not contradict the Jewish faith.

Zamość had a name as a scholarly city, and this was no exaggeration. The Jews of Zamość sought books, bought them and guarded them. The great collection in the *Bet HaMedrash* of Zamość was indeed a result of generations-long protected collections in the homes of *balebatim.*

It is necessary to count the Jewish physicians of the city as part of the forerunners of the Enlightenment in Zamość. In 1690, a Jew from Zamość studies medicine in Padua. In the 18th century, several Jews from Zamość study in Frankfurt-Oder. In his application, one of them indicated, that he obtained his preliminary education (in medicine) at the Zamość School. What this might mean, is that he studied with practical physicians [sic: *feldschers*] which were very popular at that time with their practice, and also with their Hebrew-Yiddish medical folklore. A portion of these physicians even had a continuation in the ir own families, for example, R' Moshe Doctor.

In 1778, a Jew, Aharon ben Shlomo (Slomkovich), becomes the area doctor of Zamość. Two years later, a second Jewish doctor arrives – Bernard. There is little known to us about the role that these Jewish physicians played in the cultural life of Zamość. With the exception of single individuals, who were truly radical Maskilim(for example, Dr. Kalmanson of nearby Hrubieszow), these physicians were not active in the Zamość community.

If Zamość entered the mainstream of the *Haskala* movement – and not through the incidental deeds of individuals outside of the city – it was thanks to specific political changes. Since 1772, when the first partition of Poland was implemented, Zamość became a part of the new Austrian Province which was given the name Galicia. On July 25, 1772, the fort at Zamość capitulated to the Austrian forces. On August 24, 1772, the Austrian monarch, Josef II the Enlightened Royal, visited Zamość. Regrettably, there are no memories to tell us about this visit, and we do not know whether an Enlightened group came to greet this man of reason, as was done that same year by the *Maskilim* of Brod. In any event, there were already in Zamość, individuals who sympathized with the royal decree regarding general education for Jews, and probably they participated in the first and last reception that Zamość was compelled to give the Austrian ruler.

In 1788, Naphtali Hertz Homburg (1749-1841) arrives in Zamość, the Great Jewish Inquisitor, whose goal was to open schools for Jewish boys. In Zamość, and in surrounding cities and towns, such as Hrubieszow, Kulikow, Tomaszow, Tarnogrod, etc., such schools were immediately opened, and they had to be supported by Jewish taxes. From what we know, these schools did not survive for any length of time in the Zamość environs, and they were closed well before 1806, at which time they were altogether liquidated.

Another important matter, as it touches upon the spread of German, the language of the Enlightenment, was the colonization sponsored by Josef II of the area around Zamość by Germans, which also included Jews. According to the Patent of March 14, 1784, colonization by German peasants began, partly on private sources, and part based on the

outlays of the Austrian monarchy. In total, about 231 German families were settled on land, and 78 Jewish (365 souls). German laborers were also brought to Zamość. The daughters of these German colonists became servants in Zamość, and many of them worked in Jewish homes, where German was already spoken, that is, in the houses of the educated. In general, this colonization effort did not take. Part of the colonists did remain, and Peretz [sic: in his time] still recognized them as such, but the larger part of them later emigrated to America. German, however, in this manner, left traces in many Jewish homes.

The Austrian officials were not stingy with their praise for the dynamic role of Zamość Jews in economic development of the newly formed province. If it was possible to obtain something to be sold – they wrote – we can thank the Jewish merchants of Zamość, and other cities. Also many foreign visitors to Zamość are not stingy in their praise of Jews, with whom they could converse – a sign that German had penetrated into many Jewish homes.

In 1823, the Zamość District numbered 18,823 families, out of which, 1,656, that is, 8.8% were Jewish. In 1780, when Zamość became a central city, there were 870 Jewish families in the cities, and 788 in the towns. It is easy to permit ones's self the assumption, that most of the 870 families lived in Zamość proper, in view of the fact that the other cities were, in reality, [nothing more than] villages.

During the Austrian Era, an internal migration also took place. Jews from Galicia settled in Zamość, and the opposite. Two essential facts stand out in front one's eyes: Zamość provides valuable people to the cities of Galicia, and even to other countries, as is also the opposite. These valuable people marry with families outside of the city, and in this manner, a migration of the educated element gets underway. Jews from Zamość are found in Frankfurt-am-Main, 11 in Berlin, 12 in Amsterdam. Among the members of the small, fledgling Jewish community in St. Petersburg one finds a Jew from Zamość.

People with means used every opportunity to leave Zamość. Principally, it was the frequent wars, sieges, and plagues, that destroyed Jewish life. Those that could be away from the city for at least part of the time, and even uprooting themselves from the country entirely. Merchants from Zamość, who would often travel to fairs, utilized their effective contacts, and saw their way to settle in those places. There was, however, an element who was connected through their livelihood with the armed forces stationed in the Zamość fortress. Many of them, in fact, settled there because of this. This fact is of great significance, for the reason that Zamość becomes the little Paris, about which Peretz writes as do many non-Jewish memoir writers. Because of this permanent influx and outflow of Jewish livery service people, a part of which were already converted, and their children, especially the daughters, they became linked and bound to the Officer class, causing Zamość to acquire more of a cosmopolitan character. Peretz recalls this in relation to his own era.

A short overview of that dynamic military era in the history of Zamość, as a city in general, and as a fortress in particular, will bring out this moment clearly.

On the eve of the first partition of Poland, Zamość lived through two Russian sieges, in 1768 and 1771. The second one was led by Suvorov[164] himself. The capitulation to the Austrians came later (in 1772). In the year 1809, the war between Austria and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw erupts, which laid siege to the fortress at Zamość, and took it by storm. A plague broke out in the city. Jews were robbed. With the articulation of a strategic need, the Jewish streets were destroyed.

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164 Suvorov, Aleksander Vasilyevich (1729-1800), Russian Field Marshall. In 1794, Suvorov commanded the Russian army that suppressed the Polish revolt after the second partition of Poland by Russia and Prussia. In a swift campaign, culminating in the battle of Praga and the capture of Warsaw, he crushed Polish resistance. One of the great generals of modern times, Suvorov was never defeated in battle; he ascribed his success to the principle of "intuition, rapidity, impact."

R' Ze'ev Wolf Baer Schiff (1768-1842), a scion of Zamość, son of the great philanthropist Yeshayahu ben R' Joel Baal-Shem Heilperin, who in 1800 erected a Jewish hospital in Zamość, told about what he lived through during those tragic times, in a book. He was a prince of a Jewish man. On the Eve of *Shavuot* of the year 5569 (1809), the battles around the fortress began. First, the Jews were driven away, they were apparently considered to be Prussians. The author of the memoir barely got out alive, and like many others from Zamość who saved themselves, never returned to his home. Jews had barely been able to catch their breath from this frightful siege, and plague, when the Polish War of 1812 broke out. Apart from eliciting [the usual] victims of war, this conflict also had political manifestations. The Zamość community was compelled to declare that it stood in solidarity with the demands of the restitution of the former Polish monarchy (this was the political outcome of that war).

When the French and Polish armies drew back from Russia, Zamość played a rather important strategic role in supporting the retreat. Napoleon had given an order that the fortress should not permit the Russian enemy to gain access to Poland. The Russians besieged Zamość for seven months, but in the end the fortress was compelled to surrender. This was on December 22, 1813.

Polish and French military sources tell what the Jews of Zamość lived through during those seven months. The community was severely impoverished. For strategic reasons, once again, the Jewish streets were burned down, after having been recently rebuilt. The mikva was converted into a military hospital. Forceful speech was made that only those who were native-born to Zamość should be allowed to continue residing there.

The war ended, and a completely different set of Jews become residents of Zamość. These were livery service people who had business with both armies, the Polish and the Russian. These were half pious and half non-observant Jews, – actually more like having fallen away from the faith, rather than rationalists. They had no contact with matters that pertained to the *Haskala*. Largely, this was a conglomeration of people without deep roots in Judaism, lacking a feeling of home, and rarely involving themselves in community affairs. There were, however, exceptions among them, and indeed, there came out of their ranks, a portion of the Maskilim of that generation and general community activists, whom Peretz still recognized.

As in all cities in Poland, the Jews of Zamość lived in a separate quarter, constructed first in 1862, thanks to *Wielopolski's* act of Jewish emancipation.[165] In 1814, however, five Jews of substantial means were given permission to buy houses in the general streets of the city.

In 1815, the Kingdom of Poland is founded, and Zamość becomes a central city in the Voievode of Lublin. The fortress is enlarged, the garrison strengthened, and military life becomes the foundation of Jewish economic life, and for part of the Jews, even their community life. Many Jews who fled, return to the city. One already can hear many foreign tongues in the streets. Zamość really becomes little Paris. In official circles, one sees many free-thinking Jews. The first of the dramas involving romance between the daughters of Jews, and the surrounding Sons of Mars, start to be played out. For the time being, nothing yet is heard about converting to Christianity – perhaps because it was so vigorously choked off. Jewish life still remains *Yiddish-balebatish*, and the conflict between the two generations has not yet arrived, which already is so sharp in other cities.

Zamość had a reputation, that after Warsaw, it had the largest number of free-thinking Jews. Polish officers write about this in their letters home. This is also known from [sources in] Warsaw. In 1825, the Jewish Committee is founded in Warsaw, with the goal of reforming Jewish life in Poland. Among its correspondents, can be found the Zamość merchant Leibl Cohn, who had a wine business. Peretz recalls a son of his. That Cohn, was perhaps one of the first of the Jews who could write well in Polish.

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165 In the early 19th century there were about 90 towns in the Kingdom of Poland (or about 20% of all towns) which held the *privelegia de non tolerandis Judaeis*, "the privilege of non-tolerance of Jews", which forbade Jews from settling and residing within town boundaries. The emancipation proclamation of Aleksander Wielopolski in 1862, which removed legal restrictions from the Jews, opened all towns in the Kingdom of Poland to Jewish settlement.

In 1827, the Jewish population of Zamość numbered 2,874 souls, against a general population of 5,414, meaning that at that time, the Jews comprised 54% of the population.

The number of free-thinking Jews grows. From Galicia, young Maskilim come, and become the teachers in the homes of the *balebatim*. Yet for these Galician Maskilim, Zamość is still a desert, and one flees quickly to home. Local Enlightenment talent feels isolated, and they flee to [other parts of] Galicia. They become teachers in Enlightened schools in Brod, Tarnopol, and Lemberg. Those Zamość Jews, who had decided to give their children a more worldly education, did so privately, and especially went out of their way to hire Polish teachers. German though, is still the cultural language of the free-thinkers, which can be seen from the circle around Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. Only two important Maskilim of that era, are able to express themselves with a good, basic Polish: The community leader from Szczebrzeszyn, Leib ben Shlomo Szper (died in 1849) and R' Hirsch'keh Neimanovich of Zamość (died in 1862), both friends of the priest and Physiocrat,[166] Stanislaw Staszicz, who was extensively involved in settling Jews on land.

The idea of settling on the land struck a responsive chord in Zamość, of all places. In 1820, Leib Szper, thanks to the Zamoyskis, took three tracts under lease-management, and settled Jews there. He himself, personally, conducted a village establishment until 1831 only with Jews.

On the eve of the November revolution of 1830, Neimanovich began to busy himself with settling Zamość Jews on land. However, a new catastrophe appeared, which was no less frightful for the Jewish community than the previous ones of 1809 and 1813.

The patriotic fervor of the populace surrounding Zamość also infected the Jews. In Zamość proper, no big investigations were conducted to determine whether a Jew with side locks and a beard could serve in the town guard, as was the case in Warsaw. They were accepted, and many went voluntarily.

He Russian siege was a difficult one. The city suffered from hunger. The epidemic of cholera laid waste to the city. A native Jew stood at the head of the military hospital, Dr. Philip Lubelski (1778- 1879), a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars. He was a native of Zamość, and everyone knew him well. His prestige, to a large extent, wiped away the anti-Semitic tendencies that were on the rise, because of the failures of the revolution, and also because the commandant of the fortress was the Frankist Jan Kryszynski.

The Jewish streets were destroyed and laid waste. When the fortress surrendered to the Russians, the very wealthy Jews went off to Warsaw.

With the end of the Russian-Polish War in 1831, the role of Zamość in the Polish military formations comes to an end. Their place is taken by the Russian army, which stays until 1866, when the fortress is entirely liquidated, because on examination, it appeared to have minimal strategic value. Military historians who served in Zamość in the years 1812-1831 pass through their impressions of Jews by way of their observations. In light of these, often incidental details, one can see that after Warsaw, Zamość had, by count, a meaningful number of Jews, mostly Jewish women, who had the facility to carry on a conversation in a number of languages, French among them. This did not yet make them into Maskilim. They were *Hasidim*, from the anti-Hasidic movement which at that time had grown stronger. These Jews, however, remained Jews of the *Bet HaMedrash*, and were privileged to unite the elements of the Enlightenment and *Mitnagdim*, without many shortcomings. It was in this way, that the adherents of the *Haskala* in Zamość became very active *Maskilim*, and stood on the foundation of traditional and scholastic *Yiddishkeit*. Even part of the physicians of Zamość, from the new generation, largely children from the homes of *balebatim*, nevertheless followed in the footsteps of their parents.

The mercantile element in Zamość, according to an assessment, was cosmopolitan, in the sense that many merchants

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166 Physiocrats were a school of French thinkers in the 18th century, who evolved the first complete system of economics. They were also referred to simply as 'the economists,' or 'the sect.'

saw a little of the world because of their business. They dealt with Warsaw, Danzig, Breslau, Vienna, Krakow, Berlin, and Hamburg. They would bring books of the Enlightenment from there, and also the latest news about Jews in other places. In the homes, and in the Bet HaMedrash, they engaged in conversations about Jewish issues. In the city, they were called Germans, even thought they were no less local than the very pious. The city *Hevra Shas* was a product of their doing. The large library of this *Hevra*, about which a native son of that generation writes, also included the books of the Haskala, and had a reputation among scholars in the Polish province. Its living spirit was R' Joseph Tzireles (Aleksander Zederbaum's father)and he died in 1832, his house was a true headquarters for sages.

It was in these circles, that the old idea of settling Jews on land came to life. Hirsch'keh Neimanovich continued the work, which had been disrupted because of the revolution of 1831. The amendments of 1846, which freed Jewish colonists from military service, gave a new impetus to continue with this work. In that year, Zdanów (5 viorst from Zamość) was founded as a Jewish village. Apart from Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, such Maskilim as Joseph and Hirsch Cohn, David Engelberg, Moshe Hertz, and Yudel Sobel, were deeply involved in this effort. The land was leased from the Zamoyskis for thirty years. In total, 14 Jewish families settled there, but they were unable to sustain themselves for very long, and a little at a time, they left. The interpretive poetry of the two homespun poets, Yehuda Kinderfreund and Feivel Szyfer, which attempted to edify Jewish village life, did not help. From the two unsuccessful attempts (of 1759 and of 1846) nothing remained, except the purely theoretical assumption, that only by working the soil, can the Jewish classes be made productive.[167]

Zamość became a center for the Haskala immediately after the revolution of 1831. The organized Maskilim of Hrubieszow, Kulikow, Jozefów, and even from ardently Hasidic Lublin, would gather in Zamość. Abraham Ber Gotlober visited Zamość in 1836, at the time he was traveling about to collect subscriptions for his collection pf poems, P i r k h e i H e A v i v , [168] which was published in Jozefów in 1837. Among the names of subscribers from Zamość, we also find the name of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, he even composed a 'poem of consent' in Hebrew, as it happens, the only one to emerge from his pen that was published in his lifetime.

In the years 1832-1863, there is a parallel growth in Zamość in the number of readers of Polish, along with [growth in] competent readers of Hebrew books. Jews are reading Polish periodicals, even if German remains as the principal indicator of the free-thinking Jew. Jews are already writing in the Polish pages about Jewish issues and carry on a discourse about even such delicate questions as Sabbath observance for Jewish students in secular schools. Polish theater troupes that come for guest performances to Zamość, attracts a great deal, especially from the Jewish participant. In 1856, Zamość had a population of 2,475 Jews, and 1,531 non-Jews. Despite the fact, that according to the census of 1827, the number of Jews dropped significantly, it practically doubled, in line with [the growth of] the general population.

Zamość played an important role in the years of Polish-Jewish Brotherhood (1861-1863). The best articles that were written in the province, for the Journal, J u t r z e n k a (1861-1863) came from Zamość. Among the contributors were Margolis, Altberg, Korngold, and Ephraim Fishelsohn. In their articles, the Maskilim from Zamość not only dealt with local issues, but also questions of Jewish education, economics, and general reforms in Jewish life. There pronouncements exhibited much circumspection and conservativeness.

In 1861, Jews in Zamość collected money for the benefit of poor Christians, and this initiative, a year later, elicited an analogous undertaking of fund-raising by Poles themselves. In city elections and advisory circles in the year 1862, four Jews were selected from the Zamość *powiat*,[169] among them, Yehoshua Margolis, about whom we will yet have more to say. Peretz documented that period very well, despite the fact that there are not many insights to it. However, he

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167 The map of modern Poland shows a *Zdanówek* at approximately the distance indicated in the text.

168 The Blooms of Springtime

169 A Polish administrative unit

correctly underscored that in 1863, the Jews of Zamość felt as if they were 'ardent Poles.' 'We recited verses from the Psalms for the success of the Second Revolution.'

In 1863 the Zamość fortress was made into a prison for political criminals. Hundreds of accused were brought into the city. Among them were also many Jews. A Jewish committee was created to help those who were arrested, especially the younger ones, who were immediately remanded to military service.

Peretz was 14 years old, when the Zamość fort was taken down (1866).

The physiognomy of the city underwent a very severe change. Jewish children, even those from Hasidic homes, began to learn in the Russian pro-gymnasium which was opened in 1867. The older generation of *Maskilim* lived with the remnants of a former glory, with the intense consultation of Hebrew books, with the free echoes that tied them to those former Zamość townsfolk who went on to fame and fortune in the larger world of Russian Jewry.

The year 1870 marks the end of the early period of the *Haskala* in Zamość. When Aleksander Zederbaum visited the town of his birth in 1869, he already found a state of decline. He felt an oppressive atmosphere in Zamość, he writes to the editor of K o l M e v a s e r. The city had too many *Hasidim*. He comforted himself in that other cities in the Lublin Region it was even worse. There, it was simply a spiritual wasteland. Zamość is still an oasis.

There is more sense about education here than in all of Poland, because in comparison with other cities, there are less wild-eyed *Hasidim* in Zamość, even though they are quite visible. According to Zederbaum, the *Hasid* of Zamość, less tied up in [religious] knots, he doesn't regard a work of science as apostasy. One still finds, after all, books of the Enlightenment in the *Bet HaMedrash*, and they are read, and nobody here looks upon the use of the Holy Tongue as some sort of transgression.

This was two years after Zederbaum printed his B a y n H a M e t z a r i m , [170] an autobiographical tale that conveys many important details about Jewish life in Zamość. He was still hopeful from that (last) visit to the town of his birthplace. In 1883, he printed his Y i d d i s h e V o l k s b l a t t , a letter from Zamość, where the correspondent bemoans to himself, that since Zederbaum's visit, the situation has gotten worse. Once – he writes – 'Zamość was a city that contained all manner of important elements, genuine scholarship, great sages, fine merchants, genteel *balebatim*, and outstanding free-thinkers. There is no trace of this any longer. One cannot say – the writer complains – that a new generation has arrived on today's manner. This is not so, because '*Hasidim* have a large party, and strong ideas,' and none of the 'aristocrats' wants to read Yiddish, and the periodical of the son of the city, the editor, has almost no readership in Zamość.

Who is responsible for this? The writer provides two answers to this. First of all, the railroad destroyed life in Zamość, and secondly, the fortress. 'At the time that the fortress stood, it was possible for silliness to steal its way into the city. Today, the world is chaos.' Community activity of the Maskilim has become severely weakened. The *Hasidim* and the *Mitnagdim* haven't fought with one another. Broken heartedly, both sides have begun to send their sons to the pro-gymnasium.

In the community, elections practically never took place. It was necessary to ask the police, to have them conduct an election, because nobody wanted to get into a fight with the Rabbi. In 1879, elections of this nature took place, controlled by the police. A private minyan was created in the *Bet HaMedrash*. New, wealthy people came into the community, who held themselves out as free-thinkers, even though they had no relationship to the old Enlightenment aristocracy. They wanted it to be their order, and their community, but they had no inclination to create any new or reformed institutions. In that same year, Peretz, along with a number of his idealistic friends, founded an elementary school for children. The teachers protested, and the initiators, together with Shimon Khodok, the religious teacher at

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170 The traditional Hebrew name for the period of abstinence between 17 Tammuz and 9 Ab. This may have been the time of his visit.

the pro-gymnasium, pulled back from the undertaking. The first Jewish students at the pro-gymnasium did not precipitate any excesses against the Enlightenment. There was, in general, no trace of deep conflict in 'the city full of sages and scholars.'

In 1896, an Enlightened writer from Zamość, Albert Lederer, gave a sort of overall summary of those years:

> Zamość occupies the principal position in the (Polish) province regarding that which pertains to spiritual development among Jews. I will not dwell extensively on the past, and will not recall the teachers and great scholars who were born in the city. I will only deal with the last 25 years. During those years, Zamość also had, apart from that outstanding colloquial author Mr. Peretz, many well-educated Jews who excelled in a variety of fields, as doctors, engineers, technicians, technologists, lawyers, and in general, an intelligent population of young people, even including daughters of our *Mitnagdim* and *Hasidim*, who completed their attendance at local schools with distinction.

Now, meaning 1896, the writer of this correspondence complains , there no longer remains a trace of this former cultural-dynamism. The community does not even have its own school, even though there is no lack of funds; there is a lack of initiative. Lederer refreshes the recollection of the story of Peretz's school of 1879, which had no longevity to speak of. He recalls the private two-class school for girls, run by Mrs. Altberg, – and that's it. He appeals to the free-thinking Jews of Zamość, indeed, in the name of that one-time cultural tradition, in which Zamość took such pride, that the community see to it that they open an elementary school with classes for working people.

A second important detail that is brought out in this letter is, that despite the fact that there were many German Jews in Zamość , yet they continue to pray at the general synagogues and [their] *minyanim*, and make no effort at all to build [even] a small synagogue that would function according to their own tastes. The writer attributes this to the failure of community energy, despite the fact that he demonstrated that Peretz was correct at the time he wrote his memoirs, saying: The Enlightenment, whenever it will manifest itself, will not dress itself in the colors of assimilation. This, in fact, was the very prominent feature of the Haskala in Zamość.

Nahum Sokolov wrote once about Zamość:

> When I will have the privilege of writing more about the Poland of our small towns, the Poland of the old ways, with it's emphasis on *yichus*, and about our Rabbis and Maskilim, maybe then, I will really be able to capture the true essence of Zamość

This feeling was prominent in the idealistic atmosphere of a city, where Hasidic Rabbis were not permitted to take up residence, and where contact with a non-Jewish clientele, which Zederbaum makes reference to quite often, led to the combination of a solid Jewish culture and a secular culture. Zamość was not cognizant of those conceptual conflicts, which in their day, brought such unrest to cities and [whole] countries. The free-thinker remained a Jew who was an adherent of the synagogue, Hasidism had no foothold for a long time, one lived within the normal confines of the existing cultural ambience, which embraced both the [religious] scholars, the Maskilim, whom Sokolov had so well characterized.

## 2. The Writers and The Readers

*Page 202:* *The Zamość "Academy," near the Posziwiszewski-Gasse*

The first *Maskilim* appeared in Zamość during the time when the city belonged to Austria. Part of them were newcomers, actually from Galicia proper, others came here in order to find relief from the burdensome battle that went on at that time in Eastern Galician cities and towns between the *Maskilim* and *Hasidim*. Two things drew them to Zamość: first there were many *Haskala* sympathizers to be found there, and few *Hasidim*, and second, the Jewish bourgeoisie would retain private teachers for the children, and in this manner there was an opportunity to take care of one's self by obtaining employment. A portion of these newly arrived *Maskilim*, who chanced to come here, remained, married, and only later, when it became crowded, began to seek their fortune in the much larger country of Russia, or they returned home.

In Galicia, Zamość had a reputation as an Enlightened City. R' Joseph Tzireles, or Zederbaum (c. 1772-1832), the watchmaker who gave assistance to Enlightenment authors, conducted a household that was called 'Tzireles' Yeshiva for Enlightenment.' He came from a family of more-or-less modern scholars, who already were 'addicted' to the German *Haskala*. Joseph Tzireles was born in the town of Markeszow, not far from Lublin. His father, R' Abraham Abush HaLevi, settled in Zamość. He was a learned Jew, and wrote poetry in the style of the old poets. He dies at the age of 46. Joseph's mother was the daughter of R' Natan ben Alexander HaKohen (1750-1786), an author of books. In 1780, he was in Berlin, where he became acquainted with Moses Mendelssohn. Alexander Zederbaum (1816-1893), who later became the editor of H a M e l i t z and of K o l M e v a s e r , which became the pride of the second generation *Maskilim* of Zamość , is a scion of this free-thinking, educated family.

Alexander Zederbaum recounts, that his father's house was 'an educational institution in Zamość.' One would find all manner of Jews there: pious scholars, and the less-observant, free-thinkers.

'For us – he writes – my father's house was a university.' That the son didn't take the mantle from his father, comes from certain evidence by other *Maskilim*, Zederbaum's fellow city residents. One of them tells, that when Joseph Zederbaum died (in1832), there was a feeling, that a person that had given the city importance had left the world. With is death, the city itself lost 'the living embodiment of modern civilization, a disciple of the Mendelssohn school,' and it was really because of this that 'hypocrisy and indifference' once again reared their heads. He was referring to the fact that Hasidism on one side, and spiritual decline on the other – reigned in the city. As Alexander Zederbaum tells, his father was to have said before he died: 'If, in the Other World, I should see the Ibn Ezra, I will say to him that nobody understood the subtle inferences in every one of his words as well as I did.'

Many young *Maskilim* grew up in Joseph Zederbaum's home, among them were the Bloch brothers, and Yaakov Eichenbaum.

A young man named Shlomo Ze'ev ben Yitzhak Bloch took up residence in Zamość approximately in 1802. He came from the Galician *shtetl* of Kulikow. He was a Hebrew teacher and also wrote in Hebrew about the natural sciences. His brother Shimshon Bloch (1784-1845) came in 1804, later known as the author of the popular three-volume work on geography, also called S h v i l a y O l a m .[171] He got married in Zamość. He made a living by giving Hebrew lectures. By comparison to the stormy life in the centers of the Enlightenment [elsewhere] in Galicia, life in Zamość was quiet and tranquil. Shimshon Bloch could not abide by this, so he returned once again to Lemberg. Later on he came back. In 1821 he was still in Zamość. In a letter to his one-time ideological friend, Yaakov Shmuel Bick (died in 1831) he complained that he is unhappy in Zamość, that he is torn away from his comrades. Therefore, he left Zamość and went to Vienna. He personally missed the Austrian Enlightenment atmosphere, and the sympathy to Maskilim shown by the monarchy. In Poland, there was no resonance with the Haskala in the surroundings, and the interest in Polish circles was rather much less.

Yaakov Eichenbaum belonged to the same circle as the Blochs. He was born in a small Galician *shtetl*, Kristinopol, in the year 1796. His real family name was Gelber. His father, Moshe Gelber, settled in Zamość in 1815, and took a parcel of land under lease-management not far from Hrubieszow. In Zamość, Yaakov Eichenbaum wrote poems at various opportunities, but he did not become a poet. He had rather solid ideas in mathematics, and in 1819, he translated Euclid's Geometry [sic: *Elements*][172] into Hebrew. He married a Zamość girl, and for a long time, he was the teacher of the five sons of the Enlightened wealthy man, Natan Kinderfreund. He left Zamość in 1830. Later (1850) he became an inspector of the Teacher's-school in Zhitomir.

The first substantial Hebrew poet that Zamość produced was Aryeh Leib ben Natan Kinderfreund (1797-1837). Peretz

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171 Highways of the World

172 The *Elements* have been studied for 24 centuries in many languages starting, of course, in the original Greek, then in Arabic, Latin, and many modern languages.

mentions this very family, principally a young man, a Maskil, who knew German well, read Mendelssohn in the original, and prayed from a German *Siddur*. This was the pot's brother, Herman Kinderfreund, and partially his patron at the publication of his first works as an author. In 1814, Aryeh Leib Kinderfreund left for Tarnopol, and became a teacher in the renown Pearl school. He was a very well-educated young man, with profound ideas in many ancient and modern languages. A philosophical work of his, to our everlasting sorrow, has been lost. In 1833, he completed a volume of poems which was later published under the name, S h i r i m  S h o n i m .[173]

At one time Gotlober waved off these poems because of his pure, formal tastes (they lacked attention to meter), [nevertheless] he wrote many years later, that Kinderfreund was 'one of the outstanding poets who stood out in Israel during the past generation.'

Both transcended the bar. Kinderfreund was a quiet poet, not producing great poetic innovations, only the collection, H a M e s h o r e r  B a K f a r i m [174] is interesting, which reflects a poetic reaction to the Jewish impact in the Zamość [agricultural] colonies. According to everything that we know, Aryeh Leib Kinderfreund was the first and only poetic talent [who wrote] in Hebrew, that Zamość produced, before the appearance of Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz.

The prolific Hebrew author, Feivel Szyfer (1871-1890), needs to be thought of as a native son of Zamość. He was born in Laszczow, but spent a part of his life in Zamość. He helped Jews by needs and....poems, to settle the land. Szyfer was a good friend of Shlomo Ettinger. Both were the 'literary powers' of the colony at Zdanów. He came to Warsaw in 1835, where he opened a private school for Jewish children. Paszkiewicz, the 'Viceroy' of Poland drew close to him, and ordered that he be supported from a fund which had been designated for 'essential' authors. Szyfer produced five books, one of them, M a t a  L a S h e m, [175] (Warsaw, 1843), is set in the climate of Zamość. It is a work of poetic prose, about the idyllic life in Jewish colonies, – a direct product of the author's contact with the tillers of the soil from Zamość. Feivel Szyfer was the darling of the Maskilim of Zamość. Of the hundreds of notables that are enumerated in his works, the largest portion comes from the Jews of Zamość, who took great pride in 'their' author.

The importance of the researcher in Jewish history, Yaakov Reifman (1818-1894) was very great in Zamość. He lived his entire life in neighboring Szczebrzeszyn, under frightful material conditions. His father-in-law, Joseph Maimon, was a well-know *Maskil*. Reifman's name figures prominently among the literary notables of that period. He wanted to be active in the field of Jewish education. This 'apostate,' and researcher of Jewish history, whom Peretz recalls with great respect, had to suffer a great deal of trouble from *Hasidim*, they wanted to have him put under excommunication. This was because, in his very early years, he caused the establishment of the Jewish elementary school in Lublin (in 1833) and later in Chelm (in 1862). The strong Hasidic opposition lead to these schools being closed.

As previously said, Reifman was held in great respect in Zamość. His approach to Jewish education, which attempted to create an alignment between the words of Scripture, and the wisdom of Zionism, appealed strongly to the local Maskilim there. Reifman dreamed of a modern Yeshiva, and in 1862, thanks to the help of Yehoshua Margolis, a close relative of Peretz, it became possible for him to create such an institution. It existed for the sum total of one year, but it became quite the subject of note in the Enlightened circles of the land.

Every Saturday night, the young people would come together, and Reifman would hold a series of well-prepared lectures about scientific subjects. He gave them good definitions about all issues which pertained to Jewish lore, and acquainted them with the newest achievements from the field. He severely criticized the Warsaw Teacher's Seminary for its negative attitude towards the Jewish past. He was greatly embittered by the fact that the Teacher's Seminary did not keep its word. As early as 1854, it had promised to retain him as a teacher of the Talmud. However, for the Warsaw free-thinkers surrounding the Teacher's Seminary, Reifman represented a personage that was too religious, while at

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173 A Variety of Poems

174 The Poet in the Villages

175 A Planting for the Lord

the same time, in the eyes of the *Hasidim*, he was considered to be a dangerous 'apikores [apostate]'. He held the position, that Polish Jewry possessed as powerful a Jewish-intellectual potential, as the Jews of Western Europe. It was only necessary to find a middle way between the chaotic old rote method of teaching, and the modern methods. The objective of a Teacher's Seminary – he explained in his lectures in front of the Zamość students – is not to increase the number of just teachers, or bookkeepers and secretaries for merchant houses, but rather to rear an educated intelligentsia. Wittily, he would playfully quip to his students: 'תַּחַת רַבָּנִים יָצְאוּ אֲבָנִים, וְתַחַת מוֹרִים חֲמוֹרִים'[176] Zamość built a solid circle around Reifman. Thanks to him, the local *Hevra Shas* had a good library. The very fact that he could give such a serious course, bears witness to the fact that there were scholarly and Enlightened young people in Zamość.

Yehoshua Margolis [who was] Reifman's patron and friend, died in 1877. Therefore, he spent his older years in frightful poverty, lived in a 'chicken coop,' as he complained in a letter, and subsisted on handouts, that were collected on his behalf through the Jewish pages. The Zamość Maskilim of the older generation had died out, and not many young and fresh energies had arisen to replace them. Reifman's scholarly work (he was very productive), were largely indeed intended for teachers, because he was no writer, only a researcher. The world of pedagogy was transformed by his innovations. The world around him did little to help him, despite the fact that it took great pride in him. Among his student, the Hebrew writer David Shifman (1828-1906), who was a private Hebrew teacher, and also dealt in books, was the only one who from time-to-time was helpful to his old teacher. For a specific period of time, Shifman was Peretz's secretary. He was the local correspondent of H a M e l i t z , produced unpublished poems by Yaakov Eichenbaum and did everything that he could to assure that the Enlightenment movement in Zamość would not atrophy. A. Korngold is also counted among the Reifman's students, who published H a S h a k h a r (94., 1, 1869), footnotes and insights to specific text in the *Tanakh,* [as is] Joseph Mintzer, who published poems in *Kokhvei Yitzhak* (1865), H a B o k e r O r, and other Hebrew Journals; Leibusz Levison (c. 1844-1904), the author of the tale, N e d e r Y i f t a k h ,[177] (Warsaw, 5630/1869), and of the Yiddish folk-comedy, V e i b e r i s h e h K n i p l a k h , [178] and many others.

Two Yiddish authors from Zamość have yet to be recalled. These are Shlomo Ettinger (c. 1800 - 1856) and Ephraim Fishelsohn. When Ettinger died, Peretz was four years old. Nevertheless, in Zamość, he remained alive in the memory of the city residents, and here is the evidence: In later years, the free-thinking Jews wrote about him, and always recalled him in a positive manner, his community role in Zamość being much greater than it was conventionally thought to be. Ettinger is counted among the major personalities of Haskala books, in the years 1837-1854. In the case of one book, even his son, Yitzhak Ettinger counts [in a significant way]. Shlomo Ettinger was one of the confidantes of Joseph Zederbaum, and played a role in the community similar to that of his father-in-law, Yehuda Leib Gold, who in his time was the head of the community, and in the manner of his brother-in-law who was active later. The Jewish hospital, which was the center of general activity of the Enlightened sector, had much for which to be thankful to Ettinger. Wit the financial help of Yehoshua Margolis, Ettinger built up the pharmacy. I do not wish to elaborate on his literary accomplishments here. Enough already has been written about them.

Ephraim Fishelsohn, also a writer of the pre-Peretz period, came from a small shtetl, Kruszniewicz. He lived in Zamość for many years. In 1839, he wrote up a satire in the form of a dialogue, T e a t o r f u n *H a s i d i m* . He dedicated this work to Shlomo Hertz Mazomoshch, that is, Shlomo Ettinger. Fishelsohn was the only rationalist among the entire group of Maskilim in Zamość. In this respect, he was close to Shlomo Ettinger, who in his epigrams also strongly unmasked the Hasidic movement and the entire system and way of life of the *balebatim* in the community. Fishelsohn corresponded with Daniel Neufeld, the editor of J u t r z e n k a , wrote in H a M e l i t z , and gave much of his time to the research of *Medrashim* in light of comparative literature. For Neufeld, the conservative *Maskil*,

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176 "In place of Rabbis, out came stones, and in place of teachers, asses."

177 "The Oath of Jephthah." See: Judges 11:30-35

178 Old Wive's Clutches

Fishelsohn was too radical, and he did not want to publish him. In 1862, Neufeld sent him back an article written in Polish, declaring, that publishing such an article meant inciting both sides, at a time when religious-demagogic problems do not fit the 'programs' of D e r J u t r z e n k a. Fishelsohn was greatly angered by this. He did not want to publish such an article, that criticized the foundations of the Jewish religion, in the general Polish journals, even though they would have published them there.

The Neimanoviches belonged to the popular group of Enlightened families in Zamość . We have already recalled Herschkeh Neimanovich (died 1862), the practical innovator, who dedicates himself to settling Jews on land. He was very popular thanks to his genuine Polish appearance, and Polish speech. Andzhei Zamoyski remembers him often in his memoirs. He knew the priest Staszicz, and through him, Abraham Yaakov Stern. His name figures prominently among the personages having to do with Enlightenment books. We know little about his son, Yitzhak Neimanovich, and for this reason, his grandson, Naphtali Yehuda Neimanovich (*HaNetz*), was well-known. He was born in Jozefów in 1843 and died in Warsaw in 1898. He was a close comrade of Peretz. He wrote an outstanding Polish, Hebrew and Yiddish (in the Warsaw Jewish Daily) and belonged to the small group of tri-lingual writers of the Haskala of that era. The Geliebter Family also had three generations of Maskilim. The oldest, Zvi Hirsch Geliebter was a scholarly Maskil. His son Feivel (1808-1888) was a lawyer with a private practice in Zamość, he had the reputation of a genius, who 'knew the entire *Tanakh* by heart.' According to Peretz, he was 'was self-taught.' His son, Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, an ardent Zionist, occupied himself with assembling the folklore of the Zamość Jews, and he made use of Jewish folklorists. His collection was later deposited in the Warsaw Ethnographic Museum.

A periphery of consumers of written works and books, and just plain lovers of the printed word, grew up around these writers, which was substantial already because of the number and traditional continuity. Such a phenomenon was not known in any other city in Poland. It is sufficient to indicate a group of names of families, in Zamość, who systematically appear in any list of prominent personalities, about whom it is possible to set down biographical details with confidence and certainty. The Kinderfreunds, the Luxembourgs, (Mottel, Abraham & Edouard), the Korngolds (Father and several sons), The Peretzes (Meir Peretz, the Levine family on the mother's side), David Steinsberg (from 1835 to 1862), Shlomo Zalman Finkstein (1791-1877), a companion of Zederbaum's, The Schloss Family (Ze'ev Wolf and his son), The Margolis Family (Yehoshua and his four sons), Shlomo Ettinger and his son Yitzhak, The Szpers of Szczebrzeszyn and Zamość (three generations with eight branches of the family), and many others. At the beginning of almost every book of the Enlightenment, written by someone from Zamość, Rabbi Moshe Wohl, whom Peretz described so warmly, figured as a sponsor. He was born in 1797 and died in 1873. Peretz writes of him, that he was a well-to-do son-in-law. His father-in-law was the Rabbi of Zamość, R' Yitzhak ben R' Joseph Hochgelernter (1767-1825), the author of the responsa Z i k h r o n Y i t z h a k (Lemberg, 5560/1800). He was a merchant in his younger years. After he lost his money, he became the Rabbi of Zamość (in 1834).

> An enemy of unjust indulgence – writes Peretz – he occupies his seat already for a jubilee, and does not permit himself to be given a raise. 'Don't make me a rich individual,' (he argues). He takes no compensation! Moneys that he receives for adjudication, he distributes among the sitting *Dayanim*, or arbitrators. He doesn't take anything to eat that is not prepared by his *Rebbetzin*. At a mitzvah feast, he takes a little nip of something, in order to be able to recite a blessing; eating a dry, olive-sized morsel of the ritually prescribed size, in order to be able to ritually wash and recite a blessing.

It is this 'little sweet Jewish man, with a little silver beard,' with eyes 'akin to doves,' who was the gentlest spiritual leader in a community where Maskilim played so important a role. He was a companion to Yaakov Reifman, the 'apikores,' and defended him with vigor. When the movement was afoot to excommunicate that great ascetic of Szczebrzeszyn, R' Moshe Wohl said –and so Peretz tells – that 'whosoever issues an order to excommunicate without the prior knowledge of the spiritual leader of the city and his court of justice, is himself in mortal peril.'

Alexander Zederbaum writes of him, that he was thoroughly educated, a tolerant man, who wrote a beautiful Hebrew. Apart from several book endorsements, there are, however, no writings that are known to us by this Rabbi of Zamość. When he died, it proved difficult to find a Rabbi that everyone would agree to. Rabbi Shlomo Zilber was the Rabbi of Zamość for a period of time. In 1879, Rabbi Joseph Shlomo Shabtai ben Yehuda HaLevi Horowitz (born 1861) was selected as Rabbi. At that time, the free-thinkers, largely the children of the one-time Maskilim, took a minimal hand

in the internal issues of the community.
The central place in the Enlightenment sector of Zamość, was taken by Yehoshua Margolis (1805-1877), who has been mentioned so many times already, the 'Cold Uncle,' Y. M. of Peretz's memoirs.

He was a provider of livery services to the military, and managed mills, dealt in grain, had his own buildings in Zamość, and also in Warsaw. He had five sons, one of whom vanished immediately after the 1863 rebellion, and two daughters. These [all] were raised in a scholarly and enlightened atmosphere, taught by private teachers, among them also was Yaakov Reifman. They all knew Hebrew and Polish very well, one of them, Shmuel, was for a time the Zamość correspondent for the I s r a e l i t a . Margolis's sons count as sponsors for many scholarly works and Enlightened books of that period. One of his daughters (Rukhama) married Yaakov Korngold, a second daughter (Gittl) married Naphtali Pick, also of the Yiddish connection in Zamość. She died in 1877 at the age of 47 years. Her father died in that same year.

Like all the enlightened Jews in Zamość, Yehoshua Margolis was far from breaking new ground. He took part in the general life of the city and took part in Polish events no less than in Jewish community affairs. In the year 1830, he was a member of the city militia. In the years 1861-1863 he took part in the revolutionary events. Together with his relative, Joseph Altberg (1801-1873), an employee of J u t r z e n k a, he took part in the Jewish delegation that went to a Polish patriotic demonstration, collected money for the Christian poor of Zamość (together with the Luxembourgs), as a demonstration of brotherhood. In 1862, he was a member of the City Council. His work, for the benefit of Zamość, was so significant, that in 1854, the city honored him with the title of Honorary Citizen.

Jewish issues were no less close to his heart. He was the greatest donor of charity in Zamość, dedicating himself intensely to the Jewish Hospital, and was the head of the community for many years. The remodeling of the old synagogue was accomplished thanks to him, which had 100 Torah scrolls, as for the founding of the Hevra Shas, and distribution of Reifman's lessons.

Alexander Zederbaum characterized him as the most idealistic Jewish community activist in Zamość. In 1869, he visited him, and at the same time, expressed his awed respect, which that already world-famous Jew had for this Enlightened community leader of his home town.

Until the decade of the 1880's, the Enlightened synthesis of [traditional] scholarship and Haskala developed around patrician families such as Margolis, Altberg, Korngold, Krasnopolsky, Luxembourg and others – an original Zamość style. Peretz absorbed a great deal of this legacy. At that time, it was still dynamic, even though the first signs of stasis and decline were already visible. The Hasidic element in the city became larger, and consequently stronger, and many of the Maskilim, especially their children, left entirely, first from Zamość, and later, part of them entirely abandoned the Jewish people – leaving in a variety of ways that it is possible to separate oneself from a people, religious conversion being among them.

## F o o t n o t e s

*(The interested reader is referred to the original text for details)*

# Addenda

## I

## A Document About the Zamość Doctor Pinchas Rosenthal

(Original Text in Russian)[179]

The private practitioner, Jewish physician Pinchas Rosenthal, has submitted a petition for obtaining civil/citizenship rights for himself.
The Rights Committee of the Ministry of Interior presented this petition to Council with the consideration of the following circumstances which would be in favor of the petition: that petitioner has been carrying out public service

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[179] Translation courtesy of Dr. Thomas Zoltan Fahidy, Dean Emeritus, School of Engineering, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario (Canada).

for more than ten years, first having the title of surgeon of Tarnogrod and specialist in epidemics, then a doctor in the Zamość region; that during a raging cholera epidemic in the(his?) local area, he provided help with exemplary zeal and unselfishness to sufferers/victims; that he and equally his family wear clothes not different from that of Christians; that he, as a person devoting himself to scientific things, does not engage in profiteering/speculation to which a Jew is restricted by civil rights(law?).

The Council, keeping in view the Imperial will, that a Jew's right to acquire landed property can be considered only as a gift/reward, and only in exceptional cases, did not find sufficient reasons for the (case of) Jew Rosenthal, and decided to reject the petition. February28/March 8,1836

**II**

## Article by *Erez* (Alexander Zederbaum) in *Kol Mevaser*, 1869, PP. 47,48, & 50.

(The Format Has Been Modernized)

In many travelogues, a feeling is portrayed, that one leaves a specific cities with all of the conveniences, and enters a long, sandy desolation, where a green tree is encountered only rarely, no developed place where to rest, no nourishment, no good water; no populace is to be found of like-minded folk, only rare offensive types, who are like people who have passed from the world, or entirely savage, with whom one fears to even have an encounter; one hears only the shouts and the conflicts among wild beasts, and at every step, one is in danger to be bitten by snakes and serpents. Suddenly, one finds one's self in mid-stride, in an oasis, that is, a parcel of the field covered in green grass, high trees, with beautiful delicious fruit, a well with an abundance of fresh potable water, a number of affectionate hospitable people, with whom one can exchange a word or so. What an overwhelming experience for the traveler! He is refreshed, he rests himself from the stresses of his travel, stretches out, and gathers his strength for his further journey into the wilderness. We experienced that feeling, when we arrived in a tiny place called Zamość, after a journey of a number of weeks from Odessa to there. When one leaves the large, beautiful, commercial cit of Odessa, which is so full of life, where it is possible to take advantage of all physical and spiritual amenities, where almost all the residents are practical people, except for the local Hasidim, all deserving of respect, because they are cosmopolitan people in their attitude to the world: active, employed, bold and practical, not identified in their occupation by their dress, demeanor or speech, they understand how to have a discourse with Jews and Christians; one does not see any fanaticism displayed by them, but rather the opposite, they come in contact with all classes and have dealings with freethinkers and extend their trust to them; Of what concern is it what goes on in their thoughts within their place in the *Bet HaMedrash*, or in their home under their direction? Who asks for anything more, only that it should be possible to meet with all people, in a civil manner, in entrepreneurial undertakings, in a friendly and honest manner. If one leaves, let us say, beloved Odessa, into the desolate provinces, into those cities, whether large or small, and one sees before one, stifling places, and one largely encounters darkly-visaged, single-dimensional frightened people, mostly plodding away in their rut, or being carried away in some higher world in their houses of worship; these are the parties of various classes of Hasidim, where each maligns the others *Tzaddik* with words that should be forbidden to speak, and if a critic were to assemble all of the opinions, he could make a very lucid attack on the entire chapter. Their dress is half 'Jukisch' and half 'Feivusch,' what passes for their speech, is some sort of an 'spectacle' in Russian Yiddish and German, their mean-spiritedness, together with their lack of respect, as they look upon a stranger, the non-Hasid, and despite this, they will slither before him like vermin; the half-savage masses, who gape at a stranger as if they had never seen a human being in their lives; except for the wealthy, who have already been out in the world, out of the country, and who already feel what good and beautiful is in their hearts, what today's times demand; however, they wear masks, playing the Hasidic role, because it serves their purposes in business. To arranging marriages; The very few freethinkers have to conceal themselves in a mineshaft, and look like rare, single trees out on the steppe, they may be aggressive in intent, but against the Law of the *Shulkhan Arukh*, they are dead at the starting gate; Who can talk about more, when the only thing that commands attention is the disorder in the community affairs, and one hears only repulsive disputations and debates between the various Hasidic sects, the envious jealousy that lurks under the veneer of *balebatishkeit,* the absence of a capacity to graciously accept each other's good fortune, the contentious disrespect, the bad-mouthing, and slander, that reigns in all circles; their sad plight in comparison to the indigenous Christian populace; everything is the same, in the shortage of all conveniences of life and forms of sustenance, all appear to the discerning traveler, just arriving on the scene, like a spiritual wasteland. And just like this, when he comes unexpectedly into a town like Zamość, which is situated in the middle of a vast desert, it appears to him like an oasis in the great desolation!

It is not necessary to suspect that we are captivated (in this matter), because Zamość is our birthplace, the cradle of our youth, the impact that it made on the emotions of childhood years continue to adhere. In contrast, at the time we rode into [the city], the saddest of thoughts came up in mind, we asked ourselves: whom among the living do you still have left to see here? No parents, no in-laws, no close or distant relatives (all died out a long time ago), no friends from youth, either that, or very few, it would appear that from very many different points of view, just about nobody from that unique literary society which sprung into being, and was sustained in the ambit of [my] patriarchal house. Only the cold, weatherbeaten grave stones, the eternally faithful memorial to all the elders from Zamość and its environs. This is the only thing that ties us to Zamość, which we had left 18 years ago, where for 5 years when we lived in Lublin, and visited only once, and since that time, where having lived for 30 years in Odessa, never having set foot back here. Really, we could have discharged our duty by driving straight to the cemetery, pour out our feelings at the graves of our parents with the reverence of a child, and resume our travel. There would not have been any special interest for us, were it not the objective of our trip to investigate the condition of our fellow co-religionists, and it is with such eyes that we observed all of Zamość in an impartial manner.

At the time of entry into the city, towards nightfall, after a 24-hour difficult post ride, a sad feeling overtook us when we saw the torn down walls of the fortress, the wrecked gates to the fortress, and the connecting bridges of the onetime fortress. We didn't long for the fortress, which had no particular value after our attack, because it stood in the middle of flat land, not beside any running water, not by any land prominence, not next to any inherent natural boundary. But we recollected every redoubt, every lair, every point of protection, every gate that was constructed before our very eyes, and grew up along with us; what a cost was involved, how many men worked on it, and this mighty fortress that had been able to survive for so many generations, was shattered in so short a time! We took comfort in one thing, we thought, that this might be a good thing for the residents: trade would become more free, they would be locked up within; but as we subsequently learned, businesses had become very distressed. Having lived for decades in the crowded milieu of people who worked among the workers of the fortress in the garrison, and living off the engineers – a Commandant, a resident Major, with their staff, brought a source of income. – It became difficult for them to motivate themselves to find other sources [of livelihood].

The following morning, we went out into the street; it is noteworthy that I recognized all men and women of old acquaintance that I encountered, even though they had not changed by any small amount over the course of thirty years, but also in this vein, by contrast, no one recognized me. Firstly, we went to visit the magnificently simple synagogue with its outstanding iron balustrade, which represents a crown of branches. It is indeed sweet, and illustrates the beautiful taste and the vitality of the Zamość community of that time, along with its distinguished citizens. Only one thing took us aback – that at this time in Zamość, drawing of animal figures on the walls had been permitted, as if it was a menagerie! We were literally ashamed, and hope that our friends in that locale will not give heed to the fact that this art work had cost a great deal of money, and that they will show some faith with themselves, and a little to our taste, and will permit, starting all over again, for the walls to be painted either entirely in white or in a light grey, so that traveling visitors will not make sport of our hometown, or believe that in current times that Zamość has entirely changed; But it is false that, just because there are perhaps not such outstanding scholars, that the old spirit does not generally continue to hold sway there as before, and there is an awareness of education there that is greater than that of all Poland. One encounters few wild-eyed Hasidim there, even though the *Yozhuveh*[180] has, to our great misfortune, expanded there quite sufficiently, but, the Hasid himself there, seems to be somewhat more refined, less fanatic, or rigidly bound up, less addled; he learns, he does not regard a work of science as apostasy, because these can be found in the *Bet HaMedrash*, and he reads or studies it. It is also no transgression to use Hebrew, quite the opposite, since it is counted as a favorable attribute. That is why we wish, from our heart, that what we see as the external appearance is in fact an expression of the inner, olden spirit and taste.

From the synagogue we went up to the *Bet HaMedrash*. Certainly a pleasure: in larger cities one rarely encounters such a large, roomy *Bet HaMedrash*, with such a respectable library. There are books to be found there from every branch

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180 Zederbaum continues to show his ill-concealed contemptuous disdain for Hasidim, by referring to the collective of their communities as a colony of hedgehogs.

of Jewish literature: from complete sets of the *Shas*, *Mishnahyot*, Commentaries, *Sifri*, *Safra*, *Tosefta*, *Mekhilta*, *Alfasi*, *Rambam*, and responsa, old and new, [these] go without saying.[181] But apart from these, one finds *Mikraot Gedolot* with Twenty Four, and other commentaries on the *Tanakh*, and research books, astronomical and mathematical works in Hebrew, naturally of an older variety. It would even be proper to acquire newer works as well. We were happy to see, that the library is kept in the highest state of order, the *Hevra Tikkun Sforim*[182] looks after this. One can barely conceive of the grandeur of most of our old comrades and acquaintances. Every corner, where we once studied has an attraction to us, and remains resonant in the memory of our youth.

In the *Bet HaMedrash*, we stopped the *Shammes* of the *Hevra Kadisha*, and our first trip was a filial visit to at least see the small mounds of earth, the cold stones that for us, cover the sacred final resting place of our beloved parents. We were accompanied by one of our elderly friends.

Even here, in this place of eternal rest, we recognized the Old Zamość. How many times, can we recall the instances when the gate was torn down, and the grave stones laid low, because in the resistance to the siege, there was fear that the enemy might penetrate here and entrench themselves. His also occurred during the last uprising. The city suffered in general, even though a new gate has been erected here, and the headstones are in order. Further: everything is registered. By consulting an alphabetical listing in a book, the *Shammes* immediately found the row and number of the graves of our father and mother and grandmothers.

What we felt there, I think, was quite different from what is minimally rooted withing the typical Jew. True, we recited the requisite prayers, in order not to deviate from Jewish custom, but what we felt in our heart, and thought of in our minds – the writer of the traditional prayers never dreamed of. We did not come to beg our parents that they should serve to intercede on our behalf in the heavens, that we should be forgiven for our sins, and that our good fortune be secured. That is nonsense: If parents can have any impact in the Other World, then they will do these things without being asked by their children, especially in the Other World, where they have no concerns about themselves. If remembering them without them even caused them to smile, a thought which is an insult to intelligence, it would appear that until death, no child ever forgets his parents, which is the least obligation we can take upon ourselves! Our mother has been dead for 42 years, and our father for 33, but despite this, it is as if they stand before my eyes, and were we artistically gifted, I am certain that it would be easy, and a sacred obligation to render a portrait of them that would not be deficient in a single detail. We remember them always, and here by their graves we did not (?) remember them any less. To offer a prayer for their souls doesn't seem to be appropriate either, we don't have to say *Kaddish* for more than 11 months, and we can reckon that our parents are both in the Garden of Eden [in the hereafter], and here we come, people who are sinners, to do them favors, and to become their ombudsmen. Yes, with good deeds, with intellectual education, a child can do credit to his parents in this world, possibly in the other, but not with screams over a grave, with banging on the headstone. Nevertheless, at this appointed place we wept with great feeling, but with a different kind of tears. In the blink of an eye, our entire life flew by us. We recalled what had transpired with us from the time of our earliest childhood up to this very day. We recalled our father, whose house was an educational institution in Zamość; all manner of the more refined type of people would gather there, scholars and enlightened people, R' Shimshon and R' Shlomo Wolf Bloch, and other such types of personalities that understood the world; It was there, under the oversight of my precious father, that the world famous Eichenbaum ע"ה, received his education. We would sit nearby, when this group would gather in the middle of the day, to entertain a variety of subjects and speak about them. In the winter nights to speeches. We reckoned that even though we didn't have any teachers (except for *melamdim*), and didn't participate in any school explicitly, that our father's house was a university for us. Even while playing, we heard the most profound dealings in the most necessary practical world events, which later was of great use to us. As children, we were placed in a higher sphere, among instructed and educated people, who developed our intellect and character. In our mind's eye, we saw the image of our father's illness, how all of his indebted friends and the entire city waited on him, and how all served as guardians during his illness. How he single-handedly began and

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181 This is an enumeration of some of the more prominent works of analysis and interpretation of all Holy Writ. They are the standard staple of any reputable Jewish house of learning.

182 Maintenance of Books

finished his own will, and dictated the rest to one of his friends. How he bade farewell to those who clung to him, the references that he recalled and cited, the force with which he awaited his own death, his words: if I should happen to see the Ibn Ezra in the Other World, I will say to him that no one understood the subtlety of his inferences in every word better than I. How he blessed us before he died, and even though we were awash in tears since the first day of his illness, didn't sleep and didn't eat, and felt the terrifying loss, nevertheless, as a child, we still had the inner strength to say of our father after the final parting while crying bitter tears: 'Let my mouth speak for both of us, with your spirit upon me.' We knew that in him we were losing an educator, quite apart from a provider. We recognized our plight, that we are remaining alone in the world, a weak child without direction, without broad understanding, we reminded ourselves of what we had already gone through, our five years in Lublin, our travel to Odessa, our struggle to get something of an education, and to look for some sort of a living. All of this flew by our eyes like a speeding wraith, and caused us to mourn the fact that we had been orphaned at such a young age, [because] parents would have certainly cared for us much better; but what pained us even more, was the fact that my parents struggled so hard, and did not live to see even a small morsel of *nachas* from their one and only child in this world. Maybe they would have derived some satisfaction from the position that we achieved for ourselves in the world. Parents feel pleasantly rewarded and it looks bigger and better in their eyes than the reality. Whether we feel fortunate in our current position of not, as a proper child we are watchful before our parents, certainly secretive, but for the while revealed, and, that makes a parent happy. This undertaking, which was so specially sacred to us, on this hallowed place, also arouse deeper thoughts and disturbed feelings. The trees, that had grown up by themselves on the graves, and continue to draw their nourishment from the corporeal remains of the parents, made an impression on us that we too have to thank them for our existence, our corporeal and spiritual development, those dear parents, and we asked ourselves, do we conduct ourselves in the same decent manner as the trees provided by nature, whose roots, the source, faithfully, and in equal measure, divide up the sap drawn from those parental remains, among all the branches, and is that is why they are all covered in green leaves, and bear their fruit? If we also have the religious and Jewish national spirit, that we suckled with our mother's milk, from the education of that highly revered father, and planted it into our children, did they do it entirely faithfully with the spirit of their parents? It is with this thought that we left a little stone behind.

This is the place where one should not fool one's self. In the first glance, we thought, that we were strongly taken, impressed by their program. They had not altered even a hair on the quotes and minutiae of their parents and ancestors of generations gone by. They also sent us into a similar room where they studied, where everyone is drawn, as they indicated. By contrast, we educate our children in schools, in a more worldly fashion; Have we discharged our obligation? Only after a genuine consideration, were our thought processes appeased. We reckoned that it was not our great-great-grandparents who were culpable for the fact that their children had to be educated in the *Heder* system, but rather because, at that time, it was forbidden for Jews to attend a real school, and all of the worldly knowledge [taught there] was of no use to the Jew in the world. They were only(?) a source of misfortune to him, he was able to feel his exile more palpably, the limitations, the prohibitions that he suffered, among the peoples where he lived, but kept isolated. It occurred to us that at least we have to blame ourselves already, our grandfathers had a feel for education. Both were accomplished grammarians, masters of the *Tanakh*, wrote excellent Hebrew, were thinkers, they had studied all of the Yiddish philosophical works. One of them, R' Nathan ז"ל, (mother's father), was a good mathematician, a capable astronomer, and also understood German and Latin. It is true, that in addition to this, they were substantial [religious] scholars, outstandingly thorough in their knowledge of Torah. Our precious father was a formidable Yiddish scholar, also read German and Polish, understood mathematics, had expertise in mechanics, and permitted all of us children to learn the native language, and German also, geography, history, which shows what he felt the spirit of the times required. He undertook to endow us with a specific practical skill, a trade to learn. Were he alive to see the remarkable strides that the world has made in the past 36 years, how the circumstance of the Jew has changed for the better; what the times now demand of each person, that he may enjoy the rights of a citizen, and secure his own existence; he would most certainly take it as an egregious sin, that the best of one's young years be spent only with such studies that not every child can bring to completion, and only very few remain with them and try to sustain themselves from it.

The one-sided exclusively religious education has truly infused the child with religious structure, but rarely deep convictions, self-awareness, pride in his nationality, and for his respected pure faith. But, for as long as a worldly life was closed to him, he made his way withing his limited ambit from birth to the grayness of old age; his needs, his

activities, did not stand in opposition to his view of life, to his struggles, and he was not put to the test (being proved). Today, God forbid, such an education can be dangerous, and neglected youth barely is able to perceive the need, and they throw themselves against the wishes of their parents for them to engage in practical studies (and in today's times, this cannot be prevented, the education steals its way into the orthodox homes that try to lock it out), and they take revenge against their faith, and disobey their parents, thinking of them as enemies, as Agents of Darkness. It is better, from childhood on, to guide a child in the spirit of the times, and thereby instill great pride in him for his nation, which has been able to hold on for thousands of years, weathering all of the most terrifying assaults, and with its patience made it to the point, that all other nations must recognize it. It is better to clearly and specifically explain the purity of his beliefs, of our Torah, that he should feel fortunate to be a child of this people, that has – pave the way for almost the entire world's religions. By so doing, he will become a Jew in his heart, and he will be willing to suffer disappointments that may come some day because he is a Jew, in the conviction that whoever chooses to either insult or circumscribe the rights of a Jew, is not a person of any worth, in the spirit of the civilized world, and that one has no need to feel distressed by that type of person. Such an education is entirely harmonious with the spirit of the parents, much as leaves of a tree [harmonize] with its ripe fruit. Such real thoughts and feelings arose within us at the graves of the parents and a stream of hot childish tears lightened our heart. With a longing heart, we left, who knows if we will again in this lifetime be in a position to fulfil this sacred ritual; only the hope that we will unite with their spirits when we meet in a better world strengthened us, and in our hearts we thought: 'we shall meet again, my dear parents.'

We had barely returned to the city, when everyone already knew of our arrival. Everyone seemed very happy, and smiled at the fact that I had thought to visit my birthplace after 30 years. The first visit that we made, was to the old, venerable Rabbi Moshe Wohl, the pride of our Zamość. This is our aristocratic son, the son of the Turobiner Rabbi, in whose house Torah, wisdom, lineage, wealth and cosmopolitan advice-giving were all unified (the Rabbi, R' Yitzhak's daughter ל"ז, the author of *Zikhron Yitzhak*). He lived as a merchant in Zamość, and somewhat more than 35 years, was Rabbi in the city where he was born. Apart from his scholarly knowledge, he is a completely accomplished scholar, expressing the prevailing spirit of Zamość, writes Hebrew beautifully, and along with his genuine piety, he is very tolerant. He earns the absolutely highest level of respect. It is natural that both of us were very happy to see each other again. We then visited that refined wealthy man, R' Yehoshua Margolis, and also one of the oldest friends of the house of our precious father, R' Zalman Finkstein. Afterwards, we went to the pro-gymnasium, which has been in existence for a number of years now, and had Jewish students from the beginning, whose numbers grow every year; to the point where a Hasid also sends his child to the gymnasium. Under 90 students are in the 4 classes, of which 31 are Jewish, of which 13 have received commendations on their examinations, even though they do not attend on Shabbat, and at the time of the opening, the District Inspector, Mr. Szerszeniewicz, permitted Jewish student to go to synagogue, and released them from school attendance. They also have one religion teacher, who is appointed and paid by the government, and is a graduate of the Vilna Teacher's Seminary. – Well, the dignitaries complained, that the Inspector (there was no director there), proposed and decided in the teacher's committee, that Jewish students must attend gymnasium on Shabbat, and if not, they will be charged with an absence, through which they can be expelled. – After the inspector had given us a tour of the classes, and we had evaluated the lessons, and assessed the entire local structure, we set to conversing with him, asking what he wants to compel the Jews, in particular, to attend class on the Sabbath, after it had been established up until now, that they were permitted to observe their Sabbath, and not penalizing them for it. He had answers in abundance, but we concluded from all of this, that he cannot on his own volition, make the decision, he has first to present this to the director of the classical gymnasium in Chelm, to whom he is subordinate, and that person must present this to the Senior Teaching Administrator in Warsaw. We promised the gathering that we would speak to the Curator about this matter. It became possible for us, during the first few days after our arrival in Warsaw, to discuss this matter during our first audience with the Senior Administrator. We recalled the approval of His Excellency, Mr. Szerszeniewicz, our good (friend) and acquaintance, who has given us permission to offer support in this matter. The Senior Administrator, and his assistant, Mr. Micniewicz, promised us, that when this proposal will come up, they will act not only for Zamość, but will write up a circular for all of Poland, [indicating] that Jews may, with the permission of their parents, refrain from attending on the Sabbath, and not have to attend at all, or should they decide not to miss the lectures, they may be released from any requirement to write or underline. We hope that they will keep their word.

After noon, we visited the Jewish hospital. This is the same location where a private individual, R' Sender'l the Doctor's

[son] (R' Berish ז"ל) had built even before we were born, significantly restored, and a great deal added to it. It is well managed and is maintained in the best of order. We will cover more details in our Hebrew brochure, which, with God's help, we are thinking to publish about our thoughts during these travels.

We had no other obvious institutions to visit. The guest-house which was in operation during our time, that is to say, one local building, which wasn't very large, even though it was a refuge for transient poor people, with a controller, it no longer exists. A Talmud Torah no longer exists. There is a *Heder* located in one place, not worth visiting. It is true that Zamość has suffered for a great many years, but despite this, we are saddened that such an important institution should be so neglected there. It would be proper if a few energetic people would apply themselves to this matter, and install a Talmud Torah of the type demanded by the times, [to teach] Tanakh, Hebrew, *Mishnah*, even some *Gemara*, *Shulkhan Arukh*, specifically desirable translated items, and alongside this, Russian and arithmetic. For sure they will find the means, even though the construct just implemented is being absorbed with great difficulty. – The remaining active community *Hevras* from prior years remain in place.

In general, Zamość made a very good impression on us, even more so after seeing out brethren in Krasnystaw, Lublin, and other cities, until Warsaw, and even in Warsaw itself, we came to the conclusion that Zamość stood higher than all of these communities in Minor Poland. Foremost, we were struck by the wild thoughts and the disarrayed appearance of our Jewish kinsmen with whom we hadn't lived with for a long time already, and during the week's delay before reaching Warsaw, and then in Warsaw itself, could find no way out of it. It would seem that Jews use the equality granted to them by the government only a few years ago, solely to pick the *spodeks* and the *shtrymels* off the ground and put them back on their heads again. Yes, it appears that the dead have arisen, and they crown their heads once again with shaved heads and long side locks which is frightful to behold (not curled, they reach down to the shoulder). A part of them let some of their side locks get into noodle soup, or get stiffened from beer, and look like waterlogged pipes; others hang curls straight down, giving the appearance of pigs tails; and yet others have spread out hair, curled or not, like a forest. One does not need to take a microscope to these animals that are found there. You can understand that the rather full yarmulke can be seen sticking out from under the shopworn out little *spodek*. The old, long outer coats with the tightly wound *gartels*, with the knot in front have been given a new life. Shoes and stockings, with worn out heels, are very much in style. We have thought about the side locks already, and if those local Jews have not gotten a wink from up above, since the Master of the Universe does demand from Jews in general a certain measure of sideburns; it is as if in our times, among our many sins, shaving of the sideburns had come among the Germans, so through their command, they want to establish this, and earn the entire reward. – It is true that the women don't wear veils, but only the rough homespun or pile of cloth, so it would be worthwhile for the head of all Parisian couturiers to use this as a model, and perhaps the French Empress Eugénie might dress like this, an this style would then catch on throughout all of Europe. In that event, the Polish [sic: Jewish] women might find something else to wear, so as, God forbid, not to look like the gentile women. Sort of a heap with a sash around it, ribbons, running colors, pearls, whether wax or glass. After all, how does one send a Jewish daughter out without jewelry. These young adolescent girls are a torture to the heart. One sees grandly, a plain hair for band (for the elderly), braided with hair band curls; wigs made from raw silk, and the hair of gentile women, of half so. A portion of the younger women wear ornaments, and have their wigs dyed black, and under that is the residue, the natural part of their *shytel*. And their own hair is mixed with and braided into the foreign hair that is put on top. It would not be decorous to describe the appearance of this chignon. – For sure they have Christian freedoms in Poland! We didn't see anything like this anywhere in Russia during our trip, until we set foot across the Polish border in Hrubieszów. Feh, feh, it is not for this that we are Jews! – Zamość earns a compliment, there one sees quite a bit less of this type of wild figures, only the women will have to forgive us, since even if less so, they are strange with their hair decoration. Of course, there is much yet to be improved in Zamość, but in Poland, Zamość can still be taken for a progressive place. We hope that time itself will accomplish this, and when the regime stopped forcing the Jews to wear European style clothing, the spirit of the times itself will hold up a mirror to them, so that they can look at themselves and recognize how ludicrous their appearance really is.

Erez

III

# Zalman Sobel, An Unknown Fabulist from Zamość

*Page 218:* *Frontispiece to Sobel's Book of Fables.*

*Page 220:* *A Fragment of the 'Potchineh at Ormianska 22. The soda water factory of Yekhezkiel Topp was located at this place, as was the food business of Shlomo Groipn*[183].

In 1874 in Warsaw, a small book was published, comprised of 86 pages containing 12 fables, under the title: Couples or The Conversations. To drive away the idle time. The author of the book was a Maskil from Zamość, Zalman Sobel. From the Hebrew introduction, written by Gabriel-Yehuda Lichtenfeld (Gi"L), the father-in-law of I. L. Peretz, one learns that Sobel was a teacher, a father of six children, and a great pauper. The introduction itself is written more to help the author sell books than to provide an endorsement. Lichtenfeld takes on the defense of the Yiddish language, and argues that it is precisely such a dialect... like the German dialects, where there is a literature, whether it does, or does not follow in the direction of the canonical direction of German literature. The author of the introduction translated one of the fables into Hebrew, and placed it right after his own introductory remarks.

The point of why Lichtenfeld's introduction was written (he assures the reader that his intent is to assist a *Maskil* who wanted to write in the 'vernacular;' that he was not paid to do so: that the author is a pauper, and 'doesn't have the means with which to pay' is entirely characteristic [of him]. He, himself wrote poetry, but only in Hebrew; his introduction to a small Yiddish book is offered with warnings that indicate this to be a matter done out of pity rather than a matter of according any literary respect for Sobel's fables.

The 12 fables, however, do earn the interest of a Yiddish literary historian. They are important and interesting paradigms of the literary style, which apart from Shlomo Ettinger, has no real precedent in 19th century Yiddish literature.

In his 'History of Yiddish Literature,' Leo Weiner presents the first view of Sobel's fables. He correctly appreciated their strong idiomatic language. To our regret, he did not go further than this appreciation. Zalman Reisen, in his L e x i c o n (II, p. 590), repeated Weiner's view, but added only that a prior work of Sobel's existed, called D o r o t O l a m i m , Warsaw 1865, which is a sort of chronology of important events 'from the time of creation to current times.' Noah Prilutsky, in his book, T h e S t r u g g l e (Warsaw, 1923, p.114) cites a greater portion of Sobel's fable 'The Shtrymel and the Spodek.' Nobody gave an assessment of these fables in their text.

The essential fact that Sobel was from Zamość, and that Peretz's father-in-law wrote the introduction to his fables, raises the level of importance of this book from a literary and cultural-historical point of view.

The 12 fables are dialogues between Shtrymel and Spodek, a wristwatch and a wall clock, a tablecloth and a prayer shawl, a mirror and a window pane, etc. This style of poetry, done in the form of a dialogue, is well-known in the Yiddish literature. It suffices to take note of the poets of Brod, and the epigogual period of the Lithuanian comedians. This style, over time, became so imbedded into the folklore, that it was no longer possible to know who influenced whom [in regard to style].

In this respect, Sobel is the exception. There are many images of the human condition in his fables, primarily of Hasidic life in Zamość, and despite the fact that his tendency to be anti-Hasidic is very prominent, one feels the authenticity of the ambience about which he writes.

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183 Since *groipn* (pl.)are a form of coarse grain, this may not be a conventional last name, but rather a trade-related appellation, which was very common among Eastern European Jews throughout the Pale of Settlement. It suggests that the individual may have dealt in grain, rather than a full line of 'food.'

Sobel is a democratic Maskil. He criticizes the feasts held by the rich Jews, who forget that a mass of paupers writhes around them. He is not a major spokesperson for the masses – he calls them: 'ever-present everybody,' but in him, compassion stands higher that everything else. The Bet HaMedrash (probably the one in Zamość) was to him 'an archive of sacred books, precious *Gemaras*, and Pentateuchs.' Sobel did not hold by the theory that was at that time very popular in Poland, that by saving, one can become very wealthy. He is ironic about this when he writes, that such a view is a good response on the part of the rich not to be concerned for the poor. 'Let your brother also have a life, let him also have a piece of bread,' he writes.

He mocks the external trappings of the Haskala, which express themselves by their abandonment of traditional Jewish modes of dress, and in changing of names. 'There is respect shown for shortened garb, which is intentionally given, only because it has no Yiddish name.'
In many of the fables, similarity in images, and metaphors sparkly. The Shtrymel, for example, 'with points all around the brim, is the mirror of Yiddishkeit with the gilded rim.'
In the fable, 'The fireplace and the oven,' the fireplace says: 'what is your lineage, seeing as pure pearls fall from your mouth,' and it is for this reason that people stroke the oven. And the fireplace itself has a 'manner as coarse as flax.'
The pot (in another fable) has 'a belly full of grain, meat up to the craw,' and is 'a major character so long as the fire burns, and heats it,' but when there is no longer any fire, the pot loses its status, and becomes like a lump of clay.

The onion, which takes so much pride in itself, and is impressed because the *khrayn* and radishes are its best friends.
In the fable, 'the prayer shawl and the tablecloth,' the tablecloth expresses pride that the 'whole world of women become enthralled with it on the Sabbath eve.' The prayer shawl answers that the table cloth has only one thing in mind: 'stuffing its face and swilling,' but when one goes off to the Other World, one takes along only the prayer shawl.

In the fable, 'Two Sides,' there is a debate between a rich and a poor person. The pauper asks:

Is it possible that the Angel of Death would overlook
One who has eaten the best in his life, and lived in salons?
And then says that
A man without means, down on his luck
Can also have a bit of *Nachas*.

The pauper laughs at the approaching wealthy people for whom 'in order to eat, there has to be a silver fork.'
The hearts of the rich are 'filled with hard quartz stone.'
One finds interesting words and wordplay in Sobel's work, which are rarely encountered. When he writes about young people that love to dance, he writes: '*Na'aronim*[184] *Tanzen*.' A mother-in-law that feeds her son-in-law only soup is described as 'a mother-in-law that 'soups him up' at mealtime.'
It is appropriate to cite two instances of the old-fashioned Yiddish expressions used in Poland:
'I was born to *shayneh familianten*,' that is, from a prominent family, and the '*rayenteh ksubeh*,' a wedding contract that was signed at a notary (regent in Polish).
The fables of Zalman Sobel's, the Maskil from Zamość, are a continuation of the tradition of Shlomo Ettinger.

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184 A rare Yiddish usage for 'fools.' It is a play on the Hebrew *Ne'arim*, which means 'young men.' The singular, *Na'ar*, in Yiddish is often used to describe a fool, in the sense of a person being too young to have the proper understanding or experience in a situation. The plural in Yiddish is usually *Naroyim*.

# The Books of the Rabbis & Sages of Zamość

**(Bibliography)**

**By Yaakov Dov Mandelbaum**

## Introduction

Zamość was not counted among the old Jewish communities in Poland. Its genealogical record did not reach back to the beginning of Jewish settlement in Old Poland, yet despite this, it occupied such a prominent and important place in the magnificent gallery of the hundred of cities and mothers, with which destroyed Polish Jewry excelled at so specifically. The name, Zamość, was a synonym for Torah and Wisdom. A spiritual aristocratic aura emanated from it, and up to the last day of its tragic demise, one could still inhale the inspiration of hundreds of the giants of spiritual thought that lived there, influenced their surroundings, and were creative, during the approximately 300-year history of its existence.

The exact year, in which a Jewish community was established in Zamość, is not exactly known historically. This is because, if we talk about a Jewish settlement in Zamość, we do not take into account the noteworthy instance of the invitation of Jan Zamoyski to the Sephardic Jews, also called 'Franks,' to settle in Zamość. The Jewish-Sephardic settlement of Jews in Zamość, at the time of its establishment in the year 1588, has left no trace on the course of the history of Jews in Zamość. The name of Zamość, as an organized Jewish community, first begins to appear when its gates were opened also for the so-called Ashkenazic Jews. The received tradition, that was passed down in Zamość, that the Great Synagogue was built by the first Ashkenazic Jews in the year 1595, also cannot be historically established with certainty. However, it is certain, that at the beginning of the 17th century, Ashkenazic Jews were already living in Zamość. The Jewish colony developed rapidly. In the year 1648 (ת"ח) there already was a meaningful Jewish community, and thanks to the famous fortress that surrounded the city, the Jews of Zamość were safeguarded from annihilation by the sword of Chmielnicki's hordes.

Already at that time, the reputation of Zamość begins to become prominent in Poland, because the famous Kabbalist **R' Joel Baal-Shem** (the Elder) took up residence there. We do not know where R' Joel comes from or when he was born. However, one thing is clear, that in the first half of the 17th century he was already a citizen of Zamość, since many of the local residents gathered themselves around him, and his name as a scholar reached literally to the ends of Poland.

We have no specific information about wh the first Rabbi of Zamość was. As the historian of Rabbis and the rabbinate in Poland, R' Zvi Hurwitz relates, his name was **Rabbi Shlomo.** All my efforts to find out something abut him from the elders of Zamość, and from the local folios, came to naught. I did not find his name mentioned in the Zamość source books. It is (perhaps) for this reason that we do have clear and certain memories about the second Rabbi in Zamość. This was Rabbi Aryeh Leib, the author of **Sha'agat Aryeh** (Number 62-63) in **Teshuvot Geonei Batrai'i** (Number 77). He was a stepson to the Gaon and Lawgiver R' David HaLevi, the author of the book **Turei Zahav** (No. 15) and a grandson of the Gaon and Lawgiver Rabbi Joel Sirkes, author of the book **Bayit Hadash** (No. 28).
It appears that the reputation of the Jewish community of Zamość, spread extensively all over the country of Poland, if such a prominent Gaon, descended from such distinguished lineage as Rabbi Aryeh Leib was, would take over the seat of the local Rabbinate.

Rabbi Aryeh Leib was the Rabbi in Zamość for seven years, from 1682-1689, when he left Zamość and took over the pulpit of Chief Rabbi in Tiktin.

In my short introduction to the bibliography of the Zamość authors, I will not dwell on **how** it was that Zamość became what it was; which historical reasons, direct or indirect, influenced events that caused Zamość to become the 'city full of sages, book writers for which there is no like on the earth.'

And here we see a noteworthy development. Barely several decades later when the Zamość community had really come

into its own, after the great destruction wrought by the Chmielnicki siege, the first fruits of creativity, derived from its spiritual vitality, begin to manifest themselves. In the year 1705, Rabbi Eliezer Lipman ben R' Menahem Menli publishes his first book, **Lekakh Tov** (No. 34). Fifteen years later, in 1720, a second Zamość author, Rabbi Aryeh Leib ben R' Abraham publishes his book **Pnei Aryeh Zuta** (No. 55). In that same year, the book **Toledot Adam** (No. 71) appears, and even though Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem (the Second) is not the author, it is however clear to see from the introduction of the publisher, that the writings were in his, Rabbi Joel's permission, and he, so to speak, 'edited them.' In 1723 we see the previously mentioned Rabbi Eliezer Lipman again as an author. He then publishes his second book, **Perush Avot d'R'Nathan** (No. 52). In 1724, we again see the name of Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem (the Second), in connection with the book, **Miflaot Elokim**, which appeared at that time (No. 40). His name, as the author of this book, truly does not appear on the frontispiece. His connection to this book is clearly established from what is written on his grave stone (cited in the bibliography), as well as on the frontispiece to the book **Minkhat Zikaron** (No. 39), and as the publisher writes, that the author was a grandson of 'Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem Tov the author of Mifalot Elokim.' In 1727, another Zamość author appears: in that year Rabbi Abraham be R' Baruch published his book **B'Derekh Alshikh** (No. 11).

In those times, a scion of the city of Zamość, R' Binyamin ben R' David goes away to far off Turkey, to the town of Kizalnik, 'near Adrianople,' where he is the *Shokhet* and Teacher, and in the year 1738, has printed, in Izmir, the first part of his book, **Ben Oni** (No. 14), He is also the author of a second book, **Sha'arey Binyamin** (No. 62).
At that time, Rabbi Israel HaLevi resided in Zamość, and was writing his well-known compositions, he being the author of **Otzar Nekhmad** (No. 6); **Tuv HaLevanon** (No. 26); **Nezer HaDema** (No. 46); **Netzakh Yisrael** (No. 48) and **Perush Ruakh Khen** (No. 54).

The creativity of the sages of Zamość manifests itself with full force in the other half of the 18th century. The Rabbi of Zamość at that time was Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak Hochgelernter, ז"ל, the first of that famous family, which for close to a hundred years occupied the Rabbinical seat in Zamość. Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak, a son of Rabbi Moshe Chaim, the Rabbi of Zloczow and Lemberg, became the Rabbi in Zamość in the year 1740. He immediately founded a yeshiva, which was one of the most important centers of Torah study in the Poland of that time.

Among the most prominent of the sages of Zamość from that era, it is necessary to recall: Rabbi Abraham Yitzhak HaKohen, author of **Beit Abraham** (No. 12); Rabbi Shlomo ben R' Moshe, author of **Mirkevet HaMishnah** (No. 42-44); **Shulkhan Atzei Shamayim** (No. 64); **Shulkhan Arukh** (No. 65) and **Sha'arei Ne'imah** (No. 67); Rabbi Moshe ben R' Hillel Oster, author of **Drash Moshe** (No. 17) and **Arugat HaBosem** (No. 51); Rabbi Abraham be R' David, author of **Birkhat Abraham** (No. 16); Rabbi Meir ben R' Moshe Meiseles, author of **Hilkhot Olam** (No. 18a); his brother Rabbi Abraham Nathan Neta, author of **Neta Sha'ashuim** (No. 47a) and **Kol Shakhal** (No. 62-63); Rabbi Azriel ben R' Aharon, author of **Zera Aharon** (No. 24); Rabbi Mordechai ben R' Meir, author of **Tavnit HaBayit** (No. 69-70); Rabbi Boruch ben R' Aryeh Leib, author of **Zahav Tahor** (No. 20); Rabbi Neta be R' Alexander, author of **Perush Bakashat HaMemin** (No. 53); Rabbi Reuven Zelig ben R' Israel Eliezer, author of **Makhane Reuven** (No. 36); Rabbi Zvi Hirsch ben R' Binyamin Biksha, author of **Tiferet Zvi** (No. 74-75), and so forth.

Rabbi Chaim Khaika ben R' Aharon was especially productive in writing books, as the author of the book, **HaZikhronot** (No. 23), **Tzror HaChaim** (No. 56), and **Toledot Aharon** (No. 72). His entire life consisted of 35 years, and yet, as his brother R' Yitzhak tells in the introduction to the book, **HaZikhronot**, he directed the writing of 20 texts in Halakha, discourse, explanations on the *Tanakh* and *Shas*, tradition, research, etc. Incidentally, I saw his footnotes and comments written into in many of the volumes in the Zamość *Bet HaMedrash*, and especially, I recall the writing went from one side to the other, in the book of questions and answers **Makom Shmuel**, by Rabbi Shmuel ben R' Elkanah (Altona, 5498 [1738]).

It is necessary also to recall, that apart from their greatness in Torah study, such that many of their publications have remained to this day as creations that serve as pillars which are studies by Jewish scholars, many of the Zamość scholars were well-schooled in other fields of knowledge also. Rabbi Abraham HaKohen knew Latin; the same is true of Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem; Rabbi Shlomo ben R' Moshe was knowledgeable in astronomy, algebra, mathematics, music, etc.; Rabbi Israel ben R' Moshe was a renown scholar, and such was the case with many others.

It will be interesting to relate what the well-known Rabbinical historian, R' Chaim Nachman Dembitzer, writes about that era in Zamość. 'And in that time – he writes – the city of Zamość excelled above all the Jewish cities in Poland, as a city to which Torah and wisdom were joined together[185] with science and industry, to a city that rears soldiers in the study of Torah, and wisdom together. Because many of the great Torah sages who resided there and engaged in Torah study, apart from their Torah study, also gave heed to the pursuit of other channels of knowledge, and they succeeded at it, and this caused them to grow, and they succeeded and were productive.'

Also, the wisdom of the Kabbala was rooted in Zamość. The names of only three Kabbalists of Zamość have come down to us, these are the already mentioned: Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem the first, his grandson Rabbi Joel ben R' Uri and Rabbi Moshe Ostrir, who in his last years was the Maggid in Brod. However, it is known that Rabbi Joel Baal-Shem, especially the second, was surrounded by many advisers and had a large number of disciples.

The already-mentioned Rabbinical historian, R, Zvi Hirsch Hurwitz, writing about Zamość, expresses himself in the following way, that there was a 'great and very important community, a city that was a Mother in Israel, full of Sages, people of the book, men of God, and the light of the Talmud was like the dawn, which fills the streets of the city, and it was like an place of respite, in which the Torah, wisdom, Kabbala, and beautiful knowledge, and all manner of scientific wisdom....'

In the year 1772, Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak Hochgelernter passed away, and the Rabbinate passed to his son, Rabbi Joseph, the author of **Mishnaht Hakhamim** (No.45). As the older people in Zamość used to tell, the importance of the Zamość community, during his time, was raised like no time before. Naturally, the fact that Zamość was part of Galicia (1772-1809) during his tenure, was of some help in this regard, and the unification with Austria brought economic bounty for the city. Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter, ז"ל, was personally very rich. His grandfather, R' Abraham, R' Chaim's [son] from Lublin, left him a substantial inheritance. He donated the salary paid to him by the community to help support his large yeshiva. Among his pupils were famous *Gaonim*, Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Heller, author of **Tiv Gittin** (No. 27-30), **Kunterus R' Zvi Hirsch** (No. 58-59) and **Tapukhei Zahav** (No. 76); his brother R' Shmuel Zeinvill Heller, author of **Zikhron Shmuel** (No. 22); Rabbi Shlomo Kluger of Brod, et. al.

At that same time, the famous orator and Gaon, Rabbi Yehuda Leib Edel lived in Zamość, and wrote his works, **Iyei Chaim** (No. 7-8), **Afikei Yehuda** (No. 9-10), **Mei Naftuakh** (No. 37), and **Mayim Tehorim** (No. 38).

The extent to which the reputation of Zamość had spread out, is shown by the fact that the *Maggid* of Dubno, Rabbi Yaakov Krantz ז"ל, selected Zamość as the final station for his life. It was in the Zamość Synagogue that the final chords of his oratorical symphonies rang out. Here, surrounded by the admiration of the sages of Zamość, he finally found the ultimate peace, and it was here that he composed the short notes about his sermons, from which first his son, R' Yitzhak, and afterwards R' Berish Flamm, after his passing, on 17 Tevet 5565 (1805), put his familiar works into order: **Ohel Yaakov** (No. 1-5) **Yom Yeshua** (No. 32), **Kokhav MiYaakov** (No. 33), Sefer **HaMidot** (No. 35) and **Kol Yaakov** (No. 57).

And before the congregational prayer stand, one of the former great cantors of the era led services – R' Shlomo Weintrib, called 'Kashtan[186] Hazzan,' and Polish Jewry envied Zamość for its great Maggid and great Cantor.

The most prominent Jewish communities in Poland, and outside Poland, indeed did select their Rabbis from the sages of Zamość. [Rabbis from] Zamość served in such cities as: Lemberg (Rabbi Shlomo ben R' Moshe); Lublin (Rabbi

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185 Using the biblical allegory regarding Jerusalem, as found in Psalms 122:3, as a measure of added praiseworthiness.

186 A chestnut tree in Russian, alluding to the beauty of the tree as an analogy to this great cantor's vocal abilities.

Azriel Hurwitz, called 'The Iron Head,'[187]); Brod and vicinity (Rabbi Zvi Hirsch ben R' Binyamin Bishka); Krakow (Rabbi Moshe Zalman ben R' Binyomin Bishka); Uvin (Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Heller); Przemysl (Rabbi Shmuel Zeinvill Heller), Amsterdam (Rabbi Yitzhak ben HaKadosh R' Shlomo), not to mention the many smaller towns and *shtetlach*, who had a Rabbi from Zamość.

It was during the time of Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter ז"ל, that the first sprouts of the Hasidic movement begin to show themselves in Zamość. It is true, that among the disciples of Rabbi Israel Baal-Shem Tov, ז"ל, we already find the name of someone from Zamość: Rabbi Dov Ber ben R' Aryeh Leib from Lublin, the Rabbi in Koznitz, Krashnik, Reisha, and finally the Headmaster of the Mesivta in Lemberg. But this item only confirms the general fact, that the sages of Zamość were not drawn to Hasidism, even if we have no evidence of any overt opposition on their part to the Hasidic movement. Again, with the single exception – the previously mentioned Rabbi Azriel Hurwitz, Rabbi in Lublin. We do not see the signature of a single Rabbi or author, from Zamość, under any of the decrees or excommunications against Hasidism. The fact that Hasidism did not seem to penetrate into Zamość at the outset, must be , more than anything else, quickly ascribed to the fact that Zamość at that time still lived with the tradition of its own Baal-Shems, especially the Second – Rabbi Joel ben R' Uri, who himself was a Rebbe to disciples, and had a great following. His influence was evident for many years even after his death, and his son, Rabbi Yeshaya occupied his father's place for a number of years. It was only first in the time of Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter, ז"ל, that the change arrived. Rabbi Joseph personally was a close friend of one of the exponents of Hasidism in Poland, the Maggid of Koznitz, Rabbi Israel, ז"ל. Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter also gave his concurrence to the well-known Hasidic book **Likutei Yekarim** (Lvov, 5559 [1799] ), where he writes about R' [Dov] Ber of Mezrich: One of the members of the Rabbi Gaon, the *Hasid* and Man of God, Our Teacher, Rabbi Dov Ber ז"ל, spiritual leader of the sacred community of Mezrich.

It is necessary to take into consideration, that this book was excommunicated by the congregation of Krakow at the time, led by Rabbi Yitzhak, and if Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter gave his concurrence to it, one may conclude with certainty that the contents of the book were close to him [sic: in spirit and concept].

And speaking of Hasidism in Zamość, it is necessary to also recall that a scion of that place was Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev ז"ל. His grandfather, Rabbi Moshe, was one of the Zamość sages. In the frontispiece of the book, *Keter Torah* of Rabbi Levi Yitzhak's son, Rabbi Meir, he gives his genealogical descent: 'Written by myself... Meir, son of my father the *Gaon*, Out Teacher Rabbi Levi Yitzhak, may his light continue to burn brightly, son of the *Gaon* our Teacher Rabbi Meir of Blessed Memory, Bet-Din Senior of the sacred community of Hoskov, son of the *Gaon* our Teacher and Rabbi Moshe, of blessed memory, from Zamość.' There is a theory that Levi Yitzhak himself may have been born in Zamość in the year 5500 (1740).

In the later years, we see how a Hasid from Zamość, R' Abraham ben R' Yehoshua writes about the teachings of his Rebbe, Rabbi Noah ben R' Shmuel Makarov, and has the book **Kav Khen** printed (Breslau 5626 [1866]).
As indicated, I recollect this only in passing. In the introduction to the bibliography, there is no room to write in detail about *Hasidim* and Hasidism in Zamość. I hope to do this in my work, 'The City of Zamość and its Sages.'

And Zamość excelled in yet another area: scholarship was the property of the general populace. Everyone studied, I was told by the aged Shammes R' Shlomo Dalis, ע"ה, in whose memory the images of the personalities of that Zamość of olden days were still alive, he still remembers the times, when the Bet HaMedrash was filled to overflowing with people studying, that many sat on the 'Polish,' and others even on both sides of the steps, leading into the Bet HaMedrash, with Gemaras in their hands, and studies. Whoever did not witness this – he would end in an emotional tone of longing for times gone by – does not know how Zamość studied.

And evidence of this remained up till the last days of the destruction. When one had barely crossed over the threshold of the *Bet HaMedrash*, one saw an impressive picture: all four sides over the length and breadth of the wide *Bet HaMedrash*, covered in bookcases filled with all manner of books. Wherever the eye turned or wandered – books. Half

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187 A metaphor for a person with exceptional intellectual skills

of the western wall, near the famous standing clock, which is supposed to have been a gift of Zamoyski for the *Bet HaMedrash*, was filled to overflowing with volumes of the *Shas*. I was once curious to know at one time, how many copies of the Shas there were once. It was not difficult for me to establish this. Is known, there are some tractates that are studies more frequently and others less so. The tractates from the Order *Kedoshim*, for example, are not studies so frequently as the tractates from other Orders, and consequently do not get 'learned out,' that is to say torn. And on the basis of the undamaged volumes of the Gemaras from the Order *Kedoshim*, to my own astonishment, I discovered that there were over thirty sets of the *Shas* there...

Hard times fell on Zamość at the beginning of the 19th century. The city was ruined and wrecked in the war between Austria and the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1809. The destruction of the city forced many of the local Jews to move on elsewhere from there. Among those who left was Rabbi Wolf Ber Schiff, author of **Minkhat Zikaron** (No. 39), who, at the time, was one of the richest Jews in Zamość, with far-flung branches of business in Brod, as also in Leipzig, and it that year, his entire fortune was robbed. The Rabbi of Zamość of that time, Rabbi Joseph Hochgelernter, author of *Zikhron Yitzhak* (No. 21), who, along withe the seat of the Rabbinate, had also inherited a large fortune from his father, was reduced to such a level of poverty, that he had no means with which to have his father's book **Otot LaMoadim** printed.

From that era, we have two books of record: **Zikhron Yitzhak**, and **Minkhat Zikaron**. About three decades later, two additional books appear, and as it happens, from two Rabbis of the '*Neustadt*,' – the book **Beit Moshe** (No. 13) by Rabbi Moshe Epstein, and **Ateret Shlomo** (No. 50) by Rabbi Nachman ben R' Shlomo, who passed away in Jerusalem. In the other half of the 19th century, we have the books, **Hukhshar HaZevakh** (No. 18) and **Yad Avi Shalom** (No. 31), by the Zamość *Shokhet*, R' Meir Zvi ben R' Yaakov Yitzhak, and the book **HaKriv Netanel** (No. 19), by Rabbi Netanel Shnar.

At the beginning of this century [sic: 20th century], Rabbi Netanel Schnar appears again with two books: **Tiyul BaGan** (No. 30), and **Eden BaGan** (No. 49). This Rabbi Netanel Schnar was an interesting type of folk-preacher. He was for many years the Rebbe of 'the common people,' in Zamość. He studied *Ein Yaakov* with them, *Medrash,* Pentateuch with [the commentary of] Alsheich, and also preached to them, first in the 'Community *Shtibl*,' and afterwards in the 'Little Synagogue of the Butchers.' And it was, in fact there, between afternoon and evening prayers, in the middle of leading a discussion on *Ein Yaakov*, that he died.

In the year 5685 (1928) Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Friedling (from the '*Neustadt*') Rabbi in Biskovitz, published his three books: **Chaim HaNetzakhi'im** (No. 25), **Kiyum HaOlam** (No. 60) and **Ratz KaZvi** (No. 61). He published and edited a Rabbinical Quarterly under the name of **HaBe'er**, which appeared for nearly 20 years, beginning in 5681 (1921) up to the Nazi occupation of Poland.

And here we come to the tragic end of the chapter: The authors of Zamość. The hand begins to tremble. How difficult, how profoundly hard to dredge up the words: the last Zamość author. The last one... Rabbi Chaim Moshe Gastinsky ז"ל, is the name of that last author. And his book was published after the bloody inundation, which washed over Polish Jewry and Zamość among them. He came to America after surviving a bitter exile in Siberia, and here, in the year 5709 (1949), published his book, **Nakhalat Khamisha** (No. 47). He had preserved a small part of the insights about Torah and Halakha from his father-in-law, the last Rabbi of Zamość, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blum, ז"ל, and disclosed them as an addendum to his book called, *Tiferet Moshe*.

We should also record here, the names of Zamość Rabbis who were not authors, after Rabbi Yitzhak Hochgelernter ז"ל up to the Destruction (1939). These were: Rabbi Aryeh Yehuda Yaakov Meiseles (Afterwards Rabbi of Pietrkow), Rabbi Moshe Wohl, Rabbi Abraham Yaakov Teicher ('*Neustadt*'), Rabbi Shmuel Zilber, Rabbi Joseph Shlomo Shabtai HaLevi, Hurwitz-Weisbrod, Rabbi Chaim Goldschmid (Teacher-Director), and the very last three, with whom the glorious capital of Zamość Jewry came to its finality: Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Hurwitz-Sternfeld ('*Neustadt*'), Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blum, and Rabbi Zadok Hurwitz (Teacher-Director). May God avenge their spilled blood, and Rabbi Nathan Habenstreit (Afterwards the spiritual leader in Przemysl).

A number of them left behind handwritten insights and responsas, and for a variety of reasons, they were never published.

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The bibliographic list encompasses fully 80 books, published by Rabbis and scholars of Zamość. It is a rather meaningful number for how small a Jewish community Zamość was. When one familiarizes oneself with the contents of these books, it can be seen that there was no single approach to Torah scholarship that the Zamość authors put forward. The encompass: commentaries on the *Tanakh*, insights into the *Shas* (*Halakha* and *Aggadah*), on the *Mishnah*, *Rambam*, *Shulkhan Arukh*, Responsa, Commentary, Tradition, Research, *Kabbala*, Hasidism, Grammar, and so forth. I made an effort to provide the first editions of each book, just as it came from the hands of the author, or from the first publisher. This is very important for bibliographic reasons, because, some things get omitted in later editions of the same book. For example, in their interesting introduction and epilogue to **Toledot Adam**, is missing from later editions. In other books, that were reprinted more often, the concurrences to the books are missing, as well as other details. It would, of course, be important for those books that were reprinted more often, to have provided a full bibliographic accounting. In this respect, the work would have branched out quite extensively, and it would have become too crowded for the annals of **Pinkas Zamość.** I will leave this for my more general work, '**The City of Zamość and Its Sages**.' I did not have the opportunity to see the first edition of **Tiv Gittin** (No. 27); Sefer **HaMidot** (No. 35), and **Mif'alot Elokim** (No. 40). For these three, the second editions are cited. I also did not see three other things, which only appeared once, and those are: **Ben Oni**, Part B (No. 15), **Mar'eh Kohen** (No. 41) and **Neta Sha'ashuim** (No. 47a). They are presented here for bibliographic purposes. I also did not see the original edition of **Tuv HaLevanon** No. 26), despite the fact that it appeared many times together with **Khovot HaLevavot**, I thought it better to cite the original edition, as it is cited by Shmuel Wiener in **Kehilat Moshe** (p. 479, No. 3928). The book, **HaKriv Netanel** (No. 19), is not mentioned in any bibliography, and all my efforts to find something about it came to naught. I cite it on the basis that the author himself writes so in the frontispiece of his book, **Eden BeGan**. Next to the books that I did not have, I have placed an asterisk (*) next to the sequence number.

I want to believe that I have encompassed everything published by authors from Zamość in this bibliographical list. I will be very grateful to bibliographers and researchers, if they can show me more books by Zamość authors, which I have overlooked, in order that I may be able to incorporate them in my previously mentioned work, **The City of Zamość and its Sages.**

I hold it as my obligation to express thanks to the erudite bibliographer, Dr. Yitzhak Rifkind and the bibliographer, R' Chaim Lieberman for the friendly interest they took in the assembly of this bibliography. A hearty '*yasher-koach*' to the editor of **Pinkas Zamość**, the spiritually rich writer, our friend, Mordechai V. Bernstein, for his good oversight in preparing the bibliography and seeing that it would be able to appear in its complete form.

Now – a word about the language of the introduction. The work is thought out and prepared in the language in which these writings were written – the Holy Tongue [sic: Hebrew]. And for the bibliography, cut, as it were, from the same cloth, it would have been better for the introduction to have been in the same language. However, I was brought around by the request of the editor and the publishers of **Pinkas Zamość** to write the introduction in Yiddish, [the language] in which the entire **Pinkas** appears, in order that all the readers, also the non-experts, have an accurate picture and a summary of the bibliography. In the end, perhaps it is better this way. For Yiddish is the language of that Polish Jewry that has been cut off from us, sanctified by long generations of Yiddish tradition. It is a fact, that these very writers, who composed their insights into Torah in Hebrew, gave their oral lessons in the language of Yiddish. It is in Yiddish, that Rabbi Ber Mokhiakh, Rabbi Abraham Zbarzer, Rabbi Yaakov Krantz and others preachers and orators in Zamość, thundered and sang out their flaming and arousing heart-moving sermons in the sacred community of Zamość. With this language they excoriated, but equally brought comfort and hope to their stressed and afflicted brethren and sisters. The language of Yiddish at the side of The Holy Tongue, accompanied the thousand-year ascendancy of Jewish life and

created a 'Po-lin-ya[188].' Therefore, an introduction in Yiddish is indeed very appropriate, for a bibliography of '**Books of The Rabbis and Sages of Zamość.**'

At the end of the bibliography, there is also 7 various added notes about the names of individuals and cities.

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My work here, is to sanctify the memory of my parents, Our Teacher, R' David ben R' Mordechai and Mrs. Taube Miriam bat R' Moshe Meir (Landau family), my brother, Mordechai and his entire family, and my sisters Beileh Rivka and Ethel, who were all killed in the destruction of Poland. May God avenge their blood!

Yaakov Dov Mandelbaum

New York, Iyyar 5716 (1956)

## Footnotes & Bibliography

Apart from three pages of footnotes, the author provides an 90 page bibliography of the various works that he has summarized in his introduction. The bibliography is a formidably work of scholarship in its own right, and its translation is well beyond the scope of this endeavor. For each book, the author gives a complete reproduction of the frontispiece of the book, which contains detailed information about the contents of the book, and the pedigree of the author. Additionally, the author has delved into the contents, and has extracted three things of related value from an historical point of view. These are:

1. *Haskamot* (Concurrences) These constituted a form of endorsement by colleagues of the author, and served as a way of giving the author both publicity and legitimacy in the rabbinical circles where the book would be sold. These generally ran only a couple of sentences, but there were usually several of them.
2. *Mikhtevei Tehilla* (Letters of Praise) Similar to the *Haskamot*, but more elaborate and detailed. There were fewer of these, and they could run to a half a page or more.

3. Excerpts of interest from the introduction of the book. The introduction was often a place where the author had the liberty to write in a somewhat more informal manner, and convey thoughts that may not necessarily fit in with the formal text.

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188 The author plays on a Hebrew construction of the name of Poland, which when broken down into its syllables, means, 'here is the place where God dwells.'

# Shlomo Ettinger, His Life and Personality[189]

**By Dr. Max Weinreich**

*Page 317: Portrait of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger*

**A**

Shlomo Ettinger was born in Warsaw in the first years of the 19th century. It is possible to say according to those who knew: 1803. He was the scion of a prominent family, in which there was equal ease with both Torah and commerce. His grandfather, R' Itcheh, who is considered the patriarch of the entire family, was said to have been the Rabbi of Chelm, and concerning Ettinger's father, R' Yoskeh, I have been by Ettinger's youngest daughter, Mrs. Maria Goldman, that he was an ordained Rabbi and he had been wanted to take a pulpit in Frankfurt-Main, but he didn't want to leave Poland.

Shlomo lost his father early on, and his grandfather, to whom he was a darling, was also no longer alive – and so he went to his uncle, a younger brother of his father, Rabbi Mendel Ettinger, who was the Rabbi of Lencza (Lublin area). Here, e studied under his uncle's oversight, and as it is related, Ettinger received from him not only Torah [education], but also [secular] wisdom as well: R' Mendel is known to have command of German, and secular, worldly books were not considered off-limits by him. Here, in the tolerant house of his uncle, the yong Shlomo saw that Torah and [secular] wisdom were indeed not conflicting elements, and it was here that the foundation was laid for his later odyssey, that it is possible to be an educated and enlightened person and despite that not sunder one's self from the traditional Jewish way of life.

The young lad, who additionally was a motivated student with a sharp mind, was intensely sought after by the marriage brokers. But R' Mendel didn't want to marry off his nephew to just anyone. He had the right to be particular, until he felt that he had found an appropriate match: he 'negotiated' with the Zamość magnate Yehuda-Leib Wolf, who wanted the accomplished young man for his youngest daughter, Golda. Shlomo married in a most fortunate way, and went from Lencza to Zamość, to live on subsidy at his father-in-law's while he continued study.

Everyone envied the good fortune that befell him. Nobody asked of him to make a living. He spent whole days in the bet HaMedrash, reading books; occasionally, he would go hear a performance of the lovely orchestra of the Zamość garrison. When his father-in-law, who supported him, passed away, Shlomo still did not take up a livelihood, it was Golda who concerned herself with making a living. Her oldest brother Yankel had a glass factory, in a woods near the *shtetl* Janow, not far from Zamość. So she opened a store to sell glassware, and window panes, she sat in the store, while her husband remained a 'scholar,' in the Bet HaMedrash.

Zamość at that time was a center of the enlightenment, it was here that one found Rabbi Shimon Bloch, the Ran"Kas (Rabbi Nachman Krochmal's), a close friend, his brother Shlomo-Wolf, Yaakov Eichenbaum, and others. The impact of these Maskilim was so great, that books of the Enlightenment were found even in the Bet HaMedrash, and conversations were held there about secular matters. There was a gat6hering point in the city, where the Maskilim and the Torah sages would come together – there was no really sharp delineation between the two groups: – this was the home of Joseph Zederbaum, Alexander Zederbaum's father. Here they would gather to delve into a difficult Gemara, and about world issues, or tell something worthwhile. Also Ettinger, who was called in the city with reference to his father-in-law, Shlomo Yehuda-Leib's, was a frequent guest at the Zederbaum's.

Ettinger was greatly loved here. He was also very knowledgeable. However, there were greater scholars than he was. But, in addition to this, he was a very animated young man, always cheerful, dropping witticisms, and not idle in composing a rhyme. There was no festive occasion or gathering in the city, to which he was not invited, in order to enjoy his verses and *bon mots*.

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189 Author's Footnote: Introduction to "*Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's Writings*," published by the Vilna Publishing House of B. Kletskin, 1925.

## B

It was in this manner that Ettinger's days flowed by peacefully and fine, and he might have spent his life in the Bet HaMedrash, pursuing scholarship and writing, were it not for the economic crisis that intruded on the city, and also didn't pass over the Golds[190]. And expenses actually became larger: a child was born. Shlomo began to sense that he was not on the right path: is it appropriate for a mature man to have to cope with life's vicissitudes, and look for a pittance of income that his wife would bring in from the store? No, one must find a purpose!

But what can he do, since he had no specific profession; going to work in the store was not worth it, because his wife, even by herself, had nothing to do there. A number of older good friends from among the balebatim of the city, among them also R' Joseph Zederbaum, gave him advice that he should travel to Berlin and study to become a physician. This plan would have actually been close to his heart: but where are the resources to come from? So he conceived of the following: he will travel to Odessa, because there he had someone to lean on.

Odessa was a place of which the world, at that time, took great notice. At the beginning of the 19th century, the city had become so prominent, as to be unrecognizable, and many Jews had been attracted to come there, who were engaged in commerce, especially from Eastern Galicia. The Galitzianers were of the more enlightened sort, in contrast to the 'Polish' Jews, such that 'A Broder' in Odessa became what 'A Berliner' was in Vilna, a synonym for a Maskil. One of Ettinger's brothers-in-law, R' Wolf, who, incidentally, had married a woman from Brod, also happened to have moved to Odessa, had become a broker on the bourse, and had succeeded in his business undertakings. It seemed rather straightforward that Ettinger should also move to Odessa, and see, with the help of his brother-in-law, whether he could achieve something. Odessa was Russia, Zamość – Poland, but the official language both here and there in the better Jewish circles was German. And Ettinger knew German, or at least it seemed so to him because of his facility in German speech. His brother-in-law was also of the opinion that Shlomo should come.

One fine morning, the young man seated himself in the coach. The ride was no small matter. It was supposed to take a couple of weeks. His wife was angry – she was always trod upon, and in many of Ettinger's later works, a yearning for some small amount of family happiness bursts through. But Ettinger was happy, and he had hope. In his valise, he carried not only his underwear and his Sabbath *kapoteh*, which his wife had give to him to take along, but also several pictures; perhaps in secret from his practical-minded Golda, who would have held this to be a form of foolishness. But he did not want to separate himself from his work. Even in early childhood, he loved to draw "small figures, and in Zamość he had a reputation as a good artist.

## C

All of the good fortune ascribed to Odessa came a cropper. Between the time when R' Wolf went along with the arrival of his brother-in-law, and the time he actually showed up, a significant amount of time went by, and by that time, the wheel turned. A crisis developed in Odessa as well. Many people went about with out employment.

Gold personally did not fare too badly. Both he and his wife received the small-town young man quite nicely, and he began to look aground. Beautiful Odessa appealed to him very much. But what is to be further on? After he had gotten himself out of home for the sake of earning a living, there would be no point to sit around being supported in the home of his brother-in-law, and taking advantage of the surrounding advantages, which he didn't have in Zamość. R' Wolf acted speedily to try and arrange employment for Ettinger, but to no avail. He proposed to Shlomo that he will give him four hundred *kerblach*[191], and that he should start trading. However, Shlomo apprehended that nothing would come of this. 'Gold only goes to Gold,' he reasoned to himself, and I will run through this money, and will once again be left with nothing, and it was in this way, that he spent four months in Odessa.

One time, a group of good friends were sitting at R' Wolf's, and a conversation was underway. The master of the house

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190 The author does not make clear that this may, perhaps, be the maiden name of his wife.

191 A currency denomination of the time.

was praising his young brother-in-law, and complained that there does not sem to be anything for him to do. He showed his guests Ettinger's drawings, and it was recognized that he has talent. So then, R' Yaakov Nathanson, a very rich, well-connected man from a distinguished family, also a Polish Jew, remarked as follows:

I would have a fine plan for him, if he can only have support.

– Support – replied R' Wolf – that will not be lacking. He has support from me, and I would be greatly pleased, if I could provide support in such a manner, that he should be always provided with a means by which he could support his wife and children.

If that is the case, says R' Yaakov, I propose that the young man should travel to Lemberg, and study pharmacy. I am now sending my son there, so they can travel together.

R' Yaakov, you are right, another person chimed in, but the study of pharmacy demands a lot of money. He would be better off to study medicine.

And a third person added: and at the same time, he can get an education in art. We have seen enough instances where people have been able to make a living from both skills.

For the entire time, Ettinger sat silently, listening to the conversation. He felt hurt by the fact that everybody was thinking about ways to help him, the unsuccessful one. Finally, his brother-in-law approached him and asked, what he thought. He was to strongly confused to give an immediate answer. He asked that he be allowed three days to think the matter over. This was a matter that will decide all of the rest of his life.

With that, the group dissolved, and Ettinger was left alone with his thoughts.

**D**

The decision was not an easy one. When he depicted the time that he would return to Zamość, with everyone gaping at him, that the son-in-law living off of support has become a medical doctor, he thought that there could be no better outcome. But, before his eyes, he immediately saw his angry wife, and heard her angry cry in his ears: rather than have to suffer here scolding, it is better to forfeit all dreams. But upon reconsideration, what then else could he do, return home? Wander around with nothing to do, and wait, until one will consume the last of the money? And then to watch how his own beloved child goes hungry? No, rather than that, it is better to bear the burden of one's wife's anger! Again the same thing: traveling to Lemberg means taking off the distinct garb of a Jew, to exchange the black mohair kaftan with lace for a flaxen jacket, and the kosher Jewish *Shtrymel* for a hat. What will all the Zamość Jews say about this? Will he be held as a traitor to Jewry, will he still be permitted to enter a Jewish home? And will his own Golda still want to live with him in the same house?

He engaged in thinking about this matter for several days, until he finally came to a decision of yes. The following argument was decisive: rather than see the family expire from want, it is better to assume the burden of the wife's shouting and cursing. Everyone acquainted with what he had decided, give him the same advise. One, R' Shmuel Landau, a nephew of his father-in-law by a sister, invited him to his home, and there, R' Shmuel, together with his sister, who was a very educated and sympathetic woman, argued in favor of this with Ettinger. They said, not to be afraid, that your wife will understand, and that good traits cannot only be manifested in a mohair kaftan; even a lion, should he put on the hide of an ass, does not lose his intrinsic strength.

On the following morning, Ettinger went to a 'German,' and a week later, he was already on the way to Lemberg. Before his departure, he wrote a letter to his good friend Zederbaum in Zamość, that he should calm his Golda down, and say that the study of medicine is not a waste of time: here, after all, the son of R' Yaakov Nathanson is also studying, and also the son of a very rich man from Brod.

**E**

*Page 323: Yaakov Eichenbaum, drawn by Ettinger from memory*

Ettinger arrived in Lemberg approximately in 1825, and immediately knocked at the door of the Medical Institute (Medicinsch-Chyrurgische Leheranstalt zu Lemberg, which was its official name). They accepted him, no manner of limitations existed – but there was a practical difficulty: the raw student was not prepared for the studies. He had read a great deal of the literature of the Enlightenment, but without any system of learning. He had no concept of Latin, and his knowledge of which German was evident, was nevertheless inadequate. However, he was not intimidated, and began to study with focus. When he traveled home a half-year later on vacation, he could take pride, that he had gone through three classes in German, and the first class in Latin. Simultaneously, he was permitted to attend classes in medicine as well.

Ettinger lived well in Lemberg. He had little money, but because of this it was interesting. Arnold Zhelinsky was among his university friends, later a dermatologist in Vienna. Ettinger got together with him in yet another context: Zhelinsky was a talented artist. It is to him that we are grateful for the only surviving portrait of Ettinger. The 'Cheerful Shlomo' as Ettinger was known among his colleagues, was a frequent guest in the homes of the *Maskilim* and the wealthy families of Lemberg. He loved spending time in the company of others, and people would enjoy him in return, even if there was some apprehension about his sharp tongue

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At the beginning of 1830, Ettinger completed his studies at the institute, and returned home. He achieved his goal, and could take satisfaction in his accomplishment. Only one thing pained him: his hope to develop his capacity as an artist was not fulfilled. It is true that he did not forsake it entirely, and we hear that even later in life, that he drew a picture of Eichenbaum from memory, to the extent that everyone was amazed at the resemblance. But at this point, it was only a hobby, and no longer an ambition.

But because of this, he uncovered another talent during his time as a student, which he himself, didn't anticipate at the time. Previously, he would orate, saying good words, write epigrams, and comic poems, not suspecting that this had any value. In Lemberg, he discovered the writer in himself. It was here that he began to write his parables, and it was here, very likely, that '*Serkeleh*' was created as well.

**F**

That the Lemberg Institute granted him the title of 'Mediker,' not 'Doktor,' would have been only half the problem. The Jews of Zamość accepted their educated scion of the city in a very friendly manner, and immediately anointed him as 'Doctor Ettinger.' They would have had complete trust in him. It was however bad, that according to a regulation that was also then in force, a graduate of a foreign advanced school was not permitted to immediately begin a practice in Poland. He first had to take a government examination at Warsaw University. Ettinger began to prepare himself. But before it became possible for him to complete the course, that was required of him, the November Revolution broke out. Who could now think about studying? Zamość was a fortress with a sizeable garrison, and one could reasonably believe that it will be put under siege. Ettinger then decided to leave the city with his family, and to take up residence with in his brother-in-law Yekl's glass works near Janow. The assessment was in fact a correct one, Zamość became a central point of the war operations.

A frightful cholera epidemic broke out in Poland in the summer of 1831. This was the first epidemic in the country, which was brought as a gift by the entering Russian military. The epidemic raged through Janow and the surrounding villages, and the authorities did not know what to do. The number of doctors was small, and even with the greatest effort, it was not in their capacity to attend to all of the sick. The ruling entity became aware that in Gold's glassworks, there is a 'Mediziner,' who, while it is true, did not have a formal diploma from Warsaw, but he had just finished the full course. So Ettinger was summoned, and was ordered to begin handling those sick with cholera.

Ettinger threw himself into his work with his heart and very life. He paid no heed to the danger in which had put himself, he worked day and night, making no distinction between native Pole and Jew, between poor and rich. Many people indeed owed him a debt of gratitude for their very lives.

**G**

The Russian-Polish War came to an end, – Zamość held out longer than all the other points and only surrendered at the very end of 1831 – and Ettinger returned with his family to his home city. Sick patients began to come to him. Once again the question stood before him: what next? According to the regulation, he would now have to go stand for an examination in Warsaw. But this was a long drawn-out affair, and before you know it, there would be no means from which to live. But, in this respect, he had a bit of luck: perhaps for the only time in his life. The regime knew him beforehand from his committed service in Janow. Dr. Brzezinski, the Medical Inspector of the Lublin Province, had a high opinion of him, and looked the other way regarding the fact that Ettinger was not properly credentialed. Brzezinski gave an order to the town pharmacist, that he is to dispense medicaments in accordance with Ettinger's prescriptions, and because of this, it became possible for him to conduct a private practice. Ettinger had good relations with the military doctors – there were no others in Zamość. They would even come for consultations, when he would call them. Quickly, Ettinger was appointed as an inspector of the municipal hospital, in the division for venereal diseases. He also applied himself vigorously to the Jewish hospice, which had been founded by one of the local wealthy people. Ettinger created a good order in that location, took on the obligation of visiting there daily, and look over the sick patients, made his own medicines, in order to save the hospice pharmacy expenses.

Quickly, Dr. Ettinger – which he never called himself, nor did he sign himself in this manner: he didn't want to use a title that his institute had not bestowed upon him – developed a sizeable practice. But he was not overly endowed materially. The patients paid very little. It was generally known that the doctor was someone who made do with less, so the poor gave him nothing, and even the rich were idle inj reaching into their pockets, usually two Polish gulden at the highest. He barely made a living for his family, which , no evil-eye intended, continued to grow.

Where he could, he continued to prepare himself for the government examination. At the moment he didn't need this, but his position was nevertheless an uncertain one. All that had to happen was for the inspector or the pharmacist to revoke the boon that had been granted, or a clandestine enemy inform on him, he would be broken and cut off from a livelihood. In 1833 or 1834, he journeyed to Warsaw (his affluent brother-in-law, Hertz Krasnopolsky helped him out with expenses). However, misfortune did not leave his side. He got so sick in Warsaw, that they despaired of his life, and he was already being mourned back in Zamość, but the illness consumed the money that he had brought with him, and in order not to come home to his wife with nothing, he went off to take the examination before he was prepared appropriately. The commission gave him the title of 'Mediziner (Lekarz) of the second degree.' This means a sort of *feldscher* with the right to heal only external illnesses, not internal ones. It is with this sort of inferior document that Ettinger traveled home, and returned to his old troubles and worries. He continued to practice as he had in the past, because the pharmacist continued to honor his prescriptions. But the fear continued to hang over his head.

**H**

His one satisfaction came from writing, from which, god forbid, he never made a cent. It was the opposite, that which he produced on paper and ink, to be written over four or five copies of every work, was perhaps for him a rather substantial outlay, but he had no greater pleasure that sitting down and reading something of his own. And Gotlober happened to come to Zamość in 1837, and contracted cholera there, and was certainly not the only patient to whom Ettinger said:

'What is cholera to you? I will better read my 'Serkeleh' to you.'

'He read to me, and I got better.' Gotlober adds. Others did not enjoy his barbed words as much. Many of his paradigms and parable were written not only concerning the general world, but also directed at living people, and his criticisms were remembered.

The moment and the motivation that brought Ettinger to writing in Yiddish is fixed in a document written in his own hand, which is so relevant to the point, that it is worth reproducing it here verbatim:

> 'A couple of years ago, I received two small books to read in Lemberg. One was called 'The World Deceived,' and the other, 'Alteli.' Both books had been translated and worked

over from German into Yiddish. The first was called *Der Tartif* in German, and the other, *Robinsohn* – I took note of the fact that these books appealed to a large number of people, that is to say, people who were erudite, and also people who were not well-educated. I am of the opinion that the first appealed to them, because they saw something that heretofore had not been written in the Yiddish language, and the other, because they were able to read a storybook. – Whether the books had been written or not, for a number of reasons, I don't want to say , but everyone by themselves will be able to see that at the very least, the plan to write in the vernacular Yiddish was felt within me, wherein I had to immediately try to see if it was within my power to also produce something of this kind and to write in this language. The first things that I wrote were single parables, and little writings (called epigrams in German). I saw that the readership liked them very much, and everything that I wrote got snatched up as it was written, and a number were re-written, but as it happens, with a number of errors and mistakes. As soon as I saw this, I sat down and thought out a lot of parables and epigrams, and at the end, a complete theatrical production. I did not, however, want to rely entirely on myself, and I gave the manuscripts to several people to read over, who have a talent for this, and who were already well-read in many books and other languages, and also to such people who were not educated, and do not know anything but the Yiddish language, in order to get a point of view from many directions. The educated people praised it from their point of view, and the uneducated people from their perspective. Both sides began to make requests of me, asking for more. Their request was to permit my work to be published, but I resolved as follows: I will lay out a plan of the sort, that I will be able to – apart from that which I had already written – to add new things every time, such as theatrical pieces, stories, parables, epigrams, and other things of this kind. – From my end, I was satisfied with this plan, and was prepared to deliver new things, but I want to ask the readership, that in the first book that will be printed, the names of a number of people should be recorded, who wanted to have the book printed. And I promise them, that they will be satisfied. Because I have such a dark nature, that I always put in a great amount of effort to assure that they will be satisfied with me. Now, a theatrical piece will be printed that has five acts, called 'Serkeleh,, or The Yahrzeit for a Brother,' in parables and epigrams. I will see to it that it is printed on good quality paper and with the same font of letters that will make it entirely easy to read, and the names of the people, who will sign the signature page will also be printed in the book.'

I

It is possible that Ettinger wrote this perspective about his work a little later, in the forties, at the time that he published early-letters in Odessa (see the accompanying note), but there is no doubt, that by 1836-1837 he already had the thought in him to publish his work. I must immediately say, he writes at the beginning of 1837, to an unknown addressee, that I would like to see 'Serkeleh' published as well as the 'Parables.' This would represent some income for me...according to the promise made by Mr. Tughandler, I am hoping to get the approval of the censor in Warsaw.[192]

At the same time, he also carried with him larger literary plans. He, who constantly copied over German poems, and speeches, who studied Italian, and who wrote the larger majority of his letters in German, did not for one minute give thought to the possibility of exchanging his Y i d d i s h pen for another one. This dominates all facets of his work, and is the sole language of his heart. True, his character Redlich speaks German, but it is not for nothing that the bride Hinde says with an involuntary irony that 'He speaks like a book,' and a book of the Enlightenment must 'speak' in German. This is also the reason that R' David expresses himself in German at moments of great excitement. Apart from that, all the characters in 'Serkeleh,' apart from the comical character Friederika, speak *mameloshn*, and R' David asks her explicitly: 'Why do you not speak our beloved Yiddish?' The greatest difference between Ettinger and an

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192 Author's footnote: Yaakov Tughandler (1794-1871), a well-known activist in the Polish Enlightenment; from 1820 on, he was one of the Jewish censors in Warsaw. He was a good friend of Ettinger's.

enlightenment author such as Wolfsohn can be seen when we compare their comedies. In '*Leichtsien und Fremmelia*,' all the remarks are in German, even on the part of those characters that speak Yiddish. That means that the writer's language is German, and Yiddish has only the value of an ethnographic curiosity. In 'Serkeleh,' it is exactly the opposite, even in the case of Redlich's replies, the remarks are written in Yiddish.

But Ettinger sensed, had to sense, that a Yiddish writer had to be the best, was analogous to his own parable of the flying fish. He can't fly particularly high, because the language itself is somewhat poor, and if the author were to find a means to deal with this, he then has to reckon with an audience who lack even the most elementary [abstract] concepts. Ettinger wanted to fashion in Yiddish, 'a mythology, a cosmic and natural history,' as he articulated himself, and he thought that in the span of a couple of years, he would have such a work completed. But he did not follow the indirect path of many who came later, who would bail themselves out easily with a German word or with a foreign reference. It is especially the t r a n s l a t e d p a r a b l e s among Ettinger's works (not fables!) and his c a n t i c l e s (not epigrams!), give some sense of this, of how concerned he was to preserve the purity of his meaning. His t h e a t r i c a l pieces (not drama!), consist of p r e s e n t a t i o n s (not acts and not even scenes!), and every presentation of several i n i t i a t i o n s (not scenes, and not entrances!). In place of 'Introduction-delineation' or 'Contents,' we find in his manuscript of parables the words, P a r a b l e - T e l l e r . Later, he invented an expression: *Z u c h z e t t e l* . He does not subscribe to the notion that 'The play takes place,' but rather that T h e S t o r y is in Lemberg.

**J**

On May 24, 1843, the renown one-time director of the *Beobachter* and *der Weichsel*, Anthony Eisenbaum, and later Director of the Warsaw Teachers' Journal, a good friend of Ettinger, submitted a request to the curator of the Warsaw Teachers Circle, that they should permit the printing of 'Serkeleh,' and the 'Parables.' This type of work, he said, was accessible to all classes of Jews, and they portray in many hues the failings and shortcomings, they portray accurately and humorously the entire Jewish way of life, and for this reason, they can have a special influence (*Bardzo zbawienny*) on peoples' thinking.

Ettinger meanwhile was hoping to have Tughandler's protection. However, he sorely deceived himself. The strict censors found material that they deemed unsuitable in his understated writing. On the 10th of August of the same year, the 'Jew Eisenbaum' received a reply from the curator, that after consultation with the Hebrew censor, he is issuing a permission to print the referenced two works, only under the condition, that all the modifications be made that are demanded in the report by the censor's committee.

We do not know how far along Ettinger had reached with his plan to develop a sort of popular-scientific literature in Yiddish. Only a small, tiny fragment survives, that we enter in the footnotes; however, even the intent alone is entirely characteristic of him.

The censors, Tugenhold[193] and Tchersker didn't just satisfy themselves with erasing individual places. They ordered that entire sections and pieces be altered. The censor-exemplar of the 'Parables,' which is preserved by record, gives testimony to the foolish and small-minded methods used by the censors in wielding their red pencils.

In the 'Parables,' the word 'King' may not be mentioned, as a metaphor for a lion. Because, if the lion is presented in anything but the best possible light, there could be an undertone, or a tome, that kings are not angels. And from there, it is but a single step to the insult of Majesty, and to Republican ideas. 'When I see that exalted people are talking, and they don't know about whom, or what they are saying,' (this is the insult), that is no good: permit just the implication that people in high places can err occasionally, then tomorrow, this could start a revolution. Better to erase the word 'exalted' and that is less provocative. The censor also had a view regarding Jewish questions: that strong attacks by writers of the Haskala against the *Hasidim* was terrible. Therefore, it is better in the parable, 'The Fly,' one should not

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193 We are seeing two spellings of this name, and believe this to be the same individual as Tughandler.

use the expression, 'Guteh Yiddelach,' and in the 'Assembly,' it certainly should not say: 'The *Tzaddik* has taken issue with us.' Because, even thought this concerns a different matter, the audience can be led to believe that this is a reference to a Hasidic Rebbe.

Further, the censor is concerned about morals. About 'slippery' themes that do not belong here. Here he has nothing to think over. However, he cannot stand the thought that 'some can write a slanderous poster,' (the writers); the reader cannot become aware, that it is possible to construe that a father can strike a grown child (the response). And what kind of language is this: may rumor mongers be cursed (the insult), or ' ... B u r n ..'. Better the chaste Viteleh herself (Viteleh?) Burning, cursing? Forbidden, that cannot be permitted! And in this fashion, the red pencil crosses out entire portions of 'Assut,' and entirely such epigrams as 'The Female,' 'The Doctor Grind.'

That's what they did to the Parables and Canticles. 'Serkeleh,' was mangled even worse.

As soon as the first lines of the 'Vort Fried,' the censor demands their removal: one may not say – do not open your mouth to say bad things! – *only goodness may survive in the world all by itself*, and in order that the following phrases should make sense, he demands that on the third line, the word 'whereby' be expunged and replaced with 'something.' He demands that the expression '*reinisch, mintz, kreitzer'*, be replaced with *kerblach, groschen, thaler, 'gulden,'* in order to bring in the local designation [sic: for currency] rather than the foreign ones ( despite the fact that 'the story is in Lemberg.'). Among the other demands of the censor (in 'Serkeleh,' as seen in the report of the censors Tugenhold and Tchersker to the curator of the Teachers' Circle, about one hundred 'improvements' were made. In the 'Parables,' and 'Canticles,' 'only' about forty) the following are worth taking note of:

A) Removals from the Christian faith: apostate, strategems for conversion, they request using the term 'gentile,' in place of 'transgressor against Jews,' of 'Khultai,' 'thievery,' 'Christians,' or delete them entirely.

B) Removals regarding the ruling political order: 'Monarch' must be replaced by 'Magnate,' 'Freedom' by 'Sharing,' and even the humorous 'Bird-Freedom' in Frederika's monologue in the last act, with 'Liberation.'

C) Removals having to do with morals: In the phrase, ' He who follows in the steps of his father-in-law, sleeps with the bear,' instead of 'sleeps,' the word 'sits' is put in. Instead of Malka-Green, the censor prefers 'Toyz-green.' Instead of 'a kiss,' 'a pat.' Instead of a 'Shiksa House,' a 'Bad House.' This is also the place for the censor's prohibition against the word 'Poritz' [sic: a nobleman], which is synonymous with a rabble-rouser. In each instance, he requests instead the word, 'Ruler,' or 'Herr.'

Ettinger was beside himself over such a ruling from the censor-committee. He, the author, slaved over every word, working over every line, wrote the chapters and picked the names of the characters specifically with certain orthography in mind, the remarks with the intended barbs – and here comes a barbarous hand and makes mincemeat out of his work, taking no account of the author. He poured out his bitter heart in an explanatory letter to his good friend.

> '... but your words: send me your book with forty rubles, and your book will get printed, I do not understand this. For I do not want to print the book for free with the modifications that the censor-committee has proposed. Do my characters there speak ill of God, of his Messiah, of the kings of the earth, of their nobility, of their judges, or their overseers, God forbid? Or does my tongue speak evil about the ways of the conventional morality, that these fine folk had to underscore with their red pencils, crossing out, and ruining it from beginning to end, and debasing its beauty, leaving behind a mess of erasure instead of beauty? And furthermore: I know these people, and I know them to be educated people, people who seek knowledge, and they are good-hearted people, and have been at peace with me for always, and I ask, why did they seek to inflict such anger upon me? My book is clean of anything that is not right, and if a shortcoming can be found there, let then let me know what I am guilty of, and I will either expunge it, or fix what is not right, but they must not simply speak out against me! – You also did not let me know the number of copies that would be produced for the forty rubles, that you wrote for me to send to you.'

## K

The remarks concerning the forty rubles show that Ettinger continued to hope that he would be able to rebut the decree of the censor. And that he saw his goal before his eyes – to publish his work – exactly as completed. Once again, this lead to nothing. More details about the reasons are not known to us. It is possible, that new concerns, which pushed themselves in front of Ettinger forced him to forget about the luxury of being a writer.

The moment arrived that Ettinger feared the entire time. The head of the Zamość pharmacy was replaced, and this resulted in the branch under him to be cut away, on which the quasi-legal doctor stood all this time. This was approximately in 1845. A Jew in his forties, responsible for children – he had a total of seven – now, after fifteen years of practice, had to hit the books anew, and here it wasn't a question of the basic energy to study: the examinations were difficult, and the preparation needed a great deal of time, and therefore, money. An there were no loose funds to be found in the house.

Having no choice, once again, he had to approach his brother-in-law in Odessa, and so Ettinger traveled to Odessa. We know that along the way, he visited with Gotlober in Krzemieniec. Wolf Gold did not turn him away this time either, and it was agreed, that Ettinger would travel to Krakow, to take the government examination.

In Krakow, he made his way to the Deacon of the Medical Faculty and receives a cold official answer, even worse than he had anticipated: Seeing that in his Lemberg papers he has no indications of having studied physics and chemistry, he cannot be permitted to take the examination. He has to take these courses anew. True, when the Deacon, who was a decent chess player found out that Ettinger was able to play, he became more lenient. But the best piece of advice that he could give was still a weak one: that Ettinger should approach the Minister with a request showing, that he had lost his Lemberg credentials, rely on his work in the Zamość hospitals, and ask to be released from the examination in the referenced subjects.

The professor offered Ettinger comfort, indicating that the Minister would respond positively to Ettinger's request. However, Petersburg was not in any hurry to provide an answer. Month after month went by. How many times, in his anxiety, did Ettinger feel like throwing it all in and going home. But this would have been possible if he had been traveling to a family that was sympathetic to him. In his case, it was just the opposite, he was certain that they would simply just pour salt on the wounds. His wife didn't write him so much as a single word this entire time, the oldest of the Golds in Zamość, Zeinvill, also looked askance at this peculiar person, for whom the bread always falls with the buttered side down. The only one in the entire family, who wrote to him from time-to-time, and also supported the house a little bit, was one of his nieces.

In the end, he had to make a decision about this fruitless undertaking. He had been away from home for eleven months, living in straitened circumstances, and there were no visible signs of any quick answer. He had news from home that his Disha, may she live, his most beloved little daughter, was not well. His brother-in-law Wolf was being very generous, but open-ended support has its limits, and Ettinger sensed in his letter, that he is becoming impatient. So he waved off the entire plan with his hand, and in the middle of October 1847 traveled back home. In Berdichev, half-way home, he ran out of money again, and once again, he had to approach his brother-in-law for assistance. On the 25th of November, after a trip of five weeks, he came back to Zamość – he came with nothing.

## L

The new arrival was like a guest. His wife Golda had no sooner become aware that her husband had arrived in the city, when she left home and went to her brother Zeinvill. This was a punishment for Zeinvill as well. He understood that less than everything, that the brother-in-law was responsible in the unsuccessful conclusion of the trip, and as it happens, the brother in Odessa also wrote a warm letter about Ettinger. Zeinvill directed his sister that she would go home. She didn't obey him, and went to one of her friend's house. Three days went by, until she could be persuaded that she should return to her husband and children.

The bloodletting that Ettinger had to put up with from this – which the whole town resounded with from this piquant affair -- one can see even from the restrained, self-controlled letter, that he wrote to Wolf Gold in Odessa. However,

in finally taking account, the entire matter didn't turn out too badly. He thought that he was returning to an impoverished family, and here it becomes apparent that during the period of his absence, the family funded a stone house for Golda in Zamość, and an added couple of hundred dollars as well. The spice store, which his wife had opened, also wasn't doing badly.

He attempted to practice again, and the pharmacist (Ettinger himself was surprised by this) issued medicaments according to his prescriptions. But this was upset rather quickly, when he purchased a parcel of land, 65 Morg in size, in Zdanów, about four kilometers from Zamość, and took up residence there with his entire family.

Working the land as an ideal of Ettinger's for a long time, and he was pleased that he personally was able to become a colonist, and as it turns out, a good thing emerged from it: since colonists were freed from military service, and this was in the time of Czar Nicholas I, it was no small benefit[194]. Even if Ettinger, dressed in 'rags,' would exhort the Jews in a various way to serve the king, and to 'go even into fire, in order to carry out the king's plan.'

It was in this manner that Ettinger occupied his land for a period of time, and engaged in the pursuit of agriculture. However, a time came, when the authorities yet again came to Ettinger and appealed to his medical e x p e r t i s e , willing to ignore the question of his credentials, when in July 1855 in Zamość, a fresh cholera epidemic broke out anew. He did not delay for even a moment, and did not try to engage in any recrimination. The family remained in the village, and he traveled back to the city, moving into the two rooms that he had reserved for his own use in his own house. After this, he returned to the colony.

**M**

Ettinger's final years passed by uneventfully, and he no longer gave much thought to literary work. During his last trip to Odessa, he attempted to have programs of his work created – perhaps he hoped that he would derive some income to offset his large expenses – but nothing came of this. After this failure, he lost his 'muse and desire,' as he himself wrote.

The external circumstances for sustenance in Zdanów were actually not at all bad. Income was derived a little from agriculture, a little from medical practice, a little from the rent of the house in Zamość. In Zdanów proper, the Ettingers had five nice rooms. Occasionally guest would come to visit, and important people: once a general came, an engineer, and at one time, the Governor himself. At another time, they were visited by four Rabbis, among them the *Tyszowcer* [*Rebbe*], the Rabbi of Zamość, and the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*.

The guests were very welcome to Ettinger, became they helped to dispel the otherwise difficult rapprochement in the house. Golda continued to remain angered. I t was rare that she exhibited a wifely temperament. Most of the time she remained mad at him. I make no great demands in order to live, [she says], extracting a great sigh from Ettinger. I just want a little family happiness, and that is the one thing that fortune has denied to me. I am a husband, father and owner of my own house, a worker of the land. But it is my fate to bear everyone's sorrow. He did have a small measure of happiness from having married off his son Isaac well.

His health, also, was not the best. His troubles made him sick, and before his time, at the age of fifty years, he refers to himself as 'a feeble, old man.' He begins to think about death. A sign of this, is that he had already prepared his own epitaph, which actually was later used on his grave stone:

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194 Czar Nicholas I was a notorious anti-Semite, who promulgated the infamous ukase requiring that every third Jewish male child in a family be forcibly conscripted into the Russian Army for a twenty-five year term of service. The objective of this plan was to break up the solidarity of the Jewish community, and lead to its eventual assimilation into the Russian mass. It gave rise to the nefarious occupation of *khappers* (Yiddish, for kidnappers), who typically victimized poorer Jewish families, by grabbing their children, in order to satisfy the quota set by the Czarist regime.

Death
You unsheathed your sword against me
You cruelly cut down your prey
But my soul will mock [death] forever
Because the corner of resurrection will always be before his eyes

He died on 4 Tevet 5615 (1855). In the city, it was said he died '*raptovna*.' Everyone saw how fresh his spirit still was, and therefore no one thought he was so near the end. When he was brought into the city from Zdanów, he was greeted by the Bet-Din and carried his casket to the cemetery. This was an enormous honor, and an indication of how strongly the city thought of him. The entire city escorted him to his final resting place.

Ettinger really didn't break new ground, he was not a rebel from the Jewish tradition. Isaac is true to his religion because he is my son, he writes to a good friend. And the city had the same opinion of him, and this was not only that Rabbis would come and visit him as guests fro a while. It is also known as a fact that the *Izbicer Rebbe* came to Zamość, with his mother to get medical attention from the doctor, and they stayed with Ettinger at his house. This would have been impossible, if the community had even the slightest doubt about the conduct of Jewish ritual in the doctor's house.

Many details and incidents from Ettinger's life have not yet come to the fore, but the portrait of this pure, simple and straightforward Jew stands out clearly before our eyes. The least of his attributes was as a breaker of boundaries. Every letter that he ever sent was first written in draft form, and he worked over the expressions, until he thought that he had gotten his ideas properly raised. He wrote many lengthy greetings-poems in Yiddish, and in German when it was necessary, and if his son, writing from Lublin in a letter says: 'Fraydeleh and her loving husband and little children sent you their heartiest regards,' he would reply: 'Why, my son, do you send regards from our Friend, the Modest, Educated, Grand Lady, Mrs. Fraydeleh Cohen, just like that, without any title, this is not very nice of you in the least.'

But he was a wise man. This form of expression, after all, was a style of the times, like the high collar. And he was a loving man as well. When he would skewer someone, it would hurt, but it was done without malice.

**N**

*Page 337:* *Frontispiece of a Playbill for Serkeleh with Ettinger's Autograph*
*Page 340:* *Ettinger's Grave Stone in the Zamość Cemetery on the Eve of the Hitler Holocaust*

Ettinger's greatest tragedy was not to have lived to see a single line of his work in print, even though he strove mightily to accomplish this, all his life. Yet, even after his death, his writing still didn't have any luck. In 186, a Gansherovsky printed a 'Comedy in 5 acts about Serkeleh, or the bogus Yahrzeit that took place in Lemberg, in the Prussian town of Johannesburg, in the Year 5585.' The text of this little boom is mixed up and full of errors. It is evident that this was printed from a draft that was copied over by a third party. Quickly, in 1862, a bookseller from Warsaw appeared, who wanted to reprint *Serkeleh*. Ettinger's two sons, Mikhl and Yaakov, students at the Warsaw Teacher's Seminary, became aware of this, and approached the Warsaw censor-committee with a request that no one should be give the right to publish their father's work, before there demands to the publisher are over. The committee granted their request. A short time afterwards, the two sons again came to the censor, and this time with a hand draft of their father's work, and requested that they be granted permission to publish it. Their request was again granted. At the end of 1862, a copy of the Parables and Canticles was also approved by the censor-committee, in which the censor-committee still insisted on making certain changes, but granted permission for publication.

Nothing came of this undertaking either. If 'Serkeleh' was printed in Warsaw, it was in the error-ridden style of the edition from Johannesburg; an edition also appeared in Lemberg. Alexander Zederbaum began to print the Parables and Canticles in *Kol Mevaser* in 1863, and after that, they were printed in the *Warsaw Yiddisher Zeitung* and in the *Yiddishe Volksblatt* in Petersburg. They were first published as a collection in 1889 – and in a second edition in 1890 – because of the efforts of Ettinger's son Wilhelm (Yaakov) in Petersburg.

Serkeleh is being printed for the first time in its entirety in this work.[179]. However, it is not necessary to conclude that the audience is not familiar with this work. Ettinger himself wanted his work to be recognized, since he dedicated a considerable amount of time to writing copies in his tight formal handwriting. Five handwritten manuscripts of 'Serkeleh' are still known to exist today. And how many have been lost?

The Maskilim were inspired by Ettinger's work, and we know that it was not performed only one time on the stage. Regarding one such performance in 1863, in which the role of Serkeleh was played by none other than A b r a h a m G o l d f a d n , we are told by Papirnow in his memoirs. Zederbaum brings in a second fact, that in Turkish Mohilev (by the Dneister) a group of *Maskilim* put on this theatrical piece, and the role of Yokhanan the Matchmaker was played by R' Yaakov Eichenbaum. There were many other instances of this nature, and we know of many such instances with certainty.

And after all is said, Ettinger's influence was a minor one, limited within narrow circles. If he had the temperament of a revolutionary, perhaps he would have become the grandfather of our literature. He had the literary capacity for it. If he stands behind Mendele [Mokher Sforim] in talent, he stands higher than him in both detail and the feel that comes with form, even if he wrote thirty years before him. But he was a prisoner of his own character that he could not break through. And so, he has remained the G r e a t - g r a n d f a t h e r o f Y i d d i s h l i t e r a t u r e , the little-known, half-forgotten great-grandfather, who in the course of r e s e a r c h, we are obligated to present to our readers.

Ettinger died not knowing that better times would come for Yiddish writers,.But when he departed this world, his great and influential heir was already born into this world, Shlomo Ettinger died in Zamość in 1856. In 1851, in Zamość, Yitzhak Leib Peretz had already been born.

# Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's Warsaw Relatives and Friends

**By Dr. Y. Szyfer**

(As Derived from Archival Sources)

As a complement to the work of Dr. Max Weinreich, we bring the work of the Kadosh-historian Dr. Y. Szyfer, which was incorporated into Volume III of the YIVO folios of April-May 1932 (No. 4-5). From both works, one already gets a full picture of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, whose one-hundredth anniversary fell on 1956, when our *Pinkas* was in the midst of preparation.

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## Dr. Ettinger's Warsaw Uncle, R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Raver-Ettinger, and His Descendants

In the biographical Ettinger research of Dr. Weinreich (see his classical Ettinger presentation), we find a row of threads that stretch to Warsaw. It is in this fashion that we become aware from letters and footnotes that Dr. Weinreich introduces at the end of his Ettinger presentation, that Dr. Ettinger was friendly with the well-known Warsaw *Maskilim*, **Yaakov Tugenhold** and **Aharon-Anthony Eisenbaum**, and he corresponded with a friend in Warsaw, one **Y. Korngold** (compare the letters No. 3,4,12 & 13), Dr. Weinreich also brings us a highly interesting document from the year 1862, in which two sons of Dr. Ettinger, **Mikhl** and **Yaakov** are mentioned, and it appears from this, that they were both students of the renown Warsaw Teachers' Seminary at that time, which was, at that time, under the direction of Eisenbaum, and later Tugenhold (compare Dr. Weinreich's Ettinger presentation p. XLI and 590).

Even though we encounter both of Dr. Ettinger's sons in Warsaw after their father's death, we may assume that they came to Warsaw while Dr. Ettinger was still alive. For us, however, of far greater importance is the friendship, firmly

[179] Author's Footnote: This refers to the book, "Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's Writings," from which we are extracting the subject matter for this work.

established by Dr. Weinreich, between Dr. Ettinger and the Warsaw Maskilim. Were these the only threads that connected the author of 'Serkeleh' with the Polish capitol city? According to the most recent Ettinger research ( of Kappel, Weinreich and most recently from M. Weiner) it would appear, that Dr. Ettinger did not have more than a few good friends in Warsaw. So the question remains hanging, as to how Dr. Ettinger came to form these friendships? A personal meeting does not make much sense, because it is not known that Dr. Ettinger ever made a trip to Warsaw. Who then, took note of him in Warsaw, and who made the connection between him and the leading Warsaw Maskilim, such as Eisenbaum and Tugenhold? How did he acquire his Warsaw friend Y. Korngold, with whom he later carried on such an intimate correspondence? And in general, how does that very same person, the 'friend who is a guardian of the word,' Y. Korngold, who sought out Ettinger – as is described in the revealing letter of 1854 (letter Number 14 in Weinreich's presentation) -- in Zamość about 2-3 years before his death, by which time he was already 'a feeble, old man?'

All of these accumulated questions would be rhetorical, or 'fervent wishes,' if we had not fortuitously come upon material that bears witness to the fact that Dr. Ettinger had an extensive family in Warsaw, and especially one of the most prominent Warsaw families. They, the Warsaw Ettingers, were the protectors of his writings, it was from them that he received the necessary recommendations, and through them, he got to Eisenbaum, Tugenhold and Korngold. The Warsaw Ettingers are, however, interesting for another instance, which is, incidentally, more important that the connections that they created between their Zamość relative and the Warsaw Maskilim. And they are interesting in their own right, as leaders of t6heir generation and as personalities. Their biographies, which we will present here, can serve as a supplement to the basic Ettinger research, which gives an understanding of the 'race' from which the author of the 'Parables' came from, and similar descendants from the same bloodlines...
Let us then transition to the theme itself.

According to the research of Kappel and Weinreich, Ettinger's parents lived in Warsaw at the time of his birth. His father, **Joseph-Yoskeh** had rabbinical ordination, and he was offered the pulpit in Frankfurt-Main, but he did not want to leave Warsaw. In addition, it is known that R' Joseph-Yoskeh came from a very prominent family and that his uncle, **Yitzhak-Itcheh**, was the Rabbi of Chelm. Apart from Joseph-Yoskeh, the Ettinger biographical material makes mention of another son of R' Itcheh, R' **Mendel**, who was the Rabbi of Leczna, and in whose home, the future author of 'Serkeleh,' was raised, after having lost his father as a child. In the Warsaw records, we encounter yet a third son of R' Yitzhak-Itcheh, and this is R' **Yekhiel-Mikhl Raver-Ettinger**. If Dr. Kappel characterizes the Ettinger family as one of the most prominent in Poland, which 'gave Poland many Gaonim, Business leaders, Community activists, and Merchants, who carried on substantial business dealings with the Polish nobility of that era,' such a characteristic only described a foundation, if one stops just at this Warsaw uncle of Dr. Ettinger, at this previously mentioned R' Yekhiel-Meir[180] Raver-Ettinger, his children and grandchildren. It is only in this branch of the Ettingers that we encounter the Gaonim and Entrepreneurs, Community activists and Merchants. In comparison to R' Yekhiel-Mikhl and his [family], R' Mendel of Leczna appears as a prominent provincial personality, as a weaker offshoot of the Ettinger line.

The following accomplishments are recorded and can be read from the grave stone of R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Raver-Ettinger: 'A great man among the Jews, he led the community of Jeshurun with righteousness, and faithfully engaged in dealing with matters of the community, a sharp-minded Rabbi.' And in no way are these exaggerations. As evidence – the further biographical details that we continue to present.

Just like his brothers, Yekhiel-Mikhl was also brought up in the orthodox spirit, and was an ordained Rabbi. In Zamość, where he lived during his youth with his parents, so-called 'forbidden' books would fall into his hands, and it is known of him, that he was an accomplished scholar not only in matters of Torah, but also in secular studies. He did not make a living from his rabbinical ordination. He was drawn to commerce, and while still a young man, he went off to Rawa in Mazovia, to seek his fortune. We immediately encounter him among the first of the Jewish merchants who cemented relationships with the newly emerging textile industry in Lodz. He buys raw goods, has them processed by the Lodz weavers, and carries on a trade with the finished goods in Warsaw and 'New Prussia.'

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[180] A possible misprint.

At the end of the 18th century, he settles in Warsaw with his brother, R' Joseph-Yoskeh, the father of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. At that time, he already had a name as one of the most important and wealthy merchants and entrepreneurs in the land. He measures himself against the wealthy sons of the Warsaw magnate, R' Shmuel Zbitgever, and competes with them on every front, both in business and in community affairs. With the elder Zbitgever and his 'simple' sons sitting in the community leadership, it becomes an goad for confrontation, and he will struggle against them until, in the end, he will push them out of the community house. And he will accomplish this by embracing the younger generation of Warsaw Maskilim, who in joining up with him, the contender, anticipating all manner of secular 'innovations.' For example, as a non-Zbitgever, he created an expensive homestead, with real salons and expensive furniture. And a library that was filled with rabbinical works and innovative books of the Enlightenment, such that only at the home of the rich Maskil, Mikhl Cohen, could you find a larger collection. The very 'cream' of young Warsaw intelligentsia would gather in his salons. The leading thinkers of the young generation of the Enlightenment which at that time appeared in the arena of liberal live would be heard by the steady stream of visitors to his salons: the energetic and exceptionally talented **Anthony Eisenbaum**, the erudite, but weak-in-character, **Yaakov Tugenhold**, the **Epstein** brothers, Herman, Josef and Jan, 'Poruchnik's' sons from Koscziuszko's army, Yaakov Epstein, the young **Jan Glicksberg**, the son of the university lecturer, R' Nathan-Mikhl – Manli Glicksberg, the physician **David Salmansohn**, and the first registered Jewish finance broker on the bourse in Warsaw, **Chaim-Heinrich Salmansohn**, both descendants of Dr. Shimon Salmansohn, the dermatologist of the last king of Poland, the fiery Maskil, **Yitzhak Weinberg**, the Hebrew literary scholar, **Isaac Kandia**, and other such assembled 'greats of that generation.' And it was in the salons of Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger that this coterie of Enlightened youth would gather to read 'forbidden' books of the Enlightenment, arrange debates, carry on discussions about scientific and literary themes, and from time-to-time, arrange for amatory presentations, theatrical pieces, of the new Hebrew authors. In Ettinger's following, plans were also developed how to rebuild the old community, so that it would be better aligned with the requirements of the new era.

R' Yekhiel-Mikhl's importance in Warsaw grew daily, and he was regarded as the most prominent leader of the city, and in the year 1814, when it was drawing close to the Congress of Vienna, in which the fate of the 'Duchy of Warsaw' was to be determined – the Warsaw Jews took advantage of this historical moment to carry out a wide-ranging initiative on behalf of their equality of citizenship. At that time, R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger exhibited unusually extensive and broad-based community activity. He finds a way to reach the prominent Senator Novosiltsev, who at that time was to be found in Warsaw, and had obtained the protection of this highly placed man, and he gathers himself up, together with his two close friends, the banker, Wolf-Mikhl Cohen, and the secretary of the community, R' Shakhna Neiding, and they go to Petersburg to see the Czar, Alexander I himself. On July 28, 1814 the delegation presented the Czar, and the future ruler of the 'Kingdom of Poland,' a comprehensive memorandum on the limitations to the citizenship rights that are oppressive to Polish Jewry. This same delegation, with R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger at its head, also visited the Russian Sovereign, at the time that he came to Paris (July-August-September 1815), and gave him a second memorial about the same issue at an audience.

According to a report from R' Shakhna Neiding, the Czar is supposed to have said to the delegation at the time: 'I take you under my personal protection, and I will see to improving your circumstances.' Without looking only at this promise, the delegation continued its efforts: after its audience with the Czar, it went to the Grand Duke Constantine, who at that time happened to be in Paris, and obtained recommendations from him, that they may intervene yet again with the same Czar, and it traveled to Berlin, to prepare their representation when Alexander would come there. In Berlin, R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger, and those who accompanied him, took counsel with the local leading personalities of that community and they also met with Novosiltsev, who had arrived from Warsaw, in order to meet the Czar. After turning over yet a new memorial to the Senator about the Jewish question, the delegation immediately departed for Warsaw. They knew that the Czar has to come to the Polish capitol city from Berlin, and they placed hope in the possibility of an audience at the time of the Warsaw stop by the monarch. However, they did not get an audience, and they had to content themselves with a new intervention on the part of the Grand Duke Constantine.

It is easy to imagine how great Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger's authority became as a consequence of all these trips of his, and audiences in Petersburg, Paris and Berlin. He pushes himself into the very foreground of Warsaw Jewry, and in a scant few years, he achieves the highest honors, that was possible for a Polish Jew of that time to dream of obtaining.

In 1817, together with several of his few friends (such as the *Maskil* R' Itcheh Rosen, and the Mitnagdim Shlomo-Zalman Posner, Levi Shaulsohn, Shlomo Eiger, and Chaim Davidsohn), take over the 'strong box', and he funds the revenue of the empty community treasury from this. A year later, he is selected as a member of the community leadership. He, however, lays that mandate aside, and in a memorandum he declares to the overseeing authorities that he will not sit together with the 'simpletons' and their hangers-on, who carry on like big shots, but make the re-organization of the community difficult.

In the year 1823, he is selected as one of the candidates out of whom the administration of the Jewish hospital in Warsaw is to be selected. In 1825, he is nominated by the government to be a member of the 'Advisory Body' (*Izba Doradcza*) which was created by the 'Jewish Committee' (*Komitet Starozakonych*), to work out legal projects on behalf of the government, in connection with the Jewish question. Only very few individuals were accorded this honor from all of Polish Jewry. As a former manager of the 'strong box,' he gets involved in the work of the 'Advisory Body' to work out the project the hardest of the issues, and he sits in a special sub-committee for 'questions concerning kosher meat,' to which belong, apart from him, other Jews from Warsaw, such as the inventor and great mathematician **R' Abraham Stern**, the manufacturer and the coordinator for the distribution of agricultural work among Jews, **R' Shlomo-Zalman Posner**, and the ardent *Maskil* **David-Theodore Teplitz**.

Very interesting information has come down to us about Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger from the time of the Polish 'November Revolution' (1829-1831). At that time, he took part in all the important actions of the Warsaw 'Dozor Bozniczy' (community), and at the most dangerous times, he stood on the watch with regards to Jewish interests. So, for example, we hear that he opposed the proposal of several members of the Haskala youth (with the son of the renown Berek Yosselevich at their head), to form a separate Jewish Legion, on the grounds that it implied a sanction of the principle of a ghetto in the army as well. Also, Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger came out strongly against the revolutionary regime, when they decided that they would accept as volunteers, into the 'National Guard,' only those Jews who would be willing to shave off their beards and side locks. He did this for political principles, even though he was in favor of a reformed way of life for the masses of the people, and under other circumstances, he was no less sharply opposed to Jewish fanatics, when they attempted to make things difficult for the Maskilim.

Information about one such incident had come down to us from 1826, and it is worth describing this incident here, because it reveals something of Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger's tolerant attitudes.

In that year, a misfortune befell a *Maskil* from Warsaw, one **Marcus Frei**, in that his daughter died. Several uncivil scenes took place at the time of the burial. The grave diggers did not want to bury the deceased – the daughter of a *'trayfnyak*,' a 'German,' and the members of the *Hevra Kadisha* concurred. The 'German' was totally distraught. And this was the second time that this sort of uncivil behavior had occurred to him. Two years before this, the same sort of uncivil scenes took place at the time that his son Julius had died. There was an uproar in the city, great unrest. So the poor father made his way to R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger, and with him the *Maskilim* that befriended him, Josef Epstein, and Dr. Leopold Leu, and he lodged a complaint against the *Hevra Kadisha*. As members of the 'Advisory Body,' the made an official demand from the community that an investigation be made, and that the guilty should be severely punished. And that is what happened.

Yekhiel-Mikhl Ettinger died on 16 Tevet 1836. He was survived by four sons: **Aharon-Israel**, **Yitzhak-Asher**, **Menachem-Mendel** and **Yaakov-Hillel**. The upbringing that they received in their father's house was in the spirit of Enlightened *Mitnagdim*, who would synthesize Torah with secular knowledge. Yitzhak-Asher and Yaakov-Hillel had rabbinic ordination, and Yaakov-Hillel later became the Rabbi of Minsk. The three brothers that remained in Warsaw, faithfully upheld the tradition of their father, and played an important role in the community life of Warsaw Jewry. Aharon-Israel Ettinger ran substantial businesses in finished goods. He also gave much of his time to community affairs. In the fiery revolutionary year of 1831, he was selected as a community leader ('Dozor'). In the years 1839-1841 he was an active member of the budget committee and he comes out against subsidies for the government founded 'elementary schools for Jews,' because religious studies were curtailed in them. He died in 1850.

Yitzhak-Asher, also called Itzik Ettinger, was an entrepreneur by calling, and a finance person (in the Polish Acta, he

is designated as a '*spekulant.*').We know the following details about his community activities: He is selected to serve in the 'Dozor' in 1833, but he declines the position; He is an active member of the community budget committee in 1839; In 1850, we encounter him as a Gabbai in the Hevra Kadisha; Between 1850 and 1853, he is influential, together with R' Chaim Davidsohn and Alexander Rosen as a controller for the funds that were collected across Poland for the *Yishuv* in the Holy Land; We run into him again in the same capacity in 1860. He married a certain Bluma, who came from the 'Kloczka' or 'Klaczko' family and he had a son with her (Mendel) and four daughters (Renina, Rosalia, Liba and Rebecca). He married for a second time after his wife died. His second wife (Yetta) was the daughter of a prominent wealthy man in Warsaw (Zimel Epstein). He had five children with her: the son, Mikhl, and four daughters (Taiba, Esther, Chaya, Freydka). Another son of his, Joel, is also mentioned, who died at a young age in 1847. In the year 1`864, he felt so weak that he made out a will. We learn from it, that his estate at one point was worth 175,000 rubles, including the 30 thousand rubles which his second wife had received as an inheritance from her father. From his estate, he designated 13 thousand rubles for various charitable causes and for poor people in the Holy Land.

He lived to a ripe old age, and passed away in 1878. The inscription on his grave stone is full of praise about his thorough knowledge of Torah, -- something that is established by a fact that comes to us from 1849; in that year, he was asked by name, along with other accomplished scholars through the community to work out a response to the German pamphlet against the Talmud, '*Der Talmud in seiner Nichtdigkeit*,'which had been published at that time by the Well-known Warsaw *Maskil*, Avremeleh Buchner.

Menachem-Mendel Ettinger was also a prominent person in Warsaw. The first record of his community activity dates from 1846: He steps forward as a community delegate and takes part in the military committee of the 3rd circle, whose purpose was to compile a list of Jews eligible for military service. In the years 1854-1856 he is active as a Warsaw 'Dozor,' and at the end of his term, he sees through a decision by the community to invite the famous Rabbi Berish Maiseles as Rabbi of Warsaw. He takes part in community activities in later years as well. He also works on a variety of assistance committees, as an example, in the year 1852, the 'value committee,' which was created to provide assistance to poor Jews.

Menachem-Mendel died in the same year of 1878 as did his brother Yitzhak-Asher. A son survived him, who was named for his grandfather, Mikhl (died in the year 1905).

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## Joseph-Yoskeh Ettinger and His Descendants

Apart from the well-known uncle of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, R' Yekhiel-Mikhl Raver-Ettinger, and his children, there resided in Warsaw a brother and sister of the author of 'Serkeleh.' Their lives unfold before us as a tragedy, which played itself out in Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's immediate family.

Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's father, Joseph – Yoskeh, as previously mentioned, was the blood brother of the Warsaw magnate and community activist, Rabbi Yekhiel-Mikhl Raver-Ettinger (who used to sign himself as 'Ettinger'). Joseph-Yoskeh married a certain Yetta, and together with his brother, at the end of the 18th century, settled in Warsaw. Three children were born to him in Warsaw: the son, Shlomo (born in 1800 or 1803), a daughter Hinde (born in 1802), and a son, Mordechai-Marcus (born in 1810). Joseph-Yoskeh died in either 1810 or 1811, leaving behind orphans that were not provided for. As is known from the biographies by Dr. Kappel and Dr. Weinreich, after his father's death, Shlomo went to live at his uncle R' Mendel, who at that time was the Rabbi of Leczna (not far from Lublin). At that time, he was a young boy between the ages of 8-11. His 8-9 year-old sister, Hinde, and young brother Mordechai-Marcus, stayed with their mother in Warsaw. It would appear that between Yetta and her rich brother-in-law, there were extended relations. She exerted herself on behalf of her youngsters, and when she died herself, a short time after her husband, the children remained under God's oversight...at a distance – for reasons that are not known – from their rich Warsaw uncle's home, and they left the Jewish community. In 1824, Hinde converted to Christianity, being a marriageable young woman of 22 and six years later, she had her younger brother Mordechai-Marcus converted also, who at the time was 20 years old, and was engaged in a printing business having to do with Christian printed works. At the time of her

conversion, Hinde changed her name to 'Costanzia,' and Mordechai assumed the name 'Marcus.' Both assumed the Calvinist faith, which was extensively taken up by Jewish converts. This 'blemish on the family,' certainly was a cause for why Dr. Shlomo Ettinger held himself at a distance from Warsaw for his entire life, notwithstanding the fact that he had rich and prominent relatives there.

It was different with the children of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. They, indeed were drawn to the capitol city, and we encounter a number of them in the second half of the 19th century, that lived and worked in Warsaw.

Of the children that survived Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, the following five are mentioned in the comprehensive Ettinger biography of Dr. Weinreich: The sons, **Yitzhak-Ignacy**, **Yaakov, Mikhl-Michal**, and the daughter **Maria** (married name Goldman) and **Disha** (married name Szpiro). We know from Dr. Ettinger himself that he had seven children. In letter No. 9, which is printed in Dr. Weinreich's Ettinger presentation (on p. 573), he writes about himself in the year 1847, that he is 'a misfortunate father of seven poor children.' The two children, who are not mentioned in his biography, were: **Joseph** and **David**. We looked for the grave stone on Joseph's grave in the Warsaw cemetery, and also for a second grave for a granddaughter of Dr. Ettinger, Helena, who was a daughter of David Ettinger.

Here, again, we bring a collection of details about Dr. Ettinger's children, who lived in Warsaw:

Dr. Ettinger's second son, **Joseph-Josef**, was born in the year 1840, and died on June 28, 1909. When he was young, he studied in Warsaw at the Teachers' Seminary. It was there that he became infected with the spirit of the Enlightenment. Without regard for this, he became the son-in-law of a well-known Warsaw Mitnaged, R' Mordechai Willner, who was a prominent disciple of the Vilna Gaon. Joseph's wife was named Rosalia (born in the year 1853, died in 1912).

Two other sons of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger studied at the Warsaw Teachers' Seminary: **Yaakov** and **Mikhl**. A document from the year 1862 is presented in Dr. Weinreich's Ettinger exposition about them, which testifies to the fact that they were in the Teachers' Seminary at that time, and that they took a strong interests in their father's works. They are also recorded in a list of students of the Teachers' Seminary, which was compiled based on the Acts in the archives by the Warsaw researcher, Adolph-Yaakov Cohen. We do not know what they did later in, and we did not find their graves in the Warsaw cemetery.

The fifth son of Dr. Ettinger, **Yitzhak-Ignacy**, whom he loved ardently, also spent his later years in Warsaw. He got married in 1856, while his father was still alive, to the 'exceptionally good and wise' – as he characterized her in a letter to her father-in-law, Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, -- daughter of the head of the Lublin community, R' Simcha Ehrlich. Yitzhak lived in Lublin until 1863. During the revolutionary uprising in that year, he participated in a patriotic demonstration of Poles and because of this, he was exiled to Siberia. When he returned to Poland after 11 years, he took up residence in Warsaw, and died there on September 14, 1887. His grave can be found in the Warsaw cemetery, and on his headstone there is Polish script, in which it explicitly states that he was the 'son of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger of Zamość.'

We have nothing to add to the details provided by Dr. Weinreich concerning both daughters of Dr. Ettinger. To provide a better overview of our presented material up to now, we present Dr. Ettinger's family tree:

Family Tree

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## Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's Warsaw Friend, Y. Korngold

As mentioned above, there is found in the collected letters of Dr. Ettinger, which is presented by Dr. Weinreich in his Ettinger exposition, a German letter from October 25, 1954 [sic: 1854 – a transcription error], which was written by Dr. Ettinger to a friend of his in Warsaw, a certain Y. Korngold (Letter No 14 in the collection). It would appear that he also wrote letter No. 12 to this friend, which according to Dr. Weinreich's assessment, dates from 1848-1850. It is

possible to extract this from the following three facts:

1. As we can see from letter No .14, Ettinger corresponded with Korngold in German, using thereby not – as is usual – the Hebrew, but specifically the Latin, or Gothic alphabet. Letter No. 12 is written exactly the same way.

2. In both letters, either No. 14 or No. 12, he immediately makes mention at the beginning that he must take leave of his friend, after they had barely made a personal acquaintance. This is evidence that the letters deal with the same person.

3. In letter No. 12, in which the addressee is not mentioned, we find the following statement:

'Es freut mich zu haben, dass sie mit H. Tugenhold in guter Freundschaft leben.[181]' Seeing as Tugenhold – the well-known Enlightened writer, and director of the Warsaw Teachers' Seminary – lived in Warsaw, we are left to conclude, that the 'unknown addressee' of Ettinger's No. 12 letter who enjoyed a 'good friendship' with Tugenhold, was from Warsaw.

Even if we stop only with letter No. 14, which is clearly addressed to Warsaw, to Ettinger's 'Highly-worthy Friend,' Y. Korngold, it is worth becoming aware of a number of details about this person, and not to overlook too much of this material on the strength of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's close friend.

On the basis of sources from Warsaw, we obtained further facts about Y. Korngold:

First his name, -- what was he called by name? In the address of the previously mentioned letter, the only thing that appears is the first letter of his name. We arrived at the fact that he is the same person as **Yehoshua-Yekhezkiel Korngold ben Shabtai**. And here is his pedigree:

In the first half of the nineteenth century we find two prominent Korngold families in Warsaw. Both come originally from Krakow, where their progenitor, **R' Lieber** lived. About R' Lieber, we know that he had the reputation of being a Gaon, and his children and grandchildren took great pride in this association. Lieber's two sons**, Moshe** Korngold and **Yehoshua-Yekhezkiel** Korngold, took up residence in Warsaw at the beginning of the 19th century, and they lived a quiet and unremarkable life there. It was first their children, the grandchildren of R' Lieber, who began to play a role in the community life of Warsaw Jewry. Of special note are: **R' Nahum** Korngold, the son of **Moshe** Korngold, and **R' Shabtai Yehuda-Leib** Korngold, the son of Yehoshua-Yekhezkiel Korngold.

R' Nahum Korngold was a member of the Mitnagdim, and was very close to the Maskilim. He becomes prominent in open community life in the revolutionary year of 1831, when the community calls upon the 'important family leaders' to come to meetings, in order to take counsel with regard to important political questions, and R' Nahum Korngold is always invited. When a 'Jewish National Guard' is created in Warsaw that year, R' Nahum becomes a member of the guard. This is evidence that he conducted himself in the 'Berlin' style, since the national guard took only those Jews into its service who belonged to the graduate intelligentsia, or the wealthy banker or merchant classes, and who did not wear either a beard or side locks. R' Nahum died in 1848. The inscription on his grave stone offers the following praise: 'The wondrous Rabbi, the magnate, the charitable man, a God-fearing man, a scion of Our Teacher, R' Nahum...' One of his daughters married Rabbi David-Menachem ben Zvi Soloveitchik of Kobrin.

R' Shabtai Yehuda-Leib was even more important, called in the Acts by his first name, R' Shabtai. His community career also begins in the revolutionary year of 1831.We encounter him in the then responsible and unusually difficult position of a Warsaw 'Dozor.' After the failure of the revolution, he was removed from the position of 'Dozor' by the Russians, and 17 years went by, until he became prominent again in the oversight authority. During the epidemic of 1887, he distinguished himself by his action in providing aid to stricken Jews. A year later, he becomes a candidate for

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[181] I am made considerably easy of mind to know that you have good, friendly relationships.

'Dozor,' with the ful powers of a 'Dozor.' He takes part in the sessions of the community leadership, and especially participates in the ongoing issues of the charity section of the division that deals with the cemetery. He is the chairman of the charity section since 1848. He died in 1853. As indicated in the writeup on his headstone, he had rabbinical ordination, and was a considerable Torah scholar.

His two sons also committed themselves to the study of Torah: one named **Benjamin**, who later became the Rabbi of Grodno, and the second, named for his grandfather, **Yehoshua-Yekhezkiel**, who is the same person as Dr. Shlomo Ettinger's 'Very worthy friend,' Y. Korngold. Benjamin was a Mitnaged like his father, and by contrast, Yehoshua-Yekhezkiel moved himself a little further to the left, closer to the Maskilim. Evidence of this lies in the fact that he corresponded with Ettinger about matters which had great relevance to ... critique of the Bible. We were unable to find the grave stone of the friend of Dr. Ettinger.

Footnotes & Bibliography

The author presents sixteen footnotes, and an eleven-page bibliography of primary references containing the works and correspondence of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. The interested reader is referred to the original text for details.

# Zamość Nearly A Century Ago

**(Two Documents)**

As we stand close to finishing the first historical part of our Pinkas Zamość, we find it necessary to introduce two pieces of correspondence from Zamość, which were produced about a hundred years ago. Both appeared int eh Jewish newspaper, written in Polish, of that era, called Jutrzenka [sic: The Morning Star]. This was the f i r s t Jewish newspaper published in Polish. This periodical, which appeared weekly, was founded by D a n i e l N e u f e l d (Born 1814, Died 1874) and appeared in the years 1861-1863 in Warsaw. The paper was closed by the Czarist administration, and the editor was exiled to Siberia.

The editor, D. Neufeld, himself a community activist and researcher, who made an effort to show the importance of Jewish community life in Poland, encouraged Jutrzenka to publish historical monographs about special Jewish communities. He requested that these various materials be sent to him, acts and documents having to do with Jewish history in Poland.

Two pieces of correspondence appeared there from Zamość, both by Y. A l t b e r g. Dr. Yaakov Shatzky mentions him in a couple of places (in his works that appear in our Pinkas). In one instance he calls him Y e h o s h u a Altberg. In his footnote 30 to his work 'Sephardim in Zamość,' he says:

'This document (referring to the privilege from Jan Zamoyski of the year 1588, for the Sephardic Jews, which appeared before on pp. 88-89) was first recollected in a notice in the weekly 'Jutrzenka.' The Zamość Maskil, Y e h o s h u a Altberg, a relative of Peretz, submitted the full text to the editor of 'Jutrzenka.' (see previously on p. 92).'

In a second place – in his work, 'Haskala in Zamość,' he writes: '... he (Yehoshua Margolis) participated in the general life of the city, and participated in revolutionary activities. Together with his relative, J o s e p h A l t b e r g (1801-1873), a correspondent of 'Jutrzenka,' he took part in the Jewish delegation to a Polish patriotic demonstration...' (see previously p. 201).

Whether he was called Y e h o s h u a or J o s e p h, it is clear – he was a relative of Peretz, and a local community activist.

The first piece of Zamość correspondence appeared in No. 20 of November 15, 1861, and was dedicated to *The History of the Jewish Community in Zamość.*

The second piece of correspondence was in No. 22 of May 30, 1862, and told of *The Jewish Agricultural Colony of Zdanów Near Zamość.*

These works, truthfully, were cited in a number of prior chapters, but they are brought here to complete the picture of the Jewish settlement in Zamość a hundred years ago.

We received copies of this correspondence from the Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw. We have translated them into Yiddish [sic: presumably from Polish].

# 1
# The Jewish Community In Zamość

*"Good deeds are repaid with praise."*
Jan Kachanovsky

Recording the various (Jewish) cities, and their charitable institutions, the various *Hevras*, and their founders, serves a double purpose.

First, the gratitude that we owe to the various founders of these charitable foundations places a certain obligation on us, that we should set down written thoughts, which should enumerate their heroic endeavors, to express that gratitude, as is the case with other societies (folk organizations). With us, where it has not been the custom to produce physical evidence of such gratitude, we commemorated the good deeds of our heroes by means of historical memorials in which their fine deeds were described. This public recognition on the altar of immortality, that we grant to those doers of good deeds, and what they have earned, is a rather limited form of gratitude, if it is possible at all, in our power, to even thank these benefactors.

The sanctified author of the Psalms, in blessing those who do good deeds, says: 'The memory of a righteous one is eternal.' Our Sages, in the Mishnah, in the first chapter of the Seder **Pe'ah**, express it in this way:

'Here are the things from which a man enjoys the fruits in this world...' and there are other things that remain to be reaped in the World to Come: showing respect for elders, **and doing of good deeds** – and....

Apart from setting up the rules for charitable activities, here is an example of other such deeds: it provides a stimulus for others to do the same, at the time that they see, that even in this world, the results of these good deeds can be seen through public recognition in appropriately allocated respect.

We do not subscribe to the position that a stout-hearted person does his good deeds for one or another reason – it is not our concern whether he does it for his own benefit (honor). There is not only one institution that can thank its existence for the efforts of such people.

The first use is for the writers, and the second use for the readers. It is a known fact that such records are both important and necessary.

Therefore, it raises the question: -- we, who have in almost every town all manner of charitable *Hevras*, (in the larger cities, hospitals, and in the smaller towns, all manner of *Hevras*) – where for example, for poor people who are too embarrassed to go door-to-door to collect funds to marry off a daughter; or a free loan society, etc., why have we not, with the exception of Warsaw and Chestochowa, created any record of these institutions and their founders?

This matter relates to the situation of our writers, and we can perhaps make sense of it by observing that up till now we have not had our own organ, a special periodical, which would be dedicated to such matters. It is understandable, that from the available periodicals of the country (the non-Jew ish ones), which do open their pages to us in connection with specific matters, we cannot rely on them to provide a forum for details about (Jewish) affairs, which would not interest the general (non-Jewish) reader at all.

Now, however, that the long-awaited 'Jutrzenka' has appeared on our horizon, and we now have our organ; now, I say, the obligation of every one of us, everyone of us who is vitally interested in the welfare of our co-religionists; that a writeup of the institutions be sent in from every city, where a charitable institution exists; and the names of the founders be enumerated; and we should record the significance of the successes and failures of the institution; first to serve as a model for others, and second to attract the requested submissions. The discussion elicited in this fashion can only, in this manner. Be a support to carry out needed reforms.

Therefore, leaning on the familiar quote from Kachanovsky, 'Each according to his means,' I permit myself to s\emphasize a short summary about the condition of native (Jewish) residents and their charitable institutions, and limit myself to the Jewish settlement in Zamość, because the general history of the city itself, is covered by the local scholar Duke Kolaszynski.

It is difficult to accurately specify when Jews settled there, and what their exact number was, because there are no documents on which we can confidently rely. There is one, single document, which has survived to this day, and whose accuracy cannot be guaranteed, which indicates that Jews already lived in the city by 1588. That document states, that the founder of the city, Chancellor **Jan Zamoyski** permitted Jews to live in his city of Zamość. In that privilege, he gives to Jews, among others, the right: to chop wood from his forests for heating; to harvest forest lumber for purposes of building construction; the Jews have permission to engage in all branches of commerce and industry. The local Jews were not compelled to distinguish themselves from residents by any external symbols [sic: on their clothing], as was the case in other places; he permitted the Jews to select from among themselves, elders, who would settle disputes and punish the guilty. Local (Jewish) residents enjoyed these, and other privileges.

It is a pity that for lack of space, we cannot incorporate all of the rights, from which it would be seen that not only were the Jews tolerated by the founder, but also greatly valued.

It is also difficult to assess when the local synagogue was built, and from what sources of funding. A large number of details are missing. The assumption, that the letters של"ג, which can be found on the side of the wall, in part refer to the year in which the synagogue was built, cannot be accepted as being correct. In that year, של"ג, which means 1573, the city of Zamość did not yet exist. The city first came into being in 1580 (ש"ם), six years before the death of Stefan Batory, and the city was founded, as is shown by Duke Kolaszynsi in his work, the History of Zamość.

The previously mentioned document also reveals the erroneous nature of the assumption (that the synagogue was built in 1573), because it was only in the year 1588 that (the Jews) were allowed to build the synagogue.

It is worth recollecting, that this synagogue, with its wondrous appearance, its artistic internal design, with the diligent oversight of its *Gabbaim*, left nothing to be desired. The *Bimah* that is found in the *Schul*, which is made of wrought iron, and gilded, is the gift of **R' Shmuel Barzel** ע"ה. This *Bimah* is to this day, the reflection of wonder – both from an artistic standpoint, and from its great value.

The **Bet HaMedrash** is found next to the *Schul*, a house of knowledge, which has an outstanding library, having several thousand volumes – Talmud and its commentaries. As can be seen from an old synagogue book (*Pinkas*?), these spiritual houses were already in existence by 1662.

From those times, the city (the Jewish community) is especially indebted to one *Hevra*, which has remained essential to this day. This is the **Hevra-Kadisha**, which has incorporated into itself the *Hevra*: **Bikkur Kholim**, whose objective is to lighten the burden on members of the populace who are ill, providing the sick with food and standing watch over them. It is worth stopping at this point, to mention that in the statutes of this *Hevra*, there is a requirement that every member, when it comes to his turn, must spend a night at the bedside of a sick person, and nothing could release the member from that obligation. [It also incorporated] the *Hevra* of **Pallbearers**, who had the obligation of assuring that the poor were properly interred at its expense, providing burial shrouds, and during the days of mourning, to provide financial support to the needy bereaved, so they could attend to those first needs during the days of mourning.

This very deeply human *Hevra*, was first founded in the year 1688. The *Pinkas*, in which the various amendments pf the Hevra are recorded remains in existence to this day. And to this day, it remains a point of pride of every (Jewish) resident to belong to this refined *Hevra*.

It is indeed unfortunate that we cannot distinguish the names of those fine people who founded this *Hevra*, from what is written in the *Pinkas*.

It is hard to establish the material condition of the Jews of those times, we have no trace of such information – but if we judge by the number of Torah scrolls donated as gifts, it is possible to infer that their situation was a good one – the number is close to 100.

The lives of our forefathers in that time flowed harmoniously, and if something interrupted that monotony, it was the changes to the political situation, whose disruption also had an effect on the Jews.

Among the native Jewish scholars, we come to cite, apart from the many who were outstanding in their Talmudic, and Biblical knowledge, who cannot even be counted, the renown Rabbi **Israel Zamość**, who received no formal schooling, and was expert not only in Talmud and its commentaries, but also in mathematics, philosophy, psychology and metaphysics. Later, he moved to Berlin, where he learned a number of classical languages, and became the teacher of the immortal [Moses] Mendelssohn. For this reason, Jewry can be grateful for its Socrates.

This famous man exerts himself in a variety of his works to illustrate that embracing science does not imply a need to reject (religious) belief, as fanatics would believe, but rather the opposite – the right education endows the individual with an ability to revere God. He illustrates this in the introduction to his book, '**Netzakh Israel**.'

After him, it is necessary to recall the renown **Rabbi Yaakov**, later the **Maggid of Dubno**, whose parables are known everywhere.

Again the familiar geographer, **S. Bloch**, who was the first one to publish in Hebrew, a geography book in a wonderfully beautiful style, that was very contemporary, about nature, and the way of life of the peoples of Asia and Africa. His book achieved great fame in Hebrew Literature. His brother, **S. V. Bloch**, as well as the famous **V. B. Schiff**, also merit being mentioned.

**Joseph Zireles**, or **Zederbaum** occupies a fine page in the history of the native Jews, the father of the editor of the Hebrew periodical, 'HaMelitz,' which appears in Odessa. He was a model of the most wonderful doers of good deeds. He was the central point around whom the principal forces of our native spiritual social life would gather.

It is sufficient to mention several people from that, shall we say, school, in order to present the brad knowledge of the native Sage, **Yaakov Eichenbaum** – the famed poet and mathematician, the member of several scientific academies, who with his famous work, 'HaKrav' earned himself a name throughout Europe.

**Leon Kinderfreund**, a beloved poet, whose work, 'Various Poems,' is a true original in Hebrew literature, both from its lofty style, and its realistic portraits of nature.

Further, we must mention **Alexander Zederbaum**, the editor of the Hebrew [periodical] 'HaMelitz' whom we have mentioned, and Dr. **Ettinger**, who earned a beloved place in our memories with his parables and stories.

After identifying all these well-known people, we have to mention a name that is practically unknown, and wasn't short of a good education, but earned eternal praise – that is **R' Hirsch Schiff**, the founder of the local Jewish hospital, which exists to this day.

This wondrous Rabbi Hirsch, following his own gentle heart, established the local hospital out of his own funds in 1800. By bringing this offering on the altar of human decency, this philanthropist showed that the sacred spark of decent humanity and generosity, which for generations has been a shining symbol of our people, had not been extinguished. Honor and praise to his memory!

No change occurred in the history of the institution from the time the hospital was founded until 1843, that is worth mentioning. The hospital lacked sanction by the regime (juridical recognition), which would have placed it under the protection of the law, and given it the right to develop further.

From that year onward (1843), the institution came under the oversight of the Chief Council of Charitable Associations. Its rise must be reckoned from that point on.

Originally, the hospital consisted of one large room for the sick of both sexes, a room that was designated to be a kitchen, and a small room for laundry. However, given the extent to which the hospital became recognized in its vicinity, from where the sick were always brought there, the residents felt the need to expand and re-build the entire premises. They could not, however, carry out this plan for a very simple reason – they lacked the required funds.

It was first in the years 1846-1849, with the help of donations through a lottery, and the continuous work of the onetime chairman, **S. Levin**, ע"ה, who dedicated his entire energy and time to the institution, everything got done, in order to carry through all the necessary reconstruction work.

The institution was rebuilt, and now consists of four rooms – 2 for men, and 2 for women – with 24 beds, two rooms for the kitchen, two top floor rooms for the chancellery, pharmacy, and a room for laundry. Apart from this, there is a separate building for the municipal direction, which brings in a certain amount of revenue for the institution. It is not the size or appearance of the institution – it is really about its convenience, cleanliness, order, and in general provisioned with all the provisions that such an institution requires, in the full sense of this word.

The institution is indebted to its current chairman, **Yeshaya Margolies**, and Dr. **Ettinger**, who passed away not long ago, for having its own pharmacy, that apart from being a great saving for the institution, makes it possible for it to dispense prescriptions without charge for the poor who are sick (apart from those who are patients in the hospital).The institution truly did not change its external appearance since 1849, but in a measure of the needs, which would manifest themselves in local relationships, significant advances were made. In the past year, through the efforts of the highly energetic honorary member of the leadership, **D. Steinberg**, the entire roof of the building was re-worked.

In the following year, the entire interior of the building was renovated through the efforts of the previously mentioned member (D. Steinberg), together with the Honorable **M. Cahan** and **F. Koppleman**, honorary member of the leadership. The local residents, recognizing the benefits brought to them by the institution, support it with continuous donations, which is clear to see from the government order of 1859. In that year, from donations and flowers alone, the treasury of the hospital received an amount of 1,008 rubles. This is a very large amount, taking into account that our city has only several thousand (Jewish) souls, especially since the majority of the residents are not in a particularly substantial material circumstance. This is yet another indication of how Jews relate to charitable works.

Among the members (who direct the hospital), who distinguish themselves with their work on behalf of the hospital, and therefore deserve to be mentioned, is Mr. **Yeshaya Margolies**, who stands in the first rank for his love of good works, and does not stint on making any sacrifice or expending work, in order to bring support to the institution. Using his great influence with the populace, which lifts its morale, Mr. **Z. Gold** has worked for seven years on behalf of the institution.

Mr. **D. Steinberg** has done very much on behalf of the institution whose work and accomplishments span 12 years. Apart from the charitable institutions already mentioned, there is an array of others which are appropriate for us to mention:

**Hevra Gemilut Hasadim**, which has the objective of assisting the needy, covering their needs, and assumes the task of looking after orphans;

**Hevrat Talmud-Torah**, which assures the children of needy parents a proper religious education, and also assists the elderly in the pursuit of study;

**Hevrat Hakhnasat Orkhim**, which helps out the needy who have come from faraway, who are too embarrassed to beg. They provide food, a domicile, and a specific amount of money, sufficient for them to reach yet another destination. These Hevra organizations are in existence for a long time already. The names of their founders are not known. They sustain themselves through the voluntary contributions of the residents.

The readiness of the native (Jewish) residents to participate in charity, is not limited only to assistance rendered to Jews, and every noble activity has a counterpart in Zamość that wants to emulate it. And it is in this manner, that this year, when news came about the expenditure on the part of the Warsaw (Jewish) residents of the amount of 9,200 gulden for Christians, the gentlemen: **Y. Korngold**, **Max Kinderfreund** and **E. Luxembourg** collected several hundred gulden in a matter of a few hours from the local (Jewish) residents, and distributed it among the needy Christians.

In my second letter, I will provide information about community life, and the spiritual interests of today's Jews, and also about the Jewish agricultural colonies near Zamość.

Y. Altberg

## 2
## The Jewish Colony of Zdanów Near Zamość

*Où la critique n'est pas permise le louange est sans dignité* [182]

(De la Rochefoucault)

I don't have a specific impression when I sit down to write about the present condition pf the local Jews, and their social and spiritual life. This is because we took such great pleasure in portraying the Jews of former times (in **Jutrzenka** No. 20 of last year), so it is with resistance that one comes to mentioning the present ones.

Those men, who understood the purpose of life, have vanished, who were able to integrate the many-faceted aspects of education with religious traditionalism; on the side of the highest of the folk good deeds, they also counted the ideals of human progress. There is only one comfort, that critical and objective assessments, which are spoken in good faith, have a value; that those words of criticism, no matter how bitter, how truthful, will be of use.

After the death of the one whom we praised so highly in our prior evaluation, Joseph Zederbaum, who died in 1832, our city lost in its meaning, that which projected it into the front ranks among others on the road to progress; she lost the one who raised the concept of modern civilization; the one who was illuminated by the rays of the Mendelssohn school and who drove away the darkness that reigned in the surrounding area. In place of a thirst for knowledge, after he died, the residents were seized with a slowdown. A darkness, under the mask of religion, dominated thought processes, and an unwillingness to know – the antithesis to progress.

One must mourn the fact that the seedlings of civilization, planted with such tender caring hands of such a man, did not produce the intended fruit. The place of the love for learning was assumed by a hostility, and something of a aversion. What is even more painful is, that under the false veneer of a so-called respect for the tradition, it is established that religion cannot go hand in hand with science. It is hard to understand how the character and temperament of the people could have been altered in so short a period of time – the friends of education became hostile to it; the disciples of erudition became opponents of knowledge.

Since this transformation, no personalities have arisen with a talent in the field of Talmud, or in general in the field of human knowledge, as was the case in former times – there are none of this kind to be found now. Only memories of those times remain. Residents may take justifiable pride in the proud past, their forbears, whose struggles no one today will seek to continue.

We would however, do the city a great injustice, if we did not mention that we have outstanding people – there are people who struggle to be educated, people with progressive inclinations; those who are loyal to the ideals of civilization, who do not stint on any effort in the amount of what they will do, in order to spread education among their fellow co-religionists, and give their children an upbringing that is in keeping with the spirit of the times.

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182 Where criticism is not permitted, praise has no dignity.

And we need to reprove everyone from yet another standpoint, especially our native co-religionists, who thanks to their education which they received from their forbears, there remains a love for their close ones, and for philanthropy, and there are many facts to be told about this. Among the many facts, we will present the following:

In the year 1854, want reached its highest point, in the form of high prices which placed pressure on the poorer classes, bringing them literally to the brink of danger from starvation. One of those among us, together with Mr. Yeshaya Margolies, bought close to 800 *kortz* of flour, facilitated the baking of bread, and sold it at half price compared to the normal price. The bread was sold to poor people, without consideration for religious belief. This fact requires no further commentary.

The material condition of the native residents causes us to take note of the truth, that in the measure of spiritual development, material relationships also undergo change.

The community life of the native residents does not present an object for assessment – it is one-dimensional. If one had taken the life of bygone times, and made a faithful copy of it, he would be able to establish that in time, nothing had changed.

Their relations with their Christian neighbors were always quiet and friendly. The native Jews in the year 1846, still denied the offense made against the Jews, that they were only good at commerce, and have an aversion to working the land.

In that same year, the brothers, Joseph and Hirsch Cahan, David Engelsberg, Moshe Hertz, Yehuda Sobol and others, a total of 14 families, established a colony 5 kilometers from the city. It is located south and east of Zamość, and is called **Zdanów**, and has an area of 592 *morg*.

The previously mentioned colonists concluded an agreement with the Zamość Province for a 30 year [lease]. On the strength of that contract, they obligated themselves to pay an annual fee, apart from the national taxes, of 4 gulden 15 groschen and 5 gulden 15 groschen for each *morg* – depending on the type of managed area.

There were no buildings there. By there own means, they took the lumber provided by the province, and built several tens of houses in a row. Each house had from 4 to 6 large-sized rooms. Behind each house, there was a yard, surrounded by an orchard, in which there were found a variety of estate buildings, such as stables for horses, barns, etc.

Before the colonists took over the area, it was in bad shape. Despite the fact that it was close to the city, none of the Christian peasants wanted to manage it. Lying fallow for a long period, unworked, the land was overgrown with thorns, and wild grass, like an uncultivated steppe. Our colonists were not deterred by these difficulties. They resolved to combat all manner of deficiencies, and become useful agricultural workers. They survived in their idealistic struggle. I required a huge measure of patience, in the broadest sense of the word, in order to carry through with this undertaking. The fields required an indescribable strain involving work and energy and inhuman exertions (in order to till the soil, it was necessary to harness 4 pairs of oxen to a plow). The worthless and difficult terrain did not yield anything in return for the energy and cost that was put into it for a long time. Raising animals there, which was so essential for working the land, was also impossible, because there were no pasture areas in the wilderness.

Paying no attention to this, they struggled for several years, with all these obstacles and sweat running down their faces, in order to overcome everything. There, the muse also had its companion: Dr. **Ettinger**, ע"ה, and F. Szyfer[183], the author

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183 *In an e-mail dated February 21, 2004, Leon Szyfer of Canada writes:* My family name before 1939 was spelled Szyffer. After the war in 1952, ironically as a part of de-Germanization of "Polish" names, one 'f' was removed. **Szyfer** remained, and this is the name on my father's gravestone.

I do not have to explain to you the misspellings of Jewish names in Latin alphabet. Another source of troubles with our name was, that it was widely considered an *Ashkenazi* name, while in fact our family, like many in Zamość, has

of the biography of Napoleon I in Hebrew, in whose portrayal, the pure air flew full of beautiful images of village life, which is so finely expressed in his, '**Mateh LaShem**.'

But like everything else in the world that vanishes, and with the best intentions of the colonists, foundered against the ensuing obstacles to obtain additional capital, which had been exhausted to the end; the needed fee for the colony fell short; one failure followed another for the colonists; they were forced to retrench from their undertaking. To their great disappointment, they had to abandon the place, where they had invested several years if very hard, decent work.
The difficult points of the contract with the Province, which were generally unfair to the peasant and the manager, nearly drove the colonists to ruin.

In this way, the colony also belongs to the past.

Y. Altberg

* * *

There is an addendum to this correspondence. It is not clear if it is from the correspondent A l t b e r g, or the editor. In order that Jewish colonization be implemented, it must be a labor of love for near ones, and a love of the land and not a matter of financial speculation. To demand of our brother co-religionists that they should engage themselves in colonization, we have the sense, that a village populace needs to be created, skilled, thought out carefully, and work-ready – an element that our Christian peasants will not achieve even in 100 years. The Jewish peasant could become the model for his Christian neighbors, and in the course of about 20 years, one Jewish peasant could re-educate ten Christians, teach them conservation, sobriety, and commitment to the land.

But the landowners of all faiths need the Jews, who colonize their land holdings, not thinking of their peasants, but only as estate managers; not as a means for immediate enlargement of their income and profits, but as a form of [human] capital that can earn interest for their children.

Therefore, the landowners need firstly to allocate fertile land for Jewish colonists, provide them with paternal relationships – not some sandy, swampy parcel, or a wilderness to scrabble over. This latter action was practiced, to frighten away the Jews from agriculture, and elicit all their resistance to it.

No plan for colonization will succeed, if we will forget that the Jews need first to study the science of agriculture. And with every teacher, one begins with the easiest material and ends with the hardest.

* * *

More about the Jewish colonization in the Zamość Province can be found in the article of Y. Bartys, in our Pinkas, p. 376-413.

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*Sephardi* roots, and the original last name derived from Hebrew '*shifra*'.

# The Jewish Agricultural Colonization in the Zamość Province

## (In the /First Half of the 19th Century)

**Y. Bartys**

As is known, the Zamość Province was founded in 1589 by Jan Zamoyski, the Chancellor and Great Hetman of the Crown, on his personal, widespread estates.

The province had its own large archive, in which, beginning from the 18th century, a special section was developed for matters pertaining to Jews who lived in the villages of the Zamość Province. The proceedings that relate to the Jews that lived in the villages were divided into sections according to circles (in the original, Kluczow, which literally translated means 'keys'), and were designated by titles, for example: 'Proceedings concerning Jews that lived in the Szczebrzeszyn Klucz.' In the main, information about the Jewish colonization can be found in the volume with the name '**Jewish Proceedings in General**,' which has the signature 4757. We find a variety of types of extracts from protocols from the sessions of the Zamość Province; correspondence from the central chancellery with the administration of the Zamość Province; requests by Jews for the subdivision of land areas; lists of the Jewish population by name; directions and instructions in connection with diverting those Jews from those villages, who are perceived by the leader of the circle as undesirable, and so forth. This volume is relevant to the years 1840-1854.

These referenced documents gave us the possibility to really delve, a part at a time, and become familiar with the condition and the fate of Jewish agriculture in the first half of the 19th century; the relationship of the administration of the Zamość Province to these Jewish peasants; the colonization planners of the administration and the central chancellery, etc. Regardless of the fragmentary character of these documents, they are an important, until-now-unknown complement to the history of Jewish colonization in Poland in the 19th century.

The first information regarding Jewish peasants in the estates of the Zamość Province, dates from that time when the Province was part of Austria. In the list of the Jewish population of the year 1838-1839, the Jewish families that lived in the village of **Karasinki**, **Kulna** and **Lipiny Gurna**, are enumerated. The notation found besides these families informs us that these families settled there at the time of the Austrian regime, as a direct consequence of a general action assumed by the Austrian authority in the administration of the province. It also becomes know to us that these families received support in order to be able to settle (in these villages).

The first list of the Jewish population that lives in the villages of the Zamość Province, which has been preserved to this day, was compiled in the year 1838-1839. The list contains a great deal of detail about the Jews. The second list, dating from 1846-1847, is already not so detailed, because in this list, only the 'heads' (the oldest) of families are counted, their occupations, where they live, and remarks. These lists were compiled by someone appointed by the central administration, on the basis of reports from the leaders in each separate circle ('Kluczy'), in order to be precise in identifying the number of these 'terrible' Jews, whom they immediately began to divert away from these villages. On the basis of these lists, we can estimate the size of the Jewish population, which lived in the villages of the Province, their social structure, and the number of Jewish peasants.

As shown by these lists, the general total of the Jewish population which lived in the villages of the Zamość Province in the year 1838-1839 came to 408 persons (74 families). The size of the percentage growth of the Jewish population in the year 1846-1847, can be seen by the number of families, which was 96, which are in the list of that year, compiled by an appointed official. The actual number of the Jews in the villages of the Zamość Province in those years looked to be larger (see Table 1, p. 378).

As is evidenced by the information in this table, the majority of the Jews lived in the circles of: **Szczebrzeszyn**, **Turobin**, and **Kzczeczow-Tarnogrod** and it is only in these circles that we observe a meaningful growth in the year 1846-1847. The small number of children strikes the eye. If one calculates the number of 6.4 people per family, one concluded that the number of Jews that lived in the villages in the year 1846-1847, was approximately 615 souls.

On the basis of these population lists, we can also arrive at the age-occupation structure of the Jews in the villages of the Zamość Province, which -- in general ways – follows the breakdown in Table 2, page 378.

We see therefore, that the largest portion of the Jewish populace in the villages, consisted of families engaged in agriculture, followed by factors, estate managers, and arbitrators (skilled Jews), weavers, tailors, etc. It is also necessary to take note of the fact that the number of workers is not quite accurate, because it is certain that members of the families, who engaged in agriculture, and also other non-skilled families, were hired to do this work by the wealthier Jews. Under the title, 'Other Occupations,' we included all those people, that were identified in the name lists, but were not designated as having a permanent occupation, such as: watchmen of the ponds, fishermen, bakers, fabric workers, laborers and other non-skilled Jews, totaled 85 percent of the rural Jewish population.

The rural Jewish population on the estates of the Zamość Province can be divided into the following seven occupational categories:

1. Those exclusively engaged in agriculture;
2. Those, who in addition to their agricultural work, engage in other work, factoring, running wagons, minor trade, and such;
3. Factors, engaged in buying up dairy produce from the villages, and later selling it in the cities;
4. Craftsmen, such as weavers, tailors, roofers, bakers, fishermen;
5. Laborers that hired themselves out to work the land, as servants, working in mills, etc.;
6. The estate managers and intermediaries that held the mills, eyers?, the fact of the entire circle, pitch works, nail factories – and also a glass factory;
7. Jews without an established occupation, who engaged in low level trade and jobbing;

The greatest occupational group were the agricultural workers (36%); after them the craftsmen (20%); factors (about 15%); laborers (5.7%), other occupations and unemployed (average of 10%), Jewish estate managers and intermediaries (about 15%).

This then is the employment structure of the rural Jews in the year 1846-1847. Therefore, 58 men and women were involved in working the land, which had 38 family members up to age 17; 34 men and women with 33 members of their family up to age 17 were engaged in – apart from agriculture, also with supplementary occupations such as the crafts (weaving, brick making, wall-building, etc.), as well as low level trade. In this second group, we find three skilled Jews, who apart from their agricultural work, were at the same time managers of mills, and one of them is in charge of the glass factory in **Paari**, and tills 70 *morg* of land. The comments that are found in the lists beside these names, permit us to deduce that these three wealthy men personally directed their own agricultural work.

The size of the parcels ranged from 3 to 22 morg of property (for each family). The Jewish colonists paid off their property obligations through instalments or by crop-sharing. Not rarely, they did both together – instalments and crop-sharing. Apart from this, they also paid all the applicable taxes. Each family, on average, had 2 children under the age of 17.

In the year 1838-1839, 30% of the rural Jews of the Zamość Province were engaged in agriculture. By the year 1846-1847, this ratio had grown by 36%. The number of Jewish families engaged in working the land had risen from 24 to 35. This testifies to the stubbornness of the Jews, who paying no mind to the subterfuges of the administration, were drawn to this hard, entirely thankless work of that time, in agriculture. No doubt there were other reasons at that time, apart from the focused intent, which drove them to this work, for example, the want in the towns, and the hope of finding a way out of the 25 year military service in the Czar's Army, etc.

Apart from this, it is necessary to underscore the disarray of the social amenities of Jewish agricultural life. The Zamość Province lacked a defined base of Jewish peasantry. The largest number of Jewish agricultural families was in one location, -- 7 (in the village of Zdanów in the year 1846-1847), and in the majority of instances we encounter one or two families of Jewish peasants in each of the villages. Without a doubt, this had a negative influence on the development of agriculture [sic: as an occupation] (among the Jews), as it is possible to see from Table Number 3 on

page 378.

Regarding the relationship of the central chancellery and the administration of the Zamość Province, to the problem of Jewish colonization and Jewish peasants in general, the documents testify that there were a large number of amendments, instructions, and correspondence concerning Jewish peasants.

The first of these documents, from the year 1833, recollects the orders in the directive of 1828, which prohibits Jewish peasants from hiring Christian workers to assist them, and instructs the leader of the Janow-Tomaszow 'Klucz,' that he should monitor this matter.

It is necessary to note, that the Jews of this period would often hire Christians as helpers, not only to help with the field work, but also to learn the work of agriculture. This directive then became like a stone in the way of the Jewish land workers, and shows quite obviously the negative attitude of the administration to the [concept of] Jewish agricultural pursuits. It is necessary to recall here, that even the Czarist authority, with its ruling of the year 1844, permitted Jewish colonists to hire Christian helpers for a period of three years, with the objective of learning how to engage in agricultural work from them.

In the letter from the administration of the Zamość Province to the leader of the 'Klucz,' we read that in the event that such a 'violation' is confirmed, such a colonist is immediately to be expelled from the village.
In the year 1833, the directive intentionally expelled all the Jews from all the villages of the Province, and grouped them together in one village, that is, in **Kalinowice** (called **Kelniewicz** in the language of the local people of Zamość), near Zamość.

The organizer of this 'abusive' action on the part of the administration was designated to be the colonist Hirsch Neimanovich of Zdanów. Paying no mind to the fact that the land in the village of Kalinowice was not of a good quality, the Jews were not in any great rush to come together there, with the grant from the nobles for projected agricultural parcels (following the model of the allocation of the so-called Jewish sections in the cities). The failure of this action is shown in the listings of the year 1838-1839, from which we can see that in Kalinowice, there lived only one Jewish family, that of the goldsmith Yitzhak Hol[ho]lander, who owned the property. There is not even a single Jewish resident listed in the record of the Jewish population for the year 1846-1847.

The attitude of the administration underwent a fundamental change in 1840, when, in conjunction with a project to eliminate Jews from the villages, which had its basis in a very 'zealous' leader of a 'Klucz,' a special directive was issued to all the leaders pf the 'Kluczki' and the overseers of the district settlements.

In this directive, the administration of the Zamość Province proposes that one should not harass the Jews openly, and one should not confront them specifically. Rather, only the general administrative authority has the right – in the view of this directive – to decide on the fate of the Jewish populace that lives in the villages of the province. The obligation of the local leaders and overseers is only to monitor that the Jews 'not engage in any occupations deleterious to the peasants,' that they fulfill all their obligations, and that no take any steps to permit a Jew to become his neighbor. Apart from this, the leaders were supposed to engage in spying on the Jewish populace, and inform the administration of all instances when Jews violate the ordinances. These directives had the objective of restraining the flow of Jewish population to the villages, which consisted in the first place of the poor element from the cities that had no financial resources with which to construct their own domicile.

The remarks made by several of the leaders of the 'Kluczki' which are to be found in the lists for the year 1838-1839, about the Jewish agricultural workers, testify to the disorganized demeanor of the colonists. The non-positive relationship of specific leaders stands out sharply, in the meaning of a certain Strzemieczny, in which he writes about the Jewish colonists in this language: '...(I do not agree) that they will permanently be benign towards the peasants; these are leeches...' This evaluation is in conflict with a prior notice recorded in different handwriting, where one can read that ' these (Jewish) peasants comport themselves peacefully, were not punished in any way for any violations, and they are minimally dangerous to the 'Dominium'.'

We see a notice of an entirely different character beside the name pf the Jewish peasant, **Wola Olszanska**. This notice affirms: 'The poor Jewish peasant is qualified to be eliminated.'

We see a certain representation of good will by the Administration of the Zamość Province in the Year 1840, when the same vacated the plea of a Jew in **Bialowola** about annulling the decision to expel him from his property; it was simultaneously established that simply the suspicion that he was 'a devil,' was not an adequate basis on which to expel him.

In the year 1841, the central administration released the Jewish peasants that lived in the village of Zdanów, from their sales taxes, which they owed. On the basis of the representations made by the district leader of the 'Klucz,' concerning their disorganized management (of the Jewish peasants), and the losses from hail that befell those colonists.
These are only minor remarks about positive relations of the administration to Jewish colonists, who already rand households. In the same year, 1841, we stumble across a notice, that testifies to the continuity of the action to eliminate Jews from the villages.

The administration lays out a proposal to the overseers of Tworiczow and Turobin, which requires that the Jews of **Rodecznic**, **Gruszka-Zaporoszka**, **Zhavna** and **Gai** be diverted, and that they conform themselves to the instructions to divert Jews 'without resorting to methods using force.'

The entire plan to drive the Jews out of the villages of the Province failed. The Jewish Land workers, of whom 90% were recruited from the poorer classes, showed special energy and stubbornness in struggling (as we will see later on), with the subterfuges of the administration of the Zamość Province. Despite of all the attempts to find things that Jews did that 'were bad for the peasants,' in order to expel them from the villages, the administration could rarely take an pride in 'achieving' this objective.

A certain number of families were expelled or relocated, in a couple of instances, peasant families, but in the majority of cases these were factors, people who did not have steady work, traders, and the like. As we have already said, in the years 1838-1847, the Jewish colonists not only did not diminish their base, but it was the opposite – they grew by a meaningful amount. Coincidentally, this was also the case with other occupational groups among Jews who lived in the villages. This is established in a list of the Jewish residents in the villages for the year 1846-1847 in a report about the movement of the population from July 23, 1845. In this report (from the Administration of the Zamość Province to the Central Chancellery), we read that as a result of the recommendation of the central chancellery to make it difficult for the Jews to settle in the villages, their number has significantly diminished. This, however, is not quite accurate. It is true that 13 families were removed from the settlements of **Stary Zamość**, **Tworiczow**, and **Zwiezhinets**. However, 9 new families came in. In total, there were only 4 families less. It is interesting that only in the case of 2 Jewish peasants – as becomes evident from the accounting – was the land taken back from them, but they could not be evicted from the villages. The thirteen that were expelled, were factors, and those that lived as neighbors in other people's homes. Two Jewish families were indeed evicted, but four Jewish families were put in their place.

About the course of a spontaneous Jewish colonization, the written evidence, or the exceptional notices tell us the attempts on the part of Jews to acquire parcels. We have made use here of the term, 'spontaneous colonization,' because the central chancellery and the administration of the Zamość Province even at the time of allocating the parcels procedurally, always exerted itself to make it difficult for Jews to establish and run a community. The shortcoming was not so great in the material help for the colonists, as it was in the various obstacles and pitfalls that 'constrained' the capacity of the Jews to remain in a village, as well as generally negative posture of the leadership of the Zamość Province, which inhibited the development of Jewish colonization.

The commitment of the Jewish colonists to the soil itself is seen from the 1845 report of the administration of the Zamość Province to the central chancellery. The report confirms that the Jewish land workers of the villages of **Haraszinki** and **Jaszienik**, paid no heed to the fact that their land was taken away from them, and that they were told to leave these villages, not only not obeying these orders, but, again, sowed the land that had been taken away from them. Apart from this, they undertook efforts to approach the police chief of the area, about permitting them to live in

certain boundary strips of these same villages. The stubbornness of these two land workers, in confronting the decision of the central chancellery, about settling this manner in a legal fashion, manifested itself in an effective way. Both of these individuals continued to appear in the lists of the citizens for the year 1846-1847.

A similar incident took place in the village of **Zapor**, where, on the basis of the indication made by the central chancellery, the order came that the poor weaver, **Wolf Oberweiss** was to leave the village. This weaver, paid no heed to the statement, 'pursue him often,' and did not want to stir from the place; every time he received the order to vacate the village, he cried, 'curded be the day I was born.' The leader, in the end, was compelled to allocate an empty house for his use in the village of **Gruszka Zaporska**.

The acts of the Zamość Province that have any relationship to the Jewish populace consist of 18 requests or notices about the approach of Jews, who asked for an allocation of some land, and 2 documents, which describe collective approaches of a significant number of Jews who wanted to undertake agricultural work. The administration granted only four from among the petitioners, the rest of the requests were drowned in the sphere of unrealized projects, or more starkly, just outrightly refused.

It was in this fashion that the healthy and stikhish movement of the Jewish population was paralyzed by the leadership of the Province, which contended with the onetime medieval attitudes towards the Jews. They even gave up on meaningfully economic needs, which would have without a doubt helped the /Zamość Province, when Jews would have worked many hundreds of morg of otherwise fallow land. Such colonization would have definitely alleviated the overpopulation of the towns in the Province with the Jewish poor. The leaders of the Zamość Province rejected the requests of the Jews regarding the allocation of parcel of the land, which they could then work in accordance with the sharecropping system, or instalment payments for the land.

In 1835, the administration rejected the request of a Jew in **Jozefów**, for a parcel of land, and no motive for this refusal was given. In the same year, the administration puts forward to 10 Jews of **Jozefów**, who had made a request for land, that it will allocate land in **Kalinowice**, where it wanted to concentrate the Jews from all the villages in the Zamość Province. This proposal didn't smell right to these 10 candidates, understand, this was a prospect of living in a rural backwater, instead of a more urban one. Nothing came of this transaction.

In the year 1841, a (Jewish) resident of **Szczebrzeszyn** came with a request to the administration, that he should be allocated a parcel of land on instalment, and to provide assistance, in the form of a pair of oxen and a pair of horses, which he would return after a period of three years. This request was rejected without any reason being given. In the same year, the administration rejected the request of a Jew from **Ruskie-Piaski**, about receiving a parcel in the village of **Horyzów**, 'because in Horyzów, there already is a goodly number of Jews, who are more evil than useful.' The central motive of this rejection, however, was the state of poverty in which it found this Jew; there was considerable doubt that he could sustain the enterprise.

The request made by **Kalman Zumerman**, of November 16, 1841, that he should be allocated a parcel from the estate of 'Pan Ciesz' who died without heirs, was rejected by the administration. The collective approach by the Jews of **Tarnogrod** is again rejected, which they had submitted to the central chancellery in the year 1846, through the leadership, with a strenuous protest, in which they requested that they should be given larger parcels in the estate of **Karkhov**, which will be taken under supervision by a certain **Joseph Goldman**, who will divide the parcel among his *landsleit* from Tarnogrod, and he will collect all of the fees and taxes. This proposal, which would have been convenient for the administration, was also rejected, because, 'it is not the wish of the Graf to reduce the size of his estate holdings.'

The fact that the name **Israel Mendel Milkh** is absent from the list for the year 1846-1847 testifies to the fact that his approach of November 22, 1846, to obtain a parcel in the village of **Sukhin**, was accorded the same fate as his prior approach. It was first in 1842, when a larger number of Jews from **Zamość**, and other cities, approached the Province with a request for parcels, that caused the administration to come forward with a proposal of its own, for a project to settle the Jews on land across a broad area.

The large-scale movement of the Jewish population from the cities of the province was related to the law that was promulgated on August 26, 1827, regarding the military obligation of the Jews. Working the lad freed them from the 25-30 years of conscripted service in the Czar's Army. Recruits were sent to places that lay thousands of kilometers away from home. The Jews wished to protect themselves against the danger of divided families for long periods of time. It is therefore no wonder, that notwithstanding the negative posture of the administration and the central chancellery, that the Jewish population in the towns began, *en masse* to apply for parcels to be given to them, for [agricultural] work.

The administration proposed to the central chancellery that a tract of 900 morg be set aside to be divided among these Jews, in presently virgin lands that can be found in the villages. Each colonist-candidate had to make a deposit of from 100 to 200 Polish gulden, which was to be held by the administration, until such time that he did not build up a residence and other related buildings for economic use. Apart from this, the administration proposed that these colonists should be given building lumber at no cost for their buildings, and they should be held free of instalment payments for a period of 2 years. The administration underscored in its letter to the central chancellery that it wished to have a speedy reply in connection with this approach to the activity of the commission, which had complied the census (in connection with recruiting for the military). The Jewish candidates wanted to transfer to the villages from the cities as quickly as possible, before the list for military service is [finally] compiled.

Also, this project, to re-settle Jews to do agriculture, was at its root not appropriate for the majority of the Jewish populace, which was recruited from among the poor. For them, the required deposit was much too large. Apart from this, the central chancellery made the act more difficult for poor Jews from the cities to settle and undertake land work in the villages. In the letter of January 2, 1843, it permits Jews to settle on parcels, and to conclude contracts with them, but only in the instance where several families would go at one time, who would then take two '***wolkas***,' of land (arable hectares). The central chancellery concurred with this approach, expecting that it this way, a purely Jewish colony would be formed, located on a specific parcel, far from the Christian villages. At their own expense, the colonists were required to build [sic: homes, buildings, etc.], in the course of three years, and they were not supposed to receive any sort of help or relief from instalment payments. Each of the colonist families were obligated to deposit a minimum of 200 Polish gulden as security.

In principle, the central chancellery rejected the approach of the poor Jewish people. The requirement to turn into the treasury of the Province, what for that time was so large a sum, in fact made it impossible to implement the settlement of candidates without means on the soil.

Further details about the fate of this project of the central chancellery are missing. One however can conclude, that if even a few or more willing candidates existed, who could meet the requirements of the administration, that they were exclusively Jews with some means.

As we have already stated, barely four families obtained the permission of the central chancellery and Administration to occupy vacant sectors of land. These requests had been made in the year 1842. In one of these requests, there is a peculiar remark, something like an instruction from the central chancellery, that it is 'not at all opposed to taking on Jews to do agricultural work.' This instruction brings the generalizations that relate to the matter of settling Jews on the soil to do agricultural work. These generalizations state that Jews may settle in only those villages where Jews already are located; that they are to receive a land parcel of no less than one *wolk*; that every candidate for such a colonization should have a good reference with regard to his prior occupation. Each of these positive emptied requests, also had a notation with a 'recommendation' from the leader of the 'klucz.' Characteristic, was the fact that each of these four candidates, who presumably received parcels, were entirely not taken into the rosters of the Jewish population of the year 1846-1847. It emerges from this, that even these four families had to leave the parcels, as a result of the various conflicts and subterfuges on the part of the administration; they could not have held out for very long on their allocated parcels. And so, it was in this way that the stikhish action on the part of the Jews to settle on the land was treated officially, and was completely paralyzed through the powers of the Province.

Most of the documents that have a bearing on the rural Jews of the Province, carry the designation: '**A Jew who is bad for the peasants**,' or '**A Jew that is bad for the country's wealth**;' against the Jews who were so marked with this characterization, a real war was declared; periodically, his life would be made difficult in a very perfidious manner. They are expelled from the village; hundreds of reports are written about them, messages, indications, opinions, and similar things. This kind of relationship by the administration would have applied to a really small group of Jews, such as the very wealthy (Estate managers, substantial mill operators, owners of pitch operations, nail factories, and other elements of rural industry). But it is exactly the opposite that happens – the accusation of 'evildoing' is instead directed to the poor element of Jews in the villages: to peasants, weavers, small businessmen and others. The richer Jews, by contrast, they attract good opinions; they also are given the opportunity to acquire parcels. The glassworks in Paari occupies 68 *morg*, which was turned over to be used by the owner, the -- rich Jew **Finkwas Schener**.

Not all the employees of the administration of the Zamość Province were in agreement with the position of the law and with the central chancellery in connection with this question. Characteristically, and explicitly demonstrated, is the prominent unjust and discourteous relation of the leader of the Zamość Province to the Jewish populace in the matter of the Jewish peasants in the village of **Ploskie**. Entirely separately, it is worth emphasizing the fact that the accusation of the alleged 'evil danger' of these Jewish peasants to the Christian peasants. Is rejected by the loyal representative of the appointees of the Zamość Province; these criticisms are also rejected by the local peasants and the German colonists, who (together with the Jews) lived in the village of **Ploskie**. The politics of the leaders of the Province had a shameful failure in this village. Here, the mysteriously constructed false accusations against the Jewish peasants, of their 'being evil,' failed. Similarly, it did not take a great deal in order to lodge a charge of 'evil' against a Jewish peasant. It sufficed that if he engaged in some supplemental form of income producing work, in addition to his agriculture; if he employed (at harvest time) temporary Christian hired help; or if he had some additional agreement in addition to his agricultural work. That was already sufficient for him to be asked to leave the village, confiscating the parcel he had, and very often having been worked from the time it was fallow. This previously mentioned accusation, was for the powers of the administration, a very convenient mechanism by which they could displace the Jews from the villages; in order to heap on them, the blame for everything that went wrong in the village. The ruling classes especially focused on distracting the attention of the peasant and the urban element from the real reasons of their want. In this way, the attention and anger of the exploited were directed ast the Provincial peasants, and among other things, by organizing discriminatory actions against the Jews, as the allegedly guilty parties for the want in the villages. The issue of the Jews in the village of **Ploskie** began in October 1843. The central chancellery, concluded, based on a report by Frankovsky (the chairman of the sessions of the Province), to carry out a complete investigation of the village of **Ploskie**. Frankovsky, it appears, had presented that the Jews of that village are an evil influence on the peasants with their 'shakhrystvo.' The central chancellery then ordered that it should take an interest in these previously referenced peasants, that they should begin to be investigated, and to decide on the possibility of expelling them from the village. It appears that this action on Frankovsky's behalf was organized in partnership with the manager of the Ploskie Estate, **Grisa**, who had a personal interest in pushing the Jewish colonists to the margin.

In December 1843, the administration dispatched a commission of two people, consisting of the inspector of that 'klucz,' Filipovsky, and an arbiter of the district of the Gmina Lipska – Hallen. The objective of the commission was to carry out an on-site investigation. This commission compiles an accurate testimony on the part of eight peasants (Christians) and two German colonists, who live in the village of **Ploskie**. The peasants declare that the Jewish colonists engage in agricultural work along with their children, and as a supplemental form of income, two are engaged in transporting produce on behalf of Zamość merchants; that they are peaceful people, who cause no one any damage. These Jews, in general, do not engage in any form of trade. During the season when there is really an intense amount of fieldwork, they hire Christian laborers, whom they pay out the wages immediately after they complete their work. The ones who testified add that the communal life of the Jewish and Christian peasants with one another is without reproof; on the contrary – in the instance of a fire, which took place in the village, the Jews took in those who were burned out into their own homes, and they sent their wagons into the forest, in order to bring back building lumber for those who were burned out.

This declaration was signed by 8 peasants and 2 German colonists, and also by the members of the commission. The opinion testified to the commission about the Jewish peasants confirms the opinion of the peasants. With special

recognition, both members of the commission stress the fact that the Jewish peasants are training their children to be used to agriculture from their earliest years: 'We have seen their sons, who went with the *broneh*, with the plow, and drove the oxen during the sowing season.'

One of the land workers – **Haskell Oberferst** – can, according to the opinion of the commission, serve as a good example for the entire village.

Ignoring the demand of the commission to the manager of the Ploskie estate, that he should come and provide a clarification in connection with the losses, that the Jews of Ploskie supposedly caused him, he refused to appear and give the appropriate testimony. He discusses this in a letter that is attached to the act in this issue.

However, at the demand of the central chancellery, Grisa provides a clarification first in February 1844. In this clarification, which was given in a very whining tone, this manager complains that he fell victim to the Jewish peasants, who manage the best of the parcels, and deprive him of the seasonal laborers. What is interesting is the rather cutting remarks of the leader of the Szczebrzeszyn 'klucz,' – Czszontowski – which are written in the margins of Grisa's letter. Czszontowski reveals the falsehoods, that are found in the complaint of the estate manager, in his remarks.

The inspector of the 'klucz,' Filipovsky, in his letter to the chairman of the Szczebrzeszyn 'klucz,' comments on Grisa's complaint, and the complete lack of any basis for the charges made in this complaint. He gives the best possible opinion about the Jewish peasants of **Ploskie.** His remarks are substantive, without a bias towards one side or the other, but factual, and one that recognizes the problems of the peasantry quite well.

In the end, the chairman of the Szczebrzeszyn 'klucz,' himself – Czszontowski – in February 1844, in his official letter to the administration of the Zamość Province, affirmed that on the basis of his own personal investigation among the peasants, he has come to the following conclusions:

The peasants suffer no damage whatsoever at the hands of the Jewish colonists in Ploskie; that the Jews pay the Christian land workers a better wage than Grisa; these workers prefer to work for the Jews; Not only do these Jews not cause the peasants any damage, it is the opposite, they actually come across with assistance. And in the end, Czszontowski stamps Grisa as a bad person, who is skilled in the worst capacities. He establishes firmly in his exposition that the Jewish colonists in **Ploskie** need to be protected against Grisa's accusations.

It is first after these declarations, clarifications and reports, which were conveyed by 11 people, and in which everyone concurred in showing the falsehood and ill-willed intent of Frankovsky and Grisa's accusations, the central chancellery was revealed for having misplayed its hand. In its letter of March 14, 1844, it recognizes Grisa's complaint as being without substance, and qualifies it to be annulled. However, with this, it isn't over yet. On November 8 , 1844, the leader of the Lipsk 'klucz' sends over –at the demand of the central committee – a report about the conduct of the Jewish families in the village of Ploskie. He affirms that the declarations that he had received from the peasants and colonists, which live in this village, confirm the good opinion and unblemished conduct of the local Jewish peasants. The leader promises, however, that he will keep watch on their behavior, and will immediately provide notification in the event that they should violate and statutes.

In this instance, we observe a peculiar posture on the part of the central chancellery, in its stubborn desire to discriminate against these peaceful and productive peasants, who work hard for their existence, and who deposit a significant part of their income into the treasury of the Province in the form of instalment payments for their parcels. In light of these documents, it is apparent that the peasants of the village of Ploskie guarded their class solidarity. Which united the Jewish and Christian peasants in their struggle against the common exploiter – the estate manager.

It is worth emphasizing the unusually decent and impartial approach to this issue, taken by the district, the inspector of the 'klucz,' and the chairman of the 'klucz,' who even though they belonged to the privileged circle, they opposed a trumped up anti-Semitic incitement; an incitement that was abetted by the central chancellery, and carried out by two open anti-Semites against the Jewish peasants. On the one hand, this testifies to the awareness of the general need of

Jewish and Christian peasants, and on the second hand about the existence of a strongly progressive group among the lower levels of the appointed members in the administration of the Zamość Province, which was not sympathetic to the injustice and wrongs which were being directed against the Jews. It is certain that this was a strong group. This is seen from first the energy with which they approached this accusation, which was supported by the regulation and the central chancellery.

It is not established, that the growth of the Jewish population in the villages of the Province, that we observe in the years 1838-1847 and the movement of Jews from the cities to the villages, came about as a consequence of the silent support of peasants and the lower level employees of the administration. This may explain the fact, that despite the scrutiny of the police, the 'harassment,' various prohibitions, and hardships, that the number of the Jewish population during those 9 years rose by 30 percent. The number of Jewish families, engaged in agriculture, comprised 36 percent of the Jewish population. Also, the number of Jewish land workers during this period, rose by 36 percent.

The principal factor in this case was the endurance and the commitment of the Jews. The history of the Jewish colonists in the village of **Ploskie**, throws an entirely new light on the history of Jewish agriculture on the estates of the Zamość Province and in all of Poland.

In total, we can present the following conclusions:

1. The preserved documents affirm that the Jewish colonization of the estates of the Zamość Province existed from the end of the 18th century, and developed quite meaningfully – in the first half of the 19th century, despite the fact that there was no help at all from the authorities;

2. The assistance from the authorities manifested itself in the allocation of land parcels, and support at the end of the 18th century. In the first half of the 19th century, the administration of the Zamość Province not only did not provide any financial aid to the colonists, but also did not release them from instalment payments (as was the case of the Czarist authorities in the western provinces), but rather made it more difficult and did not permit the development of Jewish agricultural colonization, striving always to completely eliminate the Jewish population of the villages;

3. In the years 1838-1839, 24 Jewish families, from a general total of 74 who lived in the villages, were engaged in working the land. In the year 1846-1847, there were 35 families engages in working the land, out of a total of 96 [families].

4. Despite the hardships and imposed limitations, and baseless accusations, the number of Jewish peasants grows. Their economic productivity was good, and a number of them served as a sort of model of a good peasant. The Jewish colonists of the Zamość Province, and the western provinces, showed the representation of various activists and politicians in the 18th and 19th century, about the unsuitability and lack of skill of the Jews in agriculture, to be false;

5. Relations between the peasants and the Jews developed satisfactorily, and the matter of the village of **Ploskie** affirmed the fact that there was a solid front of the peasants with regard to their Jewish neighbors;

6. In addition to the Jewish families, which had previously already been engaged in agriculture, and who constituted approximately 40% of the colonists, a stream of impoverished Jews came into the villages from the overpopulated cities and towns. An important driving force to that movement of colonization of the Jews, was also the release of land workers from the multi-year military conscription in the army of the Czar.

7. The project, emanating from the regulation of the central chancellery, which sought to create Jewish agricultural colonies that would be isolated from the Christian world, elicited no motivation among the Jews, they already had the experience of the 'revirs' for Jews in the cities. The Jews preferred to settle individually in the villages, among the Christian peasants. They often did this in violation of the unwillingness, the

limitations and prohibitions. The often settled in the villages without the knowledge of the central administration, with the silent support of the local leader, who took from one hand to the other, and turned over 'an empty' parcel to them. The Jewish colonists increased their numbers by bringing their relatives from the cities.

8. The Jewish peasants conducted their activities on plots of land from 3 to 22 morg. A number of them (after 1840) would hire Christian land workers, during the season in which the land had to be worked. Only one Jew, a manager of th glass works in Paari, ran a parcel with an area of approximately 70 morg.

The acts that have been preserved to this day, of the Zamość Province that have a bearing on the Jewish populace which lived in the villages of this Province, provide us with a great deal of information. This information has, until this time, never been published in any work, which is either in part, or entirely dedicated to the history of Jewish agricultural colonization in Poland. These materials will undoubtedly be an important, thought modest, supplement to the history of agricultural colonization on the Polish soil.

## Documents

The author provides a complete translation from Polish into Yiddish of the source material he uncovered in the Warsaw Royal Archives for the Acts of the Zamość Province 4750 and 4757. This is the underlying source material for his commentary which has been translated above. We do not plan to translate this source material, which the interested reader may access in the original Yiddish or Polish.

# Alexander Zederbaum and "Kol Mevaser"

**By Sh. L. Citron**

*Page 414:* *Alexander Zederbaum*

Once again, we present here a couple of excerpts of Sh. L. Citron's work, "The History of the Jewish Press" 1.From the Years 1863 to 1889., which appeared in Warsaw in 1921, published by Akhisefer Verlag. These are sections that relate to Alexander Zederbaum, a scion of Zamość, and the Jewish newspaper "Kol Mevaser" which he began to produce.

## The Birth Pangs of the First Jewish Newspaper

Approximately forty years passed between Eisenbaum's proof until a Yiddish press began to be created and develop in Russia. The leaders of the Enlightenment who were the only ones would could and were able to be the initiators of such a culturally elevating act, took to it from the first minute, without following the path of the German Maskilim, who thought of the 'Jargon,' as a hump on the back of the people, and tried to employ all methods to rid themselves of it. The fact that the Vilna Maskilim, who in the first twenty years of the 19th century planned to publish a Yiddish newspaper, as we have related (referring to the introduction to Citron's book), was an entirely exceptional occurrence. The Maskilim, in general, took a wary posture towards Yiddish, and it was in their eyes 'a sort of yellow badge, a symbol of the wretched Diaspora, of a life of slavery.' It is not possible to grasp how the people in their time did not understand, that in their shouting of: 'the Jargon must be taken down from the Bimah, and it must be exchanged for a proper language,' that they were letting the best and most certain key to the heart of the people, on whose good will they were so dependent, out of their hands. It is however necessary to say, that the Maskilim really had in mind to provide spiritual nourishment only to the intelligent segments of the populace, and they had no concern for the larger Jewish mass, which understood the written word specifically in 'Jargon,' and it was for this reason that they settled on Hebrew, Russian and abandoned Yiddish.

The antipathy towards Yiddish reached so far, that among certain circles of Maskilim, ways were sought to influence the government to completely forbid the printing of books in 'Jargon,' not taking into account that it was the single most apt language for the Jewish masses.[184]

Time, however, wrought its effect, and at the beginning of the nineties, it is possible to note a change in the minds of specific Maskilim, in connection with Yiddish. A little at a time, it becomes evident that without the help of this *lingua franca*, it will not be possible to wage the war on behalf of Enlightenment, and without the tongue of the masses, in hindsight, nothing will be able to be accomplished. It is worth to note, that this changeover to a good opinion of Yiddish, first appeared in the south of Russia. The reason is, that in that sector, Hasidism had spread so vigorously, that it had become a genuine folk movement in that place, and the leaders of that movement immediately began to utilize the people's language for their propaganda. This led to the Maskilim finally being forced to adopt Yiddish as part of their arsenal in their battle against the influence of Hasidism.

As a result of this, in that sector, step by step, the area was prepared for a Yiddish periodical, and the time was of such a nature, that a great interest was awakened among the Jews of the Pale to become acquainted with the surrounding world through the medium of their own newspaper. Only the man was missing, who could capture that inclination from the street, and transform it into a fact of real production.

In 1858, two writers from Odessa, **Joseph Rabinovich** and **Chaim Tarnopol** submitted a request to permit the publication of a weekly Yiddish periodical in Odessa. In Russian, 'Razviet.' Despite the fact that their request was strongly supported by the famous surgeon Pirogov, who at that time was the curator of the Odessa Teachers Circle, Rabinovich and Tarnopol were not given permission to publish a periodical in Russian, bu only in 'Hebrew, or also the

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184 Author's Footnote: Even much long before Zederbaum, the first energetic fighter on behalf of Yiddish, *Yehoshua Mordechai Lifschitz* from Berdichev attempted to publish a Yiddish language newspaper, on the strength of a government permission.

Yiddish-German language used by Russian Jews.' Rabinovich and Tarnopol however did not utilize the permission that was granted to them, and then the long, very arduous exertion passed to another writer from Odessa. That was, **Alexander Zederbaum**, as he was later known popularly by the Jews.

As was later related by the historical writer about the older Yiddish literature, **Eliezer Shulman**, Zederbaum initially was ashamed of publishing a periodical in 'base Jargon,' and therefore requested that he be permitted to publish a periodical in Hebrew, and in German, using the Hebrew alphabet. Zederbaum received this permission through Pirogov's good offices, and on September 29, 1860 the first edition of 'HaMelitz' appeared – 'A Central Organ for Jewish Works in the Hebrew and German Languages.' as it stated in the masthead.

For the first two years, 'HaMelitz' effectively appeared in both languages: Between the Hebrew articles, German was often printed, using the Hebrew alphabet.

The practical Zederbaum immediately saw, that the German articles in the paper were essentially a waste, since nobody needed them, and nobody reads them, and he came to the thought to set aside his embarrassment, and in place of the German articles, attempt to produce a separate paper in Yiddish. In the 42nd edition of HaMelitz, Zederbaum put in a large advertisement in Yiddish, covering 4 pages, in which he communicated the news that very quickly he will begin to publish a separate periodical written in plain Yiddish, by the name '**Kol Mevaser**.'

It is with this 'Kol Mevaser,' that the **first** epoch of the history of the Yiddish press begins, and a **new** era in the history of Yiddish literature.

## "Kol Mevaser"

### A

Alexander Zederbaum, on whom the fateful burden of laying the foundation for the first Yiddish periodical press fell, was born in **Zamość**, in the Lublin District in 1816. Zamość was one of the Polish cities, that because of its proximity to the German border, absorbed the Haskala of Mendelssohn more rapidly; already, in those dark years on the threshold of the 19th century, it already had several famous Maskilim. Zederbaum's father was a watchmaker, but also a scholar of great substance, and a Maskil, thoroughly familiar with both the old and new philosophical literature, possessing a command of German and Polish, a beautiful Hebrew speaker, in keeping with the taste of the times, a writer and translator of poetry. His house was a center for Maskilim, and intelligent people in general, and every person who felt a thirst for education. Among his constant visitors were: the well-known mathematician and later inspector of the Zhitomir Teachers Seminary, **Yaakov Eichenbaum**, the historian, **R' Shimson Bloch**, and **Dr. Shlomo Ettinger**, who earned a reputation by way of his Yiddish fables and poetry. During his youth, Zederbaum rubbed shoulders with these Maskilim, and benefitted from their knowledge and Enlightenment. He studied the Gemara with commentaries, German and Polish, and a little French, and more than everything else, Hebrew. As a young man – he already had a wife and children, – he moved away, as was the custom of the Maskilim of that time, to seek his fortune in the larger world. He came to **Odessa** in 1840.

There, he first got employment as a bookkeeper in a garment business, and a short time later, opened a store for finished clothing. In order to become more expert in this business, he taught himself to cut clothing. Later, when Zederbaum became a writer and an editor, and used to engage in sharp polemics with journalistic opponents, they would often try and needle him by calling him a 'tailor.' However, he never felt insulted by this, and he would occasionally take great pride in contrast to other Maskilim, who were embarrassed for having a [manual] trade.

Periodically, when he had the opportunity, in his articles, to discuss the need for spreading work among the Jews, and to indicate in passing, R' Yohanan the Shoemaker, and R' Yitzhak the Smith, and other learned men in the Talmud, who were also tradespeople, his habit was to end with the following words: ' and also **we** (that means the editor of 'HaMelitz' and 'Kol Mevaser') have not been embarrassed to develop a simple skill, with which to provide for ourselves in case we need to.'

In Odessa, which at the time was the cultural center of southern Jewry, Zederbaum involved himself in many activities, became active in all charitable and educational institutions, and received the greatest notice everywhere. In this process, he became a close companion to the 'leadership.' A man of minimal education, and with a born, broken Russian, he still knew how to approach to highest authority and to get everything he wanted to accomplish. To this, he brought his deep commitment to community work, and his iron energy. It is, however, necessary to note that his old-fashioned, striving, or more correctly: negotiating style, played no small role in this regard, which he acquired with his innate sense from the first minute, and remained with him for his entire life.

The Odessa intelligentsia of that time, which was entirely from the outside, especially from Galicia (from which the sobriquet, '**Die Broder**' is derived), brought with it a substantial stream of Germanization into Jewish life. The language of discourse was German. Until the seventies, the Russian regime took a tolerant attitude to this; and it appeared to be just the opposite, as if it supported these tendencies towards Germanization. It came so far, for example, that the government itself printed German textbooks for Jewish schools.[185] But after the Polish rebellion of 1863, the Russian regime began to conduct a sharply nationalistic political agenda, and began to energetically attempt to Russify the Jews in the entire country, including Germanized Odessa. This 'official' Russification didn't smell right to the 'Broder.' Only **one** small detail obtained sympathy, to which Zederbaum also subscribed. Zederbaum was not very content with the dependence on German, and expressed his opinion freely and often, and through this vociferous loyalty he earned a reputation with the authorities.

Zederbaum, however, imported a son-in-law, a Galician doctor, **Aharon Yitzhak Goldenblum**, who was a fanatic 'German,' and as it happens, a person with European pedagogical credentials, but with a very superficial inclination to Russification, who through his kindred spirits, the 'Broder,' was appointed as Headmaster of the Odessa Talmud Torah, in which the Jewish education of the lower and middle level Jewish classes was concentrated. Zederbaum was afraid of the idea that under the influence of his son-in-law, the Oddest Talmud Torah would acquire a Germanized character, so he worked for a long time, until he was able to 'stick in a foot,' in this institution, as a 'pochtonii blyoostityel' (honorary inspector) as it was then called. From that time on, no matter which educational institution Dr. Goldenblum entered – and there were **several** of these – Zederbaum immediately inserted himself, and all because of this, to render the German influence of his son-in-law benign. In this fashion, Zederbaum was drawn into the issues of education, and because of this, he entirely neglected his business, and in the end, wanted to rid himself of it entirely. A number of hears later, when he was bent and writhing under the heavy yoke of his editorial and community activities, in which he managed to acquire many opponents, who created bad blood for him, he complained on his pages more than once about how he had abandoned 'the measuring tape and the shears.'

Having been left without a way to make a living, Zederbaum paused to consider publishing a newspaper in Yiddish. He didn't consider whether he was fit for this work, based on his ideas and expertise; he just knew that he was a formidable mouthpiece, but what of the pen? He then considered that he would go into partnership with his educated son-in-law. And Zederbaum was one of those people, who once they thought of something, it was as good as done. He immediately began to work towards obtaining permission. But when it came to the issue, Zederbaum suddenly acquired 'embarrassment,' as we have previously related here – to publish a newspaper written in 'vulgar-Jargon' and in its place, he worked out a concession to do a German paper in Hebrew lettering. His calculation, it seems, was that such a paper would have a substantial following among the 'Broder,' that one-time class of the Odessa Jewish population that had means. However, the 'Broder' turned out to be rather lukewarm patrons of his German paper, and this moved him, after a couple of years, to convert to a real Yiddish paper. But now, he was not able to obtain permission for a

185 It is important to take note of the fact, that the Russian Empress, Catherine the Great (1729-1796) was born a German princess. In 1745 she was married to prince Carl Peter Ulrich, the heir to the Russian throne (the future Emperor Peter III). When she acceded to the Russian throne, German became the language of her court. Additionally, she initiated a policy of inviting Germans to colonize Russian lands. This policy continued to operate for nearly a century, and it was only in the 1870's that Russification policies led to wholesale emigration of Germans from Russia to the New World.

separate Yiddish paper – this was already too much for the Russian authorities – but only for a Yiddish byline to the Hebrew 'HaMelitz' and this is the way it remained for eight consecutive years.

Telling the world about this periodical, that he was planning to put out in 'Plain Yiddish, in order that the simple audience and even the women will be able to know what is going on in the world,' Zederbaum found it necessary to immediately and on the spot answer for himself to those who opposed Yiddish by using the following words:

> 'We are aware that today's enlightened people cry out that we should wean the people of Yiddish and train them to communicate in the language of the country; it is possible that they are not entirely incorrect, because, in the country where one lives, it is necessary to understand the [native] language; but what language is to be used to communicate with the unlettered populace, so that they learn what is necessary for each individual, if in fact, all they understand is Yiddish.'

As the reader can see, Zederbaum is not yet prepared to fully say that he is coming here to do something on behalf of the *lingua franca* itself. For this, as he approached 'Kol Mevaser,' he did not as yet have the temerity. He spoke of the 'vulgar language,' about the 'language of the masses,' He did not embrace this yet in Number 18 of 'Kol Mevaser,' (First Year anniversary), in which he still finds it necessary to admit to be, in a special remark, that he does not, God forbid, hold the Jargon to be some sort of respectable language, like all other languages. In another place, we find an opinion of Zederbaum, that the Jargon is only a transition language, a language that will be used for a while, an appendage which we will get rid of quickly. But this was not his true belief, his deeply held conviction; he did this for external appearances. One needed to know Zederbaum, and understand Zederbaum's psychology, to understand that he didn't want to do this to save face with the adherents of German or Russian, but rather with the Hebraists, the readers of 'HaMelitz,' to whom 'Kol Mevaser' was given as a free premium, as an enticement to become a subscriber. This is also the reason that he gave his Yiddish newspaper a **Hebrew** name and why, in the first editions of the 'Kol Mevaser,' most of the articles were given Hebrew names. But, as said, this was all at the beginning. However, the longer Zederbaum continued, the bolder and more certain he became in his conviction about 'Jargon,' and began entirely to call the language **Yiddish** and **Yiddish**, as the reader will see in the coming chapters.

## B

*Page 420:* *A Sample of 'Kol Mevaser' when it was still a Supplement to 'HaMelitz'*

The first edition of 'Kol Mevaser' appeared on October 11, 1862. By today's standard, if such an edition were to appear, especially when it was a **first** edition, it would seem wildly strange. Instead of a program-article, he begins with several remarks about – **America**. The essence of these remarks: 'America is a fortunate country, where nobody asks you if you are a Jew, but rather if you can do business.' Afterwards come a series of special Jewish news items, selected from various foreign newspapers, from Paris, Mainz, Vienna, Copenhagen, and also from Jerusalem. After the news, there is a poem by an anonymous writer, titled, 'All is Vanity' (apart from charitable works and good deeds). The title alone says enough about the character of the poem. Afterwards, the edition presents a short story about a Jewish 'young ne'er-do-well,' a short write-up, 'Kiddush HaShem,' which tells how the crusaders had at one time persecuted the Jews; an article about the 'bread-trees' that grow in India; the beginning of a translated telling of the story, 'The Redeemer,' and at the very end, a fable with the Hebrew name, 'A Doctor, but not to Himself,' by the already deceased Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. If there had been no date on this edition, it would have been possible to believe that it had been published 100 or 200 years earlier; that is how much it did not have the stamp of its own times on it.

This first edition, and also several of the following ones, were filled by Zederbaum himself under a variety of pseudonyms, one could immediately recognize this from the tart language, – a sort of gobbledegook. And this is no wonder. Zederbaum did not know how to write any other way. Himself, born in monarchial Poland, where he lived until he was able to come off being dependent on his father-in-law; in addition to this, a resident of Odessa for how many years, where the Jews there did not speak the fine, rich Yiddish of Volhynia, but rather, a mishmash of Volhynian Yiddish with the Galitzianer dialect (a legacy of Brod), and in addition to this, the common daily language used by Zederbaum was German (the influence of his German son-in-law, Dr. Goldenblum), – all of this together caused Zederbaum to develop a wooden Yiddish style, which literally irritated the ears, and was often not comprehensible.

A small example of Zederbaum's one-time Yiddish and his spelling:

> 'A beautiful summer day began to appear. The dark of the night began to flee before the red blush of the east side. It was entirely silent in all of the streets of Prague, where sleep still held the populace in its beds.'

And here is yet another example of another form of language (also recognizable as Zederbaum, but with **Russifying** sympathies):

> 'Those who belong to *podanta soslova* are released from *herbovoye* paper: both in the case of submitting recruits to the *nabor*, or in writing to the *nachalstvo* in all matters that pertain to recruits, but if one procures *nayomshchikehs* or *kvitantziyehs*, which have been given to recruits for accounting, and in addition, it is necessary to make use of marked paper. *Akhotnikehs* who go before their *semieystvehs* are to be taken *otcherednyii*' etc. [186]

After a while, the Yiddish language began to develop in 'Kol Mevaser,' at the time that Zederbaum ceased being compelled to fill the all the pages throughout with his own 'creations.' And principally, since it was a coterie of Volhynian writers that began to group themselves around him, among whom could be found such stylists as Abramovich, Linietsky, and others. Under the influence of his Volhynian collaborators, Zederbaum himself learned how to write Yiddish increasingly better. In time, he personally worked out a general standard spelling for the writers of 'Kol Mevaser,' began to agitate for the need for a Yiddish grammar, and other educational books, and make presentations in his capacity, of various plans as to how all this could be accomplished. This was at the time where, figuratively, he carried the banner of Yiddish high, with great pride.

Zederbaum did not have any program regarding what he should do with his newspaper. In general, Zederbaum was a person, so to speak, who didn't take cognizance of programs. He was by nature a flighty person, meaning, a person without strong attitudes and clear views of the world about him; to whom things seemed right one way, and then another, today – it could be day, tomorrow – night. He had no fear of inconsistencies, and if someone 'tugged at his sleeve' because yesterday he had written exactly the opposite of what he had written today, it was of concern to him in the amount of 'ten times nothing;' after all, it was his newspaper, and therefore, he felt he could write whatever he pleased. However, he did not always know what he wanted. This clarifies the resulting fact that during a two year period, in which he carried on an intense battle against the contesting elements who opposed the Enlightenment in the Hebrew language 'HaMelitz,' he could not seize the style of the 'Jargon' publicist. Zederbaum approached the new, 'plebeian' – as he put it – expression, with great trepidation, with fear of a misplaced word, which could cause harm, for an extraneous suggestion, that could become dangerous.

In time, because of the outside, incidental material, a program began to take shape for 'Kol Mevaser,' that had very specific tendencies, which later on, took a hold of the flighty Zederbaum himself, the productive daily contributor to the newspaper. We will not, however, jump to this, and before we get to the later program of 'Kol Mevaser,' we will examine the general form that the newspaper had, until the time where it acquired a set format.

From the third edition on, 'Kol Mevaser' began by opening each time with an article under the general name of '**News**,' which was a line of a variety of news, but several with its special commentary, and it always came out in a form that on the basis of the news, Zederbaum offered opinions on all sorts of questions. This, naturally, led to a situation, where he always selected those facts on which he could base that which he wanted to express. And no matter what question he chose to touch upon, and no matter what he had to say, it always led to the fundamental thought that 'Russia is a blessed land and it is better for Jews there than anywhere else;' Jews are suffocated in Rumania, they are oppressed in Morocco, even in the blessed land of Germany they are victims of the most egregious suffering, only in **one** Eden, and the objective of this was, naturally, that one needed to be patriotic, hold the country dear, and be loyal to the Czar. Especially in the initial period, this was the **only** theme that Zederbaum sought to develop for his readers, even more

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[186] The Slavisms have been left untranslated to communicate the intent of the original writer.

broadly and deeply, because in it, he found a clear response to all of the problems of Jewish life in relationship to the external world.

Later on, Zederbaum began to utilize the 'News' as a means to illuminate the innermost Jewish issues. He pauses, for example, at the fact that in the Moroccan city of Tetuan, the Jews opened a school for their children, and then draws a parallel between them, who find themselves in such a bad situation, who are objects of derision and mockery in the land where they live, and the Jews in Russia, where for an educated person, 'the entire world is open; he can live anywhere in Russia, and may practice any profession, he may even be a professor. How much did that already cost our educated brethren in Germany, that they should be given access to all the most distinguished positions, and they are not yet done.' Thereby, Zederbaum warns, and says, that the process of education is education as well, but 'take care that the children seriously attend school, give them books to read about tradition'('Kol Mevaser' First Year anniversary, No. 5). Zederbaum did not yet write any special articles about the issue of Jewish education. He did not yet have the impulse to express himself about this question with total openness. He especially didn't want to arouse the ranks of the old traditional Jewish educational system, and if occasionally, he was moved to say something about this matter, he would bury it in the lines of his 'individual items.'

Zederbaum nourished the first eight editions of 'Kol Mevaser' with his own output. Apart from small, minor translation, which were signed with initials, under which mostly the very same Zederbaum hid himself, one did not encounter a **single** unfamiliar name in 'Kol Mevaser.' A new name first appeared in the **ninth edition**. This was **Yehoshua Mordechai Lifschitz**, a Jew from Berdichev, who had a German education, a man who greatly loved the Yiddish language, in which he believed that he saw not only a convenient and necessary means to disseminate education, but also something of great, meaningful national, cultural worth. This **very** Lifschitz, who himself wanted to publish a Yiddish newspaper, and couldn't accomplish this, as we had previously mentioned, was very happy with the appearance of 'Kol Mevaser.' He imagined that Zederbaum would immediately and certainly use the opportunity to strengthen the prestige of Yiddish, which had a very low status among the Maskilim of that time. However, he observed that not only does 'Kol Mevaser' not agitate even in the slightest on behalf of Yiddish, but that Zederbaum even threw out the following peculiar thought in a footnote:

> 'We do not want to wait until those who mock will ask us, better that we should say that our vulgar Yiddish is not suitable as a language, since it is a corrupted German (see 'Kol Mevaser' No. 5)'

It was here that Lifschitz personally undertook to clarify the meaning of Yiddish to the simplest reader. He did not do this, however, in a feature article, but only in the form of a dialogue between **Yudel** (the Jewish people) and his wife **Yehudis** (the Yiddish language). The dialogue was written in rhyming stanzas, but does not have a poetic rhythm. The essence of it is the conclusion, and the lesson.

Yehudis is very angry with her husband, because he 'averts his eyes from her,' and he has a high regard only for 'others.'

> 'You only want to look at others!
> And go off to strangers.
> You are always jealous of others,
> And take pleasure only in strangers.'

And the husband used the following excuse:

> 'It is a pleasure to look at others,
> That is why I am drawn only to them
> Pearls drop from their mouths
> Your speech makes my hackles rise.'

To this, Yehudis proudly replies:

'And this indeed is
An old plague,
A strange woman is satisfactory,
She is wise, good and beautiful...
They were less lovely than I by far.
They wrote and spoke like children.
Only, they had good reports,
They were polished day and night;
That is why they play great roles,
They are danced with, one sports and laughs.

Just try to hone and polish me,
Adorning me with preparations,
Initially, you may sweat a bit,
But you will have plenty afterwards.'

The husband gets a strong longing for his 'former wife' (referring to the **Hebrew** language) and says in sadness:

'A great pain is here in my hide,
When I recall my former wife,
She was so brilliant,
She had a name throughout the land,
But apart from all of her golden virtues,
She had such a golden pedigree;
Your pedigree is rather questionable,
You come from all manner of spirits.
Your very name is some sort of novelty
She was called 'The Holy Tongue,' not 'Yiddish'.'

Yehudis does not relent a bit, and says:

'I can live with you right along with her,
I love her without measure;
What I wish for her
Should only happen to me.
I do not say for you to hate her,
Quite the opposite, be good to her;
But don't take only a single glance
From the wife to the former wife is only a dream,
You only go to visit her
But you need me each and every minute.
It is true that she is beautiful
But you cannot get along without me,
Truly, she is God's wonder,
But you already have children with me.'

At the end, Yehudis intones that she is dependent on her husband's good will:

'In my prohibition, it is not so much myself,
I really pine mostly for you.'

At the end of the dialogue, Lifschitz inserts, so to speak, the opinion of the editor regarding this matter. In order to make the impact stronger, he lets him take the word, not of the editor of the **Yiddish** 'Kol Mevaser,' but rather of the editor of the Hebrew '**HaMelitz**.' It serves Lifschitz's purpose better that Hebrew should be designated only as Yudel's 'former wife,' that Hebrew itself should shower Yehudis with praise and arrive at the conclusion that:

'I can wager with you
That Yudel will not divorce Yehudis,
For whatever time it is given to her to live
He will always treat her with dignity.'

It is entirely possible, that Zederbaum himself, who had not yet said his last word about Yiddish, found it better that 'Kol Mevaser' should remain silent for the time being about this matter...

By the 13th edition, 'Kol Mevaser' (together with 'HaMelitz,' as usual) ceased publication suddenly for a space of three months, we say: **suddenly**, because Zederbaum did not prepare his readers for this; quite the opposite, he reminded them of renewing their subscriptions for the second quarter of the year. This is very characteristic of the relationship of a Jewish newspaper publisher of the times to his subscribers. Only later, did Zederbaum find it necessary to explain that the cessation of publication was due to the conversion of the newspaper to a new **typeface.**

For the first quarter of a year, a real chaos reigned in the technical composition of 'Kol Mevaser.' It seemed proper, for example, that there was an article published at the very top of the page an article entitled, 'The Machpelah Cave,' should be printed, and that after the 'News,' (the lead article) there should appear: 'A cure for the malady called carbuncles,' or that in the right center number, methods should be presented to 'take out rust spots from white material.' It was proper that a poem, that has no quality or substance ('A vulgar-song') should be printed in small parts over several consecutive editions. It is necessary to remark here, that Zederbaum had a specific weakness for 'poetry,' that is to say, rhymes. There were certain editions, in which two or three poems were printed simultaneously. Among the drivel, once in a while a pearl would be found – a short poem 'The Pauper,' written in the genre of Abraham Reisen to come. We allow ourselves to bring a few excerpts from this poem here.

'I run about and seek.
From morning until night;
In futility I wear out my shoe,
And return home worn out.

I come home on foot
And first have the burden:
To deal with crying children
And a wife to handle.

You abandoned us
– They cry out with a wail –
We have not eaten
For three days now.

I am pained in my wound
My wife cries out and pleads;
The baby cried in the cradle,
Practically flaying off my skin;

We suffer hunger and want,
It is cold and wet in the house;
The rain leaks in,
As if this were the street itself.'

This poem, signed with the initials Y. V. Sh. (Recognized as **Joseph Weinstein**, a name we will encounter often, later in 'Kol Mevaser'), resonates dissonantly both in its introduction and in its language, compared to all the other things which appeared in 'Kol Mevaser,' at the same time.

The names of genuine writers were not yet seen in 'Kol Mevaser.' The writers, it would seem, chose to wait, and see beforehand, what sort of 'creation' would emerge from Zederbaum's Yiddish newspaper. Only one of the well-known Yiddish authors do we find in the first editions of 'Kol Mevaser,' and not actually his explicit name, but rather his

pseudonym: **Joseph Joel Herdner**. This was **Joseph Yehuda Lerner**, the translator of 'Uriel Acosta,' and other theater pieces of Jewish history, and who converted [sic: to Christianity] late in life.

This is the sum total of 'Kol Mevaser' during its first 3 months. This totality had both **positive** and **negative** promise in the end. Zederbaum was still feeling his way.

(Sh. L. Citron's work about 'Kol Mevaser' has 12 chapters. We have included here only two, the most important ones, relating to his biography and founding of the newspaper, and we will also bring the final paragraph of the last chapter of the work.)

* * *

When we summarize the accomplishments of 'Kol Mevaser' in its nearly nine years of existence, we first see a generally unmatched influence on Jewish life in Russia, despite the fact that it was dominated by tendencies towards Russification, it still had a great attractive meaning and a nationalist sense. No matter how thoroughly suffused it was with the concepts of the Enlightenment, it nevertheless preached constantly a love and longing for nominal Jewish values. Because of this, its **iconoclastic tendencies** actually served **constructive** purposes.

Secondly, 'Kol Mevaser' created the new Yiddish reader, meaning, the reader of the 'worldly' Yiddish book. Until the advent of 'Kol Mevaser,' the only spiritual nourishment available to the men and women who read Yiddish, came from the '**Menorat** HaMaor,' with 'Nufat Tzofim,' and from the other side, 'Creations' such as 'Tzentura Ventura,' and all manner of 'Old-wives' tales.' 'Kol Mevaser,' at the outset, awakened an interest in them for a more modern type of reading material.

Third, 'Kol Mevaser' modernized the Yiddish language. Since Zederbaum himself did not think much of Yiddish and its ultimate fate, he personally did not willingly contribute to enrich the Yiddish language, he personally invested considerable energy to create a standard Yiddish orthography, despite the fact that he himself didn't always abide by it.

At the bottom line, 'Kol Mevaser' laid the foundation for the new, modern Yiddish literature, through the smaller and larger talents that were elicited through it, in the various avenues of the art of the written word.

* * *

From Zalman Reisen's 'Lexicon of the Yiddish Press and Philology' (Volume III pp. 235-350), we excerpt only a small number of biographical details, which were not mentioned by Sh. L. Citron.

Alexander Zederbaum was born on 3 Ellul 1816 and died on 26 Ellul 1893. He was married in **Lublin** at the age of 19. During the last years of his life, he directed only 'HaMelitz,' But his accomplishments on behalf of the Yiddish press, literature and language remain historic, even though they have not been completely evaluated yet.

At every opportunity, Zederbaum sought to popularize Yiddish literature in his newspapers, making his first impression on his fellow townsman, **Shlomo Ettinger**, on his Odessa friend, **Israel Oxenfeld**....he was also the founder of Yiddish criticism, truly in the most primitive form of the word...

Showing superhuman energy and capacity for work, in his role as an editor and community activist, he founded a monthly Hebrew journal called '**HaMetzapeh**' (1885), after the failure of the Russian, 'Vestnik' which was published together with Goldenblum in a weekly 'Razviet' (In Russian – 1879-1883, under the actual direction of G. Bogrov, M. Warshawsky, N. Minsky, M. Kulisher, Y. L. Rosenfeld)....

His older son, Joseph Zederbaum was the progenitor of the well-known Russian Social-Democrats **Martov, Yezhov, Levitsky**....

* * *

Professor Simon Dubnow, in his "From Jargon to Yiddish" published in Vilna, Verlag B. Kletzkin, 1929, relates a series of details from his meetings with A. Zederbaum. From the chapter, "The Yiddish 'Volksblatt,' in Petersburg," we extract the following fragment:

On a hot summer day of the year 1881, in Petersburg, the current editor of 'Razviet,' Mark Warshawsky, called and said: "Zederbaum, the editor of 'HaMelitz,' wants to publish a periodical in 'Jargon' (the word 'Yiddish' was not yet being used) for the Jewish masses, and he asks that 'Razviet' should support his plan. Perhaps you can prepare an article about the significance of such a paper for the masses? If yes, please approach the Old Man, and obtain from him the appropriate ideas about his plans and possibilities."

I went to see Zederbaum in his large house on the Litani Prospekt. An old, slightly hunchbacked Jew met me: that is the 'Cedar,' Erez (his literary pseudonym), whom I envisioned in my childhood fantasies, when I read 'HaMelitz,' as a sort of Samson-like hero of our literature. In a bad Russian (to speak Yiddish between two Maskilim at that time was considered 'shocking') he began to tell me the entire story of his first Yiddish newspaper, 'Kol Mevaser,' which he had published in Odessa in the 1860's, a supplement to 'HaMelitz.' For a couple of hours in a row, he told of how much trouble he had to put up with, from the Russian censor, in both of his newspapers, how he managed to draw in the young Abramovich into 'Kol Mevaser,' – Mendele Mokher Sforim – and yet other writers of that time, and the disputes that he had with his co-workers – Gotlober, Lilienblum and the like. Now, I will create yet another newspaper in Jargon, in order to spread the Enlightenment among the masses. 'HaMelitz,' and 'Razviet' are for the Maskilim, and the new intelligentsia, and a *Volksblatt* written in Jargon – for the uneducated Jews, who do not understand either Hebrew or Russian, and in this manner, he boasted that only he could have gotten the permission from the government for a newspaper in Jargon, because he is somewhat 'connected,' being close to men of considerable power in the ministry. In Petersburg it was known that Zederbaum was, indeed, someone who could get results in these matters, because he was able to enter the 'corridors of power,' even through the back door.

I have already forgotten many of the details of that conversation with Zederbaum, but I do remember an overall general impression: For me, where the conversation already had moved on from elementary Enlightenment [issues] to European world problems, a portrait was revealed about the netherworld of literature that cast a pall on my poetic presentations about that Hebrew Enlightenment-literature, which in prior times had shone for me like a bright sun. In Zederbaum I saw more of a businessman in literature rather than a genuine literary figure himself. His plan for a newspaper in Jargon appealed to me. All of us, young and old alike, looked down on [the use of] Jargon in literature. That is: we, the educated, were creating a literature for ourselves in the language of our country, in Russian, which must become the language of our destiny, and in part also Hebrew – the language of our past. But the poor, unlettered classes, to be pitied, also need a vehicle by which they can educate themselves and lift themselves to our level – and for them, it is necessary to create an effective literature in their language, in Jargon, until such time that they will be privileged to speak and read in Russian.

In the previously mentioned article that I wrote for 'Razviet,' under the tile, 'A Yiddish Newspaper for the Masses,' I also took the same position, but with a strong shift toward democracy. I demonstrated what a powerful force for education lies in a living national language for millions of Jews, and what a great shortcoming our Maskilim made, who up till now had nullified this power, or used Jargon in literature only for purposes of making a joke or for foolish anecdotes. Now, at the time of a frightful political crisis in the life of the people, after the new pogroms, which just now have touched the larger Jewish masses, and precipitated the extensive emigration, a newspaper must be created which will be a beacon for them to follow.

And so, in the fall of 1871, 'Dos Yiddishe Volksblatt' began to appear weekly in Petersburg, and existed until 1890. Spector and Sholom Aleichem printed their first works there; My Petersburg friend, Frug, had his beautiful humorous poems written there, who in those years had a reputation as one of the best **Russian** writers.

* * *

To this day, Alexander Zederbaum remains an object for research. In the year 1954, in the book by N. B. Minkov, "Six Yiddish Critics," which appeared in Argentina in Verlag 'Yidbukh,' the first chapter is indeed dedicated to Alexander Zederbaum, where he is indeed portrayed as the pioneer of Yiddish literary criticism; we present the following excerpt from this book:

... No matter how we choose to interpret Zederbaum's relationship to Yiddish, one thing is clear – to him, the arch-intermediator, Yiddish was not more than a means. The central point to him was 'to attain the goal.' And the goal was: improving the lot of the Jewish people. In the heat of the moment, he attempted to help with his own personal effort. But even more, it was possible to help through education. Education was the central issue. And if it was necessary to educate the people by using 'Jargon,' then he must also develop 'Jargon' itself. He must vest it with everything that a person requires in order to 'develop taste,' and in order for him to be able to fell his 'obligations as a citizen.' It is necessary to have this also in order to demonstrate the 'lofty objectives,' to the regime.

It is for this reason that the unusually energetic Zederbaum promulgated a standard orthography. He sought to create a 'formalized' language. He was the first to raise the problems of orthography, grammar and dialects. He created the public and journalistic styles, without any tradition to draw on. An important chapter in Yiddish literature is his [capacity to] attract Yiddish writers to the press, and awakening new talents. Among his 'News Items,' which he introduced, there was also a section called 'Yiddish Bibliography.' This section was prepared, apparently without help. However, taken in historical context, it is the foundation of the later modern Yiddish literary criticism, if one does not take into account Zederbaum's obituary about Israel Axenfeld ('Kol Mevaser,' Number 26, 1866).

# Alexander Zederbaum's Bibliography

**by Yefim Jeshurun**

### Articles about A. Zederbaum in Books, Journals and Newspapers

*The author presents an eight page bibliography of references in Hebrew, Yiddish, English and Russian. The interested reader is referred to the original text for details.*

# Yaakov Eichenbaum

Yaakov Eichenbaum, one of the first members of the Haskala Movement in Russia, Is recalled in the work of Dr. Yaakov Shatzky about the Haskala in Zamość, and in the work of Dr. Max Weinreich about Shlomo Ettinger, as well as in other works in our Pinkas. Once again, we provide the biographical details about Eichenbaum, taken from Gershom Bader's "*Medina VeKhakhameha*," The reproduction of Eichenbaum's handwriting comes from the same source.

*Page 439:* *Facsimile of Yaakov Eichenbaum's Dedication of Friendship to his friend in Odessa*

**Yaakov Eichenbaum** – born 10 Tishri 5566 (12 October 1796) in Kristinopol; died 20 Tevet 5623 (11 January 1863) in Kiev.

He was among the first who made an effort to disseminate the Enlightenment in the south of Russia. A poet who excelled in his wonderful feelings, and a mathematician, who nourished himself from all well springs of knowledge, and in his last years, was a teacher an inspector in the government Teachers' Seminary in Zhitomir.

His father (Moshe Gelber) wanted to have him educated as a Rabbi. His father was thoroughly grounded in all the calculations having to do with holidays, the geometric calculations of an *Eruv* and a *Mikva*, and studied these matters with his son, even when his son was still a child. When the young boy was 8 years old, he was already well-known in the entire vicinity for his quickness in absorbing material and his knowledge ability.

One of the extremely wealthy men, at that time, stealthily took him from his father's house, and took him into his own house, in order to raise him and have him become his son-in-law. The father-in-law saw, however, that Eichenbaum learned German really well, and occupies himself entirely with mathematical sciences, and dissipates the time to be spent studying Torah, and as a result, he force him to divorce his wife [sic: the man's daughter].

His father then married him off in **Zamość**, which during the years 1772 to 1851 was under the hegemony of Austria. This circumstance contributed to the fact that the city became an entrepôt for merchants from the west, going to the east; a city of scholars and Maskilim. There, Yaakov learned foreign languages, and [obtained] an understanding of the Tanakh based on biblical research.

When the city was incorporated into Poland, and the Russian regime demanded that the Jews present their documents in order to establish their right to live in Zamość, Yaakov was forced to make use of a forged document, and change his family name from **Gelber** to **Eichenbaum**. He became a Russian citizen.

When he began to look for a way to make a living, he became a [private] teacher in the homes of the wealthy, who were more than eager to turn over their children to be educated, because of the very substantial reputation that he enjoyed as a Maskil. After this, he moves to the south of Russia, first to Uman, and from there to Mohilev, and from Mohilev to Odessa.[187]

In those days, he came across the works of Euclid in German, and seeing how the book was difficult for him to understand, he translated it for his own use into Hebrew. This translation permitted him to delve into the work, and understand it. This translation marks the beginning of his literary activity, even though this book remained only in handwritten form.

In the year 5504 (1844) his name and capability became known to the Russian regime, and it appointed him as an overseer in the Jewish government school in Kishinev, and in the year 5510 (1850) he was appointed as the inspector and teacher in the Teachers Seminary in Zhitomir. He fell ill there. He then traveled to Kiev for medical treatment, and died there.

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[187] All of these cities are in modern-day Ukraine.

His first poems were published in the collection 'Zion,' which was edited by Just and Kreitznakh; In Fin's 'Pirkhei Zion,' in 'HaMelitz,' and in 'HaCarmel.' Part of his poetry are collected in the folio, 'Kol Zimra' (Leipzig 1836), in the Folio 'HaKesem' (which is a visionary epic-poem, published in the first anniversary edition of 'HaMelitz' and later in a separate folio in Odessa in 1861). His poetic skills are especially evident on his book, 'HaKrav,' a poetic book about the strategy of the game of chess (London 1840, Lemberg 1860). This specific book was translated into Russian by Joseph Rabinovich and was published together with the Hebrew original (Odessa 1847 and Lemberg 1874). He also wrote a book on mathematics, 'Khokhmat HaShiurim,' written in French (Warsaw 1857) and an essay in the first volume of 'Kerem Khemed.'

# Yaakov Reifman

When we stand at the 'border between eras,' in the period of the Enlightenment, between the Zamość of [traditional] Rabbinic scholarship and the new, modern era, it is not possible to ignore or not to mention the personality of **Yaakov Reifman**, who has a substantial connection to Zamość and is recalled by all those who write about those times.

Reifman is mentioned in our *Pinkas*, in a number of works in an incidental and peripheral way. It is clear that this is not sufficient. We cannot provide a sufficiently thorough study of Reifman's life and creativity, characterizing his work, because this is best left for a specialized piece of work. Here, we again bring a variety of excerpts that have an essential relationship to his biography, which to all intents and purposes should not be omitted from our *Pinkas*.

## Yaakov Reifman's Autobiography

In the third volume of 'Knesset Israel,' which appeared in Warsaw (Edited by Shaul-Pinhas Rabinovich, שפ"ר 1896-1988) there is an autobiography sent in by Reifman himself. He very likely supplied this biography at the request of the editor. We present this autobiography here, once again, leaving out many parts, which are full of a great deal of commentary.

**Initial chapters** of my story, which I have written down, so that it may remain as a memorial for all generations to come.

I was born on Rosh Chodesh Nissan of 5578 (1818)[188] in the village of Logów which is three versts from the city of **Opatów** which is in the District of Radom, in the land of Poland. The name of my father, ז"ל, was **Zvi Hirsch** and my mother, ז"ל, **Rachel**. My father was born in the previously mentioned **Opatów** and my mother in a second village, whose name I no longer remember. Both my father and mother were descended from distinguished families, Torah scholars, God-fearing people, suffused with wisdom, who exerted themselves to direct their children onto the same path... I can remember more than one instance, when I was still a child, how my mother would take me out of bed in the middle of the night and in the black of the night she would lead me to the Bet HaMedrash to learn Torah there from the mouth of my teacher. She would do this in the most intense and unbearable cold, not heeding the fact that she was not well-dressed [against the weather], not missing the act of taking me to learn. My father worked with a heavy sweat for very little income, which was inadequate for a living, but nevertheless he paid my tuition fees.

My father could learn, and had a knowledge in the Torah and tradition. My mother knew nothing, but a fear of Heaven satisfied her, and she knew how to avoid falling into doing the wrong thing.

When my parents lived in the village of Logów, despite the fact that they were not wealthy, we didn't lack for anything. My father was a scribe for someone, and this position brought in enough for our needs... but when I was 4 years old, our blessing turned to a curse, and pleasure to pain. God poured out his wrath upon us, a fire broke out in our house, which destroyed everything, we were left without so much as a thread or a shoelace.

We were forced to leave the village, and we settled in Opatów, the place of my father's birth. There, my father took up teaching. This was the source of anger and bitterness from which we had to derive our livelihood... until he died. There is no pen with which one can describe our need and deprivation in that time. And from that time on, when I began to imbibe the galling cup of deprivation and tribulation to my fill, it has not ceased until this day; it is only intermittently that God eases my burden, and benefits me with a new insight in Torah and wisdom...

Until I was 6 years old, I studied with my father, [learning] the alphabet, *Tanakh*, *Mishnah*, and *Gemara*. Studying the alphabet, so as to recognize the letters and vowels, and to be able to read words took me one week to learn. It penetrated my bones like a good oil.

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[188] The text gives an erroneous translation as 1718.

From 6 to 15 I studied Talmud and *Pesukim* with the *Dayanim* of the city, one of whom was called 'Rabbi Meir *Harif*[189]....'

After the age of fifteen, I ceased studying with others. I began to drink from the waters of my own brook. I left the path of casuistry and hairsplitting. I exerted myself to understand every issue in a straightforward and simple manner, getting to the root of the matter.

For a half year, I pursued this path, and the path of **logic** became clear to me, even though I had never heard that word used with my own ears. I went of on the road to free research, exerted myself to understand everything in terms of simple linear thought, and praise be to God that he helped me find such truths through this method of investigation, which had previously been unknown to me.

In Opatów there was nothing of the philosophical works of our scholars, apart from the commentaries of the *Ralbag*[190] on the *Tanakh*.... Indeed, I studied those with relish...until the time when God selected for me as a wife, the daughter of the beloved sage, Out Teacher, Rabbi **Joseph Maimon**[191] of **Szczebrzeszyn**, and I found the book, '**Moreh Nevukhim**,' by the *Rambam* in his possession. Like a starving man, who rushes to eat, that is the way I began to absorb this profound book, until I fully assimilated it into the innermost reaches of my heart. Later on, books came to my hand such as '**Belief and Thought**' by R. Saadia *Gaon*; the '**Sefer HaKuzari**' by Yehuda HaLevi; '**Sefer Ekrim**,' by R. Joseph Albo, and the '**Sefer Milkhamot Adonai**,' by the *Ralbag*. I began to study them and with all my might I exerted myself to access and understand their words.

After this, I learned German very well, and began to look into the studies of the German philosophers, and my heart became strongly bound up with the study of philosophy. I also did not hold my hand back from poetry, and at various opportunity, wrote poems in Hebrew and Aramaic, with very lofty forms of expression and lofty ideas – true, without the disciplines of rhythm and rhyme, as was the style of all poetic creations in our holy tongue; I also wrote a whole set of fables...

I began to carry on a correspondence with the leading figures of the generation from Szczebrzeszyn: Rapaport, Geiger, Just, Rgeiv, Luzzato, Frist, Khayot, Steinheim.... Gorodny...Kirchheim, Zachs, Goldberg...Wiezner, and others...
In Opatów, my activity consisted of only talk and feelings from the heart, but not in writing, I had not written a single word in a book. Coming to Szczebrzeszyn, I began to hold a pen i my hand, and really began to write. There, I really put myself into the explanation of our holy tongue. And the first portion of my commentaries on this language I assembled in te folio that was titled, 'Igeret Tosiah Umezima.' I hope that God will help me to have it published in the open and the reader will be able to see that also my initial labors in Hebrew commentary was not minor.

My intellectual guideposts are:

1) I always strive to be original in every thing; I exert myself not to copy or imitate. I enjoy reading works by writers that are original (by using the Hebrew root-word '*makor*,' he encompasses the word **urgeister**, **originalen**. – Ed). And also creators of new directions. This has brought me to write an essay by the name, 'Teudat Yisrael,' which is meant

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189 This appears to refer to Rabbi Meir APTA (1760-1831) of Opatów, the author of *Ohev Yisrael*, and a leading Hasidic figure of the times.

190 *Levi ben Gershon* (1288—1344), also called *Gersonides*. Jewish philosopher, astronomer, and mathematician, called also Ralba"g, from the initials of his Hebrew name, b. Languedoc. He wrote scientific works and commentaries on Averroës and the Torah. His *Milkhamot Adonai* [the wars of the Lord] is an elaborate treatise modeled after the *Moreh Nevukhim* of Maimonides. It is mainly a systematic criticism of the syncretism of Maimonides. His scientific views remained influential into the 19th cent.

191 This spelling follows the transliteration of the *Rambam's* father. In time, this became transmuted into the Polish Majman, and hence the American equivalent: Maiman.

to clarify the support of the people of Israel. This work has to be original, both from an intellectual and from a substantive sense.

2) Out of a sense of distaste, I do not tolerate duplicity and hypocrisy. (By way of explanation, he uses the words, **verheimlichung, verstellung, sich anders stellen als man denkt**. – Ed.). [One should] Not say one thing, and think otherwise; not to conceal enmity with so-called friendliness; not flattering the 'powers that be;' benefitting from hypocrites. That is why I tend to form friendships with the young rather than the old, because the hearts of the young are still free of falseness, not yet spoiled, and not yet ensnared in the net of those who corrupt.

3) I love being alone, where there is not a living soul. It is very seldom that the demand is made for me to be in the presence of friends, and a gathering of good brethren.

4) My love for **mankind** is stronger than death... I do better to draw close to a small, insignificant, but decent person, rather than to the rich and powerful, and those who, so to speak, are sensible. I detest people who earn the hatred of others, especially those who on the outside show themselves to be friends, but inside, is a stranger and an enemy...

5) I love everything rooted in basics, understanding thing from the ground up.

6) I love research of medieval things and criticism; for me this is literally a game, when I literally exhaust myself in studying very lofty issues.

And these are the books that I have already written:

1) '**Tavnit HaBayit**' (Volkova 5604 [1844]); It contains questions and answers regarding issues in the Talmud. It is part of my large treatise, '**Beit Yaakov**.'

2) '**Pshar Davar**' (Warsaw 5619 [1859]); Contains interpretations of 22 Agadot [Historical Parables] using the critical approach.

3) '**Toledot Rabbeinu Zerakhia Baal Maor**' (Prague 5613 [1853]); This book has been used by the leading German educators, such as Graetz, Neiger and their like.

4) '**Kol Mevaser**' (Prague 5609 [181849]); An announcement about the objective of my large treatise, '**Hilkhot Gedolot**.'

5) '**Khut HaMeshulash**' (Prague 5619 [1859]); Consists of 3 different issues: A) About the knowledge of the Talmudists and writers of commentaries in foreign languages; B) The history of Jewish fables; C) Remarks about the book, 'Sefer Peninim;' There is a letter at the end of my book 'Mishloakh Manot' about this book, which was written to me by Professor Franz Delitch;

6) '**Arba'ah Kharashim**' (Prague, 5620 [1820]); Deals with the four books A) Ben Sira; B) Sefer Hassidim; C) Sefer HaTefilah; D) Shealtot LeR' Akhai Gaon;

7) '**Mishloakh Manot**' (Prague 5620 [1820]); Contains two scientific gifts that I sent on Purim, one in the year 5619 and the second in the year 5620 to the great man, who is well-known in all corners of the world, Our Teacher, **R' Abraham Albert Cohen**, ל"ו in Paris. Regarding the second gift, the commentary, 'Ner Shabbat,' my friend the wise and great Rabbi, **Raphael Kirchheim** wrote the following words to me: In order to ease your soul, let me let you know that your commentary, 'Ner Shabbat,' was quoted and repeatedly re-read this week through the mouth of the great and wise Rabbi **Abraham Geiger**, in the sermon that he gave in the evening all week in the Great House, which is filled to overflowing with men and women, **Christians** and Jews, who come to hear lectures about Jewish Law and about the various Jewish sects. That is what he wrote.

8) '**Moadei Erev**' (Vilna, 5628 [1868]); A collection of a variety of research subjects, that I lectured on during my Sabbath-to-Sabbath discussions before the elected youth of the young people of **Zamość**.

9) '**Teudat Yisrael**' (Berlin, 5628 [1868]); Previously mentioned;

10) '**Kan Tzippor**' (Berlin, 5630 [1830]); A parable written in the style of Aesop... It is a high-minded poem. At the end there is a letter about this poem from the leaders of the Hevra, 'Kol Yisrael Haverim,' and the great scholar Dr. Kohut, the author of 'HeArukh HaShalem,' translated the introduction of the poem into German and had it printed in a German periodical, which appears in Brealau and received considerable praise there;

11) The first chapter of the 11 that appear in my book, '**Imrot Yaakov**,' (Eitkhunen, 5633 [1873]). This chapter is titles, 'What's your problem, sleeper'; It awakens and refreshes a person from his nap to work for knowledge, and it is written in a very fine style;

12) '**Sdei Aram**' (Berlin, 5635 (1875]), which is comprised of a series of studies regarding *Targum Onkelos* [sic: The Aramaic translation of the Pentateuch].

13) **'Or Boker'** (Berlin, 5637 [1877]), which illuminates the method of critique in three chapters, and is full of new things like a pomegranate.

14) '**Minkhat Zikaron**' (Breslau, 5641 [1881]); Printed as a presentation by the learned Rabbi Dr. Marcus Greenwald, it contains new interpretations of hundreds of lectures about our Holy Writ, in the style of 'Derekh Ketzarah' [sic: the short way] containing the 32 precepts of Rabi Eliezer ben R' Yosi HaGlilli.

15) '**Khovat HaAv LiVno**' (St. Petersburg, 5642 [1882]), which takes up the six obligations that a father has to his son, about their roots and their offshoots, and also how they are discharged. I created this for one of my students at the time that he had a firstborn son.

Apart from these 15 books, essays by me can be found, and entire books, spread out in a variety of periodicals, in Hebrew and in German. 'Zion,' (which appeared through Jost, in Kreizenach), 'Orient,' the 'Monthly Periodical' of Frenkel; 'Jeshurun,' 'HaMaggid,' 'HaCarmel,' HaMelitz,' 'Kevutzat Khakhamim,' 'HaMevaser,' 'Kokhvei Yitzhak,' 'Bkhorim,' 'HaKokhavim,' 'HaLevanon,' 'HaTzefira.' Also, these dispersed book [material] had been met with satisfaction in the eyes of all educated people... both from Jews and non-Jews alike, who understand the language and Hebrew literature. Take a look, for example in the foreword of the learned Christian publication, '**Drieber**,' in its last presentation on an interpretation of the Book of Proverbs, which is written to the Rabbi, Abraham Ibn Ezra, which he had created in handwriting. And my friend, the Rabbi Gaon Nathan Adler, the Bet-Din Senior of Londin and the countries, wrote to me in his letter of the eve of the New Year of 5642 (1882) as follows: my son, the Rabbi, send you his regards, and he said to me, that he met a great scholar from the ranks of the Christian scholars in Göttingen, who spoke well of you and your books, the creations of your wisdom and erudition. I still possess a large number of useful books and if God will stand at my right hand, I hope to publish them for all to see.

In the bibliography, I have uncovered many new things that had not been known to me, and of these, I will mention (as a way of setting them doown) that the interpretation of the Book of Proverbs, which is written to the רב"א [Acronym for Ibn Ezra] is not his, but written by Rabbi Moshe Kamhi, the brother of the רד"ק....Look in '*Literaturblatt dem Orient*,' 1841, No 48.

In the year 5641 (1881) the nobleman and righteous individual, Our Teacher R' Moses Montefiore, of blessed memory, honored me with an expensive gift as follows: a large pure silver goblet, with a personally written letter from him, which says the following:

With God's help, Ramsgate, Monday, Parshat Khayei-Sarah, 5641 (1881) full of blessings....Yaakov Reifman...Szczebrzeszyn.

Please acept this silver goblet as a gift of eternal memory, that should bear witness of my desire for his marvelous books. I have placed them in Ohel Moshe V'Yehudis, in order that they may illuminate the eyes of those who come to slake the thirst for Torah and wisdom. May God bless you and give you strength and peace. And when you raise this goblet with wine to make *Kiddush* – on the Sabbath and the festivals – may you bring to mind for good, your loyal supporter, who prays for the good of his people,

Moses Montefiore

In my entire life, my mouth did not fill with laughter as much as it did on that day, when the present from this previously mentioned nobleman came to me, and then, when a boon came to me from my friend, the great erudite Teacher, Rabbi Abraham-Chaim Wagna, of Amsterdam, a full box of precious books, whose value was greater than diamonds. Only these two days were happy days in my life on this earth. All the other days were [days of] sadness, and heartache, each in its measure...

In place of garnering riches and world recognition, God blessed me with a son full of beauty, a man of great erudition in Talmud and commentators, the Original Scholars [*Rishonim*] and Latter-day Scholars [*Akharonim*]... he is today a teacher-director in **Lublin** and is renown in his knowledge and piety. His name is **Nathan**. Apart from him I have nobody, not a son or a daughter, just he alone represents my attainment in this world, only in him do I see my happiness. The remainder of my life's history, their course will be described in a separate folio. Here and now, I do not have the possibility to enumerate them, both because of considerable work I have, and the current tumult and disorder in my home. However, in order to respond to the requests of my brethren-friends and to be responsive to their demand, I want to inform you about a portion of the titles of many books that are still not available, and are yet to be published:

A) '**Levana Zakah**.' This book will clarify and explain two previous books, both having the name, '**Erukh**.' These are: 1) 'Erukh' on the words of the Torah, which was written to R' Netanel ben R' Yekhiel the Italian, and 2) 'Erukh' on the words of the Torah, by Rabbi Shlomo Pirkhon, the Sephardi.The place in the sentences will be identified ( in the first 'Erukh' there are sentences which are not well-known by most) and the commentaries of the Raza"l, which are cited there; lists will also be given of the names of the sages and the books and other important issues, with the required remarks...

B) '**HeAruga HaShniya**' (the second 'weaving') of the book, 'Sdeh Aram,' and this is the content: there are a variety of studies there about the *Targum* of the Prophets, which are written to Jonathan ben Uzziel. This is arranged in five chapters: 1) Who created it (The *Targum*). Here we give a precise clarification, that the *Targum* that we have of the Prophets, is the work of Rabbi Joseph the Amorite, and the Jerusalem *Targum* of the Prophets, which is presented in many of the earlier books, is by Rabbi Jonathan ben Uzziel. Also, all of the remarks of the Haza"l are clarified, that refer to this. 2) The way in which it was written by those who wrote it (The Targum), and it is full of new things, like a pomegranate; 3) The objective of the Targum; about the translation (of Targum)...of our Talmud authorities and Scholarly authorities as well as that of the Gaonim, Rabbis, *Medakdekim*...4) A lengthy essay about the methods of Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra in making use of this Targum; 5) Sh"as (360) observations about the *Targum*.

C) '**Dvar Esther**,' Consists of remarks and clarifications of both translations of the Book of Esther and compiles poems about the book from the alphabet and Tashra"k, that are known. This is a precious discovery, which heretofore had been hidden for the sight of men...

D) '**Baal Brit Abraham**,' consists of remarks, clarifications and emendations to the commentaries of R' Abraham Ibn Ezra....

E) '**Shemen LaMaor**,' Sheds a bright light on the entire commentary on the Mishnah by Maimonides, which is called, Maor....

F) '**Prozdor**,' collects a variety of research about all of the philosophical books of our Sages; the first volume of the book, 'Milat Higayon,' which is added to the works of Maimonides, has already appeared in the periodical 'Otzar Tov.'

G) '**Khayker Mitzva**,' is concerned with the study of the mitzvahs involving God, reasons out their limits, gives the content and basis.... it is a large and broad book, which is not yet entirely completed....

Apart from all of these publications, I have other books about Talmud and philosophy, but I currently lack the patience and energy and I cannot write down their names and subject matter.

* *
*

Up to this point, the biographical details are supplied by Reifman himself. The editor of 'HaMelitz,' **Shaul Pinchas Rabinovich** (שפ"ר), supplements them by writing:

This then, is the story of the wondrous scholar, Toledot Yaakov, the simple man, who sits in the shadow of the Torah, from his youngest years to his deepest old age. From his mouth, one does not hear his struggle for a livelihood, and his poverty of satisfaction, only the spiritual interests of a Jew; he occupies himself with his feelings and thoughts. For sixty years, he has lived in an outlying little town, far from the wider, larger world, and in the quiet, he toiled in and searched through the esoterica in the spiritual archives of our people...

The editor makes an appeal that everything should be done to relieve this old man and scholar of his worries, that he should be helped in his old age, and given the capacity to be able to publish his important books.
He ends this appeal with an excerpt from the Hebrew Poet Y. L. Gordon:

Wherever I choose to turn, I see your spirit
Who searches in the room of the Torah, with a sputtering candle,

. . . .

But I have not forgotten you, brother, and who could possibly forget you?
How many Yaakov Reifmans are to be found in the marketplace?!

# A Letter of Recommendation from Yaakov Reifman

*Page 447:* *Picture of Yehuda Brandwein*
*Page 448:* *Text of the Recommendation Letter in Yaakov Reifman's Handwriting*

Here, we bring yet another interesting document of that period: a letter of recommendation which Yaakov Reifman wrote. We received this letter from the scion of our city, Joseph Brandwein; he found it in the legacy he received from his father, Yehuda Brandwein, to whom Reifman actually gave this 'certificate.'

**Yehuda Brandwein**, born in Zamość, is – according to what his son said – was very close to I. L. Peretz, and when Peretz practiced as a lawyer, he worked for him, helping him to copy specific documents in a calligraphic manner – because he had a clean and pure penmanship.

This letter was given by Reifman in the year 5653 (1893) (two years before his death in 1895). Yehuda Brandwein, had by that time, planned to move to **Argentina**. Part of his friends, had already emigrated to that land already, which became famous as a place for Jewish residents, thanks to Baron Hirsch's colonization projects. However, the trip did not materialize.

Yehuda Brandwein first left Zamość for Germany in 1908; First, he lived in Weimar (Mecklenburg) and later in Greisfeld (Pomerania), where he died in the year 1923.

In the year 1936, when Joseph Brandwein had already left Germany, then already under Nazi rule, he found this recommendation letter from Yaakov Reifman among other documents. He donated this document to YIVO in Argentina.

The introduction of the document is a recommendation for Yehuda Brandwein from Zamość, in the Lublin Province, who up to two years prior, had still been wealthy, having money, and belonging to the town elite, and who suffered a sudden tragedy, and he lost his entire fortune and livelihood. He can write Hebrew, Polish, Russian, and keep a set of [accounting] books. He, Reifman, therefore requests that Jews all over should help him, taking him into their businesses, because he is a special person, valuable and honest...

Under this recommendation letter, there is yet another lengthy circular stamp where in the top half are the words: '**Titayn Emet LeYaakov**;'[192] In the first part, **Szczebrzeszyn** in the bottom part, and in the middle: Yaakov Reifman. It is interesting that when he signed himself, he would use a double 'nun' while the stamp has a single 'nun.'

[192] Hebrew, for: 'And you shall give the truth to Yaakov.'

# Zamość, The City of I. L. Peretz

It would be impossible to omit **our** I. L. Peretz from our *Pinkas*

Zamość and I. L. Peretz are tied and bound to each other.

And so, we confronted a difficult mission: how are we to do this? The Peretz literature is enormous. From only the books *about* Peretz, it is possible to create a large library. And our *Pinkas*, after all is said and done, is not a Peretz book.

And Peretz m u s t perforce be included in the book that is a monument to the community of Zamość , for its centuries where the Jewish community lived, created, struggled, constructed and built, and...and where it was so tragically and bloodily annihilated by Nazi bestiality.

We attempted to search for a synthesis – including the very essential facts which, whether regarding Peretz, or Zamość, needed to be preserved by us for eternity.

For this reason, in this section, we include the work of Dr. Y. Shatzky about the interweaving 'Peretz-Zamość; we bring a selection of chapters from Peretz's memoirs, where, again, Peretz and Zamość are interwoven. Opportunistic articles about Peretz from leaders of various sectors in Jewish life – **Our** Peretz is, after all, **everyone's** Peretz.

The Bio-bibliographical material complete the picture.

We believe that this was the way, in order to provide the prominent reflection, and that it should remain for all of eternity, the blessed union: **Peretz** and **Zamość**.

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**I go with my people, from the reflection off of its standard, my soul burns in the call of her service: Jews from all lands and nations, unite yourselves....the way is long and dangerous... hold yourselves together!**

**I. L. Peretz**

**... not to be stoned anywhere, not to be mortified anywhere, in no place to tear open the thread, but rather to keep spinning further and further. And if that thread was abandoned anywhere, go back, take it up again, and spin it, always further and further, spin it, for eternity, in the generations, spin it and weave and overall encompass the world with a net of light!**

**I. L. Peretz**

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# Zamość and Peretz

**By Dr. Yaakov Shatzky**

*Page 456 (Left):* *The Water-Carrier, "Khatzkel Botchan," a famous type in Zamość*
*Page 456 (Right):* *"Shayndeleh the Rhyme Reciter," whom Dr. Shatzky mentions in his article*

*Page 457:* *A former Franciscan church, which was later rebuilt as a cinema theater "Stilov," where the local Jews drama groups would often perform, as well as Yiddish theater troupes. Here, most of the talks and debates of guest lecturers occurred.*

*Page 458 (Top):* *The left side of the former bastion of the wrecked fortress. Lastly the runoff from the canalization. Known among the Jewish populace as "Near the Kozatsky River*
*Page 458 (Bottom):* *The new Lublin Gate "Brom"*

The following chapter is a fragment from a larger work, 'Peretz Studies,' which was published in the YIVO -Pages (Peretz-Book), writings of the Yiddish Scientific Institute, volume 27, Number 1, Fall 1946. We include the entire fragment, even thought there are minor repetitions in it of prior material from Dr. Shatzky in our Pinkas.....Ed.

We desire to establish in Peretz's work, those elements that reflect the theme that Peretz and Zamość are intimately tied up with memories of Zamość. We wish to demonstrate – in the history of a city and its vicinity, with its uprisings and conflicts, had an influence on Peretz's personality. In both instances, this is an important, thankful and difficult theme.

In order to elicit the essential facts, it is necessary first to understand the history of the city of Zamość in general, and about its Jewish community in particular.

The city of Zamość is (as we have covered in greater detail before – Ed.) was created as a work of caprice by a nobleman. At the end of the 16th century the Chancellor, Jan Zamoyski, a graduate of Padua, decided to open a university, because at the university of Krakow too much theology was taught, and not enough science. It was in this fashion that the city of Zamość came into being, a Polish architectural copy of the Italian city of Padua, and at the university in Zamość, for the first time in the history of Poland, Anatomy was studied there in accordance with scientific methods and for this purpose, Zamoyski imported first class scholars. A city began to rise around this university. A contingent of national groups received special privileges from the founder of the city which protected their economic rights. It was because of this that Armenians settled in Zamość, Greeks, Scots and Jews. The Jews, who settled in Zamość on the strength of an unusually liberal privilege which Zamoyski gave them in the year 1588, were Sephardic Jews. This fact alone, makes the history of the Jews in Zamość interesting already.

The Sephardic Jews did not sustain themselves in Zamość for long. Yet they left behind so much tradition, that not only one family in Zamość, according to Peretz's findings, held themselves to be descendants of Sephardim. How true this is, cannot, regrettably be established with certainty. The older Synagogue, which, incidentally, Peretz recalls in his memoirs, dates from 1595, and was an Ashkenazic synagogue. How and when the Ashkenazic Jews came to settle in Zamość is not known. In the long list of the Rabbis of Zamość, one does not find a single Sephardic name, which indicates, that the Sephardic Jews of the city did not consolidate themselves as a [distinct] community.

Zamość attracted many visitors who could not praise the renaissance beauty of the houses and the women enough. Even an expert like Casanova wrote about the Zamość women.[193]

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193 Given the unusual citation, it is worth noting that Dr. Shatzky provides a reference for this statement: Casanova, Denkwürdigkeiten, Hamburg S. A. X, 135, 59.

The Jewish history of Zamość is replete with tragic episodes, perhaps a little too much for such a small community. It would seem that the geographical condition of the city was the cause of the long chain of catastrophes, a number of which found a echo in Peretz's work. Blood libel; public hangings of Jews for stealing; various plagues; kidnaping Jewish daughters by university students and forcibly converting them to Christianity the decrees of 1648 which played themselves out tragically in Zamość, a fortress that had to withstand the siege of Chmielnicki's armies — all of this placed the city at the Eastern Wall of Polish-Jewish martyrdom. The legends of heroism and the tragic murder of helpless Jewish individuals in Zamość wove themselves into the historical memory of the Jewish community and lived their for a long time.

After this came the second era, and era of cultural and economic development, which gave Zamość and new face. This was in the time that Zamość became an Austrian city, as a part of Galicia, in the years 1772-1809. In that period, the Enlightenment blossoms forth in Zamość. The city survives a deep, spiritual revolution. The contact with the outside world let in a new spirit into the ossified city, which had been living on the remnants of its former greatness. The struggles between the *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim*, *Maskilim* and their opponents were much more pointed and sharp in Zamość than in other cities, from the outset. On finds out a lot about this from books that were written as commentaries during that period, and from the anecdotes of itinerant preachers and lecturers. The approximate significant number of Jewish physicians, almost all of whom were adherents of the Enlightenment, created the new spiritual [sic: intellectual] order in Jewish life, a weighty position in Zamość. The thrust to obtain a secular education first manifests itself in the study of medicine. Jews from Zamość are found on the medical faculties of Padua, Frankfurt-Oder, Lemberg, and even Montpelier. Part of them later returned home, even if the life of a Jewish doctor was very hard, as shown by the tragic end of Moshe the Physician.[194]

On the second side, the mystic-religious streams were also very strong in Zamość. It is sufficient to indicate, that the famous Kabbalist R' Joel Baal-Shem was from Zamość; from all that we can see, he was born there. Also the Maggid of Dubno, R' Yaakov Krantz found his final resting place in the Zamość cemetery (he died in the year 1807).

Peretz was touched by both movements. Many prominent Enlightened writers and authors used to visit Zamość and would gather subscribers for their works. Part of these Enlightened writers lived in Zamość for a period. For a city that had a population of 1531 Christians and 2475 Jews in the year 1856 – that is to say, not a large population by any means – the number of subscribers that one finds for the books of the Maskilim, was by any estimate a large one. In the years 1810-1860, it is difficult to find a Hebrew book without subscribers from Zamość. A full list of their names, the number of subscribers as examples (there are instances where an individual had even a full 100 subscribers), and the recording of the social position of the Enlightened subscriber could serve as an important source book for the Jewish cultural history of Zamość.

Gotlober, for example visited Zamość in 1835. He obtained subscribers for his P i r k h e i H e A v i v which appeared in 1837, and in the little volume there is even a greeting-poem written in his honor by Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. Feivusz Szyfer spend many years in Zamość and received support from the Maskilim there. Aryeh-Leib Kinderfreund, himself born in Zamość (died in 1837) had the full support of his townsfolk for his S h i r i m S h o n i m (Lemberg 1834). In the little known biography of Yaakov Eichenbaum, who was a Zamość son-in-law, and written by his grandson, the Russian critic, there is substantive material for the struggle between the Haskala and its opponents in Zamość and its vicinity.

One finds important details about Jewish life in Zamość in memoirs written at that time, and in correspondence. It is sufficient to indicate the letters of Renan's sister who was a governess in the home of the Zamoyskis in the years 1844-1846 and a variety of correspondence in the German-Yiddish press.

In those years, Zamość was an important city for culture. According to the writings of a German geographer, published in 1839, the city had a permanent theater, a gymnasium with a large library, a printing press, and two hospitals, a Catholic one and a Jewish one. The Jewish hospital, which was founded in 1800 by R' Hirsch Schiff, was first legalized

[194] Author's Footnote: He is the progenitor of the later-converted Polish family, Artzt.

in 1843. In Peretz's time, it had the reputation of being a well-run institution with 26 beds, and even its own pharmacy.

Jewish life concentrated itself about the Talmud Torahs, Yeshivas and *Hevras*. Part of these *Hevras* were very ancient, and played an important role in Jewish community life. The leading citizens of the city belonged to the Hevra Kadisha, which was founded in the year 1688.[195] The 'Bikkur Kholim' Society was literally a club of the finest *balebatim* of the city. It suffices to indicate that in Peretz's time, such important families as: Kinderfreund (one of them was a physician), Luxembourg (Rosa Luxembourg's grandfather), Korngold, R' Joseph Tzireles, the father of Alexander Zederbaum, and many others, were active in the 'Bikkur Kholim' Society. It is worth mentioning Yeshayahu Margolis from among the closest of Peretz's relatives in his family, who in 1861 was the presiding officer in charge of the Jewish Hospital, and Shmuel Levin, a relative of Peretz. The Peretz family not only played a role in the community life of the city, but also in its cultural life. Meir Peretz, for example, the writer's uncle, figures frequently as a subscriber to the books of the Maskilim.

The sources tell us of rather incidental things about the literary traditions of the Zamość Jews. It is enough to indicate that the first Polish Jew who wrote German poetry and was privileged to be critically reviewed by literati, was from Zamość, later known as Dr. Ber Falkensohn. We have already mentioned the support of Haskala books by Zamość Jews. So, for example, when it was planned to publish Shimon Levinson's K o r e h H a D o r o t , Shlomo HaCohen wrote a letter to Alexander Zederbaum and asked of him that subscriptions should be gathered in Zamość. We must also not forget the effect that Yaakov Reifman had on the scholarly enlightened circles of Zamość, where he lived in 1862. A group of *Maskilim* concentrated themselves about him, such as Shammai Kaplan, the Bloch brothers, Herschel Finkelstein, Dr. Pinchas Rosenthal, David Steinfeld, Mordechai Engielsberg, and Ephraim Fiszelson (the author of T h e a t e r o f H a s i d i m ). The role played by Dr. Shlomo Ettinger is well-known. His name figures quite often in the lists of subscribers.

In light of Peretz's memoirs, which deal only with the first twenty years of his life, one would first have to establish the character and personalities of the vicinity near the author. The polished descriptions about people and events, that are found in Peretz's memoirs, permit one to expand, get involved and imagine, at the time one confronts these details, [in contrast] with other sources, especially memoirs. Peretz wrote his memoirs in such a condensed form and with such a romantic sympathy, that he did not mention many details, because he did not consider them to be important. Is it not interesting to know that Zamość had a renown female reciter of rhymes? She was called *Shayndeleh*, and was born almost at the same time as was Peretz, 1851. She was still alive in 1931. Unfortunately, except for her picture (found in a YIVO archive), nothing remains, and her verses are unknown.

It is worth knowing more about the intellectual influences on Peretz. For example, Peretz recalls in his memoirs, the Jewish religion teacher in the local Pro-Gymnasia. He gives his name as the initials Sh. K.. This was **Shimon Khodak**, who died in Warsaw, where he was a Yiddish censor. This Khodak had a great influence on Peretz's spiritual development. He had a substantial Judaica library which in 1910 was transferred to the authority of the Synagogue-library in Warsaw. Peretz, together with Khodak, were active in the area of education in Zamość. They gave courses about Jewish history and natural science, especially for the youth that was unable to attend a school. Much is told of both of their activity in the correspondence of the times. This activity left deep traces behind it. A short ten years after Peretz settled in Warsaw, a Zamość resident, a certain Lederer, recalls that activity in a letter to the newspaper, *Israelita*:

> 'For the last quarter century, Zamość produced, apart from the famous Yiddish author Mr. Peretz, many educated people, who are active in many professions. Among them are qualified physicians, engineers, technicians, lawyers and just plain ordinary intelligent young people, among whom are even found daughters from Hasidic homes.'

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[195] The text shows 1868, which is surely a misprint of switched digits, based on the prior information presented.

The writer recalls Peretz's activity in education in Zamość, and bemoans the fact that there is no one to continue his work. In passing, it is worth mentioning that the single secular school for Jewish children that Zamość had, was the private school of Mrs. Altberg.

Peretz had an intimate acquaintance with the circles that played a role in the Polish revolution of 1863. In his memoirs, for example, he mentions a certain Y. M. who excelled in the revolution as a leader. Why he didn't give the full name of this Zamość patriot, is incomprehensible. Sources of the time confirm that Peretz was very well informed about this. This Y. M. was Joseph Morgenstern, whose name is mentioned in sources from Polish participants in the revolution.

Already after Peretz had settled in Warsaw, he still had very extensive contact with his home town. There is much about this in the press publications of the times, and in the little known brochure, H e s p e d which was published about Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter.

In light of these examples, it is possible to see how important it is to systematically and accurately research and uncover the historical underpinnings of Zamość in general, and about the Jewish past in this city, in particular. It is only first later that one can approach deciphering Peretz's memoirs on the basis of other sources and to do an analysis of Jewish community life in the second half of the 19th century. It is through them that Peretz's satirical poems will become clear, those fruits of Peretz the writer, whose themes are rooted in the Zamość environs. Material relative to this theme is plentifully available. No added archival material is needed, even though such material would be of great value, were such material ever to be found. To this time, we cannot hope for this. The printed matter, the memoirs, press, and above all, the lists of the subscribers with the names of the *Maskilim* from Zamość – these are at hand, and they can be relied upon for clarification purposes.

# Childhood and Teachers[196]

**By I. L. Peretz**

I was, as it is said, an unusually gifted child. I had a swift logical mind and – highly emotional.

How does this tie together? It doesn't tie at all. These traits are not miscible.

...a process of two elements (a logical mind and a heart full of feeling) – and one who 'in spite of yourself, you will live.'

In 'Monish,[197]' just between us, I wanted to copy myself. I wanted to make myself more beautiful. I was lean, dark, and had exceptionally burning eyes (sparks would remain), that were large. I was the proverbial, 'whatever lands in his sack, the *Rambam* will be his burden,' but also 'in addition, a Torah Reader,' was added to the verse. I never was a Torah Reader, not even 'reviewing the portion of the week.' The essence with us was **learning**.....

I sang no 'Maria' out of the wreckage. The Marias will come later. Not everybody...as said: I will not give an accounting. They didn't penetrate me, not in my writing...the others, as much as possible. But we are not there yet. This chapter is called Childhood...

As a young child, I remember the following: 1) I was among boys and girls in a yard, 2) On the floor of a *Heder*, the melamed was named Chaim Kelbel. I see a diminutive Jew before me, short, a little beard, small eyes, and a small hat. And 3) Under the arm of the belfer. There is a terrible snowstorm, and he is carrying me to *Heder*....

At the age of three – began (along with all my friends) the study of the Pentateuch. Studied 'Leviticus.' I used to say, 'Vayitra,' not being able to articulate the sound of 'k;' Also not 'g.' For years, I was teased as '*Dad Dood YeDoodenu* (in place of *Gad, Gedud Yegudenu*)....

On the Sabbath, after the repast, these was a festive time at the home of my grandfather. During the meal, my grandfather would take me (a little Jewish man, with a trembling head, as I became in my old age[198]), sits me down on the table, in the middle. My mother interposes herself, and quickly snatches away a fork from under me. The entire family is sitting around the table: a son, two daughters, two sons-in-law, and a widow, (after whom I had fashioned the '*Skiller Rebbetzin*,' without much exaggeration), apart from my grandfather and grandmother. I do not know why they sat me down in this manner. I like it. There is a vase on the table, so I try to see if I can get my hands around it, but my grandmother takes the vase and asks me whether later, I would like to give an exposition on the Torah.

Tenen! (Kennen[199]) – I answer, and I want to get down from the table already; I can't sit in one place for too long, so my uncle, in a black hat, who was at that time already something of a Maskil, restrains me, – the very one who later would become an expert on my childhood poems, and would collect them and squirrel them away, and he asks:

– And can you expound on '*Vayitra*?' (He says, mimicking me).
I do not understand what 'expound' means, so I ask:
– What does that mean?
– How does one explain *Vayikra*?
So I thought he was making sport of me.
– '*Vayitra*' – I answer testily – is not the way it is written. '*Vayitra*' is a sentence in a portion of the Holy Torah.

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196 From the eighteenth volume of "My Memories in Letter form," by I. L. Peretz. All works Verlag "Yiddish" Buenos Aires 1944.

197 The title of one of his works, which he began writing in 1887.

198 A possible symptom of Parkinson's Disease.

199 "I can"

They barely understood me, as to what I meant, and suddenly, I see the portion swimming before my eyes, a word, and then another word, and I call out one letter after the next, without prompting.

My mother's eyes dampen (disbelieving how I saw everything), something began to glisten in her eyes, and she gets up and goes to a corner near the stove, and my grandmother looks at her and smiles: – You are still embarrassed!

My grandfather takes me off the table, to his lap and gives me a pinch on the cheek. But I don't sit for very long, – I had bony legs, so it was not comfortable for me – and I go over to my father, who gives me a kiss.

I don't know any more about my grandfather, nor do I remember anything else about him. I know he was called Shlomo. He was, at one time, a Danzig merchant. It was told, that one time he returned home with his short whip...it was Friday, and he went to the bath, and afterward to the Eve of Sabbath services, as he always did, with no sign of distress. And only first, after the end of the Sabbath, after *Havdalah*, he called together all his creditors, and said: '*Rabbotai*, I have returned without so much as a single groschen, take everything that you want that is in the house!' – Chana'leh, bring everything! – he croaked to my grandmother.

And my grandmother Chana'leh took off her jewelry and put it on the table. She opened the chest with the silver and gold, brought in the valuables from the other building... but nobody touched a thing.

My grandmother had her store, and they lived from the store, paying off the debts one at a time, with interest. And children were married off.

To what extent this story is true, I am not able to attest. That my grandmother was skilled to her task, that I know. I do not recall my grandfather any further, as I do at the side of his table, when I recited. I can see his eyes, small, but light-hearted...

I do not know when and how my grandfather died. I was prevented from weeping at the time, and therefore do not forget, I did hear that he was ill, and the doctor directed him to have a hot bath, and he died in the bath...
I leave my family connections for later, and return to my studies....

At the age of six, I began the study of the *Gemara*. At that time – like everyone else.

I remember the Gemara teacher better.

Also, a diminutive, lean Jew. He was therefore called Berish. He was a stern Jew, but he is unable to hit. When he gets angry, his hands begin to tremble.

– Henneh! – he once called to the *Rebbetzin* – grab the rolling pin and give that ignoramus a crack in the head! Henneh does not stir, sitting next to the oven, flicking feathers, or knitting a sock. If it pertained to me, she says:

– Listen, don't you touch Leibusz... I will tell Riveleh...

Riveleh was my mother. And the Rebbetzin was a buyer of onions and greens...and would bring to us as well, she had a real heavy tread. And she loved my mother and I, especially my mother, whom she loved.

– Ah, a Jewish woman, she would say, who is righteous...stints on herself and the welfare of her home – and gives charity, but some charity! And him, that thief, wants to hit her Leibusz!

– Nu, Nu – the Rabbi growls – tell her what a priceless jewel she has...

And she would say exactly the opposite.

My father (who is no longer alive) also directed that I was not to be hit. I was still a dependent child at the time, living at home, and by nature a liberal, or possibly an anarchist.

And when a call went out that they were conscripting people into military service, and everyone became afraid, the advice was given: don't be afraid. Nobody should answer the call.

– They will beat us!
– One doesn't beat a whole world!
– They will put us in irons!
– There aren't enough chains!
– They'll throw us in prison!
– They will have to turn the whole world into a prison!

He personally slapped me twice in my life.

From my birth on, I hated sweet things. I would not take such into my mouth. 'I want to be considered smart,' they would tease me. My grandmother would bake all manner of goodies: white *lekakh*, honey *lekakh*, tortes, steffnes, frying up jellied conserves... for herself, for her children...for sick people in the Hostel, – all the grandchildren abused the privilege from time to time. One gets, or filches a little bit; I an the only one – and exception. To this day, I don't eat [sweets].

And so my younger brother's *brit milah* comes.

The paupers come for some *lekakh* and a shot of whiskey, and they gather in the middle of the house. On the right – the mother in confinement, and in the house to the left – the more refined guests. Among us there was a attendant, he should forgive me, a 'dog among dogs.' That is how he was described. He was, I see him before my eyes, unusually tall, thin and white, without a drop of blood in his face. He was a widower without sons. He had several wives, but not a single child. When the last [wife] died, he gave up on life, and made himself burial shrouds. At night, it was told, he walks around in his burial shrouds, in the yard... scaring people. He hated poor people with a deathly hate. And so, walking out of my mother's house, this rascal carries out a full tray of *lekakh* on his head, for the *balebatim*, through the middle house. And I see how a sick young girl looks at the tray with burning eyes. I was quick, so I jump underneath, grab a piece of *lekakh,* and give it to the pale young girl... My father, – I didn't know this, – was standing at the door of my mother's room. He saw my leap into the air, but what I did with the *lekakh* when I landed – he didn't see. So he goes over and cuffs me on the cheek. The following morning, we are sitting at the table, he castigates me in front of my mother:

– The comedian, supposedly doesn't eat sweet things, and snatches lekakh from the tray!

The servant comes in with the soup – she must have heard this, apparently, behind the door – and retells, what I did with the lekakh. She saw it.

My mother lowered her glasses over her eyes. She always guarded her manner in front of strangers, even for eyes that were in the house. My father paled, and his eyes became moist. And he rises, and goes into the other room. I feel culpable for not explaining immediately, and I want to follow to make up with him, – and cannot. To this day I cannot forgive myself, and can offer solace to no one...
About this another time.

The second time, I was reading, when I was 'boy' already, and not a 'child' – a 'young man' (certainly 14 years old!). But, at the time, I was a 'researcher,' studying 'A Guide to the Perplexed,' (How I came to this, will be told), and went around in lofty worlds, terrified awfully by world-tragic dreams! What is the purpose of humanity? Knowledge of the world and free choice ... where do tribulations come from, sorrow – Early Jewish puberty played a role in this, during my transition to maturity. But, I had a tendency to depression, sought solitude and tore at my soul with talons...

One Friday, I disappeared for an entire day. I do not remember where I went. I came to the *Bet HaMedrash* at the time of the evening prayers to inaugurate the Sabbath, directly from my stroll, in my regular weekday overcoat, my weekday hat, and shoes not shined, with the dirty clay of the city streets stuck to them. My father's face turned red. Nevertheless, he controlled himself in front of the public. But at *Kiddush*, he cannot take his eyes off my crestfallen face, and suddenly lashes out and slaps me on the cheek with a free hand.

– Lovely Sabbaths he makes for me! – and he went out for a while.
My mother cries out:
– And you mean to say that a child doesn't have any heartaches...
That my aches were not childish, had not occurred to her...

He hit me a total of two times.
He would certainly never let a stranger lay a hand on me. From the pale R' Berish and the *Rebbetzin*, who constantly sat by the oven, doing something, monitoring the pupils and listening to their learning.
Above the *Rebbetzin*, on the shelf of the oven, there is always a large, lazy cat...

It happens, however, that the *Rebbetzin* nods off in the middle of knitting a sock, perhaps lulled by the monotonous intoning of the Gemara lesson, and drops the ball of yarn. The cat, which has been stalking it already, jumps down on the ball from the shelf, and begins to play with the ball, as if it were a mouse, and chases it under the bed...
We burst out in laughter... the Rebbetzin wakes up with a start. The Rebbe gets angry...
For this sort of an outburst of laughter (I would laugh the loudest) he wanted to seriously beat me. But precisely at this moment, my father walked in... the scene changes instantly.

–Ah, Reb Yudel, how are you Reb Yudel? Sit down, Reb Yudel....
The *Rebbetzin* asks: How is Riveleh. And my father approaches me and asks:
– Leibeleh, why are you perspiring?
– What do you mean? – the Rebbe intercepts the question, out of fear that I should not tattle: –How do you say, the Holy Torah, blessed by God, warms us,...and it is a summer day...

My father comes up with a liberal notion and says to the Rebbe:
– You know what, Reb Berish. Let the children outside for an hour!
It was like a thunderbolt had struck R' Berish...
His eyes bulge out, and he begins to stammer:
–What are you talking about? What do you mean? They should play in the clay?
A new road was being paved, and clay had been piled up in front of the house.
–Why not? – my Father replies back to him.

R' Berish does not concede:
–Well, in connection with Leibusz.... if he wants to...
Me, also! Me, also! – my second cousin Yekhezkiel chimes in...
– **I** am responsible for Reb Mordechai's [child]! – my father responds. Yekhezkiel's father was called Mordechai.
And that's what happened. The two of us obtained permission and go out in front of the door on a daily basis, to the mound, to the clay, and played, climbing about (obtained an artillery shell from somewhere ), dug holes, and built a fortress.

And this work was useful to us later, in order to do a good deed. A short time afterwards, the Zamość fortress was taken down. The fortifications were dismantled, and workers were hired to dismantle the rubble and put it into barrels. It was paid for from the financial reserves. As a result, a number of Jews signed on to do this work. Old, broken Jews, who couldn't do much else. This was close to the Heder, and during our free hour, we would run up the pile and help the old folks.

What I ever learned from this R' Berish, I do not remember...

After two time periods [sic: semesters], my second cousin Yekhezkiel and I transferred to Mikhl the Melamed. He also didn't hit.

'Yellow Mekhl' was a peculiar sort of Jew – he had a blond beard. He was a teacher, and in addition to that, he was the *Shammes* of the *Bet HaMedrash*. He was very adept at calculation, and understood 'mensuration.' Nobody ever saw him do anything but teach us in Heder.

In the *Bet HaMedrash* he would never speak, and if he was asked anything, he would never reply about studies. Except if it pertained to a *Gemara* that had something to do with calculation or measurement. He became another person. He would speak, and with great love for the issue. In this way, learning with him was no big deal. He would look at a 'dense' young boy with pity, and say: 'stopped up, a pity.' About a 'talented boy,' – he would say accordingly, 'you will be a scholar' – and in doing things, was underlaid by: what purpose? what is the point? He once said, with ill-concealed disdain: 'you will become a Rabbi!' – And in this regard nobody saw him pray either. 'A closet *Kotzker*,' – it was rumored about him; Kotzk [*Hasidim*] did not hold by recitation of prayers. It would have had to be kept secret – A city of *Mitnagdim*, a *Bet HaMedrash* of *Mitnagdim*. I recall an incident. A diminutive Jew, called R' Azriel'khl was standing at the Prayer Table. At one time he ran a saloon – a real piece of work. He was an elderly little Jew, sickly, who seemingly could be blown away with a strong breath. One evening, a Jewish stranger comes in, tall, heavy, and strong, and stands himself to recite the Mourner's *Kaddish*, and blurts out the phrase, *Veyatzmakh Purkonay...*[200] Old R' Azriel'khl's anger flares up, he jumps over the table and the bench, runs up to the lectern, up to this strange, strong man, raised up his nails, jumps below him, and delivers a slap to the man's cheek...[201]

R' Mekhl apparently concealed his adherence to the *Kotzker* Hasidic sect, moving about during worship among the worshipers in his prayer shawl and phylacteries, never once moving his lips. He does not touch his pupils, and me, for sure not. I was important to the *Rebbetzin*. Her sister worked in our house as a servant! I remember them both, and continue to wonder how similar the two sisters were. I, been unfocused, would often err, saying to the Rebbetzin: 'Chana, can you bring me a little water,' and say to the maid at home:

– 'Would the *Rebbetzin* be so kind...' and they were beauties, Jewish, and modest, (at least in my young view). Tall, pale, thin-skinned-translucent faces, long overstretched eyebrows, silken glances from small, long almond-eyes... and beautiful. Both of them vanish from my memory. I do not know what ever happened to them. I also do not know what I ever learned from R' Mekhl. Certainly not more than a little taciturn contemplation, certainly having acquired a quiet, good-hearted disposition, which I can recognize in many of my things. Perhaps, he conveyed a little bit of Hasidism to me through his silent eyes?

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200 The full phrase is *VeYatzmakh Purkonay VeKorayv Meshikhay*. The English translation of the Aramaic is: May his salvation bloom, and may he quicken the coming of his Messiah.

201 This phrase appears optionally, in the formulation of the *Kaddish*, as a second sentence, and can usually be found in prayer books that follow the Sephardic tradition (*Nusakh Sfard*). While not strictly Sephardic, it appears to be favored by *Hasidim* and abhorred by *Mitnagdim*. The antipathy of the *Mitnagdim* is probably rooted in their suspicious view, that Hasidism was, in part, an attempt to rescue whatever may have been good, from the wreckage of the false messianic movements of Sabbatai Zvi and Jacob Frank (recall that the Vilna *Gaon* excommunicated the Hasidim at one point). Accordingly, references to a 'Messiah' in prayer, even if benign, were deemed to border on apostasy by *Mitnagdim*. This phrase then became a sore point during prayer, if people from both sides of this religious divide were praying together.

The reaction of R'Azriel'khl is far from unusual in this context. The Translator recalls, very well from his childhood, a similar incident in a synagogue in the Borough Park section of Brooklyn, where he was raised. At a Friday night service, a member of the congregation, who was leading the service, inserted this phrase in his recitation of the *Kaddish*, and the ensuing argument in the pews led to several punches being thrown, and a need to physically restrain a number of worshipers who got really hot under the collar.

My second cousin and I progress further, and we come to R' Yudel – a more advanced Gemara teacher. In his class, one 'leads' a discussion also.

That R'Yudel loved two things:
Whacking fingers with switches, and – pirogies, which the *Rebbetzin* would make for him in a cooking day – and then leave... she couldn't stand 'how the glutton gorges himself, and how the schmaltz runs out of his mouth.'...

The *Rebbetzin* does not get involved in the teaching process, and also does not patronize my mother's [store], so that she could threaten to tattle. My father is already a merchant, and is rarely at home, and R' Yudel lets himself go. And I walk around with swollen fingers, like the others. In the second period, when we went on from *Baba Kama* to *Yevamot,* which was even more difficult for us, the battle also sharpened. And we often caught it for no reason at all. R' Yudel had poor eyesight, could not see, and didn't know who was really guilty – so for any little thing, he would whack everybody on the fingers. He would select the switches, with great and caring love, from a new broom, that the Rebbetzin would bring from time-to-time, and I think that she must of actually dealt in brooms. They were always there, but I do not remember for sure. He would pick out the softest ones, the thinnest one, and he struck gently, but continuously.

We didn't miss him either.
He had a long beard, and one time, we began to draw close to the table. It was evening, after the pirogies. So, he dozed off. Noise and disturbance is going on, the candle on the table is burning, and someone touches it. It appears that someone's hand gave a start from fear. A hair of his beard got tugged. He awoke with a start, and grabbed the switches. For this reason, on the second cooking day, we captured the Rebbetzin's cackling hen, and sat her on the bowl full of pirogies, under a pillow. He comes, takes the bowl, sets it in front of himself, looks with his nearly-blind eyes, and smiles to himself with satisfaction:

– Oy, oy, so many chopped onions! And then he bit into it...

Once, we fooled him into slipping. Behind the *Bet HaMedrash* was a slippery patch of ice. Between *Mincha* and *Maariv*, we covered it up with snow. We then sent a classmate into the *Bet HaMedrash*, to tattle in front of the *Rebbe*, that we are outside sliding around on the ice...so he comes out, and steps onto the ice, and falls down. We laugh...and want to run away. So he cries out: Take pity! He swears that he will no longer hit us, do nothing to us...

So we picked him up, and he kept his word. Because of this, yet another task was created for us in the third time period. We (my cousin and I) were transferred to a particularly stern teacher.

He, already pinched. He was a *Mohel*, and had a sharp nail! And we were not quiet. He wore a small hat, and we packed snow into the brim. He is sitting at the table, and melt starts to run down on his face. He loved tea. Each day, the Rebbetzin puts a metal samovar up, without a teapot, shaking in several kernels of tea. He bellows: too little; she doesn't hear him. And the tea turns out to be particularly watery. So one time, we brought grease from an axle and put it in... the samovar bubbles, and he pours himself a glass: black as ink. Ah, delicious, he throws a grateful glance at the *Rebbetzin*, and sits himself down, setting the glass in front of himself on the table. He clearly wants already to touch the cup with his lips, when a fear seizes us, that God forbid, he should not poison himself. Someone then gives the table a kick with his foot from underneath, and the glass is turned over, and spills into the *Rebbe's* lap, the tea being boiling hot – – – – –

The biggest irritant was a different one: we were studying [the *Gemara*] *Ayzehu Neshekh*, and he tortured us with questions and demanded answers from us with his *Mohel's* nail... He was no great scholar. We knew that these were not his questions, and not his answers. So, on the Sabbath, we would drop into the *Bet HaMedrash*, check out the weekly study of the *Tosafot, Maharsh"a,* and other commentaries, and bombard him with questions on Sunday morning. He was a round, fat little Jew – and he was silent, turning like a worm, his round eyes darting around fearfully, and we then burst out laughing... so he starts pinching...

But on Fridays, he would start beating, presumably for cause: this was an old custom, to assure a reminder of [the coming] Sabbath. But it often hurt... and yet despite this, we loved him, loved him very much....

On a cooking day, the young boys would bring change (two-cent, three-cent, at most ten-cent coins). From this, a repast was arranged. This repast consisted of the Rebbetzin's foodstuffs: herring, cookies, and hot peas...the Rebbe's only daughter would also join us for this repast.... pale, sad, girl, with long hazy eyes... and the Rebbe would affectionately stroke her yellowish, and golden head, and tell us stories from *Ein Yaakov*, from the *Medrashim*...he became a totally different person. So soft, so full of heart, and his voice suffused with a precious spirituality, that the stern Rebbetzin at a separate table, would be compelled to wipe her eyes...

Oh, but did we love him at those times....but after that I suffered an exile: I studied with a teacher far away, in Szczebrzeszyn, three miles from home, and afterwards, studied in the home of a *Dayan*; and that brings us to the Second Chapter.

## After Hazy Years

Chaos. Getting acquainted with dogs. My first love. Nearly falling into the brook. I am sent away.

More turbulent years, immature chaos... occasionally growing a little, wrought by all sorts of hands; always with the marks of strangers' fingers on my soul. And occasionally, for a while, thee awakes, if not a sign of will – caprice – and demands. And I produce, as they say, wild antics...inner life is very weak. I am like a sponge that soaks things in. What I absorb, lands somewhere inside of me, I don't know how, as if I wasn't even there...the eye sees, but I do not look; the ear takes things in, but I do not listen. And a tumult mixes into everything, with one thing clashing with another...and something inside gets constructed, and new childhood moments arrive with the wind, and fall on the others – with houses being built upon houses... here and there, something sticks out, a point here, a weather vane, a chimney....

I had a 'frigid' great-aunt, my buddy Yekhezkiel's mother. A tall, thin Jewish woman, pale, and sickly. It was from her that Dr. Ettinger conceived his **Serkeleh**. Constantly whining, 'Oy, my strength!' Constantly drinking almond milk for her throat, and always bakes cheese cookies (the one sweet that I love), and eats... and she hides them on a high shelf, so the children, God forbid, should get a hold of them, and ruin them. And me, out of my love for cheese cookies, and also to irritate her, and simply, to demonstrate a trick – jump underneath, grabbing hold of the shelf support, grabbing hunks out, and upset my stomach. And then the old, stern Doctor Skzhinski comes, who later will get me excused from military service, and prescribes something bitter and salty for me, that comes in a little bottle, a white liquid. And me, when I am just left alone, spill the mixture out, pour in a little milk and water and take a tablespoon every hour, and manage to wheedle out a gift of sorts and get cringe every time I need to swallow the white stuff...and I barely get well, – Skzhinski lives right next to us, with our windows opposite each other – so I wait for him at the window, and when he shows himself, I stick my tongue out at him. He grabs a stick, and comes running to us, to give me a reckoning, and I am still in the house...and here he comes, running up the stairs, and so I tear open a big red cupboard in the house, jump in, and land with one foot in a pot full of eggs....

We have a small parcel of wreckage overgrown with green, having arrived at this condition from some situation. I play their quite often towards evening with little girls, pretending to be bride and groom. I am the groom. Me, with the fiery eyes. The bride, – is a cousin of mine, a girl with long curls. And since the game requires that the bride and groom argue, throwing presents at one another, I pick up a small stone, throw, and hit her under the eye, and he is left with a mark up to the time of her real wedding...and in addition, I am the general, and have a whole camp of Heder boys under my command...currency notes were in short supply then, coins – few, so the government permits merchants to circulate 'notes' in place of small denomination currency, – so my father generates 'notes' and I – 'snivel.' I pay him for wooden swords, with paper shields, for braided rope for the hips of my heroes, and get ready to may war with the

'*leshnitikehs*[202],' which is what we used to call the 'youngsters' from the *Neustadt*, two versts outside of Zamość. The 'encounter' will be midway, behind the common cemetery... and I take satisfaction [as if] from a piece of well explained R"N[203] that has flowed forth, aggravation from 'prima donnas,'excessively, think out simply, and tell the young folk – dependent children who loiter about the *Bet HaMedrash*....eat nothing in the morning, and drink only coffee, and take the bagel with butter to a poor child, an orphan, who loiters about the *Bet HaMedrash*, the orphan of Avigdor'l the Teacher... that is what the 'command of my heart' told me to do. And recite prayers according to the style of '*Yad HaKhazakah*,' and stand for the *Shemona Esrei*, as the *Rambam* directs, like a soldier at the front, with hands at the sides...and know already, according to the *Ralbag*, that it is not this way: Elijah the Prophet did not fly up into the heavens...

And according to the *Rambam* the miracles, are sort of not quite miracles, no 'editorial communication.' And show innovations in the Bet HaMedrash in Dominoes and Chess. The board – outlined in crayon, high up, on the floor in front of the Holy Ark (Pure!), the pieces and figures – fashioned from white and dark bread, and either cut or sculpted from potatoes, the black – in the skin! And I run to pray often in the *Belzer shtibl*: the fervor is attractive – the fire, the shouting, with the banging of the head against the wall during the *Shemona Esrei*...and because of (what today I would call) the silent rapport – in the *Gerrer shtibl*, for the Third Repast... and I run into...'A Guide to the Perplexed,' which is up on the highest shelf (who needs it?), and on the second side – the 'Tree of Life...' I will yet reach the *Zohar*...and I occasionally take down the '*Urim VeTummim*,' and hone my intellect, as if I were using a whetstone...

Details from three 'hazy' childhood years...what so I do with them? What sort of a strand am I pulling through these stones, pieces of glass and the couple of pearls?

Here I tie together my – getting acquainted with four-legged creatures! I will be able to tell about this in an appropriate manner!

The city that I found ready made, and which was sandwiched between Volhynia, is neither growing nor changing, I will first see in Szczebrzeszyn three miles from home, where I (as we will see later) was sent to a teacher. For an entire semester...I don't, apparently, run into people either. From all appearances, a small, peaceful city, composed of transients, of immigrants without bad dreams yet, seldom hearing, 'a place to leave and not return,' seldom having anything happen in the family....Occasionally, somewhere on an evening before a circumcision, and before the little red '*shlimoyz*[204]' which was shown and almost scared ourselves... I only remember the '*Hilukh*,' the reports when fortress was shot up, the fear of the *Rebbe* and the *Rebbetzin*, that the walls of the houses might split apart... I also remember the great fear when the jail 'above the clock' in the magistrate building was on fire. We packed up. There was a snow and a storm. The burning jail began to waver, it can collapse and fall on the houses, right or left, destroying the city, disappearing in smoke.. We are packing up at home, and I run to the synagogue, to rescue the Torah scrolls....

I will first see people later, and often, , Cuzmir[205], Greater Poland, Warsaw... for the time being, I make acquaintances in the vicinity, as previously mentioned, with animated people and literary folk....

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I became acquainted with cats as early as my time in R' Berish's *Heder*. We also had a cat at home for a while, and I was instructed not to play with the cat...I see cows and oxen infrequently. I know where milk, cheese, buttermilk and sour cream come from... there also is goat's milk, which is brought occasionally for medicinal purposes... I don't see any ox or cow. – Bleating and mooing, I hear only from my classmates, who make this sound only as part of child's

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202 A variant of '*leshnikehs*' from the Russian, meaning 'wood goblin,' or 'satyr.' Clearly a derisory epithet used against those without the means to live in the *Altstadt*. See also page 355

203 Here, Peretz alludes to the commentary of *Rabbi Nissim of Gerona* (called the R"N) which he doubtlessly studied as a Talmud student in *Heder*.

204 Peretz may be making a play on words, borrowing the well-known Yiddish word, *shlimazl*, to cast the target of the circumcision as a 'hapless victim,' and twisting the ending into a 'mouse' consistent with the small size of the newborn infant.

205 A variant for the city of Sandomierz by the Vistula.

play. Oxen and cows are driven to 'us' (my grandfather leased land), and to the slaughterhouse, jut n the other side of the road, around the city, no 'firstborn' of my acquaintance roams through Zamość (in the 'little Paris,' as the neighborhood is called), first from 'learning' and then from literature.

As to horses – I am well acquainted with them also, and as you understand, from a distance... In the courtyard of the 'little yard,' an old noble estate, on four neighboring streets, at the edge of the city, near the Lemberg Gate, where my Rebbe lived, the peasants stop and stand on the market days with wagons... it was from one of these wagons, we got a little bit of grease from off the wheel to put in the Rebbe's samovar. I braid little decorative items from horse hair, but I do not pull out the hair personally.. It is a little out of fear, and a little out of compassion for the animals...

The officers of the garrison have horses. The garrison leaves, and Cossacks come, part of the time, Uhlans, Hussars... from our location, at the departure ceremonies of the military, which went out from us to the Turkish War, a young general pranced about on a little horse, a pretty one, silky, with such grace, and with such sprightly moves... to the extent that one can extract an interpretation of the verse, 'my horse,' from the Song of Songs.... 'Horses are like life,' Israel Zhdanover would say, from whom one would rent horses, if one needed to travel with urgency, and not drag one's self along in the cart of a peasant....

'Zdanów,' three versts behind the Lemberg Gate, was once a Jewish colony. The Polish regime wanted to attract Jews to agricultural work, and promised easements for Jewish colonists: a one-year relief from repayments, and most importantly... [release from] military service...the colony was established by Dr. Ettinger. He personally worked in the fields with his children...not in my time. In my time, Dr. Ettinger had been dead and buried for a long while. His son was already building Russian Orthodox churches, becoming richer from day to day. 'And yet – it was grudgingly said out of jealousy – the shit that he dishes out, flies out of his hands'... Out of all of the Jewish colonists, only one Israelite remained, who carried on a not-so-bad economic activity. He had cows (his wife distributed the milk in the city, for Shavuot – also butter, and cheese wedges) and competed quite vigorously with the dairymen from Sitaniec (on the other side, outside of the city) who also maintains that 'horses are like life'...

This previously concluded memoir will come in handy. And now – my acquaintance that I made with dogs... first let us talk about the dogs....

An elderly German lady had 'emigrated,' someone sinful. She wore her own natural hair, and had other blemishes on her soul, which is bruited about from mouth to ear, and it was told that her soul went into the body of a dog, a black 'Kudlota,' dog (he went into the 'monish'), that wanders about from one night to the next on the roof, over the house where she lived. The house servant, who prepares the fish at our house on Friday, personally saw him...at around the season of *Selikhot* I am walking with my father, a good piece before daybreak, to Selikhot services, and I look, not entirely free of fear, for the dog on the roof – no recollection. They must have gotten him already.....

My classmates in Heder and in the Bet HaMedrash talk a great deal about dogs, in a childish sort of way – also. Dogs are like a stone obstacle along the path... they don't let a living human being from the city get by...

Behind the Lemberg Gate, beyond the cemetery, past the Neustadt, about two versts further, is the village of Jatutow. Jatutow has a saloon that serves aged mead, that is famous throughout the area. Noblemen come there to drink. A young man, currently supported by his father-in-law makes his way there...some time back, it is told, balebatim would go to Jatutow every Friday in the summertime, after their bath and oder-losen, to gird themselves before the Friday night Sabbath prayer, with a little glass of mead... not nowadays... today, this is no longer possible. Somebody has installed some rather surly dogs along the way. A young man supported by his future in-laws got it into his head that he would drop in there...'Imagine that?' ... everyone laughs. No, he has a 'savior.' He has heard from an elderly peasant, that dogs absolutely die for soft bread, covered in human sweat. So he plans to take a hunk of soft bread, knead it up in his hands, until it will be impregnated with sweat, and throw it... and then one goes (that is how it was told). He goes, comes back, mercy, without trousers and without a good piece of 'soft flesh' from his leg. This event comes like oil poured on water; the young man is sent away [sic: by the family of his prospective bride]...

Sitaniec, behind the Lublin Gate, beyond the slaughterhouse, has, as I have also said, a dairyman. He has something of a 'dairy concession.' In the summertime, he sells earthenware bowls of sour cream for a three-cent piece a bowl. Cold, delicious, straight from the cellar, and cheese wedges with caraway seeds. – there are also surly dogs in the village! – it is not even possible to stop by the road... give a yell: Yossel! And he comes out and leads the dogs with a whip...and if Yossel should not happen to be at home, the dogs will hear! And is the barking not enough when you are alone?

And it is impossible to go into the *Shokhet's* house, where the slaughterers cook and give you a little fatherly oversight; such dogs with bodies drenched in blood. They live well with the butchers, these mean creatures. They lick off the blood, that sprays onto them, from their outer garments and their hands – the slaughterers are already in some danger, they wear long overcoats, and not short vests with cord, like the butchers, – and the dogs don't like this... one is certain, that the Jews, leaving Egypt, also wore long overcoats, and the miracle of 'thou shalt not wash,' is held as the greatest of all.

Behind the place where the officers are billeted, there are green valleys; more beautiful than the shore side by the river outside of the city. And flowers grow there, it is a delight to take a stroll there, or to lie down there, there are artillery shells and grenades that have been abandoned, from the fortress, and dryerkikeh kupes (yards), almost frightening! And now, it is permissible to look, and point with a finger, even touch with a hand (no kidding?). The fortress is after all, no longer a fortress, the walls shot up, three-quarters of the barriers torn down – but the method of access through Polkovnik's house, and in the Feather-house, a dog stands, he is big, black, a Kudlater (it appears that he was the model for the story about the reincarnation of that German woman!) – as big as an ox! He happens to be on a chain, but what if he breaks the chain? How difficult would it be for a dog of this sort to tear away from a chain? Especially, if he sees an overcoat? Only my rich relative, Y. M.[206] goes there (a frigid uncle), who has a house in the city, a dacha outside of the city, a house in Warsaw, where he spends months at a time, and is a contractor, and comes to the club and often invites Polivnik, with whom he has business dealings, to him, for a 'preference'... he is used to dogs, has h i s o w n , at the dacha, knows how to act in front of them, and most importantly – carries himself like he is half-German... And even small dogs with a good pedigree, hate Jewish children...This is an obstacle to taking a swim in the river during the summer. All around are the benches from the former fortress; it appears that – the former 'inspector' took down all the hay. He does not want the Jewish children to go bathe, because they don't stick to the path on the way to the river, and they run, and chase each other through the grass and over the hay. And the shortest distance from the city out – assuming you do not want to make a lengthy detour, through the Szczebrzeszyn Gate, over the road, and then left over the mounds! – is precisely between the abandoned fortification and the window, where the inspector lives...well, the inspector alone would not have been such a peril. He plays cards all night long at the club ('I should have what our magnate Y. M. loses to him night after night; he has need of him!') and during the day, he has a fondness for the hard stuff – so he drinks and sleeps... he would not hear, even though during the summertime he sleeps near an open window ('what a *goy* can do!'), and one sneaks by silently: in front of the house, we take off our boots and shoes, and walk on tiptoes, holding our breath...one can hear one's own heart berating. And the inspector snores away....

Wouldn't that be good already? Well, he has a wife! And she doesn't play cards, and drinks nothing...she is a 'piece of work,' this helpmeet of the inspector. And this is the way she is described: 'Tall as a giant, skinny as a stick, flat as a board, and a face (after smallpox!) like a grater, with a dustcloth tied over the top of her head' – a little ditty was written about her, and I certainly contributed to it...

But if it was just her, it wouldn't have been too bad either. First – she was a good-natured gentile woman. All children, even the Jewish ones, wearing their long overcoats, she loved deeply from her soul; if she were permitted, she would grab them on the street and give them a kiss. It is possible, that this is because she had no children of her own... and third, if she is not running about buying things in the marketplace, in the various stores, which takes up three-quarters of an hour, she sits at home alone and lays out [Tarot] cards. In the middle of this fortune-telling, the world could turn upside down, she doesn't budge from her spot...several years later, she heard a loud thump from the house where her

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[206] Author's Footnote: Yeshayahu Margolies

husband was, a real bang, as if someone fell out of bed, – she finally went in, however, a little too late! First she completed her fortune-telling, and – found her husband stone cold...

If it was just her, she would not represent any a barrier! However, she has – a doggie! And the doggie is 'her precious,' a purebred...later, when she became a widow, and our *feldscher* had come into some big money, he bought the dog from her for a tidy sum, it is rumored for six hundred pieces of gold! And - he bought himself a house in the city, where he opened a store for books 'of all languages,' to educate the city, and a small cottage out of the city.. He turned over the house in the city and the store to his sons, and he personally (a widower at this time already), moved into the cottage with the dog, out of the city, for solitude and introspection. And I could barely restrain my classmates at that time from taking revenge against this 'dog-that-became-Jewish' for his transgressions when he was a gentile doggie ... but, for now, the dog is in the possession of the inspector's wife, and here I must relate his great sin!

To us, he appears to be a gentle dog, silken, glistening black, with a white mark between his little eyes, which therefore looks like the blind. And he has thin legs, underneath – his paws are curled, and it looks like he walks on his knees...and he is skittish, with a nervous bark. And if he gets impatient sitting in the lap of the inspector's wife, while she is doing her fortune-telling, and would like to get a little fresh air, by going out the door, and should happen to see us, we, the Jewish children, he starts to bark in his nervous way, and wakes the inspector up, and we all know what that means. And so, he sends his staff after us, to confiscate our clothing...and it is a disgrace and causes heartache – to see our fringed garments in the hands of gentiles! So we are forced to bribe them, or stand long enough ans wail, until the people take pity on us, or someone comes along and resolves the problem for us. Our parents say: 'Praised be the inspector! Would that *Heder* continued after *sefira*!'[207]

My sickly brother's nurse also tells about dogs: he was a sickly little brother, being the third after me...he needs to be watched. Father travels to visit noblemen about commerce, Mother – in the store, my little sister – too young, still plays on the floor, or in front of the store in the sand. A gentile woman from a nearby village is retained to watch my little brother.

She is a short, old gentile woman, flowing white hair, a scrawny face; short, but with quiet eyes that are moist, half-drunk; she drinks, and in drinking, she gets even better, and more attentive. She has a husband in the village, for whom she longs, and so she steals away from time-to-time, and comes back – beaten up, bruised, drained, and half-naked...and becomes even more attached to our house, even more loyal...she puts my sick little brother to sleep with a lullaby and stories...I understand little Polish, but I force myself, and decipher what she means. So, one evening, I steal into the house, lie down on my bed, feigning – a headache, and listen to her until my mother comes home and gives us our evening meal – a woman – but eat ?!

So she sings him long, drawn-out '*kolednas*' and I wait for the refrain with a quietly beating heart: *Hai, Koledna, Ko — ledna*!

For this reason, I have a frightening compassion for this poor, abandoned, abused gentile woman. I know that this is more than a lullaby, it is her begging, her prayer. And – who is listening to it? The prayer dissipates into the air...even their church sinks into the ground, by a hair (I would have been willing to measure a tract to find a 'Savior'!)... out of pity, I would 'open her eyes,' so she can set the error of her ways aside... oh, what justice! Jonah, who didn't want to warn Nineveh was punished... but I must wait, until I learn to speak Polish better... (once I was able to, she had passed away already, and I didn't have the motivation...).Once, it occurs to her, and half-drunk, she tells the story of a gentile Angel of Death – a *pangeh*, that flies out in the air, and waves a white kerchief... and the person over whom the kerchief is waved, is doomed to leave the world; there is a city, and a plague breaks out... another mistake! I, after all know: the Angel of Death has the form of a human, and has a thousand eyes.....

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207 The end of the *sefira* (counting of the *Omer*), coincides with the *Shavuot* festival, which typically signaled the beginning of summer vacation in those days.

My favorite is when she tells about the animals and the cattle in the village. Even more so about the dogs of the nobility and of the village. She tells about this animatedly, with movement, literally shaping the picture, the capture, the chase... The dogs that belong to the nobility are swift, and walk with arrogance; they are led on long leashes. If the horn is sounded, and they are released, they fly like the wind... chasing after the animals...and – brave! They will even fall upon wild boars, bears and wolves, capturing released hares and foxes...attacking the boars – a mitzvah! Pity is awakened for the hares, even though I had never seen a hare, and know about it only from the Torah, where it is listed among the 'unclean' animals... but it is a skittish animal, the way she tells it, quiet and frightened. As to the foxes – also a mitzvah; they plunder the chickens, that is how she tells it! And they run, that I know, over the wreckage of the Holy Temple... and from the Song of Songs I know that they despoil the vineyards in the Land of Israel... They are c u n n i n g , those foxes, I know: 'the fable of the foxes,' but what good is their cunning if it is only useful for doing bad things? The dogs of the peasants are also formidable creatures...they put up with a lot. Most of the time they are chained up, that is what the police demand. And thieves poison them... and yet these dogs are so loyal! They bark and wake up the village, if even so much as a spark is seen, a fire. Or, in wintertime, during the intense cold, when the animals, driven by hunger, come out of the forest and come to the settlement – there is an immediate racket, a tumult! The peasants wake up with a start, run out with staves, iron rods, pitchforks, hoo-hah! They reconnoiter about, the beast is whacked on the head, and his head is smashed in.

And why do these dog-catchers catch them in the city? – – – And soon it was made possible for me to get acquainted with live dogs of the nobility.

As previously mentioned, my father dealt with the nobility. It happened that on a winter's day, he had need to travel to see the noble in Stavrov, so he got the idea of taking me along. So he rides to the 'yard,' and enters the *Heder*. – A side note: it was not customary to go riding around the city, after all, of what business is it for people to know who was going, and where you were going to. Or what your business was? No small matter: competition, and the Evil Eye! Even my rich, frigid uncle, the previously mentioned Y. M., who goes about the city with his hands folded behind him, even he, for whom his own horses are sent for him from the dacha, also does not depart from the marketplace, but only from an obscure side street; he goes through the yard to the coach. Others leave the city and [on foot] and then board [a coach]. So, my father's riding up to the 'yard' makes an impression. As he ascends the stairs, he is followed; this can't be for nothing! The door is opened, and he is not permitted to close it: behind him, in the door, a Jew with his eyes bugging out is standing, and behind him – a number of women. The *Heder* is bubbling. And when my father says what he had come for, the noise gets even louder. My father is 'also' considered 'not quite right;' 'also,' is because I was already taken for someone 'beyond hope'....

– Reb Yudel – the *Rebbe* tries to interject – does this not imply *Bittul-Torah?* [208]
My father bursts into laughter. He knows, and everybody else knows, that Yekhezkiel and I are free from five to six days a week. He, a laid-back fellow, pays attention to the lesson immediately on Sunday, and takes the Rebbe's place, who was sometimes occupied with a sideline, either marriage-making, or acting as an arbitrator, and caries on with his classmates. I first start learning on Friday...On Friday, the Rebbe gets a 'reduced price' on a portion of beans from R' Moshe-Yitzhak's kitchen, for arranging some sort of a marriage. So there is a bean casserole available for the first repetition of the [weekly portion] that we are examined on for the Sabbath; and I study, – after the beans. The Rebbe keeps on wiping off his thick whiskers, and shaking out his beard, and I lead the class with a high hand!

For me. But Yekhezkiel wants to come to. But my father is afraid to take him along. He could, God-forbid, catch a cold, in which case, he would never be able to get himself out of it with Fraydeleh (his mother)...

We come to the field – I am gripped with an intense sense of distance for the first time. My father is already sunken into his thoughts about the accounting with the nobleman from Stavrov, and I am blinded by the snow, and by the 'sparkling gems' on top of the snow, by the pristine purity,,,the sens of harmony, which I have conveyed in my work, 'How the field looks;' Joel tells about this. I look up at the heavens, and grab my father by the sleeve:

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[208] Wasting time that otherwise could be dedicated to study: a cardinal sin of the times

Father, father, look at how the sun is frozen in place, just like our Esrog box!
We had an Esrog box that was made of pure silver....
My father does not allow himself to be distracted from his figures:
– Stop babbling nonsense...sit still...

I see the driver's shoulder, so broad, and the comical, fur hat on his head... and see for myself... and observe, how the horses gallop and run...small, swift horses, with spray kicked up behind their legs, gobs of snow and slush. And the peasant sits and does not move, like a block of salt. (The analogy is to Lot's wife!). He sits, and the whip is at the side of his hand. He doesn't need it! The runners slip, will he take up the whip? What will the peasant do? A whip is, after all, a measure of the evil disposition! I stretch out my hand. My father says impatiently:
– No, you don't!
I retract my hand, I get cold, but I do not tell my father, I am angry with him. After a while, we pass a courtyard. It looks like a city house...except that dogs suddenly jump out from a corner...one, two, three, four – I count them without an absence of fear....big dogs, with tongues hanging out of their mouths, some are barking...all of them jump to us...my father takes no note of them. He jumps down from the wagon, takes off his outer coat, wraps it around me, and goes to the courtyard. (Oh, my father was some hero!) Some of the dogs follow him, still barking... (Wow, what a hero!!!) Two, however, stay behind, and station themselves on either side of the runners, on their back legs, leaning against the runners with their forelegs. I see all of this quickly, and they are focused on the runners with their eyes, sniffing about with trembling snouts, is there nothing good here? The peasant, who had hung some provender for the horses and began to eat himself, throws them small pieces of bread, and pieces of bacon fat. They don't touch the bread, but they consume the bacon fat!

I am not pleased at this!

** ** **

A change takes place.

On the Sabbath I am examined by Rabbi Moshe Wohl, the Rabbi of the city. I described him in [my work] 'The Four Generations' as R' Zisha...someone of a good disposition. He is fond of me, and says to my father:

– He needs another teacher.
– Where do we get one?
– Send him to Szczebrzeszyn...to Pinchas'l (about R' Pinchas'l, more later).
– What will Riveleh say?
– You know what, Yudel? For a time, try the *Bet HaMedrash*. Let him study on his own.
And that's the way it was left. It is, in fact, the end of the season. I promise that I will be good, and be pious, and be studious. And I become free! And I develop a relish for researching books of the Kabbala... and even more, I run around, doing all sorts of stuff.

This is not good. So it remains that a proper teacher needs to be found. Meanwhile, I am to study at home, and in order that I be prevented from running around, my boots are taken away from me for the entire week. For me it doesn't matter. I run around in my bedroom slippers in the yard. If they get tight, then I kick the slippers with a shake of my foot up to the roof and by going through our alley, get up on the roof of the two-story house to retrieve them. From thee, I see the city for the first time from on high, and it doesn't make a big impression on me. There are taller three-story buildings that block the view...and I remind myself what I had heard about, that from the alley around the clock tower over the magistrate's building [Sic: the Town Hall], one can see not only the entire city, but also for quite a distance beyond! I am seized with an urge to see this. So I crawl down from the roof, and I walk around for days, thinking. How can one sneak the boots away, how can I make the acquaintance of the old clock master who ascends every day to set the clock, and have him take me along....

As they say: I eased off a bit...I smile a bit, and lapse back into contemplation again...in the meantime, standing one evening in the alley, I hear how my father, coming out of the door to the alley (being pre-occupied, he doesn't see me), calls through the second door into the kitchen, saying:

– Mirel, would you pardon me, but could you run down and retain a messenger and send him to Israel in Zdanów, asking him to immediately come with the horses...

Mirel answers: Good, good! She will just put something on, just grab something to put on! That will take time! So I pick myself up, and run off to Zdanów. The side street near the clock [tower] is deferred. And I run in my slippers. In the street, I am stared at, and people call out: you're crazy! They try to restrain me. I wrestle free, like a serpent. So I am grabbed from the back, and I tear myself away and run and arrive there... and I ask (that much Polish I knew already) a peasant of the village where Israel's house is. 'There,' he says, pointing with a finger. I mean, I know, I run, and fall into a neighbor's house, a German, a rich colonist. And right after the little cart, I run into a dog, who jumps up to my chest, puts his front paws on my shoulder and looks at me with his big, red wise eyes, right into my eyes: are you perhaps a thief! He is a trained dog, and he waits for someone to come outside... what I feel, you can imagine by yourselves. I understand little of the dog. And he is a big dog, brown and hairy.... my mother's milk curdles inside of me. And I cannot scream, my throat is constricted. As it happens, I was spotted while still on the way, and seen from the window in Israel's [house]. In the middle of this, a girls jumps over the fence, grabs the dog by the shoulder, gives him a shove away, and leads me out to Israel....

It was his daughter...
A girl, a young one – blood and milk. Clear eyes, wise and sweet. A net of black glistening hair [covered her head]. An excerpt from The Song of Songs....and such a heroine... I might as well have come from the Lempert mountains...And if later an incident happens that I nearly fell into a brook, I am disappointed why it was an elderly Jewish lady who kept me from falling in, and not her...

I dream about her every night...but the thought of going to see her in Zdanów never even occurs to me...

Instead, I conceive of the idea of demonstrating this kind of heroism, and to gram the big yellow dog by his end...he moves off, jumps underneath, and jumps up on my shoulder...
I have a scar to this day...
That about did it. I am sent to Szczebrzeszyn. To Reb Pinchas'l...

** ** ** **

And that is how it worked its way in. A little bit of the natural world worked its way into the heart of a little Jewish boy.....

*Page 476: Top:* *The Zamość Park on the site of the destroyed fortress. It was the favored strolling place of the Jewish young people. The young people would go out in boats on this lake, propelling themselves with oars, and the sound of their singing would carry a great distance.*

*Bottom:* *A remnant of the destroyed fortress in the park. In local argot, it was known as "Near Stak," It was a custom to go there to drink milk "At Fyodor's" – the Christian, who had cow barns there.*

# "Order" in Zamość [209]

**1.**

Oh, the poor are dying of hunger,
They shout their woe and bite their fingers:
Meat is 28 groschen a pound,
And a pound –oh! A great calamity,
Stones and bones, and a dishonest wight –
And a remnant from a dog that dies,
Flour, potatoes, are expensive,
It is a bad time, there is not a threepenny piece to be had,
The day is watched with the wind.
Maybe the finch will make a mistake
And carry out the thoughts of the Rem"A,
And the Rabbi should become the victim of the poem, "Fire, fire."
Thunder should only strike the *Shokhet*, that oppressor,
And the butcher should only go to Janow,
Then, maybe we will have meat!
But only the wind knows when that might be,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
Meanwhile, they are tearing the flesh off of us!

**2.**

Oh, the "order" in the *Bet HaMedrash* is just beautiful:
Dirty, mud-spattered, smoke-filled and enticing,
Carved stands, and cut up benches.
In the summer, it is used only for card playing,
In the winter, for roasting potatoes,
And we should live to get a drinking bar from the wife of the *Shammes*!
One comes there only to gorge and swill,
Biting into pupiks [210], and drinking whiskey.
A fig[211] to praying, and to hell with studying.
Let us hope to the future,
We may get a new *Gabbai*,
The drinking bar and all its brouhaha will be swept out,
Grass will grow on Mikhl's grave,
If Shinitzky becomes the owner,

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209 Author's footnote: From the tenth volume: I. L. Peretz – Complete Works, published in the 'Yiddish' Verlag, Buenos Aires 1944.
This poem, which in its day was very popular, and was recited in Zamość, is among other poems of this kind, written down after Peretz died, by his friends, S h l o m o A s h k e n a z i and M o r d e c h a i B e k h e r , who sent them along to Yaakov Dinesohn. The Zamość Pozhandik appeared for the first time through the efforts of Nachman Meisel, in his book, "Peretz" (Vilna Verlag of B. Kletskin 1931). One gathers that Peretz wrote this poem before the year 1874. In Zamość Pozhandik, he gives a satirical caricature-portrait of the one-time Jewish society life in Zamość.

210 A delicacy prepared from stuffed entrails.

211 A hand gesture of contempt, involving the insertion of the thumb between the first two fingers, sometimes accompanied by sticking out one's tongue.

Then the "order" will be simple.
But only the wind knows when that might be,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
But meanwhile, we are ruled (?) By our passions.

**3.**

From the hostel[212] – on my word –
There is only one direction: to the final [sic: holy] resting place,
Lame Zalman prepares the medicines,
The physician has a high opinion of himself.
It is said: Blessed is He who pities the earth
And not: Blessed is He who pities living things.
There are many levies, they only take,
But the sick are left without so much as a shirt,
The food that is given is next to disease itself,
Without Reuven and without Simcha, let us forget,
About giving the sick something to eat
And the physician should not be haughty,
And there should be young attendants, who have the time,
Not old, lazy people,
In that event, there would really be good "order."
But only the wind knows when that might be,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
Meanwhile, no hostel could get any worse.

**4.**

For this, only hope is given –
It is seven years that a Mikva is under construction,
No more work is done, only funds are extracted and taken,
The broker is the manager in complete control,
The 'Cheek' – a big operator, The Rabbi – the Treasurer,
There is no basis for the expenditures.
Is it not more appropriate, I ask you,
To have a bath in the winter, and use the river in summer,
Rather than listen to all of this foolishness?
But, perhaps, in a hundred years,
It will become clear to the community,
And nobody will really care.
But only the wind knows when that might be,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
Meanwhile, we are led around like [circus] bears.

**5.**

Everyone, individually knows about this –
It is necessary to learn, and to raise children,
A school is necessary, I should live,

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212 This is the *Hekdesh*, which seems to have served a dual purpose. It was a halfway house for itinerants with limited or no means, but also was a communal hospice for the indigent who became sick. Peretz appears to be focusing on the limitations of its latter role.

Every Sabbath and festival holiday,
If you come to offering your prayers above,
You will hear all the plans put forward,
But the festival passes,
And that's the end of the school,
Until the next festival, we should live that long.
There is no other alternative,
Only to wait for a decree,
From Petersburg, a new ukase,
That only parents should be taught,
So that later, it will become understood,
That children need to be sent to class,
But only the wind knows when that might be,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
Meanwhile children are educated in the streets.

**6.**

There is no rationale for Hasidism –
They are only concerned with the Divine Presence.
For us, the green table takes up our time,
Five cards, clothing, whatever you desire,
See us rich and having money
For generations white goods, satin, and of silk,
Should it happen to be about something that is right,
For the good of the general community of the city:
The hands – like iron, the heart becomes a stone,
One cannot give, there is no three-penney piece,
One cannot do, time is too precious,
Therefore, everything goes to ruin.
Will it ever get better, only the wind knows,
Maybe one day, The Messiah will come,
Meanwhile brother, we are left in a quite coarse condition.

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*Page 480:* *The New Lemberg Gate. Known as the 'Cavalier.' Near the Hostel.*

# The Life and Works of I. L. Peretz

**(Biographical and Bibliographical Facts)**

*Page 482:* *Handwriting sample of the first part of Peretz's story, "The Revenge." It would appear that this is the first story that Peretz had ever written.*

*Page 484* *The first 8 lines, and the last 6 lines of I. L. Peretz's handwritten poem, 'The Honest Truth,' first version of 'Solomon's Throne.' This would appear to be the very first poem that Peretz ever wrote in Yiddish.*

*Page 486:* *Peretz in Jail – 1899, a police photograph.*

*Page 488:* *A short letter from Peretz to the folklore collector Y. L. Cohen about his folk song collection.*

*Page 490:* *An unknown picture of Peretz at the beginning of 1910. Standing (from right to left): Lucian Peretz, I. L. Peretz, Sholom Asch. Lying: H. D. Nomberg.*

*Page 491:* *Chagall's Conception of a Peretz Folk Tale.*

* * *

1852 Born on May 18 in Zamość to Yehuda and Rivka (Riveleh) Peretz. His mother – Rivka – was born in Zamość, her maiden name – Levin. Peretz lived in Zamość till about 1870-1871.

1855 Began the study of the Pentateuch

1858 Began the study of the *Gemara*

1862 Sent to the neighboring town of – **Szczebrzeszyn** – to study away from home.

1867 He obtains the possibility to use the library of a Maskil of the city (in Zamość), were he reads, and 'swallows' a whole array of books in various languages.

1869 Prepares to leave Zamość, to travel for purposes of study, to Vilna – but because of the objections of his mother, he refrains from doing so.

1870 Or 1871, marries Sarah, the daughter of the Maskil and Hebrew writer Gabriel Yehuda Lichtenfeld.

1871 His son, Yaakov is born – dies at a very early age.

1872 His second son is born – Lejzor (Lucian).

1873 Because of disharmony at home, he does not live with his wife; lives in Cuzmir and Opatów, works in a brewery.

1874 Put together a folio of his own Polish poems. In that same time and also for a couple of years later, composes poems in Yiddish, which were popular in Zamość and vicinity. They were read and sung by young people. He prepared himself to be a bookkeeper.

1875 Separates from his wife Sarah, lived for a while in Warsaw, gave lectures in Hebrew, became acquainted with writers of the Enlightenment in Warsaw. Debuts in the Hebrew Journal "HaShakhar" (Vienna, Peretz Smolenskin, Editor) with a fable, "The Comrades;" "The Owl and the Moon" in G. Y. Lichtenfeld's small book "Supplements to the Pledge." Studies law in Warsaw.

1876 Law examinations. Is divorced from his wife – Sarah – his son Lucian remains with him. He publishes a poem in "HaShakhar" called "Dividing Wisdom" and "It Is Said to Me;" In A. B. Gotlober's "Light in the Morning," a Hebrew poem, "Nagniel."

1877 Together with G. Y. Lichtenfeld, published a collection of Hebrew songs and poems "Stories in Song and Various Songs." Publishes a larger poem in "Light in the Morning," *"Kiddush HaShem."*
Took examinations and began to practice in Zamość as a private attorney.
In August, became acquainted with Helena (Nechama) Ringelheim from Leczna, is smitten, and writes her often, longer letters in Polish, Russian.

1878 Married Helena on February 14, settles himself in Zamość for ten full years a successful attorney, with an active office, which for a while employs several people. Travels wit the legal system to nearby towns.

1879 The first published notice about Peretz's Hebrew songs in 'HaShakhar,' by Peretz Smolenskin, after which a hiatus of several years comes, in which Peretz publishes nothing.

1886 After a recess of nearly ten years, he appears in N. Sokolov's Hebrew [periodical] 'HeAssif,' with a poem 'Manginot HaZman,' three novels and a song; in 'HaTzefira,' with a story, 'HaTzitz VeNifga,' (the editor abridged it, tore it apart, and re-presented it); 'Hekdesh' in 'HaYom.'

1887 Publishes a poem, 'To the young Jewish girl who tries to conceal it,' in the collected works, 'Knesset Israel.' Writes the first version of 'Monish.'
Because someone informed on him, he loses his right to practice as a private attorney, is greatly perplexed, remains with his wife and son, without any means of support, looks for a living.
Conducts an evening school – in Yiddish – for workers in Zamość

1888 Enters into correspondence with Sholom Aleichem in Kiev, who is preparing to produce the collection volumes, 'The Jewish Library.' Sends him 'Monish,' which is printed with a few improvements made by Sholom Aleichem, in Volume I. In Volume II, 'Der Chelmer Melamed,' 'Venus and Shulamit,' and 'Der Meshuginer Batlan,' are printed.

1889 Moves to Warsaw to settle there. Appears giving lectures in Hebrew.

1890 Makes a trip to the Tomaszow district with a statistical expedition. A collection of Peretz's stories appears, 'Bekenteh Bilder,' ('Der Meshulakh,' 'Vos Hayst Neshomeh,' 'Der Meshuginer Batlan'), with a foreword by Yaakov Dinensohn.
Submits an application to the Warsaw municipality to be accepted as an employee.
'Der Ta'anis,' and 'Der Klayner Vekker,' appear (Odessa).

1891 Begins to work for the municipality on January 1, where he worked for nearly 25 years. Produced two collections, 'Yiddisheh Bibliotek,' where, among other things were printed: Volume I: 'Inem Post-Vagon,' 'Shol-Bayis,' 'R' Berl,' 'Der Neuer Nigun;' A number of poems ('The Prophet Ezekiel,' 'The Wagon-Driver', etc.); an obituary about Mikhl Gordon, etc; the large introductory article, 'Education,' etc.; Volume II: 'Hold your Mouth,' 'Mendel Breineh's,' 'Death of a Musician,' 'The Heart Yearns,' 'The Widow,' 'The Reader;' 'Images from a Trip to the Provinces in the Tomaszow District in 1890 (23 chapters), various poems and critiques of a variety of books and pamphlets.

Becomes inspired by Baron Hirsch's colonization projects in Argentina, goes around with the idea of emigrating to Argentina.
His address of many years – Warsaw Zegalna 1 – becomes a central point for Yiddish literature.

1892 Poetry (A collection of poems – 'Solomon's Throne,' 'he Lion's Funeral,' short writings).
Poetry, the Second part. 'Monish' (A Ballad), with the footnote: 'Printed in 'Volks-bibliotek,' this ballad suffered from the editor's scissor and quill, and my damned ego got in the way of my re-writing it, and good friends – to re-print it.'

'Violated Sabbath,' in K.. Applebaum's 'Calendar.'

'The Dumb Woman,' (a story), a novella in Ben-Avigdor's 'Sifrei Agora.'
Sholom Aleichem sharply criticizes Peretz.
Makes the acquaintance of David Pinsky, which makes him very close to the upcoming launch of the Jewish Labor movement.

1893 "He who doesn't want to, will not die of Cholera" – a special pamphlet.
Several items in K.. Applebaum's 'Calendar.'
Begins to participate in the American 'Arbeiter Zeitung' and 'Zukunft.' Among other things printed there: 'Short Stories for Big Children,' 'Good Fortune in the Cellar Home,' 'An Old Jewish Lady,' 'The *Shtrymel*.'
The time of the cholera epidemic; participates actively in the committee to fight the cholera.

1894 Produced 10 'Festival Posters:' in honor of Passover, the arrow and the bow, greens for Shavuot, The Fast, The Comforting, The Shofar, Hosannah, The Hanukkah Candle, Shabbat-Oybs[213], Hamantash. Among other things that appeared there: 'The Rose,' 'The Night Watchmen,' (a song), 'Where do the following come: 'He Performs for the Devil?', 'The Kabbalists,' 'The Dream,' 'The Miracle of Hanukkah.'

Produced a collection 'Literature and Life,' where among other works are printed: 'In the Cellar Home,' (in the 'Arbeiter Zeitung' it was called 'Good Fortune in the Cellar Home'), 'Bontscheh Shweig,' 'Accomapnying the Bride,' 'The Shtrymel,' 'Short Stories for Grownups,' (10 parables) a variety of songs, original and translated. 'Ne'ilah,' in M. Spector's 'Hoyz-Fraynt;' 'Yossel, the Yeshivah Bokher,' and 'The Poor Bot,' (a collection of short stories, Vilna).

1895 Produced an additional 7 'Festival Posters:' *Kol Khamira*, [214] The Omer, First Harvest (*Bikkurim*), Tammuz, Happy New Year, Oneg Shabbat, Fifteen,[215] (a couple of folders appeared in 1896), where among other works can be found: 'Die Neitorin,' 'Dem Rebbn's Tzibbuk,' Stories from the Poorhouse,' 'If someone says He's Crazy, Believe It,' 'Got Married,' 'In Someone Else's Bridal Gown.'
Produced 'Die Yiddishe Bibliotek,' Volume III, where the following appear: 'The Ire of a Jewish Lady,' 'During the Epidemic,' 'Der Feter Shakhna un di Moomeh Yakhna.'etc. – Several of these cited pieces were reprinted in the New York-based 'Zukunft.'
Published the Hebrew Collection, 'HaKhetz' (The Arrow), and a collection of Hebrew love poems, 'The Organ.'

1896 Prepared a collection, 'Folksongs,' (42 songs) which were approved by the censor, but not produced.

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213 Nutmeats taken from the shell prior to the Sabbath, so as to not violate the sanctity of the Day of Rest by engaging in the 'work' of cracking the nuts.

214 From the Aramaic formulation at the time of cleaning out leavened products (*khametz*) before Passover.

215 An apparent reference to 15 Shevat, or *Tu BiShevat*, the Jewish Arbor Day.

His close friendship with Dinensohn, is cemented in this year in Warsaw.

1897 'Weavings of Love, (Stories and Letters) in the New York-based 'Ovnt-Blatt;' 'Stories of Yohanan the Teacher,' 'Who Loves Life, Loves Food,' ('HaTzefira').
His son, Lucian, travels to Berlin to study mathematics.

1898 Sets about collecting folk songs, publishes 6 Yiddish folk songs using the letters of the Latin alphabet, in the Vienna German Journal 'Urkvall,' with explanations and translations.

His father – Yehuda Peretz – born in 1825 in Lubartow – passes away.

1899 Begins to work at 'Jude,' where he publishes 'Eizikl Shokhet,' 'Bruneh the Accursed,' 'Nonsense Stories.'
He is arrested in August (together with M. Spector, at an illegal gathering), spends a couple of months in the 10th Warsaw Pavilion. Leaves the fortress an even more committed revolutionary.
Began to publish the Hebrew 'Writings,' in 'Toshia,' (4 Volumes) and completed it in 1901.

1900 In 'Jude,' publishes: 'If Not Higher,' 'Altvarg,' 'A Conversation,' 'The Downtrodden,' 'Hassidish,' 'Between Two Mountains,' 'The Evolution of a Melody,' '*HaNerot HaLalu* [216],'

He suffers a serious heart attack.

1901 His 25th Anniversary is celebrated in a grand manner on Lag B'Omer, (25 years of his literary activity – counted from his first Hebrew songs, and 5oth birthday), a group of his friends produce a complete collection of Peretz's 'Writings.' There are inspired articles and congratulations in Yiddish and Hebrew periodicals.
Appearing in 'Jude:' 'From the Mountain on Down,' 'A Tailor's Purim,' 'At a Summer Place,' 'Shakhna,' 'Three Wedding Canopies (two red and one black),' He, of Blessed Memory, those close to him.'
Publishes 'A Letter from Warsaw,' by way of Israel Schwergemit.
Finishes the Hebrew distribution in 'Toshia,' (4 volumes), pictures, drawings, stories.
Thanks to his heart ailment of the prior year, and this year's jubilee, he gets four weeks of vacation from the community...

1902 In 'Jude:' 'The Mishnah of the Hasidim,' 'R' Shlomo and His Little Stories,' 'he Donor,' 'How the Yeshiva in the Forest Went Broke,' (A re-worked foreign motif from Chekhov). Publish by the Biehn, and Y. L. Zufelig auspices, 'Cities and Towns,' ('Jude') and 'From Month to Month,' ('The Jewish Family').

1903 He begins to work at the 'Freind,' (the first daily Yiddish newspaper in Russia). Among other things, he publishes thee, further folk-related stories.
A large volume of Peretz's 'Writings' is published by 'Freind,' appearing in the Hebrew HaSholeakh,' 'The Destruction of the House of a *Tzaddik*,' – the first version of 'The Golden Chain.'
Made his first trip out of the country for purposes of getting medical attention.
Began his continuous contributions to the Hebrew, 'HaTzofeh,' (Warsaw).

1904 Updates the 'Yiddisheh Bibliotek,' as a monthly journal, and releases 6 editions. Where, the following appear: 'Yaakov Dinensohn,' (A character portrait), 'Doubts,' (A Song), 'R' Nahumkeh's Tales,' (7 chapters), etc. 'The Magician,' 'It's Good,' 'The Dog's Seder,' in the Petersburg 'Freind'; 'It's Burning,' (One Act) In 'Freind;' 'The four Good Stones,' in A. Reisen's collected works, 'Progress.'

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[216] 'These candles,' from a Hanukkah prayer.

Is translated into English by Helena Frank.

1905 A revolutionary storm and waves of pogroms – writes a series of articles for 'Der Tag' about real issues – Jewish and general problems.

1906 In April, Peretz's 'The Trial,' (a drama in four acts, a variation of 'The Golden Chain') is put on at the Warsaw Jewish Theater. David Herman takes part in the Yiddish theater production. In 'HaZamir,' Peretz's 'It's Burning,' is put on. Enters i9nto an agreement with American Yiddish theater about putting on his drama creations. Gets close to putting out three pamphlets of stories in the Minsk Verlag 'Kultur.'

1907 Produces the first version of 'At Night on the Old Marketplace,' in serial form in the Warsaw 'Romanzeitung.'
'The Golden Chain,' a drama about Hasidic life, in two acts. In 'white prose,' in the compendium, 'The World,' 1907, and also in 'Zukunft.'
Under his direction, his one act plays, 'It's Burning,' and 'sisters,' are put on in Plotsk, and he puts together, 'Champagnes.'
'Champagnes,' (One Act) is put on in New York.
Visits Lemberg and Krakow.
There is a large gathering at the Warsaw Philharmonic – three thousand attendees.

1908 His 'In Polish on the Leash,' appears (In 'Monthly Literary Writings').
Participates in the Czernowitz language conference (Vice-Chairman), where he appears to give reports and participates various undertakings in a row of cities in Galicia.
Provided for release 'All Works,' through Warsaw 'Progress' in 10 volumes, completed in 1913. Volume I – Folk Tales, Volume II – The Times, Volume III – Dramas, Volume IV – Adam & Eve, Volume V – Hasidic, Volume VI – Sketches and Pictures, Volume VII – For Young and Old, Volume VIII – Essays & Feuilletons, Volume IX – Old and New, Volume X – From the Home to the Street.

1909 Began to produce 'The Yiddish Weekly' (4 issues appeared), where his well-known article on Yiddish and Hebrew appeared.
Begins to plan a trip to America to organize a Yiddish distribution for all countries. The trip does not come about.
Closes down his historic home at Zegalna 1, and moves to Allee Jerusalimski 80.

1910 Creates a society to build a Yiddish theater.
A new version of 'Monish' in K.. Applebaum's 'Theater-World.'
Published the collection books, 'Yiddish,' (two volumes).
Visits a variety of cities with debaters.
A triumphal trip to Kiev.
His brother Chaim-Joseph is killed by peasants. His brother Jonah-Yehoshua and sister Hessia Goldstein – are in the town of their birth, Zamość.
Begins the translation of the *Megillot.*

1911 A novel, 'Dame Mit Meer.' A polemic with the assimilation in Warsaw.

1912 Visits Vilna and other cities.
Takes an active part in the election campaign of the fourth 'General Legislature,' appearing at election assemblies, printed aggressive articles, and had to contend with a great deal of worry and attacks.
Published, 'Koret,' 'Mottel Prinz,' 'In the Fresh Air,' etc. in 'Freind' and in 'Zukunft.'
Turns over (but not for long) 'In my little Corner' of 'Freind.'
Partakes in the struggle during the Polish-Jewish boycott.

A sharp conflict with his employer – the Warsaw community – because of his mixing in politics.

1913 Solomon's 'Song of Songs' translated into Yiddish in 'Zukunft.'
'The Apron,' 'A Dream of a Litvak Teacher,' in 'Zukunft.'
Begins to produce 'My Memoirs,' in the Vilna 'Jewish World.' Send an inspirational greeting to the 'Jewish Publishing Society' in Philadelphia, which in 1906 produced a volume of Peretz's stories in English (translated by Helena Frank).
Selected as an honorary member of the Society of 'Disseminators of the Enlightenment.'
The last version of 'The Golden Chain.'

1914 Produces the three-act drama, 'The Hunchback' (in 'Dos Leben').
Meets with Sholom Aleichem in Warsaw and became fast friends with him.
With the outbreak of the World War, pursuit and libels against Jews begin.
Homeless Jews flee to Warsaw. Peretz throws himself into the relief work for the homeless, Helps to found homes for children and writes children's songs for them.
Gives away valuable personal possessions from his home for the relief initiative.
Translates 'Ecclesiastes.'
Produces two new chapters of 'My Memoirs.'
Riveleh Peretz, neé Levin, his mother, a descendant of a distinguished family (from the *Bialer Rebbe*), born in 1828 – dies.

1915 Publishes 'Ne'ilah in Gehenna.' (In 'Jewish World,' Vilna).
On April 3, at 9:30AM, on the third day of *Hol HaMoed* Passover, he suddenly died of a heart attack. He died while sitting at his writing table. On the table there was a sheet of paper with the first lines of a children's song:

*"Shtiller, shtiller, danken vil er..."* [217]

Approximately 100 thousand people took part in his funeral.

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Note:

These biographical and bibliographical facts were assembled on the basis of a whole array of sources – for sure they are not all inclusive. Without a doubt, much is missing here – but we have taken care that the most significant points in the life of I. L. Peretz and his creations were not omitted.

[217] "More and more quietly, he wishes to express his thanks...."

# Peretz Has Died![218]

**By M. Olgin**

*Page 494:* *An artistic postcard in the style of Peretz's 'Seamstresses,' portrayed by H. Goldberg, printed by 'Hidia' Verlag, Warsaw.*

Peretz has died. It is a terrifying thought!

He was not even that old. He was full of strength and fire. He was in the midst of a restless, full-colored work. Peretz has died! The thought of death was so far away when one beheld Peretz. In that energetic, not-quite-entirely-gray head, in those childlike eyes, so full of capability, in the entire rich play of his visage there was so much youth, life, hope, striving, desire! Peretz – and death, Peretz – and a cold grave! What a terrifying thought!

Peretz was once received in Vilna at a holiday for young workers. The entire gathering was delirious with joy. He was still on the stairs, and they had only heard that he was coming, when they started to shout like wild: 'Peretz, Peretz, Peretz!' It was one single shout, like from an overfilled breast. In a welcoming address, one person mistakenly said that Peretz was sixty-four years old, so when Peretz subsequently replied, he began half-jokingly:

– I have a complaint to the speaker. He has made me older by two years. At my advanced age, this is no small matter. There is still so much to do, and here comes someone, who takes away two whole years from me...

The Complete Peretz could be seen in those words. 'There is still so much to do...' Such a rich world seethed and boiled inside of him. The wellspring of creativity bubbled with such life within him. And every time, newer, and every time richer horizons were opened up before the eyes. And he rushed to tell all of us, what is unfolding itself in front of him. He was young, our Peretz, like a strong tree, which keeps on growing, and suddenly – the incomprehensible death... Peretz has died. It is not only a writer that has died, a dramatist, a lyricist, a creator of folklore tales, a father of a new direction in Yiddish literature; it is not only a thinker that has died, a publicist, and a man of the community, not only a brilliant friend has died – a heartfelt close friend to all of us – **An entire world has died.** Peretz was **more** than the sum of all of what he did over the course of several decades. You always felt that he is richer [than that], that he consisted of something **greater** and **more important**. You always knew, that the deeper you entered into his world, the more you would discover, ever greater treasures will light up before your eyes.

And it was a joy and a source of pride to wander this very large universe, and to behold its wonder.

Peretz has died. The Jews of Russia will greet his passing with heartache. A single, great sorrow, over the death of one, will for a while overshadow the sorrow for thousands of less significant lives, that are being lost now. In the darkness of Jewish life, a great star has been extinguished.

Will the Jews of America mourn? Do they know who Peretz is? Do they love Peretz? Is he woven up in their souls? Does he touch the most idealistic strings of their hearts?

Jewish New York rustles and is humming. Streams of people pouring about. Do they feel any ache? Do they know that a great man has left the ranks of Jewry? Will they come home and tell their children that this is a special day? The city rustles with activity, the street is humming. Has the pain, at least for one minute, darkened the light of day?

Peretz has died. It is so difficult to speak at an open grave. It is so painful to have to relate what every Jew should have known for a long time, and a long time ago absorbed as a sacred thing into his soul, into his Holy of Holies.

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[218] Author's footnote: This article, by M. Olgin, appeared in the New York [Daily] "Forward," on April 6, 1915, immediately after the news of Peretz's death reached America

Who is Peretz? This was the man who helped the Jewish people obtain greater attention for itself. This is the man who raised the Jewish people to a higher plane of human existence.

He did this, not by agitation, not through songs about '*Atah Vekhartanu.*[219]' He took the poor Jewish vernacular language, and said: I create from you a complete instrument, a wondrous tool for creating work, to express all the highest and most substantive, and holiest feelings and thoughts and dreams and searching, and striving, of a contemporary human soul. And that is how it became. And the language began to bloom, with flowers, and light, and sunshine and to ring with thousands of notes. And he approached the treasure chest of the people's soul, and said: I take out from you that which is the most dear and the most beautiful, that which lies hidden within you, and I will melt it down, and recast it in the form of my spirit, and I will show the world, and let it know thereby, what sort of treasures we possess. And that is how it was. And a whole menu of folk tales and folk legends, and folklore stories and folk poetry, came to fill our world, and awakened our wonder and our joy, and our happiness and our pride.

Peretz made us rich with the wealth of our own people. And Peretz did more for the Jewish people than was done in past generations.

Peretz has died. A great Jew has passed away. But this Jew did not isolate himself from the surrounding world. The Yiddishist of all the Jews, was the most modern, European man among all his young friends. Peretz nourished his mind from European culture, and his heart – from the Jewish one. He acquired what was beautiful, fine and harmonious, that manifests itself in his work. Peretz dreamed of a people, which lives its own unbroken cultural life, but into this very life, it had imported all the best, that he could find over the large, wide world, in all eras, since mankind began to create beauty and great things. Peretz personally was the golden chain, that binds the Jewish people to the larger culture of the outside world.

Peretz has died. Jewish workers will greet his passing with special pain. Because Peretz's heart always was with them, with the fighters for freedom. His thoughts permitted him to construct theories, that were alien to the workers, but his soul always beat in rhythm with the struggling masses, who are building a future in the light. Peretz helped the Jewish labor movement, not only with words, not only with golden poetry, but also with action. He was '**our**' Peretz in the ranks of organized labor.

Peretz has died. But do not cry. Don't wail. It is not with this that we can do homage to Peretz. We have to **live** – that means **to fight**. That means to **build** a new Jewish life; that means to transplant all the best that illuminates mankind. To live – that means – to **love** mankind, to love the downtrodden and the enslaved, to help that person feel the human being inside himself, to straighten his back, and go forward into the light, to the sun...

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[219] From the prayer, "Thou hast chosen us..." as an indication of an appeal to Divine will.

# The National Significance of I. L. Peretz [220]

**By Dr. Ch. Zhitlovsky[221]**

The committee of Jewish writers, which arranged for this memorial evening to honor the memory of the unforgettable I. L. Peretz, has accorded me the honor – to place the first cornerstone on the fresh grave, around which we have here gathered in spirit.

I have permitted myself to assume the obligation to give you a short outline, a general characterization of Peretz's life, his works and activities, in order that his image remain alive before our eyes, and in order that the great loss to our people and our literature be made clearer, as a result of his so premature departure.

I have assumed this obligation, but I did not take into account that the time has not yet come when such an undertaking can be accomplished. The totality of Peretz's life, of his literary works, and his visible activities, cannot yet be carried out, because now, we will first – all of us who take an interest in the development of Yiddish literature and the path of modern Jewish history – begin to seriously examine what Peretz has bequeathed to us, and to assess what in it is a product of the times and evanescent, and what is eternal and indestructible; what Peretz represented to his generation only, and what he became for his people and possibly for all of mankind.

This is not among the lighter tasks. Peretz's work is too multi-dimensional and variegated to be encompassed in a single glance. Peretz's soul was a wondrous organism with hundreds of vibrating nerve endings, always alert, always

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220 Author's Footnote: A speech given in April 1916 at the Memorial Evening in Carnegie Hall, New York, at the end of the first moth of mourning after Peretz's death. It follows the manuscript from which Dr. Ch. Zhitlovsky read. – Ed.

221 Excerpt from: THE THEORIES OF BER BOROCHOV AND THEIR PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH LABOR MOVEMENT by Abraham G. Duker. (the following was published as the introduction to the 1937 edition of *Nationalism and the Class Struggle*, published in New York by the Young Poale Zion Alliance of America):

> The most significant effort of this early period to bring the Jewish needs to the attention of active socialists was made by Chaim Zhitlovsky, who was one of the founders and leading spirits of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Beginning with the publication of an essay in 1887, which dealt with the Essenes from an economic point of view, this thinker developed his interpretation of Jewish life and socialism which so greatly influenced the Jewish labor movement at a much later stage. Zhitlovsky maintained that "scientific" Marxism was not a scientific system, but merely a metaphysical theory. He denied the need and utility of the theory of economic materialism for the socialist movement. His approach to socialism was of the agrarian ethical variety. From the point of view he denied the "iron laws" of Marxism about the disappearance of the Jewish people. He maintained that the Jewish people had always fought for its national existence and that religion was merely a means for this struggle. He saw the need for a Jewish progressive renaissance, the aim of which he visualized in the establishment of a secular, Yiddish speaking, mainly agricultural, group life. The main obstacle in the way was assimilation which to him was at the same time the main cause of anti-Semitism. Under capitalistic Russia, the Jewish bourgeoisie was bound to increase in number and to become Russianized. The Jews thus would be identified by the masses with reaction. Assimilationist socialism took away the best elements of the Jewish nation and forced them to work for their ideas among the non-Jews, whereas they could have done this same work among their own people. The return of the Jewish intelligentsia to Jewish nationalism would, in his opinion, revive agriculture and the Yiddish language among the Jews, and would eliminate the artificial religious factor in their survival. The best way of fitting this scheme into the frame of the Galut was the orientation of the *Narodnik* movement, which was based on agricultural Russia, and later of the Socialist Revolutionary movement which had the most liberal nationality policy. Zhitlovsky''s earlier efforts at organization and propaganda failed to bring any direct results within the Jewish labor movement. He is known better for his later contributions.

vibrating, each nerve with its own resonance. What those hundreds of nerves produced from amongst themselves was a symphony of notes, that resonate within us opposite: the general human struggle of his time, the suffering, hopes and the battle for victory of his Jewish people, the longings of his generation, the problems of his calling, the eternal esoteric questions of human thought in general.

The alert and constantly vibrating nerves of Peretz's soul would constantly and thirstily absorb all of this, and all of this elicited a special resonance within him, a very personal Peretz melody, processed through his own personally unique creative spirit.

Peretz the thinker, the artist, the Jew; Peretz the lyricist, the dramatist, the creator of the Yiddish short novel; Peretz the romantic, the realist, the symbolizer; Peretz the religious mystic, and the free-spirited agnostic; Peretz the struggler for social justice, for a democratic society, and Peretz – the intellectual aristocrat, the herald of heroic individualism; Peretz the protagonist against Hellenistic esthetics, and the advocate of a free life in this world, in which pleasure was enjoyed; Peretz, the *Rashi*[222] of Hasidism; Peretz the satirist and comic; Peretz the prophet and the standard bearer of the tragic ethic.

And how many Peretzes are there, that I have not enumerated! And how many more Peretzes would have seen the light of day, if death had not called him away from us so soon! And everywhere, in all of his richly colored manifestations, he is Peretz, Peretz, Peretz – a sharp-tipped arrowhead, that slices through the air with an ominous hiss, almost always hitting its mark.

First, each of these aspects of his persona need to be examined, in which Peretz's spirit was revealed to us, before we will be able to weave them into a single harmonized image, before we will be able to recognize the true core of his soul in each of them, in which he constantly strove to reach greatness and height, 'and even higher than that!'

Therefore, my task cannot be to even try and give a general characterization of the deceased, especially so soon after his death, especially in this small, short amount of time, which it is possible to allow for us on this evening.

Instead, I will take the liberty – to draw on your attention to a single point, which now can be made public with a specific measure of clarity and certainty – the national significance of Peretz's works. By this, I do not have in mind his opinions about the minds of our people, about the forces that influence him, about the 'bloodstained beauty' of his tragic struggle in the Diaspora, about the idea of his past, about the worth of his story for all of mankind, about the tasks that stood before him, and the ways that he should carry them out.

As a consequence of all of these issues, Peretz, at various times, expressed various thoughts, always interesting, even if not always absolutely correct. What I mean here by national significance, is not what Peretz thought of the Jewish people, as well as not the specific instances of the treasure in his legacy, which he bequeathed to the nation, but rather, what he became for her, what he did for her by producing all of his works, perhaps personally not being aware of the worth of what he did. I refer here to the meaning of Peretz for our national existence, and our further free development, his role in the national awakening of the people. And when I speak here of Peretz's significance to our national existence, I do not here refer to our political and national struggle against the ill winds form the external world that is hostile to us, which does not even wish to concede us the right to even live a little. I have in mind here our **internal** struggle; how we wrestle with ourselves, our pain-laden deliberations that stem from the Jewish-national Hamlet-problem: to exist, or not to exist in the world, to exist as a nation?

I know only too well, that thanks to God, we have a large younger generation, who cannot even conceive of how such a question can be posed. Peretz also could not understand this. To begin with, he came to the people so filled with a belief in his own life forces, that the so-called **Hamlet**-problem – if I don't make a mistake – did not touch his person in the slightest.

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222 Invoking an analogy with the great commentator, Rabbi Shlomo ben Isaac of 12th century Troyes, France.

But the fact that Peretz was free of this issue, and that we now have a large younger generation, over which the sense of national resignation has no control, is not yet an indication that the 'To Be or Not To Be,' problem has not stood in the foreground of Jewish thinking, or that it has now entirely vanished from the Jewish intellectual horizon.

The national integrity of Peretz's soul, its purity from any Hamlet issue in connection with our national survival, was an unusual exception in that era, and the large younger generation which today does not understand how one can even admit a shed of doubt enter one's mind about the force of Jewish life, how one can, even for a moment, become preoccupied – even if it is a shadow of a suicidal thought – this, full-of-life, certain-of-life, young Jewish generation must, however, not forget, that it came to life in a time where already, which is already suffused with that nationalistic-vital influence, which streamed out of Peretz's activities and the activities of his comrades.

It was a difficult time, a tragic time in the history of our people in Russia, when Peretz set out on his journey as a Yiddish literary figure. The pogroms of the '80s had just been quieted down, but the reverberations within the Jewish soul, which they evoked, began to spread like fire, even further, and more so. And all the disarrayed Jewish question were coalesced in the one single dark problem, which obscured every clear perception of the future: to be or not to be? To continue to spin out the independent thread of Jewish historical life, or to abandon it, leaving it to gradually weave itself into the fabric of the larger secular history and allow it to be lost without any reaction?

I want you to understand me here correctly.

The great question of national survival and assimilation had existed a long time before the pogroms. Ut it dis not exist in the form of an Hamlet-problem. This was a question with two entirely well-established answers, which were in conflict with one another. The older generation, the one raised with nationhood in mind, the religiously observant and even a large part of the Enlightened [generation], didn't break their heads over this question: to be or **not to be**? For them, they had a clear and vigorous reply: **To be!**

And the progressive generation, who with all its senses was integrated into the general progressive culture of the land, was also not particularly disturbed by the skeptical and pessimistic ailment. Just as proud, just as sharp, just as clear, and strong as the older generation, it shouted out the answer: **Not to be!**

First, the pogroms ripped out the certainty of the platform from underfoot. They confused the minds of both the nationalists and the assimilationists.

This was the time when the arch-assimilationist and Russifier, L. Landau suddenly detected that a chasm had opened underfoot, which had completely swallowed up his ideal, by which he had conducted his entire life; when Shimon Prug wrote his feuilleton 'Домой!' (Back to Home!), and a well-known political emigrant from Berlin, under the pseudonym Gershon Badaness, in 'Восход' (The Ascent) wrote his 'Записки Очепенаца,' (Messages from someone who is split off), where he undertook , in the name of the Jewish intelligentsia to trade gifts with the Russian intelligentsia that they had engaged in before. 'Here, take back your Nekrasov[223], and give us back our Karl Marx!'

This was also the time, when in the air of Jewish social consciousness, the mournful tones of I. L. Gordon still rang: 'For whom Do I Toil?' That I. L. Gordon, who together with many of his generation hoped to create a bulwark for progressive survival in the world by means of a **Hebrew** literature.

'To be?' – the loyal children of the people thought. 'But how?' Where doe one get the strength to put up with **that** sort of an existence? Is it possibly better to make an end of our national life, to eternally exhausting ourselves?

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223 Nikolai Alekseyevich Nekrasov (1821-78) Russian poet, editor, and publisher. Nekrasov sought to improve social conditions in Russia, and his powerful verses were used as slogans by revolutionaries.

'Or not to be?' – the assimilationists thought. 'But how? What does one do, when the very earth doesn't take us? When she spits us back out?'

These two responses became transformed into two questions. And from them, the **Hamlet**-problem grew out. And at the time that the two directions – the nationalist and the assimilationist – were pinching themselves in the cheek[224] – and assumed their respective colors – the extreme assimilationists – the color of the socialist revolution, which embraced all peoples, and from all appearances, us as well, and the extreme nationalists – the color of **Zion**, of the belief in the Holy Land, where our energies will once again be rekindled, as in our youth, – the element of progressive activists of the younger generation walked about with the poison of the Hamlet-problem in its breast.

And not only the younger generation. It is possible to demonstrate historically, that the entirety of the Jewish people, at that point in its life, stood at the crossroads between 'being' and 'not being.' The more assimilation lost in theory, it gained in strength in practical life, it began to tear away increasing amounts of youthful energy from the body of the people, as Jewish life became more dilute and impoverished.

If our nation were truly old, and had run its course, and without the internal energy to take on a further struggle, then all the fiery calls of the small camp of *Hovevei-Zionists*, and the first Hebraists, those who roused them from their random hither-thither plight, and pulled them with all their might from the life in a Diaspora to independent freedom, would not have helped. Our people would have expired from too great a loss of blood, which the force of assimilation had sucked from it, day-in and day-out.

But our nation lived on, apparently having within it, a wellspring of creative, seething life forces, and from within itself, inside its own being, worked out an antidote to assimilation, a life-essence, which held off, or diminished the bloodletting and began to heal the wounds, which assimilation had inflicted upon it.

The new life-essence, whom no one, or **almost** no one had anticipated, and had begun to circulate in its veins, disseminating the healing power throughout its entire body – was founded on and stands on the raising of the Yiddish language and the creation of Yiddish literature.

A nation creates through its best children, and this new healing power it had, against assimilation, it also permitted its best children to express, who laid down the foundation for the new Yiddish language and for the new Yiddish literature. Peretz's significance for the national existence of the people therefore lies in this alone, in that he was one of the most important creators of the Yiddish literature; that we cannot conceive of the Yiddish literature without him, just as we cannot imagine it without Mendele Mokher Sforim and without Sholom Aleichem. W cannot here, delve into a detailed examination , as to which of our three classical writers is the greatest, but in the name of historical truth, we must aver as follows: that Mendele Mokher Sforim was for a long time nothing more than an interesting episode. Yes, if you please, a literary ocean. With his entire geniality, he would have remained a curiosity, were it not for the following development of writing in Yiddish. The existence of Mendele's work, did not yet make certain the existence of a literature. Also, Sholom Aleichem could have remained merely an episode, a rich, and richly-nuanced oasis in a sandy desert, if a **tradition** of creativity in writing had not started with Peretz. It appears that the onset of Peretz's creativity, like a tiny mountain stream, which cascades down from boulder to boulder, and in every place awakened keys and pools with its splashing sounds, which gleefully responded to his freedom-call, and as one with him, poured together into the currently might stream. Peretz genuinely earned the privilege from his people, that with his writing he will be bound up – not the act of enabling the creation of a Yiddish literature – he shares in this recognition with Mendele Mokher Sforim and Sholom Aleichem – but rather the uninterruptedness, the continuity of Yiddish literature, the transformation of a line of isolated episodes into a flow of development and life, which gives life and development [potential] to the people.

Yes, the Yiddish language and the Yiddish literature are the life-essence which guards us from death; they are *Khayeynu VeOrekh Yamenu*, our lives and the continuity of our days, as **a nation**, and not as a religious sect. How can

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[224] That is to say, 'congratulating themselves for being so clever.'

a nation exist otherwise, and fight for its survival, how can it otherwise carry out its own historical life, when it is dispersed over the entire earth, when it does not have its own corner that the people can call its own?

Regrettably, I cannot here, permit myself to go into the entire depth of the problem, about which so much has been said in recent times. But a few more words must be said about it, because if not, the matter of Peretz's national significance will not be clear to us.

Our people have lived in exile for two millennia. What was the force that enabled it to sustain its existence for this period of time? All of us know the answer to the question. The religion was the wellspirng of its national life. This is without a doubt. But in what did the life-essence of the religion lie? Most of us believe that the life-essence laid in established religious values, and specific supernatural national aspirations about a Messiah, and the wondrous release from exile. This is also certainly true. Were it not for those hopes and beliefs, the religion could not sustain itself. But it was not through these alone that the individual parts of the people were welded into a single organism, not through them alone did it hold each individual within the confines of a nation of people. Its wondrous power of protection stood in that, which is unique to our people – permit me to refer to that half-unknown-creating collective-force, which dominates our historical life, – the unique aspect of our people, developed from the religion an establish protocol for Jewish life, Jewish rituals and customs, Jewish garb and ceremonies, which enveloped the Jew from all sides, and sharply set him apart from the surrounding world, so that he was compelled to do so, willingly, or unwillingly. With every breath that he inhaled, with every pulse beat of his heart open and demonstrating to the entire world his membership in the Jewish nation, and his solidarity with Jewish historical destiny.

The religious beliefs and hopes, – who knows how deeply they prospered in the soul of the masses? But no matter how little the soul of the masses were nourished by them, their **life,** every move of their lives, was purely Jewish, and it was this that sustained our existence. The Jewish life of the masses was not less significant and maybe a lot more important than the belief and hope of the intelligentsia.

From a national standpoint, the wagon-driver, who greased his wheels while wearing his prayer shawl and phylacteries, was a much more important and prominent symbol of national being, that the Vilna Gaon, who in the same prayer shawl and phylacteries sat for an entire day and studies the Torah. It is for this reason, that the wise Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev instinctively so extolled his ardently-loved people of Israel, when he heard about the wagon-driver that greases the wheels in his prayer shawl and phylacteries.

But the Jewish religion, – regardless of what its religious meaning may or may not be to the individual Jew, – has entirely lost its sway as a national force. As is the case with every nation, it passed into the purview of the individual, and no longer has any power, and can never again have that power – to set the direction for the individual's life. It can no longer compel adherence to its directives. And even among those, who believe in it today, it has ceased to play the role of a national symbol. It has gone inside, into the heart. In external culture, in language and thought, an entirely pious and observant Jew can be assimilated, entirely assimilated into the external alien ambience in which he lives. And if all Jews everywhere were to become like him, – and the religion can no longer guard against this – we would have a religious ensemble of 'Israelites,' but it could be possible that there would be an end to the Jewish people, if not to their existence, which might be sustained in a diminished way, there would be an end to Jewish historical life, to our greater national development.

Once again, the objective grew to confront the genius of our people: to work out a force for survival of our people, that will not prevent the infusion of European culture into our lives, that should tie everyone to the nation, regardless of what he believes of hopes, – to work out a set way of life, which should be able to sustain itself on its own merits, having its own momentum, and should grow thanks to its own innermost vital essence.

And this very new force for survival was found, I say, in the Yiddish language, and in the Yiddish literature, which sustain themselves today by their own critical mass, carry themselves forward under their own impetus, and grow, indeed, thanks to their own internal juices. A Jew, who thinks in Yiddish, speaks Yiddish, and fills his soul with the spiritual products, that are developed in the Yiddish language and Yiddish literature, is more nationally attached and

bound to the national existence of the people that the wagon-driver who wears his prayer shawl and phylacteries. For him it is true, letter by letter, that with each breath that he takes in, with every pulse-beat of his heart, that he **must** demonstrate his allegiance to the Jewish people, and his solidarity with Jewish historical destiny.

As a Jewish literary figure, as one of those who created the Yiddish literary language, and Yiddish literature, as one of those 'who enriched it with so many treasures that have to nourish the Jewish soul, Peretz himself became a part of that historical force, that helps us sustain our life and helps us in our continuing historical development.

But it is not only with this that his national significance is defined. No matter how powerful the objective nationalistic impact power of a unique, rich literature may be – in this respect, all Yiddish writers make their influence felt, no matter what the content of their writing might be, more or less nationalistic, – we must differentiate between its prior impact, which arises from the Yiddish language, in which it is created, and that **direct** impact that it has, which is tied up with its national propaganda value.

A national awakening is not created solely by itself. As is the case with all historical manifestations, it must be carried forward by people, and not by individuals, but by an entire generation...it must be embodies in the thoughts and feelings of the aggressive and stormy, future-rich-laden youth. It is in the seasoning and education of that youth, which carried around the Hamlet-problem in its breast, that the great vigor of Yiddish literature lies.

Publicists and artists must play an especially important role here. The publicist must first apply **logic**, appealing to the understanding of the reader and listener, while the artist must influence the emotions. And how often, are the emotions almost always stronger than the intellect, and how often the thought processes are subordinate to feelings, and it is for this reason that the role of the national artist is always more meaningful than the role of the publicists and the thinkers. The man who is ardent about national life, who wishes to spin the Jewish historical thread further, is born within us out of a nationalist feeling. Nationalist **thought** merely declares the 'why' and the 'how.'

Peretz was a thinker and an artist, and he placed both of his capabilities at the service of the nationalist re-awakening. The thinker made an impact directly through the propaganda of national thought, the artist – indirectly: by portraying Jewish life. But there is no way to evaluate the degree to which the indirect artistic path had an impact that was deeper and more powerful than the direct route of the publicist.

Peretz was a great artist, and the power of every great artist is grounded in his ability to use clear images to burn out or burn in living-vibrating feelings in our hearts. Peretz had that power within himself in a very important measure and all of his stark and sharply limned images awakened in the readers a clear and sharp national feeling, which just happened, in his time, and even on into our time, to be so necessary and remains so necessary for the young Hamletized generation.

What doe that feeling consist of? That nationalist feeling is not actually made up of only one emotion, but of a whole menu of moods, anxieties, and suffering, out of which, in the end, the will to national existence crystallized.

My personal involvement, – and it just happens that in my life, I was afforded the opportunity to be close to that generation, which has, – I have no other word for this other than: **pained out** the national awakening in their souls. -- my personal involvement with that generation taught me, that all the new moods, anxieties and suffering, that began to seethe in its breast, grouped themselves around four clearly expressed emotions, which bound the souls of the young generation and to this day continue to elicit this attachment to the historical destiny of our people.

This is first, the feeling of **compassion** and **sorrow**, which envelopes the heart, when the entire vista of **suffering** in which our people find themselves, unfolds before an individual. Secondly, is the feeling of **love,** of simple human affection for a specific type of Jewish person, that manifests itself when one poses the question, to whom can he more easily pour out his soul – with Jews with whom he is acquainted, or non-Jews, among whom he lives? And third, is the feeling of **pride**, which reveals itself at the time an individual makes visible the incomparable creative power that resides within our people, the incomparably important role that our people have played in the history of mankind and continues

to play to this day in all fields of human culture, and when he suddenly apprehends the contrast, that exists between our national **value** to mankind and our national **circumstances** [among the peoples of the earth]. Fourth, is the feeling of **responsibility**, when a person is so totally integrated into his people, that he not only takes pride in those things that are praiseworthy, and not only is he personally deeply offended by every offense or abuse, that are heaped upon us for no cause, but also sees what appear to be the **deficiencies** of his people, sees its failings and incorrect ways, and his heart is drenched in blood, and with every breath he perceives that this is not someone else's worry, someone else's responsibility, but rather that it is **my** worry and **my** responsibility, that **I** must see to it that it is removed from us. This is that feeling of responsibility for the life and the entire consciousness of the people, which rang with such might in the words of reproof of the prophets and in Bialik's 'From Sorrow and Anger.'

The limited time and boundaries of my presentation today do not permit me to pause any longer at these nationalist feelings, which played such a role in the national re-awaking process of our youth. I must immediately proceed to that other, very noteworthy point, for which I have raised this entire issue.

It is truly noteworthy: as you read the work of our great classicists, Mendele Mokher Sforim, Sholom Aleichem, and I. L. Peretz, and you ask yourself, what fundamental harmonic in emotion do they elicit with their portraits of Jewish life, – it would appear to you, as if the three of them had conferred together and indeed had created a well-worked out plan, and divided the work among themselves: 'You, Mendele, illustrate accurately how we stand in the world, what kind of a fine fix our people find themselves. Not too much! Let them have a bit of a taste of the theme of that life, which has fallen to us as our portion. And you, Sholom Aleichem, show them the simple flesh-and-blood Jew, the day-to-day man-in-the-street of ours, how he stands, how he goes about, with all his foibles, and complaints, with all his failings and virtues. Let us see if they are able to recognize their very own flesh and blood. And you, Peretz, lift up the curtain a little, which blocks the **spiritual** life from our people. Show them, what sort of wonderful forces roil within themselves, or have only recently stopped bubbling. Reveal to them the unlimited heavens that rise above our heads, and the twinkling stars that sparkle in them. Let us see how this speaks to their temperament.'

In reality, as we understand, these three classicists did not get together , and each one created his work out of the innermost driving forces of his talent, mirroring the same character and the character of his times, and perhaps gave not even a thought to the impact that his work would have on the process of national revival, on the struggle against assimilation and the emotions of the progressive generation.

Each one of them did their own thing. But behind each one of them, there stood the life needs of the Jewish people, as it stands behind every creative person and activist, and invisibly guides his hand. The classic period of our Yiddish literature was a protest against the ideas of the first period of the Enlightenment, which led to assimilation.

The raîson d'être of the first period of the Enlightenment consisted of the compelling need to incorporate the foundations of the progressive human culture within itself, and the compelling need to run to the [outside] unfamiliar for education and culture, and the compelling need to **discredit** the foundations of the old Jewish way of life. This called out the ideals of assimilation, the discrediting of every [aspect] of Jewish life in general. The first heroes of the Enlightenment period could not look at the old world in any other way, that is, the entirety of the people in olden times, except as a host of 'unenlightened people,' 'fanatics,' and 'abandoned souls,' and upon the small number of the educated, on the fighters and heroes of the 'rationalism,' as the sole representatives of the kind of person that **must** flee their own home, until everyone will become '[real] people.' In addition, the raîson d'être was added that the intelligentsia that fled, had to reverse itself, and return home and align its wisdom and knowledge to the specific issues of the Jewish people. The Jewish people, ignoring the outmoded forms of its way of life, had to be rehabilitated in the open, progressive, knowledge-based sense, and in the minimal sense of the classical period in our Yiddish literature, had to consist of the rehabilitation of the old, Jewish world.

Mendele Mokher Sforim, Sholom Aleichem, and I. L. Peretz do that, each in his own way, according to the individual elements of their character and according to the situation of their time, in which the fundamental harmonic of their talent was determined.

Mendele's talent was forged in a time, when the community still had control over Jewish minds, when the masses were mired in the swamp of ignorance, inhuman poverty, neglect, absolute alienation from the world, and bereft of any source of a secure, respectable living.

Mendele perceives how porous it is to demand education, enlightenment, high-minded goals from a mass that is starving and enmeshed in dreams. He sees the social foundations of Jewish life, and criticizes the ideals of the Enlightenment period with the simple maxim: 'Don't provide for dancing before providing for eating.' Neither a protest, nor any words of reproof, elicit the Jewish condition from him, rather endless **sorrow** and **compassion**, and that feeling is what he brings into the heart.

Sholom Aleichem's talent is established in a somewhat later period. The liberal reforms of the 60's and 70's begin to straighten out the hunchbacked nature of Jewish life a little bit. The struggle for Enlightenment has ceased, or has become weakened; elements of Russian education penetrate into the circle of religious *balebatim;* the economic condition improves; one becomes 'civilized,' a little at a time, and the future appears to portend quiet development. To all appearances, there are no great problems being created. Sholom Aleichem rehabilitates the old world, not by becoming its advocate and spokesman, who stands up for and defends it – it is not being attacked from within, – but through the way in which he portrays its Jewish-**human** character, that he **loves,** the masses, and its own special cultural life. And by portraying them in the light of his love, these images elicit the same emotions of love from us.

It is the stamp of the end of the eighties that lies on the talent of I. L. Peretz, when all of the bitterness of the period of pogroms had already entered our veins, and the problem of national re-awakening had come to a halt in life, and demanded a clear answer to the 'To be or **not to be**'....

Peretz rehabilitates the old world, that is, the entire nation, in its **historical** sense, and he accomplishes this by taking us, rather, to the closest period of our historical creativity, to the period of Hasidism, to that period on which the arrows of Enlightenment criticism hailed down with such intensity. He immersed himself into its life, refreshing its heroically replete spiritual length and depth, he elicits, as his own breast swells with pride for the creative power of our people, and unwittingly, he awakens the self-same pride in us, and forces us to bow our heads before those who are so full of heroism in our creative Jewish power.

If one takes Mendele into our hearts, it is possible out of sorrow and compassion for the living to fall into a state of pessimistic resignation; if one permits Sholom Aleichem to influence our feelings, our hearts are lightened, and the love of the people leads to an unclear [sense of] security. But if one becomes thoroughly impregnated with Peretz, by his great sense of respect for the historic Jewish struggle, for his unquenchable thirst to action and victory, then it becomes a **calamity** to even think, that such a people should disappear. Out entire being revolts against such a thought, and every drop of our blood becomes ignited with that same unending desire, to carve out a standard of living for our people that will prevent its force from being splintered, not to be pulverized over the seven days of the week, but rather that it can be consolidated in a single basis of its own, that will remain in permanent parity with the bases of other peoples, working out new treasures for human progress. In this lay Peretz's special significance to the important historical process in the modern life of our people, for the process of national re-awakening.

Dear audience! I know that with this little bit that I have said here, I have not delved very far into that substantive theme: Peretz's national significance – that I have set out for myself. But for this evening, it is sufficient when we have touched upon the surface, because this alone also can give credence to our mourning and deep sorrow at the time we stand at the side of his fresh grave.

However, dear audience! Mourning and sorrow is not the only emotion that we are living through. We are now living through an heightened moment, which is given to us with the death of every man of immortal stature, a moment, when we feel that not only has something that is so precious to us vanished forever, but also that through that persona, something that is even more dear, raising his head with pride, having peered into eternity itself, and demands his right to immortality. This is a moment, in which the death of the body confronts the immortality of the spirit in the [national] memory of a people, in which an individual life pours itself together with the mystery of the creativity of an entire nation.

# Our Peretz [225]

**By B. Mikhalevich**

For us, this is neither a phrase, nor bragging. We do not mean to monopolize Peretz, or to 'requisition' him. We are simply stating a fact, we are setting down definitively what is reality.

And the fact is, that Peretz blended in harmoniously with the Jewish Labor Movement, he became a vital force there – our festival, our inspiration.

Because Peretz as the first and only one in his time, who gave Yiddish literature a might shove, pushing it out of its old, moldering quagmire. Aggressively and stormily he tore it out of the tiny, impoverished conveyance of Reb Mendele, out of Sholom Aleichem's refined-timid royal pedestal. He was the first to lead Yiddish literature out onto the broad European byways of humanity – and world problems, and lashed it to the rhythm of our times.

Because Peretz was the first and only one in Yiddish literature who felt the suffering and need in the life of a worker. Not the need of Glupsk and Kavzansk, not the suffering of the intimidated community of scurrying insects, but the need of the worker, and the suffering of the worker. Because from those works, for the first time in Yiddish, we heard our thirst for justice and our cry for restitution.

Because Peretz was the first and only one in Yiddish literature who gave it an idea, created a purpose for it, and raised it to the level of a culture.

How harmoniously the times brought them together. They, the builders and creators of the material culture, the people, who need, desire and suckle, people who had been degraded to the level of beasts of burden, being used only for 'hands,' and him – the stormy one, the creator of the spiritual culture, the writer of the 'Bontcheh Shweigs,' of the Yohanan the Water-carriers, of the Satya the Fishermen, and other 'silent souls.'

In their urgency and need, they met each other in a new existence. They understood each other with just a wink, and embraced each other for all time. Peretz became the eruption, the sunrise, the awakened energy of the masses of Jewish workers.

Every creative period weaves together the awakened masses and the creative personalities – even if they are at a great social distance from each other.

The years of the 90's of the past century was such a creative period. In pain and hurt, they gave birth to the Jewish working class. A new class with new ideals, a proud self-awareness with creative aspirations. And the birth of this very class, its striving and struggles, its heroic wrestling and lofty ideals, made possible the birth of three personalities: I. L. Peretz, Vladimir Medes, and the Vilna shoemaker, Hirsch Lekert.

All of these three, so set apart, express in themselves, the completeness, and full color of that newly born, proud, creative and harmonious Jewish person, the Jew as a fighter, the Jew as a Socialist. Peretz breathed a new soul into Yiddish culture, and in the process, he opened the way for the cultural awakening of the Jewish working masses, who has sundered themselves from the Jewish Middle Ages, based on the culture of the Bet HaMedrash, with the milk-drip of the old traditions. Peretz brought the Jewish worker a cultural resurrection.

He brought them back from the dead, mechanical assimilation, he freed them from the compulsion to conform themselves to others, and he opened vast possibilities for them of a personal national human cultural creativity.

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[225] Author's footnote: This article was published by B. Mikhalevich in the illustrated Peretz Supplement of the 'Volkszeitung' that appeared at the tenth anniversary of the death of I. L. Peretz, in Warsaw, April 1925.

Peretz's proud words still ring freshly and energetically for us today, which he throw out at us in the conference in Czernowitz in 1908:

> 'Yiddish is our language and in our language we will experience life, and create our cultural territory, re-awaken our soul once more, and we will serve no one. The location of nations cannot create a cultural territory for us. Let Yiddish become a formally recognized language among the languages of the nations. Then we will have our independent motif among the symphony of nations.'

And Peretz, beautifully and so completely, so humanly, so stormily and traumatically, sang out this motif for us, in his rich and creative life.

And this very motif continues to play in our souls 10 years after his death, and he has not been silenced. The rich treasures of his great, warm heart are assembled in thousands of longing, self-torn hearts.

Or souls burn from being ignited by the great light of Peretz, and are not extinguished; pervaded by his boiling and bubbling song, our hearts [continue to] sing.

And today, at the 10th anniversary of his Yahrzeit, we do not weep, and we do not sorrow, because we know: he lives, he lives, and influences us, he. Our Peretz. Our melody, our ecstasy, our resurrection!

# The Peretz-Year

**By Joseph Opotashu**

**This speech was given at the festive gathering of the Culture-Congress in New York, May 19, 1951, at the proclamation of The Peretz-Year – 1851-1951.**

*Page 510:* *"What Can Be Found in the Fiddle" Right: A picture created by Bruleau; Left: A picture by David Tushinsky*

Following Moses Hess, Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz constitutes a new word in Jewish life. If Yiddish literature has **its word**, that lifted the literature to an ideal, then that word said Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz.

Peretz – the relentless rager, the mouthpiece, that shakes up the complacency (it is not for nothing that one finds all the new directions of the new Yiddish literature in Peretz), the father of the new **spoken** word, at the very least, the spokesperson – it was particularly him who was the 'Rebbe' of the young boys in the *Bet HaMedrash* and the shtibl, the director of the ranks of the tailors and shoemakers, of the Jewish sweepers and weavers; the flame, that drew to it those who returned to their Jewishness. Those who recognized that it is not Europe that is missing in us, but as Jews....only Yiddish is missing, Hebrew is missing – all these rallied around Peretz, not the Peretz of Zamość, but the Peretz of Safed, of Cordoba, of Amsterdam, of Prague, of Düsseldorf, of Vilna, of Kotzk – that Peretz, who was prepared to knock down centuries old pillars that had interred Jewish thought, and the Jewish soul.

Those revealed well springs struck with such a stunning light, that the Jewish person was temporarily blinded, and could not see, how Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz guided Jewish thinking to worldliness and other-worldliness.

Peretz did not approach the young man in the Bet HaMedrash with compassion, and had not sympathy for the ranks of the tailors, or with the person who was returning to his Jewishness.

The young boy, even the one who had been seized by apostasy, read through Peretz, and came to understand that there was nothing laughable about the *Bialer Rebbe* or the Kabbalist of Amshinov [also Amszynow in Polish – JSB]. The life that surrounded him, this young man's, which he had attempted to choke off within himself, this live, with one sudden impulse was released within him, and became dear to him. The one, who had returned [to the fold] from the far away, saw, that to warm one's self at alien fires, causes Jewish souls to be incinerated.

The people learned from Peretz, that their father the water-carrier, the woodcutter, the laborer, they all can be considered equally human, at parity with scholars, with the wealthy, with those who got their education outside, who offer opinions, and take up space at the Eastern Wall.

Peretz, who placed his intellectual intuition at the disposal of the common wisdom of Jewish literature, specifically him, with one single push, went to the street, to the marketplace. With the joy of a kinsman, he searched out old abandoned ideas, in the far-flung Jewish settlements, which had lain dormant. He opened up these abandoned ideas in the middle of the marketplace, called to everyone, the young boy in the Bet HaMedrash, the laborer, all of the people:

– Jews, come to drink; It is very convivial to drink together!

Peretz is to be sought – in groups, in nations, in historical categories. Peretz is among the very few authors, who found a justification in Jewish life. R' Yehuda HaLevi was such an author. Such authors carry not only the world within themselves. They also carry a responsibility for the world. Their world does not consist solely of what the eye sees, what the ear hears – it also consists of soul and responsibility.

Yiddishkeit, social justice was to them the driving force to unite themselves with past generations, with the human gestalt, with eternity. This was the way of Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz.

Peretz was the very first Jewish artisan from whom it was possible to learn something. We continue to learn from him to this day, and we will continue to learn [from him]. As the thinking man says: 'Peretz always was our head, even at those times when he protested against all our plans and thinking.'

Without Peretz we would have had a different literature. To this day, the significant Yiddish authors continue to go along the path of Peretz. We live in Peretz, and he -- in us. Through us, Peretz reveals himself in his true light, in the light of every generation separately. And if one digs deeper, one sees that without Peretz we would have had talented people, but we would not have had a Yiddish literature. And if one will confront you with various signs and indicators, that Peretz's artistic way is not pure, it is not the white flour of rolls, that it is flour mixed with bran, you should remember that it was from precisely this kind of a flour that the prophets baked bread, when they went off into the desert to speak with God.

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It is a hundred years, since Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz was born, and thirty-six years since he left us, leaving in the middle of his work, when he was preparing to build a renewed Yiddishkeit, a Yiddishkeit rooted in 'The Congregation of the Lord,' in 'The Community of God,' that is rooted in the Covenant of Sinai, in the Prophets, in the return of Ezra, in the *Tana'im*, in Yehuda HaLevi. This Peretz-Year, which we are proclaiming today is no monument. How does the Gemara say it: 'One doesn't create souls for the righteous, their words are their eternal legacy.' For us, the Peretz-Year has to be one of the 'Ten Precepts,' it had to be a signpost, that we must continue Peretz's work, as he had continued the work of prior generations.

And what did Peretz continue? Jews such as Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz, who within themselves carried the sorrow and the ache of Jeremiah, the goodness of a Hillel, the fire of a R' Avika, such Jews could not give any consideration to pure form. In Yehuda HaLevi, in Peretz, the Jew and the non-Jew constantly struggled with one another, that which attracts them from idolatry and Christendom.

Peretz, who left us at the beginning of the First World War, felt that a bitter fate is closing in on Jews. He know, that we are the children of a pursued and murdered people. The enemy wishes to tear us out by the roots. Only the truth, the absolute human truth, can save us. And Peretz, for his whole life, was one shout: 'let us forge that very truth within ourselves, that very strength, let us personally feel, that to be a Jew, someone who is persecuted, is a privilege.'

That bitter fate has, indeed befallen us. Like awful dreams that pass before our eyes – the destruction of Poland, the destruction of Lithuania, the destruction of the Ukraine. And as we recite the Kaddish (and do so every year), the brilliant form of Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz rises from the desolation. And not only from the desolation. It also rises up from within us, from our pain-ridden hearts, and when we, the mourners, ask one another:

- What is the Yiddish literature to become?
- Peretz answers:

- It must be the tongue and consciousness of a pursued and persecuted people. It has to be the thousand-year reservoir – where there is faith, where there is comfort – the energies that teach us, our children, that to be a Jew, one who is persecuted, is a privilege.

# The Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz Bibliography

**By Yefim Jeshurun**

### Books and Pamphlets about I. L. Peretz

The reader is referred to the original text for this seven page list, which has entries in five languages.

# Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz and Berish Beckerman

**By Louis Gross**
(Nicknamed 'Leibeleh Shliomkeh's')

**Two Jews from Zamość – Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz and a baker of sweets – send their poems to be considered for a large collection; Peretz's poem is not accepted, and the baker's poem is printed, – who was this baker? – material for the future history of Yiddish literature.**

*Page 523:* *The Frontispiece from Two of Beckerman's Works*[226]

How well off the person is who doesn't seek an opportunity to have his name in print at one time or another; bitter and dark it is, however, for those people who would have liked to see their names sparkling from the columns of periodicals and journals. Those people are not strangers to the 'tale of inquisitions:' they most certainly know what it means to send in manuscripts and then have to wait for a reply....; with certainty they are acquainted with such replies as: ' we have already replied to you by mail;' 'Send us something else;' or, 'Perhaps you would be well-advised to consider some other line of work, and leave writing to those who have the talent for it,' and similar remarks....

Would you have believe that Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz – the future classical genius – also needed to put up with such an 'inquisition?' And – the essence – would you have believed that a baker from Zamość sent in a poem to the very same book of collected works to which Peretz sent a poem of his, and – the baker's poem was printed, and Peretz's poem was returned? But it is a 'fact,' which was told to me by the very same baker, and everybody knows his poem, which is printed in that collection, whose name I will reveal later on.

## Who Was The Baker ?

It is not necessary to tell who Peretz was: hundreds of books, journals and articles have been written about him, and all of the material about him hasn't yet been exhausted. You would only want to add that our city Zamość did much to give the Jewish world a genius such as Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz – apart from many others like **Rosa Luxembourg**, (born in Zamość on December 25, 1870; murdered by German officers in Berlin, and thrown into a canal in 1918); the violin virtuoso **Bronislaw Huberman**; **Alexander Zederbaum**, editor of '*Kol Mevaser*,' and '*HaMelitz*' (born in Zamość in 1816; died in St. Petersburg in 1893); the *Maskil* **Feivel Szyfer** (1871-1890); the great Jewish researcher **Yaakov Reifman** (1818 - 1893); **Shlomo Ettinger** (1800 - 1856); the folklorist and ardent Zionist, **Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter**, educational director of the Workman's Circle (died in New York in 1935), and many others. It is also of interest that our city of Zamość was called 'the little Paris.'

Zamość was the place where the cradle of our genius stood; the territory where the author made his first effort; the wellspring from which Peretz drew the largest portion of material for his later-to-be-written 'Hasidism,' and the place that, ever since the Six Days of Creation, had been prepared for that latter-day classicist and prophet...Zamość, with its surrounding ponds, fields, forests and orchards; the very construct of the physical city itself, with its enchanting little plantings in the middle of the marketplace; the magic of its covered walkways, with their labyrinthine offshoots, the discarded and pulverized fragments of the former great fortress, spread out and scattered outside the city, [all of this], makes a wondrous impression.... something secret and hidden lies within it all... a sanctum sanctorum....

We may perhaps say, with some certainty, that were it not for this place, perhaps we would never had a great Peretz... As previously stated, I will not pause about Peretz. But I will offer an response to the question that I posed : '**Who Is The Baker**?' His name was **Berish Beckerman** – a name that must not be omitted by future historians of Yiddish literature, in the area of song and poetry, as well as drama and operetta.

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226 These pages indicate that his full name was Dov Ber HaLevi Beckerman. His double Hebrew-Yiddish name is shown fused, with a Slavic ending: Dovberish. The Hebrew part of his name, apparently is dropped in the idiomatic usage of the times, yielding Berish.

Berish Beckerman had designations by those of us in the city: 1. 'The Town Atheist;' 2. 'The Mocker;' and 3. 'The Self-aggrandizer.' And how many of these names were justified? Well, let us see:

'**The Town Atheist**' – because he would shave his beard; he would never pray, and in general, had a low opinion of 'Jewish divertimentos.'

'**The Mocker**' – Because he would continuously make sport of the institutions of the city, of its leadership, the community servants, important people, and other Defenders of the Faith, and in order to attain his objective, he would have printed – at his own expense – collections and brochures, which he edited himself and distributed, in which he would make a laughingstock of everything and everybody. And, thanks to the Almighty, there was certainly enough to make fun of...

In his first collection, 'Der Yiddisher Spiegel,' (Warsaw 5655 [1895]), he kibbitzes about the balebatim of Zamość, and even in the reporting, he does not miss the chance to skewer a number of highly prominent people.

Here is merely an example of how he characterized only a few of the notables:

> 'Here in our city – he writes there – we have a *Gabbai*, a foolish egotist with a fat belly; a hoarse cantor, with the voice of a calf;' a hunchbacked singer with the voice of a *shiksa*; pious Hasidic traditionalists, who slap the Eastern Wall with great religious fervor; a Rabbi who is a fool, Laban's grandson; a blind *Shammes*, a big bag of shit; a *Hevra-Kadisha* comprised of uncouth young people from the better families; a host of idlers behind the oven in the *Bet HaMedrash*,' etc...'

Do understand, that those he picked on, considered themselves insulted: 'Some nerve he has, that busybody!' They were not used to that kind of *chutzpah*, and they started making all sorts of complaints and threats...

Beckerman, however, was not intimidated by these kind of 'little minds:' as quickly as he could gather up a few rubles, he put out a 20 page little book (including the frontispiece), under the name, '**R' Bezalel'keh the Melamed**,' and on the frontispiece, he had printed 'a few words to my fellow townsfolk,' in which he made use of the anecdote 'anyone who is in here, let him vacate the bath,' and then asked them: 'Who asked you for an opinion? You were not identified by name, and if you had not reacted, no one would have been able to find out what fools you really are....'

Quite separately, this reminds me of his 'R'Chaim'l the Water-carrier,' – a realistic portrait which mad a special impression on my memory. It is suffused with poetry and literary artistry.

'**The Self-aggrandizer**' – Because he deliberately held himself in a haughty manner. He would seldom be seen in the street. If, perchance he was observed outside, then he was on his way to the 'German,' minyan. That's the way the place was called, because that is where our 'all-rightniks' would gather for 'prayer...' he would appear in a rich fur mantle, with a wide fur collar and hat. He more closely resembled a Russian merchant, sooner than be taken for a Jew.

## He Writes Dramatic Works and Operettas

As previously mentioned, Berish Beckerman was a baker of 'decorated' baked goods. From his hard work, he had to support his family, and enable his children to grow up and become educated people. Nevertheless, this did not prevent him from leaving – in the middle of the day – his dough, the oven, and the two workers that he employed, to closet himself in his bedroom, and to write, write, and write... stories, songs, dramas, and operettas. He produced a couple of his dramatic works on his own, in Zamość. He personally performed in them, as an amateur, and other of his works were performed in Warsaw, under his direction.

This is talking about his dramatic work. What does one do with the operettas? It is necessary to have music. However, this was not a problem for Beckerman: he created the music himself, à la Goldfadn, as it were. He couldn't write a note of music, or read it. But [as the saying goes], a Jew takes his own counsel: he would sit down next to 14 year-old

Moshe'leh, who at that time already played the clarinet, and sang whatever came into his head. Moshe'leh wrote all of this down in the form of notes, and then he played it back on the clarinet. Beckerman would listen to it, make improvements: indicating a place where something needed to be erased, to add something in another spot, and – a number of tunes, which I remember to this day – weren't so bad....

If it happened that a troupe of 'wandering stars' should happen to stray into Zamość, they immediately rode over to Beckerman, and Beckerman would – pushing the *lekakh* with the bread-paddle into the oven – set up rehearsals with them: singing songs, playing out entire scenes, etc. Beckerman had already provisioned our Jewish people – the theater lovers – with productions, and the poor 'artists,' – with 'goodies'....

A 'little detail' comes to mind: a fire broke out in the Town Hall. Beckerman just happened to be in that building at the time, which was very tall, and there was no way to save one's self, except to jump out of a window, which meant certain death.

Beckerman has no fear: He finds an umbrella somewhere, opens it, and jumps right out... and – miracles from heaven: he was unscathed...

Don't even ask what happened afterwards: All of Zamość went topsy-turvy: No small thing! 'He flies like The Evil One, may God have mercy on us!'

This baker was once struck by the following thought: the late Mordechai Spector, at that time, had produced his renown collected works, 'House-Friend.' Beckerman found out that his young friend Peretz had sent off a poem to Spector. Why not, after all, test one's own skill?

No sooner said than done: He immediately composed a poem and sent it to Spector. It is easy to imagine what this baker – this small-town author – went through at that time!... this undoubtedly meant extraordinary emotional torture and intolerable waiting...

Several weeks go by, and – here comes the postman and hands him a small envelope and a letter.

Beckerman opens the package: a book, the 'House-Friend,' and in the letter, Spector writes: 'We thank you for your poem, which you will find printed in the enclosed book. As an expression of our gratitude, we are sending you a sample copy of our 'House-Friend.' Send us something additional.'

Peretz, who later would become great and renown, also received a copy of 'House-Friend,' but with the comment: 'regrettably, your poem cannot be printed,'...

Berish Beckerman's poem is called 'The Weekly Dream,' and takes up two sides of 'House-Friend.' (Volume 1, appeared in 1888, and 4 more volumes until 1896).

## Who Is The Originator of This Story?

This story was told to me personally by Beckerman, before I emigrated from Zamość at the end of 1909. Years later, when he came to America, he corresponded with me from New York. I then sent him a copy of the article, which I had printed – in an abridged form – in the Philadelphia 'Die Yiddishe Velt,' where I had been a steady employee, under the editorial direction of Moshe Katz (not to be confused with M. Katz, an employee of 'The Morning Freiheit') and he confirmed every word. All he had to say was: (I cite from his letter, in his handwriting).

> 'You have interpreted the name 'Baker' a bit illogically. The word 'baker,' is not in as much sympathy as with other lines of work. And when one comes to saying 'baker' already, that connotes a baker of bread, rolls, challahs, etc. But I am designated not only as a 'baker,' but [also] 'cake baker,' or 'fancy cake baker,' or at the highest level, 'conditeur.' Because a 'conditeur' can produce from

chocolate or sugar, exactly what a sculptor can produce from stone, and I possess these very attributes, because I studied conditorie in Warsaw.'

I immediately recognized our Beckerman the 'self-aggrandizer:' it was not acceptable for him to be called 'baker.' But for me, the mark always hung there: is this true?

We must remember that in those years, Peretz was no longer a new face on the scene. Peretz had already published his masterpiece, 'Monish,' at that time, in Sholom Aleichem's 'Volks Bibliotek,' so how is it possible that Mordechai Spector would refuse to publish a Peretz poem?

True: In that period (1888-1895) Peretz carried a bit of a grudge against Spector. But this was not because Spector had done anything against Peretz. It was because Spector had treated Yaakov Dinensohn (Peretz's closest friend) in an unfriendly manner, and that elicited an antipathy out of Peretz for Mordechai Spector.

So I continuously search for a way to disclose the truth about this very serious incident, and I made my way to Shmuel Neiger. His answer was: 'Impossible!'

It happened that I was in Miami Beach (Florida), and I visit the renown critic Dr. Alexander Mokdony (Kappel). We spent several hours [together], and Dr. Mokdony looked through a variety of books, journals, and newspapers, and in the end came out with the conclusion: 'Yes, – it is very possible!'

Yes, – I thought to myself – it is very possible. As I said before, there was 'bad blood' between Mordechai Spector and I. L. Peretz, and it could very possibly be that Spector wanted to 'get even' with his 'enemy' – and not print his poem....

Nevertheless, the same question continues to gnaw: which one of these literary experts is right? Do understand, I do not presume to take on the burden of deciding on so important a question. I leave this for our Yiddish literature history writers. However, I would have liked to round out the portrait of 'Berish Beckerman,' and say here that Berish Beckerman (now deceased) was not a well-educated person: he had very little education, and for sure was not a musician. He had a natural desire to write – stories, poems and song, to which he personally adapted the music, with the help of his son, Moshe'leh.

Beckerman suffered quite a bit here in America. In his letters to me, he kept on complaining, that he is worn out from running around to the theater-managers and producers, and that 'all the doors are closed to me,' – more about this – later.

## Beckerman's Journals and Brochures

*Page 524:* *Right: Facsimile of Beckerman's 'The Fortunate Trousers; Left: A handwritten letter from Beckerman to the writer of this article.*

I have, in my possession, three of his works: 'Der Yiddisher Spiegel,' (128 pages), which appeared in Warsaw in the publications of a: Baumritter, Jika 44, 5655 (1894); 'The Fortunate Trousers,' – a 'Tale of Fabric,' (36 pages), the same publishing house, September 12 (1894) and 'R' Bezalel'keh the Melamed,' – a 'Warsaw Tale of this Year,' (20 pages) 1895.

When you read through these three works, you immediately see that the orthography, the punctuation, syntax and etymology is far from being literary and grammatically [correct]. But if we take into account the time when they were written, we can certainly forgive him all of these shortcomings. Who, at that time wrote any differently, apart from such classicists as Sholom Aleichem and his ilk?

If we page through 'the History of Yiddish Literature,' by Dr. M. Pines, edited by the renown critic and thinker (Dr. Israel Eliashev), which appeared in Warsaw, 1911 under B. Shimin Verlag, we see that Mordechai Spector

'was not familiar with foreign literature,' and that he had principally devoted himself to 'that which has to do with folk-novels,' while thanks to them, he was able to 'increase the intrigues, and always introduce new events, enlarging his novels to whatever length he chose, and easily fill the lines of his page.'

And further: 'Spector...makes use of those melodramatic effects in his novels, which remind one of Shomer's novels,' and '... the informed reader is overwhelmed by the artificial portrayal of the people, and the portrayal of love is as foolish and overdrawn as it is in Shomer's novels, and the portrayals of nature are equally artificial and premeditated.'

At that time, Mordechai Spector already had a significant reputation, which he achieved through his 'Hose Friend,' and with his novels, 'The Jewish Peasant,' 'Rebbe Treitel,' 'Paupers and the Poor,' 'A World of Small Worlds,' 'The Cripples,' and others. Despite this, he was quite far from the later writers in theme, and in portraying what was 'artificial and premeditated'...

I therefore believe, with total conviction that the future historian of Yiddish literature will not be able to ignore our *landsman*, Berish Beckerman, ע"ה, who died a few years ago in New York.

## Beckerman's Troubles in America

As previously mentioned, Beckerman suffered a great deal in America, and in his letter to me (dated on the last day of Passover, 1918), he writes:

'...for the first three years, I could not even consider taking a pen in hand because I lacked the means to make a living, and I was still fresh here. And now, I have begun to re-copy my plays on one-sided paper, which I brought with me from Europe, And when I have completed re-copying them, then I will begin to apply myself to the theater. My plays are the following: 'The Conversos of Spain,' (already performed in Warsaw); 'The Murderess,' (a drama performed in Warsaw); 'Samson,' (operetta); 'Deborah the Prophetess,' (operetta), and 'Jephtha of Gilead,' (operetta), and 'From Prison to the Throne' (Operetta). Since this is not the time to sell plays, I will wait until the summer is over.'

And later (in the same letter): 'I send you a poem for 'The Yiddishe Velt,' and ask of the editor if he is willing to send me his newspaper, I will each week send him something new...:

Signed: B. Beckerman – 719 East 5th Street, New York.

Here is his poem:

### Springtime

Spring has made green and revived the fields
Birdsong twitters all around;
The banks and the forests have already come alive,
The buds, the lilies, the roses and the flowers.

The butterflies hum about like a song of joy,
They alight silently, like leaves on a tree,
And all wingèd creatures dance and leap about,
Springtime has awakened them with great feeling.

And look how the singers bow their heads,
Like for holy prayer, like '*Barkhu*' in Schul,
As if they wanted to overcome silence itself,
As if their effort is only for human purposes.

And the waters cascade with gay abandon,
They wash the shores that still lie asleep.
And the sun mildly looks at its reflection in the water,

And bestows its warm rays of energy.

Oh, shine your rays upon us too, our dear one!
Light up our world with the joy of Spring.
Enough, enough victims have fallen already,
Oh, Springtime! My Springtime! Only Peace is missing.

I cannot remember what happened at that time: did I turn over this poem to my dear friend Moshe Katz, and he didn't print it; or, was I personally not moved by this poem, and I didn't give it to him.

His urge to write, nevertheless, held on, and he writes as follows to me (October 23, 1918): '...If you have the intention to produce something in printed form, I will immediately become a partner to you,' and '...I have over a hundred new Zionist poems, about fifteen declamatory writings. Many stories, skits and monologues, etc. I had the desire to put out a weekly periodical, under the name, 'The Zionist Beam.' However, a single person is nothing. Here in America, I am isolated...and in this manner, I wait for the Messiah to come...'

Later on , in the same letter: '...and also know and feel, that you, my dear Leibeleh, could be my greatest good fortune. But how does one get there?' And, '...I received word that you had worshiped there during the High Holy Days, and I was greatly pleased to hear this...'
After this letter. There was a brief cessation (why, I now no longer remember), and on May 23, 1924, he complains yet again:

'...my continuing work exhausts me. I only want to sit, and my foot is bothering me. '

He immediately forgets about his ailing foot, and reminds me again about 'I have in my possession about 50 new stories – a dozen one-act [plays] – about 200 poems – about 30 biblical and historical declamatory writings – eight 4-act operettas – about 30 seminars – several novels, all of which is waiting to be made public...'

In one of my letters, I made him aware that since I was retained by the 'Tog,' and I have an intention of writing about him, if he has some important material, that he should send it to me immediately. Here is a short article which he sent to me. And, it is very interesting:

'My dear Leibeleh! I am sending you a little bit of stuff for the other article that you have in mind to write about me and Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz.
Leibeleh and I (that's the way Peretz was called when he was little) studied in Heder when we were about 9 or 10 years old. We lived togther like two loyal, small brothers.
Quite often, we would test our skills on each other, reciting rhymes: he would, for example [say]: *shtayn*, and I would have to recite all those words that rhyme with it, like: *tzayn, khrayn, bayn, gayn, fayn, rayn, zayn, gayn, kayn, vayn, mayn*, and if I had forgotten any, then Leibeleh would remind me of an added rhyme, like *klayn*, and I would bet boxed three times quickly in the nose.
And then I would pose just a word-rhyme to him, and in this fashion we would rhyme back and forth and box each other on the nose...
Additionally, we would also tell each other stories that we had fabricated in our heads, that is to say, stories that we thought up, about thieves, of magical places with stones that would open up with a verbal command, as well as a hat that when you put it on, you became invisible, but could see everyone else. We would tell all these stories to many of our Heder boys, so seriously, as if we had been in these places ourselves.
Leibeleh's character as a boy was nothing to praise, but even so, as a ten year-old boy, he already exhibited a very high degree of compassion, he would ask me why nobody ever brought me any 'heated victuals,' in Heder? (In the small towns of Russian Poland, the house servant brings each child something to eat at the *Heder* before the noon hour – B. B.), and I related to him that my father had died, and my mother was in Warsaw, and I am here with a poor aunt who earns 60 kopecks a week for flicking feathers. And when Leibeleh heard of my plight, he would then, every day, bring me a specially wrapped dry lunch, consisting of all manner of good things, and he would sit down with me under the Wohl (a grassy place) and there, with a smile, he would watch how I would eat [chewing] with both of my cheeks....

One day, his mother Riveleh (or Rivkeleh – L.G.), confronted him, demanding that he tell her to whom he takes such a package every day, full of food, and Leibeleh, said fearlessly: that he gives it to his poor comrade Bereleh Zlateh's (Berish Beckerman, the son of Zlateh – L.G.), who is an orphan, and has nothing to eat.

Hearing these words of compassion from her own son, she ordered him to bring me to the house, so that I would regularly eat with Leibeleh together, but I, being a shy little boy, did not accept the invitation, and indeed, that same week, I took a tearful leave from my dear friend, Leibeleh, and I told him that an uncle of mine (a wagon driver), is taking me to Warsaw, a journey of ten days, on a coach. Here, I was making this trip to locate where my dear mother was in Warsaw, and not finding my mother, a terrifying want and hunger began for me.

And for a long time, a long time, I carried the yoke of a homeless orphan, these hard and bitter times continued further, and further, until I received an order that I have to present myself for conscription.

Oh, how quickly my young years flew by, with nothing to show for them. Already 10-12 years had passed, and I am now ready to travel home, to stand for conscription, and to whom am I know traveling? I didn't have anyone there anymore, except for my friend, Leibeleh Peretz. And oh, how hard it will be for me to meet with him now! He, he about whom I have been told, that he had been educated by all of the best Gemara teachers. After that, attending gymnasium, became educated, and already has a diploma as a lawyer....

And I?... oh, my heart weeps inside of me for how cruel fate has cheated me of my youthful expectations, with what sort of speech will I now be able to speak to my comrade Leibeleh? He will recognize that I am coarse, uneducated... Leibeleh my friend is a lawyer, and I ... have become a cake baker, or a conditeur that makes artistic sculptural works out of chocolate and sugar. Yes, it is true, it is a fine line of work... but not what I had hoped to become according to my emotions...

The shame penetrated deeply into me, and I decided within me, not to meet with my friend Leibeleh, until I will be able to catch up to him with a bit of knowledge, and then I will be able to converse with him briefly. And I became strongly satisfied, when I heard that Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz had moved to Warsaw, and that he will remain there as an employee of the Warsaw Jewish Community. Only then was I able to remain at peace in my home town of Zamość, until the times took me and my entire household to the '*Goldeneh Medina*' in America.

In the end, I became exhausted, scratching my way up the ladder of education, and remained halfway up the ladder trying to pull myself up, but with no strength...it would appear, that in order to climb the ladder of education, one should climb with young feet, and then it is possible to arrive at the highest rung, the level that my immortal friend Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz achieved.'

A footnote accompanies this letter: 'You may edit this for improvement in accordance with your own taste.'

I wish only to add her that I turned over all of this material exactly as he wrote it: with his orthography, punctuation and language.

We can see from this material that Beckerman portrays himself in a not-too-favorable light: he communicates secrets about his childhood years and – thinking perhaps that this would not be printed in written form, he gives me permission to improve it 'according to my taste'... and to this effect, he adds himself – even as late as 1924 – that he is still not rich in a literary sense. It can be seen from his orthography, syntax and etymology.

## Beckerman Replies

Regrettably, I do not have copies of the letter that I wrote to him. However, from his letter, written June 1924, we can imagine that I probably made some comments about this, and he answers me:

'...I am at the point now, where I want to allay any of your dismay about the matter of my poor orthography and punctuation. I am actually greatly pleased that you, my friend, had been able to detect a number of errors in my writing: but, I am equally disappointed that at the same time you didn't understand the reason for this, even though I had previously revealed half of my secrets.' And he has an additional issue with me, in that I 'should have responded in a more sympathetic tone' and that 'I was not ashamed to write out my memories for you, that I had studied until the age of 8 or 9 years in a Heder on the side, and that afterwards the large city of Warsaw swallowed me up under very hard and struggle-filled circumstances...' and that 'the bitter luck of being isolated and in ignorance accompanied me all the way to the wedding canopy...'

## Beckerman Doesn't Give In Easily

Berish Beckerman had always sought ways to educate himself. He understood very well, that witho9ut education, he would not get very far. So, what did he do in this regard? Let us permit him to tell us about this. In the same letter, he tells me that:

> '...I immediately hired a teacher for my little 5 year-old daughter, Etteleh, ע"ה, and he taught her to write and read Yiddish, and this latter person, paying no mind to anyone, I focused on with such an intensity and such a fire, that every word that the teacher said became woven into the strands of my memory...'

He had another issue with me (all in the same letter), he writes:

> '...I have the right to make an occasional mistake in my writing. But this is not permitted to you, because your mind is sufficiently instructed by the best Gemara teachers and other teachers. And me – by whom?'

For those who take an interest in Yiddish literature, the following clarifications will be of interest (all from the same letter), which were unknown even to me at that point, for example:

A. 'Der Yiddisher Spiegel' failed after its first edition. The second edition never appeared. Why? The second edition was to be titled,'The Orphan of the World.' However, it remained with the censor, because I spoke somewhat cavalierly about Czar Nicholas...'

B. Bovshover's poem, 'My Lady Friend,' (printed in the first edition of 'Spiegel'), he obtained from America from a friend of his, 'a former director of the Yiddish theater, David Tanzman, ע"ה.

C. In the same edition, he printed 'A spirit and its father – a satirical telling 'from one, A. M. Krivonoy, who was a soldier, a Hebraist, who served in Zamość.'

D. A poem, 'Yisrulik in Jerusalem,' by Alter Hershkes. Who is he? He clarifies for me that this was 'the very same Krivonoy, who wrote under a variety of pseudonyms.'

E. A certain Mendel Messer, writes 'A Letter from America,' there, in which he relates very interesting material about the immigrants of that time. Already in that time – over 60 years ago – the writer bemoans the fact that there are machines that 'throw thousands of workers out of the factories, and they literally expire from hunger.' Of great interest, he also relates facts about the plan of Baron Hirsch to settle Jews in Argentina. But who is this Mendel Messer? I learn – indeed from his letter – that he is 'the son of Abraham Einbinder of Zamość, who lives in New York today.'

F. Apart from the fact that I had a strong interest in knowing who these writers were, and how they came to him, I was most interested to know how he came to Abraham Cahan [227], who (in the'Speigel') had two full chapters about 'The Spanish Inquisition,' with a 'following introduction.' Also, this clarifies for me [the origin] of Abraham Cahan's 'The

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[227] Abraham Cahan (1860-1951) was the first editor of The Jewish Daily Forward (*Der Forverts*)

Inquisition,' with pictures, that I received from a periodical. 'The Forward' is in front of me. How could I not remember.'

I believe that Beckerman has made an error here: the first edition of the *Forverts* appeared on April 22, 1897. It is self-explanatory that Beckerman could not have made use of the *Forverts* in 1897.

## Beckerman Seeks a Partner

In the same letter, he also confirmed an announcement in the '*Morgen Zhurnal*' in which he advised:

> 'Partner or manager needed, for modern concerts, of strictly new literary not yet heard works. A new program every week. Assembled and registered by the oldest Warsaw actor, master baker, write to the '*Morgen Zhurnal*,' Box 1300.'

Regrettably, I do not know if anything ever came of this. One thing is certain: if something had come of it, I would have seen it in the news periodicals. It indicates that he never rested, and always sought ways to do something with his writings.

After this long letter – in which he enclosed two poems, and asked me to print them in '*Die Yiddishe Velt*,' he sent me a short little letter, in which he also enclosed a card from 'Young's Gap House,' in Parksville, Sullivan County, N.Y. Where he had taken a job as the baker for the summer, and immediately afterwards – July 17, 1924 – I received a longer letter from Liberty, N. Y., in which he tells me, among other things, that:

> 'Even in childhood, I began to feel that mt thoughts were occupied by the creative forces of what we call 'The Muse,' or literature...
>
> My first ideal was the theater, and I can rightly say that I was one of the first pioneers that 50 years ago founded the Yiddish theater (I have an article about the 'memories of the Yiddish theater 50 years ago – B. B.). However, good fortune regrettably could not come to my assistance and help me overcome my bad circumstances that occur quite often in human life. It is true that I saw my first two production achieve success. However, they did not have good luck, because it is necessary to have good luck more than to have talent.
>
> Here, in America, it is much easier to sell bad pieces from a well-known writer than the best piece of someone who is unknown, and today one has to be thick-skinned to withstand and outlast the kibitzing of the claque, and since I have already had the opportunity once to hear from a director that biblical and historic operettas are not worth producing, because the stage scenery will be too expensive to make, and it has therefore occurred to me, that I have nowhere to turn to. Brother Gross, one has to have luck!'

Along this he provides me with a fact that 'thirty years ago, I created my [play] 'Samson,' a biblical operetta in 4 acts, with song and dance,' and it lay with him for 8 or 10 years, until 'a new king arose, a new writer and he made a 'Samson,' and it was performed in Warsaw for a number of years.' And his piece still lays in one of his boxes, and 'rests on its bones.' He recalls other biblical works that are waiting until 'a Messiah of some sort will come. And I will be able to trot them out onto the stage.'

That is why he set himself first to produce his one-act plays, poems, and declamations. But this will now be 'only my seasonal work,' and become the 'director of the Warsaw concert Troupe.' He will play – he writes – in New York, in Brownsville, in Brooklyn. In the Bronx, etc.

He also took it upon himself to approach Morris Guest, because, 'one needs deep pockets for such operettas, and no one but Morris Guest has this.'

And at the end of the letter he writes:

'You can see already, that I didn't want to set down the vowels and markings, because it is more that certainly possible that I am not putting them in the right place, because in those days, 50 years ago, when I learned to write without the help of a teacher, very little was known then about modern punctuation, and believe me, friend, it is possible to write a good piece not only with a more beautiful fountain pen but also with a more legible penmanship, and if my markings will not be proper, then the typesetter will fix them.'

I received one more short letter from him. And that was on October 15, 1924. In that letter, he told me that he is receiving 'letters from managers,' and he doesn't know what will come of this yet (his ad in the '*Morgen Zhurnal*').

After this short letter, there was a halt until August 11, 1933. I then received a letter from him, in which he invited me to come to him in his house. He had already moved away from 5th Street, and had moved to 565 193rd Street. Regrettably, I no longer remember whether I traveled to see him, or not. However, later, I received the sad news that he had died.

And in this way, we lost yet another talent from Zamość, that perhaps might have been able to develop, and become one of the great men, that Zamość has given to the world.

** ** **

As a footnote to the bibliographic work of Louis Gross about B e r i s h B e c k e r m a n , we insert the following excerpt from Zalman Zilberzweig's 'Lexicon of the Jewish Theater,' in which he write about Berish Beckerman. (New York, 1931, pp. 195-197).

# Berish Beckerman

*Page 532: Portrait of Berish Beckerman*

Born in 1854 in Zamość, Lublin Province, Poland. Father – a fancy baker. He studied in a *Heder*, and was orphaned at the age of 10, then travels to Warsaw, where he goes to work for a fancy baker. A few years later, he also becomes a chorister in the choir of the 'Broder Singers,' who appear in the garden of Wolf Litvak's yard (Franczikaner Gasse 36), where the bakery is also located.

As Beckerman tells it, this 'theater' was located in the second yard of the same house, in a garden. This 'theater' consisted of a wooden building. In which there was a specially made curved gallery of boards. The scene: a straight platform, on which an actor would come out, with two singers, one each side of him, wile the other singers and actors would sing from behind the 'background.'

The troupe consisted of the actors Aharon Tager (the director), Kopkeh Dubinskym Shmulyak, Heimovich, Max Blumenfeld and of the choristers (the later actors) Berel Bernstein, Max Goldberg, Abraham-Yitzhak Tanzman, Shliferstein, and Berish Beckerman.

A ticket cost 5 kopecks. Every week they put on a different program.

To the extent that Beckerman can recall, on the outside wall of the 'theater' there was a program hung, with the following content:

'I Am Ashamed to Say,' sung by Aharon Tager.
'*Borkhi Nafshi*,' sung by Shmulyak.
'The Mirror and the Clock,' sung by Heimovich and Aharon Tager.
'*Oz Yashir*,' sung by Max Blumenfeld.
'I Should Only Have a Beard,' sung by Heimovich.
'The Hassid and the 'German',' sung by Shmulyak and Tager.
'Four Porcelain Plates;' 'The Heroes of Israel:' 'The Three Deaf People:' and 'The Matches' — played and sung by the entire troupe.

The performances were so well attended that the price of a ticket was quickly doubled. A short while thereafter, the troupe performed 'Shmendrick,' later, 'The Grandmother and the Grandchild,' 'The Witch,' 'Both Kuni-Lemel,' and moved from Wolf Litvak's little garden to the theater on Moranover Platz.

Beckerman goes to Grander after the 'Broder Singers,' who puts together a troupe (Israel and Anita Grander, Berel Bernstein, Tanzman, Shliferman, Joseph Taubers, Max Goldberg) for the province. Here, Beckaerman appears in parts under the pseudonym B. Berkovich. For family reasons, however, he leaves the troupe, and travels back to Zamość, where he opens a conditorei, and writes 'In Times Past,' novels, stories, etc.

According to the tradition from 'Peretz's Pages,' Beckerman produced 'Der Yiddisheh Spiegel,' a collection of various outputs of Dovberish HaLevi Beckerman, Volume One, Warsaw, 5655 (1885). The volume contains 64 pages, 2 folios of 16°, under his own name, as well as the pseudonym, Dr. Bo'ee BeShalom, The Chief Baker, Berkovich, and in passing, Beckerman prints there his stories, poems, jokes, translations and feuilletons. A year later, B. Beckerman published original collections under the name 'Flowers to the Jewish Mirror,' apart from which he presented 'R' Bezalel'keh Melamed,' a story set in Warsaw about the current year, 1895, compiled by Dovberish HaLevi Beckerman, Warsaw 5654 (18 pages, 16°) and 'The Happy Trousers,' a tale about fabric, composed by Dovberish HaLevi Beckerman of Zamość, Warsaw 5655 (1885) (23 pages 16°). In Spector's second book, 'The House Friend,' Beckerman also published a poem, 'A Weekly Dream,' and anecdotes.

At Kaminsky's initiative, who comes to Zamość to perform with his troupe, Beckerman works over a novel of his own into a play, under the name, 'Die Frumeh Erderin,' a comic-drama, which plays in Warsaw for a number of years, by Kaminsky's troupe, and Kompanietz. Because of the bad business in Zamość, Kaminsky also works out that Beckerman should appear in his plays a number of times in his performed Goldfadn repertoire.

On September 30, 190... Beckerman's classic operetta, 'The Conversos of Spain,' in 4 acts and 5 scenes, was presented under the direction of A. G. Kompanietz at the Warsaw Moranover Theater.

Beckerman came to America in 1914, where he was employed as a fancy baker. On November 1, 1926, Beckerman produces the first edition of 'The Immigrant Sentinel,' a monthly journal, first edition, produced by B. Beckerman. The entire edition was filled with Beckerman's own compositions. Among other items, he presents 'Mendel and Genendel' there (in theater form), and 'The Divorced Bride,' a life's portrait in one act, from the Immigrant Sentinel (unfinished).

Beckerman has in manuscript form, 'Deborah the Prophetess,' a biblical operetta; 'Jephthah of Gilead;' a biblical operetta; 'From Prison to the Throne, an historic operetta; 'The New God,' historical operetta. The ne act plays: 'The Second Judith;' 'The Woman convert' and the one act comedies: 'My First Groom,' 'A Bomb in the Rebbe's Attic,' 'Swapped Wives,' 'A Diamond Ring,' 'Fish the Water Carrier,' and 'Ladies First.'

# The She-Eagle that Flew Out of Zamość

**By Y. Zudiker**

*Page 535: A Portrait of Rosa Luxembourg*

Zamość, in the second half of the previous century!

A city, a town, like tens or hundreds of Jewish towns, in the one-time, in the Russian Poland of the past.

A city with a special street of Sephardic Jews, whom the patron of the city – Jan Zamoyski – whose name the city bears – brought in the year 1588, from Turkey, with the explicit condition that none of them may undertake the 'gentile' trade – of shoemaking. A city of special renaissance buildings, and a city that had one of the first printing presses in Poland.

A pleasant little river flows near the city, which serves not only for *Tashlikh*, or to formalize a Jewish Divorce – but also as a source of inspiration for writers and lovers. Fields and woods can be found near the town, that extend nearly to the renown forests of Szczebrzeszyn. And outside the city, one can also find the renown Zamość fortress, which withstood the sieges of the Mongols, Swedes, Napoleon, etc., and which played such an important role in the Polish uprising of 1863. Not far from the fortress, a palace, built by the Zamoyskis of old, and is suffused with mysteriousness.

The city is not far from the German-Austrian border, and German culture has just as strong an influence here as does the Polish; Goethe and Schiller are as well-known among the intelligentsia as Adam Miczkiewicz[228] and Ciprian Norwied.

Such a city and its surroundings has an influence on the character and disposition of people; such a city moves you, and is destined to produce great and interesting personalities.

Out of these interesting personalities, we will cite only three: the first turned himself to the past – to what had transpired. There, he sought treasures and pearls and he introduced them into his Yiddish folk creations.

– His name was **Shlomo Ettinger**.

And the second, storm-tossed and boiling – like his name – **Peretz**, sought to break a window into Jewish life, in order to admit the rays of light from the Europe of that era.

And the third – more appropriately third (feminine form), went out to the nations of the world; carried with her a great dream, about breaking down the borders between nations, and making one great elevated people out of these nations; with this dream, she raised herself, and forcibly tore out the masses, taking them with her – she became a she-eagle, until a malevolent, perverted spirit broke off her wings and destroyed her.

Her name was **Rosa Luxembourg.**

And it is about this wondrous she-eagle, about this stormy wonder-bird, that we will attempt to tell about here.

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228 Adam Miczkiewicz (1798-1855), author of "Pan Tadeusz", also known in Poland as "The National Poet of Poland.";

# A. Childhood and Young Years

Despite the fact that a very elaborate literature has been created about the personality of Rosa Luxembourg, in many languages, this nevertheless is relevant to her later social activism and especially to her tragic death. However, there are rather few biographical treatments of just her alone, especially about her childhood and period of young years.

All we know is that she was born in 1870[229] in the city of Zamość, and raised in stormy times that were out of the ordinary, and indeed, it was these stormy times that tore her out of the quiet, subdued, half-dreamy Zamość, at the age of four years, and carried her to heaving, and stormy Warsaw, and later to a variety of capitol cities in Europe.

Rosa Luxembourg came to live and make an impact in one of the most interesting periods of human history. It was a time when nations awakened, when ideas and movements arose, and became relevant to the times.
She was born in the second half of the nineteenth century, which enters the annals of human history as an epoch of transition – since it was a transition period from the end of the Middle Ages, to the beginning of modern times.

It was the time of the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In the time when 'His Majesty the Machine' came upon the arena of society, and placed a stamp on that society, and then transformed that society.

If, in the thirties, there was an active resistance to the rise of steam power, a resistance that is known under the rubric of 'the machine wreckers,' in Germany, and in the neo-Luddite movement in England (also in Polish Lodz, there were attempts to break the machines), then in the second half of the previous century, it became clear to everyone, that it was irrational to oppose the irresistible forces of progress. In its place, the thought was placed that it is not the machine that is the enemy of the people, but rather the opposite, the machine needs to be used for the good of humanity and for the good of the working classes.

The modern socialist movements begins to take form.

This movement travels in a direction opposite to that of the sun – it goes from west to east.

The industrialization begins in England (the ancestral patriarchs of socialism think that England will be the first socialist state) passes through France and Germany, and reaches the borders of the once isolated semi-feudal Czarist Russia, and in the front row, to the Poland of that time.

Poland of that era came to play a rather important and interesting role in the geography of Europe; Poland lies on the border between east and west; Poland is famous for its history for being the land which halted the advance of the Mongols, the Tatars, of the Turks and other Asiatics, and semi-barbarous tribes in various kingdoms.

Also, from the perspective of industrialization, Poland stood far ahead in comparison with the Russia of that time. Poland, broken up and quartered among three kingdoms, was nevertheless much more advanced than Russia to the east; in this respect, Poland stood closer to the west than the east. In the year 1874, Russian Poland accounted for more than 19 of all steam-powered machinery of Russia at that time, and in Poland – especially in Lodz, Pabianice, Zyrardów, and Warsaw, formidable factories begin to rise, which employ thousands of workers.

Also the Polish labor movement was a lot older and more assertive than its Russian counterpart. If in Russia, until the late nineties, held onto the movement of the 'Народая Воля' which mainly supported the *muzhik*[230] and the landless peasant, in Poland there already was a socialist labor movement. Already by 1862, a group of Social Democrats existed in Poland, which took part in the founding of the First International, and in the year 1881, creates the first Polish Socialist Party, under the name of the first 'Proletariat.'

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229 The historical literature gives this date variously, as 1870 or 1871.

230 'Farming Peasant,' in Russian.

The various people's movements and revolutions which took place in Europe in the 19th century, had a deep and powerful echo in Poland; The Chartist Movement n England, the Revolutions of 1848 in France and in Central Europe, the heroic uprising of the Paris Commune in 1871, resonated mightily in Poland. Which itself carried through two revolutions in the past century – the revolutions of 1830 and 1863 – revolutions that was put down bloodily by the Czarist Cossacks, but also elicited deeply flowing undercurrents from within the Polish nation.

These referenced undercurrents and transformations, brought many residents from the villages and the *shtetlach* and from the smaller settlements within the larger cities, to look for work and bread and also brought the family of Rosa Luxembourg from small Zamość to large Warsaw.

To the extent that is known, Rosa Luxembourg's father, Edouard Luxembourg, was an enlightened, assimilated Jew, who did not have any special relationship to his Jewishness. In his youth, he studied in the commercial schools of Berlin and Bromberg. It is also known that Edouard Luxembourg studied for a period of time at the Teachers Seminary in Warsaw – despite the fact that in life, he was at a distance from pedagogy and from all appearances, did not have much luck as a merchant... Rosa Luxembourg's mother, Lena, was an intelligent, enlightened woman, who had an ardent love for the Bible, and the German poet Schiller – as Rosa Luxembourg herself tells in her famous letters from prison.

One of her grandfathers, on her father's side, was one of the most prominent merchants of Zamość, having dealt in Danzig, Leipzig, and other cities out of the country. On her maternal grandfather's side, there are a slew of Rabbis and apparently also the famous Gaon of Lemberg '*Pene Yehoshua.*'[231] She also had a great-grandfather who took an active part in the Polish revolutionary movement of 1846 in Krakow [232]and at that time released a call 'to the Jewish citizens of Krakow' – and it looks like the genius, and revolutionary spirit of her grandfathers and uncles, were embodied brilliantly in Rosa.

Rosa was the youngest child of her parents – the youngest, and the most talented. The Latin saying that 'A Healthy Soul is found in a Healthy Body,' did not apply to Rosa Luxembourg; from earliest childhood, she suffered from a variety of ailments, and from one of these bouts of illness, she remained with a permanent limp for her entire life, but – as the doctor of that time is reputed to have said – 'she certainly won't limp intellectually...'

It is indeed because of these ailments that she begins to attend school late, but even before she enters school, she can read, write, and sketch ( she had a special weakness for sketching and drawing), her beloved heroes are Spartacus, The Brothers Gracchi, and other warriors for justice. She keeps a diary, writes letters to her mother, to her girlfriends, to her canary.... from all appearances, she was a master letter-writer, not only in prison, but also when she was free, and not only in her later years, but also in childhood.

She is one of the most talented students at school, she is in the second grade, and knows more than most students in the fifth grade.... her girlfriends call her 'Globus,' because of this, because she seems to carry all the world's problems on her head. Her reactionary Russified teachers hate her – but guide her skills.

At that time, the Polish socialist organization, '**Proletariat**' is founded. At the head of this organization stand such wondrous personalities such as the legendary **Ludwig Varinsky** – who is later thrown into a Czarist prison, **Stanislaw Mendelson**, Shimon Dickstein – known by the pseudonym 'Jan Mlot,' and the author of the famous brochure, '**What One Lives By**,' and a whole host of other interesting and wondrous personalities.

Rosa Luxembourg was all of 13 years old when she entered one of the circles of 'Proletariat' – by appearance, she looks much younger – however, it doesn't much time before she attracts everyone's attention; **the soaring trajectory of the young she-eagle is recognized!**

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231 Joshua-Höschel Falk b. Joseph (author of "*Maginne Shelomoh*" and "*Pene Yehoshua*"; d. in Krakow 1648).

232 The prior footnote gives a generational insight into how a branch of her family came to Krakow.

The Czarist regime falls on the 'Proletariat' organization with special cruelty. A large part of its leadership are hanged, a wave of informants cascades over the organization, and many of its members are arrested. Rosa doesn't sleep at home, prints calls to action, brochures, translates Karl Kautsky's brochure 'The Division of Wealth in the Future Order,' into Polish and at that time, she receives an order from the remaining party leaders, that she must leave Poland, go to Switzerland and assume the leadership of the organization.

At the time she left Poland, at the time she fled over the border, she is followed by the border guards. Her companion – a shingle maker from Posen, shoves her into a church. There, he tells the priest that she has in mind to convert to Christianity, the priest helps save them, and to get over the border undetected...

Rosa Luxembourg was twenty years old when she went across the Polish border and also the border into a new, stormy world.[233]

## B. In the World-at-Large

*Page 541:* *A Facsimile of one of Rosa Luxembourg's Letters from Prison*

In the same year that she flees Poland, she arrives in Switzerland, which at that time was the refuge of all political refugees, and she enters to study at the law faculty and becomes a diligent student of the socialist professor, **Konrad Schmidt** – the one socialist professor in that time. Later on, when Konrad Schmidt becomes a follower of **Edouard Bernstein**, his former student leads a sharp battle against him, and against Bernstein's revisionism in general.

In Zurich, she met [the man] who would become her friend and life-long companion, **Leo Jogiches** (also known as 'Tiszka,' 'Grozovsky,' etc. – a sin of wealthy Jewish parents frm Vilna, who had been expelled from gymnasium because of political activism. His entire life was dedicated to the labor movement. Every hour that he did not dedicate to party work, he thought of as 'stolen minutes. [234]').

In the year 1893, together with Leo Jogiches and **Juliusz Markhlevsky** (Jan Karski), she founded the Polish Social-Democratic Party, for which she is not only the founder – but at times also the entire party. This party, known by the initials S.D.K.P.L. – later the communist party of Poland, carried on a sharp struggle against the second Polish Socialist Party, P.P.S., for its nationalism and separatism, this battle is carried out by Luxembourg in the name of pure Marxism – and it is not for nothing that she is later designated as the 'mother' of Polish Marxism.

She made her first appearances in the public eye in the venue of the Austrian-German socialist '*Eintracht.*' Her first offerings were far from being a success; she was very nervous, and simply was unable to put the words together, and so she groped about, and it was hard to imagine that a short time later, she would mature, as an effective public speaker, who would be able to sway thousands of listeners.

In that time, she edited the Polish S. D. *Sprava Rabotniva* (The Labor-Issue), produces an array of brochures under various names, about The first of May, and about 'Independence and the Labor-Issue,' where she develops the concept that 'a freedom for humanity will come, and not a Polish freedom.' In the year 1896, she prints her first article in Kautsky's 'Neue Zeit,' about social-patriotism in Poland. In that same year, she takes part in the coming together of the socialist International, which took place in London. There, she appears sharply in opposition to the P. P. S. delegate **Ignaz Daszinski** and against the P. P. S. doctrine of separatism, creates a large number of enemies and also many adherents.

On the trip back from London, she spends a few months in Paris. She becomes acquainted with the French Socialist leadership, foremost, **Zishl Ged** and **Jean Jaurès**, with whom she has disagreements over many matters. She is impressed by his oratorical talent and his struggle for peace, to which she is also a strong adherent. At the congress of

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233 History gives the date of this event as 1889. This would have made her eighteen or nineteen years of age.

234 Author's Footnote: See the biographical details about Leo Jogiches later on

the Socialist International, which took place four years later in Paris, she conducts the debate about 'peace for the nations, about militarism and the permanent army.'

During her visit to Paris – and later in other European capitols – she also visits various museums, acquainting herself with art treasures, visits The Louvre, and the art exhibits of the Impressionists. Within Rosa Luxembourg there lived not only a great politician, but also a great artist.

In 1897, after submitting her university thesis about 'The Industrial Development of Poland,' which is considered by all the professors as brilliant work – she moves to Germany, in order to settle there and realize her ambitions. She is drawn to Germany for two reasons: first, Germany at that time had the strongest labor movement, and her knowledge of the German language. In order to be able to be politically active, she must become a German citizen, so she has a fictional wedding with the son of a German socialist and obtains the name, 'Frau Liebeck.'

In September 1898 she directs the socialist organ in Dresden, and protrudes ever further out in the top ranks, as a brilliant orator, a brilliant writer, and as a sharp uncompromising warrior against reformism, which in that time had come to the fore, with the well-known theory of Edouard Bernstein about revisionism. It is against this theory that she writes her famous book, 'Reform or Revolution.'

Rosa Luxembourg had her own path and her own way in the socialist movement. She came out, not only against Bernstein and later against Kautsky, but also against Lenin, with whom she agreed on many things, but disagreed with him on many more things. The same can be said in connection with Plekhanov, for whom she had a great deal of respect, as the father of Russian Social-Democracy, but against whom she – and even more so her husband Leo Jogiches — carried on a bitter fight.

She takes an active role in the Socialist International, where she represents the extreme left wing, taking an interest in all affairs which come out in the Polish and Russian socialist movement and also takes an active part in the election campaign of the German Socialists in the year 1903. For a sharp speech that she gives against militarism, she is arrested – but later set free.

And in this manner, tightly involved with German workers and the German socialist movement, news of the 1905 revolution in Russia reaches her, and Rosa Luxembourg realizes that she has to be there.

The entire, vast land of Russia is caught up in a boiling revolutionary wave; the entire country is one giant battlefield. In Petersburg and in Lodz, in Baku and in Warsaw, in Odessa and in Riga, barricades are being erected; workers pour out, soldiers, sailors, peasants, students – all Russian peoples, and Rosa Luxembourg finds herself there.

She comes under a false name – Anna Matckko – and under this name, she is active for a long time, until the Russian reaction succeeds in choking the people's uprising and the citizen Anna Matchko is arrested and thrown into the usual prison, together with ordinary criminals and crazies.

However, while she was in prisons, she composes three brochures, which are smuggled out and printed. On a certain evening, she is blindfolded and she is taken out of the cell. She believes that this her end has arrived, and 'and I was ashamed – she admitted years later – because I thought I had gone pale.'

After leaving prison, she makes a small break in her political activity and travels together with **Louisa Kautsky** to Italy – to rest her shot nerves.

She had to have such short rest periods, breath-catching opportunities, after active incidents; [but] such rest was in itself a prison for her, and a second pause, to travel to sunny Italy in the year 1911, arouses in her a desire to draw, which she had a weakness for since childhood.

It is hard to know, how such an obviously frail and sickly woman could do so much; It is a fact that she participated in Polish Social-Democracy, in the German and Russian Labor Movements, in [The Socialist] International. She was everywhere in word and deed, appeared everywhere, and wrote everywhere and thereby demonstrated to produce such important capital works as the previously mentioned 'Reform and Revolution' and her even more important work, 'The Accumulation of Capital,' which many consider to be the single most important socialist book, after Marx's 'Das Kapital.'

And in this fashion, her life continued on, with activity, until the bloody world war in the year 1914.

## C. Rosa Luxembourg's Jewish Moments

This chapter will be especially short; Rosa Luxembourg belonged to that class of people that cannot be circumscribed within boundaries, or in the ranges of a specific national group. She dreamed of creating one nation out of all nations, and did not even think of herself as Polish – in fact, she was what at one time was understood to be a cosmopolitan person, in the best sense of that word.

Also her family – as we have already mentioned – did not have any relationship to Jews, despite the fact that they came from such a genuinely Jewish ambience, which is what the city of Zamość was at that time. They were assimilated and at most, they thought of themselves as 'Poles of the Mosaic faith.'

The Jewish moments were however, indirect, and came from the other side. All those who fought against her, never forgot to remind everyone of her Jewish origin. In hindsight, it seems appropriate to cite what was written about her by the former Polish radical and freethinker, and later black marketeer, **Andzhei Niemayevski**.

In his journal, *Misl Niepodliega* (Independent Thought), he writes:

' The Jews incite the workers to make all of socialism an enemy of the Fatherland... that, along with what Rosa Luxembourg and her followers – these heirs of the one-time saloon keepers – they nourish the workers, with all the attributes of [sic: intoxicating] literary drink... This destructive devil's work, carried out by these Jewish louts, under the guise of ameliorating the plight of the laboring classes, really emerges as having the true objective to full the hearts of the workers with hate towards Poland. It is to win them over to the view that Poland is dead. To use them, in the end, for ameliorating the interests of Jewish petit-bourgeoisie. This is because the Jews are 'anti-gentile,' and the Luxembourg Social-Democrats – inherent enemies of Poland...'

However, she also had certain positive Jewish moments. As told by Jean Mille (one of the pioneers of the Bund), in his book, 'Pioneers and Builders,' in defense of the Jewish labor organizations in Russia and Poland, against the attacks of the P. P. S. and even later, when the *Bund* was already 3-4 years in existence, and had already shown, according to its point of view, signs of the so-called 'nationalistic sickness,' she asked of him if he would write up an overview of the Jewish socialist movement, for the popular scientific journal, '*Psheglond Sozial-Democratichnii.*' that she edited at that time. Since the evidence showed that Jean did not undertake to produce this work, someone else prepared it.

As the same Jean Mille relates, in the previously cited book, Rosa Luxembourg, together with her husband, Leo Jogiches, staged 'four speeches of Jewish workers,' which took place on May 1, 1892 in Vilna, and can be thought of the beginning of the organized Jewish labor movement. – Despite the fact that the Vilna organization was not satisfied with the way in which the speeches subsequently were printed.

No further Jewish moment connected to Rosa Luxembourg are known, and quite properly, no more could be expected.

# D. In Prisons and Out Free

No one less than her great friend and sharer of ideals, **Karl Liebknecht**, wrote in his renown letters from prison, that he would like to live twice: once 'at leisure' in prison, in order to become familiar with certain things, and a second time, free, in order to be able to make an impact and fight.

Regrettably, he did not even live one complete life, and it was a murderous bullet from a reactionary Junker that ended his young life.

The larger part of revolutionary life was a double-life – in prison and out of prison, free.

Ros Luxembourg also lived such a double-life, being in prison and out free. In the year 1890, she flees Poland, in order not to be incarcerated in some Czarist prison. According to one version – supported by B. Mark, in his work about I. L. Peretz – Rosa Luxembourg served time in the Paviak in the year 1889, together with I. L. Peretz (In our opinion, this version is not correct. At that time, Rosa Luxembourg was already in Switzerland). In the year 1903, she is arrested in Germany because of her pointed election speeches. She is freed on the basis of an amnesty, which was proclaimed at the occasion of the King of Saxony. Rosa Luxembourg refuses to accept the benefit of the amnesty. Consequently, she is literally thrown out of the cell where she was incarcerated.

In March 1907, she again gets a taste of a Czarist prison, as we have previously described.

In the year 1914, when the clouds of war began to thicken in the European skies, she appears actively against the impending war. In an array of meetings, she calls on the German workers and German soldiers, 'not to take up their arms against our French brethren,' A trial is conducted against her, and she is sentenced to 11 months conditional imprisonment.

The government attempts to put her on trial yet again, because in one of her speeches, she mentioned corporal punishment that was meted out in the German army. 'She has insulted the officer corps, the non-commissioned officers, and the soldiers.' But 1013 victims of this corporal punishment present themselves as witnesses and the government pulls back.

And when the bloody war breaks out, and the largest part of the socialists in various countries are drawn into the maelstrom of the war, Rosa Luxembourg is one of the few who holds high the banner of struggle against the war, helps to call together the Zimmerwald Conference and carries on vigorous anti-war activities.

In March 1915, she is thrown into prison, where she remains until February 1916. However, from prison, she edits the periodical 'The International,' along with **Franz Mehring**, **Leo Jogiches**, and others, and writes her brochure about 'Crisis in the German Social-Democracy.'

After a short interlude of freedom, she is incarcerated yet again in July 1916, and is interred in prisons in Berlin, Wronka and Breslau – and she remains there until she is liberated by the German revolution at the end of the war.

Indeed, it is from these imprisonments that her famous 'prison letters' come to us, in which one can get a sense of the profound soul possessed by the one who wrote such letters.

If Rosa Luxembourg had created only these letters in her life, and nothing else, for this alone she would have to be crowned as a great, pure, feeling, poetic soul – with a great human heart and with a true poetic talent.

It was a time when the walls of a prison were not so stifling as they have recently become; it was still possible to write something there and tell something, and Rosa Luxembourg told a great deal: she told about her great love for art, for music, for genuine folk literature, for the singing bird; she portrays her enormous compassion for a roach that has been

bitten apart, to a captured Rumanian ox, who is a 'captive' and dreams there about how, after the bloody war, she will rest and live out her life on the island of Corsica, etc.

From all the predictions she made in her letters, only one came true. That 'she hoped to die at her post: in the battlefield of the streets or in prison...'

On November 9, 1918, the revolutionary storm breaks out in Berlin and other cities of Germany. [Kaiser] Wilhelm II flees to Holland. On the same day, the workers of Breslau break down the gates of the prison, and free Rosa Luxembourg, carrying her out on their hands, to the cathedral square.

But this was not for long, because at the rear, evil forces lay in ambush. They sought the life of this revolutionary leader, as they generally sought to undermine the upcoming German republic -------

And on a cola-black January night, reactionary German Junkers – the very same ones who later brought Hitlerism to Germany – seized Rosa Luxembourg, and in a terrifying manner, they murdered her and threw her body into a dirty canal.

However, the memory of this proud and substantive she-eagle will live for a long time, she, who flew out of the small town of Zamość, flying through the heavens of all Europe, leaving a bright contrail of light behind her.

# Rosa Luxembourg's Husband, Leo Jogiches Tiszka

**Biographical Notes**

*Page 548:* *The northern part of the Rynek (Marketplace) – Ormianska Gasse 24-30*

We have previously mentions Rosa Luxembourg's husband, L e v J o g i c h e s T i s z k a in the work of Y . Z u d i k e r . Here, we bring further, an array of data and facts about the referenced individual, whose course in life and destiny was so well-aligned to hers. These facts are taken from the work of the martyr Z a l m a n R e i s i n , under the name: ' L. Jogiches-Tiszka and the Beginning of the Jewish Labor Movement.' which was printed in the 'YIVO Proceedings,' Vilna, Volume 1, Number 5, May 1, 1931, Pages 432-448.

Zalman Reisen based his work on an array of bibliographic sources as well as on personal questioning of individuals: in our notes we omit all the sources. We provide only the data and facts.

** ** **

Leib Jogiches was born in Vilna on July 17, 1867 to a wealthy Jewish family.

Among his ancestors, we know his paternal grandfather, Yaakov ben Joseph Jogiches, a very wealthy magnate, a scholarly Jew, and one of the leaders of the Vilna community (This, for example, is confirmed by what was communicated by the Vilna community by the teacher Levin Lionder) such that on October 10, 1823, there are signatures of the community leaders Morgenstern, **Jogiches**, Kassel and Gershany.

Yaakov Jogiches owned a large watermill on 1329 Poplaves, and four large yards. In one of these yards, at Number 1 Shavler Gasse (once called Jedmanski Zavelik), he established a big building that still exists (meaning up to the year 1931 — Ed.), under the name of **Jogiches Building**; in his will, he made a special point of warning, that no matter what happens to the land property of the yard, the building must not be allowed to fall into disuse, and thanks to that one of the later owners of the yard property who sought to demolish the building, lost out in the process. His religious piety is attested to by the fact that he did not allow himself to be photographed. He died in 1848, in his dacha, during the time of a cholera attack; he was, at that time, over 80 years old.

After his death, his watermill was transferred to his son, Shmuel-Gershon, the father of Leib Jogiches. Like all the children of Yaakov ben Joseph, he was already an enlightened person, but still comported himself with the stature of a Jew, to the extent that his son, Leib (the youngest of the family) obtained what can be called a Jewish upbringing.

In general, very little is known about his childhood years. The following episode is characteristic of the young Leib, which is told in the family:

One day, after noon, a servant came in and informed Madame Jogiches that a pauper was begging for alms. Mrs. Jogiches declined to give anything. The 8 year-old Leibl asked his mother at that time, if she had eaten lunch that day, and when she replied in return with a question, as to what it was that he wanted, since everyone had just finished eating lunch, he asked her:

– And it is possible that the pauper has not yet had a midday meal ....

Leib Jogiches studies at the Vilna Gymnasium, he was a great joker, to the extent that once he stole the class journal and changed its contents.

** *** **

Zalman Reisen presents many interesting facts about the part played by L. Jogiches in the beginning of the labor movement in Vilna. He takes these facts from the memories of the people who were active at that time, who were the pioneers either in the Jewish labor movement of the *Bund*, or of the general socialist movement (Tz. Koppelsohn-Timofei; Abraham Gordon-'Rezchik'; Fati Srednitskaya-Kremer; Arkady Kremer; Feliks Cohen; Max Hochdorf; Sh. Gozhansky-Lano; Dr. Sh. Peskin; Markhalevsky, and others).

From all of this information, the following picture emerges:

As a young Gymnasium student, **Liovka**, as he was then called within the circle of his acquaintances, was already suffused with revolutionary tendencies, and carried on social-revolutionary agitation among his school comrades. In order to completely dedicate himself to this work, he left the 4th and 5th class of the Gymnasium.

It appears that he began to organize the first conspiratorial cells about 1885. Jogiches began his revolutionary activity among the first Jewish labor circles, and according to one version, while it was among the Jewish stocking makers, L. Jogiches was not drawn to the work of **Jews**, he later went over to work among non-Jews.

L. Jogiches had only a weak command of Yiddish, and his entire demeanor was an assimilated one – or better said, a cosmopolitan one. At the time when his contemporary pioneers were particularly drawn into the Jewish-Socialist creation effort, he didn't have an interest.

When the extensively branched Jewish labor groups came on the scene, strike cells, the first group of Jewish Social Democrats, from which the *Bund* later emerged, L. Jogiches was already far removed from the Jewish milieu, and was out of the country.

In order to have access to the workers in the factories, L. Jogiches began to learn the trade of locksmith. For a long time, also engraving. Later on, he made the acquaintance of Russian officers and among them, he organized a circle.

On September 14, 1888 Jogiches was arrested and incarcerated in 'The 14th Number,' of the former Vilna Citadel. On November 21 he was released on the parole of his mother, Sophia Jogiches. On May 11, 1889 he was again imprisoned, and on September 11 he is released under police surveillance until September 11, 1890.

He is then taken as a soldier ( he was required to present himself to the draft in 1888), but as a political operative, not seeing the possibility of carrying out revolutionary work from within the military, and also out of fear that his hot temperament will cause him to be put into a disciplinary battalion, he fled a night from the 'concentration point,' to his brother, Pavel Jogiches, and from there to Wilkomir, to his relatives, from where he fled to Switzerland.

After fleeing Vilna, the connection between L. Jogiches and the Jewish labor movement is broken. In Switzerland, L. Jogiches (under the pseudonym **Grazovsky**) makes the acquaintance of **Rosa Luxembourg**, and ties himself to her for life, as her constant helper and adviser.

Jogiches never came out against the *Bund*, quite the opposite, in the first efforts of this party, he was attached to it, but taken in general, he already didn't have any special interest in the organized party of the Jewish proletariat; he did not believe in the independent power of the Jewish labor movement. Together with Rosa Luxembourg, in 1893, he was the founder and leader, under the pseudonym of Jan **Tiszka**, of the **'Social-Democracy in the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania**.' (Known by the initials, S. D. K. P. L.)

After the outbreak of the Russian revolution (1905-1906), Tiszka-Jogiches, together with Rosa Luxembourg, came to Warsaw. They were, however, immediately arrested, and sentenced to hard labor. He, however, found an opportunity to escape from the prison at Makatow.

At the London gathering of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party, Tiszka was elected in the presidium as the Chairman of the S. D. K. P. L. (**Lenin** – from the Bolsheviks; **T. Ran** – from the Mensheviks; **V. Meres** – from the *Bund*; **Azis** – from the Latvians).

In the years 1907-1913, Jogiches worked in the Polish and Russian party. In time, he also began to play a role in the German left-wing socialist movement. He belong to the group of **Karl Liebknecht**, **Rosa Luxembourg**, and **Franz Mehring**, and the Spartacists.

After the January strike of 1918 in Germany, he was arrested and was released in November 1918. In January 1919 he was again arrested and when he escaped from prison, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxembourg were no longer alive. He then became a co-editor of '*Die Rote Fohne*' (The Red Flag). But on March 12, 1919, he was arrested again. On the same day, he was killed in a horrible way.

** *** **

How similar they were in their lives and their activities; in their struggle and in their demise: – **Rosa Luxembourg** and **Leib Jogiches-Grozovsky-Tiszka.**

At the end, it is worth adding a further detail.

The first May Day celebration in Czarist Russia took place in 1892 in Vilna. It was at that time, at a secret May Day celebration held in a forest, that the famous **Four Speeches of Jewish Workers** were given.

The speakers were:

**Fanya Levin-Resnick**, a seamstress (her husband was a teacher, Akiva Resnick). She died in 1896 in Brisk.

**Yelena Gelfand-Druskin**, also a seamstress (her husband later became a doctor). In the year 1939, she was living in Leningrad. Both of these speeches were given in **Russian**.

**Mottel Meisel**, a jeweler; he gave his speech in **Yiddish**. In 1939 he was living in Israel.

**Reuven Gershovsky, 'Yaakov,'** a quilt maker, who later became a dentist and in the year 1939 lived in Vilna. He gave his speech in **Russian.**

These **Four Speeches** of 1892, appeared a year later in Russian in Geneva, in the foreign publications of the 'Social-Democratic Bibliotheque.'

As is noted by the editorial staff of the third volume of **Historical Writings** of YIVO (Paris-Vilna 1939), which is dedicated to **The Jewish Socialist Movement Up to the founding of the *Bund***, the compiler of the 25 page introduction to these speeches was **Lev Jogiches (Grozovsky Tiszka)**, the producer of the brochure. The editorial staff adds that **Rosa Luxembourg** contributed to this as well.

In the referenced volume of the Historical Writings from YIVO, we find the Four Speeches translated into Yiddish. In the course of the long years, the 'Four Speeches,' were among the most popular propaganda material in the illegal revolutionary movement of the *Bund.*

# The Zionist Movement in Zamość

**By Yekhiel Goldwag, Moshe Schliam**

## A
## Basic Overview


*Page 550:* *The Zionist Organization in Zamość in the year 1922. In the middle of the front row is the teacher, Sholom Weiner.*

*Page 551:* *Invitation Card to an Evening of Traditional Dance from Keren Kayemet l'Yisrael in Zamość in the year 1927.*

*Page 552:* *Lottery Day of the Zamość HeHalutz Organization for the Benefit of 'PAF' (Palestine Arbeiters Fund)*

*Page 556:* *The 'Freiheit' Organization in Zamość, photographed on September 21, 1929 at the time of the aliyah of their leaders, Menachem Zilberstein and Sholom Kruk to the Holy Land.*

*Page 557:* *The Youth-Pioneering organization 'Gordonia,' in Zamość, photographed on January 15, 1931.*

*Page 558:* *The Sport Club, 'HaPoel' from the right-wing Poalei Zion in the May 1st demonstration of the year 1935.*


The first sprouts of Zionism in Zamość manifested themselves in the times of the *Hibat Zion* movement, but it took on especially prominent form in the time of political Zionism.

The adherents of Zionist concepts in that time were recruited from the ranks of the worshipers at the *Bet HaMedrash*. During the time of the Czarist regime in Poland, the movement was illegal. Despite this, Zionist activity was palpable in our city, which manifested itself in a variety of forms.

During that time, a variety of Zionist advocates visited Zamość, such as Rabbi Nissenbaum, Kuratko, etc., who brought support for the *Yishuv* in the Holy Land to a level of practical activity. Zionist work, at that time, found its expression in the distribution of funds, initiatives taken for the colonial bank and gathering funds for the *Keren Kayemet* l'Yisrael.

Among those who were active, the exceptional workers were: Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, Elkanah Geliebter, Hirsch Handelsman, Yaakov-Joseph Schneerson, Gedalia Hoffman – from among the youth; Yitzhak Frenkel, Aharon Nadler, Shmuel Grossbaum, Yehoshua Fruchtgarten, Azriel Shafir, Chaim-Jospeh Gebet, and others.

From the year 1905, the movement began to penetrate circles of young people from various directions: such as the youth of the *Bet HaMedrash*, folk youth, and *Maskilim*. Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter, who had returned from the Holy Land as a student at the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, had a great influence among the young people at that time. The work for strengthening the dissemination of the Hebrew language and culture was strengthened at that point, and in 1909, a community Hebrew school was established, by the name, '*Heder Metukan*.' In this school, pupils were educated in the renewed Hebrew culture.

In the year 1914, with the outbreak of the war, activity came to a halt, principally because of the fact that many Zionists and activists left the city, and were dispersed throughout the entire length and breadth of that one-time Russian Empire. (Among them was also the activist, Hirsch Handelsman, who later was active in the movement in Russia – Berdichev).

With the Austrian occupation of the city, in the year 1915, possibilities opened up for the organization of a legal movement. In Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter's home, youth meetings took place, with the objective of founding a Zionist youth organization.

News arrived from Warsaw at that time about the formalization of the '*Tze'irei Zion*' movement and the movement attracted many adherents among the young people of Zamość. A location was rented, and the establishment of a '*Tze'irei Zion*' organization in Zamość was proclaimed.

Poland at that time was partitioned into areas that were under wither Austrian or German occupation. And because in the part under Austrian occupation no regulation existed for the existence of '*Tze'irei Zion*', the organization in Zamość was formally incorporated into the center for the Zionist movement in Vienna, under the name, '*Kadima*,' because it was from there that it received legal sanction, even if form a practical point of view, it drew its substance from the '*Tze'irei Zion*' center in Warsaw.

The composition of the first committee of '*Tze'irei Zion*' in Zamość was as follows: Zvi-Chaim Geliebter, Hirsch Gebet, Israel Roset, Yekhiel Goldwag, Shlomo Tziffel, Shimon Finkman, Tuvia Stern, Reizl Goldberg-Roset, Shifra Levinson-Zegen, Nehemiah Feiler, and others.

The organization at that time embraced the largest majority of the Jewish young people in the city, and its activities were multi-branched. Collections were taken up for Keren Kayemet, Funds were distributed, a broadly-based propaganda effort was conducted, and Hebrew evening classes were established, a dram troupe was established. The courses, and in general the broad cultural activity, were conducted by Zvi-Chaim Geliebter and the teacher Joseph Chessler, who at that time had arrived from Pinsk.

The organization in Zamość at that time, served as a district committee for the surrounding towns. Zvi-Chaim Geliebter at that time visited the surrounding towns of the province, and with his inspiring speeches, he awakened the youth to undertake Zionist activities. At that time, there was a rather complete network of organizations in the province, such that in 1917, there was a district conference held in Zamość of all the Zionist organizations in the vicinity. The '*Tze'irei Zion*' in Zamość at that time opened branches in the principal sections of the city, there was a branch in the Neustadt, the activists of this branch were: Simcha Zworyn, Yaakov Feigenbaum, Levi Rosenman, Stern, and others.

The activities among the young people also had an impact on the circle of the citizenry of the city, and in the year 1917, the 'Mizrahi' organization was established in our city, and among the founders were: Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, Mordechai Vogsholl, David Cooperstein, Baruch Sobol, Israel Rosen, among others. With the initiative of 'Mizrahi,' a religious national school, 'Yavneh,' was established, under the supervision of Mr. Anshel Sobol. The teachers were: Vitlin, Weinstein, among others. Hebrew courses were also given at the school.

With the Balfour Declaration in the year 1917, the work intensified, and Zionist influence was permitted to make a mark in all of the social institutions of the city. When, in 1918, the initiative for '*Keren HaGeulah*' was proclaimed, it was taken up with the greatest inspiration by most of the Jewish populace. Significant sums of money were collected and other assets such as precious items. Jewelry, gold and silver and precious stones.

In the middle of 1918, the Zionist organizations were disbanded by the disciplinary authorities of the Austrian occupation, under the suspicion that they were collaborating with the English and then for a short while, the Zionist organization went underground, but its activity was not disrupted, and it found many ways to conduct its work.

In the year in which the Russian border was opened, many Jewish war refugees returned to the city, among them, Yitzhak Funt, who had spent a great deal of time working in the central organs of the movement in Warsaw, as well as other comrades from among the young people, who had been influenced by the ideology of the '*Tze'irei Zion*' movement, which had developed during the time of the revolution in Russia: the group under the direction of Yitzhak Funt, helped a great deal with the crystallization of the Zionist-Socialist concept in the original '*Tze'irei Zion*' in the city, and carried on the ideological discourse with opponents of Zionism in labor circles: the *Bund* and communists.

At the end of 1918, when sovereignty passed from the fallen Austro-Hungarian Empire, to the newly established Polish regime, the danger of anti-Jewish excesses by anti-Semitic Polish elements appeared, and the '*Tze'irei Zion*' organized a self-defense organization in Zamość, and a specific amount of arms came into their possession for this purpose.

In the year 1920, at the time of the Polish- Bolshevik War, the Hetman [Semyon] Petlura had control of Zamość, for whose account their were a large number of Jewish martyrs, who were murdered by his armies in the Ukrainian villages. At that time, it came to pass that a meeting took place between him and the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Military, [Josef] Pilsudski, in Zamość, about concluding an agreement concerning mutual support between the Polish military and the Ukrainian Cossacks. Among the membership of the '*Tze'irei Zion*' in Zamość, a plot was hatched to assassinate the murderer Petlura and to avenge the spilling of innocent Jewish blood. R' Abraham Hartz volunteered himself in order to carry out this attempt. The '*Tze'irei Zion*' committee after a very serious deliberation of the issue – looking ahead and seeing that the consequences of the attempt could elicit a wave of pogroms against the Jewish population, which suspected the Jews of being sympathetic to the Bolsheviks – decided to cancel the implementation of the attempt.

The first democratic elections to the city municipal council in Zamość took place in 1921. '*Tze'irei Zion*' appeared here with an independent slate and carried out a decisive struggle with opponents on the left and the right. The bloc of assimilationists and old-line community activists was broken, who up until that point had represented Jewish Zamość: '*Tze'irei Zion*' succeeded in electing three members to the city council: Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter, Israel Roset, and Stern. For the first time ever, the proud words of the programmatic declaration of '*Tze'irei Zion*' were heard within the walls of the Zamość magistrate building, which were read by Israel Roset, eliciting stormy protests from the anti-Semitic councilmen at the extreme. Demands for national rights were heard for the Jewish minority, such as: schools for Jewish children in the Hebrew and Yiddish language; independent self-government and autonomy in connection with internal issues of the Jews, etc.

Also, in the professional movement of Jewish workers, the '*Tze'irei Zion*' organization had an influence, and through it, a professional society was founded of people involved in commerce, and was led entirely by its own members.

At that time, the '*HaShomer HaTza'ir*' organization had a great influence on Zionist youth, which produced may pioneers for the Third *Aliyah* to the Holy Land, and among their activists were: Chava Fuchs, Joseph Fuchs, Mattityahu Weiner, and others.

In 1921, the sports organization 'Maccabi' was founded in Zamość, which fulfilled an important role in the development of sports among the young Jewish Zionists in our city, and many of their members were active in a variety of areas of Zionist endeavor. Among their activists were: Moshe Luxenburg[235], Simcha Geliebter, Yaakov Bajczman, and others.

With the *aliyah* of the activists of '*Tze'irei Zion*' to the Holy Land, Zionist activity was measurably weakened, the membership of '*Tze'irei Zion*' fell with replacement by of those elements who did not have as deep roots in the movement and were members of the Jewish labor parties, in opposition to the Zionists, such as the *Bund* and the communists.

In time, the idea arose among the Zionist youth in the city to found an apolitical Zionist youth organization, whose purposes would be: practical Zionist work, such as the collection for the Zionist funds, distribution of monies, and cultural work, in the Zionist spirit among the youth. In the year 1921, a Zionist youth organization called '*Tzionim Tze'irim*' was founded. Among its founders were: Moshe Rubinstein, Abraham Fecher, Shmuel Shmarak, Benjamin Rosen, and others.

The organization embraced all the young Zionists from all different streams, and excelled in its practical activities along the entire length of the Zionist front in our city.

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235 This spelling is distinctly not the same as the one used for Rosa Luxembourg. It is not clear whether this is some relative, of hers, or not.

Within it, a Hebrew circle was founded, called, '*Hovevei Sfat Ever*,' which founded the first community Hebrew library. The members of this organization excelled in their activities on behalf of the Zionist funds. There was one especially highly influential group in this organization, which sympathized with the idea of the working man in the Holy Land, and took part in collections for the Palestine Arbeiters Fund (PAF) and also disseminated the initiatives of Bank HaPoalim. Among this group, the active members were: Leib Brandwein, Mottel Lastikman, among others.

In the year 1922, during the elections for the Polish Sejm, the Chairman of the Zionist organization in Poland, Yitzhak Greenbaum, founded the nationalities-bloc as a response to the proposed election ordinance proposed by the anti-Semitic priest Endek Lutoslawski, which had the purpose to diminish the representation of the Jews and other national minorities in the Poland of that era. The bloc of national minorities put up a slate of candidates, in the Zamość area among others, wanting to assure a proportional representation for the oppressed national minorities.

The concept of the proud struggle for equal rights for Jewish citizens in Poland threw down roots among the youth in our city and motivated them to unusual activity. The members of the '*Tzionim Tze'irim*' committed themselves to this election work, and stood at the point of the entire election campaign. The youth was also motivated to this national work by the aged Zionist worker, Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, who spared no energy or financial measures for this initiative.

The slate of minority candidates in the Zamość vicinity achieved a resounding victory, sending two deputies to the Polish Sejm: a Ukrainian, and the second was Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer.

In the year 1924, indications of differentiation began to crystallize among the members of the '*Tzionim Tze'irim*' along the existing ideological lines of the parties, within the Zionist movement.

The '*Tzionim Tze'irim*' organization was disbanded, and its members went off, each to the party with which they were ideologically near to.

Abraham Fekher, Yaakov Neimark, and others, founded a branch of the Zionist-Socialist Party, '*Dror*.'

Yohanan Morgenstern (who later transferred to work in the central instantiations of the movement) founded a branch of '*Tze'irei Zion*' (Tz.S.). The location of the branch was found in the Neustadt among the activists: Gershon Zucker, Levi Rosenman, Yitzhak Unterracht, and others.

Meir Goldhaar, Shmuel Hechtman, Moshe Schliam, and others, founded a branch of the Zionist Labor Party, '*Hitakhdut*.'

Shlomo Velichker, Yehuda Kornblitt, founded a branch of the Zionist Revisionists.

There was a general Zionist organization founded, and among its membership were: Chaim-Hirsch Geliebter, Sholom Weiner, Israel Roset, Mordechai Vogshall, and others.

In time, the '*HeHalutz*' organization renewed its work among the youth of the city, and among its activists were: Yaakov Neimark, Menachem Zilberstein, Shmuel Dulcher, Menachem Zingerman, and others. The organization carried out a multi-pronged facilitation effort, for cultural and physical conditioning for the Holy Land, and embraced a broad cohort of youth. In this organization, there were circles that studied the history of the Zionist movement, the labor movement in the Holy Land, problems of the '*HeHalutz*' movement, and prepared themselves to address the challenges of pioneers in the Holy Land. In order to encourage the transition to productive physical work, they founded groups for wood-cutting, and baking of matzohs.

After assembling a meaningful sum from the income associated with the previously mentioned labors, they approached the creation of a land development farm on the parcel that had been provided through Avigdor Inlander on lease to the 'HeHalutz' organization without cost. On these twenty dunams of land, in the Zamość vicinity, the land development farm of 'Avigdoria,' was established, which prepared *halutzim* for agricultural work in the Holy Land. This farm did

not exist for very long, because of the lack of need by its members, who worked in it, struggles with financial difficulties to sustain the group of members who lived there, and it had to be liquidated, but in the short time of its existence, it served as a gathering point of the youth, who on every Sabbath would stream there and have lively discussions, which was tied to their future *aliyah* to the Holy Land.

At that time, the '*HeHalutz HaTza'ir*' organization was founded within '*HeHalutz*,' which had the objective of training young cadets as future implementers of the pioneering concept. Among the activists of this organization the outstanding members were: Yehuda Eisenfeld, Chaika Funt, Rachel Zuberman, Moshe Horenfeld, and others.

With the unification of *Poaleï Zion* (right) and '*Tze'irei Zion*' (Tz. S.), in which the membership of '*Dror*' participated, a strong party, *Poalei Zion* Tz. S. was created in Zamość, whose influence was palpable in all community institutions of the city. The party took part in all of the elections for the municipal council and the Jewish community. Its representatives in the institutions were: Moshe Herman, Levi Rosenman, Moshe Tzaler (to the city council), Meir Pelker, Yehuda Wagner (the community). The party had a strong youth organization, 'Freiheit,' which had a large expense from educating the youth in pioneering objectives. Among the activists of 'Freiheit' the following stood out: Lipa Ehrlich, Israel'itskeh Gol[d]graber, Nissan Vogshall, and others.

Members of 'Poalei Zion' in Zamość published the only weekly periodical in the Yiddish language, '*Zamośćher Stimme*.' The initiator and first editor was Yohanan Morgenstern and the publication of the periodical was later chaired by Leib'tzi Goldgraber.

The party was active in the work for the Zionist funds, and its influence was also palpable in the professional movement of the Jewish workers in the city. It was through it, that a professional union of leather workers was formed, under the leadership of Yehuda Wagner. The members of Poalei Zion had large expenses for erecting the league for the workers n the Holy Land, in the city, which, apart from taking in the members of the Zionist-Socialist parties, also encompassed the sympathizers of labor in the Holy Land without party affiliation. A special activity on this behalf was demonstrated by the members Leib'tzi Goldgraber and Mottel Lastiksohn.

In the years 1933-1938, the league distributed more than 1000 *shkalim* in the city and at the election campaign of the Zionist Congress, it achieved a complete victory. In the league, it also organized a sports organization, 'HaPoel,' which apart from providing physical education of the young, directed a cultural activity in spiritual matters for the laborers in the Holy Land.

After its debut in the year 1924, the branch of the Zionist Labor Party, '*Hitakhdut*,' stood out in its activity in all areas of Zionist concern. The party founded the first people's university in the city, in which debates were conducted on general and Zionist themes, by the teachers at the Yiddish Gymnasium and Hebrew *Volksschule*, '*Kadima*.' Among the debaters were: Wagmeister, Weiner, Zeidman, Mannheim, and others. The debates were heavily attended and elicited an intense interest by young people. The party also had a folk-pioneer youth organization called '*Gordonia*.' Despite the fact that '*Gordonia*,' in its last years in Zamość suffered from the work of communist elements, who had penetrated the organization, a majority of the membership still followed in the path of developing themselves as pioneers. In its last years, the party suffered from a decline in the number of its members, which had left for a variety of reasons, but the party always had a loyal core of active members in all branches of the Zionist organization. The activists of the party were active in the work of the Zionist funds, '*HeHalutz*,' organization and assisted greatly in the establishment and development of the Hebrew *Volksschule*, '*Tarbut*,' in the city.

In the election campaign for the Polish Sejm in 1928-1932, when the independent Zionist slate had to put up with the attacks from the Polish government's half-fascist Sanazia-party – when many Zionist activists withdrew, under the pressure of the attacks – the members of 'Hitakhdut' carried out all of the campaign work with energy and without fear about their own backs. It is worth recalling the fact that the City Elder invited the previously mentioned venerable Zionist activist, Dr. Geliebter, and attempted by a variety of means to have him withdraw from election work, and Dr. Geliebter answered with pride: – if the presentation of a Zionist slate is not in the interests of the authorities, then it is certainly good for the Jewish populace, and our lines of activity can never be made the equivalent.

When the repressions of the regime against the Zionist slate took on more sharp forms, and the Zionist slate became practically canceled for the Senate, the national circles in the city voted for the canceled slate as a protest, and the previously mention Dr. Geliebter openly threw his ballot into the ballot box for the disqualified national ballot (paying no mind to the ordinances that made it forbidden to vote for a disqualified slate).

Both Zionist labor parties, Poalei-Zion Tz. S. and '*Hitakhdut*,' had a common field of endeavor in 'HeHalutz,' and the League for labor in the Holy Land. In the year 1923, despite the fact that organizationally it didn't have a large number of members, its activities always stood at the point of Zionist activity in the city, such as activity for the *Keren HaYesod, Keren Kayemet*, and help for the support of the Hebrew *Volksschule*, '*Kadima*,' and '*Tarbut*.' In 1929, the work of the organization was strengthened by the founding of the youth organization, '*HaNoar HaTzioni*,' among its activists, the following stood out: Sarah Shlafrok, Asher, Zegen, Shmuel Berger, and others.

During the crises, which would break out in the Holy Land after each aliyah, the waves of the Zionist movement would break over the youth in the city, and during the time of the outflow of the conjuctor-elements from the ranks of the Zionist organizations in the city, there always remained behind individuals who were like rock fortresses in their loyalty to their movement, and carried on their backs the entire burden of the Zionist endeavor in the city.

The activists were recruited from all of the Zionist parties in the city, from all their streams, and it is a duty to recall with awesome respect the names of these activists, who were cut down by the Hitlerist murderers and were not privileged to see the realization of their ideal – the establishment of a the Jewish State in our times: Dr. Rosenbush, Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, Mordechai Vogshall, Israel Roset, Moshe Rubinstein, Benjamin Rosen, Aharon Shlafrok, Yaakov Goldgraber, Aharon Shmuel Neimark, Chaim Dickler, David Dulcher, Moshe Zoberman, Mrs. Fuchs, Shmuel Lehrman, Shmuel & Leibl Schmarak, Abraham Fekher, Gershon Zucker, Leib'tzi Goldgraber, Shayndl Hechtkopf, and Yohanan Morgenstern.

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## The Movement for Hebrew in Zamość

*Page 562:  Facsimile of an announcement by 'HeHalutz' of a Yizkor memorial service.*

At all times, there was in Zamość, many Jews who were lovers of the Hebrew language, who excelled in their knowledge of the language, and had a considerable impact on its behalf especially in its dissemination among wider circles of the Jewish populace.

As is known, the editor of 'HaMelitz,' Zederbaum, was born in Zamość, and I. L. Peretz produced his first works in Hebrew.

Zamość, as a city of the Enlightenment was known among the Jews in Poland, and among the up-and-coming intelligentsia of that time, which came largely out of the ambit of the *Bet HaMedrash*, which excelled in its understanding of the ancient Hebrew literature, loyally attended the first step in the construction of the modern Hebrew literature.

It speaks for itself to say that Nahum Sokolov chose Zamość as the place for the raising and education of his son, whom he sent to study in the government gymnasium of Zamość, in order that he be able to simultaneously learn Hebrew and Jewish studies under the well-known *Maskil*, Hodock (who later moved to Warsaw and there was the official government censor for Hebrew and Yiddish literature).

There were always individuals to be found in the city who founded modern *Heders*, and these were the modern teachers: Goddel, Chaim Brisker, and others, who taught their pupils *Tanakh*, Grammar, and Jewish History. These *Heders* were the first undulations in the affairs of their time, on the front of modern national education.

In the year 1909 a community school was founded under the name of '*Heder Metukan*,' which, in its program, were: learning the language using the method of '*Ivrit Be 'Ivrit*,' Jewish studies, and a large measure of secular studies. Among the founders of the school were: Hirsch Handelsman, Schneerson, Zusha Falk, and others. The first teachers were: Sholom Weiner, Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter, Anshien, Rosenblum, Kalman Engelstein, and others. The school had many opponents from the religious-fanatic circles, who declared a Holy War against the 'Apostasy.' But the school held on, and developed, drawing in the young generation because of the worth of the renewed Hebrew culture. With the outbreak of the First World War, in the year 1914, the school was closed down, because the activists, as well as the teachers, together with other war-refugees in the city, were impelled [to flee] into Russia.

In the year 1916, the '*Tze 'irei Zion*' organization established evening courses in Hebrew, and in the year 1917 Hebrew evening courses were also established by the '*Mizrahi*' organization. The teachers of these courses were: Joseph Chessler, Geliebter, Witlin, Weinstein, among others.

In the year 1917, through '*Mizrahi*,' thanks to the initiative taken by Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, the national-religious school, '*Yavneh*,' was established, in which many of the young people of our city were educated, in the spirit of the traditional and renewed Hebrew culture. This school existed up to the year 1923.

In the year 1918, Sholom Weiner returned from Russia, and with the help of the '*Tze 'irei Zion*' organization, a Hebrew Volksschule, 'Kadima,' was opened which educated the younger Jewish generation in secular knowledge. Many of the members of the Zionist youth organizations from all walks of life, got their spiritual preparation in this school. At the same time, the teachers of the Hebrew schools and courses conducted a broadly-based cultural endeavor. Various appearances were organized in the Hebrew language, such as debates, evening get-togethers, literary directions, which influenced the young people to draw nearer to the roots of the Hebrew language and literature.

In the year 1922, the society '*Agudat Hovevei Sfat Ever*,' was founded in out city through the initiative of the organization '*Tzionim Tze 'irim*,' which opened the first community Hebrew library in our city: among the initiators: Abraham Fekher, Berel Edelsberg, Mottel Lastiksohn, Aharon Koppelman, and others. This library was created by young people from the ages of 16-18, developed year-by-year, and gathered around it the nationalistic youth, who craved the new Hebrew written word, and found spiritual satisfaction there. This library reached an apogee in development in the years 1924-1926, when the new management in cooperation with the members: Hechtman, Zilberstein, Schliam, Eilbaum, Rak, Fekher and Mandelbaum attained a strengthened and more active level, and was able to show an increase in the number of books to over 1000. It was at that point that it was able to get official legal recognition from the authorities, under the name of 'Community Hebrew Library, of David Frishman.' This legalization created possibilities for the expansion of financial sources for the support of the library, and various improvements were introduced such as: evenings, ticket-days, lotteries, and many of the Zionist youth were activated to participate in enlarging the library collection. At that time the latest books that were published, were purchased. In the reading room of the library, all Hebrew periodicals could be found, weeklies and monthly publications, collections, such as '*HaShaluakh*,' '*HaTekufah*,' etc. A Herew circle came into being at the library, which met every week fro debates and free discussions on a variety of themes, all in the Hebrew language. Among the readers at the library were many Maskilim, and even children of the Zionists.

In the final years the number of activists around the library shrunk, and the number of readers declined, the financial difficulties were great, and the library needed to be moved from location to location until it found a home in the new building, which had been erected by the '*Tarbut*' School in our city.

The 'Kadima' School developed from year-to-year, and attained the level of seven grades and received government certification.

From the year 1930 one could sense a certain decline. Parents became enamored with the idea of country 'objective' for their children, and began passing over the idea of providing a national education, sending them to unfamiliar [sic: Polish] schools. Part of the parents began to demand that some subjects be taught in the Polish language. The number of students fell and the school had to wrestle with great financial difficulties. The school continued to exist thanks to

the exertions of its principal, Sholom Weiner, and the assistance of the Zionist supporters, Leibusz Levin and Mordechai Vogshall. The fact that the school exhibited a local character, and didn't come to depend on the central institution of the Hebrew movement in Poland, the school, which in the end, suffered from the lack of a clear educational program, and withstood pressure from a part of the parents, who wanted to diminish its Hebrew character, adopted the curriculum of all the '*Tarbut*' schools and emerged onto the broad plain of visibility and development.

Among the activists who gave much of their energy for the existence of the '*Tarbut*' Hebrew School in our city, beginning in the year 1935, were found: Mordechai Vogshall, Aharon Shlafrok, David Dolcher, Zimmerman, Shmuel Berger, Itamar Ehrlich, Asher Zegen, Baruch Sobol, Joseph Dickler, Jerusalimska, and others. The last leaders of the school were: Rubins, Kaplan.

In the year 1938, a place for the '*Tarbut*' School was set aside in the location of the Jewish community, where a building for a Jewish Gymnasium had been put up thanks to the donations of the well-known philanthropist, Yitzhak Margalit (where studies were taught in Polish), thanks to the stubborn struggle put up by the Zionists , who pushed through the expansion of the building and adding another story to the edifice, in order to accommodate new students, who came from year-to-year to the '*Tarbut*' School in our city.

The bloody wave which cascaded over Polish Jewry, beginning in the year 1939, abrogated the efforts aimed at the completion of this building for the '*Tarbut*' School in Zamość

# The Religious Life of Our Zamość

**By Rabbi Abraham Goldschmid**
(Haifa)

The prominent role of our city in ancient times and its one-time great Torah scholars, their good deeds and wisdom, had already been told. This latter has a bearing on more recent times, to the last few generations leading to the eve of the *Destruction.*

In addition to being world-renown for its culture, Zamość also influenced the religious sector of Jewish life and played quite a significant role in the life of the Jewish community.

There was a rather large number of *Heders* with teachers. Teaching was done there by the prescribed methods. We also had a yeshiva, which produced many scholars and Torah sages.

The yeshiva was directed by the great *Gaon*, Rabbi Joseph Shlomo-Shabtai Hurwitz, זצ"ל, and also the Scholar-Teacher Rabbi Chaim Goldschmid זצ"ל who personally gave lessons to the students. Apart from them, other teachers and Torah sages taught the other classes.

For certain specific reasons, the yeshiva ceased to exist, and there was a set period of time where there was no such institution in the city. Before the Second World War, a yeshiva was established yet again. The Head of the Yeshiva was the great *Gaon*, a brother-in-law of the renown *Gaon* Rabbi Aharon Kottler. In the yeshiva, there was also a kitchen for the poorer students.

Over one hundred young men studied at the yeshiva.

We had an array of houses of worship, *minyanim* and *shtiblach*. Apart from the Great Synagogue, there was a small synagogue of butchers and near the synagogue was a '*community-shtibl*,' which called itself the '*Hevra-Nose'im*' synagogue. Next to this synagogue was the Great *Bet HaMedrash*, which was renown for its large library of books, especially in Responsa. That location literally hummed like a beehive. The sounds of learning Torah never ceased there. Scholarly Jews, ordinary *balebatim*, and also working people, who after a hard day's work, would tear themselves away, and hasten to the *Bet HaMedrash* to absorb a page of the *Gemara*.

In the *Bet HaMedrash*, one could always count on running into such Jews as R' David Montog, R' Moshe Nets, R' Yaakov Frenkel, Volvish Melamed, the *Hazzan* of the Bet HaMedrash with his grandson, Mendel Veltcher, Itcheh'leh Brumer, Joseph-Yudel Geliebter with his son, Berish, Abba the Hallikes, Eliakim Melamed, and others.

The *Shammashim* were recognized names. They played an important role in this sector – who didn't know the name of R' Shlomo Dalus and R' Sholom Mittlpunkt, known as R' Sholom Shmulker. Also, past *Shammashim* need to be remembered, Netanel'eh, Mikhl *Shammes* (who was I. L. Peretz's teacher) who was a scholar and a Hasid of the Kotzker sect.

There was a minyan at '*Linat HaTzedek*,' at whose head stood R' Berel Blum, R' Yaakov-Baruch Meldel's, R' Yaakov Hechtkopf.

In the community hall there was a *Schul* of '*Mizrahi*' Zionists and ordinary *balebatim*. Here at the head, stood R' Ben-Zion Lubliner, R' Elkhanan Eidelsberg, R' Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld.

Each of these little places of worship had its own direction. Here would be a small *Schul* where everyone studied the '*Daf Yomi*,' and where the completion of a major tractate of the Talmud would be celebrated in grand style, in which

the leader of the study group, R' Chaim Goldschmid זצ"ל, would sing a fine '*Hadaran*,' interwoven with much *pilpul* and *medrash*.[236]

It was his effort to organize and conduct a Seder for the Jewish recruits of the Zamość garrison.

He also was the overseer of all of the *eruvs*.[237] Every Friday, towards evening, he would go out into the city, with R' Noah the *Shokhet*, to exercise control over the *eruvs*, and assure that they were not broken, or to assure that, God-forbid, there was no suspicion cast on the permission to carry things on the Sabbath.

There also was a small Bet HaMedrash, headed by the teacher, Rabbi Yitzhak Lubliner. He had instituted there, that every evening, ten verses of the Psalms would be recited between afternoon and evening prayers. He. Literally. Was called '*Der Tehillim Yid*.' The great philanthropist, R' Eliyahu Zwillich was among those who initiated the recitation of the Psalms. In this same small *Bet HaMedrash*, every evening, there was a lesson in the '*Daf Yomi*' from the *Gemara*, conducted by the great scholar and God-fearing man, Rabbi Shmeryl Vorslavitzer.

In the last decades, Zamość had the privilege of having in its midst, the Kielcer Rebbe זצ"ל. He was renown for his heartfelt prayers and melodies. Miracles were attributed to him, but the most important thing was his comportment – the '*tischen*'[238] that he would arrange for hundreds of *Hasidim*.

The tailor's had their own little *schul*. Apart from that, there were a number [of Hasidic sects] who had *shtiblach* – the Gerrer, Sandzer, Belzer, Radziener, and Trisker. In these *shtiblach*, time was spent immersed in Torah and Hasidism. And in all of these, in accordance with their custom, there were '*tischen*' arranged, '*hilluls, melaveh-malkehs*, etc.[239]

Every sect had a process for receiving guests and also maintained a charitable fund. Everyone had a place to go and unburden himself of the bitterness in his heart.

Certain individuals, pious people, showed themselves to be people of great charity, and became 'institutions' in their own right.

Such a person was R' David-Tevel Fuchs, the *Melamed* from Krasnystaw. He had a very homey process for receiving guests at his home. At the very least, there were usually about ten guests staying at his home each night. No matter who the Jewish person was who came there, he would immediately feel at home. He made no distinction among his 'guests.' They could be dressed shabbily and disheveled. There was no difference to the *Melamed* of Krasnystaw. No pauper was ever sent away without a fine donation in addition to a place to spend the night.

Rabbi Yohanan Wolfenfeld dedicated himself to the mikva. He dedicated himself full-time to making it a hygienic facility, with both energy and full-hearted commitment.

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236 '*Hadaran*' is the Aramaic word for 'We shall return.' It is part of a standard formulation recited at the end of each tractate of the Talmud, in which the reader intones that 'We shall return to you, Tractate of so-and-so.' *Pilpul* is casuistic reasoning, and *medrash* refers to the detailed commentary and explanation of the Talmudic text.

237 An *eruv* is an unobtrusively cordoned off area, within which there could be a relaxation of Sabbath restrictions regarding the movement or carrying of items. In effect, the *eruv* symbolically extended the boundary of one's own home, permitting observant Jews a certain set of conveniences they otherwise would not have on the Day of Rest. The person who oversaw these constructs had to make sure that their integrity was correct, and that the cordoning was not broken, or removed, thereby nullifying the ritual value.

238 Literally, 'tables.' Refers to the common custom among Hasidic *Rebbes*, of having a combination repast and study session in a large hall, surrounded by their disciples and followers, during which time the Rebbe 'presides' over his flock.

239 All various sorts of festive events, combining study, eating , singing and merry-making.

R' Aharon Geliebter had his institution – the 'Old Age Home,' which in his time, was established by R' Eliyahu Margolies, at his own expense. Geliebter, as the director of the institution, demonstrated boundless self-sacrifice in order to be able to support the sixty senior men and women, and obtaining what was required for their needs.

R' Ben-Zion Lubliner concerned himself with the charity fund, '*Gemilut Hasadim*.' He was the principal activist on behalf of this institution for years on end. Who helped so many people without means get back on their feet again.

My heartfelt unforgettable mother, the Righteous Woman, Rebbetzin Mrs. Eidel Goldschmid הי"ד – her work consisted of 'canvassing all the homes,' – when she would come into a house, it was already understood that it was for an important reason – ranging from simply being able to rescue a respectable family that needs to be assisted discreetly; perhaps on behalf of some sick people and not omitting the possibility that it is altogether for 'dowry money' – and she would be generously given donations and not asked for whom of for what. She always had time for the other person...she was, indeed, called 'The Mother of Zamość.'

Jews such as R' Shmuel Reisenfeld and R' Abraham Feltl need to be mentioned, such that if a Rebbe would come to town, of an ordinary person of good-will, he would have to stay with him. With him, such a guest had all the amenities. There was no single thing that was good, or a yeshiva for which he would not make a donation in a generous full-handed manner.

Who does not recall the two elders, R' Zvi-Hirsch Ehrlich, and R' Chaim Inlander, who for all of their years were involved with supporting the Zamość Talmud Torah, concerning themselves with making sure that the teachers and the *melamdim* were paid their salaries on time. They would canvass the city, going up the longest flights of stairs, in order to collect the monthly fees for the Talmud Torah.

There were tens and tens of them, these individuals, God-fearing, who did their sacred work without recognition, not wanting that their names should be known. They didn't want recognition for their good deeds in this world, because they knew they would receive recognition in the world to come.

These righteous people of integrity, scholars and God-fearing people, shared in the same fate as our entire Zamość community, as our six million martyrs. May their memory never be forgotten among us.

# The *Gaon*, Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Sternfeld

**By Sender Rothstein**
(Chicago)

## (The Last Rabbi of Zamość-Neustadt)

*Page 566:* *Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Sternfeld, the Rabbi of the Neustadt, photographed with his two grandsons, the children of his daughter, Tzireleh, at the time they were at a 'Dacha.'*

It would be impossible to put out a fundamental portrait of Zamość without recalling my grandfather, Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Horowitz-Sternfeld ז"צל, the important Rabbi of the Neustadt.

Who knew the Jews of Zamość better than him? Their joy and sorrow, their economic circumstances, their family suffering? Who felt so strongly, and understood so deeply the responsibility [that he had] to the community, and carried that responsibility with such love on his shoulders? Whose home more than the Rabbi's, was constantly open for every person, without exception, regardless of economic or social standing?

I would like to pause at an episode, which took place a short time ago in Chicago, and mad a profound impression on me.

As it happened, one day I chanced into a Jewish delicatessen store. I fell into a conversation with the owner of the store. From our conversation, I learned that he was a Jew from Rumania.

– And where do you come from? – my friend asks me.

– From Zamość, Poland.

– From Zamość? So you must undoubtedly know the Rabbi of the Neustadt, Reb Mottel'eh?

His question astounded me.

What sort of connection does a Rumanian Jew have to a Rabbi in Zamość? And that he knows him well enough to refer to him by an endearing form of his first name?

This Jewish man answered me, and here, I will attempt to make his long reply brief:

Years ago, before the First World War, my friend, as a Russian soldier, served in Zamość, and along with him, many other Jewish soldiers also served, most of whom came from faraway places, from Rumania, the Ukraine, Russia, etc.

Naturally, the Jewish soldiers felt they were in a strange place, and lonely, and they would gather in the Rabbi's home. The Rabbi's home, this Jewish man told me, was a second home to them. There, they forgot their troubles, the hardship of life in the barracks; there they felt *heimish*.

Many years had passed, and many things had transpired. My fried had lived through a lot. But this Jew from Rumania still remembered the Rabbi of the Neustadt. He speaks of him, not like any ordinary orthodox Rabbi. But rather as a loving man, a loyal friend...

The recollections of my friend elicited a form of longing within me, a nostalgia. And so, as the mood is nostalgic, recollections surface in my memory of that distant past and images of bygone Zamość flit before my eyes.

** *** **

The house in which my grandfather lived stood on the Hrubieszow Gasse. From the exterior, there was nothing remarkable to distinguish this house from other houses in Zamość. Inside, however, it was entirely different. What differentiated my grandfather's house from others on the inside, and what gave it a specific character was – the Bet-Din in my grandfather's house.

I will never forget the Bet-Din in my grandfather's house. The big table, with the long benches. Next to the table was my grandfather's reading stand. On the table next to the reading stand there was always a book. I remember the large bookcases full of books, and the white heating oven.

On cold early winter mornings, the women of Zamość, who would sit in the marketplace, would come to my grandfather's house. From this little cooking stove, they would take hot coals for their fire pots. When the coals in the fire pots started to glow, the women would throw in a few potatoes to roast. The fire pot was a gift and a blessing. It warmed their cold feet, and simultaneously enabled the preparation of roasted potatoes....

I have to admit: to this day, I do not understand how the fire pots didn't cause any major conflagration... the women, each day, surely had to recite the '*Gomel*' prayer.[240]

The women who sat in the marketplace were sharp-tongued women. Their tongues could stitch a wall to a wall. They would sit in the marketplace and sell a variety of products: fruits, vegetables, bagels and bread boards [*pletzlakh*].

The bread boards from Zamość were famous throughout the length and breadth of the area. Not only were they delicious, they were presented with a little bit of democracy...in the morning, after prayers, one ate a *pletzl*, young and old, small and big, poor and rich, everyone, without exception. It is even told that the biggest *pletzl* was consumed by Zanvel the Water Carrier, an impoverished Jew. If this were true, this is then an indication of the democratic spirit of the *pletzlakh* of Zamość...

My grandfather's cane stood in a corner of the Bet HaMedrash. It was a black cane with a white bone handle. There was a child's story about this cane.

We, the *Heder* children of Zamość, would tell each other all sorts of tales. These were tales about magicians, spirits, demons, jesters and ne'er-do-wells. There were also stories about the old Zamość cemetery.

At twelve o'clock, midnight – the story goes – the dead rise out of their graves, in order to commit mischief on ordinary passers-by. They pull on your garments, tug at the sleeves, put out a foot [to trip with], and perpetrate other antics....

Most fantastic of all was the story of the Great Synagogue of the Neustadt. It is told that past midnight the dead gather in the Great Synagogue. They come wrapped in their prayer shawls, and they are called up to the Torah....

When I would hear this story, I would be beset by fear. I do not recall the details of this fantastic tale. I only remember that my grandfather's cane occupied an important place there. – My grandfather's cane is the hero of the story.

** *** **

In the Bet-Din always swarmed and overflowed with people. There was always something to see and to hear. The people, their appearance, the way they comported themselves, their dress, placed before me a gallery of all the types of people in Zamość.

Jews came to the Rabbi with their disputes. They came to obtain a ruling according to Torah law. Rich merchants came to have differences straightened out. Ordinary Jews of Zamość came seeking right and justice, rulings and righteousness. No one rested until a wrong was righted. It was here that brides from poor families were wed, and widows and orphans

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240 The classic prayer thanking God for saving a person from some potential misfortune.

were tended to; *balebatim* came to seek advice and the poor and downtrodden – to pour out their bitter heart. The chasm, that separated the distinguished people of the city from the common folk, vanished here with abruptness.

But not all matters were things that concerned issues in this world. Learned Jews would enter, Jews who dug deeply into the fine print. They constantly spoke of earnest issues; they would in a simple way, allow themselves to slip into discussions of the interpretation [of the law]. Every remark by a *Tanaitic* Scholar, or an *Amoraitic* Scholar, every commentary by *Tosafot*, was like gold to them. My grandfather would say of some of them, that they were unusually gifted intellectually.

Also, modern, worldly Jews would come in. Many of them – former students of my grandfather. Once they were pious young men, and would learn with deep conviction. Later, they wandered off in various directions, and they became 'flawed.'....hose

I want to tell a story here. It is a record of human responsibility and human duty.

Shortly after the outbreak of the First World War, the *balebatim* of Zamość decided to abandon the city. The Russian military had suffered one defeat after another, and the German army, flush with victory drew nearer and nearer to Zamość. The city was in danger of coming under fire from the German positions. There was no other alternative but to flee. The people packed on the way. Most of them were the well-to-do. A frightening confusion seized people. This was characteristic of those days.

In those days, my mother ע"ה, pleaded with her father, the Rabbi, that he should also abandon Zamość. The Rabbi answered her:

– My daughter, so long as a single, solitary poor Jew remains in the city, I will remain here with him...I will abandon the city with the last of the poor Jews leaves the city...

And that's what happened. The Rabbi did not abandon his city. He remained with his community of poor Jews....

**  ***  **

The Neustadt had, Thanks-e-to God, all manner of paupers. There were quarter-paupers, half-paupers, and full-paupers, or 'round' paupers. It was these 'round' paupers that would canvass the houses in order to gather up some bread.

So it happens, on one day, that several balebatim come to the Rabbi, who had a high opinion of themselves, with a complaint:

– There is a rumor going around that the poor are not eating the bread. That they are selling the bread that they collect and using those funds to raise goats, and this is a terrible transgression – they argued – that must not be permitted....

The Rabbi listened to them quietly, and when they were finished with their complaints, he said to them:

– Listen to me, fellow Jews. Is it acceptable to you that human beings should eat nothing more than only dried out bread? It seems that they must be selling off a part of the bread in order to buy a little bit of onion, a little bit of potato, and is this, God forbid, such a bad thing? What do you want from them? A complete accounting?....

**  ***  **

Our mothers were always busy. Some with housework, some with helping their husband make a living. Young boys went to Heder. So, if it happened that a question had to be brought to the Rabbi, most of the time a little girl was sent.

When a little girl would come to the Rabbi with such a question, and it appeared that [in a matter of food] it would be necessary to rule *trayf* [sic: unfit for consumption by observant Jews], the Rabbi would turn inwards and think for a while. He would bend down to the little girl, give her a pat on her little cheek, ans quietly ask her:

– Who's [child] are you, little girl?

If it appeared that the little girl came from a home without means, he became distressed. He was left standing face-to-face with a difficult problem. How can one, God forbid, permit a Jew to eat something unclean? And where does one get the heart to declare a poor man's meal to be unfit for consumption?

A serious issue. There is something to think about here.....

** *** **

*Page 571: The Eastern Part of the Market Square ('Rynek') with the Covered Walkways ('Potchinehs')*

One of the Rabbi's most important traits, was that he never stopped being the simple, loyal member of his community. No work was difficult, and no work was beneath his dignity to do. From repairing an *eruv*, to canvassing the homes of the wealthy to collect funds for the poor and the needy.

He carried himself modestly and simply, in his relationship to people. And indeed, because of this trait, he developed an unusually fine reputation among the Jews, both from the *Neustadt* and the *Altstadt*.

The Rabbi's three laudable attributes: Torah, patience and common sense, made him famous as an accomplished arbitrator. This capacity, to be skilled at arbitration would often take him out of his *Bet-Din* at home and caused him to travel the Polish cities and towns.

When the Rabbi hld forth with a sermon, the Synagogue would be filled to overflowing. Small and large came to hear him. His sermons were always directed to the common man. And, indeed, thanks to this warm relationship to common people, he was listened to with great attention, and with exceptional interest. His speeches would make a deep impression even on those who were far removed from religious Judaism.

Personally, a deeply religious man, he simultaneously recognized Jewish-secular problems. For this reason, he appealed to both the older and younger generation.

In the book, '*Zamość in its Glory and Destruction*' Yekhiel Goldwag writes: ... 'The Rabbi in the *Neustadt*, Mordechai HaLevi Sternfeld, זצ"ל, who was the only Rabbi who remained in Zamość during the Nazi occupation (p, 237).' In the same book, Shlomo Schwartzberg writes: .... 'Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Sternfeld-Horowitz, ז"ל (murdered by the Poles at the beginning of the War)' (p. 274). From these cited extracts, it is possible to see, that just as was the case in the days of the First World War, also in the days of the Second World War, he remained with his community of Jews. He was killed in the destruction of Zamość.

The Rabbi had two sons and four daughters. The oldest son, Rabbi Joseph HaLevi Horowitz-Sternfeld, a Torah sage, possessed of all virtues, and the younger son, Mendel, a formerly active member of the *Bund*, are both found in America. The Rabbi's daughters: Sarah, Zelda, and Tzireleh ז"ל, were killed in the Jewish Holocaust. His daughter Henneleh, ז"ל, (my mother) died in America in the year 1953.

The Gaon, Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Sternfeld, from the family tree of the Seer of Lublin, occupied the rabbinical seat of the Neustadt in Zamość for nearly fifty years. His life was one long road of Yiddishkeit and love for his fellow Jew. A long road of full-hearted commitment, from which he was so tragically cut off.

With the death of my grandfather, part of the old way of life of Jews passed away from Poland. A way of life rich in tradition, rich in culture, which had existed for hundreds of years and has vanished forever.

With the passing of my grandfather, the last Rabbi of Zamość has gone away.

May the memory of a Righteous Man be a Blessing!

# Religious Periodical Output in Zamość

In another place we will describe the '*Zamośćher Stimme*' which appeared in Zamość, during the course of several years. We have also excerpted the community chronology of our Jewish life from this weekly periodical. Apart from this periodical, there appeared additionally in Zamość, an array of periodic publications of a religious character. There were: '*HaBe'er*,' '*Unser Geist*,' and '*Zamośćher Vort*.' Again, we incorporate a variety of information about these publications within the limits of what we can do in our Pinkas.

## 'HaBe'er'

*Page 573:* *A Reproduction of the Frontispiece of the First Edition of HaBe'er*
*Page 574:* *Reproduction from the Periodical, 'Unser Geist.'*

This periodical was a Rabbinical journal, which printed various questions and answers, innovative insights and explanations, *Tanakh*, Talmud and other works.

The first edition, which appeared in the year, '**May the Lord Bless Us,**' which means 5683 (1923), [241] And one can see that the editor who signs himself, **HaK' Zvi Hirsch Friedling**, son of **R' Dov Berel**, זצ"ל (*Neustadt*) ע"י, thought of it as a periodical that was to appear 4 times a year.

As we see from the address, (see the band) that is where the editorial office was. However, HaBe'er was actually printed in other locations, because there was no printing press in Zamość that could be set to print these kinds of Rabbinical interpretive and casuistic type of periodicals.

Number 1 was printed in Warsaw at Wagmeister, Nalewcki 7. Number 2 was set for printing by Kronoenberg in Bilgoray, and later editions by the setup of R' Benjamin Liebeskind of Pietrkow.

From Zamość-Neustadt the editor moved to Biskupice, where he became Rabbi (after which he would sign himself HaK' Zvi Hirsch... of Zamość-Neustadt, and currently Bet-Din Senior of **Biskupice and the Valley**). The editorial office, however, was always in Zamość.

Rabbis from all over the world contributed to this '*HaBe'er*,' and not only those from Poland.

The second periodical, '*Unser Geist*,' was in Yiddish already. We reproduce here, the frontispiece of Number 3, from the second year of publication 5689 (1929). The editor is identified as **Israel-Dov HaKohen Frishman**. The actual initiator and owner of this periodical was also the prior resident of Zamość-Neustadt, and the later Rabbi of Biskupice, Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Friedling.

Numbers 3 and 4 of 'Under Geist,' were printed in the 'Print of Kronenberg Feldhandler Zamość.' The 5th edition (already in 5690 [1930]) was printed in Lublin in the publishing house of 'Shalmon,' of R' Ezer Zwecken.

Despite the fact that both of these publications were from Zamość, there is practically nothing in them about life in Zamość.

In '*HaBe'er*,' there are a couple of innovations by the *Dayan* of Zamość, **Chaim Goldschmid**. From '*Unser Geist*,' (Numbers 4,5 and 6 are before us), there is an obituary in Number 4 by Y. D. Frishman about the previously mentioned Dayan, R' Chaim Goldschmid.

Apart from this, we move onto *Zamośćher Vort*, about which we write further.

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[241] The numerical value of the letters appear to total 5678, or 1918.

# *Zamośćher Vort*

*Page 575:* *An Advertisement in Zamośćher Vort*

*Page 577:* *Number 1 of Zamośćher Vort*

From the Yiddish Historical Institute in Poland, we were sent a microfilm of 9 sides, where there was an advertisement of a periodical, **Zamośćher Vort**, and 8 sides from 2 editions of this periodical: Number 1, which appeared Friday, April 11, 1930, and Number 2 from Friday May 2. We do not know if any additional numbers appeared subsequently.

In order to demonstrate the nature of this Zamość periodical, we have brought the full text of the advertisement here.

Despite the fact that the advertisement does not make clear whether the paper will be partisan, or if it will be apolitical in its complexion, these past two editions reveal that this was a paper of **Agudat Israel**. We will be able to see this from the excerpts that we will be providing later on.

Both of these numbers had four sides apiece.

It is described that the paper is edited by a collegium. The official editor, for government purposes, figures to be **B. Frishman**, and the publisher: **Ch. Perlmutter**. He paper was priinted in the print shop of the Weinsteins in **Chelm**. This fact clarifies why both numbers have (on side 4) a **Chelm Section**.

In the presentation of the editorial staff, '**To Our Readers**,' which opens the first number, it says the following:

'We are stepping forward to present a local publication in our city. We know that the responsibility associated with the undertaking we are assuming is great, a periodical that must have clear significance.'

> 'It is our hope, however, that we will fulfill our obligation completely. We are therefore certain that the Jewish population in our city will value our work as relevant, and will give us the means to assure our existence. We can summarize our direction in 7 word: 'Everything that is Jewish is Close to Us.'
>
> The Editorial Staff'

One cannot say, that from this description, that the direction was made clear. However at the head, the dates from both of the editions show the direction – the religious orientation of the publishers. Both of the dates begin with a ב"ה (with the help of the Almighty). Later:

Zamość, Friday, Portion of *Tzav*, 13 Nissan (*Hullin 106*) (Number 1).
Zamość, Friday Portion *Tazriah-Metzora*, 4 Iyyar (*Hullin 106*) (Number 2).
The editorial staff wanted to give the '**Daf Yomi**,' but regrettably, the typesetter (or corrector) didn't change the 'Daf' and left it as '*Hullin 106*' for both editions.

The price of the first edition was 25 groschen, and the second one was cheaper – 20 groschen.

The announcements in the first edition are of a Holiday Eve flavor, because it was 13 Nissan, the Eve of Passover.

**Abba Friedling** advertises his variety of baked goods, chocolate, a variety of sugar products, and delicatessen. **All Kosher for Passover**.

**Sh. D. Fershtendig** announces that if you want to have a happy and kosher holiday, you have to buy his Kosher for Passover wine. In passing, he says in his ad, that his wine business os the '**oldest Jewish wine business that is in**

**existence since 1836.'** This means that in 1936, this business would have had to celebrate its **100th anniversary**. Did it actually come to pass?

L. Rosen also presents his wine for Passover. He announces: '**Bring Passover Joy into your home.**' In this manner, he describes that his wine, 'Carmel,' is brought 'directly from the winery' and is secured by a certification of kashruth by the *Gaon*, the Tzaddik of Kielce שליט"א, living in Zamość at this time. He does not forget to add that at his place, one receives **competitive prices!**

Y. Y. Eisenstadt, in his announcement which begins with the loud, blatant 'And you shall be joyful during your festivals!' makes a case for a large availability of colonial merchandise, such as: sugar, raisins, cocoa-butter from the best companies, Kosher for Passover, *Mehadrin min HaMehadrin.* [242]

M. H. Ashin asked the audience: 'Do you want an *Oneg* on the Holiday.' If yes, they should come to transact with him for caps, hats, underwear, the latest styles in ties, shoes fine fabrics, gabardine, jackets, gloves, slippers, socks, etc. Do understand, 'at competitive prices!' His firm is also an old one, claiming it has existed since 1903.

There is also an ad (not especially for the holidays) from Y. M. Cohen, where there is a large availability of gold, silver, precious stones, diamonds, plate. As he assures, his firm is an old and well-recognized one, which has been in existence since 1892.

The articles in the paper:

Apart from the announcement 'To Our Readers!' and the ads, there is a call 'to **The Jewish Populace!**' Signed by a – B. The call concerns the **Charitable Fund (Gemilut Hasadim)**, that had been in existence already for 5 years, and towards which there is only a weak interest being exhibited. The writer addresses those individuals, to the community, to the Jewish leadership of the town council, that attention should be given and help offered to this important institution.

A second small article: 'The New Judgement Day,' signed by **B. Landau**, takes up the issue of 'Assessment Commissions,' that must determine the taxes for merchants, small storekeepers and craftsmen. He proposes that:

> '...therefore there is an obligation on all of the members (of the assessment-commission) not to neglect the meetings. It is necessary to come on time, and the important point – to energetically take up the cause of the poor and oppressed, and to see that no one is harmed.'

Side 2 is taken up by three articles relating to the holiday, with themes about Passover: **Leib Szczakacz** (Warsaw) – 'Let Him Who Is Needy, Come in and Eat!' **G. Frishman** – 'Spiritual Liberation.' **A. L. Pearl (Warsaw)** – 'Security, (A Folk Legend).

Side 3 is taken up by a chronology: '**Life in Zamość and its Vicinity**.' From this section, we will, indeed excerpt an array of notices and news which will complete the picture of Jewish life in Zamość in the time between the World Wars.

* * *

The notice from the **town council** communicates about the budget for the year 1930-1931.

The preliminary general budget comes to more than a million zlotys (1,110,699). Jewish subsidies take up the following amounts: Jewish schools (Jewish Gymnasium 'Kadima,' Peretz School) – 40,000 zlotys; Old Age Home – 2,500 zl; The TOZ organization – 5,000 zl; there also is figured in a sum of 12,000 zl. For summer colonies for Christian and Jewish school youth; 10,500 zl. For food for Christian and Jewish school children; ans 3,000 zl. For books, clothing for poor school children, Jews and Christians.

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242 An Aramaic formulation accompanying certification of *Glatt Kosher*, indicating the absolutely strictest adherence to ritual requirements.

There is an accounting from the Bank of the **Charitable Fund (Gemilut Hasadim)** in Zamość.

The bank has been in existence since May 1927. Up to January 1, 1930, the bank disbursed 2,204 loans in the amount of 144,455 zlotys. 80 percent of the loans disbursed were up to 100 zlotys. The capital that the bank has came to 25,968.50 zl. Out of this, the Joint is owed 13,586.50 zl. Paid in capital has been constituted from one-time support by local contributors, consisting of 9,915 zl. Also from monthly payments of 5,447 zlotys. All of the activities of the bank were controlled through the review committee that consisted of the Messrs. **Kleinerman, Cohen, Schliam**. In the last 3 months, from January 1 to April 1, 1930, 274 loans were disbursed, for a total sum of 22,710 zlotys.

* * *

There is also a notice about a **major political trial in Zamość**. It is reported that on Wednesday, April 2, the central Zamość judiciary initiated a major political trial against 23 men, who are being accused of communist activity. As defense attorneys the following appeared: Shviontkovsky, Lubovich, Ziegelman and several others from Zamość, as well as 2 lawyers from Warsaw. Over one hundred witnesses were heard, including the Rabbi of Krasnobrod שליט"א.

* * *

A rather engaging story is told about an interesting trial against Jewish journalists for conceiving of libels against the Rabbi of Komarov, ז"ל. This story, a real period piece, is worth reproducing as it is presented in the newspaper:

> 'On Wednesday, April 2, an interesting legal proceeding was initiated in Lemberg against a number of Jewish journalists for conceiving base canards about the Rabbi of Komarov ז"ל, which elicited great distress from the Jewish community.
>
> The story about this is as follows: About a year ago, the Rabbi of Komarov passed away, The *Gaon*, Rabbi Yekhiel Mikhl Goldberg, ז"ל, leaving a will that after his death that he should be thrown off his bed, that if, by some chance, he had, God forbid, committed some sin, that this will be an atonement for him.
>
> Secondly, he requests that he should be interred beside his mother, who was a great, righteous woman, so that her merit will serve as a support to him.
>
> This was used by the Warsaw correspondent of the New York 'Forward,' N. Cooper (a pseudonym for I. J. Singer) writing, no more and no less, that the deceased had left a will in which he had confessed about terrible sins, ans open transgressions, and therefore the Rabbi had decreed that he should be buried outside the normal confines, near the most notorious of outcasts.
>
> This sensational report was picked up and repeated in a number of Jewish papers in Poland, A. Rosenfeld (Bontcheh) in '*Moment*,' as also in the '*Lodzer Volksblatt*.'
>
> The congregation in Komarov, especially the children of the deceased, could not remain silent in the face of such a defamation of the dead, and the son of the deceased, who lives in Lemberg, accused the writer of this libelous story in court.
>
> The accused were: I. J. Singer, A. Rosenfeld (Bontcheh), and also the Editor-in-chief of '*Moment*,' – Mr. Zvi Prilutsky.
>
> The trial attracted a great deal of attention in Jewish circles, especially among journalists. The accusation is an entirely serious one. As evidence of this, the plaintiffs have arranged that their defense attorney would be the renown Jewish attorney Dr. Leib Landau.
>
> Simultaneously, a trial will take place in the Lodz judiciary courts, against the responsible editor of the '*Lodzer Volksblatt*, Mr. Kaufman.'

* * *

In this section, a notice is also found about the **arrival of 500 dollars of Pasover aid**.

The notice tells: as was the case each year, at the new year, a 500 dollar contribution came from our respected landsleit in America for Passover support, for the poor Jewish populace in our city. 250 dollars for the Altstadt at the address of the community, and 250 dollars for the Neustadt at the address of **Mr. Zimring**.

* * *

On this side, (side 3), a series of monographs begin under the heading, '**Great Personalities of Zamość from Bygone Times**.' The author is **Y. B. Davidsohn**. The writer indicates that there was a large number of great people that were produced by Zamość, and he set himself the goal of telling about part of them. In this edition, he talks about the **Maggid of Dubno**. Earlier in our Pinkas, we have already presented the biographical details of this personality. From this biography we will only excerpt the style of the headstone that the community placed [on the grave of] the Maggid of Dubno, which is found in this article. The writer recounts:

'On his headstone, the Zamość community expressed its greatest respect for him. It says:

**Passed away 'In the Good of Tevet'**
**The Year 'May Jacob Come to Rest' [Without the Thousands]**
**The Renown Orator and Rabbi**
**Whose Words Were Heard in All Lands**
**There Was None Like Him Before, And None Like Him Will Ever Come Again, Through Whom The Spirit of God Spoke**
**Our Teacher R' Yaakov Maggid of This Place, Son of Our Teacher, R' Ze'ev ז"ל**[243]

The fourth, last side, is devoted to the '**Chelm Section**.' On this side is also found a letter from **Hrubieszow.** On this side, there already is an explicit mention of the direction of the paper. Among the announcements from Chelm, there is a greeting from '**Youth of Agudat Israel**; and the letter from Hrubieszow talks about a Bet-Yaakov school.

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The second edition of *Zamośćher Vort* is opened on the first page by two articles that deal with actual issues and demonstrate already the leanings of the paper.

The first is by **B. Frishman**, under the alarming title, 'Rescue While There Is Still Time!' This article concerns itself with the fact that in Zamość there is no '**General *Heder***.' It will suffice to reproduce just the introduction, so as to understand what the alarm was about:

> 'The pen trembles in the hand. To begin to write about such a real thing as founding a 'General Heder' in Zamość.
>
> The current tenor of the times is such, that some parents, literally with tears in their eyes, have begged the writer of these lines, to convey to our paper the sad state of Jewish children, from the 'younger generation,' which seeks a place for Torah study together with secular studies and are going about like a flock without a shepherd.
>
> The anger against the 'I'm all right' attitude that reigns in our city, among the religious leaders and community activists, who have the capacity to save this young generation from this bad plague, and are doing nothing, is raising the ire [of the people] like dark roiling clouds...
>
> A frightening mood possesses the serious-minded religious Jew, when he sees his like-minded brethren, 'We are of one mind,' peering through fog-shrouded lenses with such a cruel stinginess at the want of today's generation that is separated from us, and do not want to come alive with activity utilizing the factual power, so long as the rudder of the community is still in their hands.'

The conclusion is clear – it is necessary to create a *Heder*.

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243 The first two lines contain a play on words that come from a clever re-arrangement of Hebrew letters to achieve a specific sentiment, consistent with the correct numerical values required.

The second article on this side is by B. Landau and carried the title: '**A Call to Action**,' and has a sub-title: About the newly created advisory committee in our city. It is worth glancing at what the purpose of this 'advisory committee' was, which will indeed reveal to us a bit of the picture of the Jewish material condition and mood on that time. We will provide a couple of excerpts from this article:

* * *

'The impoverishment of the Jewish masses in Poland is proceeding at a much faster rate than we had imagined. The loss of the sources of income of Jewish merchants, small storekeepers and craftsmen, comes more rapidly than we had anticipated. An the numerical calculations of the statistics about the economic plight of Polish Jewry, and all the ways they can be interpreted regarding the situation, have shown that we were incorrect, and we are witness to the economic decline from the top of the mountain down, of how we Jews live here in Poland.

The reasons?

Certainly there are, and probably are carried out by a refined hand, certainly there are people who have an interest in Poland, who want to make the effort to drive the economic condition of the Jews to such a sad state.

Also, here among us in Zamość, several weeks ago – even if very late, but like they say, better late than never – called a meeting in the area of the Jewish populace, with the purpose of founding an advisory council. As is the custom at all Jewish assemblies – a committee of more than 15 individuals was selected, and the committee elected its leadership and it was decided to create a large base of capital with which it would be possible to place an institution on a solid foundation.

From that time on, more than six weeks have gone by, and we hear nothing, and we see nothing being done about it.'

The writer appeals and also alerts [the readers], that some action needs to be taken, because the condition is quite a difficult one. Poverty and need have become very substantial.

On side 2 of this edition, further articles and notices appear:

'**Why Are You Silent?**' with a sub-heading: A call to the New [sic: Neustadt]-Zamość populace. In this 'call' the Charitable Loan Bank of the Neustadt is discussed. We want to convey this, which tells about the social atmosphere in that suburb of Jewish laborers and common people.

'The Charitable Loan Bank which at this moment is the most essential institution – whose purpose it is to lighten, as far as possible, the frightening plight of the small shopkeepers and craftsmen, especially in such a poor city as the Neustadt, – has for a time been taken over by 3-4 people, who are running the bank on their own authority, not taking into account at all the opinions of the members. Today's local leadership, ignoring the demands of the membership, who want to take an interest in the fate of this important institution – needs to call a general meeting to know what their current activities are: but regrettably, a number of years have gone by, in which no general meeting has taken place. And our *golem*-like community lets itself be led around by the nose...

The few shouters who have been taken into the management sit around toasting each other with '*L'Chaim*.' That is how an important institution is managed, of sufficient importance that America sensed this importance enough and sanctioned our city to receive a loan from the 'Joint.'

Regrettably, this loan was put into hands of such people that use its proceeds for their own interest, and a member of the management indeed is able to receive a bit of a loan for his loyalty to the President, as well as other assets that secure a place for themselves in the community, town council, and so forth.

You would think that it would be time already for the common good to occupy a higher place that personal recognition and ambitions. Those who wish to stand at the helm of a social institution must first exert themselves on behalf of the community.

If we had such a leadership, then there would be greater support by the city populace, and quite likely, the director of the 'Joint,' Mr. Y i t z h a k G i t t e r m a n , would offer more support, as we see by the example of other cities that receive double the size of loans.

Therefore, all the Jews of the Neustadt have to organize and demand that a general meeting be conducted, where a reconstituted management will be elected, and in lodging a general protest against today's not completely effective stewards, who threaten before elections, not to extend loans to those who do not vote for them, and they are believed...

Every single member must contemplate, that the entire work of the bank is dependent only on a more sound leadership. And also seriously consider whether the currently selected leadership will understand its responsibility and the intensive work needed for the development of the Bank, on which the fate of many Jewish storekeepers and craftsmen depend.'

* * *

A later article on the same side is by Yekhiel Friedman, under the name of 'In Pressured Anticipation,' where he discusses the economic crisis in the land.

On the same side, there is also an article signed with the initials B. S. T. called 'Final Report of the Investigation Committee,' which deals with the situation in the Holy Land regarding the British Investigative Commission.

This side ends with a report of '**A Meeting of the Community**,' and from this report, we discover that:

'On the previous Saturday night, April 26, there was a community meeting of the council and leadership of our local Jewish community here in the city. The President of the council, H. Sh. Goldstein opened the session and the agenda is presented. 1. Reading of the minutes of the prior meeting; 2. Dealing with the budget of the year 1930; 3. Selection of a Revisions Committee; 4. Open business.

In this connection, a motion is made to amend the agenda, so that first, the Revisions Committee should be elected first, afterwards address the budget, which passed.

Afterwards, the minutes were read, and a Revisions Committee was selected, consisting of Messrs. Kornfeld, Y. Sheck, and L. Roit. On the proposal of a chairman to represent the craftsmen, it is decided to co-opt Mr. Mermelstein.

Regarding the budget for the year 1930, it was decided not to vote for a budget commission, because in that case, a long time will elapse until the budget will be decided on – only the leadership will work out the budget and present it to the council for approval. At the end, the request of the local synagogue was transacted, to hire the *Hazzan*, Mr. Moshe Rudnitsky, as the Cantor of the city of Zamość, and set a salary of 200 Gulden a month.

With that, the meeting was adjourned.'

* * *

On side 3, where the section, '**From Life in Zamość and Vicinity**' is found, the report, 'A Meeting of Craftsmen About Community Activity,' is especially characteristic. We read there:

'On the previous Sabbath, April 26, a meeting of craftsmen took place in the local community, here in our city, about the activity of the native community.

The Chairman, Mr. Fuchs, opens the meeting and distributed the report of the Community *Dozor*, Mr. Sheps, which gives an accounting of his activities in the previous community leadership, demonstrating with facts that by him being in the community leadership he properly safeguarded the interests of craftsmen, and he also stresses that the craftsmen have to demand to make the

community more aware of the world around them, and after him a report is given by Mr. Hechtkopf of his activities in the current community leadership.

After this, the Secretary of the craftsmen, Mr. Mermelstein, submits his report, speaking very substantively and with logical arguments, he criticizes the activity of the community.

He also discusses the activity of the Jewish communities in Poland, beginning with the '*Va'ad Arba Aratzot*.'

It is interesting to note, that when Mr. Mermelstein spoke of the period of the 'Va'ad Arba Aratzot,.' a certain leader of the craftsmen made a comparison, that communities at one time gave up poor Jewish children to military service (a blot on Jewish history). Afterwards, Messrs. Wagner and Topf spoke, who criticized the activities of the leadership of the craftsmen in the community.

At the end, the words of the President of the community leadership, Mr. Goldstein, are received, responding to the calls of several speakers of today's gathering who had expressed their concerns. He proposes to those gathered, that they appoint a commission, which should review the activity of the community.

As a result, a commission was elected of the Messrs: Mermelstein, Meinberg and Stegel, who in the course of one month must present a report. After adopted some individual resolutions, the meeting was adjourned.'

* * *

On the same side there is a further biography from the series 'Great Personalities of Zamość from Bygone Times,' that was started in the first edition by **Y. B. Davidsohn**. This time, it is the start of the biography of **Zvi Hirsch Heller**.

About him, enough has already been said in the work of Yaakov Dov Mandelbaum, in our *Pinkas*, in the chapter, 'The Books of the Rabbis & Sages of Zamość,' (pp. 221 and further) about Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Heller, and please refer to the entries 27, 28, 29, 58, 59, and 76 of that referenced work.

On the third side, there is also a piece of correspondence from **Tarnogrod**.

The fourth side is given over to the '**Chelm Section**.'

As previously mentioned – we do not know if subsequent editions of this periodical ever appeared.

# Fragmentary Memories
## (Zamość 1914-1923)

**By Yaakov Ne'eman (Neimark)**
Tel-Aviv

## Homeless

A short time before the First World War, my parents sent me away to the small *shtetl* of **Laszczow**, close to the Russian-Austrian border, to my grandfather, R' Berel the *Dayan*. This was a compromise between my father, who began to resist the fanatic surroundings, by sending my two older sisters, Eidel and Hella to a *'Heder-Metukan,'* and my mother, who at the end, had the position of doing 'what the father and mother say to do, and all good and observant people say to do,' who saw in the '*Heder-Metukan,*' an apostasy and a tool leading away from a righteous path.

In Laszczow, the little *shtetl*, at my Grandfather Berish's, I was required to be raised in a traditional environment, in real *Yiddishkeit* and to study with *melamdim* in *Heders*. At least not in godless Zamość, so that I might possibly become a God-fearing person and a son of the Torah.

This rather made an impression on me. The trip in those days, through forests, fields, villages and [across] rivers, in an open wagon, sitting between bundles of merchandise from Aharon 'Shpiliter.' My first trip outside of the city came about after Passover, immediately following the holiday. The itinerary captivated me, enchanted me. To begin with, it did not disturb me that I was traveling away fro such a warm home.

I studied in a *Heder* with a *melamed*. Everything was new to me. The little sukkah-house with the fly-roof, where my grandfather sat and studies from early in the morning until very late at night. The small candle-lit sukkah, was filled with bookcases full of books, which to me, an eight-year-old little boy, quite unfamiliar. My grandmother, small and thin, made us a living from the manufacturing store in the marketplace. It was a quite life for the entire week, except for the market day in the *shtetl*. At that time, it came to life, Ukrainians from the villages would bring wagons with all manner of good things to sell and to by various merchandise. That is how weeks flowed by.

On Tisha B'Av my grandfather took me along to measure off the cemetery plots. The mood at that time was one of tension. This was the year 1914. One could sense the world catastrophe in the air, despite the fact that no one could imagine its extent. We no longer went to *Heder* at that time already, waiting for something unknown. So, individual little boys like me, sat on mounds of a dried out rivulet and cut into the dark glistening soil with pieces of wood, houses and bakery ovens. Until our grandmother suddenly came running, out of breath, worried, grabbing me by the hand and dragging me, pulling and pinching me, because I didn't want to leave what I was doing in the middle.

– Come home, quickly, my darling. There is war....

Before we even came within sight of my grandfather's house, Russian cavalry entered the town, armed from head to foot. 'If you will not be a good little boy, the Cossacks on their horses will impale you on their picks'... And politically informed people in town – and those among them with a sense of strategy – said that the Russians were retreating.

At night, candles were no longer lit in the homes, but also nobody slept either. Residents readied themselves to uproot themselves from this border town. The hubbub in the center of the marketplace did not subside, frightened Jews provisioned themselves with food and water, anticipating that hard days lay ahead. With packages and pails in their hands, they coursed about in the broad, dark emptied marketplace. The talk was that large battles would take place here between the Austrians and the Russians and Jews must not remain in this place.

In the distance, one hears the explosions of artillery shells and the reports of gunfire. A the outside, as soon as daylight broke, everyone came out of their little houses; in groups of three, four and five; telling each other how they lived

through the night. Little boys bent themselves over, putting their ears to the ground, [and hearing] 'how the earth trembles from all the shooting'...

The morning passes, and predictions circulate about. There are those who favor one side, and those for '*Efroyim-Yussel*,' (Kaiser Franz-Josef II of Austria-Hungary). Late in the afternoon, the [inhabitants of] the town suddenly tear themselves away from their homes. Each individual grabs whatever they can see: a pillow, a goat, a calf, containers of food, 'a bread slice in a basket' and who knows where one will spend the coming night...

Everyone left, with no differentiation, young and old, the wealthy and the abject poor, optimists and pessimists, adherents of the Austro-Hungarian regime, and the few adherents of Czar Nicholas II. The first stop was in the village of Ptaetz, hard by a wooded area, on the second side of the river. 'Staych Gentiles of Ptaetz' of the nations of the world. But the residents of Ptaetz were not in the village, they had gone off into the fields, dug deep bunkers and hid themselves. The small empty little shacks shook with each discharge of artillery. A misfortune, trouble, the group bites its lips, fallen in harm's way, they all think. The long row of little houses has been emptied. The window panes have been taken out of their frames, in order that they not be shattered. Only a few of the peasants remain.

In the woods, hard by the village, the Russian conscripts have dug themselves into foxholes. The explosions form cannons and rifle fire have shaken up the air. – 'we have fallen into the very center of the fire, into a veritable Hell.'

When the fusillade stopped, the entire community of homeless Jews from Laszczow picked itself up from the ground, and once again began to follow the road in the direction of **Hrubieszow.**

The road stretched on forever. Every time, a second person would faint. The heat was very great, and the miasma that hung over the sides of the road was heavy, barely tolerable...

About ten o'clock at night, we came to a large village, exhausted and thirsty. Many didn't make it, and remained along the way. We spent the night here in the local school. Out first night of being homeless.

The next morning, close to noon, we arrived in Hrubieszow. We thought that here, we would be able to rest, one way or the other. We made our way to the home of R' Yitzhak'l Neimark's guest house. But the disappointment came very rapidly. Everything was shut, the door and the gate. The Jewish populace had left and gone to **Dubienkow, Lyubomil**; fled the shooting, fled from death. We go further. The great bridge over the Bug River has already been blown up, the Russian military is retreating. After a great deal of pleading, we were permitted to cross the river over the temporary military bridge. As soon as we got the other side, my grandfather hired a peasant's small wagon, because the horses were barely able to pull their load through the deep sands, towards Lyubomil.

Here we sat until after Sukkot, wandering about from place to place, without means, until the heat of battle passes – until the storm abates.

At that time, the Jews of Zamość also held the opinion that it was safer to get away from the front. They could not forget the incident of a Blood-Libel, at which time fourteen of the finest of their youth had been shot to death. In the month of AB of 1914, when the Austrians drew near the city, the Jews of Zamość took to the road, in the direction of **Izbicza – Lublin**. My grandfather, R' Benjamin Harenfeld resisted the idea, and insisted he would not go, and that he would remain free in his home: 'Happy Are They Who Abide In Thy House.' The key to our candy factory were left with him. The warehouse was filled to overflowing with merchandise. At that time, we worked at full steam, because all sugar products were taken to the front. As soon as the Austrians entered the city, the remaining Jews breathed freely, opened their businesses, and the redemption was great. Merchants pleaded for mercy with my grandfather, begging him to open the factory. He no sooner opened, than storekeepers seemed to grow out of the ground, forcing themselves inside, and in a short period of time, emptied out the entire inventory...

After Sukkot, we began to return to Zamość. We no sooner had returned to the city in the middle of the night, we were forced to spend the night outside of the Altstadt, because the inside of the city was off limits. After spending the night in a small house, very early we came home to my parents.

## The First World War (1914-1917)

Every time the Russian military pushed forward on the Galician front, the Jews of Zamość got to their feet. Commerce rose, and the provisioning of the Russian military brought income in abundance.

At the same time, bitter news arrived about the destruction of Galicia; death and massacre, destroyed Jewish communities in Poland and Galicia, thousands of Jewish refugees that were torn out of their homes.

Jewish young folk in the Russian Czarist military met at the front, at the time of the bitterly fought battles face-to-face with Jewish soldiers from the Austrian side. With the cry of '*Shema Yisrael*,' thousands of Jewish soldiers were killed on both sides....

For nearly a year, the city of Zamość did not suffer from the war, despite the fact that it was difficult to forget the tragic first two months, when because of a Blood-Libel, 14 of the best of the young people of the city were shot to death, because of the frightening pogrom actions of individual Polish patriots and annihilators of Jews. Many young people, and fathers of children were mobilized by the Russians, and sent away to the front. From time-to-time, a family might receive notification of the sad news that a son of theirs had fallen at the front.

The Jews of Zamość took a significant part at the time that the Russians celebrated their great victory at Przemysl at the front. The Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Horowitz went at the head of a large Jewish delegation out in the open, with a Sefer Torah in hand, in front of the Russian Orthodox Church, and brought the best wishes of the Jewish community of Zamość. On the opposing side, this victory was accompanied by destruction and death.

On August 15, 1915 the German soldiers marched into the city. The Russian began their evacuation many days before. The archives were carted off, the magazines and ammunition and produce were emptied out, and what was not possible to take was destroyed out in the open. The families of Russian officials rode off. Many prominent Jewish families went off into Russia, taking with them whatever they could, loading their possessions on platforms, going off to the Minsk district, Crimea, the further from the front, the better. Everything became ossified, the streets became emptied of people, the businesses closed up tight.

Those who remained in the city, were severely pressed. Every crack in the gate or entry way created a strong pull to discover what was going on in the city, because the more the situation became graver for the Russians on the Russo-German front, it had a very significant implications for the Jews, suspected of espionage, collusion, and this indeed was the cause of death for many Jews through hasty field military trials.

In a few hours later, the Germans began to march in, with heavy artillery and infantry. The Jews greeted them warmly, standing at the sides, offering water and everything that they required.

In our house there was celebration. A day earlier, my youngest brother, Moshe, had been born – at the height of the artillery barrage. The midwife called me over to my mother's bed and said to me: 'Nu, Yankeleh, you won't be an only child anymore.' To which I replied: ' Whatever I will want, one way or the other, I will make happen.'...

Many homes in the city stood empty, German officers who remained billeted in the city took them over, and if that did not suffice, Jewish families gave up a room in their homes. Because of the war situation, it was hard to know how to manage. Everything had been killed off. Slowly, the way to the commandant of the city was found; pretty young ladies got a '*schön*' and it was much lighter.... business started up again, bringing in a variety of goods, for which we had been severely starved.

Shortly after this, the city came under Austrian rule. The Austrians were quite liberal and especially when most of the billeted military consisted of soldiers, who were only soldiers because they wore an insignia.

In the summer of 1916, a frightful typhus epidemic broke out; an intestinal form and a form with a rash. There was no family that didn't have someone ill with typhus. Many died. Most of the sick could not be accommodated in the small general hospital. There was a dearth of doctors and medicines. The *Hevra Kadisha* was engaged, to the extent that even on the Sabbath, the dead would be laid out in wagons and taken to the new cemetery. The mood was somber. The epidemic lasted nearly a half year.

After a long time, Jewish community life began to return to normal... the remaining children grew up. Jewish young men from the Austrian military garrison drew close to the locals. On the Sabbath, and on Festivals, the synagogues, *shtiblach* and *Batei Medrashim* would fill up with Jewish soldiers, among them also, many religious-national interesting types. Being forcibly separated from their families and environment for many years, they longed for the warm homey little corner. Indeed, it was these very Jewish conscripts who took a greater part in the Jewish life of the city. A great deal of Jewish patriotism spilled forth during those times. The world war drew to its close. Nations fought for their independence, and the great empires began to disintegrate. Waves of revolt and uprising cascaded over Russia, Germany, etc.

At the initiative of local activists and at the instigation of Jewish soldiers, a scouting organization called '*HaShomer HaTza'ir*' was established in 1917. Mr. Shlifka from Lemberg, himself a member of the movement, founded it. The best of the local idealistic young people joined this organization. A short time after this, we affiliated ourselves with the central organization in Warsaw and Lodz. We began to learn the Hebrew language with savor, with the Sephardic accent – and preparing ourselves for *aliyah*. A little at a time, we were visited by Krongold, Shenhabi, and others. The Hebrew scouting-songs, and melodies from the Holy Land captivated the Jewish youth of the city. Among the founders were Chava and Joseph Fuchs, Chava Falk, and others.

In the same time. A 'Mizrahi' organization was established, which took in a large number of religious Jews, traditional young people who were active in all walks of Jewish life.

I will not forget the abstract discussion about the question: 'What will happen to the railroad (?), if Jews should obtain independence in the Land of Israel?' – They immediately founded a Hebrew religious *Volksschule*, 'Yavneh,' which existed until 1920. In those days, this was the only modern Jewish school in Zamość. At the head of 'Mizrahi' activity, stood R' Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, and R' Baruch Sobol. Among the teachers of the school were the writer, Gitlin (a brother of the book publisher Gitlin, in Warsaw), Tchizh from Lemberg, a young author beginning to write in Polish.

With the return of inspired young people from an aroused Russia, back to Zamość, a '*Tze'irei Tzion*' was established which later crystallized as a Zionist-Socialist party. At the beginning, R' Zvi Chaim Geliebter, Yitzhak Funt, Zvi Gebet (all in Israel), Israel Roset (killed in Kremieniec by the Nazis) and others belonged to them.

The '*Heder Metukan*' which existed since 1908, was re-opened anew. Anshel Sobol, the brilliant teacher from Warsaw, was active [here]. Hebrew evening courses, under the direction of the Pinsk teacher Joseph Tchessler, were instituted. Many of the young people of the city heard the lectures of these very courses. He was later known as a young Hebrew writer.

Political and Social life in the city went through its springtime [renaissance]. The battle between the Zionists and non-Zionist streams became sharpened.

The *Bund* organized the professional unions, and began to seriously position itself against the great influence of the Zionist youth organizations for [the minds of] Jewish youth.

# The Red Revolution

January 1918. A wintry Saturday, an afternoon worthy of the 'Song of Moses.' The streets are bedded down with a hard-packed layer of snow, well tamped down, and holding its place really finely. The air – dry, frosty. Older people are catching and afternoon nap at this time, literally an *Oneg Shabbat*. It is only then, that one can regulate the exhaustion accumulated from the six gray days of the week.

In the yards, and on the streets of the city, the children and young folk are playing, some in hideouts, others organizing themselves into two opposing sides, following all the rules of the military; kids from the Altstadt against the Browar Jewish kids; Neustadt kids against the ones from the Altstadt; prisoners are taken, they are confined to dark rooms until nightfall. In the course of all this, both sides suffer furious beatings. Stones, sticks, snowballs, all serve as ammunition and weaponry... the Browar youth are sassy and quick, and drive them back into the gates of the Altstadt. The vale of Moshe Koval, which could be found between the Altstadt and the Lubliner suburb, served as a boundary point. In this way, children imitated their elders and carried on bitter conflict among themselves.

It was on just such a Sabbath day, after noon, a group of armed gentiles draws nigh. Part of them are immediately recognizable: workers from the flour mill, and field hands for the large estates around the city. At their head of this marching group was Leibusz *Henteleh*, a known persona in the workingman circles of Zamość. He got the nickname, '*Henteleh*,' because one hand was crippled from a childhood disease. The others, the gentiles, were wearing their everyday work clothes, that is to say, they had just come off of work. All of them were armed with guns, revolvers and hand grenades that were stuck into their belts.

Leibusz *Henteleh* shouted imprecations frequently against the reactionary Polish regime, against the commandant of the city, who administered the city in the name of the reactionary Polish regime in Warsaw.

They arrived at the '*Lubliner Brom*' (*Broma* – a Gate, being in memory of the old famous fortress) or First-of-May Street, as it was later called. They passed through the Magistrate Ring, through the so-called mini-orchards, throughout the Third-of-May Street, in the direction of the *'Schloss*,' or the keep of the Zamoyskis, to the building of the Senior city Elder (*Starosta*), where the city commandant resided.

Nobody stood in their way to stop them. Nobody opposed them. Only the children accompanied them, out of curiosity, up to the building of the *Starosta* on the Academy Street. On arriving at the building of the *Starosta*, they met up with another group of several tens of revolutionists, which had come from a second street. The protests against the regime became stronger. They shot with their guns into the air, and through the windows of the *Starosta*. As soon as the shooting started, we scattered like mice. Fire was being returned from the windows. The officials were not there at the time, except for a few, therefore it was not difficult to seize control of the building.

The city was captured by the worker groups, the red revolutionaries. Shortly afterwards, it was made forbidden to go out into the streets. The atmosphere became oppressive. There was no way of knowing how it would look further on. The city was cut off from its environs, and it was not possible to enter or to leave. On the following morning, businesses no longer opened. Craftsmen and workers did not go to work. Everything waited for the events to play themselves out. It was forbidden to go out even to look for bread. Patrols wandered through the streets: armed revolutionaries. The air was disturbed by sporadic gunfire.

At nightfall, the patrols disappeared. An alarm went out that the Rightists had sent an appeal for help, and a large number of Polish military was approaching Zamość. The Jewish residents hid themselves. The nights of Sunday and Monday were very uneasy, gunfire and explosions, screams of people who were dragged out of their houses and hideouts.

Before dawn, the regular Polish military force began to attack the city. Polish volunteers from the 'Endek' Party,[244] surrounded the city. Looking out of the window in the roof, I saw the photographer Stzizowski with a poetic (?) Group of other civilian Polish volunteers coming out into view, with guns in their hands.

As Paderewski's military took control of the city, the soldiers received a free hand. The Jewish resident was well-acquainted with this matter. Three Jews were shot to death. The wife of Itcheh-David Schliam, for looking out of an attic window from her house onto the 'courtyard,' the news reporter Bokser, was called out of his house, from the fourth story. In R' Hona Eidelsberg's house, he was taken down the cellar steps and shot through the head with a bullet. He had been informed on that he was selling bullets to the revolutionaries. I cannot recollect the name of the third person killed.

Apart from this, Jewish businesses were emptied out, and as revenge, a large sum of money was demanded. And if this was not enough, mass arrests were made, without any charges. It was sufficient for a Pole to accuse someone of being guilty of participating in the revolution, thereby causing that person to be arrested.

At the outset, many Jewish community activists were arrested. Later, old and young were dragged from the houses. Polish gendarmes made raids in many Jewish homes, robbed everything in the process, that they could lay their hands on.

I will never forget the picture: hand-in-hand we ran to see the tragic image of how several hundred old and young people who were arrested, were surrounded by tens of Polish cavalry men on horses, with naked swords in their hands, they were driven onto the road to Lublin. At the head of this group, I especially remember the recently deceased R' Mendel Funt. They wanted to reveal to the Polish residents who the revolutionaries were. All these were gathered up from their homes, and incarcerated for temporary arrest at the Magistrate's [building], where they were held for several days under unbearable conditions. Following this group came the women, children, and frightened and confused families, crying with heart-rending screams. The guards constantly stepped on these people who came along, and tried to drive them off.

In a number of months later, most of those arrested were gradually released, after much interrogation, which were accompanied with torture.

## The Bolshevist Invasion

Summer 1920. The Jews of Poland survived dark and difficult days. Pilsudski coveted a Greater Poland, from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea, and went to war against Red Russia. Despite the hard times that Russia had gone through, frightful hunger, unending attacks by the White Guards, supported by England and America, ruined by the battles in the years of the First World War, the barefoot Red Army smote the organized Polish military. They reached the Vistula River, hard by Warsaw.

While suffering such bitter defeats, the Polish government harassed the Jewish populace and the activists without distinction between them. Many thousands of Jews were interned in specially organized concentration camps. Jewish soldiers in the Polish military were interned in a special camp in Jablona, for purposes of isolation. Jewish boys were given field military trials on the slightest suspicion, and death sentences were carried out without any serious reason.

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244 The Polish left wing, and even most of the center and peasant parties, did not clamor for anti-Jewish laws; doing so was the specialty of the increasingly large right wing, especially the followers and successors of Roman Dmowski's Endek Party, which promoted the notion of "Poland for the Poles." Such pernicious slogans and ideologies permeated all of Eastern Europe; they are still the rallying cry of nationalists everywhere. Polish nationalists engaged in propaganda and even violence against the Jewish, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and German minorities in Poland; of these, the Jews, lacking a neighboring power to take up their interests, were least able to defend themselves.

In Zamość, only one daily paper arrived, '**Der Yid,**' which the '*Agudat Israel*' published in Warsaw, on badly colored paper. Other periodicals, in our area, which was close to the front, were forbidden. In the city, the incident with R' Itcheh Meir Manzim was known, that could have ended very tragically. The latter, as a worker for the 'Agudah,' and distributor of the previously mentioned Yiddish newspaper in Zamość, had telegraphically requested from the editorship, to increase the number of papers being sent. The request was written in Polish as: 'Wiszloc sto Zydov,' (Send one hundred 'Yids'). The contents of the telegram elicited a terrible thought against Itcheh-Meir Manzim, and his relatives, because who knew for what purpose he was calling for 'reinforcements.' The secret police immediately surrounded the house where he lived, arrested him, and many more activists in the city. Only thanks to the quick intervention of an acquainted Polish patriot was the misinterpretation clarified.

The truth be said, there was a portion of the Jewish populace who was sympathetic to the advance of the Red military. From the first minute when Poland was liberated, the Jewish populace suffered from pogroms, decrees and harassment.

In the days when great battles took place between both armies at the gates of Zamość, the Jewish populace in the city and its vicinity lived in great fear. In the city, authority was in the hands of the militia, which was put together thanks to the cooperation of many parties. The militia could not obtain any weaponry. Dark elements had designs to open up Jewish businesses and houses, rob them, and destroy what they could not appropriate... all at the time that the Jews were lying hidden in cellars and bunkers, and underworld elements began to hack off locks from the businesses. Sunday, the peasants came from the villages and the gentile women came with large boxes, and it was only thanks to the militia members that it did not turn out well for the thieves and robbers, and they turned back to the surrounding villages.

It was completely tragic when the forces of General Bulak-Balachowicz, Petlura's most loyal protegé, and renown perpetrator of pogroms, entered the city.[245] This Ukrainian General, fought on the Polish side at that time. Being exhausted from weeks-long life on the front, tired and hungry, they needed everything: food, clothing, drink and women. All the streets of the city, all the yards and places were occupied by the military groups of the bloody Bulak-Balachowicz. The leadership of the Jewish community began knocking on the doors of the local Polish activists, but all had hidden themselves. The pressure became enormous as night drew near.

An impending pogrom hung in the air. The Jewish residents in the city and the Neustadt readied themselves for this, each in his own way. Gates and doors were reinforced, people hid together, and a small amount of weapons were procured for purposes of defending one's self as best as possible. There was no talk about organized self-defense, and it was forbidden to possess weaponry.

It was the Jews of the Neustadt who suffered the most. Jewish businesses and saloons were wrecked and robbed, a number of houses were opened, and Jewish women were violated. As luck would have it, thanks to the fact that Polish military had defeated the Red Army, the Ukrainian bands received an order to move to a new point.

The harassment of the Jewish populace did not cease even when the war was over. The Polish defense prohibited and obstructed every attempt by the Jews to organize their lives in the city. The intelligentsia, and especially the radicals, tried to be active, but the police obstructed each initiative.

The best of the active labor youth of the city, gathered itself around the reading room of the I. L. Peretz Library, which was found in the best locale of the city, in the house of the rich merchant, Inlander. Our *landsleit* in America concerned themselves with providing financial resources and books. We received many, many books, from our committed friends.

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245 In an attempt to help set up a non-Soviet Ukrainian State, Pilsudski formed an alliance with the Ukrainian Symon Petlura. A combined force of Poles and Ukrainians made it to Kiev in May, 1920, but could not hold the area. General Bulak-Balachowicz was originally from the Vilna area. He was in the Czarist Russian army until the Bolshevik revolution, when he formed units determined to fight the Bolsheviks. He became an ally of Pilsudski and organized units of volunteers made up of Poles from the eastern border areas, which fought in Russia against the Bolsheviks.

The police looked askance at this point of light, and were suspicious that anti-government work was being carried on in this institution. The secret police often would make sweeps of the library, and at the time that a banquet was being held, the police arrived, took everyone into custody, and did an investigation as to the purpose for which the banquet was being held. All the participants were registered, and later, during the mass arrests in connection with the explosion at the Citadel in Warsaw, this list served as a guide and all the participants were detained.

That visit by the police, at that time, resulted in a shameful pogrom in the library. The rooms were demolished, the floors were ripped up, the books, among them very rare copies, were torn.

Shortly afterwards, the Deputy, Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer, the well-known Historian, gave a directed peroration in the Sejm, and demanded an intense investigation and punishment of the perpetrators.

## In Prison

October 15, 1922, Witos, the so-called 'Minister without Cravat,' was the Prime Minister of Poland.[246] The broad ranks of the workers and common masses lived under the most difficult circumstances. The Polish currency was continuously losing its value. It reached to the point where the pay that a worker received had considerably less value at the end of the month than it did at the beginning of the month. Strikes of hundreds and thousands of uninformed workers broke out, as a protest against the regime, that represented the comfortable peasantry and the rich class in Poland.

In Poland, the cynical reply of Witos was quite familiar, to the delegation of the government representatives, which complained to him, that their stipend was insufficient, and their families are going hungry, at the time when many, many citizens were getting rich from speculation: 'Do what you want, because tomorrow will be even worse'.....

Shortly afterwards, rebellions by workers and the military broke out, in a number of manufacturing centers, and especially in Krakow; workers put up barricades in the streets; conscripts and officers went over to the side of the fighters. During the time of these occurrences, many were killed and wounded. The government was not at all intimidated, and instead of finding a way to improve the situation, it responded with harassment of the labor activists.

Shabbat, *Simkhat Torah*, 1922, Warsaw was shaken up by a frightful explosion. The 'citadel,' the ammunition magazines, were blown up. Tens of people were killed, hundreds wounded, houses were ruined. All of Poland was shaken up. Premier Witos immediately ordered investigations in all cities of the land, and all elements thought to be of the left wing, were arrested. In Zamość, the secret police did not have a difficult job, all of these 'suspects,' were listed with them, and at Saturday night of *Simkhat Torah*, late at night, the police surrounded many houses in the city and made searches. Twenty-nine labor activists, men and women, Jews, Poles and Ukrainians, activists in the trade unions, members of the leadership of the I. L. Peretz Library, activists of the nationalists-bloc in the Sejm, members of the city council, all were arrested that night, 25 men, among them, myself (then a sixteen year-old boy), and 4 women, among them my oldest sister Eidel. Otherwise, our family was spared.

Here, I open my diary and read the few lines from those days, when we were in prison:

Almost midnight. Everyone, we children and parents are all asleep, tired from the Festival days. I am sleeping close to the window that looks out on the large yard of the Rathaus, and next to me, on a second bed, Joseph Tchessler is sleeping, the well-known Hebrew teacher and writer from Pinsk. In sleep, I hear a rapid banging on the large iron-covered gate of the Rathaus. I sleep as if in a deep sleep, barely raising myself, and bend myself over and look out of the window into the thick darkness. The house guard, Jan, comes down from his post, cursing out of anger that he has

246 Vincenty Witos, (1874-1945) According to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Witos served three terms as prime minister of Poland between 1920 and 1926. He was a political prisoner in Poland during the 1930's, and was imprisoned by both the Germans and the Russians at various times during World War II. Witos died in Krakow shortly after the end of the war.

been awakened so late. He unlocks the gate and opens only one half, and as soon as he sees the important guests, he opens the second half of the gate, widely, and in a graceful manner. Red police entered, he immediately showed them where we were domiciled. Jumping down from the horses, a few stayed below, the remainder immediately came up to us on the steps. Again, a strong, impudent banging on the door. My father, trembling, began to open the door. 'We have come to make an inspection' – they informed us – and the purpose of the inspection we knew only too well from previous instances.

It is already close to 3 in the morning, and they are still searching and rummaging. Every paper, every newspaper, every envelope, everything is reviewed.

Before dawn, when it began to get gray, the police officer notified us that my sister Eidel and I are arrested. In the police commissariat the procedure was a short one. We were from anew interrogated again, and separated: me, in a large dark room, of arrested men, and my sister – in a room for women.

Our room was overflowing with arrested people, most of whom for political reasons, who were rounded up in the course of the past night. The others were various lawbreakers. I was the youngest of all, barely 16 years old. A few knew me quite well there, as an activist on behalf of the Peretz Library, as a leader of the school youth. Shortly afterwards they brought in a few others. Only our comrade Fiedler was not sent in so quickly, he was punished for a longer period, even though he was well known from other instances. In the end, the police pushed him into the crowded room also, the door opened widely, and closed quickly, not wanting to hear our protests against the inhuman conditions. There were Poles who sat with us, who served time in Czarist prisons and various exiles.

From Fiedler we learned that in the women's cell were three additional political prisoners apart from my sister, and the rest were streetwalkers and other criminals. You can imagine our state of mind, when we heard this. The conditions in the prison quarters of the commissariat were very difficult. Food was not provided. [We were] in a small room with a small high window that opened onto a courtyard to the general facilities. We were forced to stand for the entire time, because there was no room to sit down. The walls were damp. At every instance, when one of us was called out to be interrogated, he brought back news about what it was that we were being accused of. This news was inconsistent. Tired and hungry, we began our second night of vigil, not knowing what awaits us in the morning. Some said that we will be taken to Lublin, to the famous prison.

It was only early on Monday, that we were quickly taken into the large yard, calling all the names. We were 29, (22 Jews, 4 Ukrainians, and 3 Poles). We were lined up by threes. A large detail of police surrounded us, and ordered us to march forward. Among our relatives, nobody knew that at this hour we would be passing through the city. And so, we came to the jail next to the so-called 'Browar.'

Clang! Clang! Clang! In the deep hollow of the long corrugated prison corridor, close by the stairs, a railroad bell hangs. The agile and gleeful guard stands there, with his cunning squinty eyes, with the little hammer in hand, and strikes the bell continuously. At that precise moment, at the time of the early morning summons, we, the new residents, arrived. From a number of the windows, we saw white tablecloths, and we saw no faces, only the hands that held the tablecloths, because the prison guards had made the threat that they would shoot into the windows. This was the way everyone was put under pressure on that morning. Our group of men got a large room. Shortly afterwards, we were visited by the prison warden. Some of us were well-known to him. Standing up in this manner, he presented us with the regulations for the arrested people. Comrade Fiedler was selected as our 'Senior,' and as a Deputy to him the former Ukrainian judge (fate would have it, that this very gentile was a member of the building commission of the jail in Czarist times). As soon as the warden left, Comrade Fiedler told all those arrested how to behave, in relation to the prison authority.

We were gnawed at by the thought of what it was that we were being accused of by the rulers.... a few days later, the interrogations began. One at a time, we were called out, and afterwards, not permitted to return to our room. As the youngest of all those arrested, I was treated especially 'nicely.' Before my interrogation even began, I was 'accorded some respect.' After that, I was asked for the addresses of certain people. At the end, when I thought this tedium was finally ending, two interrogators began anew to beat me, because I was so young and don't get mixed up much in

politics, because I was so arrogant, because I didn't want to tell anything about Heder... the fact was that I really had nothing to tell, because at that time, I was ideologically close to the Zionist-Socialist parties, and that was my great transgression, for which I was sentenced to one month of arrest for taking active part in the elections for the Polish Sejm for the Nationalist-bloc, at the time that the candidate for *Poalei-Tzion*, Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer had figured in the Chelm-Zamość regional elections.

Also, the police could not forget my 'sin,' and that of my sister Eidel, as activists in the Peretz Library, especially after the police had demolished the library and Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer had lodged a sharp protest in the Sejm, demanding that the police officers who were responsible for the pogrom against a cultural institution, should be punished....

The interrogation lasted nearly three weeks. Various rumors [circulated], that we will be accused of sedition. In the Poland of those times, that meant being imprisoned for a number of years.

Suddenly, an order arrived to release us.

## Regarding the Destruction of the I. L. Peretz Library in Zamość

**The Speech of Sejm Deputy Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer Given in the Sejm**

In the Yiddish daily paper, '*Unser Volkszeitung*,' (an organ of the *Bund* ), of October 18 (Number 127) a correspondence from Zamość appeared, under the tile: 'Police Destroyed the Peretz Library in Zamość.' In this correspondence, the following is told:

We received correspondence from **Zamość**: In the night of Sunday, into Monday (meaning the 14th to the 15th of October), the government police, together with secret agents, carried out a break-in at the location of the Peretz Library.

They tore off the stays from the tables, tore off the linoleum from the piles, they ripped up to 5,000 books in the Yiddish, Polish and other languages, tore off, and destroyed the pictures of Peretz, Medem[247], Mickiewicz, and others, that hung on the walls.

In a word – the library looked as if it had come through an actual pogrom. The members of the library leadership immediately notified Senator **Lubovich** ( from 'Vizualenia'), who at that time had been elected in Zamość, who went to the location of the library and confirmed the destruction carried out by the police. He promised to present what he had seen to the relevant organs of authority.

The library had more than 7,000 books; in that [count, were] 3,000 Yiddish [books], and as many Polish [books].

After extensive effort, it was possible for the Jewish workers and intelligentsia of Zamość to create such an effective library, which had up to 700 members.

The library was counted as not only one of the most important cultural institutions in Zamość, but of the entire vicinity. And in one night, it was destroyed in a single barbaric act.

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[247] Vladimir Medem (1879-1923) – Medem was a leading *Bund* theorist, as well as a writer and editor for Russian- and Yiddish-language *Bundist* periodicals. Born in Russia in 1879 to Russified Jewish parents who had converted to Russian Orthodoxy, Medem increasingly came to identify himself as a Jew as a gymnasium student. He was radicalized as a law student at the University of Kiev, where he also decided to study Hebrew. Expelled for political activity, he began working with the *Bund* in Minsk. In 1903, Medem represented the Bund at the second convention of the Russian Social Democratic Party. During the German occupation of World War I, he became the leader of the *Bund* in Poland. Increasingly dissatisfied with internal politics, Medem immigrated to the United States in 1921, where he contributed to the *Forverts*, but died shortly afterwards.

In that same night, the locations of the trade union locations of the tailors, leather workers, and bakers, were also destroyed.

The books and records, that were found there, were torn up. The furniture was broken.

Thirty people, Jews and Christians, were arrested, and the secretary of the Ukrainian Club, Racznik, and the member of the Peretz Library, Neimark.

After reading this correspondence (in the *Volkszeitung* ), Dr. Szyfer took counsel with his constituents in Zamość (Szyfer was newly-elected by the voters in Zamość), which is completely reported in the referenced correspondence.

The barbarous vandalism of the police organs in Zamość elicited a great sense of unrest in the city, because we were not certain whether or not additional such break-ins and arrests, and other upsets will disturb the peace and order of the city.

In connection with this item, the signers ask the Honorable Minister:

1. Is he aware of the previously mentioned descriptions of the keepers of law and order in Zamość?

2. If yes, is he prepared to bring the guilty to a severe punishment for their responsibility, and to do everything that is possible make amends for the related losses?

(Translated from the Polish-Yiddish Daily Paper,
'*Nash-Psheglod*,' Warsaw, Wednesday November 7, 1923).

# The Library Named for Dr. Shlomo Ettinger in the *Neustadt*

**By Simcha Zworyn**
(Ramatayim – Israel)

*Page 599:* *The Leadership of the Neustadt People's Library, Elected on July 20, 1933.*

*Page 600:* *The Leadership of the Neustadt Library Named for Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, Elected on June 7, 1934.*[248]

*Page 601:* *After the police shut down the Dr. Shlomo Ettinger Library, it was taken over by 'HaPoel.' This photo is from January 1, 1939, during a new year election. From right to left: Abraham Shoffel, Shayndl Kleiner, Berish Schatzkammer (?), Joseph Arkava.*

*P. 602:* *The Carpentry Establishment of Eliyahu Schwartzberg (Elyeh Melekh's) in the Neustadt. The first person on the right is Yossel Greenbaum ('Burmistzh') from the activists in the professional area. Most of the young carpenters pictures were among the consumers of the Dr. Shlomo Ettinger Library.*

In the year 1922, a group of young people came together from the *Neustadt*, and decided to become 'independent,' at least from the standpoint of culture, from the haughty-bourgeois *Altstadt*.

The truth is, that young people from the *Neustadt* found it difficult to take advantage of the big, I. L. Peretz Library and reading room in the *Altstadt*. It was not only the distance that mad it difficult. One couldn't simply go over to the city, just like that. One needed to 'change clothing.' Get home from work, do a change, re-dress, and by that time it was late – there was no time left to take advantage of the spiritual pleasure, which the city residents had so close to them....

This 'revolution,' was carried out by: M. K.. Nirenberg (today in Israel); Yohanan Morgenstern (killed in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising); Gershon Zucker (killed by the Nazis), Nekheh Rak ( today in Buenos Aires), Zissel Wagner (today in Israel), Yaakov Zimmerung, Shlomo Gruber.

At the first get-together, it was decided to open a library and a reading room. There was a model – the I. L. Peretz Library and reading room in the city.

The first work was assembly of books and subscribing members. A serial was released with 'obligations' for specific amounts of money. A purchaser of such an obligation was essentially borrowing a sum of money, which later was deducted from the membership dues, and reading fees of the future library.

The workman's circle in New York was also approached, and from there, a donation of approximately $100-150 was sent.

From the assembled funds, we rented a 3-room house, in the center of the *Neustadt*. A meeting to establish the institution was called. At this meeting, there were approximately a hundred me, the first subscribing members. At this establishment meeting, the first leadership was elected, consisting of the following people: M. Kh. Nirenberg – Chairman; Shlomo Gruber – Secretary; Leadership Members: Yohanan Morgenstern, Gershon Zucker, Levi Rosenman, Zissel Wagner; Audit commission: Baruch Roisner and David Stern.

The establishment meeting decided that the library and reading room has to be a non-partisan cultural center for all elements of the Neustadt populace. It is indeed, because this decision on the part of the establishment meeting was taken, the library was protected from going under.

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248 The Roman numeral VII in the picture would lead the reader to believe this was July (not June).

The anti-Semitic Polish authorities did not only once look for 'political' motives to have an excuse for shutting down this single general-purpose Jewish institution. Because we maintained this non-partisan posture we, indeed, managed to deflect an array of surprises.

Looking for a 'non-partisan' name, the establishment meeting decided to name the library after **Dr. Shlomo Ettinger**. Incidentally – this was the only instance in which Zamość had memorialized the name of its famous son.

The income of the library flowed in from purely cultural undertakings, such as speeches, debates, literary evenings. Not rarely, debaters would come to us from Warsaw, known personalities, whom we would describe through the means of the Warsaw Literary Society.

On the first Peretz evening, that we organized in the year 1922, the following took part: Jonah-Yehoshua Peretz, a brother of the writer, who spoke on the theme: 'Peretz As A Thinker;' Mr. Shmuel Asheknazi, a childhood friend of the writer, who recorded his memories of the writer's youth, and Yerakhmiel Brandwein, who spoke on the theme, 'Peretz As An Artist.' In the artistic portion of the evening, Peretz's 'Three Seamstresses,' was performed.

When the library had been finally set on a firm foundation – it already had 3,500 books in Yiddish, Hebrew and Polish, we turned over the management to the younger generation.

Even if the management of the library had been turned over to the young people, the founders continued to participate in the activity and would participate in the leadership, would transact with the appointees, and provide a specific factor of perspective in the direction of the institution.

Apart from the founders previously mentioned, we must recall here, Yaakov Feigenbaum (today in Israel), later, Yehuda Wagner (Israel), Leibl Rosen (Secretary for a period), who greatly helped in the development and growth of the institution.

The reactionary Polish authorities, however, 'kept an eye' on the institution. After all, it was located in the Neustadt, the 'heart' of the Jewish laboring masses, so there must be 'destabilizing elements' there, and on the evening of the First of May the police deemed it necessary for the 'public peace and order,' to arrest the leadership of the Sh. Ettinger Library. They were detained until the 'danger' passed – that is to say, until after May 1, and then release them.

In this manner, Mr. Nirenberg was once arrested, being the Chairman of the Library, on the even of May 1, as a 'dangerous' element. After May 1, together with the other members of the leadership, he was released.

The library played an important and direction-giving role in the life of the *Neustadt.*

# Yiddish Theater-Lovers and Drama Circles in Zamość

**By 'Sheva Fekher-Garfinkel & Moshe Garfinkel**

*Page 603:* *The Balalaika Orchestra in Zamość, photographed May 1, 1910. In the photograph are: from right to left seated: Yekl Mermelstein, Itcheh'leh Sobol, S. M. Lelelngant (the teacher), David Dorn, Berel Sobol; standing: Shmuel Tatengreber, Moshe'leh Beckerman, Elieh Klieger.*

*Page 604:* *Facsimile of the Program of the Drama Circle of the 'Y. Sh. O.' in Zamość, from June 1925.*

*Page 606:* *Facsimile of two programs from the Dram Circle of the 'Y. Sh. O.' in Zamość: Right – from the year 1926; left – from the year 1927, performed in Hrubieszow.*

*Page 607:* *The Drama Circle of the Yiddish School Organization 'Y. Sh. O.' in Zamość.*

*The following captioning is brought forward from page 706 in the Pinkas:*
*From Right to Left: Ben-Zieh Zeidner, Yankel Shpizeisen, Rachel Korngold, Moshe Freilich, Moshe Mittelpunkt, Y. M. Hertzberg, Meir Adler; Second Row, seated: M. Tupman, Y. Feldstein, Sheva Fekher, Nahum Korngold, Meir Graber; Lower Row: The two Cohn sisters, Moshe Garfinkel.*

*Page 608: Top:* *The Former Jail at the Rear of the Rathaus*
*Bottom:* *A Part of the Fortress from the 19th Century.*

Yiddish theater was performed in Zamość from early on. Our fellow scion, **Berish Beckerman**, one of the pioneering actors of the Yiddish theater in Poland (there is a special write up about him by Y. Gross – Ed.) was also among the first, who directed and involved himself with drama groups.

Among the first things that were performed under his direction, were, '*Hertzeleh Meyukhem*,' and '*Mireleh Efros.*' Taking part in the play, apart from Berish Beckerman, and his daughter Zissel'leh, were Moshe Sobol, Chana Presseisen, (daughter of Moshe Piusker), Mrs. Perlmutter (she worked in the municipal building), Sukhovolsky, Avreml'leh Forehs, and others.

However, this belongs to the period **which is told about.** What we remember, is before the First World War, before 1914.

Before the First World War, there was found in Zamość a group of Yiddish theater-lovers, who put on various productions. The ones whom we know are: '*Die Shekhita*,' '*Mirel Efros*,' and '*Mein Veib's Shvester.*' Among those who participated in those productions, we remember the following:

Dentist Gruber, Khemek Scher, Tzipa Oder-Scher, Zin'keh Scher, David Evikeit and his wife, Hirsch Gebet, Brontsheh Peretz, Nahum Korngold, Leib'tcheh Brokh, and Voveh Schereh, as well as Lieber Morgenstern, Yakhneh Sand-Ackerman, etc.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 disrupted this activity. In 1917, when things eased up a bit, and community activity began to resume on other fronts, a newly constituted dramatic-artistic activity also made an appearance.

On 20 Tammuz (apparently in honor of the Yahrzeit of Dr. Herzl) Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter put on a literary-musical evening performance with Meir Adler's theater [group]. In the program, there was singing, oratory, and other presentations.

Batsheva Fekher read Bialik's '*M'sei Midbar*;' Malka Brandwein and Nahum Korngold sang a duet. The evening was received with acclaim. The city was entertained a bit. The income derived went to *Keren Kayemet.*

In the winter of that same year the first group of pioneers was put together. And so, they organized an artistic evening. The put on Goldfadn's, '*Die Bobbeh mitn Aynikl.*' Hirsch Gebet played the part of the grandmother, and 'Sheva Fekher the grandchild. Abraham Hartz was the groom, and Joseph Sobol the marriage broker.

There was an unusually large box office receipt, which was allocated to various *aliyah* purposes. At that time, many friends were orienting themselves to make *aliyah.*

In the year 1918 a '*Tze'irei Tzion*' organization was established in Zamość, and it established a drama circle together with the *halutzim*, which existed for 20 years and provided pleasure to the Zamość community.

The first production, which this group put on, was '*Der Dorfsjung*,' (Yankel Boyleh). The Hebrew teacher, Joseph Tchessler, directed the play, and it was performed several times. The tickets were sold out in advance, even before the performances.

The second production was '*Die Pusteh Kretchma*,' which was performed several times to great acclaim and generated a sizeable income.

The third production was Sh. Geliebeter's '*Galus*,' which was printed in the Hebrew collection '*HaTekufah.*' We translated this play by ourselves, and put it on several times. The subject of this play, the Cossack pogroms against the Jewish villages, stayed for a long time in the memory of our audiences.

Also, the *Bund* had a drama circle, which produced an array of presentations. I remember one – Peretz Hirshbein's '*Die Nevayleh.*'

There was no room for two separate drama circles. Chaim Shpizeisen ע"ה, and Nahum Korngold came forward with the proposal to merge. Thanks to Moshe Gafinkel and Ben-Zion Zeidner, the unification of both drama circles came to be, which afterwards played to even greater acclaim.

This drama circle continued to perform together for over ten years. The revenues generated went to support the **Peretz School** of the 'Tz. Y. Sh. O.' The largest part of the expenses of the school were covered by the income of the drama circle.

Chaim Shpizeisen was the 'babysitter' for my children when I had to go for rehearsals. Incidentally, he was also the treasurer and the ticket-seller.

This new Zamość drama circle put on the following plays:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | '*Der Dorfsjung*,' | – by L. Kobrin |
| 2. | '*Gott fun Nekomeh*,' | – by Sholom Asch |
| 3. | '*Ganovim*,' | – by B. Bimko |
| 4. | '*Motkeh Gonif*,' | – by Sholom Asch |
| 5. | '*Der Shtummer*,' | – by A. Weiter |
| 6. | '*Der Dybbuk*,' | – by Sh. Ansky |
| 7. | '*Dos Groyseh Gevins*,' | – by Sholom Aleichem |
| 8. | '*Menschen*,' | – by Sholom Aleichem |
| 9. | '*A Doktor*,' | – by Sholom Aleichem |
| 10. | '*Der Khosn*,' | – by A. Tunkeler |
| 11. | '*Zieben Gehangeneh*' | – by L. Andreyev |

12. '*Yuh, Khasseneh Hobn – Nisht Khasseneh Hobn*' – by Tunkeler. The author made a special trip to Zamość to see our performance of this play.
13. '*Gevalt, Ven Shtarbt Er*,' – A Comedy by Chana Gottesfeld
14. '*Greeneh Felder*,' – by Peretz Hirshbein
15. '*Dem Schmid's Tekhter*,' – by Peretz Hirshbein

We had also prepared '*Yossi fun Yakrus*,' an historical drama, and '*Miriam fun Migdal*.' But the town Elder did not give permission for these to be presented. It appears that he feared that we would touch [unfavorably] on the sanctity of Christianity.

Everything that we performed, stood on a high literary-artistic plane. We exerted ourselves to bring out the characters naturally, with no end of work.

As part of the recognition of our circle, let it be remembered that when Poland was established [sic: as an independent republic], we were approached by the city magistrate, requesting that we give a performance, and that the income be for the benefit of the Polish military. This was at the time when the sorrowfully-renown *Hallerists* inflicted all manner of barbarous troubles on the Jews, cutting beards, beatings, killings. It was impossible to refuse this request, and you can imagine what our mood was, that we had to perform for our persecutors, may their names be erased....

The members of the drama circle, those who remained alive, are sown and scattered over the entire world. They are found in the State of Israel, in the United States, Argentina, and Mexico. Let us, here, set down their names:

Joseph Tchessler, Hirsch Gebet, Nahum Korngold, Moshe Garfinkel, Nettel (Klieska) Yom-Tov, Ben-Zion Zeidner, Yekly Feldstein, Leib'tcheh Brokh, Gedalia Mandelbaum, Voveh Scherer (scenery director), Rachel Korngold, Gittel Cahan, 'Sheva Fekher-Garfinkel, Rikil Grossman, Baylah Wechsler, Sarah Aronovich (Malka Ha'Abasis), Golda Goldberg, Chava'tcheh Funt, Mirel Rapaport, Malka Brandwein. Also, two sisters performed, Baylah and Chaya Shtitz, orphans. They emigrated to America. Supplementary performers were: Lozer Nirenstein (Der Krumer), Itcheh-Maie Hertzberg, Hona Millstein. Stage assistants: Joshua Stein, Jekuthiel Zwillich (Kova), Moshe Mittelpunkt, and others.

# Community Life in Zamość

**By Chaim Shpizeisen**

## The Jewish Socialist Movement in Zamość Up To World War I

An underground Socialist development network was already being run in Zamość in the nineties decade of the prior century. This was carried out by students in our city, who had studied out of the country, and who would come home on vacation from the university cities. They would bring back with them, a variety of illegal propaganda materials from the rising socialist movement in Russia. They printed periodicals and brochures on cigarette paper-thin paper which passed from hand-to-hand. In their intimate conversations, among comrades, they told about the various socialist directions that existed in Russia. However, no visible organization was created.

Also, the works of the classic Yiddish writers began to appear, Peretz, Mendele, Dinensohn, and others, in whose content the young Yiddish reader was able already to find ideas that appealed to them, which the socialist propagandists have spread about.

The writer of these lines, in the years 1900-1901, was able to get access to such literature, that has just been described, from fraternal cups.

My friend Fishl Geliebter ע"ה, supplied me with the illegal propaganda literature.

This was already the time, where developments of organizing activity began, and the foundation for the *Bundist* movement in Zamość was laid. At that time in Zamość, the construction of a concrete army barracks for the Russian army was completed. Many Jewish craftsmen were involved: carpenters, table makers, artists, metalworkers, locksmiths and others from the surrounding villages, where there already was an organized Jewish labor movement under the leadership of the *Bund*. With the help of the local Jewish intelligentsia, who were the first in the movement, the workers organized themselves, and established strike-funds.

At the point of the movement stood the comrades: brother Ashkenazi, sister Huberman, Fishl Geliebter, Yerakhmiel Brandwein, and others, who led the work under the banner of the *Bund*.

The first strike took place in 1903, by the Jewish hat makers.

This writer returned from Minsk in White Russia in the summer of 1905, who began to create the organization of the 'S.S.' (Leadership of 'Zionist-Socialist' Labor Movement). Until then the Bund was without competition on the Jewish labor street in Zamość.

The work of the 'S.S.' consisted of distributing literature, you should understand, primarily illegal: pamphlets, brochures, invitations; leading circles, mass meetings, lectures, and we, like the Bund, had our own 'exchange.'

In the Jewish labor movement, a period of contentious debate and ideological discussions began, disputes about the programs, and a struggle for influence over the masses. This, however, did not disrupt the many-branched activities of the struggle. Continuous strikes are launched in the various trades of the ranks of Jewish labor. Better working conditions are negotiated; higher wages; a shorter work day; a recognition of the professional organization; consideration for the Jewish worker, youth, and so forth.

In the revolutionary years of 1905, the days of great turmoil come to all of Russia, and to our Zamość, its Jewish workers were not on the sidelines. When the huge demonstrations took place in Russia, after October 17, 1905 we had an analogous demonstration by the Jewish and Polish socialist and revolutionary organizations.

After the Czarist 'Freedom-Manifesto,' when the black wave of police terror began in Russia, it also did not spare our city. Frightened by the revolutionary movement that had grown, the reaction began to 'constrain,' the movement. Extraordinary circumstances are proclaimed. There are arrests and terror, and in other places, pogroms.

The *balebatim* of Zamość utilize the excuse of the uprising, and desire to retract the improvements in working conditions from their workers that had been negotiated. With the consent of the police, they then organize an attack, with truncheons, against the intelligentsia, who had taken part in the organization of the local Jewish labor movement. This was intended to be a provocation, to elicit a street fight from the ranks of the workers, which would have made it easier for the Czarist police to 'intervene.'

The writer of these lines was among the first who was attacked by this band. When the news of this provocation became known among the workers, they wanted to leave their work, and go out into the streets, but the leadership had immediately oriented itself to the situation, and ordered the workers to restrain themselves and not engage in bloodshed and to engender further provocation.

Afterwards, the attack was brought to the courts, and part of the leaders [of the attack] received up to a month of arrest.

Despite the fact that a number of comrades were compelled to leave the city, because of the increased terror, the work was not disrupted.

The 'S.S.' at that time, released its first own published leaflet, a warning to the leadership. The 'S.S.' released a second leaflet on the anniversary of the Bloody Sunday of January 9, 1906.The leadership of the 'S.S.' were: Chaim Shpizeisen, Iteh Geliebter (daughter of Elkanah Geliebter), and Yaakov Geliebter.

There were strikes and fighting throughout the entire year of 1906. For the tailors and shoemakers by the *Bund*; For the bakers and brush makers, by the 'S.S.'

At the end of 1906, arrests were carried out among the leaders of the movement. The *Bundist* leaders Ashkenazi, Andzheh Huberman, and Yerakhmiel Brandwein were arrested and exiled to Siberia. Fishl Geliebter emigrated to America. From the 'S.S.' Shpizeisen and Iteh Geliebter went to Warsaw.

The work, however, did not cease. New activists arose, who took the place of the departed.

A provocation (instigated by Lejzor Moshe-Sarah's, a brother of Esther Moshe-Yekl's wife), cause the committee to be arrested. The collective was arrested and deported from Poland. Among them, Hirsch Fruchtgaten, who later was the leader of the *Bund* in Chelm, and was killed in the Warsaw Ghetto, and Mendel Epstein, the son of Rabi of the *Neustadt*, and active member of the *Bund*, today in America. This work almost came to a halt.

Those who remained, under no circumstances, wanted to give up their activity, sought other means by which to sustain the movement. The existing library, named for Gedaliah Hoffman was already legalized (we will have the opportunity to discuss this library at many other points). However, this did not create satisfaction. The desire was to transform the library into a community library with a reading room. An attempt was made to open a branch of '*HaZamir*.' This did not succeed. So a division of the literary society was organized, which had its central office in Petersburg. When we finallygot legal permission, the central office of the society was closed, and all of its branches.

In the end, the local activists got legal permission to establish a local culture society, with its own governance. The leadership of this society was: Mordechai Bekher, B. Feder, In addition to these who have been mentioned, the following residents signed the charter: Jonathan Eibeschutz, Schneerson, Ashkenazi, Y. Y. Peretz, and others, all prominent people in the city.

In the year 1911, our comrades Yerakhmiel Brandwein, Chaim Shpizeisen and Herschel Fruchtgarten return from exile, who then take up the work of the society and help to organize it.

In the year 1912, after an extensive amount of effort, the long-dreamed-for local is rented. The library is organized their, which after the death if I. L. Peretz gets the name 'I. L. Peretz Library.'

This library became the spiritual center of modern Jewish Zamość; [it was] the new Bet HaMedrash for the worldly generation. It transformed the broken labor movement. It was here, that the few who managed to save themselves from prison, Siberia, or dispersion, would gather, and remain true to their ideals.

It is here that all the citizenry would spend time. With all the developments of the world; here in friendship, literally idealistically 'fought' with one another, debated, with each person defending his own perception of the truth.

This is the way it existed up to 1914, until the First World War.

## The First Great Demonstration in Zamość in the Year 1905

*Page 613:* *A Portion of the Active People and Members of the Trade Unions in Zamość, Photographed in the year 1917.*

It was after October 17, 1905; after the day in which the Czar of All Russias, Nicholas II, granted the people a 'constitution.' He promulgated the decree for a 'People's *Duma*' (Parliament). An awesome wave of demonstrations cascaded through the entire huge Russian Empire. The revolutionary camp thought of this as a victory, and wanted, through these demonstrations, to celebrate its triumph. Zamość did not stand apart from the other cities of the land, and also here, there was a demonstration. The demonstration was organized by the *Bund* and the P. P. S. (the organization of the 'SS' did not yet exist).

The writer of these lines was invited by the *Bund* to participate in a preliminary council, which took place in the old Christian cemetery, which was the place from which in later years, the railroad tracks to Ludomir were put through. At this council, Naphtali Margalit, Salek Asch, Moshe Epstein, the brother and sister Dzhuba, and others, participated. It was decided that the demonstration would be held on the coming Friday. The gathering place was set near the river (*Tashlikh*), behind the engineering-garden.

Friday morning, the workers gathered at the appointed spot, Jews and Poles. At 10 o'clock, the train of people moved out, with banners and song, over the entire Lubliner Gasse. Schlossgasse, up to the church, and up to the Sztaszitza Gasse. Along the way, S. Ashkenazi, Arnold Ehrenreich, Moshe Goldstein and a number of Poles spoke. When the train came to the row of the covered sidewalks (*Potchinehs*), behind Klossowsky's Pharmacy, it ran into a wall of military forces with their guns drawn and raised. Salek then stuck out his breast and said: '**Shoot!**'

The crowd dispersed. S. Ashkenazi and a number of others were detained, but were released that same day.

Moshe Goldstein, who while marching past the gymnasium, knocked the hat off the head of a gymnasium teacher, was several days later arrested by the gendarmerie, and was immediately sent to Siberia. However, while en route, the amnesty proclamation of the Czar, issued at that time, reached him, and he returned immediately.

## *Bund* and Trade Union Movement in Zamość Between the Two World Wars (1914 - 1939)

*Page 614:* *A Group of Activists at the 'Y. Sh. O.' Peretz-Library and Bund, in Zamość*
*Page 616:* *Committee of 'Zukunft,' the Bundist-Youth Organization in Zamość for 1939.*

In the last years of the First World War political-revolutionary activity, which had been well branched out by the time of the first revolution in Russia (1905 and later), had already been choked off. The entire activity of the democratic-

progressive community work was directed out of the library, where those who had been drawn into the prior revolutionary movement had concentrated themselves.

It was first in the years 1916-1917, during the Austrian occupation, that signs of a renewed political activity became visible; professional worker organizations began to be created, each according to their own trade, and afterwards, a council was created of the trade unions, however, no obvious political activity was carried on, even though the prior active members of the *Bund*, and other organizations, stood at the head of this group.

It was only at the time that Poland became independent, that a lively political activity began, and a strengthening of the professional organizations. Frequent debates, formal sit-down evenings, theater presentations, and other cultural undertakings, then come out on the surface of political Jewish organizations, such as *Bund* and '*Tze'irei Tzion*,' and others.

Those who revived the Bundist movement in Zamość were the comrades Itzik Goldstein (today in Russia), Yerakhmiel Brandwein ( killed by the Nazis in the Minevich Ghetto), Mikh'cheh Levin (today in New York), Salek Leviv ( killed in Russia during the civil war after the revolution), Chaim Shtikh, Mordechai Zwillich, Abish Shpizeisen ( all 3 killed by the Hitler-bandits), Itcheh-Leib Herring, Shia Bin (both in New York), Mendel Sznur, and others.

Under the influence of the Bolshevist Revolution in Russia, the Russian *Bund* created an entity that drew it to Bolshevism, the '*Combund*.' These sentiments also carried over into Poland, where in the ranks of the Bund, such an entity was created, which formed itself as a '*Combund*,' and afterwards went into the Communist Party.

A process of this kind also took place in Zamość. A group of workers, which came out of the local Bund organization had previously created a '*Combund*,' and later, they became the ones who founded the Communist organization in Zamość.

As the Bolshevist army drew near to Zamość in the year 1920, the so-called 'Red Revolution' took place by us. A great number of the Jewish elements who were radical sympathizers were drawn into it. After the 'revolution' failed, a whole array of Bundists were compelled to leave Zamość – some to Russia, some to America.

The *Bund* suffers greatly from this splitting up and from the mood of the times. It is primarily weakened in the professional [sic: trade] movement. The older workers, formerly under the influence of the *Bund*, now become 'independent;' the economic crisis forces them to 'be for themselves,' – they abandon the professional organizations. The activity of the *Bund* in the professional organization diminishes. The communists obtain influence in a whole array of professional trade unions. In the course of a few years up to 1923, the influence of the *Bund* in most unions is entirely eliminated. The leadership, in particular, is in the hands of younger people, radicalized, after the victory of the Bolshevist Revolution in Russia.

In the year 1923, after overcoming the internal '*Combundist*' schism, a renewal of *Bundist* activity begins. Under the influence of the comrade, Hella Ashkenazi, Moshe Mittelpunkt, Mordechai Zwillich, Rachel Korngold, and the writer of these lines, the *Bund* organization is built up again. Once again, the *Bund* makes an effort to become active in the trade union movement.

There were no great successes to talk about during the first years. The principal focus of the *Bund* is placed on Cultural-Social activities. Under the influence of the Bund, the local branch of the Jewish School Organization is established, which founds and directs the Zamość I. L. Peretz School for a number of years; the Peretz Library is passed from 'hand-to-hand,' but is found mostly under the direction of Bundists and their sympathizers; a Drama Circle is created, which is greatly beloved in the city, which helps out its affiliated organizations; with the initiative of the Bund, a commerce-based union is established, the transport workers union, the baker's union, and the socialist hand workers' union. The baker's union and the socialist hand workers' union which plays a very prominent role in native life, election campaigns tot he municipal council, and the community, where the sympathies for the *Bund* grow from one election to the next.

A Bundist-youth organization, '*Zukunft*,' is established, whose leadership is: Herschel Orenstein, Gershon-Henoch Cooper, Yaakov Mandelbaum. There are frequent debates with guests brought in from out of town.

Concerning the sympathies of the Jewish population of Zamość on the eve of the Holocaust, the results of the city council elections of 1939 are characteristic.

Of the 24 councilmen in the city council, at this occasion, 6 Jews were allowed to serve, thanks to the specific 'election-demography,' that had been agreed to, where the Jewish regions received fewer representatives, and an array of villages were incorporated into the city... before this, Jews had between 12-13 representatives in the city council.

The elected Jewish councilmen were all from the socialist camp.

For this election, the *Bund* agreed to a bloc with the Jewish 'left.' This was at the time that the Comintern had abandoned the Polish Communist Party, and the members then grouped themselves into an 'opposition,' in the professional unions. A bloc from the *Bund* professional unions went to this election. Of the 5 elected, 3 were *Bundists* and 2 from the trade unions.

The sixth elected councilman was from the right-wing *Poalei-Tzion*.

## I. L. Peretz in Zamość

*Page 617:* *This picture is from the visit of I. L. Peretz in Zamość, which is described here. In front of the 'Polish House.'*

It was October 1913, this period of time was referred to as '*Prizivzeit*,' when the draft-eligible young people would be called for conscription at the military commission. Peretz came for a visit to his mother, Riveleh, in Zamość.

Thursday evening we, the library-activists, become aware that Peretz has arrived. Immediately, our comrade **Yerakhmiel Brandwein**, whom Peretz already knows from a prior visit, is delegated to discover whether our guest would not be opposed to giving us a lecture. I. L. Peretz agrees to this immediately on the spot.

Not being mindful that all we had was a short Friday in which to formally arrange the lecture, we exert ourselves to make this happen. Ignacy Margolis, the important city citizen exerts himself in the 'Recruitment-Hall,' and approached the '*Powiat-Nachalnik*,' asking him to make an exception and to permit the lecture to take place. The latter gives his permission.

It is Friday – how does one inform the public? However, in the course of numbered hours, the printer Szper gets the placards ready, and they are posted all over the city immediately.

Saturday, during the day, the 'Oazow' cinema is packed with people; young and old have come to listen, among the public were many Hasidic boys and young people. I. L. Peretz then related a number of his folk tales, which had not yet been published. You can appreciate this was done with suitable introductions and special insights, as he could masterfully do. The audience was inspired.

In the evening, Saturday at night, a *Melave-Malkeh* took place at the house of Dr. Y. Geliebter – a singular honor for the guest. This was organized in partnership with the library activists, and the owner of the house. We enjoyed each other's company until late at night. For the most part, this was the evening of final goodbyes with I. L. Peretz, whom they did not see again.

The next day, Sunday morning, before departure, a large crowned gathered at the 'Polish House,' here the young gymnasium student Stash Huberman photographed I. L. Peretz with those who came to see him off. Also, this photograph is one of the last documents of Peretz's final visit to his home town.

# The I. L. Peretz Library in Zamość

*Page 619:* *The leadership of the I. L. Peretz Library in the year 1922 before it was destroyed by a police pogrom. From right to left, standing are: A. Miller, Ph. Topf, Sh. Goldstein, Y. Schiff, Y. Gartenkraut, A. Richtman; Sitting: Y. Brandwein, Y. M. Topf, A. Neimark, L. Finkman.*

I have already mentioned how the I. L. Peretz Library came to be, and became the gathering point for those who got their education and in its day were active in the labor movement. But it is necessary to tell more extensively about this beloved institution, so that this will stand as a memory forever.

These following lines of mine, are being written years later, in the destroyed German city of Stettin, now a part of Poland. I am not yet 'unpacked,' and stand yet again to continue my journey. I am writing from memory, and therefore it is possible that I may omit something, or switch dates.[249]

As is known, Zamość was renown in the wider world for its scholars and learned people, but it was also known for its large and unusual collections of *sforim*[250] and books, which Zamość possessed – both owned by the community and held privately.

The collection of *sforim* of the great *Bet HaMedrash* in the *Altstadt* was an object of awe in the rabbinical world. It used to be told that Rabbis from faraway places would submit questions to Zamość, as to whether it is possible that a certain book might not be found there, or some other responsa, which they needed in order to resolve certain issues.

Apart from the large collection of *sforim*, the community of *Maskilim*, enlightened and free-thinking, for who the *sforim* of the Bet HaMedrash were not satisfying enough, also had a place. [It was a place] where they could obtain that which they deemed missing, and which they desired. – By **David Shifman**, who was the proprietor of a book business, it was possible to find the type of books that the 'Germans' were looking for. Incidentally, this Shifman was the correspondent of 'HaMelitz,' where in Number 21 of 'HaMelitz,' in the year 1878, he published a rather extensive correspondence from Zamość under the title, 'A Tale of Zamość.'

A second place for someone with books was at [the house of] **Goddel Melamed**; in his residence there was a 'Polish Minyan.' This minyan was called this way, because that is where the men in 'short jackets' prayed. In the house of the previously mentioned Goddel, there was found a library of Hebrew books and journals ('HaShakhar,' 'HaMelitz,' and others). The writer of these lines derived much satisfaction from this [collection].

In that time, a follow-on request for a Yiddish book. This follow on request was satisfied at a certain time by **Binyami'tcheh Fruchtman**, the bookbinder (today in America). It was possible to obtain a book on loan from him for a few groschen.

At the end of the 90s, of the past century, there was a serious, secret little library with the brothers **Mordechai** and **Yetcheh Bekher** (Kokeh's). The very first of the Jewish students, sympathetic to the revolution, were the first to make use of this little library.

For a period of time, a tea salon was opened on the third floor of the home of the treasurer, where it was possible to read a Hebrew periodical (there were no Yiddish ones at that time yet), and play chess.

The leader of this was **Shmul'keh Grossbaum** (a son-in-law to David Voveh), the father of the future *Bund* activist Dr. Saul Grossbaum. I was also a patron there, and you understand, clandestinely. This little tea salon, which was a sort of 'club,' was rumored to have been started by the Zionists, which had at that time, begun to organize themselves.

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249 Author's Footnote: Ch. Shpizeisen wrote this article in the year 1950 in Stettin.

250 The writer makes a distinction here, using *sforim* (Hebrew) for books, probably those that have religious content, and *bikher* (Yiddish) for all other books.

In the later years, the entire first decade of the current century [sic: the 20th century], young people were occupied with the 'revolution,' – the various movements took up their time and their interest. They lived within these movements, and it is there that they obtained their reading material.

As I previously mentioned, the failed revolution brought about the establishment of our organization, which was called '**Library Reading-Room**.'

This was possible because, the bottom of the charter was signed by 10 of the most prominent intelligent citizens of Zamość: Jonah-Joshua Peretz; Shmuel Ashkenazi; Yehonatan Eibeschutz, and Schneerson (the last two, son-in-laws of Shmuel-Leibusz Levin). The actual establishment of this library took place in 1912.

Zamość was a city with taste. The library needed to be organized so that it would have a following, meaning, that it should satisfy the pampered Zamość [intelligentsia].

The 'hoi-polloi, after a year of effort, worked out the charter, but it was the young people who got on with running the library, carrying out the necessary tasks, being the real force at that time. Among the active people I will recall: B. Feder, M. Bekher, Y. Brandwein, David Cohen, the writer of these lines, and many others.

A location with 4 rooms was rented, which was furnished with new tables, benches and stools. For the reading room, Russian, Polish, Hebrew and Yiddish periodicals were written. The library was opened. Everyone could get what they wanted, and the success was literally colossal, exceeding all expectations.

Right from the start the library signed up more than 300 members. The budget was placed on sound footing. The library was open every day from 6 to 9 and until 11 in the reading room. This location became the meeting place of the entire young Jewish enlightened intelligentsia. Here was the place that the increasingly knowledgeable segment of the Jewish working class began to get together, who years before had made the first footsteps in the revolutionary movement.

During the Austrian occupation (1915-1916) the library was moved to the house of Avigdor Inlander in the center of the city.

I cannot tell about the occupation period, up to the year 1922, because I was away from Zamość.

In the year 1922, in the time of the revolutionary upswing, the Jewish working class utilized the library as a meeting place. This did not please the Polish authorities of that time. In the year 1923, was closed down by the authorities, as well as the right of appeal.

The books and the inventory were turned over to the control of a selection liquidation commission, which consisted of the following people: Y. Brandwein, Ch. Shtikh, David Cohen, Eliyahu Richtman, Ch. Shpizeisen, and others.

The liquidation commission immediately began to search for a way out, trying to get the library re-opened. Because the prior library leadership, that functioned under the old charter, could not submit an appeal, a fresh charter was submitted, with new signers of older 'loyal' citizens. The charter contained an array of constraints, which the authorities demanded, for example, a member had to be at least 24 years old.

After a year of tribulation, and large expenses, the authorities still did not want to approve the charter. No form of intervention helped.

The 'liquidation commission' faced a critical situation. It had to pay the landlord of the premises for the closed library – and there was no income.

When all attempts to legalize the library on the basis of a local charter produced no result, other means were sought. The liquidation commission decided to legalize the library as a branch of a central institution, which could, following its charters, open a library in the province.

The writer of these lines then traveled to Warsaw to find such a 'central organization.' The 'Culture-League' Society in 'Tz. Sh. O.' did not have a point in their charter that would enable them to open a library in the province. The society for 'Evening Courses for Workers,' however, did have a right to do this, but it opened its branches in those locations where it had its adherents (the 'Society Evening Courses' was under the influence of the *Poalei-Tzion* – leftists), and it was these adherents who managed the library. This movement did not exist in Zamość.

With a recommendation from the writer, Leo Finkelstein, we approached the 'League for the Education of the People,' which stood under the influence of Volkists (Prilutsky's adherents), for this 'League' to take over the library and legalize it as its branch. This society, in fact, had the right to open libraries throughout all of Poland.

After a set of formalities, which lasted several months, the library was opened again in January 1926.

**Moshe Levin** became the Chairman of the society; the librarian accountable to the authorities was **B. Feder**. The library came to life once again. A radio was installed. The library, once again, became the spiritual center and place of rest for a large part [of the people], especially the youth of the city. The Zamość branch of the leadership of the 'People's Education League' was responsible to the authorities, with Moshe Levin at its head. In reality, the library was run by the 'Yiddish School Organization,' ('Y. Sh. O.'). A 'double set of books,' was required to satisfy the authorities.

In 1931 (springtime) the authorities closed down the central office of the 'People's Education League,' and all of its branches. Our library was also sealed off.

The 'People's Education League,' which was the formal organization of the *Volkists*, was in fact a fiction. The *Volkists* has adherents in very few Polish cities. Where they had larger groups. But in all of Poland, there was not a Zamość-like instance, where the authorities had prohibited the opening of a library. In this situation, there were an array of cities with Bund organizations, or communist groups, which were not permitted to open libraries. So, the 'People's Education League' would be approached, who was sympathetic to helping open its branches, with the calculation that those, in time, would be influenced... however the *Volkist* movement did not have the manpower or the apparatus to embrace and really control who came into and what transpired in its branches. The police, however, clearly knew that this 'Central Office, was the 'lightning rod' for all the libraries that the local authorities did not want to have...

Several months passed before the library was re-opened. It became evident that we were standing before a real catastrophe – there was a substantial deficit and Mr. Inlander threatened eviction...

A difficult struggle began to keep the library.

Some time later, the library is shut yet again. A year goes by until it is opened again. This time, as a branch of the central 'culture League,' which was under the influence and direction of the *Bund*. The new statues of the 'Culture League' now did foresee the opening of libraries in the province.

The library, however, was drowned in debt. It was necessary to give up one of the four rooms to the landlord, Inlander; for this reason, the reading room is discontinued.

Once again, the library becomes the great culture-center of our city.

Together with the Jewish community, the Jewish library partakes in the fate of its builders, friends and readers.

* * *

Apart form this Peretz-Library, there were an array of smaller libraries that existed in the city. In the Neustadt, a library and reading room, which went through a series of phases (this is related separately); In the year 1926, the Jewish trade unions also had a library and a reading room; Also, the *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Had a library.

## The Creation of the Yiddish-Secular School Named for I. L. Peretz, in Zamość

*Page 623:* *Board of the Yiddish School Organization in Zamość, 1926*
*From right to left: first row standing: Chaim Shtikh, Chaim Shpizeisen, Zalman-Gershon Gewirtzman, Mordechai Zwillich, David Cohen, Moshe Mittelpunkt; second row sitting: the teacher, Itteh Lazar, Yerakhmiel Brandwein, Gedaliah Jonasgartel, Nekha Rak, Nahum Korngold; last row, on the ground: Meir Sternfinkel, Rachel'leh Morgentstern.*

*Page 624:* *The I. L. Peretz School in Zamość in the year 1927. In the middle from right to left: the teacher Itteh Lazar, the teacher Pearl Wein, board member Chaim Shpizeisen.*

*Page 626:* *Classes 2 and 3 of the I. L. Peretz School in Zamość in the year 1928. From right to left, seated: Leadership- committee member Moshe Mittelpunkt; Leadership member Ch. Shpizeisen; Teachers: Malka Haltz, Dina Rubins, Rivkah Profitker; Leadership-member Mordechai Zwillich.*

At the time when the workers began to organize themselves in order to improve their economic condition, and at the same time also begin to take an interest in community political questions, they felt the lack of simple, elementary education. They saw, that they lacked a great deal by not being able to write and read, to be able to read a book or a newspaper.

The worker, who for the most part came from the poorest sector of the population, could not reach more than the level of a very basic teacher. He studies in a Heder ( and usually this was not of the best sort), from which he took with him the knowledge of a little bit of Hebrew, in order to be able to pray a little form a *siddur*. Most of them did not know the meaning of the words.

The activists of the labor movement therefore had to approach their constituency not to talk about political, economic, and historical materialism, but one had to begin at the beginning, teaching them to read and write. It became possible for the writer of these lines to be involved in playing the role of a teacher in this respect.

In that stormy revolutionary time, during the revolutionary year of 1905, many cities and towns set up evening courses (mostly in secret) and in part of these places, Yiddish day schools for children. In **Ludomir**, the writer of these lines took an active part in the opening of a school in the year 1908.

At the time of the First World War, when Poland was liberated from Czarist rule, and later became independent, Jewish kindergartens were established in an array of cities. Later, the central Jewish School Organization, known by the initials 'Tz.Sh. O.' was established, which not only organizationally encompassed all secular Jewish school institutions, but also stepped up to unify their curricula and the character of these schools, while also supplying the needed material help for the established schools.

In the year 1924, the poet Melekh Ravitch visited Zamość. Through his initiative a group of 'friends' of the secular Jewish schools was founded. This group consisted of the following comrades: **Chaim Shtikh, Rachel Korngold, Chaim Shpizeisen, Gedaliah Jonasgartel, David Cohen**, and others. The group immediately began to carry out a lively program of activity, recruited friends, orgaized the first lectures by D. Neimark (Aryeh), Sh. Mendelsohn, and several months later, opened a branch of 'Tz.S.O.' in Zamość.

At the first general meeting, the former Secretary-General of 'Tz. Sh. O.' comrade Yaakov Patt attended, who on the occasion of that visit, held a lecture on the theme of 'Behind the Shops of the Last Half Century.' At this gathering, the first leadership was selected, which consisted of the comrades: Gedaliah Jonasgartel, Chaim Shtikh, Chaim Shpizeisen, Moshe Mittelpunkt, Yerakhmiel Brandwein, Rachel Korngold, Nekha Rak, Zalman-Gershon Gewirtzman, and David Cohen. The leadership took to the work with great energy, and after a rather short time, the number of members had reached 200, who pais regular membership dues.

The leadership organized a drama circle under the direction of comrade Ben-Zion Zeidner. The drama circle performed many plays (this is separately described). Also, frequent debates were organized, and lectures with speakers from the outside, especially from the membership of the Jewish Literary Society in Warsaw. Apart from the spiritual enjoyment, these undertakings also generated a significant income.

At a conference of an array of 'Tz. Sh. O.' branches in Warsaw in the year 1926, it was decided that for the new school year, a school should be opened in an array of cities, among them, also Zamość.

We began to implement this recommendation. From an array of local undertakings, especially from the drama circle, and also in the local towns, a fund was created in order to be able to open a school.

But it was not so easy for us to find a location of the school. Apart from the fact that there was always a shortage of housing in Zamość, the city was also divided into three parts – *Altstadt, Neustadt* and '*Browar.*' A location was needed that would at the very least lie between the two most important parts of Zamość – the city [sic: *Altstadt*] and the *Neustadt*, where most of the Jewish population lived. It was not possible to obtain such a location. A location suitable for a school was first available in '*Browar*,' in the smallest section of Zamość.

This school location was entirely inaccessible for the children of the Neustadt, which because of their circumstance, and following common sense, should have been the beneficiaries of the Yiddish-secular school. It was also a little too far for the children of the *Altstadt.* Despite this, apart from being used by the 'Browar' children, the school was filled with the children of the city, and a few from the *Neustadt.* It is understood that the school progressed because of the commitment of parents to make use of it, and an ideological relationship to it.

The school developed quite well, and became beloved among the working-class Jewish people. In each successive year, a new, higher class, was opened.

The school brought a new form of Jewish life into the city. There were many presentations by the children, elections by the children, and festivals and parent assemblies.

For this entire time, the leadership thought of, and did not abandon the plan to open a second school, also in the Neustadt, which for the Yiddish-secular school was the right reservoir of students and, indeed, the appropriate social climate for such a school.

It was first in the year 1930, after much effort and struggle with the *Neustadt* authority, which resisted greatly, that such a school was opened in the *Neustadt.*

Let us here recall the exceptional fact, that no Jewish homeowner who had a suitable dwelling wanted to rent his premises for use by the people's school. Only one owner, a Jew, who had already rented the location, under the pressure from the religious-fanatic element of the Neustadt, retracted his deal. In the end, it was necessary to rent space form a Christian....

To our great disappointment, this important institution only survived for 6 years, and was forced to close for lack of financial resources.

The city council, which at that time had a socialist majority, had approved subsidies, later stopped paying the subsidies. The central organization cut down on its help, and the aid from America came less frequently. All our alarm 'SOS' calls did not help... at the end of the year 1931, both schools closed with a large deficit.

Let us here recall those people, who assisted in the hard work of building and sustaining this important institution. Apart from the previously mentioned comrades, there were: Meir Sternfinkel (later the Bund councilman in the city council); Mordechai Zwillich, Nahum Korngold, Yasheh Mendelsohn, Mendel Blumenthal (teacher in the Yiddish-Polish gymnasium) and Tzesha Weiss. All of them are victims of Hitlerism.

Over the years, the following teachers worked in the schools:

The school year 1925-26 – Sonia Gershuni and Moshe Alman (today in Glasgow, Scotland, U.K.);

The school year 1926-27 – Itteh Lazar, Pearl Wein;

The school year 1927-28 – Dina Rubins, Rivkah Profitker, Malka Haltz;

The school year 1928-29 – D. Rubins, R. Profitker, and Esther Mendelsohn;

The school year 1929-30 – R. Profitker, E. Mendelsohn, and Reuven Tzipkin;

The school year 1930-31 – Zissel Fufiska, Brumberg and Shapiro.

It is possible that I have omitted someone from the leadership or from among the teachers.

There was an evening school as part of the school for a number of years, where courses were given for working people. These courses were given by the teachers Itteh Lazar, Dina Rubins, and the leadership members Ch. Shpizeisen and Y. Brandwein.

# The Martyred Teachers of Zamość

*Page 628:* *A trip to the woods by the students of the I. L. Peretz School in Zamość on April 25, 1930 in the Sitaniec Woods.*

*Page 630:* *At the inauguration of the I. L. Peretz School in Zamość in the year 1926. In the middle is the teacher, Sonia Gershuni.*

As a supplement to the work of Chaim Shpizeisen ע"ה, we introduce here further the biographies of the teachers who worked in the Zamość I. L. Peretz School, taken from the Teachers' Yizkor Book, in memory of the teachers and activists of the 'Tz. Sh. O.' schools in Poland, who were killed in the Holocaust. We will follow th order as they are presented in the work of Chaim Shpizeisen, ע"ה.

* * *

**Lazar-Melman Itkeh** – Born into a religious Jewish family in the Lublin area (Piusk – ?), completed the 'Tz. Sh. O.' Teachers Seminary in Warsaw at a very young age. She was a very diligent teacher, full of belief in her work as a teacher, as a mission to the Jewish children. In her last years, she taught in Lodz, in the Medes and Mikholevich School, but before Lodz, she worked in several 'Tz. Sh. O.' schools in the province (**Zamość**, Czestochowa, and others).

Itkeh Lazar belonged to the *Bund*, and did every kind of work that was entrusted to her. She carried out 'skip'-work among the children. Hasidic belief emanated from her, in everything that she did. Every community endeavor was a sort of sacred duty to her. In the ghetto of Lodz and Warsaw she was very active in the underground activities. She took the position of 'courier,' who traveled over the province.

Itkeh Lazar-Melman is mentioned many times in the book by Bernard Goldstein, where he tells about her:

'Comrade Melman, a teacher from the Medes-School in Lodz over the course of many years, was the first to travel from Warsaw to Lodz to acquaint herself with the situation and to establish relationships; it happened that she had sharply critical things to say to the Head of the Lodz *Judenrat*, Rumkowsky, about distributing food products to the children of the schools; she opened school locations, called together the previous teaching personnel, and organized the food-action around the school locations. She traveled to Miedzyrzec, and provided a larger sum of support funds and established direct relationships. In Warsaw, she was active in the illegal Teachers Seminary, in the 'Red Circle;' She also occupied the position of a regional-inspector for the 'Joint.' Comrade Melman was killed with her 12 year-old child in the bunker on Grauetzka Gasse, togther with Emmanuel Ringelblum, and 30 other people.'

Itkeh Lazar-Melman was a prominent teacher in the school network of 'Tz. Sh. O.,' where she taught the younger classes, has a wonderful approach to the children, and was attuned to their mood. She truly thought of her school work as a sacred calling.

* * *

**Profitker Rivkah** – Born in Bialystok in 1905 to working-class parents. In 1917, she enters the first Bialystoker Yiddish-Secular School (*Jugend-Verein*) and finishes in 1920 (the second graduating class of the school). In 1921, she comes to the Jewish Teachers Seminary in Vilna. She belongs to the group of younger seminarians in the first course. She takes good counsel from all of her studies, and distinguishes herself with her good sense and a stubborn commitment to break through all difficulties. She gets her Teaching diploma in the year 1926, together with the rest of the seminarians of the first course.

She begins to work as a teacher in the Yiddish-Secular school. Her first practical work experience is in **Zamość**.

After several years of work in the school, she decided to study further. She had an interest in mathematics and chemistry. She decides to continue her education at the Vilna University. However, in order to enter the university, it is necessary to have a '*Matura*' from a Polish gymnasium. This is no great shortcoming for Rivkah Profitker. She tears through the work in school and enters the eighth class of a Polish gymnasium in Vilna. It does not interest her that the

other students in the class are younger than her, and have an entirely different mentality. She had but one objective for herself – she needs to get a '*Matura*,' so she temporarily has to suffer certain 'inconveniences.' At the end of the school year she gets the '*Matura*.'

The way to the university is now open to her. True, she now has financial difficulties, but the will to advance her education is stronger, and he addresses the problem. Rivkah Profitker doesn't need much to live on, she can get by on a minimum, the most important thing is the university tuition. She will get a little bit of help form home, and the rest she will earn from temporary work in school. And in this fashion, her plan for further education materializes. In 1934 Rivkah Profitker enters the Chemistry faculty of the Vilna University, and at the same time, she takes over the full work of a second class in the Dvora Cooperstein School.

The Polish school-inspector visits Rivkah Profitker's class for the lecture on Polish. She emerges from the visit energized and strengthened: the inspector praised her work very highly.

When the world war breaks out, Rivkah Profitker was on her third class of the University. It was not ordained that she should graduate...

Rivkah Profitker belonged to the Bund. In resonance with her healthy sense of alignment, which was so characteristic of Rivkah Profitker, she was a highly disciplined and committed Bundist. She believes in the concept of the Bund and she conducts 'skip' groups with flame and fire

When the Red Army captures Vilna in 1939, Rivkah can no longer find any air to breathe, she flees, since she can no longer remain in Vilna, and she comes back to her home city of Bialystok. Here, she is killed during the period of the ghetto.

Ph. Melmarovich

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**Tzipkin Reuven** – In the school year 1940-1941, when the Soviet authority in Vilna did a re-organization of the schools, I was transferred to the '*Mefitzei Haskala*' school, where Reuven Tzipkin became the director. This was some person; truly, it is rare to encounter someone with all these virtues: a brilliant pedagogue, and a wonderful friend at work. He possessed a great deal of knowledge and much culture. That year, everyone made an extra effort to please the new authorities, but it had rather minimal effect, doing their modest, serious and proper work, which produced wondrous results. He was still young at that time, but he had in his own personal control teachers older than himself, and of a different cut; in this respect, he showed himself to be not only a brilliant educator of the children, but also of the teachers – there was harmony in the workplace – and only because of the tact of the teacher, Tzipkin.

On September 6, 1941 we were driven into the ghetto – into the few small streets, thousands of people were squeezed in. We lay in the yards, one on top of another, because the houses were still locked and sealed at that time, after being chased out of the houses in the day of the known 'provocation.' A day later the domiciles were torn into, and really lived there. On the first day of the ghetto, I had the opportunity to squeeze myself in under a roof. Larger majority stood a whole night in the rain in the yard. (This was on the Szczarszun Gasse 7). In the middle of the night, I heard how the teacher Tzipkin comforted his little daughter (Faygeleh), who was crying. I took them in with me, under the roof – that means, we met up again.

He did not work in the schools in the ghetto. He went to work at the Vilna railroad station – at the train. He received a '*lebensschein*,' and thanks to that he saved himself from all of the decrees with is wife and child. I was among the group that began to register the children in the ghetto-schools – the authorities called them *'kinder-pflege Number 1*.'

The teacher Tzipkin was in the ghetto up to the liquidation of the Vilna ghetto. If there were circumstances that took him away from the ghetto, I am unaware of them. I had heard that he was in **Kloga** (the extermination place of the Vilna Jews) and whether he was killed in that camp, or in another one – I do not know. He remained in the eastern lands, where one can find the common graves of the most beautiful and the best sons of Vilna.

Sima Ligumsky

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**Brumberg-Gavenda Miriam** (Marila) – Born in Lodz in 1980.[251] In 1914, with the onset of the First World War, the family moved to Swienzian, near Vilna, the hometown of her father, Abraham-Ze'ev Brumberg. A jew who was a merchant, and at the same time a great community activist, he became the leader of the Swienzian Jewish community, during the years of the German occupation, respected not only by the Jews, but also by the non-Jewish population.

The Brumberg family, no matter how tragic and ironic it should echo in the hindsight of the terrifying Hitler-epoch, was killed by the Bolsheviks: the father, together with 2 of his sons, Shimon and Henryk, were killed by them on May 2, 1919; Marila and the youngest brother were killed in Russia during the time of the Second World War, deep in Soviet Russia. Only two of the six children remained alive.

Marila Brumberg got her first education in Swienzian in the Yiddish school. She ended an eight-grade gymnasium in Vilna, and later graduated university in literature and history. In Vilna, Marila Brumberg always maintained a relationship with the circle of Jewish teachers, and followed the development of Yiddish-secular education with a special interest.

After finishing university study, Marila took a special course to obtain a diploma to be a teacher in a *Volksschule* or a middle school.

She began her teaching career in Swienzian. She also worked in the 'Tz. Sh. O.' school in **Zamość**. In the Jewish gymnasium of Sofia Markovna Gurevich in Vilna, and in the beginning of the Second World War, again in the Yiddish school in Swienzian. For a short while, she worked in the Medes-Sanatorium in Miedzieszin near Warsaw.

By nature a lively, animated and always happy-singing person, she had intrinsic qualities to be not only a teacher, but also a leader and a true friend of the children, who literally cleaved to her, and loved her like a sister and a friend. She integrated herself into the atmosphere of the sanatorium in an exceptional manner.

At the beginning of the Hitler-war, Marila and her husband Shmuel Gavenda, returned to live in Swienzian, which was occupied by the Soviet military. There, she gave birth to a child, and when the Germans drew close to Swienzian, she, and her husband and newborn child in arms – went deep into Russia; just short of three years of wandering, plodding and suffering, she died of an illness in Tashkent.

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**Blumenthal Mendel** (Miska) – Younger brother of Nachman Blumenthal, born on December 14, 1899 in Borszczow, completed the gymnasium in Stanislavov – afterwards the university in Lemberg (philosophy and mathematics). Lived a longer time in Warsaw, where he added to his knowledge and skill in pedagogy. He was a teacher in the Yiddish-Polish gymnasium in Grodno and in **Zamość**, where he directed, at his own initiative, circles for Yiddish literature, and also organized dramatic studies by the younger and older students; directed the city theater in Zamość, instituted folk songs and fragmented scenes form Yiddish-dramatic works. A gifted portrait artist in general – and very friendly, he could gather about him circles of intelligentsia, and ordinary people. He was the vice-chairman of the leadership of the Jewish School Organization in Zamość, where he worked for the I. L. Peretz School, not to mention his position in the Yiddish-Polish gymnasium. The activists of 'Tz. Sh. O' in Zamość, who are still living, speak of him as if he were a *lamed-vovnik*,[252] a loyal school and culture activist.

Before the Hitler-war, Miska Blumenthal worked under the oversight of Yitzhak Gitterman and Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum in 'Tz.K.B,' the central aid society for bank loans from the 'Joint,' in Warsaw. He published articles in the bulletins of the 'Tz.K.B.' and took part in the 'literary pages,' a short time, he worked at the Medes-Sanatorium.

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251 This seems to be a transposition error. Likely the intent was th write 1890.

252 From the Hebrew, *lamed-vov*, which had a numerical value of thirty-six. The reference is to an apocryphal thirty-six righteous, anonymous men, whose life is the reason that God continues to let the world exist.

In the war years of 1939-1941, he worked in the curia of the Soviet school system in Lutsk (Volhynia), leading the statistical division. He took part in organizing help and self-help during the time of the German occupation. He was killed, apparently, on October 22, 1941, during the first '*aktion*' in Lutsk.

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**Grossbaum Shaul** – Born in 1890 in Zamość. His father Shmuel was an educated man, a free-thinker, his uncle, his mother's brother, was Fishl Geliebter, a familiar activist in New York, and director of the education committee of the Workman's Circle. Shaul Grossbaum received a secular education and upbringing; he studied Jewish subjects in Brisk, which is where his father came from. In his young years, Sh. Grossbaum was torn along with the revolutionary storm, he comes into a new world of Yiddish language and literature. He is threatened by a political trial and even before the First World War, he flees to Switzerland, where he turns to the circles of the political emigration. With enormous patience and aggravation, he studies medicine at the University of Bern. A couple of years after the First World War he returns to Poland, accompanied by a notarized certificate of examination and obtains permission to practice [medicine] in Poland.

In 1928-1930 Sh. Grossbaum was a doctor in the Medes-Sanatorium near Warsaw. For a period of time, he discharged the duties of director of the sanatorium. After leaving the Medes-Sanatorium, he practiced a time in Garvolin (near Warsaw), and later he settled in Zamość. Here, he was active in the community. He was the chairman of TOZ and was selected as a councilman in the community on the *Bund* party ticket.

At the start of the Hitler-war, Dr. Grossbaum, together with many Jews, left Zamość and took up residence in the city of Ludomir (over the Bug [River]}. When the Germans later captured Ludomir, Dr. Grossbaum, together with his wife, were killed during the first pogrom in September 1942.

About his work in the Medes-Sanatorium, Lyuba Kantorivich-Gilinsky tells: 'Dr. Grossbaum was a modest, knowledgeable man of high ethical stature. He remained loyal to the ideals and principles of his youth, to the last days of his life. In his commitment and love for the children, he worked harmoniously with the personnel of the Medes-Sanatorium. Everyone had great respect for him, for his idealistic character traits. In his work, he showed fundamental skillful qualifications and a great deal of community responsibility.'

# A Community Chronology of Zamość

The following overview had been put together on the basis of more than 50 excerpts from the *Lubliner Tageblatt*, for the years 1926-1928. In this newspaper, correspondence from Zamość was published from time-to-time, that was sent in by Yaakov Neimark. Under the title of '*Zamość Leben*,' or '*News from Zamość*,' the correspondent would communicate a variety of events in Zamość. It is from this correspondence that we extract, first and foremost, the **community news** of the city. In that selection, we have made no distinction, as to which is group [news] and legal [news]. As most of these excerpts have no date associated with them, we have left those without comments. In any event, they occur, as we have said, between the years 1926-1928.

We have not sorted these news items according to issues, areas, and community groups. They are presented just as they were sent in the correspondence. Because dates are missing on these excerpts, they are not given in chronological order.

## Regarding I. L. Peretz Gasse in Zamość

*Page 635:* *The summer half-colony of TOZ in Zamość in the year 1934.*

Today, we have a large majority of councilmen in the city council, who think more or less in radical terms, and have an understanding for the cultural needs of the Jewish populace. For this reason, it is high time to raise the question about memorializing in a prominent way the name of our great folk poet, the scion of Zamość, I. L. Peretz, who was born and raised in Zamość.

We have memorialized him up till now, by naming 3 cultural institutions after him. But many other cities and towns in Poland are doing this. We, the residents of Zamość, Peretz's townsfolk, must exert ourselves to have one of the nicest streets in Zamość, where the Jews live, named after I. L. Peretz.

It is already two months since the new city council took up its position, but the Jewish councilmen seem to have completely forgotten to put this on the daily agenda. Warsaw, the city where Peretz was creative, and lived his last years of his life, has already, some time ago, made a proposal about naming a street after him, but was defeated only because of the majority of Endekists. It is different here in Zamość, where we have a certain majority: Out of 24 councilmen, there are 12 Jews, and it is certain that the P. P. S. representatives will support the proposal, and in this way, there will be more than a two-thirds majority in favor of the proposal. An obligation therefore lies on the Jewish councilmen without distinction regarding their party affiliation, immediately to submit [a proposal], and to energetically see to the passage of such a proposal, because it is high time.

(Yaakov Neimark, '*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 230, October 1926)

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...there is vigorous discussion in the city, that the Zamość community will be disbanded, and there will be an end to the chaos that reigns in the district.

... in the city, one feels the elections to the treasury for the ill very strongly, which will take place on the 19th of the month. Mass meetings are being organized on the side of the workers, at which the audience discusses issues quite amicably. Separate slates are being run in this election by '*Poalei Tzion*,' (Right), '*Bund*,' '*Hitakhdut*,' under the name of the Democratic Zionist Bloc, '*Poalei Agudat Israel*.' In opposition, the employers (Jewish) a substantive slate was put forward.

.... the native Jewish co-educational gymnasium obtained the sole right, and by implication, it is already understood, that it will be able to issue '*Matura*' designations to its students. In honor of this happy occasion, the gymnasium is organizing a large celebration in the garden of the gymnasium on Sunday the 12th of this month, during the day, and an evening of dance.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 136, June 14, 1927)

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...at a general meeting of the Jewish Humanistic (co-educational) Gymnasium, the councilman, Mr. Geliebter came out against ignoring Yiddish and Judaic studies in the gymnasium, and in general against the spirit that is in control there, a spirit of a tendency to an education that is assimilationist, which seems to satisfy the school authorities. He put the entire responsibility for this on the director, Mr. Jakubowski. The parents then decided that for the coming school year, to broaden the Jewish studies, and in general, pay greater attention to the nationalist upbringing of the children. The director, Mr. Jakubowski drew the appropriate consequences from this decision, and submitted his resignation. The board of the gymnasium accepted the resignation.

....Sunday, elections took place to the Zionist Congress. The result was the following: 25 places were received by the Zionist-Socialist Bloc; 16 places are received by 'Hitakhdut;' 4 – 'Al HaMishmar;' 1– Revisionism. 'Mizrahi' and 'Et Levanot' – nothing.

...the division of '*Linat Tzedek*' from the *Altstadt* decided to build a convalescent home in Krasnobrod. To this end, a place is being actively sought for the building, which will be found in the woods. The convalescent home will be for the poor Jewish sick, and will be made ready in time for the summer of 1928.

... at the last sitting of the town council, the issue of parceling out city property was taken up, and dividing them into shares... for a small number of places, there are already many bidders. Also, the *Volksschule*, named for I. L. Peretz near the Yiddish School Organization, is striving to acquire a place to build a building for the school.

... the native Jewish laborers and their leadership on Thursday declared a protest strike of 3 hours against the death sentence handed down against Sacco and Vanzetti.

... the council of the trade unions approached the Magistrate with a demand to set aside land from the municipal tracts, to build a house for the trade unions.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' August 16, 1927)

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... the native TOZ division... is, in fact, the most active of our societies in the city. During the summer season, of the past year, 2 half-colonies were opened for children: one in the *Neustadt*, and one in the *Altstadt*. This week, the first session is already ending, and 65 children are being sent home from both colonies, and 75 new children are taking their place...

...In the village of Dlugy-Kant near Jozefów, the TOZ division rented a special building, where a children's colony was organized for 28 children, and is under the direction of Mrs. Wurst. The children are fed 5 times a day, also, each child had a separate bed in which to sleep.

...ten children suffering from lung ailments were sent by TOZ to Wiszniowa-Gora (near Lodz) to the sanatorium of the Lodz TOZ. Ten children were sent to Otvotzk.

... the local division has in mind, in short order, to create an advisory position in the city for pregnant women, and a 'Drops of Milk' program. Both institutions are needed by our city.

...the *Hevra-Kadisha* of Zamość has a *Pinkas*, which is about two-hundred years old, and from an historical and ethnographic standpoint, this *Pinkas* is of colossal value. It had been in the custody of the recently deceased *Gabbai*

of the Hevra, Mr. Emmer. Immediately after his death, the *Pinkas* disappeared, and we had given up on finding it. Suddenly, we find out that Messrs. Y. Goldgraber and Y. Weintraub have purchased the *Pinkas* from the deceased *Gabbai's* son-in-law, Mr. Hilf, for 200 gulden, which he was then carrying as a debt. The community found out about this, and sent a warning letter, to the previously mentioned two gentlemen, that they are to return the *Pinkas*. The latter, indeed, returned the *Pinkas*, but not to the community, but to Mr. Margolis.[253]

...the local Magistrate opened a children's colony in Krasnobrod, where children from the local 'higher' schools are sent to be healed. This past Sunday, 28 Jewish children were, indeed, sent there.

...on Saturday, July 28, our city was visited by the engineer, Mr. Reiss, and emissaries of the 'Palestine Workers Fund.' At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, a festive reception as held in the chamber of the city council. Greetings were offered by the chairmen of: *Poalei Tzion* (councilman M. Herman); Wiltos (P. P. S. ); Bankovisky (Tur); Tz. K.. Geliebter (Zionist Organization); B. Rosen (*Hitakhdut*); Sh. Engel (Teaching Personnel); Abraham Fekher (*HeHalutz*); B. Dinerman ('*Freiheit*'). The guest spoke on the theme of 'The Role of the Jewish Worker in the Building of the Land of Israel.' On the following day, an [sic: fund-raising] action took place that produced satisfying results.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 194, August 19, 1928)

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... it is now more than two weeks that a sharp strike has broken out among the men and women garment workers. The workers demanded raises in pay in the amount of 100, 75, 50 and 25 percent. In the course of 24 hours, the workers had to give a reply, and in apposition, the workers have walked off the job. In a number of workplaces, strikebreakers have been brought in. This has caused riots in several workplaces. The authorities began to intervene, and arrested a number of labor leaders, of which 2 continue to be imprisoned to this day. The City Elder proposed his compromise at the arbitration, and even proposed to the owners of the larger factories that they should give the demanded increase. The trade unions quit that arbitration by the City Elder. Negotiations then took place between both sides, currently without results. One nevertheless hopes that the strike will come to an end in the next immediate days, which had elicited so much bad blood.

... the week of holiday is being proclaimed by TOZ as a week for propaganda and gatherings. Speeches will be given on an array of medical and hygiene questions. Mr. Malkin, the well-known activist has also been invited, who will speak on the subject of 'From the 'Twelve' to the 'Eleven.'' (Romen Rolan).

...this week, the local P. P. S. organization called a conference of the socialist parties, such as '*Poalei Tzion*' (Right), *Bund*, and others. The question of a boycott of the 'Fuchs' chocolate firm was discussed. It was decided to carry this out in Zamość.

...the news about having Jewish artists, and such as Ida Kaminska and Sigmund Turkov, come and visit our city with their ensemble made a good impression, since it has been a very long time since such a Jewish troupe has been to [entertain] us. Despite the fact that Zamość had a sufficiently large theater, and a Yiddish theater following, these Jewish artist skip over the city. The reason for this is incomprehensible to us.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 230, October 3, 1928)

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The local district legislature, at its last meeting on the 27th of the prior month, decided to subsidize the branch of the TOZ, with 200 gulden, for its activities in the area of making the Jewish populace healthy. This is the first time that a Jewish society in general, and TOZ, in particular, was being subsidized by the local legislature.

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253 A second account of this event is also given in an excerpt from the Zamośćher *Stimme*. See Page 343.

...the beginning of TOZ-week was inaugurated with a speech by Dr. Hirschenhorn (Lublin), in the beautiful hall of the local Rathaus, on the theme of 'Health Problems Among the Jews.' The large hall was filled to overflowing with masses of people from all walks of life in the Jewish community, who came to hear the speech of the one-time doctor from Zamość.

...Friday morning, the well-known poet, Z. Segalovich came to Zamość, at the invitation of the editorial staff of the *Zamośćher Stimme*. In the evening, the poet, after a warm greeting by the brother of the late poet, I. L. Peretz, – Jonah Joshua Peretz, read a speech on the theme: 'The Poet, Reader, Critic,' and presented a number of his most recent creations. Masses of listeners filled the hall of the Rathaus, and reacted the poet with heartfelt ovations. During the day, accompanied by several co-workers, he visited a whole array of historical locations, general and Jewish, which have a relation to Peretz, and the Enlightenment era.

... the strike of the men and women tailors in Zamość, which went on for such a long time, ended this week, with the employers giving a raise. Also, the two labor leaders of the trade unions who were arrested as responsible for the riots that took place between the workers and the employers were released under the fine one hundred gulden apiece, and it is interesting that the prosecutor had originally demanded ten thousand gulden.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 239 October 15, 1928)

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...the local *Bund* organization sent the *Bund* officer Mr. Yerakhmiel Brandwein as a delegate to the funeral of the beloved labor leader Beinish Mikhalevich who died in Warsaw, as well as a letter of condolence to the Tz. K.

..last week after the murder of a brother in the Krasnystaw jail, where the provocateur Hochman murdered the communist Zaltsman, death notices were posted late at night on the streets of the city. Because the notices were not legal, the police tore them down. A policeman stopped the young N. Garfinkel, who was passing by, suspecting him of being the one who was hanging up the placards, and therefore, was detained for a number of days in jail, and charges were filed against him.

...Sunday and Monday, a circle conference of *Keren Kayemet* will take place by us. For this purpose, the representatives from the Land of Israel, Mr. Meir Haezrachi and A. Hartzfeld, will travel here. Significant preparations are being made also for the existing fund-raising campaign for *Keren Kayement* here in the city.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 258 November 6, 1928)

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In the past week, a circle advisory meeting was held by *Keren Kayemet* activists... the local committee took on a pledge of 8000 gulden for the year 1929.

...in connection with the 10th anniversary of Poland's independence, a whole array of celebrations took place, in which the Jewish populace took part. In the houses of worship, special services were held in honor of the day. In the synagogue, a special service was held, where issues of the day were addressed by Mr. J. Peretz, and the Rabbis. The City Elder made a special visit to the synagogue.

... towards evening, everyone participated, for the poor and especially for the Jews, in a kosher afternoon meal. The Jewish community gave out a 'bonus' of coal and wood for the Jewish populace that was without means.

...at the last meeting of the advisory council and the leadership of the community, a decision was taken: to inscribe the 10th anniversary of Poland's independence in the 'Gold Book,' of *Keren Kayemet*, and to send telegrams of congratulations to President Moszczicki and Marshall Pilsudski, ans well as an announcement to the populace which was released.

...the local Rabbi, Blum, at the meeting of the community, protested against the decision to also play the *HaTikvah* in the synagogue at the time of prayer services. He demanded that his protest be formally recorded.

('*Lubliner Tageblatt*,' Number 267 – 1928)

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...the society, '*Linat Tzedek*,' has already walked up to the initiative of creating a fund for building a sanatorium for poor, sick Jews in Krasnobrod. The first action has already been crowned with success. 1500 zlotys have been collected.

...also the *landsleit* of Zamość in America have not forgotten, and have sent in support in the amount of $175.00 for the poor for the holidays, which, along with the locally raised monies, distributed among the needy populace.

...the Jewish district worked out an increase in the Budget for the current year. The budget comes to 30,000 zlotys, instead of the prior amount of 12,000 zlotys.

...at their meeting the Jewish conscripts, who serve in the native units, voted some eighty in favor and 6 opposed, not to take advantage of the special holiday kitchen, provided especially for them, by the district. The motive behind this was, that if they accepted this offer, they would not receive permission to travel home.

...at the occasion of the 10th anniversary of '*HeHalutz*,' the local '*HeHalutz*-Organization' arranged a 'Stilovi' in the theater on the Seventh Day of Passover, a grand festive academy. Apart from speeches and greetings from councilman Tz. K.. Geliebter (Zionist elements in the city council and the community), Morgenstern (Poalei-Tzion), Rubinstein (Hitakhdut), and Yitzhak Fuchs from Warsaw, there also was an artistic program. Scenes were put on from the works of I. L. Peretz, Ch. N. Bialik and also singing by a choir.

(1928)

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...this past week, after a long recess, a sitting of the community took place...the issue concerning ritual slaughter was vacated. It was decided to approach the authorities that they should disqualify Rabbi Blum, since he does not possess the appropriate qualifications...at the same time, a protest resolution was passed against the pogroms in Rumania.

...the plenum of the city council struck down the name changes for the streets proposed by the education commission for street name change. The name of **Rosa Luxembourg** was taken off the list. A street to be named for I. L. Peretz was settled, and a street to be named for the creator of Esperanto, Dr. Zamenhof.[254] The Jewish councilman, Elias Epstein was elected as the representative of the Zamość city council in the election committee (to the Sejm).

...the native landsleit from America sent $75.00 for the Yiddish School Organization, for the Yiddish *Volksschule*.

...the local Poalei-Tzion (Right-wing) arranged a festive academy in the hall of the city council in memory of their leader Ber Borokhov. Mr. Herman and Mr. Feilshako (Warsaw) gave speeches, as well as Kazansky from the P. P. S.

...the Magistrate has finally opened a kitchen for the unemployed. The Jewish unemployed, who do not wish to take advantage of the kitchen because of ritual concerns, can obtain products that are uncooked.

...the local Jewish Humanistic Gymnasium arranged a Hanukkah presentation. Most of the numbers were either in Yiddish or Hebrew. (Among them, two songs: '*Mai Koh Mashma Lon ?*' and *'Oyfn Pripitchuk Brennt a Fyerel*'), conducted by Professor Blumenthal.

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254 Ludovic Lejzer Zamenhof (1859-1917) was born in Bialystok, Poland. The choice to honor him, is not because he was a native son of Zamość, but rather because he was a prominent Polish person..

...The First of May did not pass here particularly quietly. Already, by April 30 at night, the police began to chase the walking public home, and arrested a few. The city council had decided to hang out a red flag on the tower of the magistrate's building, with the inscription, 'Long Live May 1st!' Also the Magistrate did not dit at all, and all communal institutions were closed for that day. Several days before May 1st, there were negotiations between *Poalei Tzion* (Right), P. P. S. and the Bund and the trade unions to find ways to have a general demonstration, but we satisfied ourselves by doing nothing.

...The P. P. S. and Poalei-Tzion sponsored May-Academies.

...Mr. Zygmunt Lev, the well-known artist of the Hebrew theater, is visiting our city. He will be appearing in a number of interesting evening recitations.

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...the city is strongly abuzz with the new Rabbi, who several days ago, came back, traveling here to assume the Zamość rabbinical seat. A great difference of opinion reigns in the city, because there are three sides; the side of the Podembitzer Rabbi Blum who actually occupies the rabbinical seat, has the smallest number of supporters, but it has been possible for several stubborn *Dozors* of the native area to push through this candidate.

Confirming the Rabbi took place at a sitting where there was not even a quorum, and paying no mind to the protests of all the sides. Whether from the side of the Agudah, and orthodox *Dozors*, or the side of the opposition, who in its time wanted to pressure a move to the 'vote' to give the Rabbi an open brief. Despite this, the Podembitzer Rabbi did not want to acknowledge this issue, and has now arrived by travel. The opposition went to the City Elder, about the impropriety of the election, but without result, and it appears that the question went from his time up to the highest administrative tribunal. The protagonist of the Rabbi was the famous eater of Jews, Khmursky. The argument of the lawyer about the leadership of the Zionists and Communists in the city, who, in general, don't want any Rabbi at all, elicited a great deal of aggravation from all walks of the Jewish populace. The administrative tribunal ruled that the Rabbi must take the rabbinical seat, and is entitled also to remuneration for the entire time that he has been approved by the community.

On the Sabbath, when the Rabbi, participated in prayer at the synagogue for the first time, a senior member of the police department ( *pshodovnik* )was present.

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...the city council, at its last plenary session, took up a protest resolution against the legal project of the Endekists of the election ordinance committee to the communal institution, which is currently being deliberated in the Sejm. The proposal was presented by councilman Mr. Herman, and was passed by a significant majority.

...in the budget for the year 1927, it was finally possible for the Jewish councilmen to secure demanded sums for Jewish institutions: TOZ – 500 zlotys; TOZ Children's Home (which is currently under consideration to be built) – 3000 zlotys; 'Linat Tzedek,' – 300 zlotys; 'ld Age Home,' – 2500 zlotys; And the so-called (Jewish Academies) – 300 zlotys; Yiddish Gymnasium – 700 zlotys; I. L. Peretz School adjacent to the Yiddish School Organization – 1500 zlotys; Evening courses by 'Y. Sh. O.' – 1000 zlotys; Jewish Library – 600 zlotys. It was also decided to open an ambulatorium in the *Neustadt*, where the needy Jewish population lives. It is necessary to point out, that according to the last statistics of the city ambulatorium, more than two-thirds who take advantage of the ambulatorium, are Jews.

...the '*Kadima*' School approached the city council with a request for a subsidy. Councilman Herman came out against this, showing that this school calls itself Polish-Hebrew and neither Yiddish studies or Yiddish are pursued there, and therefore, the city council must not under any circumstances offer it a subsidy.

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*Page 641:* *Students and Teachers of the Yiddish Gymnasium in Zamość (1937), Standing on the Steps of the Entrance to the Gymnasium Building, Owned by the Community.*

...the local Yiddish coeducational gymnasium had its first graduation this year. The '*Matura*' examinations produced the following results: the entire complement of students that were admitted to take the examinations, passed them, these being the students: Freida Diament, Chana Zaltsman, Miriam Nissenbaum, and Pearl Ehrlich, and the student, Moshe Shapiro.

...in the state gymnasium for women, named Maria Konopnitska, *Maturas* were received by the students: G. Bernstein, H. Brokh, Chana Haltz, B. Fuchs, Ch. Zimmerung, B. Kilstein, A. Mandelbaum, Ch. Stern.

...in the state gymnasium for men, named for Jan Zamoyski, the following students received '*Maturas*:' Berish Goldog, Israel Goldvarg, Pinchas Wahrman, Yitzhak Mendelson, Israel Ruf.

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The Magistrate took up a decision to name one of the streets in Zamość 'I. L. Peretz Street.' in order to memorialize the name of the great Yiddish folk-poet I. L. Peretz in his own home town.

...the newly elected Magistrate in Zamość, which has a leftist majority, decided at its last sitting, to give the Volksschule that is a branch of the School-Organization a one-time subsidy of 900 zlotys and to put into the annual budget a separate subsidy of 2500 zlotys. It is worth emphasizing that the Yiddish Volksschule in Zamość is developing very well, and has a good reputation in the city.

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At the last sitting of the city council, and interesting incident occurred between the councilman, attorney Czarniecki, 'friend of the Jews,' and councilman Ch. Herman (*Poalei Tzion,* right) regarding the point of the daily roster of public work. Lawyer Czarniecki came out against the socialist magistrate and the way public work was allocated. He came out against the day listings, demanding that the work be given over to accord, and told how he personally had seen how a Jewish worker was conveying a load of soil by taking 30 unnecessary steps, and time is idled away at work. In response, councilman Herman spoke up, and disclosed the real motive of the city watchdog, who did not take kindly to having Jewish workers work on public jobs.

...As conveyed to me by the labor leaders, today, 33 percent of the laborers, out of the entire force working on municipal jobs, are Jewish. In proportion, this is a satisfying ratio. The relationships between the Jewish workers and the Polish ones is sufficiently friendly.

... the leadership of the Yiddish school organization decided to build a building for the school. To this end, it will be approaching the magistrate about a location for the structure. It is intended to raise the funds required to accomplish this purpose from the American *landsleit*. Also, TOZ has in mind to construct its own building as a 'Children's Home,' which it is thinking of founding, [since this is] a place that is needed, perhaps the Magistrate will donate a location. The sum that is needed to erect the building is in the hands of the local TOZ – this is a sum of between six and seven thousand zlotys.

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... Zamość has always been a city with original ideas, and also this time, the local *Neustadt Hasidim* came up with a novelty: it irritated them that the *Neustadt* Public Library, named for Sh. Ettinger, had instituted an evening on Friday night, and so they decided that they would all sign up as members of the library, hoping thereby that the young people would not be rude enough to at least not violate the Sabbath, during their evening sojourn at the library. In this fashion, the public library acquired a very handsome number of additional patrons.

... Through the initiative of *HeHalutz*, and *Poalei Tzion*, an association was created for the working class in the Land of Israel. At this time, the association numbers more than 100 members.

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...the current year Rosh Hashana also did not pass without incident here. The first day of Rosh Hashana cast a terror on the Jewish residents of the suburb of 'Browar' because of an incitement to a blood-libel. This arose from the fact that after the noon hour, a Christian employee of the shoemaker Shmuel Eiler came to him with his 6 year-old little sister, leaving her to play in the yard, and himself having gone inside to greet the shoemaker. Coming out of the house, he did not encounter his little sister. The Christian immediately raised a cry, and a large crowd of Christians gathered around him, who shouted that the Jews hid the child to be used for ritual purposes. Several policemen with a senior officer at their head reconnoitered the entire yard, and the child was not found.

On the morning of the second day, a 'miracle' occurs, and a Christian from a nearby village, who was passing through, hears that a child is being sought, and tells that yesterday towards evening a Christian child blundered into that location, which indeed, as it turns out, was the lost child. The police immediately freed the shoemaker, and simultaneously, the fear of serious unrest dissipated.

....at a prior sitting of the city council, the proposal for a motor transport company, to be granted a concession to implement a line between the city and the suburbs, was taken under consideration. The city council with a large majority, decided to give this mentioned company the concession. Because of this decision, the coach drivers, which consists only of Jews, will suffer a great deal, because the motor connection will deprive up to 50 poor Jewish of a livelihood. Characteristically, apart from one right-wing Poalei Tzion member, a manual worker, and 3 communists, all the remaining Jewish councilmen came out in favor of the concession.

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This month, through the local TOZ branch, two half-colonies were opened in the city and the *Neustadt*. About 70 children will be accommodated in the half-colonies, where they will be given meals three times a day, and will find themselves under the supervision of pedagogically trained personnel. Also, a large number of children will be sent to Cuzmir. Additionally, weak children will be sent to Otvotzk and to Dembina.

A festive anniversary party was held on Sunday, July 1, at a specially prepared garden plot, at the day-care home for the children of TOZ. The children put on many numbers, excerpts form songs, etc.

Sunday the 23rd of the prior month, a celebration took place at the Yiddish Gymnasium in honor of the first graduation. Many guests were invited to the celebration, and among others, the Chairmen of the educational authority, Yiddish culture institutions, etc. All conveyed their greetings, including the director of the government Men's Gymnasium, Mr. Levitsky, who praised the high pedagogic plane of the Yiddish Gymnasium.

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— The manager of the estates of Khorovyeh Zamoyski that are found in our area sent the local '**Linat HaTzedek**' Society a sum of 5000 (five thousand) gulden, for the construction of a sanatorium in Krasnobrod for the needy Jewish sick

— Finally, the district authority confirmed the decision of the city council about changing the names of a row of streets in our city, in the following manner: instead of *Buzhnicza* – I. L. Peterz; *Juden-gasse* – Dr. Ludovik Zamenhof.

— The recital artist, Mr. **Zygmunt Lev** had a great success here with us, with his sparkling recitation evenings. He came out up to 5 times with his rich repertoire, and he is now beginning to an array of theater performances. The first thing that is going to be performed is Z. Segalovich's drama, 'The Wall.' The premiere took place on Saturday June 2.

— In New-Zamość [sic: *Neustadt*] one is still used to carry on in the old manner. So, in this manner, since there is still a '*Gemilut-Hasadim*' Bank there, the activists called together a general legal review meeting after 18 months of its existence. The reason for this, is that the treasurer had not provided any disbursements...in the bank review no disbursements at all were uncovered...

— A chess club can be found in our city in the 'Culture League.'

— The councilman, Eng. **Moniek Goldstein** (elected by the radicals) who entered the city council via the Jewish-Democratic Bloc, sent in a letter of resignation, in which he gave the reason for his resignation as being personal circumstances. In his place, **Hirsch Zwerin** was installed, from New-Zamość.

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— The opposition of the recently, not-long-ago installed Rabbi, Mr. **Blum**, has in the last days very strongly spread about. It comes to light, that the opposition had the majority of the city behind it, and now wants to, by means of a variety of plans, place itself against the transgression done to it by the minority of the community. It has been a long time since we have had this kind of a controversy. For example, a plan was put forward to appoint as Rabbi, Rabbi **Leibeleh Keltzer**, who already has been living here for nearly two years, as the '*de facto*' Rabbi of the city. As a compromise, let the nominated Rabbi Blum be the Rabbi, '*de jure*,' insofar as the outside world is concerned, and he would then run the books of '*Stan Zivilny*.' The Rabbi has not yet provided a clear response to the delegation of 'important Jews,' but as it looks to be, he will, indeed, assume the Rabbinical Seat. The supporters of Rabbi Blum keep sending delegations to the Rabbi to persuade him not to take the position. This Sabbath, before the Torah reading, the worshipers of the *Gerrer* and *Shmigraver shtiblach* gathered together, and also many from the Great Synagogue, together about 150 people, on the *Schulhof*, formed a 'demonstration,' and moved in the direction of the residence of the Rabbi in the Lublin suburb. No one was permitted to enter. It was barely possible for a delegation of 3 Jews to worm their way into the Rabbi, whom they implored 'not to disturb the peace.' He answered them, that he also wants peace. Then, the 'demonstrators' dispersed, not paying mind to the fact that they were greatly upset. The police even lodged charges against a number of the 'demonstrators.'

— The approach made by the community opposition to the City Elder, against the election of the community leadership with Mr. **Wolfenfeld** at its head, was helpful. Mr. Wolfenfeld stepped down from his position as the President. In his place, it appears that **Yitzhak Margolis** will be designated as President, and Mr. **Hona Eidelsberg** as Vice-President.

— On Saturday, the local society for trade and bureau appointees received a communication from the City Elder, that the local branch is being liquidated, on the basis of the liquidation of the central organization in Warsaw.

— With a majority of only 3-2 votes, the city council, it was decided to remove the market stalls at the covered walkways, that is, in the places where they have been installed for many years. By contrast, it was decided to erect the 20 or so special small structures [sic: of this type] outside of the city. The interested Jews were strongly dissatisfied with the decision of the city council.

— At a sitting of the city council, the following gentlemen were elected as delegates to a meeting of the cities in Posen: The Bundist representative **Yerakhmiel Brandwein** and the P. P. S. Vice-Burgomaster **Ostrovsky**.

— The local TOZ used the days of Yom Tov for propaganda. On the 11th of this month, the leader of TOZ, Mr. Schwerdscharf spoke at the New-Zamość Bet HaMedrash, on the theme of 'The goals and Activities of TOZ.' On the 12th of the month the Chairwoman, **Dr. Rosenbush** gave a speech to 200 women on the theme of ' The Hygiene of the Child and the Meaning of Childhood.' On Saturday the 15th of the month, the Vice-Chairman, **Dr. Zinberg** spoke in the Great Bet HaMedrash of the *Altstadt* on the theme of: 'What TOZ gives to the Jewish Populace,' and **Dr. Wegmeister** spoke to an overflowing room in the 'Stilov' theater on the theme of: 'The Hygiene of the Child of Pre-School Age.' In the near future, the opening celebration of the 'Children's Home' will take place, whose premises are being renovated.

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*Page 646:* *A Call to Vote of the Krasnystaw-Hrubieszow-Chelm Circle to the Sejm elections in the 'Sanatia' Period. The Placard was printed in Zamość*

— In the prior week, **Dr. Szyfer** spoke about the issues of the Sejm elections that will be held soon, and organized a local election commission.

— A regional conference of the Jewish section of the Nationalist Bloc took place on Sunday, with participation by the former deputy, **Dr. Feldman** from '*Mizrahi*' and Engineer Mr. **A. Prowalsky** from '*Hitakhdut.*' Delegates from the following towns came to the conference: Zwierzyniec, Tomaszow, Tarnogrod, Jozefów, Laszczow, Komarow, Szebrzeszczyn, apart from Zamość. According to the direction of the delegates, it appears that the 27th Zamość regional population is disposed to vote for the Nationalist Bloc. Delegates from several towns demonstrated the necessity to put up a second approved candidacy in place of the current incumbent Dr. Szyfer. The reason given was, that Dr. Szyfer is not appropriately interested in his election district, and often even does not intervene when necessary. After a speech by deputy Feldman about the nationality problem several related resolutions were entertained. Also, the desire was taken up, that for the first time that the head of the ticket in the Zamość region be headed by a Jew, and for the first time that the second position be a Ukrainian. The reason – The Ukrainian population is not particularly favorably inclined to the Bloc. The 'Serlov' is conducting a rather strong agitation among the Ukrainians against the Bloc. A regional center was approved that would have its seat in Zamość. It appears that in Zamość, the Bloc will not put up a separate slate, because they have put together volunteers from the Nationalist Bloc about controlling the voting slates. The Zionists, *Hitakhdut Mizrahi*, the Merchants Society, Hand Workers Society, and the *Volkists* have joined with the Nationalist Bloc. There is no Small Business Society in the Altstadt, as opposed to new-Zamość, which does have one. The latter did not assume any position.

— Our local Jewish community is quite lively. Above the heads of the local population two sides contest with one another, and both sides impinge upon an insoluble problem of the most sacred principles of the rights given to us to independently elect our own officials. In a time of resignation and weak faith. In the year 1923, the Jews of Zamość elected an authority that, despite its inability to help, does not want to vacate its mandates. Not a single positive piece of work has been accomplished by it. Just the opposite – a lot of damage, yes. They have provisioned us with a Rabbi, that does not please the city in any respect. Now, the community advisory council has decided that the city needs an Assistant Rabbi. This has been taken up with the approval of the 'opposition.' First, there were arguments over whether the city needed a Rabbi, and were it not for the fact that the authorities demanded it, there would not be a Rabbi in Zamość to this day (there is a Rabbi in the *Neustadt*!). And now the opposition wants to get this passed, and if the City Elder will confirm this, the burden of an additional Rabbi will fall on the populace. At the same time when everything is destroyed, when no cultural institution receives any subsidy from the community, when an awesome chaos reigns all around. Thursday, a sitting of the council took place, and lasted until 2 in the morning and the first point of the agenda didn't even get touched.

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— On the previous Saturday night the Zamość city council had a sitting at which an array of Jewish questions were dealt with. First and foremost, subsidies for Jewish cultural institutions. No normal budget has yet been worked out. For the time being, one-time subsidies for the Yiddish School Organization with the school and evening school, named for I. L. Peretz – 600 zlotys. The large Jewish municipal library (the former Peretz Library) adjacent to the Municipal Library – 300 zlotys; The Neustadt Library named for I. L. Peretz – 200 zlotys; the library of the trade class societies – 100 zlotys. For a smaller city, these sums are an indication of the good relationship to the Jewish institutions. The city council showed a different kind of attitude towards the Hebrew Library, which has 1000 volumes, and a larger number of members. A debate arose around this question between the Zionist councilman **Geliebter** and the Bundist councilman **Brandwein**.

At the same sitting, the approach to the city council was deliberated, to allocate 1000 zlotys to erect a memorial to the 14 Jews that were shot in 1914 by a Russian Cossack officer at the time that the Jews were carrying out a citizen's obligation. To this day, there is no marker over their common grave. The community is giving 1000 zlotys, and requests that the city council also match these funds. The anti-Semitic councilman Lawyer Czarniecki spoke out against this, arguing that it would be a 'moral sin' to put such a memorial over people who had been shot. Regarding this question, the Jewish councilmen took a full mouth of water, and kept quiet.

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— The local drama society of the Yiddish School Organization gave a performance of Seckler's *'Yossi fun Yakrut,'* at the *'Stilov'* Theater. This drama was performed for the first time anywhere in Europe. Suitable stage scenery was prepared. A second performance is being made ready.

— The 'opposition' appointed Rabbi Leibeleh Keltzer as Rabbi of the city, and a battle is underway any time there is a need to perform a wedding, the need for a *Sandek*, etc. Both sided are fighting with one another. The following situation has been created in the city: 'the masses' are with the Rabbi, and the 'big shots' are with Rabbi Leibeleh Keltzer.

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— On Sunday, a festive opening of the Children's Home took place at the location of this institution. This was a get-together of the elite of the Jewish community. Mostly, lady members of the 'Ladies Auxiliary' came, which had been especially founded in order to look after the financial existence of the Children's Home. At the invitation of the committee of TOZ, the chairmen of a number of institutions were invited to offer their greetings. In this connection, no response was received from the City Elder, the district Sejm Deputy, the Merchants Society, and Jewish financial institutions.

At exactly the appointed hour, the tireless activist, and Chairwoman of TOZ, **Dr. Rosenbush** gave the opening remarks, which briefly summarized the aspects of the activities of TOZ, on our behalf in the city, and the initiation of the concept to create such an institution. She also remarked on the financial difficulties involved in founding such a Children's Home, etc. Afterwards, congratulatory telegrams are read from the central [sic: TOZ office] in Warsaw and from the regional committee in Lublin. Then we come to the array of minor greetings. In the name of the Magistrate, Vice-President Mr. **Ostrovsky**. He praises the people who initiated the effort, and promises that the Magistrate will provide an annual subsidy of 3000 zlotys a year, especially for the Children's Home.

In the name of *'Linat Tzedek,'* **Israel Rosen** offers greetings; The director, Mr. **Sh. Weiner** in the name of *'Kadima;'* Mr. **Shpizeisen** in the name of 'Y. Sh. O.' Mr. **Y. Brandwein** (Representative); he says that the time has arrived for the communal institutions to take on the obligation, and assume the financial oversight for all institutions, as well Jewish education. That the community should not have to carry this burden as an item that is special. **J. J. Peretz** also offers greetings (a brother of the poet I. L. Peretz). **Dr. Geliebter** responds to these greetings, and the assembly is asked to contribute for the benefit of the Children's Home. The response was quite handsome. On the spot, nearly 700 zlotys were collected. The budget of the Children's Home runs 700 zlotys a month, towards which the Magistrate provides less than 300. The remainder will have to be generated from individual sources and a variety of fund-raisers.

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– The publisher, A. Gitlin in Warsaw, has recently issued a book of our well-known native son Y. Firestein, under the name of '20 Year Retrospective.' Criticism has been generally good about this original book of memoirs. Many of the heroes of this book are still alive, and this indeed elicits a great interest about the book.

– the Jewish merchants and hand workers this year have been assesses to pay a fully-loaded sales tax. The local Merchants Society send a delegation to Warsaw, in the persons of : K.. Eidelsberg, M. Kezman, D. Zegen, Sh. Tishberg, M. Eidelsberg, and Sh. Wohl, so that they could intervene about the wrongs that have been encountered by the local Merchants in Zamość. The delegation delivered a memorandum a the ministry, and the local merchants sit and wait. Meanwhile, the date arrives at which time the tax needs to be paid to the municipality. A strong embitterment reigns in the circle of the merchants. Part of the storekeepers, even this year, will have to actually liquidate their stores, having no other choice. What is interesting, is that the local Polish merchants, at their meeting, adopted a decision to protest against the fact that...the local Jewish merchants have not been assessed enough.

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*Page 650: Half colony of the Zamość TOZ of the year 1927.*

— The 'Kadima' school this year, had its first graduating class, in the amount of 7 students, who have completed the 7 grades of the school. Now the school has a full seven grades.

— Together with announcing a campaign for Labor in the Land of Israel, the leader of the Israeli Labor organization, a member of the World Union of 'Poalei Tzion,' (United with Tz. S.), a member of the Central Committee of '*Akhdut HaAvodah*' in Israel, and an advisory member from the General Jewish Labor Organization in Israel, Mr. Engineer **Rice**, will be coming to Zamość on the coming 28th of the month.

— For the second season, it has been possible for the local TOZ to arrange the following for the sick and weak children: 34 children were sent out to *Zazolkiew*[255]; 3 children to *Druzgenik*; 2 children to *Otwock* and 40 children in the local half colony.

— The Jewish Gymnasium, with good fortune, has a new Director from Lublin, Mr. **Alterovich** (A Christian). For the time being, we cannot predict what sort of an atmosphere will reign there. It made a great impression, on the local religious circles, that the Director and his wife accompanied the children into the school during the ceremony to honor of the beginning of the new school year. The school has finally opened up its eighth grade. The 'Kadima' School also opened a new grade – the 6th; The Yiddish School named for I. L. Peretz this year opened its 3rd grade.

– The Zamość city council also adopted a protest resolution against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti.

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— At the last meeting of the city council, a resolution was passed by a large majority, stating that 'the city of Zamość demands an immediate amnesty for the people arrested for political reasons in Poland.' This resolution sis being sent to the Justice Minister. The entire Socialist Bloc voted for this resolution, which consists of 18 councilmen, Jewish and Christian.

— The local Magistrate began an examination of the treasury books of the Jewish community beginning on the 21st of this month. This was undertaken because of the alarms about malfeasance in the community. As is being said, the audit will take a long time.

— he single Jewish institution that exists in the *Neustadt* (Zamość), is the People's Library named for Shlomo Ettinger. The library was founded 6 years ago, and takes up an important place. It obtains the means to support and enlarge the library from its membership and a variety of undertakings [sic: fund-raisers]. The library also receives a subsidy from the city council. The Jewish community does not assess itself, God-forbid, for the benefit of such institutions. To this day, the Library has 3000 Yiddish books, about 2000 Polish books, as well as a number of Hebrew and Russian books. There are 250 members. Together with the celebration in honor of the sixth anniversary, there also was a celebration for renovating the premises. More than 1000 zlotys were donated to make a fundamental renovation of the Library and reading room, and one can certify from a first-hand view, that the arrangement and order that reigns in the institution is simply a wonder. There is a great deal of committed work imbedded in this, from the loyal hands of workers. The current celebration came out in quite a festive way, with chairmen of just about every Jewish institution and party conveying their greetings.

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– The School action [sic: fund-raising] was also announced here through the local Jewish School Organization. Lottery tickets were distributed and many friends of the Jewish School Movement were signed up. A mass meeting dedicated to the school movement was especially organized. The councilmen, Messrs. **Herman, Fekher** and **Neimark** appeared.

— Also, the 'HeHalutz' Organization is now conducting a campaign. In the meantime, a flower day has been organized for the benefit of '*Keren HeHalutz*,' and the result is that a sum of somewhat under 150 zlotys were raised.

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255 Seemingly pronounced '*Zaklikov*' by the Jews.

— Two trials against 2 Jewish young people took place on Wednesday in the district court, who were accused [of being involved in] in communist activities. The first, David Levinson, who has been confined to jail for a half year already, because of a lack of evidence, was released. The second, Leibl Zeidl, was punished with a 4 year sentence. Both accused were defended by the P. P. S. activist, Lawyer **Kh. Szwientkowsky.**

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*Page 652: Jewish Children in the Government School, 1938*

— A '*Gemilut-Hasadim*' Fund was established in the *Altstadt*. Such an organization already exists in the *Neustadt*. A campaign was conducted over the city, and it was able to assemble several thousand zlotys. How Jewish institutions relate to Yiddish is known. Also, our '*Gemilut-Hasadim*' Fund is not supportive. The invitation with the agenda for the founding meeting were distributed only in Polish, at a time when most of the rank and file membership were far from willing to conduct their community interests in something other than the Yiddish language.

— It is a number of years now, that we do not have an active Jewish sports society. There used to be an active 'Maccabi' organization, which even had gotten musical instruments together for an orchestra. The leadership personnel emigrated, and the organization fell apart. This past week, a member of 'Maccabi' in whose possession these musical instruments were left, turned them over to the Yiddish Gymnasium.

— On Sunday the 2nd, a red flag was hung up in the *Neustadt* on the *Zamoyski Gasse*. It was immediately taken note of, and at twelve thirty at night, the flag was taken down by the police.

— The Jewish school, named for I. L. Peretz, adjacent to 'Y. Sh. O.,' this year, opened the fourth grade, in which Hebrew will be taught.

— The local trade unions bought a parcel from the Magistrate to build a house for the unions. The American workers, who are *landsleit* of Zamość sent in a larger sum of money for this purpose.

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Notes:

As we said in the introduction, all these notices were extracted from the '*Lubliner Tageblatt*, from the years 1926-128. The Zamość correspondent was **Yaakov Neimark**. A part of the correspondence is signed with a full name, and apart with the initials, Y. N-k, or *Yud Nun*, and yet others with the pseudonym, Y. Nakdimon.

# Zamośćher *Stimme*

*Page 653:* *Facsimile of the Top Front Page of the First Edition of the* Zamośćher *Stimme*

We have previously provided excerpts about Zamość that were printed in the '*Lubliner Tageblatt.*' The following excerpts are from the **Zamośćher *Stimme***. This periodical appeared in the years 1928-1939 with larger breaks. We have numbers 1,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 from the year 1928, Number (42) 20, from 1938, and Number (57) 11 from 1939 in our possession.

It appears that between these years, there were vert great breaks, because the first numbers from the year 1928 are designated as the first year of publication, and number (57) 11 from 1939 is identified as the third year of publication.

We will excerpt notices from these editions of the Zamośćher *Stimme* in this section, data and facts that have a bearing on the community life of the Zamość community on the eve of the Holocaust. For certain, there will be omissions, either because there are so many editions of the paper that are missing, and also because the paper was under the influence of a direction that was even more right-wing than the rightist '*Poalei Tzion.*' As was the custom in the Old Country, and is still the custom in the microcosm of the Jewish world, it was often the case that activity in other circles went unnoticed. Despite this, we find very interesting news in these editions, also from the general Jewish life of Zamość which needs to be incorporated in order that it be preserved.

Before we approach the notices, a writeup about the periodical in particular is deemed necessary, since we have the **first edition**. As we have stated, the periodical was called:

## Zamośćher *Stimme*

It had a subtitle: 'A Bi-weekly Community Organ.' The first edition appeared on the following date: **Friday, March 9, 1928**. The address for letters and money was given as: **Ormianska 6**. It was indicated that the editorial offices were open from 7-9 PM except for Saturday.

The responsible editor is identified as **M. Herman** (the councilman of the right-wing Poalei Tzion in the city council). The paper was edited by a **collegium**. The paper was printed at the print shop of the Weinsteins in **Chelm**. In the later numbers, the address was already given as Postal Box No. 72. In the last edition of 1939 that we have, the address is given as **Peretza** Number 6, Residence 15. During this time, the Ormianska Gasse was re-named as the I. L. Peretz Gasse. Also, the responsible Editor of this edition is someone else – **Leib Goldgraber**. These later editions were still being printed in Chelm.

The content of the first edition is:

**M. Herman** – Our Responsibility; Vice-Burgomaster **Ostrovsky** – About the Zamość city economy; **Yitzhak Geliebter** – What Do We Want?; **A True Son** – It Is High Time; **Shmuel Ashkenazi** – Avigdor Simes; **Dr. Rosenbush-Shpigelglass** – TOZ in Zamość; **A Hearty Poverty** – Day Phrases; Afterwards, a 'chronology of Zamość life' comes, and a variety of correspondence 'from the area,' – Krasnobrod and Grabowiec. Do understand, that there is no lack of commercial advertisements, greetings and obituaries.

We will make an exception for the first edition of this periodical, and pause to present a broader view of the issues that are dealt with in the articles.

M. Herman concerns himself with the institutions of self-government, such as the city council and the Sejm. It is worth bringing in a couple of larger excerpts which will serve to clarify the relationships of that era:

'...The Jewish community has, until recently, been used to look at the self-governing institutions such as: the city council, and the Sejm, as institutions that were pressed down upon them form 'above,' and whose only purpose is to collect taxes. But, could the Jewish community also get some benefit for its social needs and cultural development? The Jewish community never even dreamed that this could be possible.

The entire 'activity' of the leaders of the Jewish citizenry in these institutions, was circumscribed by striving towards making the imposed taxation less burdensome.

It is only now, in the city councils of recent times, the leaders of the Jewish political parties made clear to the Jewish community what self-government entails, that the Jewish community can, through its leaders, have an impact on the city economy in general, and with special Jewish interests in particular.

And if we are speaking of the interests of the Jewish community, we mean for only the poorer part, which to this day is the majority of the rank and file of our city. Common sense dictates therefore, to join forces with the leaders of the needy Polish working populace, in order to build a majority in the city council, which will be effective in addressing the requirements of the needy segments of society.

In this regard, our Zamość city council can show some partial accomplishments. The reason this is only partial, is made clear from the fact that the consolidation of all the socialist factions, until now, was not forthcoming.

Therefore, the responsibility now lies on the Socialist groupings, wether to work out the budget for the current year, or to actually implement it. To see that the interests of the needy Jewish populace will be set right.

The Jewish worker has to have the right to work at any undertaking that the Magistrate is carrying out; The Yiddish secular school, named for I. L. Peretz, needs to be subsidized in such a way, that it is financially secure; the subsidies for the libraries have to be meaningfully increased; the TOZ Society, which has done so much in the course of this year, must receive the recognition of the city council without any special presentation, which it supplements in a great measure in the area of social care, by a meaningful financial support; in general, all progressive Jewish cultural and social institutions need subsidization as is appropriate.

This will only come to reality when we arrive at an understanding with the Polish Socialists and to clarify for them, that alleviating the need of the Jewish masses brings them closer to the end goal of all Socialists – to Socialism.

And we want to hope, that at last, the contact that will come between Polish and Jewish workers will cause the mutual discovery of understanding for the working classes in general, and for the special interests of the Jewish working classes in particular.'

This article is a direct consequence of the relationship of forces in the city council of that time, which had a Socialist majority. For this reason, it is possible to find in this same edition, the article by the Vice-Burgomaster of the city, the Polish labor activist, **Ostrovski**, about the condition of the city economy. As he describes the needs and requirements that this Magistrate, led by the Socialists, must find solutions for.

The article by **Ben-Amiti** deals with the plight of the Zamość congregation. From an array of notices which we have previously introduced, and in later ones, it is possible to see that there were unending disputes – 'sides' and 'oppositions,' fought with one another and strongly defended their personal activity, so that the call of **A True Son** was: **'It is the highest of time to put an end to this abnormal situation...'**

From the community chronology, of this issue, we extract the following data and facts:

— At a sitting of the city council, it was decided (based on the proposal of councilman Herman) that for the Jewish students of the evening trade courses, the studies will be conducted in Yiddish.

— Thanks to the initiative of Mr. **Ben-Zion Lubliner**, a 'Gemilut-Hasadim' Fund was opened in Zamość, which is making interest-free loans.

— A general meeting of TOZ took place on the 13th of February, with an order to elect a leadership. The order was given by Y. Brandwein.

The following took part in the discussion: Dr. Rosenbush, councilman Herman, Councilman Peretz, Morgenstern, Sobol. An acknowledgment of the outgoing leadership was expressed. It never got to new elections, because at this point a tumult arose. However, the old leadership was elected by a bloc. The assembly also agreed to accept the resolution that the community should subsidize the TOZ.

— A large children's holiday presentation was presented on the 23rd of February at the 'Stilov' Theater, put on by the children of the I. L. Peretz School. This celebration was very enthusiastically received.

A chess club has been in existence in Zamość for 5 months. On the 18th of February, a general meeting took place, where a new leadership was elected that had the following composition: Y. Templediener, Lax, Markfeld, Arenstein, Schmutz, Fruchtgarten, and Ackerman. Candidates: F. Feckler; Audit Commission: Y. Schporer. Hirschhorn, Grossman. The club was accepted by the 'Culture League.'

— More than 600 Workers (Jewish) are members of the 5 unions and they carry on their activities in cramped quarters. In that location, thee is also found a library that has 600 books, and tens of readers. The advisory board of the trade unions had indeed recently purchased a parcel from the Magistrate (900 square meters in area) and is moving to erect a building for the trade unions. The leadership believes that this initiative will be supported by the progressive Jewish community.

— A new committee was elected of the 'League for Labor in the Land of Israel.' A meaningful sum of money was created for the 'Palestine Labor fund,' and together with 'HeHalutz,' a 'Tel-Chaim Academy' is being prepared.

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In number 3 of the Zamośćher *Stimme* (Tuesday, April 10), the following articles appear:

**Shmuel Ashkenazi** – Yitzhak Leibusz Peretz (A collection of memories on the occasion of his 13th Yahrzeit).
**M. Herman** – Several words about the Sick Fund in Zamość
**A. Jew** – 'Between Two Mountains' (A word about the Rabbi-Rabbi Controversy...)
**J. J. Peretz** – Memories; Folksongs that Peretz composed in Zamość in the years 1887, 88, 89.
**Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter** – Peretz's Childhood Years;

From the ' Zamość Chronology,' we learn:

— The leadership of the Yiddish School Organization in Zamość has decided to renew the school [fund-raising] initiative which was interrupted by the Sejm elections. The week of Passover will be used for this. The school lottery which had been set for March 15th has been postponed to May 15th because of the elections. There remain 250 [unsold] lottery tickets out of the total of 1050. Thursday, the last day of Passover, April 12, at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, the drama circle of 'Y. Sh. O.' will present the premiere of David Pinsky's '*Miriam fun Migdala*' at the 'Stilov' Theater. On the same day in the evening, the traditional 'Passover Ball' will take place, at the location of the Chess Club (Rynek 3). It is also represented that a new preparatory grade is being opened at the I. L. Peretz School for 6-7 year-old children. On Saturday, April 21st, a general meeting will take place with elections of the leadership.

— Because of the victory of Ballot Number 18 (Nationalist Bloc) during the Sejm elections, a 'victory banquet' was held on the Saturday of the 24th at the Chess Club. Speakers were: Dr. Geliebter, Sh. Weiner, M. Rubinstein, Rosen, Y. Goldstein, M. Schliam, Y. Schporer, and others.

— The members of the New-Zamość people's library named for Sh. Ettinger, elected a leadership that consists of the representatives of all parties and persuasions. Tens of new books have been purchased. The location has been renovated.

— In the youth organization, 'Freiheit,' of the right-wing Poalei-Tzion, a lively set of activities is carried on. Readings, lectures about 'political economics,' history of the Jewish labor movement and other [subjects] take place regularly.

— For the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the global 'HeHalutz,'a large celebration is being readied at the 'Stilov' theater for April 1st. Among others, Mr. Berdichevsky from Warsaw will appear

— The Manual Trades Union in Zamość counts 160 members. An initiative was carried out in connection with social laws. A support bank exists in the Manual Trades Union which distributed interest-free loans to poor laborers (up to 50 gulden). 90 families have already received loans. As has been the case every year, on Passover eve, the leadership led a *Maot-Hittim* campaign, which brought in 1200 gulden. 82 families received support from the Union for the Holiday.

— In Zamość there is yet a second Manual Trades Union, 'The Socialist Manual Trades Union,' which is under the influence of the *Bund.* Between the two unions, there is a struggle for control of the manual laborers.

— The *Gemilut-Hasadim* Fund of the *Neustadt* carries on a many-branched set of activities. In the year 1927, 891 loans were disbursed in the [aggregate] sum of 46 thousand zlotys. 280 families benefitted from these loans.

– The Jewish chairman of the assessment commission of the [municipal] finance agency, Mr. **Ben-Zion Lubliner,** informs that the sales tax for the year 1927 has been raised by 50percent.

From an announcement in this edition, we see that, at that time, a **Merchants Bank** existed in Zamość, which provided all manner of banking services. Discounted commercial paper, deposits, and security over the best assets.

In this edition, there is a announcement to the Jewish populace in Zamość in connection with the 10th anniversary of 'HeHalutz.' Under the announcement the following people signed as members of the anniversary committee in Zamość: Sh. Biterman, Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, Shlomo Goldstein, Zvi-Chaim Geliebter, Moshe Herman, Shmuel Hechtman, Sholom Weiner, Prof. Wagmeister, M. Zilberstein, Eng. Z. Mannheim, Y. Morgenstern, M. Epstein, J. J. Peretz, Dr. M. Zinberg, M. Y. Kornfeld, M. Kezman, Dr. Rosenbush-Shpigelglass, Y. Roset, M. Rubinstein, Y. D. Schliam, Shmuel-Elieh Schwerd-Scharf, Moshe Schliam, B. Schporer.

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Number 4 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' is from Friday, April 27. Articles there include:

Lawyer **Henryk Swiontkowski** (Deputy of the Sejm from the Zamość district, P. P. S.) – The First of May;
**J. J. Peretz** – Memories;
**Raphael** – a Dream (A Small Feuilleton);
Lawyer **M. Klinkowstein** – Troubles One Creates for One's self.
Free notices in the paper.

Regarding community life, we will take note of the following direction, data and facts:

The expenditure level of the congregation in the year 1929 came to 12 thousand zlotys, and a year later 30 thousand (about this raise, a critical notice).

– At its plenum of April 18th, the city council decided to celebrate the 1st of May, and all employees of communal institutions will be given the day off from work; that a third banner will be hung by the Magistrate on the clock tower bearing the legend, 'Long Live May 1.' The proposal of the 'reds; that the Magistrate make an announcement to the populace that it should participate *en masse* in the celebration, was defeated.

– On April 11, an anniversary celebration of '*HeHalutz*' took place at the 'Stilov' Theater. Speeches were given, and there was a rich artistic program.

The Merchants Bank began its activity during March 1927. The bank now has 150 members. For the 9 months of its existence, the bank showed a profit of 3,520 gulden. There are 200 investors in the bank, with a capital taken in of 19 thousand gulden.

— A general meeting took place of the 'Cooperative Bank.' This meeting took place in the community location this April. 122 members attended. From the treasury accounting (provided by Mr. Pfeffer), it is possible to see that the bank, in 1927, had a value of 7,500,000 zlotys. It gave out 1460 loans for a sum of 300,000 zlotys. Almost all borrowers are small business people and craftsmen. During the year, 17 thousand bills flowed into the bank deposits for a sum of 2,200,000 zlotys.

— A meeting took place of the Neustadt 'Gemilut-Hasadim Bank.' The Chairman of the meeting was the Rabbi of the Neustadt. The accounting for the bank was given by Mr. **Tischberg**. The bank is in existence for 18 months. It has 100 members. The ban received 7000 zlotys from the 'Joint,' and 3000 zlotys were collected from the members. In the span of this time, the bank made sales of 94,668 zlotys. 995 families benefitted from these loans. The following were elected to the new leadership: Israel Zucker, Sholom Tischberg, Shakhna Mintz, Avigdor Wachs, Yaakov Koch, Gedalyahu Eltster, Joseph Werimus, Shabtai Greener, Leibl Szyfer, Audit Commission: Aharon Cooper, Abraham Rothfeld, Mendel Eisenstahl.

— On Saturday, April 21, a general meeting of the Zamość branch of the Yiddish School Organization took place. The meeting took place in the hall of the city council. Mr. **Topf** was elected as chairman of the meeting, and the accounting was presented by Mr. Shtikh. From the accounting we learn of a variety of activities – apart from the normal school activities – evening courses, a people's university. The leadership purchased a parcel from the Magistrate to put up its own building for the school. A 4th grade is being readied for the new school year. The following participated in the discussion: Herman, Shpizeisen. After expressing loyalty to the outgoing leadership, the budget for the new year was accepted for looks to be 950 zlotys a month. The following were elected to the new leadership: councilman Y. Brandwein, Ch. Shpizeisen, K.. Shtikh, M. Zwillich, R. Morgenstern, Z. Gewirtzman, M. Mittelpunkt, N. Korngold, A. Hubar, Y. Mendelsohn, Dentist Tz. Weiss, Audit Commission: B. Bekher, Ch. Millstein, Y. Feldstein.

— Preparations are underway for a cooperative bakery.

In this edition there is a balance [sheet] of the *Maot-Hittim* Committee and thanks from this committee to the landsleit in America: Y. Y. Schwartz, Y. Schatzkammer, D. Y. GL. Weintraub, Ch. Mildiener, M. Rosenberg, Ch. Giffel, M. Zeid, and Sh. Khavat, for their efforts in support for Passover (see the table on the other side – a facsimile is presented on p. 660 –JSB).

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Number 5 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' is from Friday, May 18, 1926 and has the following articles:

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| **M. Herman** | – | The Only Way; |
| **Meir** | – | From the Side |
| **Y. Morgenstern** | – | 20 Year Celebration; |
| **Shmuel Ashkenazi** | – | Dr. Shlomo Ettinger |
| **P. Lazar** (Chelm) | – | Zanvel the Wagon Driver; |
| **Raphael** | – | What I Heard and Saw. |

From the section '**From Life in Zamość**' we will excerpt the following news items from community life:

First, a very large amount of space is given over to the celebration of the First of May. It appears that:

> 'This year, the workers holiday of the First of May was not celebrated in the same imposing way as in previous years. The area First of May Committee was not constituted out of all the parties and organizations...'

We are going to omit the polemic representations, where there are arguments over who is responsible and we find out, in spite of this, that the workers holiday was indeed celebrated across a broad front, even if not in a collective fashion. We will communicate the information in the order in which it is presented in the accounting:

— The regional committee of P. P. S. (Polish Socialist Party), called upon its members to assemble at the location of the P. P. S. unions (Lubliner suburb) and from there they came to lined-up rows with party flags to the Magistrate, where a meeting was held. The following comrades spoke: Tzip, Swiontkowsky, Novatsky, Kazantesky, Wiltos, and others. At 6 PM an 'academy' took place in the hall of the city council. To a packed room, the 'academy' opens with the singing of *Czerwony Sztandar* ('Red Flag,' – the anthem of the P. P. S.).

Deputy Swiontkowsky speaks on the history of socialism and class-struggle, the choir sings a variety of labor songs. At the end, comrade Swiontkowsky proposes a resolution to protest the illegal handling manner in which the police dispersed the demonstration of the workers (see more about this in a later account) from the class-unions. The proposal is adopted.

The party committee of 'Poalei-Tzion (united with Tz. S .) Called its members to gather at the party location. The party standard fluttered from the window immediately in the morning. The members of '*Poalei-Tzion*' and 'Freiheit' gathered for the first meeting under the open sky, but because the authorities did not sanction this meeting, the meeting took place inside the location. Comrades Herman and Morgenstern spoke. At 8 PM, an 'academy' took place.

— The trade unions (the radical sector, which did not participate with the P. P. S.) Called on their members to assemble at their location. At ten in the morning, a meeting of the unions took place, at which the members Plaszczak and Savitsky spoke about the meaning of the First of May. When the final speaker took note of the large contingent of police that were watching them, the meeting was broken up by the police and the participants dispersed.

— The *Bund* held an 'academy' in the hall of the City Council, where comrade Brandwein and others spoke. The 'academy' ended with the singing of a variety of worker songs.

From the community account, it is possible to see that the controversy over the Rabbis was also dealt with; the sides of the several Rabbis sought equity. The matter of the size of the salary for Rabbi Blum was taken up.

On April 24 a portable industrial display, and display of handcrafts, was opened at the location of the City Council. The Zamość Jewish Hand Workers Union had its own special section in this display, where the Jewish Manual Trades displayed samples of their handiwork. At the end of the display, certificates of excellence were distributed. The following Jewish Hand Workers received certificates:

Mr. **Berish Putter**, a certificate (among 8) for tiles from machines. He made an especially good impression without access to a new machine.

Letters of commendation was received by the metalworking partners **Spodek-Ziss** (among 11 Poles) for a church

Letters of thanks were received by the Jewish Hand Workers Union for organizing their section: Mr. **Yaakov Goodhaut** for a pair of boots and shoes; Mrs. **Pesha Sheps** for curly-haired model head, and Mr. **Joshua Fuchs** for a summer jacket.

Mr. **Henoch Werter** was involved in the local general committee ro organize the display, on behalf of the Jewish Hand Worker Unions.

— On Monday, April 30, there was a general meeting in the *Neustadt* also of the small business people. Approximately 50 members came. Mr. **Hirsch Zwerin** was elected as Chairman; as supporters, Messrs. **L. Zilberberg, Y. Pflug** and **L. Rosenman**. The bank accounting was presented by Mr. Simcha Zwerin; Mr. **Zitzer** spoke about the intentions of the small businessmen. The following resolutions were passed:

1. The general meeting demands the nomination of a representative of the small business people in the assessment commission of sales and income taxes;

2. A representative of the small business people shall sit at the deliberation of the rates;

3. The rates should be deliberated as quickly as possible in order that the executors don't finish their 'work' first...;

4. The new leadership shall make an effort to convey the rate schedules as quickly as possible to the *Neustadt*.

A leadership was elected that consisted of: Messrs. Ch. Zwerin, Sh. Zwerin, Sh. Maiman, L. Zilberberg, Sh. Pflug, Candidates: Messrs. Ch. Babat, Y. Weiman, M. Gartler. Audit Commission: Y. Rind, A. Friedling, and M. Levenfuss. A damages court was also elected.

– In a notice **'The Sales Tax Is Ruining Many Jewish Merchants**,' the very difficult condition of the Jewish merchants is portrayed because of the unreasonably high tax. For example, it is told that poor storekeepers which had been assessed for between 4 and 8 thousand zlotys, are today at the level of between 20 and 32 thousand zlotys.

The Merchants Union of Zamość sent a delegation to Warsaw to the Ministry of Commerce, with a relevant memorandum. The delegation consisted of the following persons: Ch. Eidelsberg, M. Kezman, D. Zegen, Sh. Tischberg, M. Eidelsberg, and Sh. Wohl.

— Friday and Saturday, the 4th and 5th of May, recitation evenings took place at the 'Stilov' theater by the artist Zygmunt Lev. This same artist also appeared in the Yiddish Gymnasium and in 'Kadima.'

— In this edition, there are two additional pieces of correspondence from the province, from Tyszowce and Bilgoraj.

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In number 6 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' of Friday July 1, 1928, the following articles appear: Deputy, Lawyer Henryk Swiontkowsky — The Way to Unification; B. R. — Your Hands Have Weakened His Bright Memory; Yitzhak Zaltz – New Ways to Jewish Art; A. L. – Free News.

From the local community chronology, we will extract the following details:

— An exceptional community meeting of the trade union of the commerce and bureau employees. The general meeting took place Saturday, May 21 in the location of the trade unions, there was an unusual meeting, in order to deliberate the question of Yekhezkiel Tzitrin, which through a trial by peers was dismissed from the union for 3 months for bypassing a ruling regarding the trade union movement. The following participated in the discussion about the issue: Levensohn, Mittelpunkt, Hirschhorn, Zilberstein, Lastekson. A second panel of peers was selected to deliberate the issue again. The peer panel consisted of: Israel Zetzer, Mendel Zilberstein, David Levenson, Mottel Lastekson, and Aharon Goldstein. At the same meeting, the issue of the eight-hour workday was deliberated for commercial employees, and in connection with this matter, it was decided to approach the labor inspector.

— A general meeting of the leather workers. This meeting took place at the location of the trade unions. Issues concerning skills that related to the season and the various businesses. Mr. Ber gave the accounting. He declared,

among other things, that because of political work, such as the Sejm elections, and other things, the leadership did not implement any initiatives and also did not utilize the Passover season to do fund-raising. A union leadership was elected.

A call from the leadership of the Zamość branch of TOZ provides a rather rich chronology.

From this calling together of the TOZ leadership we learn of the following numbers about the first 18 months of the activity of TOZ in Zamość. It is said there that:

> 'In the course of these 18 months, an energetic program was carried out in the area of school hygiene; the existing 25 institutions (schools and *Heders*) were placed under a strict medical-hygienic oversight from our society; here is the expression of numbers:
>
> During this period,
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Examinations | 7487 Children |
> | Baths Given | 2401 Children |
> | Haircuts Given | 334 Children |
> | Received Cod Liver Oil | 349 Children |
> | Cured of Favus[256] | 29 Children |
> | Sent to Colonies | 149 Children |
>
> Apart from this, a Children's Home was created in which tens of Jewish children from poverty in the city and the *Neustadt*, are provided with a home in which to grow up...'

The sense of the get-together is that the community should support TOZ. Everyone should become a member with a membership-fee of 50 (fifty groschen!) a month.

— An unscheduled meeting of the Chess Club. The gathering took place on Saturday, the 26th of May, in the Chess Club's own location at the 'Culture League.' The Chairman Templediener opened the meeting, and seeing as it was an election meeting, Shmuel Shmarand was elected as the Chairman of the meeting. He points out that this meeting has been called because of a letter of demand from 31 members, who demanded a meeting, because they are not satisfied with the comportment of the [current] leadership, whom they accuse of a variety of irregularities. The members Arenstein, Schporer, Shpizeisen Grossman Markfeld, Ackerman, and Templediener take part in the discussion. With a majority of 21 votes, the prior leadership is given a vote of no confidence. By a secret ballot, a new leadership is elected that consists of: Shmuel Shmarand, Moshe Markfeld, Mikhl Zucker, Yaakov Schporer and Baruch Ackerman. In the Audit committee the following were elected: Moshe Schliam, Elieh Weintraub, Yitzhak Zingerman.

— In a notice, 'Houses Wrecked and Destroyed in the *Neustadt*,' the following fact is presented:

'The poor populace of the Neustadt lives also in very bad circumstances on the Hrubieszow and Bomba Streets.

> Distress and need, hunger and abandonment reigns there in thrown-together shacks. The administrative authorities came there one fine well lit morning, and with the help of the police, they tore off the roofs, and razed houses in which the poorest elements of the *Neustadt* residents lived. The roofs were torn off, and the foder houses of the following families were razed: Anshel Schatzkammer, Getzel Schatzkammer, Hirsch Kleiner, Pinchas Griener, Tzirel Gringer, Joel Shklar, Baylah Kremer and Mr. Papier. The residents, left with no roof over their heads, do not have the minimal means with which to try and restore that which has been destroyed.'

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256 A skin disease, especially of the scalp, characterized by dry incrustations due to the fungus *Achorion schonleinii*.

The councilman, Engineer Mr. Maniek Goldstein submitted his resignation as a councilman in the city council because he has received a post in Warsaw. In his place, the first candidate of the Jewish-Democratic Bloc was appointed, Mr. Hirsch Zwerin of the *Neustadt.*

— A general meeting of Zamość Merchants took place on May 13 at the location of the Merchants Society, dedicated to the question of the imposition of too high a sales tax for the year 1927. Mr. Eliyahu Epstein was elected as the Chairman of the meeting. Messrs. Wachs, Kezman and others, spoke out at the meeting. The sad state of the merchants was described, especially among the small shopkeepers, who are being ruined on the one side by severe competition and a lack of credit, and from the other side by the heavy burden of taxes. It was decided to send telegrams of protest to the Finance Ministry, the Jewish 'Kolo,' (Deputies' club in the Sejm),and the Central Merchants Association requesting immediate intervention. Accounting provides information, that at the same time that the Jewish merchants were heavily encumbered with taxes, the Polish merchants of Zamość, at a meeting, adopted a protest resolution that the Jews, this year, are being insufficiently taxed. At the end of the meeting, representatives were elected from each of the separate lines of business, as subject matter experts in the assessment commission of the tax assessment positions.

— On Saturday, April 14, an annual general meeting took place of the *Neustadt* Peoples' Library named for Dr. Shlomo Ettinger. A great number of members, nearly 100, came to this meeting. Mr. Ch. Goldberg was elected Chairman of the meeting; in the presidium: Y. Morgenstern, Mermelstein, and Simcha Szyfer[257]. Mr. Mittelpunkt gave an accounting. During the course of the year,300 new books were purchased, and a fine renovation of the library premises was carried out. During the course of the year, the income reached 4,416.40 gulden, and expenses were 4,440.55 zlotys. The accounting was completed by G. Zucker, and L. Rosen who underscored that the inter-party leadership worked intensively, and express their wish that going forward, that such a composite leadership should be elected. A vote of gratitude was passed in favor of the outgoing leadership. A new leadership was not elected on this day, because in the middle of the meeting the police came in and broke up the meeting. On the second Saturday, April 21, after a great deal of transaction, conferences and taking of counsel, an inter-party leadership was elected of the following members: Gershon Zucker, Yossel Greenbaum, Yitzhak Rosenzweig, Y. Griener, Moshe Mittelpunkt. Candidates: Yudel Wagner, Wolf Karmus, Simcha Szyfer. Audit Commission: Faiga Roseman, Zalman Rosenberg, Shlomo Schwartz.

In this edition, there are also letters form the surrounding towns: Izbica, Krasnobrod, Ludomir, Ostelia. There is also a letter from Israel, from a scion of Zamość who signs himself 'Ben-Sholom.' It is sent from Petakh Tikva.

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Number 7 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' is from Friday, June 22, 1928. Articles within are:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **M. Herman** | – | The Obligation of the Hour; |
| **Yam** | – | Let the Facts Speak; |
| **J. J. Peretz** | – | Memories; |
| **Y. Morgenstern** | – | Tears (From My Memoirs); |
| **Yaakov Neimark** | – | 'The Wall' |

From the Jewish community activities, this issue contains:

— The summer campaign of TOZ in Zamość began with the opening of 2 half-colonies in the city and the *Neustadt.* Seventy (70) children were accommodated within the half-colonies, where they are fed 3 times a day, and are under the supervision of pedagogically-trained supervision. A larger number of children were sent to Cuzmir. Severely weak children are sent to Otwock and a portion to Dembina. In connection with 'TOZ-Week,' which the central organization had proclaimed throughout the entire country, this initiative will be carried out in Zamość through the end of the current

257 *From the same e-mail of February 21, 2004 from Leon Szyfer:* All Szyfers, Szyffers, Szypers, Szyppers, Schiffers, Schippers from Zamość were members of the same family. Simcha Szyffer was my father's(e.g. Josef) brother, who perished with his family in Belzeč.

month. The program of 'TOZ-Week' is as follows: On Saturday the 30th, there will be a Festive Academy held in the 'Stilov' Theater with the participation of a representative of the central organization; Sunday, a garden-festival; Monday the inaugural opening of the summer colonies; Tuesday a debate in the Union of the Manual Trades; Wednesday – Sale of window inscriptions and literature; Thursday, sale of lottery tickets in the streets; Friday – distribution of prizes from the sanitation competition; in the even there will be a meeting in the hall of the city council with the participation of the representative of the central committee of TOZ, Dr. Sh. Hirschhorn. The proceeds from health-week is being set aside for the benefit of the summer colonies.

— In the intermediate schools of Zamość, the following Jewish students received their *Matura*: In the government women's gymnasium named for 'Maria Konopnitska': G. Bronstein, Ch. Brokh, Ch. Hotz, A. Mandelbaum, B. Fuchs, Ch. Zimmerung, B. Kilstein, Ch. Stern. In the government men's gymnasium named for 'Jan Zamoyski': B. Goldvarg, Y. Goldvarg, P. Warman, Y. Mendelsohn, Sh. Ruf. The Yiddish co-educational gymnasium this year, for the first time, graduated the following Maturists: F. Diament, Ch. Zaltsman, M. Nissenbaum, F. Ehrlich, M. Shapiro.

— An announcement indicates that in a few days time, there will be an annual general meeting of the '*Gemilut-Hasadim* Fund' of the *Neustadt*.

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Number 8 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*,' is from July 13, 1928 (Friday). The following articles appear in this edition:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Y. Morgenstern** | – | '*Tekhezakna Yedei HaBonim;*'[258] |
| **M. Zilberstein** | – | We Will Not Be Silent; |
| **Yam** | – | Let the Facts Speak; |
| **J. J .Peretz** | – | Memories (continued); |
| **Shmuel Ashkenazi** | – | Small Stories of Yore; |
| **Dr. Janina Endervona** | – | Dr. Ludovik Zamenhof. |

From the community local chronology:

– In connection with the campaign for Labor in the Land of Israel, which is being conducted throughout all of Poland, Engineer Anshel Reiss, the representative of the World-Union of Poalei-Tzion (united with Tz. S.) Will visit Zamość on July 28th. A variety of undertakings are being planned for the guest.

— The Magistrate has decided to relocate the auction stalls closer to the *Neustadt*, in order to provide the people who live there with a way to make a living. This did not please the Sejm deputy, and he vetoed the decision of the city council. The motive was that the pigs, in the newly relocated place, will disturb the learning process of the students of the general school, which is adjacent to the auction plaza, with their squealing. The paper provides the following:

> 'First it is not right that the school be located 'near' the place where it had been planned to put the marketplace; secondly, it is to wonder that the Sejm deputy should be so concerned about the children of the school, who consist at the very least, of the poor Jewish residents. The cacophony of the pigs should not disturb their learning, and at the same time, the Sejm deputy does not hear the 'cacophony' of the children when they go home, and find that there is nothing there for them to eat...'

— Sunday July 1, a festive ending of the school year took place in the garden of the 'Children's Home' of TOZ. It was a completely filled, rich program. The notice reports the following, among other things:

> '...the children of the 'Home' taken out of tens of impoverished families, put on a variety of scenes; recitations and songs, and words literally fail to convey how tastefully and heartily the 4-5 year-old Moshe's Shmuel'lehs, and Hene'lehs carried out their various scenes.'

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258 Opening lines of a Socialist Labor Workman's Hymn.

The Prebel-trained teacher and governess, Mrs. Wurst, led and directed the 'Home' with the presentation.

— A trade meeting of the Step Workers took place on June 16 at the location of the Trade Unions. The Chairman was Kaltfeld. Mendel Greenberg gave an accounting. The members, Y. Fuchs and Hirsch Eilbaum presented the following proposals:

1. To create a control commission to look after the eight-hour day;

2. To create 'Dozors' in the union, which will galvanize the members;

3. To create a revenue commission.

All three of these proposals are favorably voted upon.

— Two special larger representations from the leadership of the Merchants Society and from the leadership of the Small Business Society, to their members to observe the terms of the purchase, commercial and industrial licenses.

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Edition number 9 of Friday August 3, 1928.

It contains the following articles:

**On the significance of the Magistrate and the Councilmen** – by M. Herman (about the Hospital Tax).
**The Way Out** – by Y. Morgenstern. – About safeguarding historical objects in the Zamość congregation and vicinity, and creating an area committee of the Jewish Scientific Institute – YIVO;
**For the Workers in the Land of Israel** – by V. Latsky-Bartholdi. About help for the Palestine Workers Fund.
**News from the World of Electricity** – by Z. Haber;
**'Monday' of Moshe Kublak** – Critical section by the student A. Zelonka;
**A Small Feuilleton** – by Chaim;
**Short Stories from Days of Yore** – by Shmuel Ashkenazi;
**A Letter from Lublin** – by M. Zuckerman;
In this edition, there is this further notice: **Why?**

> 'And if we have finally lived to see the names of the streets changed to the names **Peretz, Zamenhof, May First,** and others, the question arises as to why we don't see this happening any quicker? A whole array of 'principal' streets have already been given new names, provisioned with street lights, but regarding the previously mentioned streets, there still do not hang street signs with the new names, and so that one should not 'inadvertently' forget about them.'
>
> One must ask the Magistrate, why?
>
> **N. Jakubowicz**

From the chronology:

— The visit of Engineer Anshel Reiss to Zamość, as an emissary from the campaign for Labor in the Land of Israel. On Saturday, July 28, a reception was held. The guest was greeted by: M. Herman (Poalei-Tzion), Wiltos (P. P. S.), Ivankovsky (Tur), Zvi-Chaim Geliebter (Zionist Organization), B. Rosen ('Hitakhdut'), Sh. Engel (Teaching Personnel), A. Fekher (HeHalutz), B. Dinerman ('Freiheit'), Gartler (Poalei-Tzion of Krasnobrod). On the same evening, thee was a verbierung meeting in the hall of the city council for the 'League' for Labor in the Land of Israel.

Also, '**A Reincarnation of a Pinkas'** is related as follows:

> 'The Zamość *Hevra-Kadisha* has a *Pinkas* that is nearly two hundred years old, which from an historic ans ethnographic standpoint, the *Pinkas* has a colossal value. It was in the custody of the

*Gabbai* Mr. **Emmer**, who died not very long ago. Immediately after his death, the *Pinkas* vanished, and hope was given up of finding it. Suddenly, it became known that the Messrs. Joseph Goldgraber and Joseph Weintraub had purchased the Pinkas from the son-in-law of the *Gabbai*, Mr. **Hilf,** for 200 gulden, a sum that he owed. It is even difficult to understand what these two '*Yosselakh*' [259]found so strongly in needing the *Pinkas* of the *Hevra-Kadisha*, but it is only a question about a deed!... Our congregation, being aware that for such an item, hundreds of zlotys are paid, quickly sent a threatening letter to the two '*Yosselakh*' that they should return the Pinkas. The latter, intimidated by the threats, turned over the Pinkas to Mr. Margolis.'[260]

In a notice about: '**For the Sanatorium in Krasnobrod,**' we read:

'At 4 PM on Saturday July 21, at the location of '*Linat Tzedek*' there was a broader consultation about initiating the construction of the sanatorium in Krasnobrod. Twenty invited citizens from the city were invited to take part in the advisory session.

H. Y. Margolis was elected as the Chairman of the meeting. The proposal of Mr. Y. Rosen was taken up, that those members of the leadership of '*Linat Tzedek*' from the city, should be co-opted into the building committee. The following gentlemen were elected to the building committee: A. Inlander, N. Garfinkel, Y. Margolis, and Sh. Epstein, who will help to realize the plan for erecting the sanatorium for the needy sick in Krasnobrod.

To this end, the previously mentioned committee will travel there, together with Engineer Mr. Margolis, who will develop the plan for the building.'

In this edition, there is also reporting from Raphael: 'A Walk Through the Half-Colony of TOZ and correspondence from the vicinity – from **Rajowiec** and **Ustyluh**.

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After a longer break, we have number (42) 20 of 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' of Friday, 12 Tishri 5698 – October 7, 1938. The graphic appearance of the masthead has been altered. The sub-heading is not the same here as in prior editions, 'Bi-Weekly Community Organ,.' but rather, '**Progressive Community Periodical**.' We are missing the editions in between, and therefore we do not know when this change was instituted. The character of the periodical is also a different one. In this edition, there are the following articles:

Observer – On the Threshold of the New Year;

As one leafs through the names (an interesting document about a transmittal from the year 1886);

**Leib Goldgraber** – Jews of the Covered Walkways (Miniature);

Yaakov Neimark, one of the active writers of the 'Zamośćher *Stimme*' of the prior editions, now already is writing letters from Tel Aviv.

We have said that the character of the paper is entirely another one – the **Jewish Community Chronology** is almost entirely absent. The section, 'What Is Heard About the City,' is largely filled out with official representations, with criminal notices, and things of that sort. Seeing as we have only one edition from that period, it is not [necessarily] characteristic of the times. In the edition at hand, which is from Tishri, there indeed is an article 'On the Threshold of the New Year' an oversight about Jewish life in Zamość. It is the last year of the eve of the Holocaust, and for that reason, we present this article as it was published. We obtain a sort of mirror of the condition of Jewish Zamość on the eve of the destruction of the community.

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259 Yiddish diminutive for the plural of 'Joseph.' An attempt to refer to the two 'Josephs' in a disparaging manner.

260 Also see the extract from the *Lubliner Tageblatt* on page 321. Undoubtedly, these news items were shared by more than one periodical.

'It is not an easy task to make a summary fo the year that has just passed, of Jewish life in Zamość. Wherever one turns to, one is seized by a fear. Apathy and frozen inaction have become our daily bread. But, more than anything, all of us have been impacted by the

**Economic Crisis**

The process of pauperization, even though it is already well understood, has made the Jewish economic crisis even deeper. A large number of '*ovshemitten*,' (the well-known word coined by the Polish anti-Semitic leadership, indicating that it is permissible to compete economically with the Jews, that this is allowed '*Ovshem.*') have been added to the backs of the storekeepers, already overburdened with taxes, who through bribed 'idealists,' inspired picketing of the Jewish stores. But this annihilation scheme went even further this year. It affected even the Jewish craftsmen and ordinary working people. It was in this way that the decision came down – Jewish drivers would not be permitted into the (military) provisioning. All of this had multiplied the deepening of our economic ruin.

**City Council**

Despite the fact that we Jews comprise over 50 percent of the Zamość population, our presence in the city council is minimal. We have no influence whatsoever over the budgets. Our subsidies get leaner and less. Also, this year, positions were eliminated for Jewish institutions. However, our councilmen accept all of this passively, not attempting to protest very often. If there is anything to emphasize that was positive, it was the 'familiar' good-spirited presentation of councilman (Meir) S t e r n f i n k e l (the councilman from the *Bund*, who came out sharply against the government program of exterminating the Jews, his presentation nearly got him sent to the concentration camp in Berezo). Everything else can be summed up with one word — Nothing .

**The Congregation**

The state in the congregation is well known to the Jewish community. The old incumbents, who have driven the economy of the congregation to its complete ruin, are holding onto power in their hands forcibly, making their influence felt wherever it is needed, in order that the new leadership not be given access to running activities. Let us hope that the oversight authorities will take note of this, that such a stasis cannot be allowed to continue, and that the newly-elected congregation [leaders] will be permitted to perform productive work.

If above we have delineated a decline in Jewish community life, let us at least say, that in the area of culture we did make very great strides.

**Schools**

The Yiddish Gymnasium, which had gone through a sever crisis a number of years ago, has come back somewhat. The Jewish community, in the end, began to understand the meaning of having its own middle school. In a large measure, it was this that, in a short time, caused the Yiddish Gymnasium to begin serving the surrounding province as well.

Also, the *Tarbut* School, even though it was relatively new, had already put down deep roots in the Jewish life of the city. The Jewish parents are striving to give their children a national education. In addition, the activists of the *Tarbut* strive to create this possibility. And it is so, through the collective exertion of the parents and the Tarbut activists, that much is being accomplished on the educational front.

TOZ has received special recognition on the cultural front with its 'Children's Home.' Sixty poor little children from homes where parents require assistance, get an upbringing there and are sustained in wholesome airy rooms of the same building.

To this, we must add that the 'Brenner' Library had developed nicely, which is stocked with the newest Yiddish and Polish books, for the Jewish reading public.

The activity of the Peretz Library has been started up again. However, in the area of speeches and Yiddish Theater, we have suffered greatly this year. Absolutely no public talks were given at all this year, and the Yiddish Theater has great difficulties in obtaining permission to perform at all in Zamość.

And what was the appearance of the activity of the

**Community Institutions**

In first position, we find TOZ with a broad-based extensively branched program of providing food, which lasted for 4 winter months. Afterwards came a great deal of preoccupation with the summer programs: colonies, half-colonies, and other works, which were under the general umbrella of TOZ activities.

After it, this year, after a year of doing nothing, the 'Linat Tzedek' renewed its activity. A group of community activists fired with ardor and commitment, developed a good piece of work.

It is necessary, at this point, to underscore the fact that the '*Gemilut Hasadim*' Fund of the city and the *Neustadt* are carrying on a sleepy level of activity. True, the work is ongoing, a little bit of money is distributed, some is collected and then distributed again....on a daily basis. If the institutions would only become a little more animated, creating a greater interest in the community, and in general for these community institutions that are so important.

We will not speak of other institutions, because, unfortunately, we cannot discern of there is any activity at all.

The **United Zamośćher Relief and the Ladies' Auxiliary of America** have come to the aid of native community endeavors.

Both societies responded warmly to the need in Zamość, and sent larger sums of money from which the needy Jewish populace drew benefit. However, the allocation of the monies, according to the proportion of activity, was regrettably a bad one.

At the end of this overview, there is a short addendum about 'Parties and Organizations.' In our introduction to the Zamośćher *Stimme*, we have already taken note of the fact that this periodical was under the control of *Poalei Tzion*. Therefore, it is understandable that this section of reporting is filled exclusively with the activities of that movement. In general, the 'Observator' is correct when he remarks that about other institutions, we will not speak, because '**we, regrettably, do not know anything about their activities...**' This circumstance and approach is understandable from a partisan product. We have incorporated the essential part of this report, because we find a portrait here of the economic and socio-political condition of Jewish Zamość.

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*Page 674:* *The Leadership of the Jewish Manual Trades in Zamość. Passover 1938.*

There is, yet again, a large break, and we have an edition of **Zamośćher *Stimme*** from Friday, 22 Sivan 5699, this means July 9, 1939 (57) – 11, and this is already the last year before the destruction – these are the last printed greetings that we have from our city.

Mostly, this edition is dedicated to the city council elections in Zamość, which took place in May 1939.

The lead article, dedicated to the elections, tells about the special 'geography' that was thought out, in order to reduce the number of Jewish representatives in the city council. From the Jewish rosters, mandates were received by the bloc of the *Bund*, and the Jewish Trade Unions, who received 4000 votes and [therefore] 5 mandates; the *Poalei Tzion - Hitakhdut*, 1869 votes and 1 mandate. The Jewish citizens party received no representation at all.

In the section, 'What Does One Hear In Zamość?' there is a notice-report about the result of the elections, which we reproduce here almost in its entirety:

> 'Saturday May 7 the senior election commission posted the final result of the city council elections. According to this result, 10 *Ozan-Endezia*, and 8 P. P. S. [representatives] were elected to the city council from the non-Jewish sectors, and it is worth noting in this connection, that a mandate was

obtained with 300 or 400 votes, whereas in the Jewish electoral districts, it was necessary to obtain many more votes.

In the 2 Jewish election districts, 1 councilman was elected – **Moshe Tzaller**, from the *Poalei Tzion - Hitakhdut* ticket, and the Trade Union classes, and 5 councilmen from the ticket: Trade Union classes and *Bund*. The following were elected from the previously mentioned ticket: **Meir Sternfinkel, Hinde Korngold, Yerakhmiel Brandwein, Benjamin Greenbaum,** and **Moshe Zaydl.**

The (Jewish) citizens tickets, which appeared consolidated, danced a 'solo.' Each candidate distributed only his own ticket, but they suffered a total defeat.

It is worth mentioning that the '*PoaleiTzion - Hitakhdut*' ticket was short only a few votes in order to capture 2 additional mandates.

On election day, it was seen that a rather large number of voters were not entered in the voting registry, and in one election district the list for the P. P. S. had a large number of ineligible votes.'

In that same section of the municipal chronology, there is also a report about the protest action against the British 'White Paper.[261]' From the report, it is possible to see that on May 22, Jewish businesses were supposed to be closed in protest, but 'because of unrelated reasons, the businesses were not closed at 2 in the afternoon.' The protest was expressed in a large meeting of the people, which took place in the Great Synagogue.

The report enumerates the following speakers: the Rabbi of the city, Blum, Israel Roset, Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, Joshua Rapaport, Leib Goldgraber, Moshe Schliam, and Yehuda Wagner.

The gathering was concluded with the singing of *Tekhezakna*, and again ;for unrelated reasons,' no protest resolution was passed.

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261 The White Paper of 1939 (also known as the MacDonald White Paper) was a statement of policy issued by the British in the wake of the St. James Conference. As the Conference failed to produce any realistic formulations for peace in Palestine, the British decided upon a new strategy for the handling the volatile situation in the region. In this new statement of policy, the British made concessions to the Arabs on a wide range of issues.

First, the Balfour Declaration was given a decidedly narrow interpretation. The Jews were promised that they could build a center for the Jewish people in Palestine; they were not promised that this center would develop into a Jewish state, as Zionists had hoped. As such, limitations limiting the expansion of the Jewish presence in Palestine were appropriate.

Since the British no longer envisioned a state with a Jewish majority, Jewish expansion was limited first and foremost by severely restricting Jewish immigration. According to the new policy, enough Jews had already immigrated to constitute a renewed Jewish community in Palestine, and any further immigration would unfairly prejudice Arab interests in the region. Thus, a quota was imposed which allowed for a maximum of 75,000 Jews to enter the country over a period of five years. Exceptions would be subject to Arab approval. These restrictions left Jewish residents of Palestine in a clear minority, dimming any hopes for sovereignty.

Another concession to the Arabs limited the amount of land in Palestine that could be purchased by Jews. The British argued that this policy was intended to aid Arab farmers, keeping the Arab economy from collapse. A series of regulations concerning the transfer of land was implemented by the High Commissioner of Palestine.

The issuing of such anti-Zionist policies sparked intense protests. Jews were outraged with the White Paper. The consequences of such limitations were clear in view of the growing stream of Jewish refugees fleeing Europe. In Britain the White Paper did not receive unanimous approval among government officials. Although the majority approved of the new policy, many vehemently opposed it, including Winston Churchill. Many claimed that the White Paper was in fact a breach in the Mandate.

There is also a report that a substantive protest meeting was carried out by the young people, under the initiative of the '*Freiheit*' and '*HaShomer HaTza'ir* youth organizations. There, the following spoke: Leib Goldgraber, the youth activists A. Rosen, and Mr. Lifschitz, the delegate of '*Tarbut* Central.'

The *Tarbut* society is further mentioned among the Jewish societies, as having proclaimed an initiative to add another floor to the *Tarbut* building. This initiative was announced by the representative of the central *Tarbut* office, Mr. Lifschitz. It is reported that the central *Tarbut* office has set aside 2,000 zlotys for this purpose, and the community has decided to donate 1,000 zlotys for this purpose.

An intriguing bit of information is given to us in this section about the community. Seeing that this notice reflects a veery important corner of the Jewish community life of the times, we reproduce this item verbatim:

**'The Community Budget Is Presented for Control.**

This week, the community leadership laid out the budget for the year 1939/40 for control purposes. The global budget did not, however, elicit any great interest, because all expenditures have been made in order to cover a variety of pending debts, which have resulted from the activities fo the previously elected community bodies.

The line item that now amounted to 536,30 zlotys, and had been increased by 50 percent over the prior year elicited a great deal of interest. Do understand, that errors are not missing from the current estimates, for example, 2 storekeepers in the same business, the weaker one was assessed 20 zlotys, and the stronger one 10 zlotys. Understand that this happened because the stronger one has some pull, and in this way, a whole array of errors were made with larger line items.

These kind of facts elicited a stormy reaction from the crowd, and justifiably so.'

In this edition there is also **an announcement** from the Zamość branch of TOZ about the colony. The announcement carries the shouting appeal **Remember the Preservation of the Generation!**

A couple of petals regarding anti-Semitic incitement are also not missing from this edition, which was carried by a local pamphlet 'Truth' (apparently *Pravda*). This time, [an accusation] that Jews had given less towards the 'Air Defense Loan.' The entire province had given a total of 677,400 zlotys, of which the Jews gave 'no more than' 146,080 zlotys...

We will also excerpt a rather short notice from this edition, even though it has no relationship to Jewish community life. On the last page we read:

**'Prison Labor Points in Tyszowce and Bialobrzegi'**

'In accordance with an order of the Justice Minister 2 prison labor points were opened in the local area. One such point was opened in the Zamość district in Bialobrzegi. In these prison labor camps, those who are serving their sentences will also have to do work.'

This notice demands a small clarification.

This was the time when it became common to establish 'camps,' – concentration camps and 'work camps.' Poland wanted to achieve parity with leading nations, and initially created the first concentration camp on **Kartusz-Berezo.** Later, already on the eve of the Nazi attack, the Justice Ministry began to implement the second manifestation: 'Labor Camps.' These are the 2 'locations for punishment' that the Zamośćher *Stimme* is describing. However, bitter fate decreed, that indeed within a year's time, in those points, especially Bialobrzegi, later became one of the most terrifying places of torture for Jews that were sent there, and one of the first of the labor camps in the Lublin district.

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With this, we conclude our chapter on 'Community Chronology' of the Zamość community. There is no doubt that this chronology is incomplete, first because it is casual, because it is fragmentary, because it is also possibly 'subjective' – it is derived from a periodical with a specific ideological color. However, we do see there, the broad extent, all the hues that had an impact on the Jewish 'rainbow' of Poland and its communities – which were destroyed.

Let these 'reports,' 'notices,' and 'chronologies' round out and complete those moments of our community, which for a variety of reasons may not have come to their total completion in our *Pinkas*.

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This C o m m u n i t y C h r o n o l o g y has been illustrated with a variety of documents and pictures which have a bearing on the period in question, and of the institutions that have been referenced.

# *Neustadt*

**By Wolf Kornmass**

## (The Location of Jewish Toil and Annihilation)

For the whole world, official and Jewish, Zamość was o n e city – and indeed a famous city. In the non-Jewish world, with its noble pedigree, with its name as 'The Polish Padua,' and to Jews, because of its great exponents of the Torah, and wisdom, which came from there, or had an influence in Zamość itself. During our generations, and more correctly, in the last century, Zamość became especially popular as the birthplace of the great Yitzhak Leibusz P e r e t z .

This is what the outside world perceived. He truth, however, is that Zamość consisted of t h r e e almost entirely separate cities. Separate in appearance, different in its populace, which resided in these sections of the city, differing in the internal conduct and external relationships – it created an impression as if there were three completely unrelated cities.

These three sections were called: **Altstadt, Neustadt** and **Browar**. The real Zamość , meaning the official city, mostly consisted of concrete-walled one and two story houses; there were also three story and even four story structures, such as the 'Polish Kamienitsa' for example. The houses were decorated and festooned with architectural ornamentation. Her were the official municipal and national institutions; the representative buildings – the banks, the courts, the *Kozioner Rabbiner*[262]...the constantly clean and scrubbed paved streets always mad a festive holiday-like impression, implying that we were just getting ready for a reception of distinguished guests, or possibly a military parade; here was also the entertainment center, theaters, and a cinema; here, the large businesses could also be found, bureaus and merchant houses – this part was called the **Der Stadt**, or the **Altstadt**.

**Neustadt**, which was a subdivision only a half a kilometer away, through **Lemberg** Way, was the opposite of the *Altstadt*. There were no concrete-walled houses, that could be seen – the *Neustadt* was built up mostly from wooden houses; the streets, apart from the center, were not paved, but were muddy, even though they were quite wide. At first glance, that some sort of bold optimist had, sort of, with intent quartered up the *Neustadt* with wide street of this kind, so that one part should be as far as possible form another. The *Neustadt* had four marketplaces, large locations, which all year, apart from the market fair days, remained bare, and radiated an abandonment, not being mindful of the fact that here, indeed, one did see a concrete-walled house.

The **Browar**, was separated from the *Altstadt* by barely a kilometer of distance on the **Lublin** way. Indeed, this was the only paved street that connected the 'Browar' to the city. Later, another paved street was added, which led to the jail, which was located on the way to Janowica. There was a quip the people would say: 'He's being taken on the Janowica' – meaning to jail.

Why this section of Zamość was called 'Browar,' I do not know, possibly it was because at one time there may have been a brewery there.

These three sections of Zamość were not only different in their external structure, which immediately hit the eye of anyone who entered Zamość; also, the residents of these separate three areas, established relationships of such a nature, that it would appear to be three separate cities.

It was particularly seen in Jewish life ( it would be more correct to say **heard,** because contentious disputes, fights, not rarely involving the trading of blows, divided these separate areas of the Jewish community). The *Altstadt* took the upper hand in this, as in all community issues. The Altstadt had the lead, whether in all spiritual matters from the outset, or in representation – by sending representatives to the municipal or national institutions, by sending delegates to other communities and so forth.

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262 Formal Russian designation of the seat of the official Rabbi of the location.

The 'Browar' never put up a protest in this connection, that it was being ignored. It was almost 'understandable,' because the Jewish settlement there was small, and did not create its own institutions and therefore did not have any pretensions.

In general, the '**Browar**' thought of itself as a part of the *Altstadt*, especial after the construction of the large military barracks, and all manner of contractors and jobbers came to live there. All the employees of the government lived in the 'Browar,' (including Jews), and the functionaries of the police, whether uniformed, or secret.

*Neustadt,* however, could not, and would not, put up with this; *Neustadt* would protest; *Neustadt* – both with a larger number of Jews, and a different class of people, which was there – common Jewish people, laborers, which had built up an array of institutions, felt imposed on, and thought that the Altstadt exhibited too much power and independent control.

Out of dissatisfaction and protests, there was a transition to even more shape and competitive deeds, until it came to the condition that the *Neustadt* became entirely stand-alone; it declared itself a separate community with its own dignitaries, even with its own Rabbi. In time, they built their own bath and mikva. In a word – *Neustadt* became a town like all other towns in Poland. With its own institutions, own representatives.

Altstadt had to consent to this, and recognized the situation. True, in one important point, there was an integration of all three parts, indeed, for the elections of the community; here, the general governmental administration did not recognize the 'autonomy' of *Neustadt.* The community existed for all three parts. It is also true that Neustadt had its own interests, and would put up its own tickets, or it would associate with others in voting blocs who would guarantee the interests of the Neustadt. Also the cemetery was for general use.

Before we proceed further, let us tell the history of this part of the city.

## Why a *Neustadt*?

In the historical section, we have previously described the fact that Zamość, at the outset, was constructed as a fortress city. A water canal surrounded the city, and entrance to the city was by way of three bridges, which connected with three city gates. Their names were taken from the direction in which they led: the **Lemberg** Gate (*Broma Lwowska*), the **Lublin** Gate (*Broma Lubelska*) and the **Szczebrzeszyn** Gate (*Broma Szczebrzesynkc*). The last was located near the current Catholic Church, which was reconstructed from the prior church of the fortress.

We, the people of Zamość, would call the gates by the name '*Brom.*' We used to say: *Die Lemberger **Brom**, Lubliner **Brom**,* etc.

As a fortress city, with military and appointees, Zamość became a large commercial center. The city was constantly full of merchants – wether from the large cities, or from the small surrounding towns, who would purchase the merchandise for their businesses. Apart from the merchants' fair, many different sorts of people would come often to the city, senior military personnel, and inspectors; Zamość was also full of a variety of support personnel for the military, with all manner of franchise-holders from the estates of the nobleman Zamoyski; a variety of jobbers and factors. A number of these factors already remained here permanently, and even acquired that as a name. Who anymore knows the right name of **Ikheleh Factor**?

Coming into, and going out of Zamość all day, were a steady stream of carts, coaches, laden wagons, and wagons with lumber (we in Zamość referred to them as **brikehs**). This went on until 9 o'clock at night. Then the bridges would be raised and the city gates were locked. After subjecting them to control, the keys to the city were transferred to the commandant of the fort. Until the following morning, nobody, legally, could come into or go out of Zamość. It was told, that one time, a really senior military official, a 'right hand man,' of the Czar himself, had to spend the night out in the open (behind the gates to the fort), because he arrived after the time that the gates had been closed.

As a result of this process, behind the city gates, from night-to-night, a large number late arrivals would accumulate, and also travelers on foot. It often happened that entire caravans with carts and coaches had to spend the night under the open skies. It was not until Zamość got the railroad, that there was unrestricted entry into the city.

This continued for so long, until a Jew, whose name no one remembers any longer (there are some who believe that this was Itcheh Vigdor's great-great-grandfather), received permission to erect a hostel, an inn, about a half kilometer from the fortress. This was the decree that gave permission to enable building to take place at a distance removed from the fortress. He built his inn on the Lemberg tract and all the wagons and coaches and hauling vehicles that couldn't get to the city before the city gates were locked, all these latecomers, would immediately ride over to the inn, where they had an overnight place for their horses and wagons. Also, these amenities were utilized by those who had no set place to stay in the city where they were traveling to, or those who wanted to travel into the city in the morning, having rested themselves.

With time, it became apparent that this arrangement had many virtues, and the stream of traffic to this inn grew stronger, and the single inn was no longer handle so many guests – both customers for rest and overnight guests. Then, a second inn was built, opposite Itcheh Vigdor's the inn that later belonged to Yudel Koenig's parents. After that, a third one was built.

Seeing as the inns were not only for the use of transients, but also for those who came with horses and wagon, each inn needed to have a rather open and wide place around itself, which caused over time for a rather large four-sided stretch of land to be developed which divided up the land from one side of the Lemberg road into quarters, and ended at the bridge from the Lemberg Gate. It occupied the two cross streets, one of which led to Hrubieszow and the second to the Wilko River. Later, these very streets took on the names **Bomba-Gasse** and **Hrubieszow Gasse**.

These inns services not only those who came via the Lemberg road. Also, the late-coming travelers from the Lublin tract, having missed being able to get into the city, would come to this point. This was how the so-called '*Wikrent*' came into being, that made use of the water that surrounded the Altstadt; which stretches from the Lublin Gate to the inns, of the Lemberg road. The '*Wikrent*' was later paved, and decorated on both sides with trees, and this alley was one of the most beloved strolling places of the young people. If a guest would come to the city, then he would be taken to this alley. Along this alley, not only once, after the Sabbath speeches, the speakers would often stroll – I recollect Peretz Markish, Melekh Ravitch, Joseph Opotashu, Duber Maklin, and others.

There is also an opinion held, that when the Zamoyskis were in the process of developing a vineyard, that this suburb was to be built on the sam plan as the city itself. An indication of this can be seen in the fact that the first inns (the beginning of this settlement) that were built, had covered sidewalks in front (sic: **potchinehs**) – true they were wooden, with wooden overheads, but they were covered walkways nonetheless, analogous to the ones in the city around the main city council building. Several of them remained up to the last Nazi destruction. We remember them – the wooden covered walkways, that stretched from the houses of Zalman Pflug to Hirsch Fyer, and from Itcheh Vigdor's to Abraham Meilekh's (the carpenter).

With the coming of the built up half-circle ('Wikrent') from the Lublin Gate to the 'Wilko.'[263] The number of inns grew substantially. The four principal locations were already built, mostly with inns, and the location near the post office was starting to get built up, which at that time was one of the few concrete-walled buildings in the area.

A portion of these inns remained until the time that I left Zamość in 1928, such as the inn of Moshe **Fashovich**, or Fashevich, where one could get the authentic type of 'home cooked' food. Around the inns, ordinary dwellings began to grow, belonging to working people, traders, smiths, sole makers, harness makers, owners of grazing areas for cattle, and in general, places for those class of people for whom acquisition of a home in the city would have been difficult; many other forms of livelihood spring up around the inns, and the entire neighborhood becomes quickly built up, with small single story wooden houses and quickly a housing shortage develops – and residences are snapped up.

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263 Author's Footnote: '*Wilko*' was the former name of the area.

This quick growth of this suburb was aided by the fact that the market day fairs would take place 'on the Wiko,' near the river. The peasants would bring their produce and live inventory from the surrounding villages, for sale. Working people who worked on a daily basis, and merchants, would bring their finished goods to sell. Cattle dealers and grain merchants wold come to buy; horse dealers to sell, trade or buy horses; fair days in our time took place every Thursday, and brought together large masses from the surrounding villages, with their local regional costumes, and a mix of the various dialects. Zamość was located on the boundary of Poland, Wester Ukraine, and Galicia, where the population was a mixed one.

All of this raised up the surrounding area, and caused streets to begin being built, which give the **Wilko** the appearance of a city and it was then that it obtained the name *Nowa Osada*, which Jews started to call **Neustadt.**

## Markets of the *Neustadt*

It is indeed because of the large fairs that the Neustadt was built differently from the majority of the Jewish villages of Poland. Because of this, it is worth reviewing how the new streets began to be 'built;' and how the various *balebatim* began to form in these places.

As previously mentioned, the frequent fairs would draw masses of merchants to Zamość from cities and towns from near and far. On the night before the fair, merchants would already have arrived, both from the Altstadt, and from far away, and take hold of a place to set up a 'stand' – which was called a **budkeh** by us (a stall).
There was competition for a 'good' location, meaning near the main streets. It therefore occurred, that a number of the merchants would arrive on the previous night, take possession of a location, and even spend the night there, until the morning. This often involved arguments and even coming to blows.

In that period, there was also an institution of the '*Nod-Strazhnik*'[264] in the *Neustadt*. There calling was, indeed, to assure order in the 'allocation of places.' They also assured that situations potentially leading to violence were defused. Among their functions, also came the duty, or right, to inspect the wagons and to see what was being brought in. It is entirely possible that this was connected to the fact that this was close to the border, and that Zamość was a fortress city. We would attempt to translate the term, '*Nod-Strazhnik*, as an elision of '*Nacht-Strazhnik*,'[sic: a Night Watchman]. Among the *Nodstrazhnikehs* were Jews. In our time, there was a person named 'Bereleh Nodstrazhnik' who was till alive, who had not performed this function for a long time already.

A period was ushered in with the payment of protection money, with interventions, whoever had whatever sort of way, made an attempt to persuade the Zamoyskis, or their administrators to grant them a permanent place, which then developed into a franchise location. Such an individual had, already, to live in the *Neustadt*, because otherwise, such a franchise didn't work. (After some time, such franchises were even transferred as a dowry).

In the construction of the four new streets, it was necessary to take into account not to damage the inns, and also not to block the peasants who used to come to the fairs. Each of the inns had two substantial gates – one at the front, of the four principal establishments, and one for the rear portion. This caused all subsequent construction of the area to be don on four smaller plots. On a fair day, these too would be full of peasant wagons, those that came without having a place designated for them in advance.

These are the four streets which formed the most important center around the areas:

Two stretched lengthwise with the Hrubieszow *Gasse* (which we called *Rabishoyver*). One began on the north side of the Lemberg Gasse, at Yossel'eh Chana-Feiga's inn, the later one which connected up with the location of the firehouse (a large wooden building, where the fire fighters stored their equipment), and took the form of the letter *daled* [e.g. two sides of a rectangle], crossing the Hrubieszow Gasse – this was to become the horse market in later times.

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[264] From the Russian word for a watchman.

The second street began behind the inn where Chaim Aharon-Leib's (Chaim Zimring, or Chaim Rofeh) had his hair-dressing salon, and stretched by Leibusz Szyfer's bakery, up to the White Mekhl's, the place near Synagogue and the Bet HaMedrash – what was later the **pig market**. Here also a *daled* took shape against the Hrubieszow *Gasse*, near Avremelh Notteh's.

The other two streets were on the south side of the Lemberg Way.

One began behind Maleshevsky's inn, near Aharon Golda's, which stretched behind Tischberg's oil factory up to Abraham Manz's mill and oil factory, also forming a *daled*, up to the Bomba *Gasse* near the inn where Dovidl Junever lived, and Yankel Kalman's (a son of Kalman the musician) – here was the **cattle market**.

The second street on this side began from the Lemberg Way behind Itcheh Vigdor's inn. From behind Zwerin's pharmacy location up to the bath street, curving through Melekh Stoller, to the Bomba *Gasse* and ending behind the inn that later belonged to Dovid-Leib the manufacturer of soda water.

Having the topography of the new settlement to the rear in one's eye, it is then possible to see the entire physiognomy; were have here, in appearance and construction of the city, its economic foundation – the inns; we also see that the entire construction of the city is adapted to cater for the fairs – that which was not desired in the haughty, finely decorated Altstadt, the noise, tumult of cattle, horses and pigs; the shouts of merchants and traders; the entire appearance and animal droppings that remains after a fair...

We also see, according to the names of the balebatim of the various owners of the houses, occupations and institutions, that here, everyone knew one another – there was no one with pedigree family connections. For the large majority, family names were not even known. They were called by the way they looked (**White** Mekhl), after their families (either their father or mother), after their occupations, and very often with their nicknames.

## Their Own Community Life

It is a new settlement, which was brought into being by a common folk element of the people.

A will begins to take shape for a stand-alone community life. It is far to go to synagogue into the city. A *Bet HaMedrash* of their own is desired, and their own Rabbi. Disputes persist – we have heard of their genesis only through the reverberations in a variety of legends, stories that are passed from mouth to mouth in the course of generations. There is no doubt, that in these tales, times and names get strongly mixed up. According to certain tales, such differences took place already between the *Altstadt* and the *Neustadt*, at the time that Chmielnicki organized his Cossack rebellion, which is connected to his murder and destruction of Jewish communities of Poland, Russia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, and the surrounding vicinity.

According to these oral transmissions the *Neustadt* already had a significant number of Jews at the time of Chmielnicki's assault on the city, who fled their outlying dwellings for [the safety of] the fortified city. It is difficult to be accurate about this. One thing is clear, that Zamość already had a significant number of buildings, and residents from outside of the boundary formed by its fortress walls and canals. As we have already indicated in a prior place the inspection of Zamość in the year 1591 tells us that there were 217 buildings, of which 175 were inside the municipal fortress, and the remainder on the periphery. Without a doubt, a significant count of the houses on the periphery (more than 40) were allocated for the *Neustadt*, the largest of the suburbs.

We also know, that the last urban plan for the *Neustadt* was worked out in the year 1822. This does not, however, mean, that the construction of the *Neustadt* from the outset was not carried out using the Altstadt as a model. This was attempted even without a [formal] plan.

According to the tales we have referred to, during the Chmielnicki march, and the attack on Zamość, the Jewish residents (we have presented this earlier – see pp. 175-178 ans 229-230) fled into the fortified city. They returned only

after Chmielnicki was smashed. However, they did not return alone, along with them, came many refugees from the villages and smaller towns, who fled Chmielnicki's slaughtering, and entered fortified Zamość, and did not return to their prior places of residence. It was hard for them to remain in Zamość; the crowding at that time was very great; the shortage of housing was awful, and only those with means were able to have the luxury of living in the city proper. The poorer element, that did not travel back to the communities that were destroyed by the Chmielnicki bands, was drawn into the *Neustadt*. They took up residence in the wooden houses. In general, the Neustadt, at that time, consisted of only wooden houses.

By that time, the *Neustad*t was populated by non-Jewish residents. These were the type that had come to the suburb during Chmielnicki's siege, found empty 'free' houses and took possession of them. (As the story is retold...) The *Neustadt* was no longer an exclusively Jewish neighborhood. However, up to the Holocaust (even before the ghetto was created in the *Neustadt* for all of the Jews of Zamość), the Jewish part of the *Neustadt* was the dominant one.

Later on, the Neustadt began to expand in area. After the failed Polish uprising, when they began to quarter military forces in Zamość, barracks were also constructed in the *Neustadt* on Margolis' property. Margolis himself was the one who actually undertook and carried out this particular construction (it is told that from this contract, he emerged bankrupt).

These barracks were later known as **Chaim Fanisker's Yard**. A second barracks, also in the *Neustadt*, was built in **Itcheh'leh Dechter's** houses. Later on, they were known as Melekh Stoller's houses.

It became quickly evident, that thanks to the fairs, thanks to the military, and large building development, and the addition of population, the *Neustadt* became an important center of commerce that competed strongly with the city. The economic positions of the *Altstadt* began to get sapped. A thought process began regarding methods for bringing back commercial activity to the *Altstadt*. Delegations went to wherever it was necessary and worked out arrangements to take down the fort; that the status as a fortress be taken away from Zamość, and that the city be declared an open city.

This, equally, was in the interests of the rulers in Moscow, who did not want to have a fortified city in Poland, where the 'revolutionaries' could fortify themselves. Angry tongues spoke out at that time, indicating that the amount of bribery that was paid to take down the bridges was greater than the original cost of constructing them...

In general, Zamość ceased to be a point with military-strategic value. A manifestation of this change, was the fact that in the tower of the Rathaus, a fireman stood watch in place of a soldier. With his trumpet, he no longer had to sound the alarm about the approach of an enemy army, but rather just sound the alarm about a fire in the city itself, or in the nearby villages and towns.

A sort of economic competition arose, between the two parts of the city. Seeing as, in population, the *Neustadt* was not very different from the *Altstadt*, the attitude of the *Altstadt* to the *Neustadt* remained lofty, as is the case where people of pedigree look down on people of a lower station in life.

A situation worked itself out over time such that when a Jew from the Neustadt needed to go resolve some sort of a matter in the Altstadt — all the official offices of the regime were there — he needed to dress himself in his festival wear. He need to don his Sabbath *kapoteh*, shine his boots, and, as you can understand, put on a white shirt. And such a Neustadt person would come to the Altstadt (with us, we also used to say, 'going into the city') the city hoi polloi would shout after him: *'Neustadter Leshnikehs*[265]*'* (Forest People). Because of this, fights would often break out between the hoi polloi from both parts of Zamość, in which serious blows were traded.

In general, when we *Heder* kids from the *Neustadt* would come into the city, on Saturday after taking our meal, we would go in specific groups for two reasons. Firstly, the street that connected the *Neustadt* with the *Altstadt* was 90 percent occupied by Christians. We did not have the certainty that one or another of them might not fall upon us to

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[265] The Russian dictionary defines a '*leshnik*' as a wood-goblin, or a satyr...

accost a *zhid*.... if we are in a group, we would not permit this to happen. Secondly, if the toughs from the *Altstadt* should fall upon us, we would be in a position to defend ourselves accordingly.

I remember that that first slap I received (I think from Lejzor Gandz) was for this reason, that I was a *Neustadter Leshnik* and had the temerity to come into the orchards of the city to pick good fruit.

In time, a silent antipathy developed between the two parts of Zamość. There were Jews in the city who never set foot in the *Neustadt*; for someone of stature in the city to come to the *Neustadt* implied a form of lowering one's self from a higher place... it was simply not worth crawling two kilometers in order to have a look at a muddy new city. On an exceptional occasion, one would 'lower one's self' – when it was necessary to attend a happy occasion, or to make a distinction, a tragic occasion at the home of a relative or a *mekhutan*. Having relatives or *mekhutonim* in the *Neustadt* was already enough of a blot....

This contributed to the fact that the *Neustadt* began to deliberate that it should have its own community life. It was not necessary to deliberate, since it arose on its own. That everything should be of its own – its own religious leaders, its own community leaders, its own Rabbi, a bath house and mikva of its own, even its own *Hevra-Kadisha* with its own treasury. Later on, additional independent social institutions were added.

There was something else characteristic: apart from the community and religious activity in **Jewish** life, which was strongly visible in all aspects – up to disputes and fights – the Christian population manifested an indifference to the local community life, they did not even go so far as to construct either a church or a temple in the *Neustadt*. The only 'patriots' from '*Nowa Osada*' was to be found in the Jewish populace. Therefore, the *Neustadt* was a purely **Jewish** city, and contained within it, everything that a village required, including slaughterhouses, a council with a Rathaus (we called it the *Koza*).

The Christians would view their Jewish neighbors with envy, when they go to synagogue on the Sabbath at such a leisurely pace, not having to run two kilometers into the *Altstadt*, as they would have to do every Sunday to go to church – whether it was in the winter at the time of the bitterest cold, or summer, in the hottest of the heat. The only thing that provided them with any memory of a church, was the bell, which stood in one of the four principal marketplaces. However this bell did not serve the Christian faith, it rang only in the event of a fire in the *Neustadt* or in the nearby villages. In such an instance, four or six of the hoi polloi would grab hold of the chain of the bell and it would clang with a frightful ring, to the point where it would not be possible to sleep that night. The Christians, who lived in the Neustadt and the surrounding villages, indeed, from time-to-time would send delegations to the Burgomaster, or the City Elder, that some sort of a place should be built for them for their prayers, but nothing ever came of it. They didn't have a single initiative or any will. Up untill the Holocaust, the *Neustadt* did not have a Catholic Church or [Christian] Temple.

Together with the synagogue and the [principal] *Bet HaMedrash*, a variety of smaller *Batei Medrashim* were started to be built (in the *Neustadt* they were called 'little schuls'), as for example, the Tailor's Synagogue, the Butcher's Little Synagogue. Apart from these, private prayer quorums also existed, where prayers were recited on the Sabbath and Festivals. Such were: Aharon-Leib's *minyan*; Yitzhak Stoller's *minyan*. Later on, the same Yitzhak Stoller organized the Yeshiva in his houses.

The Yeshiva was founded in the year 1915, during the time of the Austrian occupation. The leading citizens of the city did not have any other option, and they had to come to the *Neustadt* to visit the Yeshiva. It is necessary to add here that the high class city Jews really did help a great deal, seeing to it that the Yeshiva should have its first commencement. The Headmaster of the Yeshiva was indeed the *Neustadt* scion **Hirscheleh Friedling**, later the Rabbi of Biskupice, near Krasznik, and afterwards in a Warsaw suburb. The Chief-Rabbi was his brother Israel-Yekhiel Friedling, a truly sharp mind, filled, it would seem, only with Torah. The entire administration and finances was held in the hands of the city. The Yeshiva-Gabbai Itcheh-Meir Cohn (a gold merchant) needed to be in the Yeshiva on a daily basis to concern himself with all of the financial issues. To help him, there stood Mendele, the son-in-law from the Neustadt of Abraham Manzim. And also the son of A. Manzim – Yankeleh Manzim. In reality, this was the material bulwark of the Yeshiva.

There were other Jews from Zamość who also helped in a variety of ways. I hope they will pardon me for not mentioning their names – I was altogether eleven years old at that time, and I simply no longer remember as well as I used to.

The Yeshiva quickly became popular, and in a matter of a few months, it grew to a large educational institution with six grades, where approximately two hundred children went to school. There was also a special class which was called '*Yoreh Deyah.*[266]' In this class, Blind Shmuel also learned, which was a real phenomenon. He did not know the shape of a single letter of the alphabet (he became blind at about a half year of age). They used to come to him with an open book and say: – Shmuel, I am holding the Tractate of Gittin, such-and-such a page – and Blind Shmuel would begin to recite from that place that the questioner had specified. (He later became renown as 'The Blind Maggid').

The Yeshiva did not last long. Quarreling began between the *Altstadt* and the *Neustadt*, and to the year, the Yeshiva was closed down. (It was also said that the reason was that Yitzhak Stoller had died, and there was no one else to admonish and give direction to the factions).

Apart from this, the *Neustadt* also had may Hasidic *shtiblach*, allied with a variety of Rabbinical courts. Because the Enlightened *Altstadt* did not permit a Hasidic Rabbi to enter there, the various *Hasidim* exerted themselves to have their *shtibl* in the *Neustadt*, where no one would disturb them. The policy of not permitting entry to a Hasidic Rabbi stood fast until 1929. At that time, a Rebbe took up permanent residence in Zamość, who was a grandson, or son, of the *Cuzmirer Rebbe*, but this individual also did not take up residence in the city proper, but had to live in **Browar**...

When Hasidic Rebbes would travel through Zamość, they lodged only in the *Neustadt*. At that time, the *Neustadt* took on a completely different look, almost not like a Thursday market fair day, to make a difference. Now, the *Neustadt* would become full of guests, whether they were Jews from the city, or people who had traveled in from the surrounding villages. The big shots from the city, pitifully, would have to slog through the muddy *Neustadt* streets on a Friday evening; coming their in their Sabbath finery. Some came to sit at the Rebbe's *Tisch*[267], while others came 'to observe' the Rebbe. For a part of them, this would be the only time, or a rare occasion, on which they we seen in the *Neustadt*, or '**Neushtetl**,' as some of them would condescendingly refer to it.

This sort of way-of-life held on in the Neustadt until shortly before the 'fifth' year (the year 1905, the stormy year of the revolution in Czarist Russia). At that time, Zamość in general was shaken, and the Neustadt also began to undergo a little change in its passivity and indifference to the surrounding political and economic struggle, which was being carried out at that time.

The events of the 'fifth' brought to a head that a part of the youth of the city that took part in the revolutionary movement, had to flee out of the country and thanks to the movement, they began to wipe off the antagonism among the Enlightened youth, and from the *Neustadt*, young elements grew out, that began to assume prominent positions in the active community life of Zamość.

The importance of the *Neustadt* continues to grow in the view of the city fathers, and the level of interest grows in the *Neustadt*, and it was at that time that three of the principal plazas of the *Neustadt* are paved. A concrete bridge is built in place of the wooden one, at the place where the dirty runoff water flows from all sides of the city, and come together, now in a controlled stream into the Wilko. I am referring to the bridge near Aharon-Golda's business on one side, and Israel-Meir's saloon on the second side.

An autobus line begins to run from Bajan's metallurgical factory (indeed in the *Neustadt*). The Neustadt begins to regard itself as an important place.

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266 This is the name of one of the famous volumes of Maimonides.

267 Literally, the 'Table.' Actually, a ritual – around a table – where food was taken, and the Rebbe offered his 'wisdom' to those who partook in food with him.

# Community Activities

When the war breaks out in 1914, discussions begin quietly about certain young people, who 'run' every night into the city for meetings of a type that one doesn't even want to form on one's lips – especially the young people from the Hrubieszow *Gasse*.

Let us use this opportunity to note, that of the four principal streets that formed the center of the *Neustadt*, meaning the long Lemberg *Gasse* (that we used to divide up into the 'Szczecin Way' and 'To the Post Office') and the two cross streets, – the *Bomba* Gasse, and the Hrubieszow *Gasse*, it was from the Hrubieszow *Gasse* that we would always hear things. That was where the Rabbi Yankeleh Itkeh's lived, and as long as I remember, Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Hurwitz, who was killed during the Nazi era by Polish hooligans.

Also, all of the leaders of the various societies, religious leaders, and ordinary 'God's Cossacks' (as we would call the fiercely observant pious Jews), lived on this Hrubieszow *Gasse*. On the other side of the street, lived the leaders of the underworld, and just plain strong-arm types, which not only once were utilized to shake things up (with their 'strong-arm arguments') at the time of the religious disputes. Such an instance took place at the time of the dispute between Bereleh Friedling and the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*, for which Shmuel-Yossel'eh *Mussar*[268] was employed.

Moshe Abeles also lived on the Hrubieszow Gasse, who had an unusually great influence on the young people of the *Neustadt*. He himself was a great miser, but a very lusty person, replete with stories. He was the first drama director of the *Neustadt* youth, who put on 'The Selling of Joseph.' It was under his influence that young people began to borrow storybooks and a large number of those participating in the 'The Selling of Joseph' play, afterwards became community leaders and doers in a variety of parties. In his stories, which he told beautifully, he also wove in a variety of folk songs, which he would sing, and afterwards, they would become popular among the youth of the *Neustadt*.

Moshe'leh Strekher (Zilber) also lived on the Hrubieszow Gasse, the father of our *landsman* and friend in New York, Israel Zilber. He was called the Herschel Ostropolier[269] of Zamość (the Neustadt residents would sat *Esterpolier...*). even though I did not know him personally, we young people, not once, would use his *bon mots*, and witticisms, and not only one time would we get a laugh from his antics that he would pull off.

It was not only one stingy man of means and hothead that would be softened up and cooled off with a joke or witticism from the *Neustadt* '*Esterpolier*'

On that same Hrubieszow Gasse, Shlomo Schwartzberg (Shlomo Hentieh) also lived, with his modern *Heder*, where instead of '*Rebbe*' they used the title, '*Teacher*;' where Hebrew was already being taught, and also a bit of literature; also various montages were put on, during Jewish national festivals.

Even Baruch *Lehrer*[270], the one teacher that I remember from the *Neustadt*, also lived on Hrubieszow *Gasse*; also, the non-official teachers, such as Chaim *Lehrer*, Chaya Cooper, and the already last, young Faygeleh (Moshe Kopitsher's, because he used to make shoe tops), Arenbaum (today in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) also lived on this very same street.

The first of the *Maskilim* and people of Enlightened thinking lived on this street – the Rabbi's son, Mendele Hurwitz-Sternfeld, Moshe Shapiro, Abraham-Yudel Kornmass (the father of the author of these lines), the already mentioned Shlomo Schwartzberg, and others. The first of the labor intelligentsia lived there as well, who later became the leaders of the **Bund** – these were among the very first that I remember personally: Israel Zilber, later Chaim-Leib Melitz,

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268 This is the Hebrew word for 'a reprimand.' Apparently Shmuel-Yossel'eh was called in to administer such 'a reprimand' as an enforcer of sorts. As was the case with so many others, the sobriquet became a replacement for a last name.

269 The famous Jewish wit of Eastern Europe

270 Here is yet another case where an occupational name, *Lehrer* [sic: Teacher] has usurped the position of a family name.

Itcheh-Leib Herring, Shia Bin, Moshe Freilich. The young Bundists (already those from our generation) Nekha Rak, Leibel Goddel, and others.

And later (between the two world wars), when the radical movement was created in the *Neustadt*, who today occupy leadership positions on Poland and other countries, almost all lived on the Hrubieszow *Gasse*. The first organizers of our circles – Simcha Abersfeld, Binyomi'tcheh Greenbaum; in the later years, Mekhl and Zisha Hackman, Mosheleh Zaltsman, Aharon Abersfeld, the writer of these lines, and others.

On this same well-connected street, from which community activists and fighters emerged for a whole array of generations; spiritual leaders and idealists, and by contrast, there was also a nest of the underworld. Initially, it was the thieves who took up the places, whose influence was felt in the entire area. The thieves of the Neustadt were something to talk about, they were mostly organized, and had their own 'President' of the Thieves. They would settle their thieving issues at the location of their leader, whose judgement had to be respected – whether good or bad. If **Nahum Ganev** said 'so' then it was necessary to obey. *Nahum Ganev* was a brother of **Anshel Scher**[271] the recognized leader of the tailor workers union, and one of the active doers in the *Bund.* When Anshel Scher died (in the year 1915) a day of mourning was declared in Zamość, and the entire proletariat from all three parts of Zamość took part in escorting the funeral cortege. A second brother of Nahum's, *Buzheh*, was a member of the Bundist youth organization '*Zukunft.*'

It would often happen, that on the Hrubieszow Gasse, that a trial would be taking place in two places at the same time:

Two sides at odds with one another would be seated at the domicile of the Rabbi, partners or a pair of groups, with the people on their side and arbitrators. The arguments would be laid out in front of the Rabbi; shouts would be heard, as was the usual style – and up a way, on the same street, a 'trial' would be coming to a conclusion at the domicile of Nahum Ganev, also with defamatory remarks, and shouts. It was not rare for such 'trials' to be finished in the street with knives and staves. Khonyeh Walik even discovered a personal method by which to force compliance to the decision of the court of thieves. He would take a woman's stocking, he would put in about a half kilo weight, and held the other end in his hand, and gave a 'lecture' on how to 'show respect' for Nahum's decision. This always worked....

Even the '**Orimer Lad**', which was created in 1916, where matzo was baked for the poor for free, and often with donated flour, was also located on the Hrubieszow Gasse. We will have a separate opportunity to tell about this. ('*Lad*' means a 'place' to us, where there used to be a matzo bakery, which in many places is called '*podriad*').

## The First Occupation of 1914

This sort of way of life persisted in the *Neustadt* until the outbreak of the First World War. This war made Zamość an important military location; it was one of the strategic entrepôts for the military; in the surrounding thick forests, bloody battles play themselves out; our region passed from hand to hand; the regimes change, until it remains under the Austrian military occupation. (In the between time, the city went back over into Russian hands, who carried out a bloodbath, however, we will tell about this separately).

We, the Heder-age children, were entirely abandoned to our own devices, no one took us to Heder; our parents become 'merchants,' dealing with the military and the poverty of the *Neustadt* grows from day to day.

Under the Austrian occupation, a new chapter in the life of Jewish Zamość begins, which also had a special meaning for the *Neustadt.*

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271 It is not completely clear from the text, whether this should properly be translated as '*Anshel the Scissor*,' given the man's occupation, which undoubtedly encompassed garment cutting. This would be completely in keeping with the way nicknames were assigned by type of work a person did for a living. If so, this could be viewed as an early Jewish precursor to 'Mack The Knife.'

Together with the Austrian military, which was billeted in Zamość, there were also a substantial number of Jewish conscripts, who began to come into the Jewish houses. This also happened in the Neustadt, who, at that time, had lost a great deal of its youth. A few of them were mobilized into the Russian Army; a part went away, with their parents, deep into the Russian heartland. However, older people remained behind, or the very young. The few young people who had any sort of appetite for community activity, resided in the Altstadt, where such activity was being conducted. So, indeed, most of the young people in the Neustadt would spend their time in private gatherings, where they would dance, and later 'Play in The Fountain' or 'Flirt' (a form of cards for amusement that we would send one another), or just plain and simple, play cards. But after everything, after all of these 'entertainment programs,' we would take to other things – we would get wrapped up in a discussion in which the Jewish conscripts would participate, and really stat a political discussion. Among other things, it was told that in the city, a '*Tania Kuchina*' (a cheap kitchen) was established for the poor; that evening courses were being put together there, where writing is being taught at night, and about other issues, that were discussed quietly, so that no one might hear.

## Support-Work

One such house, where such gatherings took place, was at our Shakhna, Sarah-Gittel, who had 4 young daughters and two sons. Her house served as [a place for] such discussions about the great poverty that reigned throughout the Neustadt. It was at that time, that the thought of creating a group to provide support was raised. Which was called '*Tomkhei Aniyim*,' whose activity consisted of helping poor people by providing them with a bit of wood. A storage facility was rented, where the wood was brought to be hewn, and cut up, and whoever brought a ticket from the '*Tomkhei Aniyim*' Committee, received a bit of wood.

The winter of 1917 was a hard winter for the populace of the *Neustadt,* and Passover was beginning to draw nigh, with the threat that the larger part of the *Neustadt* populace will remain without matzo. That same committee of the '*Tomkhei Aniyim*,' which had become enlarged thanks to the help of the Neustadt Rabbi, Mordechai HaLevi Hurwitz, then decides to create the '*Orimen Lad*.'

Fate wanted that very 'Lad' (a Matzo Bakery) to be located directly opposite our house, and in the residence that belonged to Moshe Becker (Moshe Antracht). I was not quite eleven years old at that time, not old enough to be able to take part in this effort; however, because of this, I taught myself to do every possible job – from a flour duster to even a matzo baker (during the day, paid people worked, and they would turn over their place to have me replace them). I would also fill the role of handling all messages, such as going around to all the carpentry stores, to gather up pieces of sandpaper, and also pieces of glass for cleaning the rolling pins. Apart from this, I would go to distribute the invitations to the young people to come the following evening to help. And indeed, in the evenings the '*Orimen Lad*' was full of young folk, and there we would sing through and recite all Yiddish songs that were popular – the Bundist 'Oath,' and '*HaTikvah*,' – Reisen's well-known tunes, and the ones by Vinchevsky and Sh. Frugan. The work in the 'Lad' lasted until 12 o'clock and then the young girls were escorted to their homes. This singing, and 'Escorting Home' strongly didn't smell right to the observant *Gott-Strapchehs*[272] (as we called the older strongly fanatic Jews), and they went to the Rabbi with a complaint: – What does it mean that he permits this? – they want to go and break up everything...it is, after all, a sacrilege... but the Neustadt Rabbi, a very wise and truly learned and tolerant man, restrained them. He would explain to them, that the young people are doing a great mitzvah – not only in that they are providing the poor with matzos, but it is very important that the young boys and girls are involving themselves with general community issues, that they take an interest in activity related to the general welfare. He, personally, would come in several times a day, and provide oversight, assuring that everything was done as was demanded by The Law, that it should be Kosher for Passover.

The 'Lad' was set up primarily to bake matzos for those without means, free of charge. Who would bring their [own] flour. It happened, however, that some would have to be given flour to be baked. The following took part in the *'Orimen Lad*,' and distinguished themselves with their commitment: Shimshon and Yaakov Feigenbaum (today in Israel), Mottel'eh, Fisheleh Yossel's, Ovadiah Buchsenbaum, Lieber Morgenstern, Eli and Mendel Sarah-Gittel's (Eli and

272 From the Russian, meaning 'Unyielding in God's Service.'

Mendel Crook). Let the others please not take me for being ungrateful if I have not mentioned their names, because, very simply, I do not remember.

The incident of the '*Orimer Lad*' catalyzed the intelligentsia of the *Altstadt* to begin the work of the Enlightenment among the youth of the *Neustadt*. It was at that time that the various ideological groups began to construct themselves and the various institutions of partisan persuasion were founded. Illegal circles began being organized in the Neustadt. This lasted until the year 1918, when the refugees and expelled people sent into Russia begin to return. The entire community life in the *Altstadt* underwent an upheaval. Where a large part of the young people had shown themselves willing to obtain work, and began to conduct legal activity with the creation of legal political parties. The trade unions had their own separate branch already, and also a library named for I. L. Peretz (the name was obtained later) which obtained people and began a lively activity.

Once again, the *Neustadt* was emptied of every community activity, until Blind Shilem's[273] son returned from Russia, Henoch Zitser (Henoch Leidikgeier) who later, after the Czarist archives of the *Okhrana*[274] were opened, was unmasked as an agent of the Czarist *Okhrana*. He was afraid to show himself in the *Altstadt*. He therefore remained living permanently in the *Neustadt*. It was this very Henoch who began to assemble about him the 'patriots' in the *Neustadt*, and began the initiative to create a library in the *Neustadt*. Since, in fact, he was a good organizer, in a short amount of time, he demonstrated a capacity to interest a number of the Neustadt people [in this project], and a residence was rented and a rather fine library was created.

After a great deal of very burdensome discussions, Henoch Zitser was later pushed aside from his active work on behalf of the library at the demand of the local committee of the *Bund*.

## The Battle for the Youth

*Page 691:* *A Group of the First Organizers of the Neustadt Labor Youth. From Right to Left: Nehemiah Eltzter, Beyrekh Freilich (Argentina), Zisha Hackman (Died in the Soviet Union), Moshe 'leh Zaltsman (Died in the Soviet Union).*

*Page 692:* *A Group of Young People, mostly from the Neustadt, which was active in community and professional activities. From Right to Left, bottom row: Chaim Ber, Ber'cheh Kornmass, Aharon Arbesfeld, Mendel Greenbaum ('Freethinker'), Mottel Gerzon ('Tafchan'). Second row: Yaakov Koyl, Leah Keitel, Chana Bronfenbrenner, Moshe Arbukh, Dvorah Koenig. Bottom row: Yossel Greenbaum ('Brumishch'), Averemeleh Eisman, Mendel Finkman, Jekuthiel Schpendel, Yossel'eh Brand.*

*Page 694:* *A Group of Neustadt Youth, drawn into the movement. In the middle row, third from the right to the left, is Moshe'leh Rapaport who later, during the time of Nazi rule, became the last Jew from the Zamość Ghetto. His tragic end is accurately portrayed by Mordechai Shtrigler [see page 989 in the original, and page 593 in this volume].*

The joy of us, the young people was truly great – when finally we knew we were going to have a library; will no longer have to walk about a half a kilometer in order to exchange a book. The majority of us came from homes without means, and we were badly dressed and even more poorly shod. Understandably, we, the young people, were the first to subscribe to the library. However, there was a problem – in compliance with the statutes, a minor could not become a member under his own name, but had to be entered under the name of an older member. As most of the members of the *Neustadt* library were young people from the homes of the *balebatim*, and didn't want to, or were afraid to have anything to do with bedraggled poverty, and those who finally were willing to stand and do this, to become sponsors

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273 The variation on spelling here from 'Blind Shmuel' is unexplained.

274 The Czarist Secret Police

of young people, already had two and three such young folk, therefore, indeed, a large number of the *Neustadt* youth remained without access to the library.

This situation persisted to about the year 1920 – or the beginning of 1921, when, under and agreement reached as part of the Soviet Polish Peace Treaty, all Russians living in Poland were to return to Russia, and all Poles in Russia were to return [to Poland]. Among the latter, the daughter of the *Neustadt* Rabbi, with her two young children **Sender** and **Shia**, were to be found (the first, Sender Rothstein is today found in Chicago, and is a member of this *Pinkas* Committee and had engaged in this *Pinkas* with his personal effort). They tell the sad news of the frightful hunger that reigned throughout Russia. Afterwards, the anxious calls for help started. It was then that the youth of the Neustadt mobilized itself, having developed the feel for how to render assistance from prior experience.

I remember one Sabbath when the Rabbi gave a sermon, during which he depicted the need of our brethren suffering from hunger; he appealed that something be set aside, even from the neediest, in order to help alleviate the need of the stricken young children. This made a strong impression on us young people as well, and, indeed, on that very same Sabbath, after meal time, we gathered as a group of 18 energetic young people, who decided to create a youth committee for those suffering hunger in Russia. But what does one do, that we will enable us to earn trust? What we decided was to send a delegation to the Rabbi of the Neustadt. Immediately, a delegation consisting of Mekhl Hackman, Mendel Barik, Wolf Kornmass and Leibl Griener (through me) were immediately elected. We presented our plan to the Rabbi. The Rabbi knew our parents, and apart from that, he was greatly moved emotionally by our concept to create a committee and he immediately wrote out an endorsement to all Jewish mothers, indicating that they should see to it that their children should not fail to participate in this great mitzvah, and should become a member along with us. This, indeed, had the desired effect – in a very few days, we had close to 200 members.

This, however, immediately drew the attention of the already existing political parties in Jewish Zamość. Every party wanted to associate themselves with us, trying to co-opt a popular youth movement as its own. The first to establish a relationship with us was the Zionist party. We began calling meetings for every Saturday, where speakers would come to talk about various aspects of our movement. Even my former Yeshiva Headmaster, Hirscheleh Friedling came to me on behalf of the '*Agudah*,' proposing that we join their movement. But the first one who had us influenced, was the *Neustadt* Zionist Gershon Zucker, a very intelligent and substantive individual.

At that time, the *Bund* was one of the strongest organizations in Zamość – both politically and organizationally. No other party could measure up to the Bund, whether in the number of members, or the scope of its activities on all fronts of community life – especially in the area of professional (union) life. There was no single party in Zamość that had as many workers in its ranks as the *Bund.*

The activity of the *Bund* had a great impact on the poor populace of the *Neustadt,* and especially among the working masses. This influence was especially strong especially because the leadership of the *Bund* contained many residents of the *Neustadt*, such as Chaim-Leib Melitz, Shia Bin, Itcheh-Leib Herring, Moshe Freilich, Moshe Mittelpunkt, Mikhl Cooperman, Itcheh Marer and others.

Therefore, the *Bund* also began to send its representatives to this group of *Neustadt* youth.

This period, however, was the most difficult period for the *Bund* in Poland in general – sharp debates began in the ranks of the *Bund* about the appropriateness of The Third International; the disputes let to a schism in the *Bund* across the entire country, which also did not skip over Zamość ; the '*Combund*' arises.

But this schism did not cause the *Bund* party any great losses, only a part of the older comrades left to join the '*Combund*,' which threw in with the Polish Communist Party. It was the *Bundist* youth organization, '*Zukunft*' that was seriously damaged. It became a [substantially] reduced organization in the city; most of its members joined up with the '*Comzukunft*' – which created the situation that made it impossible for the *Bund* to engage with the *Neustadt*-created youth committee.

By contrast, the '*Combund*' significantly committed itself to our youth, and maintained a permanent contact with us. Originally, Israel Wapniarsky was sent to us, and later Binyomi'cheh Greenbaum, and even later still, Simcha Arbesfeld, who then already remained with us until he departed for Russia in the year 1922.

At the meetings of the *Neustadt* youth, very sharp discussions were initiated, authentic political battles. The principal battle was carried out by the '*Combund,*' and the Zionists. The last battle played itself out on a Saturday afternoon at the home of Hirsch Kornmass (the writer's grandfather). Because of the *Heder* that my grandfather ran, he had a large house. This house was filled to overflowing, and they were even standing in the street. For the *Neustadt*, this was quite an event, which was greeted with wonder, because *Heder* and student children on a Saturday afternoon, were supposed to playat holding a *Bet-Din* or a *Mitiyeh Bakup* (a sort of game with a ball), and here, rather than do so, they were gathered at Hirsch *Votchak* (grandfather's nickname)[275] in the *Heder* house. And the audience could hear talking, and didn't understand what it was that was causing so much heat — Yiddish was being spoken, and yet not a word was understood.

The principal battle was being carried out by the comrades Gershon Zucker and Israel Wapniarsky. The Zionist side, seeing that they are losing their influence, made a call to the young people, that they should abandon us, and not work at all with our Neustadt youth committee. However, since the youth at that time was not ripe for this sort of debate, and in addition, that we had fallen out of the influence of the Rabbi, the meeting ended with the result that most of the young people left. We were left with about 60 young people. Later on, another re-grouping took place, and we were left with 40, more ripe, and we elected a new leadership. It consisted of the young people: Mekhl Hackman, Leibl Gewirtz, Moshe Zaltsman, Nehemiah Eltzter, Wolf Kornmass, Baruch Freilich, and Aharon Arbesfeld (I beg the pardon of those whom I may have forgotten to mention).

We began to hold a series of lectures with representatives of the '*Combund.*' We went through a bit about political economics; Moshe Terman's 'Culture and the Working Class,' Marx's 'The Communist Manifesto,' and others. We also read through collectively, an array of popular knowledge works about literature, such as Y. Dobrishin's '*Gedankengang.*'

Because not all members were on the same cultural plane or level of development, not everyone was capable of absorbing these themes, and also, in Poland, since the '*Combund*' had been started to be followed, we decided to break up the organization into several cells. Initially at the level of 20, and later 15, and at down to 7 at the very end.

In order to be better able to organize the *Neustadt* youth, who wanted to join us, we created a debating circle, where we prepared debates, which could be sent to other cells, which we had in greater numbers.

## The 'Little Room'

By involving ourselves with these groups, we learned that a large portion of the young people could barely read print, and could not write. So we began to organize evening classes. The first of the difficulties consisted of finding an appropriate location. Our financial circumstances were more than straitened. In reality, we were hungry, and we used to divide up a cigarette. So, for the time being, we decided to start in my '**little room**' (this was the designation for my residence, which I hade set up for myself out of a room which for many years had served as a storage location for a variety of merchandise). If you would say to someone from the *Neustadt*, 'Go to Joel in the Little Room,' he knew already that he needed to go to Wolf Kornmass, ('Joel' was my pseudonym).

The entire 'salon' consisted of a small room, barely four meters in length, and three meters wide. We had decided, that for the money we would have paid for rent, we would buy notebooks and pencils. We did not have the money to buy a bigger lamp, so we found an old electric lamp in the attic of our comrade Mekhl Hackman. We had it repaired, and

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275 A sobriquet taken from the Russian word for a step-father. This may be attributed to the grandfather's role as a *Heder* teacher, and could be indicative of his relationship to the children (for better or for worse...)

this was the first sign that the 'Little Room' as no ordinary residence, but rather it gives the impression already of something special, but what that was, we ourselves did not know.

In a very few days, we already had so many students, that we could not accommodate them all at once in the 'Little Room,' and we were forced to make first two, and then three sessions. In order to utilize the location of the 'Little Room,' we made the table (out of two boards), the entire length of the room, and the bed served as a bench on one side, and on the second side we made tabourettes. The students that had to sit on the bed, had to get there by crawling under the table.

It was in this fashion that our first 'Yiddish School' began in the Neustadt. Each of us had to donate something to the 'school.' A pencil, a book, a little kerosene for the lamp was also a donation. Do understand, that these same friends were also the teachers. In a matter of a few months, we had taught several tens of children to write and read through a Yiddish letter. It is worth recollecting that out of these students, later came leaders of the Neustadt youth, such as Leibel Wolya (Kalmeleh Schuster's), Zelig-Hirsch, the shoemaker's son, Yudeleh, the blond baker's, Velveleh, Chaya-Baylah's, and others, who until our 'school' couldn't tell a squiggle from a letter.

The popularity of our school grew so quickly, that in a matter of months we had a problem, as to where we could secure an appropriate location for our school. The first thing we decided was to begin an open meeting of our 'school.' A group of the youth went out into the *Neustadt*, and approached all strata in the populace. We did not receive any large sums, but everyone gave something. Some gave a book, others a couple of notebooks, small financial donations. However, from all of this, there still was not enough for a location. We were compelled to remain in 'The Little Room.'

Since there were among the donated books, some which were not suitable, and seeing that the young people of the Neustadt could not become members of the *Neustadt* library (about which we have previously written), we decided that we would create a library to serve the larger number of young people who cannot belong to the [main] library.

In the end, we had to remove the library. It is transferred to the residence of our comrade, Aharon Arbesfeld. There, the books are also exchanged in turns.

In its new location, the library is enlarged. New young people join, who want to learn and read. We look about and see that we have an inadequate inventory of books. It is necessary to get new books. This compelled us to step out in a new way – to begin an open undertaking, that should enable us to get out of 'The Little Room.'

We organize a dance evening, indeed, in the *Neustadt*. We rent the home of Chana Kalman's and we send out invitations. This time, to our comrades in the *Altstadt* as well. And here, the Saturday arrived, that would either propel us out of our fantasies with our position, or truly give us the energy and strength – a material and moral success.

We prepared everything several nights in advance, even the musicians – Yankel Kalmeleh's ( a brother of the *balabusta* of the 'dance hall') we had paid in advance (true, with borrowed money). As we took our seats at the door of the 'dance hall' on Saturday night, with the previously prepared tickets and started to wait for guests, we thought to ourselves that we had failed. We do not even see the two girls who had been designated as ticket sellers (taking turns)at the 'buffet,' and by the drinks. We thought that nobody from the city would come; and if somebody does come, how will he know how to negotiate across the marketplace and find Leib Malier (Mangel) or to Chana Kalmeleh's (which was more popular). We decide that we have to station young people along the way that leads from the Altstadt – near the pharmacy, and near the municipal building, to be able to indicate to the eventual guests the right way to proceed.

It was winter. Our young people were poorly clothed. It was necessary to wait for hours. But when the first couples were brought, it just so happens, 'our own,' it was remarked that without the 'convoys,' they would not have found the place, and our young people took the initiative to escort the guests. As soon as a person brought someone in, he used the opportunity to warm himself up a bit, and went out again into the 'wild' – asking someone bent over if he is going to the 'entertainment.'

It became apparent, that we didn't know how popular we were, even in the Altstadt. There were many patrons who came to this type of a literary dance evening. The success was unanticipated, truly overwhelming. We had to ask the owners of the 'dance hall' to allow us to use a second room, which was not foreseen in our arrangement.

## Our Artistic Debut

*Page 698:* *The well-known dress designer business of Paya Bott in Zamość. The owner with her workers. From right to left, first row: Pessel, Esther, Gittl Koeniger, Rocheleh Gerzon. Second Row, Seated: Pesheh-Raizl Kleiner, Paya Bott, Tchipeh Freilich.*

Part of our comrades made their artistic debut at the time of our first literary dance. In the very middle of the dancing couples, our comrade, Mekhl Hackman (today Polkovnik in Poland), stopped the music, and ste himself on the stage (a bench!) And the writer of these lines, with a pair of mud-covered boots (from escorting 'guests' from the main Lemberg road to the 'dance hall') made a debut with a speech of Morris Rosenfeld's, 'With My Young Boy in the Street.' The enthusiastic reception this received was unexpected. This provided encouragement to the other artists, and readings came immediately from Aharon Arbesfeld, Leibel Gewirtz, Moshe Zaltsman, and even our leader, Mekhl Hackman did not hold back, and also went up on the 'stage' and gave a declamation of W. Weviakor's '*Dos Maedel.*'

From that point on, we would step forward with declamations, or with something to read at all our undertakings.

After the literary dance evening, which had provided us with a significant sum of revenue, we decided that we have to independently create larger quarters for our school and library. So we rented the house from Molly Ezerles (her husband, Shmuel Ezerles is not present in this matter at all, because he had no idea what was happening) and there, the school was put in order as well as the library. The 'Little Room' is used only for meetings.

With the changing of the address of the 'school,' the number of students increased in a meaningful manner, and added to this was the problem of teachers, because we were able to fill the role of teachers for the first couple of months....

But for such a stormy youth there were no difficulties in those years. We approached the teacher Chaya Cooper, Naphtali Yayechnik's (the egg merchant) daughter (her brother, Lipa Cooper is today in Israel), and to the young teacher Faiga Orenbaum (Faiga Moshe Kopitshazh, today in Rio de Janeiro, Faiga Shklau, belongs to the sub-committee of our *Pinkas*) and both promised to give one hour a day entirely for free, but with the condition that we should provide appropriate tables and benches. We agreed to this. Here, in the new premises, a Saturday would not go by, or a Friday evening, that we wouldn't hold a sit down session, a speech, or a discussion with the young students, who were already readers at the library.

Our new situation did not last long. The matter of the bombing of the Warsaw Citadel was undertaken, when a wave of terror and arrests cascaded over all of Poland. The son of the owner of our 'school,' Moshe Ezerles (Moshe Langbaum), an 'Enlightened' person, himself a teacher, and a writer of petitions, explained to his mother that she will be sentenced to prison for renting us her house. Added to this were the complaints of the neighbors, that she will roast in Hell for a hundred years for harboring the kind of people that don't believe in God, and who smoke on the Sabbath...we received an eviction, and we had to store the library for a while in our attic. We were unable to get any other premises.

At that time, two very important incidents took place in our organization. One was, that in the course of conducting our work, there began to appear young people from the *Altstadt* in an organization that was primarily of the *Neustadt*. The antagonism that existed between the Neustadt and the city begins to be wiped away. Among the first people from the city who began to work togther with us, were: Zelig Karp, Mendel Finkman, and Pessia Tzeler (all three today are found in Argentina), Avrem'echeh Pflug (Avremecheh Kapusz), Chana Bronfenbrenner.

We then got the female element into our organization. Up to that point in time, there were only young men.

The first of the young women who were active with us were: Gittl Koeniger (today in France), Tchipa Freilich, Tchipa Kerbuss.

## In the Surrounding Towns

Another fact tore us away from our prior activity among the youth of the Neustadt. We were drawn into the illegal activities of the left-wing trade unions. They needed us fro an array of technical tasks, such as putting up placards and hanging out banners on the trade union holidays, as well as during the large political demonstrations, which after the destruction of the Citadel, occurred with considerable frequency. We were also delegated the task of organizing the young people in the surrounding towns, such as Komarow, Hrubieszow, Bilgoraj, Grabowiec, Izbica, Krasnobrod, and others.

I was allocated the eastern section of Zamość. I made my first trip as an 'organizer' to Tyszowce, because Mekhl Hackman had relatives there – his maternal grandfather, and having been a guest in his grandfather's home during the past Yom Tov, he had already prepared several young people and I had to complete and set up a cell, which should organize the core of the young people.

The first address where I was supposed to go to, was the house of Leib Zwillich (died in Argentina), a man of considerable heart. After accepting my 'parole,' (this was a secret sign, that it was permissible to discuss organizational matters), he led me to his house, where I was received very warmly by the remainder of the family members.

As I later considered to myself, the house of Simcha Zwillich was always friendly to guests. Because of the three young daughters, their house was constantly filled with young people, which in those years, in a small town meant that it was a community home. This resonated strongly with the then young Leib, with the strong stamp of goodness and friendliness to guests and simplicity, which was with him until his untimely death.

After resting from a half a day of trekking about on foot more than riding on a wagon, because the way there was sandy, Leib Zwillich had meanwhile already called together the remaining young people, about twelve or fifteen young people. We talked together until quite late at night (somewhere in an attic room with heavily curtained windows). We spoke of the means by which the youth could be organized, and also the way whereby the trade union in Tyszowce could be reorganized. A leadership is elected from the group, with a chairman, who will maintain the contact with Zamość. The same group of young people later on, become the leaders of the trade union, and also of the library in Tyszowce.

The composition of the first leadership of Tyszowce consisted of: Leib Eitel, Gedaliah Bashister, Ephraim Rosenbaum (in Argentina), Leib Zwillich, Hinde Kleiner (the last two died in Buenos Aires), Moshe Schweitzer (died in Montevideo), Joseph Stengel, Feivusz, Moshe Ophir, Faiga Ophir, Mekhleh Scherer, Shayndl Schweitzer, who were killed by the Nazis, may their name be erased.

And it was in this way, that I periodically would visit Tyszowce, and already had my steady address at the Zwillichs, who could not forgive me for not having taken my leave of them on that first night. What this meant to the Tyszowce populace, was that I was a cousin of Leib's and in because of the relationship of his entire family to me, this was deemed certain, and understandable. With a number of them, I have remained personal friends to this day. When already in Argentina with Leib Zwillich from 1929 to 1932, we lived like two brothers. The same holds for Ephraim Rosenbaum (Yitzhak Shokhet's), whom my children call, 'uncle.'

Also, the ordinary residents of Tyszowce, who did not belong to any group, when they came to Argentina, speak with great yearning and respect about those members of the first group, who led their town in labor and Yiddish cultural activities. It is worth mentioning that out of that group, a part of their number became members of the 'Botwin' Company[276], who were famous during the time of the Spanish Civil War. Many of them are still found in Poland. There,

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276 From the beginning, there was disagreement about what name to give the proposed Jewish battalion. "*Bar Kochba*" was one suggestion, and it was favored by the well-known German writer and former captain in the Kaiser's army, Ludwig Renn, author of the pacifist novel *1914*,

Moshe'leh Krempel and Abraham Eisen who were active there in the community (see Sholom Stern's writeup about his trip through Poland in our *Pinkas*).

Apart from Tyszowce, **Komarow** was in my area of responsibility. Even though Komarow was half way to Zamość, like Tyszowce, relations with it were a bit more difficult – there, we had not a single address to which we could travel. Such an opportunity arose from within the residents of Komarow themselves, they were the ones who provided the initiative. It happened on one Passover (or some other holiday), when one member of our group, Chaim Koeniger (killed while fighting as a partisan), was approached by a nephew, Moshe Tzigel, who also made my acquaintance. He put me on the spot as to why we were showing an interest in Tyszowce, and not with Komarow.

After this incident of getting acquainted, we discussed and agreed that immediately after the second Saturday hence, I will travel to Komarow, and they will await me, starting quite early on the outskirts of the town, because I would not travel into the town on the Sabbath on a rover (it was called a **red-wagon** by us).

From Friday to Saturday, a goodly bit before dawn, I rode out at around 5 before dawn, and, indeed, I was awaited by a group of fellows and girls with flowers (it was said that they had gone out for a May stroll) and my little bicycle immediately disappeared into the attic of a Christian, who lived by the gentile cemetery.

Moshe Tzigel immediately presented me at the auditorium. Among the group, my eye caught an individual who had a crippled foot, who had black hair, and fiery eyes. Despite the fact that he leaned on a crutch, he was a substantive and influential individual – this was the tailor, Abish Schwartz.

Even though there were about twenty young men and women, it was immediately established that I was the cousin of Abish Schwartz, and for this reason, I remained in Abish's home (despite the fact that it was very poor, but also very clean), until I left. Every other time that it worked out for me to have to stay in Komarow, I was already put up by my 'cousin' Abish Schwatrz.

A leadership was divided up out of the group, that was to set itself at the point of the union movement and should organize the youth in Komarow.

From that onetime group, apart from my 'cousin,' Nahum Shpritz (today in Israel) remains in my memory. Up until the Holocaust, he remained as the leader of the left-wing labor movement, first, indeed, in Komarow, and later in Lemberg. He was also the representative to the Zamość committee. The others that I remember [are]: Moshe Tzigel, later a union activist (today in Argentina), Tentzeh Fitter (today in Canada), Abish Schwartz and Melekh Schwartz (both in Israel), and the remaining, who met their end at the hands of the Nazi beasts: Chaya Fuchs, Mottel Ehrlich, Leah Kreiden, Foyreh Gutman, and Yaakov-Leib Trost.

These same people also instituted a community life, which attracted a great deal of attention both among the working-class youth and the ordinary townsfolk in general, even in Zionist circles. It would often happen, that on a Sabbath, there would be several discussion evenings that took place at the same time.

It was hardest for me to organize a cell in Tomaszow-Lubelski. Here, it was not necessary for me to have to borrow a 'cousin.' My younger brother Zalman lived there, with my maternal grandparents. In Tomaszow, I had real uncles and aunts, and despite this, I was unable to carry out my mission. It got to the point where the question was tabled as to whether this point should be given up.

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which appeared even before Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*. He was the military expert for the International Brigades and commander of the German 13th Thaelmann Brigade. A number of Jewish communists, especially Gershon Dua (Admani), a former Labor Zionist, and Eugeniusz Szir opposed the idea and, instead, won approval of the name "*Botwin*," to honor the memory of the Communist hero and martyr from Lemberg, *Naphtali Botwin*, condemned to the gallows for shooting a Polish provocateur.

The reason for this was, that by contrast to the other previously mentioned towns, Tomaszow had an organized proletarian movement, led by the *Bund*. In that location, there was not the need to create a trade union, because one existed there already. The *Bund* led practically all of the progressive institutions there, and was therefore well-loved by the needy segments of the populace. All of our efforts to create a red faction was for naught.

It was first in the year 1927 (if my memory is not playing tricks on me) that the leader of the Bund, Benusz Mikhalevich was in Zamość, and at that time, young people from all of the surrounding towns came, along with a large number of older people. Most of them came on foot, because the wagons that circulated from the towns to Zamość were almost entirely filled. There was no other form of communication, and there was no rail line at that time in part of the towns (Tyszowce, Komarow, Tomaszow, Grabowiec). At that time, a large group came from Tomaszow. Among them was my brother Zalman, and Blind Yudeleh (Yudeleh Elbaum). The young arrivals spent the night with relatives, or acquaintances, where possible. Part of the group found lodging with me in 'The Little Room,' and were 'hurt' there. By the second Sabbath, I was in Tomaszow, and I had the opportunity to organize a red section of about 12 people of both sexes.

And so it is in this fashion, that Zamość becomes a center for the surrounding towns, that serves the left-wing movements both with literature and with debates. The writer of these lines was fated to drag himself around for nights on end, on freight wagons (because one feared a hostile eye during the daytime), to the further towns (apart from the ones already mentioned): Bilgoraj, Izbica, Hrubieszow, Ostilug, Krasnystaw, Grabowiec, Krasnobrod.

A group of so-called 'travelers' took form. Illegal (and semi-legal) materials and announcements would be taken along on each trip. At the outset, the group consisted of: Mekhl Hackman, Yossel Greenbaum, Nehemiah Eltzter, Moshe'leh Zaltsman.

## Means of Livelihood in the *Neustadt* [277]

The *Neustadt* was characteristic in its specific occupations, which virtually did not exist in the *Altstadt.*

In first place come the wagon drivers (*balegolahs*[278]). With us, in Zamość, this occupation was divided into three categories, one of which, the very oldest, which at one time occupied a very prominent place in the *Neustadt,* with the passage of time entirely lost its luster, and in general was at the point of vanishing.

These groups were: the first and the very oldest were the *balegolahs*, who transported passengers and merchandise from one city to the next; the second were the '*vozhe-vodehs*[279],' and the third group were the *drozhkazhes*.[280]

The first – the *balegolahs,* the owners of large wagons with holds, (or what we in Zamość used to call '*brikehs,*'), which were spanned by three or four horses across its width, occupied a very significant place in the *Neustadt* from the earliest times. There were entire dynasties that encompassed tens of families, where this occupation was haded down from generation to generation. I will attempt to try and write down part of these – the ones who appeared later on. From the first dynasts, I have heard stories, but I did not know them personally.

Even before my time, the following existed in full force, Moshe Fudim (Moshe Freilich's grandfather), Abish *Balegolah*[281], Elia Kleid (Meylakh Stollar's father – Schwartzberg), Moshe Dreshler, Azriel Mutz (Gershtengroypen), Abraham *Draykopf.*[282]

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277 Author's footnote: An array of the details used to round out this chapter were supplied by Moshe Freilich.

278 This is a Yiddish elision of the Hebrew words *Baal Agalah*, literally a wagon master.

279 From the Russian, '*vozhok,*' which was a sledge-coach.

280 This was a driver of a *droshky*, or a passenger carriage.

281 Meaning a wagon-driver, and likely connected to his occupation.

282 A rather uncomplimentary nickname, implying that the individual had the capacity to make you a bit crazy...

It was told about a few of them, that they would sit in their little synagogue and study, while the work of loading and unloading was being done by their people (or as they were called by us, the '*schmeissers* [283]'). They would only undertake the position of exchanging horses (meaning the sale of old ones and acquiring new ones). In general, they were quite a prominent part of the *Neustadt* community life.

During my time, tens of families were still engaged in this way of making a living. Who in the *Neustadt* did not know the '*Tchelovekehs*[284],' but who knew that the family's real last name was Pearl? There were perhaps ten brothers, and all of them were involved with horses, and wagon transportation. Moshe'leh 'Techelovek,' – his brothers, Reuven, Israel, Raphael, Chaim, Elia-Hirsch; and then there was the dynasty of the 'Noah's:' Yekeleh Noah's, Shmuel-Yaakov Noah's, Averemeleh Yaakov Noah's. And who in the *Neustadt* did not know (I would have said 'was not afraid of') Abraham-Yitzhak and his four sons: Mekhel, Motya, Shmeryl and Elia? The father, Abraham-Yitzhak, as I knew him (he was a neighbor of ours), was a Jew already well into his seventies, would still hold a horse by himself in his huge broad hands, while it was being shod for the first time. It was told of him, that he brought the huge dispute in the *Neustadt* between the Rabbi and Rabbi Bereleh Friedling to an end(see descriptions of this in other works in this *Pinkas*). He happened to go out into the street on a Friday towards nightfall, aroused by his mother (Henneh Flack), precisely at the point when Shmuel-Yossel'eh decided to make a stand and enforce a 'Black Sabbath' on the Rabbi (meaning, he would not permit him to go and pray in the synagogue, as he had already done a couple of times). Well, Abraham-Yitzhak happened upon the scene, and picked him up in his hands and said: "Hey 'puppy,' (this was Abraham-Yitzhak's favorite sobriquet), I've got you now"....Shmuel-Yossel'eh saw fit to beat a hasty retreat from this sort of 'embrace' in Abraham-Yitzhak's hands, and he was ashamed to show himself in the street, and the dispute simply stopped.

It was first years later, when the cemetery was renovated (which we called the 'Holy Place'), Shmuel-Yossel'eh publicly begged for the forgiveness of the *Neustadt* Rabbi. The Rabbi was silent. It was first only after the second time that he begged for forgiveness that, it is told, the Rabbi said: I forgive you, and may God also forgive you.

In my time yet, this same Abraham-Yitzhak continued to conduct his business on a high level. He and his sons owned several wagons outfitted with storage holds, and [employed] several *schmeissers* (specifically from the surrounding villages). While his wagons were still en route, other huge wagons were already being loaded in Abraham-Yitzhak's yard, full of a variety of boxes. It was not only once that arguments would break out with passengers, who would ride along, saying that they would not ride in a wagon so full of boxes, that they will arrive 'without sides,' but having no alternative, they would carefully crawl onto the wagon, and vanish under the hold, and become sunken between the various packages.

Only now, when all of the personnel were already aboard, you would begin to hear contention:

– Uncle, can you move over a bit; you have sat down on my foot – and other like complaints.

When everything was ready, Abraham-Yitzhak gave the final order to the *schmeisser*: – 'Puppy, move it already!'

The same thing took place with our second neighbor, admittedly on a smaller scale, at Ruveleh 'Tchelovek.'

This went on all week. On the Sabbath, everything went still. At that time they would all come out – fathers and sons – by dynastic order, together with the *schmeissers*, boots all shined, and they would go to their little synagogue, which was called *Hevra Tehilim*. This little synagogue stood half-empty for the entire week. However, on the Sabbath, it was packed, and it was necessary to stand in the foyer of the Great Synagogue, where this '*Hevra Tehilim*' was to be found.

All of these 'dynasties,' were mostly to be found on the Hrubieszow Gasse (what we called '*Rabishever*'). It was indeed built differently from the remaining streets of the *Neustadt*. The difference consisted of the larger majority of the houses

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283 From the German word, 'to whip,' and may be a way of describing a teamster.

284 From the Russian, '*Tchelovek*,' meaning a person, or an individual. It is a slangy usage, like the English, '*guy*' or the Italian, '*gavone*,' usually applied to someone of earthy character.

being constructed with enclosed, gated four-sided places (called '*podvoden*[285]' by us). They were constructed with huge stalls or stables. Even those homeowners, who did not engage in this line of work, built their houses to this same specification, so that they would be able to rent the premises to *balegolahs*.

My grandfather, who was a teacher for his entire life, also built such a stall, which for all his years he rented out – earlier to Yitzhak Shedletzer, and later to our neighbor Ruveleh 'Tchelovek.'

With the arrival of the railroad line (the *nodvishlanska*) which, according to the Czarist plan, was supposed to go through and pass by Zamość, the occupation of wagon driver was transformed. The contractors then demanded bribes, to permit the line to pass by the city (thereby supporting the ability to make a living), but the bribes were not paid (it is said that a part of the balebatim indeed wish to pay the bribe, but they were not allowed to), so the train went only as far as Rajowiec (about fifty kilometers from Zamość), and the city was bypassed.

The following story occurred later, with regard to this matter concerning the railroad line, in the year 1914. When the Germans, in that year, occupied Zamość, they demanded to be taken to the Zamość railroad station. When it was explained to them, that there was none, they took out their military land maps, which had been drawn in accordance with older building plans, and indicated that there is a station, and they are being fooled with; and that they will shoot every person who will not show them the way to the railroad station. When they began to explain to them the story about the bribes, they didn't want to believe it, and they took my maternal grandfather (he himself was Austrian, who happened to find himself with us as a guest), as a hostage. If it will be shown that there really is a railroad station in Zamość, he will be shot. In the end, the Germans were convinced, that there was no railroad station in the vicinity, and they sent my grandfather back with a letter of recommendation from the red circle. The railroad station was first built in 1916, under the Austrian occupation.

By the time of the first building project of the railroad, the status of the *'brikehs'-balegolahs* fell. The ones that would make trips over long distances became redundant. And when the railroad was constructed in 1916, the type of 'brikehs,' or hold-wagons was reduced to a minimum. The stalls were emptied out, and the horses sold. There was pitifully little food for one's self, much less the horses, who had nothing to do.

Many of the stalls were being renovated as dwellings. At that time, there was generally a shortage of housing. I think that the first was Yankel Koch, who made residences out of his large stalls, and Herschel Milchiger moved into one of these residences, the father of the writer, Mordechai (Mottel'eh, as he was called at home) Shtrigler.

After the year 1918, when a train line already existed in Zamość, the type of *balegolah* with the *brikeh* and hold-wagons practically disappears, and the second category of '**Vozheh-Vodeh**' increases. This was a lighter type of cargo wagon drawn by one horse. Why this type of wagon was called 'Vozhe-Vodeh' we cannot figure out [see my earlier footnote – JSB]. The 'Vozheh-Vodehs' would transport cargo from one end of Zamość to the other, and from time to time would make trips to the village (especially in harvest time, when the peasants would come to the city less frequently).

There were a couple of tens of 'Vozheh-Vodehs' in the *Neustadt*. Their number would rise and fall. If one of them would have a horse that 'fell,' that would be enough of a reason to engage in another line of work – there simply were no means with which to buy another horse. I remember one of them, when after his horse 'fell,' he began to pull a small cargo wagon himself, and he was called Avigdor Millon.

The third category of this line of work was the world of the *drozhkazhes*. At one time, they occupied an important place in Zamość. This group, within itself was also divided into three sections. Earlier, when the fortress was still in Zamość, there was also a line of work of contractors, jobbers, factors, 'First Guild' merchants, who had business and dealings with the senior military staff or with the Zamoyskis. These people would ride in a special 'classy' carriage – and enclosed and black-lacquered cart with four horses at the fore. The *drozhkazh* had to be dressed 'stylishly' – and the horses had to be adorned in a representable manner....

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285 From the Russian, '*podval*' meaning a basement, or a vault.

The second kind were the *'britchkehs'* – a smaller, open wagon, for two people only. It was used for fast rides. It was especially utilized when it was necessary to ride to the nearby homes of the nobility.

The third type, which existed until the end of our community, was the simply *droshky* which served as transport from the *Neustadt* to the *Altstadt* or the 'Browar,' and back. Especially to the train station, when the trains would arrive and depart. A droshky of this type would make the trip back and forth several times a day.

A large proportion of the *drozhkazhes* were former *schmeissers*, who had worked for the big *balegolahs* of the '*brikehs*.' Let us here enumerate part of them: Abraham Bajczman, Abraham Kefeh, Joel Drozhkazh (Yekeleh Noah's son), Matus Bajczman, who was also the veterinarian, the Ackermans (Sholom, Anshel, Moshe), the Kreidels (Moshe and Meir), the dynasty of the Stoffers, Isaac (Fefkeh), Zaydel, and others. I remember there being at least thirty people, or so.

I do not know if any of the first category, the big-time *balegolahs* of the large cargo wagons, whether apart from the ones from the Neustadt, any lived in the Altstadt, from the last two groups, the '*Vozheh-Vodehs*,' and the *drozhkazhehs*, all lived in the *Neustadt*. Except for one, Shmuel Hambal, who lived in 'Browar.' Incidentally, he was the only one who had a *droshky* with two horses. Towards the end, he indeed lived in 'Browar.' However, he was one of us, and came from the *Neustadt*.

In general, the Altstadt wanted nothing to do with these modes of livelihood, which can besmirch the pedigree and disrupt the polishing of one's *balebatish* appearance. Therefore, thee was an array of industries in the Neustadt, which were not in the city. There, one could find the tannery of Yitzhak Zucker (previously belonged to Avigdor Irlander's brother-in-law, Pinia Cooper), the large barn of Hona Eidelsberg, where leather was processed; the large soap factory of Abraham Manzim, the oil factory of Sholom Tischberg, and Shmuel Schmorak and a whole array of smaller factories of candle-makers and soap-makers. Here in the *Neustadt* was the first steam-driven mill (it was called the '*pareveh mill*[286]' by us), which belonged to Leibusz Cohn. After the First World War, a candy and marmalade factory was built there. Let us also recall the ceramic factory (tile manufacture) of Mendel Eisenstahl. At one time, there was a match factory there, which belonged to Yekhiel Reinerman, where local girls from the *Neustadt* area worked for three kopecks a day.

The Neustadt was also deeply involved in the garment trades. The trade of confections (second-rate merchandise) had a larger array of tailoring establishments, such as Motya Getz, Hirsch Feier, Avigdor Lomp, and others.

Here at the end, let us recall, among the various livelihoods of the *Neustadt*, the large number of porters, most of whom worked in the *Altstadt,* and at the train [station].

A great number of poor people came out of the *Neustadt* (who would go [begging] from door to door).

This, taken in its entirety, presents a portrait of our *Neustad*t world, which, as we have previously mentioned, differentiated itself quite sharply from the *Altstadt.*

Yes – this difference was eliminated by the Nazi beasts. Neustadt became the last stop for all three parts of Zamość. It was here that all the local and foreign Jews were brought, before they were led to the slaughter. Here, all stations in life were made level, livelihoods and groups – they had on one, single relationship – the common Jewish folk masses.

This is related in the chapter on the Holocaust.

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286 Derived from the Yiddish word, '*pareh*,' for steam. It has nothing to do with parve food.

# New-Zamość Types and Stories

By A. Schwartzberg
(Montreal)

## Shlomo'leh Beikhel

When I begin to flip the pages in my memory book, about the various types [of people] in my town, an array of all sorts of characters appear before me: Hasidic, *Mitnagdim*, so called freethinkers, all sorts of idlers, and just plain interesting types, which certainly, not one of our *landsleit* remembers any longer. Here, I will attempt to retrieve from the wells of forgetfulness, certain personas from that referenced gallery, whose description, I believe, can have, if not a great deal of cultural-historic value, then definitely, a meaning for our *Pinkas*.

It is worth noting here, that I recall these various individuals only by their nicknames. Therefore, I expect that their relatives or friends will forgive me, because I do not, God forbid, intend any disrespect to them. Rather, is no exaggeration if I say that not one of us knows their correct family names. And it is even possible that they – the people themselves – also didn't actually know them.

In general, it was perhaps something of a custom, to call people by nicknames (especially in the *Neustadt*). The nicknames, mostly, were in one of three categories:

1. The [nick]names of parents or even a wife, for example: David Shieleh's, Chaim Aharon-Leib's, Baruch Faiga's (his wife was called Faiga) or using 3 generations: Mordechai David Shieleh's.

2. Nicknames according to their occupation, or parent's occupation: For example: Baruch Koval [sic: a blacksmith], Berish Schlosser [sic: a locksmith], Elia Sofer, etc.

3. Nicknames based on appearance, or a physical defect, for example: Long Joseph, Black Abraham, Lame Ephraim, Blond Mordechai, the Blind Scribe (called by no name of his own at all).

**Shlomo'leh Beikhel**, that is what the Heder children would call him. **Shlomo'leh** – because he was small and of short stature; **Beikhel** – because he had a big belly. It is possible that this is what we children thought at the time, that his belly was too large, and that was already a reason to make fun of him, and even though I was not a badly raised child, I would on occasion, follow my classmates in making sport of little Shlomo'leh with the big belly.

One time, however, I learned something about this Shlomo'leh, which affected me, not only to stop laughing at him, but quite the opposite – to look at him with respect and great deference, mixed naturally with some compassion.

It happened that my father, Shlomo *Lehrer* (that is how my father the teacher was called), on a hot Saturday afternoon, told his pupils the wondrous story of Shlomo Konskowoler[287], the grandfather of Shlomo'leh Beikhel.

– There was once a Jew, a merchant by the name of R' Shlomo Konskowoler ('German' names were not in use at that time). This Shlomo was a clever Jewish man, and because of that, he succeeded in his commercial dealings, which consisted of dealing in forest products. He dealt with the richest nobles, and in the course of the years, he became very wealthy, a Jew with riches beyond measure. His wealth grew rapidly, and Shlomo took up residence in an elaborate palace, hired many attendants and servants, and conducted himself as if her too were a nobleman.

Every early morning, after prayers, R' Shlomo, who by that time was being called *Gospodin Solomon*, and who owned almost the entire area of Konskowola, would ride out in his silver-plated carriage, drawn by six horses in tandem. He would ride out to inspect his forests, fields, lands, and see if everything is in order: the work, the grain, and if everything is being appropriately supervised.

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[287] That is to say, from Konsko Wola.

And so, he was accustomed to do this for a long time, until one time he committed a great transgression, which was the cause for his rapid decline.

It was on a fall day. The morning was rainy, and the Polish roads (unpaved) – wet and muddy. In an open wagon, drawn by a scrawny single horse, a *Rebbe* was traveling with several of his retinue. Because of the bad road, the horse was barely able to pull the wagon, and the Jews, soaked through by the rain, tired, complained to one another, and were humming some sort of a tune. Suddenly, from behind them, the carriage of the Jewish noble Solomon appears, and with a thrust, rides right by the wagon, spraying the Rebbe and his *Hasidim* with mud.

The *Rebbe*, full of ire, called out:

– May you no longer live to ride in your carriage!

Immediately from this day onward, R' Shlomo's business dealings began to melt down like butter. He lost a lot of his wealth, sold his palace in order to pay off large debts, and in the end – lost his silvered carriage.

R' Shlomo's son, was already an ordinary, not wealthy Jew, who barely made a living. He left Konskowola and took up residence in Zamość, in the *Neustadt*. His wife bore him a son, who was given the name of his grandfather – Shlomo'leh.

Shlomo'leh's luck was, however, the opposite of his grandfather's, since in his entire life he was a pauper, and suffered because of the 'sins of the father....'

## 'The Young Flower'

In the middle of the thirties, Zamość had young people which came from a generation that received a normal upbringing. Most of the youth, born already after the First World War, received a regular education in Heder, school, and a part also went to middle school. Jewish cultural life developed quickly and broadly, thanks to the normal and stable circumstances. The Zionist youth movement, as also the left-wing groups, took in increasing numbers of members.

The libraries and reading circles drew a large number of readers and books were injected into many homes. Finally, the moment arrived, when Zamość could revive the publication of its own weekly paper – *'Die Zamośćher Stimme.'*

A group of young people did not content themselves with just living culturally and remaining passive observers of the cultural life of the city. [The group] decided to found its own circle for cultural activities, which over time would crystallize a platform of its own. Far from the congested political ranks, the founders of the circle were: the writer of these lines – then a gymnasium student, Israel Pertziger (today in Russia), an employee of a business, Abraham Pak, a later worker (an assistant to his father), Yaakov Hazenwald (from Komarow), an employee of a business, and Yaakov Schwartz (son of a *Shokhet*), a watchmaker.

The circle had no sooner been created, then it immediately undertook its brief seriously. Meetings took place twice a week, at which problems of a very substantive character were taken under review, such as: natural science, literature, sociological, philosophical, political, etc. At every meeting, a different member would prepare a talk, which was read out loud and afterwards discussed.

Everything was formally recorded by a secretary, and safeguarded in a special archive.

This circle grew rapidly, and at that time, the members decided to create their own publication – to print a periodical.

The first edition had 16 handwritten sides, and was organized according to the design of a real periodical, that means there were: a lead article, a chronology of the week, serious articles and even a humorous byline under the title of '**Der**

**Letz**' (edited by Yaakov Schwartz). The latter also carved out the name of the periodical in wood, '**The Young Flower**' which was in red ink.

The following several editions were full of interesting offerings, written by members of the circle and edited by a special collegium of editors.

Naturally, many copies were not made, because it was not easy to hand write so many columns. Nevertheless, apart from the members of the circle, also several outside people obtained this periodical. When M. Tzaller, the co-editor of the Zamośćher *Stimme*, saw this periodical for the first time, he was very moved by it, and promised try and find a way to have the copies printed.

Regrettably, this never happened, because after a certain amount of time, in which there was activity, the circle, for a specific reason that was not dependent on the membership, had to abandon the periodical – and close down.

## The Great Fire in the *Neustadt*

*Page 711:* *The destruction of the Neustadt after the frightful fire. At that time, 69 houses were burned down. Up to 400 families were left without a roof over their heads. In the foreground of the picture the skeleton of the incinerated Neustadt Synagogue can be seen. On the right is a house left completely intact, which housed the business of Pinchas Naftshazh ('The Russian Kerosene Maker').*

I believe that there is not one of our *landsleit* who has forgotten the frightful fire in the *Neustadt*, which wiped out a large part pf the Jewish center of the town, encompassing the synagogue, the *Bet HaMedrash*, and almost all of the Hasidic *shtibl* houses of worship. Eighty houses were carried away by the fire, and, apart from the synagogue, I do not believe that a single one was re-built until the war, which led to a second fire, which ended the destruction.

It was on a beautiful morning, May 5, 1936. The sky was clear blue, and the sun warmed everything. A breeze was blowing the stubble on the unpaved streets. It was 10 o'clock, and each and every person was busy: whether at work, whether in the factory, or in school.

Suddenly, the sound of the siren, with a fearful wail, is heard throughout the city, emanating from the municipal electric station. Everyone shudders, knowing that it is the sign of a fire. A commotion arises in the city.

People drop their work. Close up their businesses, and run to extinguish the fire, or to help save the possessions of friends.

Everyone hopes that it will not last long, and the fire will be extinguished, seeing that it is still early in the day, when people are awake. Very quickly, however, it becomes evident that this is mistaken.

The fire is not in one place, but breaks out suddenly in a variety of locations simultaneously. Nobody understands how this happened, and doesn't know where to put the fire out first. The siren continues to wail, but the fire-fighters do not arrive. They, themselves, don't move too quickly, because they already know that 'It is the *zhids* who are burning....'

When they finally do arrive, it appears that they have 'forgotten' to fill the barrels with water.....

They ride back to the river, and again, it takes a long time until they come back. The assembly loses patience and begins to do whatever they can. However, there is not much that can be done, because the fire spreads with frightening speed, ever swallowing up newer houses. The houses, made of wood, and dried by the baking sun, burn quickly. In a large number of places, the fire shoot out tongues of flame heavenward. There is a theory, that in a number of places, Jew-haters have poured out kerosene, in order to annihilate the 'Little Moscow,' as they cynically referred to the Jewish neighborhood.

The assets of poor Jews burned for an entire day, and the coals gleamed in the evening.

The Jewish center remained a field with chimneys, which at night had the appearance of ghosts, striking fear in the Jewish residents regarding future fires....

Regrettably, not many of us, at that time, understood the warning ans could not foresee the later global conflagration, which will annihilate not only our possessions, but also the large majority of our people, both biologically and spiritually.

* *
*

Days later, rumors circulated that the fire was set up and carried out by underworld elements, hired by the Endekist anti-Semites. This was the way they took revenge against the '*zhids*,' who had the temerity to celebrate the worker's holiday on the First of May, in such a good-spirited manner.

A number of Jews even said, that there was even a wink given by the central authorities to the gentiles of Zamość...

* * *

*When I shared an early draft of this memoir with my cousin, David Carver (born Sznycer in the Neustadt), he wrote back on May 1, 2003 as follows:*

> Dear Jack,
>
> For the first time you uncovered something that I certainly remember. The fire stopped directly across the street from our house. My father evacuated our family to a large field where others were also. My mother, brother and sister and the rest were spread out surrounded by some of our belongings, while my father returned to our house where he got on to the roof and proceeded to wet the shingles to prevent them from catching fire.
>
> Curiously while we were 'camped' out in this field a woman and man came to see us, or rather came to see my mother. It turned out that she was a non-Jewish girlhood friend of my mother's who had emigrated to America, was visiting Poland and wished to see my mother. She gave me some chewing gum which I chewed then swallowed, not knowing any better.
>
> Thank you so much for this,
> Dave

# In Those Days

**By Mark Jakubowicz**

## (At the 14th Anniversary of the Zamość Martyrs)

3 Elul 5674 [25 Aug 1914] a short time after the outbreak of the World War, when the Austrian armies and Czarist Cossacks would march into and out of Zamość, Zamość survived a bloody slaughter, during which 11 Jewish citizens of the city fell.

Zamość, found at the one-time Russian-Austrian border, was a place of predation, which largely fell on the heads of the Jews. The authority in charge of the city always went over from one hand to the other. Understand, that in such an uncertain atmosphere, there were all manner of provocations from underworld elements – street women an rascals – put themselves up against the Jews. And it happened on that 'famous' Tuesday at noon, when the Austrians left the city, and the Russians entered the city. These fine upstanding people already had aroused the Russian military, telling them that the Jews had received the Austrians favorably. So, the military began to kill and rob. The elderly **Zanvill Zegen** was murdered, who looked out of a window. In the *Neustadt*, several hundred Jews and Poles were gathered together in an empty plaza, and stood in a row. Cannon was placed opposite them, and only thanks to a specific commander, **Fanelov**, who came to that spot, was the frightful slaughter averted.

These events burdened the community activists with the come together in such a danger, at the Municipal building, to take counsel, in order to halt the pogrom. The bakers were directed to bake bread for the military. Among those young people, there was also the son of the deceased Rabbi, who was later shot.

From one dwelling, a conscript shot out of a window, and created a provocation that the Jews were firing on the military and on its leadership.

A huge commotion broke out between the military and the leaders of the 189th Warsaw Regiment, Colonel Zhulabin, gave the order to shoot.

Everyone began to run into the houses to hide. So the drunken military began to search, and pulled about ten people out of a cellar, who were stood in a row, and the previously mentioned murderer, Zhulabin gave an order to shoot them. It was in this line that the Rabbi's son fell, Yeshayahu HaLevi Hurwitz (Weissbrod), who was 18 years old at that time, and had gone to the Colonel asking him why they were being shot. The Colonel then gave a shout: **'Мерзавцй!'** [288] and gave the order to shoot. A volley, and everyone is laid out on the ground. The conscripts, in their bloodthirstiness approached the dead, and trampled them underfoot, and beat them up with the butts of their rifles, to the point that it was difficult to recognize the dead.

The names of those who were shot are:

Meir Altberg, 38 years old; Israel Hoon, 34 years old; Yeshayahu Hurwitz (Weissbrod) 18 years ols; Zeinvill Zegen, 71 years old; Tevel Finkenberg 48 Years old; Hirsch Finkenberg, 18 years old (son); Moshe Ehrlich, 22 years old; Yitzhak Guthartz, 40 years old; David Eisenberg, 17 years old; and Yitzhak-David Fass, 21 years old.

That Tuesday of the year 1914 will not leave the memories of the Zamość Jewish community for a very long time.

It is worth adding, that till this day, on the common grave of the Martyrs, there is no memorial. It is therefore the highest time for the native congregation to provide a means of placing a memorial for its community representatives.

* * *

[288] You detestable abomination!

This reminder necrology was published in the *Lubliner Tageblatt*, number 201, Thursday 21 Elul 5688, September 6, 1928. The writer advises that this Tuesday of the 10 people killed 'will not leave the memories of the Zamość Jewish community for a very long time.' After this, came the grotesque deaths of the thousands of Jews from the entire community of Zamość, which made the magnitude of this murder pale by comparison. We bring this necrology here as it appeared in its time.

Additionally, we also bring the eye-witness account of Akiva Schwartzberg about this same incident. Schwartzberg, a witness, and nearly a martyr of this very same incident, provides an array of details that are missing form this reminder notice.

# The Zamość Pogrom of 1914

**By Akiva Schwartzberg**
(Israel)

When the First World War broke out, the Austrian military took Zamość. On the second or third day, they relinquished the city and left. A number of us men from the *Neustadt* were in the *Altstadt*, on what later was the Peretz *Gasse*, opposite the tearoom where the droshkies wold stand.

Suddenly we heard shooting. So several of us comrades, among them David Yudeh (Yaakov Eisenberg), Itcheh-David Esther Henyeh's (Yitzhak-David Ahss) and I began to run towards the *Neustadt*.

On the way, we met up with Tevel Finkenberg (Lejzor Khrovyeh's) with his son – Hirsch. When we were near the 'little courtyard' a group of Russian soldiers held us up, and led us to a wall opposite the Francziskaner house. On the second side, was the building of the *Strazh Pozharneh* (The Fire-Fighters).

They held us for an hour's time, and beat us vigorously and demanded that we should tell them where the Austrians were. In this span of time, the soldiers brought in other Jews, and a small number of Christians. Understand, that we could not say where the Austrians had gone.

The commandant **Zalubin** [sic: Zhalubin] gave an order to the soldiers that they should shoot at us with their machine guns. When we saw how the soldiers were making their weapons ready to shoot, all of us who were standing near the wall pushed ourselves into a corner.

When the first shots hit, all of us fell down on the ground. A number were dead, and a number were wounded.

Shmuel Finkenberg asked his son if he was still alive? The son answered – Yes, father. A Russian soldier heard this, and he immediately informed the commandant that among the people, there were some who were alive.

The commandant then gave out an order to the soldiers that the living should be stabbed with bayonets. I was also wounded in the throat. Blood ran from the wound. I was lying with my face down. The soldiers then dragged me by the feet on the ground about 5 meters and they showed me to the commandant, indicating that I was dead. They did the same for all of the people who were lying on the ground. Anyone who showed any sign of live, was immediately stabbed with the bayonets.

To this day, I still remember the names of the people who were killed at that time. They were: Meir Altberg, Israel Hoon, Yeshaya Hurwitz (the son of the Rabbi of Zamość), Zeivill Zegen, Tuvia (Tevel) Finkenberg, Hirsch Finkenberg, Yitzhak Guthartz, David Eisenberg, Yitzhak-Davis Fass and several other Christians, who were dead.

I lay on the ground about 2 hours. It was already getting dark, and I heard how a cart was approaching. I noted that there was an officer in the cart. When he say the people lying there, he asked the conscript that was guarding us – what is this? The soldier replied that the commandant had ordered the people shot.

The officer – he was a general – his name was **Folgov** – gave a shout, that the commandant was to be brought to him immediately. The commandant came immediately, and at the question of the general, as to why he had ordered these people shot, he answered that these were spies.

Among those who were shot were a lot of minor young boys, and I myself was then 14 years old, so the general asked – what, such young children are spies? And the general ordered the soldiers to disarm the commandant and take him away.

Afterwards, he ordered that a medical orderly be summoned, and he asked him to search among the people, who were lying on the ground, to see if there yet may be among them those whom it would be possible to save.

When I heard this, I raised myself, and said, that I am alive. Next to me, another boy raised himself. The medical orderly went up to Moshe Ehrlich from the 'Little Courtyard,' and stanched the flow of blood, which was flowing out of him, and he was taken to his home. Died 2 days later.

I and the second boy, who had raised himself, were ordered by the general to go home. When the general noted that blood was running out of my throat, he said to me that I am wounded, and he ordered the medical orderly to bandage my wound.

In the time that the medical orderly was busy with me, a soldier came riding up, and told the general that in the *Neustadt*, beyond the tile factory, the entire Jewish population of the Neustadt is standing, waiting to be shot.

The general did not think, and asked us where we live. When we said that we live in the Neustadt. He told us to get into his cart, and he took us to the bell in the Neustadt, where we got down. The general went off in the direction of the tile factory.

In the Neustadt we saw no people. Our house was boarded up, and there was no one I could ask where the people were. A half hour later, my parents came running with my sisters and brothers, and told that all the Jews had been led out to be shot. Several machine guns had already been set up for that purpose. However, they were lucky, that in the very last minute, a general rode up in a carriage and freed everyone, and told them to go to their homes.

Saturday, after this great miracle, the entire Neustadt community recited the *Gomel* blessing.

(Told by Akiva Schwartzberg. Recorded by Jekuthiel Zwillich)

Haifa – The Land of Israel

# Jewish Life in Zamość in the Last Century

**By Zvi Gebet**

## The 'Fifth' Year in Zamość

Before I will write down the upheavals that took place by us, which happened as an echo of the great contest in that historic revolutionary year, I must portray the general appearance of our Jewish community, in the eve of that stormy 'fifth' year.

In general, Jewish life was clothes in a religious character, everything centered about the *Schulhof*. Conversations between *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim* generally had some bearing on the Enlightenment. To begin with, it was the religious community that had the upper hand in Jewish life, however, new winds began to penetrate, brought in by Jewish gymnasium students, who studied in what at that time was the Russian Pro-Gymnasium. To the extent that I can remember, the first of the gymnasium students were the children of Elkanah Geliebter, whom the director promised that the children would not have to write on the Sabbath, but they will have to attend classes, whether on the Sabbath or on other Jewish Festival Holidays.

The economic foundation of the Jewish community was in trade and crafts. Trade benefitted a great deal from Russian politics, which dictated that the railroad line not pass too close to the Austrian border. The closest railroad station was in Rajowiec, 50 kilometers from Zamość. From here to the border was yet a longer distance, sprinkled with towns and villages, with a large population. Zamość thus developed as the entry point which provided merchandise for a rather large ambit. Cargo wagons and passenger coaches went back and forth between Rajowiec and Zamość without pause, for the entire week – except for Shabbat. Also the passenger traffic followed the same path, to Rajowiec. Beginning with the inexpensive cargo wagons for simple, poor passengers, after that, coaches for merchants up to carriages (that belonged to the Richter brothers), for the really well-to-do people.

The Russian military was an important factor in Zamość. The city had a large number of craftsmen, such as: tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, metalworkers, hat makers, bakers, locksmiths, and a complete array of other craftsmen. A large portion of the craftsmen worked alone, without workers. The biggest among them retained 'young folk' (that is the way they were called up to the year 1905, when they started to use the expression 'workers'). This sort of 'young person' could be retained either in the city or in the Neustadt, most of them being of the type who came from the surrounding towns.

In general, the craftsman was held to be at a lower [social] level than the Jews who were *balebatim,* who owned and ran a small store (even the smallest). A Jew, who was one of the *balebatim*, would not consider proposing a marriage between his child and the child of a craftsman. One could hear from this sort of person, the following type of remark: 'I haven't fallen so low yet, that I need to enter into a marital arrangement with a craftsman; a tailor or a shoemaker!'

The craftsmen made their own small synagogues and *minyanim*. The worshipers at the community *shtibl* also came from the ranks of this type of Jewish person. It was here that they retained Maneh Melamed. Who studied with them every evening, between *Mincha* and *Maariv*.

I remember once, how one of the *balebatim* from the city, a merchant said:

– All people are equal to me, and if *Yankel'eh the Tailor* comes into my place, I will extend my hand to him (!).

And as low in status that the craftsmen were, the servant girls and apprentices, the 'young folk,' were even lower. To the extent, that it bordered on slavery. Such 'young people' were taken on by the craftsmen for a season – from Passover to *Sukkot* – or the reverse [i.e. from, *Sukkot* to Passover]. Such a youth was taken into a household with room and board, and a small amount of pocket change for the time. Usually, his sleeping place was a corner covered in straw, which was usually in the attic, or in a side room. He would take him in for the evening, and wrap him up on the ironing

board, or simply right on the floor. Food also consisted of the cheapest possible fare, that could be procured from the slaughterhouses – end pieces, the meat from the head, and other 'bargains.' Such a young person had to work to the extend desired by the master. Mostly, this was from before dawn until late at night, with a break – to go to synagogue to offer the prayers for *Mincha* and *Maariv*. Coming back from synagogue, an evening meal was eaten, and once again, one sat down to work with a fresh song, if the master didn't have a headache.

I recall that at the place of Israel-Itcheh *Schneider*, several such 'young folk' worked, and warm food was being served, as was the usual custom, but something not quite as good, and for the master, the stood a bowl of soup with a piece of fowl in it, and as the master turned [momentarily], one of the young folk threw in a handful of salt into his plate! The lady of the house had a lot of explaining to do to her husband, for why his food was over-salted.

As hard as the work was for these craftsmen: tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, it was that much more difficult for the bakers, because in the other occupations, the 'youth' had the night to themselves. The young folk who worked for the bakers, in general, did not have any set time for sleep – especially from Wednesday to Friday before evening, at the time that the *cholent* pots were put into the oven.[289] The young folk who worked for the bakers would usually 'grab a snooze' only while standing on their feet.

These sort of relationships gave rise in Zamość to a special class who literally were idlers; they were young people, who until they reached the age of military service, even though they lived with their parents and hungered, did not want to 'lower themselves' to the level of a craftsman.

The growth of the labor movement in Russia and Poland, the beginning of the organization to improve the working and living conditions of workers, reached Zamość, and became different in this respect.

The onset of the Jewish labor movement by us in the city, did not come from the ranks of the workers [themselves], but from 'top-down' – the first who took to organizing the 'young folk' were the intelligentsia. It came from a university **Naphtali Margolis** (a scion of the Zamość 'Rothchilds!') who was joined by the **Ashkenazis**, the **Goldsteins**, the **Epsteins, Yerakhmiel Brandwein**, **Fishel Geliebter**, and many others and they founded the ***Bund***.

A second group founded the 'SS Party.' The founder was **Chaim Shpizeisen**, who came from Minsk. He was joined by Itteh Geliebter (a female student), Pesha Rosen (a hairdresser), Yaakov Geliebter (a goldsmith), Hirsch Gebet (an employee), Berish Puter (a mechanic), Yaakov Goldhaar (a locksmith), Henoch Zitz (a hat maker),Gedaliah Jonasgartel (a baker), and others.

Professional activity was started by these political organizations. Strikes begin for minimally better conditions. Discussions also were initiated about the programs of both parties, and a larger and larger part of the depressed youth on the sidelines, along with craftsmen, were drawn into the movement.

There were frequent meetings, mostly in the *Bet HaMedrash* on Friday towards nightfall, and also in the other quorums assembled for prayer in the *shtiblach*. From time to time, they were also held outside of the city, under open skies. On one occasion, such a meeting took place in a vacant house in 'Browar.' Despite the fact that we had posted patrols, and

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289 A very common practice throughout all of Eastern Europe, was to take the family's Sabbath meal of *cholent* to the baker, to take advantage of the largest oven in the *shtetl* that enabled the slow stewing process to take place overnight. This reflects the fact that maintaining a fire throughout at least the initial 15 hours of the Sabbath, was both expensive, and possibly not easy to effect without violating the prohibition against 'dealing' with fire on the day of rest. Undoubtedly, the baker got a fee for this, to help defray his costs of firewood, etc. At the time that morning Sabbath services ended, the womenfolk would go to the baker's premises, retrieve their *cholent* pots, which would be taken home to be eaten as the midday Sabbath repast. These 'young folk' very likely assisted the baker in receiving and placing these pots into the oven, as their final duty before the Sabbath day of rest.

warned us that the police were coming, and that a large part of the audience fled, the police were able to arrest 25 men, which were encountered on the way from the 'Browar' to the city. It cost a few rubles, but everyone was let go.

Berish Puter, whom we mentioned previously, played a rather significant role at the 'S.S' His father had a lock making business, and a metal-casting facility; it was a small dirty factory. This served the 'S.S.' as a party headquarters, where circles would gather and meetings were held; There was also a hectograph here, where the party printed its announcements.

Courses to learn how to read and write existed in the parties. This helped to spiritually elevate the new movement. Apart from this, there was a daily meeting at a location [*birzheh*] where the workers would stroll and air the issues of the organizations among themselves. I don't know why, before the '*birzheh*,' this was conducted near the Roman Catholic Church, and later was moved to Nevsky, from the Synagogue to the Russian Orthodox Church.

The first strike was that of the bakers. This was a difficult strike, which went on and on. The strike was led by the 'S.S.' The party was completely consumed by this strike. The largest bakery belonged to the '*Kokkehs*[290]' (the Bekher brothers). Since they were two brothers, they did the baking themselves, and did not want to take on any help. In the end, the strike succeeded.

The second strike (also carried out by the 'S.S.') was among the servants, which is what we called the employees of the trading businesses. This also was a difficult strike. The demands here were, that the businesses should not remain open for more than 12 hours a day. Since most of these businesses employed between 1 ans 4 servants, the strike was difficult, in those instances where the owners discontinued the employment. This strike also was won.

A curiosity arose at Irlander's business in this strike, where there were 16 employees. There, the 12-hour day had been previously implemented. When the strike began, the merchants came to Irlander with a complaint, that he is responsible for the strike – he spoiled the servants. He called together his personnel, and told to them that he is cancelling the 12-hour day, and he will hold his business open as long as he would like to. With that, they all got up and left their work. When several days later, he called his employees and told them that he was retracting his demand, the employees then presented a demand for a 25 percent increase in pay, an increase that they, indeed, did win.

The third strike, also directed by 'S.S.' was the carpenter's strike.

But the biggest strike, which took place in that time was the one by the tailors. The majority got together and made a joint stand that they will not concede anything. The 'young folk' were not permitted to come in and spend the night, and the workers had no place to sleep, had nothing to eat. This strike was conducted by the *Bund*. The collection for a strike-fund was initiated. All the workers in the city took part in this action. The shopkeepers themselves began to do the work. Those who retained 1 or 2 apprentices were able to deal with the situation – the larger ones could do nothing. Apart from this, the *balebatim* had gotten used to being able to go down to the 'orchards,' on a daily basis at midday, where their were always circles of Jews, to discuss 'politics;' tell each other news, or just plain exchanging banter and jokes. The strike kept them tethered to their businesses....so the *balebatim* concluded among themselves, that the workers are not the ones responsible for the strike, but rather, it was the intelligentsia, which had talked the workers into this trouble. So, groups of these masters went out, with staves in their hands, and wherever they met up with a party member, they fell upon him, and broke his bones. Among those beaten this way were N. Margolis, Ch. Shpizeisen, and others.

Seeing that the beatings were not helping, the tailors decided to form a cooperative; about twenty or so tailors got together, at Fat Wohlish's (Richtman), who at that time was one of the biggest tailors, and went to work. Initially, it went happily – one cut, a second one basted, another sewed, pressed – the work went on with a song, and as they intended, also with victory. This lasted for about 2 weeks. An internal struggle began against the 'management.' Each individual anted to go to his prior clients. An internal contention began, regarding matters pertaining to trade skills – one would not be satisfied with another's 'cut;' a second one would not be satisfied with someone else's 'stitch.'

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290 A sobriquet likely alluding to strutting roosters.

Initially these differences had the character of being arguments with derisory remarks, with the usual 'blessings' in your father's father, etc. Until it got to the point that they began throwing around pressing cushions, boards, scissors.... it got boisterous, and one at a time, each master went out to find his 'young folk,' and conceded everything that the latter had demanded!

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A couple of episodes from that stormy moment:

On a certain day, friends came to the '*birzheh*' from the *Neustadt* and related that the thieves, all of whom lived in the *Neustadt*, that no 'striker' should dare to come in (by a 'striker' they meant to include anyone involved in organizing, or who was a freethinker), because otherwise, they will 'have to take care of him.' This elicited a storm, and immediately several tens of workers gathered together, and went off to the *Neustadt*. There, they promenaded about the center in a demonstrative fashion: from Stern's Pharmacy to the Post Office. Back and forth. The thieves took a moment to think through what to do. In the end, they decided to come out an 'chew the fat' and to learn what it was that the 'strikers' wanted....

We explained to them that stealing was not an occupation, and that it is a product of the capitalist system (!!!) And we made an agreement on the spot, that they really need to abandon that 'occupation.' Part of them became wagon drivers, a part shoemakers, and a few went off to America; all of them enrolled in courses to learn reading and writing. Most of them were able to pass their examinations, and yet others returned to their 'occupation.' However, they no longer sought any confrontations with the 'strikers.'

A real incident took place between a group of butchers from the 'Browar' who also had declared war on the 'strikers.' In this instance we didn't go to the 'Browar' – the butchers came to us in the '*birzheh*.' They were armed with knives in their belts and with staves in their hands – saying, *here we are! Let's see you do something about it!...* I don't remember how it got started, but a fight broke out immediately near Yencheh's place of business. I only remember that Berish Puter and Simcha Loesser (from Lublin) arrived, and they threw themselves into the melee, with the intent of stopping the incident. The butchers all threw themselves upon Berish, but they were in the minority against a larger number of the friends from the '*birzheh*.' It is true that not everyone got mixed up in the fight, and it wasn't necessary, because these 'heroic' young people got their bones broken pretty well, and didn't show themselves anymore.

After these incidents, the work was again carried out in peace. A variety of circles operated in groups of both parties. Each attempted to draw the active members of the other to themselves. The intelligentsia of the *Bund* was interested in winning me over as well, but I believed strongly in the program of the 'S.S.'

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A big event of those time was the demonstration that was organized after the October 17th Manifesto. All the Jewish workers of the city, along with a larger number of Polish workers from the brick making factories and breweries, demonstrated under red banners. The demonstration stretched from the 'Browar' Way near the three lanterns, past the gymnasium and the keep, across from the Roman Catholic Church, in the direction of the 'Little Courtyard.' Everyone walked in closed ranks, and sang revolutionary songs. When the demonstration drw close to the home of the town leader, and Dr. Geliebter, the area police constable Czerniecki approached from the opposite direction, with a small patrol of soldiers. He posed a demand that the demonstrators should disperse peacefully. He declared that the revolution si not going to start in Zamość, but rather in the big cities, and whatever will happen in all of Russia will also happen here.

The demonstration came to an end. The large assembled mass sang an array of revolutionary songs. I especially remember Liosha Altberg, who was already an elderly woman, she stood in the middle and led the singing.[291]

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291 **Manifesto of October 17, 1905**

We, Nicholas II, By the Grace of God Emperor and Autocrat of all Russia, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., proclaim to all Our loyal subjects:

Rioting and disturbances in the capitals [i.e. St. Petersburg and the old capital, Moscow] and in many localities of Our

Later we found out that a group of demonstrators had been arrested. The entire mass moved to the jail, which was behind the Magistrate [sic: the *Rathaus*], and demanded that the arrested people be released, or to arrest the entire mass of people. After a half hour, the constable came to release the arrested people under the condition that the crowd should disperse. After the arrested people were released, one of the songs was sung with vigor, and everyone went off.

After the stormy 'fifth' year, reaction in Russia strengthened. A wave of pogroms cascaded over all of Russia. The air also became suffocating in Zamość. A mass-emigration began, especially to America. This dealt the movement a strong blow. The best activists took up their wandering staffs, and the ranks grew thinner and thinner.

If one is speaking of the year 1905, it is necessary to recall that the building of a military barracks was started in the 'Browar.' This was a big construction project, the likes of which the city had not yet seen. Many Christian construction workers were imported from Russia, and a small number of Jews. These helped greatly in the building up of the *Bundist* movement in Zamość.

There was a bit of an economic uplift in the city. Political and cultural activity started up. A number of strikes also took place against the contractors.

The reactionary years put pressure on everything. Very heavily punitive attitudes came down on everyone, but the memories of that stormy period survived for a long time, and had an impact on everyone's memory who lived through those times.

## The First Jewish Community Library in the City

Before I come to relate about the founding of the **first** and **only** community library in Zamość, I must first briefly remark about the element that had to be the creator and user of the library.

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Empire fill Our heart with great and heavy grief. The well-being of the Russian Sovereign is inseparable from the well-being of the nation, and the nation's sorrow is his sorrow. The disturbances that have taken place may cause grave tension in the nation and may threaten the integrity and unity of Our state.

By the great vow of service as tsar We are obliged to use every resource of wisdom and of Our authority to bring a speedy end to unrest that is dangerous to Our state. We have ordered the responsible authorities to take measures to terminate direct manifestations of disorder, lawlessness, and violence and to protect peaceful people who quietly seek to fulfill their duties. To carry out successfully the general measures that we have conceived to restore peace to the life of the state, We believe that it is essential to coordinate activities at the highest level of government.

We require the government dutifully to execute our unshakeable will:

1) To grant to the population the essential foundations of civil freedom, based on the principles of genuine inviolability of the person, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.

2) Without postponing the scheduled elections to the State Duma, to admit to participation in the duma (insofar as possible in the short time that remains before it is scheduled to convene) of all those classes of the population that now are completely deprived of voting rights; and to leave the further development of a general statute on elections to the future legislative order.

3) To establish as an unbreakable rule that no law shall take effect without confirmation by the State Duma and that the elected representatives of the people shall be guaranteed the opportunity to participate in the supervision of the legality of the actions of Our appointed officials.

We summon all loyal sons of Russia to remember their duties toward their country, to assist in terminating the unprecedented unrest now prevailing, and together with Us to make every effort to restore peace and tranquility to Our native land.

Given at Peterhof the 17th of October in the 1905th year of Our Lord and of Our reign the eleventh.

**Nicholas**

Translated by Daniel Field

In general, there were almost no readers at all among any circle in our city. There was nobody who had an interest or a need to read in Yiddish or Hebrew. The old generation lived its time out in the books of the *Bet HaMedrash*, and the younger generation was educated in the *Heder*, and afterwards in the *Bet HaMedrash*. It was only a very small portion of the youth that studied at the Russian Gymnasium and they read Russian and Polish books.

Yiddish, in general, was not counted as a cultural language, the language was called '*Jargon,*' and most of the young people was not disposed to speak or read Yiddish. The majority of the young people, who did not study at the '*Szkolas,*' could read neither Polish nor Russian, lived their lives in Yiddish, but did not read any Yiddish books – there practically were none to be had. Some would occasionally snatch a glance at a Yiddish periodical ('*Freind*' and others), which would arrive in the city in small numbers.

In those years, a few Yiddish books would get into the city in a fashion that is today unknown. Jews would travel through towns and villages with all sorts of merchandise for Jewish religious use: *siddurim* (prayer books), *makhzorim* (High Holy Day prayer books), *Tzena U'Re'ena* (The Yiddish rendition of the Pentateuch favored by womenfolk), *Shevet-Musar,*[292] other books, and also fringed garments, phylacteries and mezuzahs. They were called *Pakn-Treger.*[293] They would wander from city to city with these packages. They would especially come around the eve of the High Holy Days, or other Festival holidays. They would store their merchandise in the *Bet HaMedrash.* Among the various sacramental objects, there were also secular items, items pertaining to the larger world, and story books.

These *Pakn-Treger* began taking along other kinds of books, which they would keep hidden, not mixing them with sacred works, and prayer books. These *Pakn-Treger* would wink at the young people, that they have items for them, that were set out on top. These secret *trayf-possul* [294][books] consisted of stories and novels in Yiddish from רמ"ש [sic: ***Nahum Mayer***] Shykevich, and others. The heroes of these encompassing novels were not from Jewish life, rather, there were frightening stories described there, of kings, princes and princesses, counts and thieves... but for this type of merchandise there were very few buyers, who could allow themselves [the luxury] of buying these books.

It was the previously-mentioned David Fekher who came to the assistance of those who wanted to read such story books. He would negotiate with the *Pakn-Treger* for such books, and later, he would lend them out for a few groschen loan fee. In the city, a variety of groups and circles formed, who would read books together, and they did so especially on the Sabbath. The place where they read was in the orchards, or near the river on the side benches. I remember how we, as a group, would lie on a hillock near the Russian Orthodox Church, one person reading out loud, and the rest listened. One section was read, and a messenger was sent to David Fekher to ask for a second section. We would lay around for many long hours, dreaming away about far off worlds, in palaces, forests, and worlds without order.

This persisted until the year 1905, and a labor movement was initiated among the Jewish youth, that I have previously described. The cultural activity, the courses for reading and writing, and afterwards, the various partisan literature, brochures, proclamations, periodicals. This literature was exclusively in Yiddish. A large circle of Yiddish readers was created, which now demanded a Yiddish literature. From the other side, the Yiddish writers, seeing that there is an audience, began to slake the thirsty young people with such reading material, which it needed.

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292 A literary work, also identified with the Ladino-speaking Jewish community, interprets Korach's behavior as haughty. *Shevet Musar*, written by Rabbi Eliyahu ha-Kohen Itamari of Izmir, discusses the Korach episode in several contexts. This book was widespread among Ladino speakers, and its Hebrew version is frequently part of the library of well-read Jewish homes.

293 This name was adopted by the Yiddish Book Center of Amherst, MA for its monthly magazine.

294 Literally 'ritually unclean, unfit for use.' An appellation used by the strictly observant for any form of writing that was not directly connected to Jewish scholarly pursuit or prayer.

After the conference in Czernowitz[295] in 1908, when Yiddish was proclaimed a national language, a movement was created among the young people of Zamość, which agreed to set itself the goal to promote Yiddish, and that Yiddish should be read and spoken. People who spoke foreign languages were already being treated with sarcasm.

By then, there were those among the young people, who possessed personal small libraries of the best Yiddish writing. I do not recall who was the initiator, that a community Yiddish library should be created, or it is possible that it arose spontaneously among a few people. Regardless of how it was, this matter led to an organizational meeting. Gedaliah Hoffman allocated a room in his home, which was on the third floor, and young couples went out all over the city to gather books and funds. Most of the young people took part in this initiative. In a very short time, a library came into being, true, in a small room, without many books, but with a large circle of enthusiastic readers and volunteer workers, who thought of their work as a sacred duty.

From this beginning, there arose a large, well-known library in Zamość, renown throughout the Jewish world, which in recent times was known as the I. L. Peretz Library. From the private little room, it was transferred to its own large premises. A struggle for control and direction began, and the leadership elected the workers in the library, under the direction of the *Bund*; Later on, the library went over into other hands. At a specific point in time, the Polish police laid a heavy hand on that institution which had been built up with such effort and dedication. The library remain shut closed and barren for a very long time.

## The First *HeHalutz* Group

*Page 724:* *A group of pioneering youth. The third from the right is Moshe Schliam.*

The founding of the first HeHalutz group came out during the time of the First World War, 1914-1917. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, the Austrian military immediately entered the city. However, quickly and in a short period of time, we went over from the hands of [Czar] Nicholas [II] to those of Kaiser Franz-Joseph. The Russians entered again, and a reception committee was established to welcome back the Russian rulers. The committee gathered all sorts of good things from the city, and long tables were set out in the marketplace, with food, drink, cigarettes, and sweets, which was distributed for free to the Russian soldiers that were marching by.

The Poles also received the returning Russian soldiers, and they told them that the Jews trafficked with the Austrians, that they, the Jews, thought of the Austrians as their Messiah, and that also the Austrians trafficked with the Jews. And there was no lack of hooligans and Jew-haters in the Russian Army.

It was told, incidentally, that in the Russian military, which had entered Zamość at that time, that the renown hooligan from the Beilis trial, named Golubov, was among them. He seized a group of 19 Jews and put them up against a wall, where a detachment of the military shot them down. Among those shot, was Yeshaya, the son of the Rabbi, a youth of 18 years, Israel Hahn, Moshe Ehrlich, and others. Most of those shot were in the committee that had prepared the reception for the Russian soldiers, which was why they didn't seek to hide themselves at this very dangerous point in time. (There are a variety of details presented about this incident in our *Pinkas*).

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295 Czernowitz (Rum: Cernautzi), the capital of the Austrian duchy of Bukovina. It is picturesquely situated on a height above the right bank of the river Pruth, which is crossed here by two bridges, of which one is a railway bridge. On the opposite bank of the Pruth, at a very little distance to the North, is situated the town of Sadagora (inhabited mostly by Jews in 1900), where a famous cattle fair took place every year.

Czernowitz was at the time of the Austrian occupation (1775) an unimportant village. It was created a town in 1786, and at the beginning of the 19th century it numbered only 5000 inhabitants.

After this incident, the Jews of Zamość began to flee into Russia and concentrated themselves in the cities of Pinsk, Minsk, Berdichev and other places. In Zamość proper, there remained a much reduced number of Jews. When the Austrians took the city for the second time, the Jews were no longer able to return, because they found themselves far behind the Russian front.

I myself ran away from the Russian Army and came back to the city in 1917. I found Zamość to be abandoned. The housing stock didn't suffer from the war, but it was the Jewish residents who were somehow the homeless.

In that time, several tens of us young people, gathered in Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter's house, and we laid a foundation for community activity – we founded the '*Tze'irei Tzion*.'

The organization brought a vitality into the city. I remember the Saturdays, when gatherings would occur; evening courses were created for Hebrew; concerts and entertainment. At the same time, we created the first pioneering group, named '*Haver*.' Our first activity was cultural – we studied Hebrew, the geography of Israel, the history of the *Yishuv* in the Land of Israel. It was Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter who came to our assistance in this regard, who previously had been in Israel and studied at the *Herzliya* Gymnasium in Jaffa.

In order not to arrive in Israel empty-handed, we applied ourselves to learning how to work the land. But where could one learn how to work the land in Poland? We needed to find Jewish peasants or Jewish businesses, who would agree to take us in to be taught. To this end, we traveled about the villages around Zamość, Chelm, Tomaszow, Hrubieszow and Lublin. Indeed, we did find Jewish wealthy people, but they didn't wan to take us in, everyone having a different excuse.

After a great deal of travel and searching, we finally found a Jewish agricultural business near Izbica. This was the village of Sredni, where the Kezman brothers had a business. It was a model agricultural business, and there was something to be learned from it. But they too didn't open their door and gate to us. After extensive negotiations, they agreed to take in 4 of our men. Our group consisted of 10 men, and we did not want to break up. Finally, they took us in, and gave us a room for all ten people, 9 men and one young woman. A wreckage of a room, about four by four. We put in an endless amount of work until we cleaned up the room, and made it possible to come into it. The crowding was frightful. The same room served as a dining room, a bedroom, and a kitchen. We would receive raw products, and we would cook ourselves. Later on, we got some small amounts of money for expenses.

Life was happy. Every day, after work in the field, we felt elated, and our singing carried over the entire village. In honor of the Sabbath, each of us could have traveled home, but it was rare that we did this.

In this fashion, a year's time of our preparation went by, until the news arrived of the Balfour Declaration, and we, like true peasants, decided that this was the right time to travel to the Land of Israel and demonstrate what we could do.

Now our burdensome journey first begins. We sent emissaries to Warsaw, to let them know about us. The Central Office, however, gave us an advisory: – remain in Zamość until we call you.

In a short period of time, we receive news that they are traveling already from Lublin. So we run to Lublin, and we learn that Lublin had heard that 'they' are traveling already from Zamość....

The periodical *HaPoel HaTza'ir* would occasionally get through to us from the Land of Israel. We thirstily read every news item. We were especially inspired by the portrait of '*HaShomer*' – the guardian of Jewish property and honor.

A news item reaches us that we can travel from Vienna. Not giving the matter much thought, we get on the road. We decide that we will make a collective treasury, and that nobody can make individual purchases. We form a real commune. We travel together and reach Krakow. At that precise point, war breaks out between Poland and Czechoslovakia. The border cannot be crossed, and we make an attempt through a second place – through Sosnowiec. It becomes evident that our funds are insufficient and we return to Zamość.

We begin to make an effort to make a legal trip. Two men, myself and Yitzhak Beitel went to the *Starosta* and request passes to leave the country – we want to travel to Palestine. The *Starosta* related sympathetically to the issue, – if only all the Jews would go to Palestine! And in a couple of weeks later, the passports arrived for us from Warsaw.

Then we have to travel to Warsaw to get the visas. We ave to travel on Sunday, and on Saturday, the 'Red Rebellion' breaks out. It appears that a group of legionnaires had declared themselves to be 'Red' and together with the local workers, declared Zamość to be a Red City. A red flag was hung from the Magistrate. This Red rule lasted for 24 hours, and on the following day, other Polish legionnaires arrived, 'Whites,' and re-took the city. The 'Red' and 'White' legionnaires unite and go to look for communists – and you can appreciate that these were – the Jews.

An assault is made against the Jewish houses, there is robbery, and arrests are made. Up to 170 Jews are crammed into the jail, and I am among them.

There follows two weeks of torturous inquisition. There is intervention at the highest levels in Warsaw, telegrams from relatives to the Jewish deputies in the Sejm with Yitzhak Greenbaum at their head. In the end: a commission comes from Warsaw and all the Jews are released.

And here, yet another disappointment awaited us. The leader of the Palestinian office, Mr. Levita, received us angrily, with shouting and banging on the table – nobody will travel until an order arrives from the Zionist leadership in London!...

So we went directly to the consulate, and indeed, we obtained the transit visas from the Czech, Austrian and Italian consuls. The only thing we were missing was the English visa. We traveled to Vienna. There we went around aimlessly for 4 months, until we received the French visa to Beirut. Through Trieste, where we boarded an Italian freighter, without food or beds. After 15 days, we arrived in Alexandria in Egypt, where we made a new attempt to enter the English consulate and we obtained the entry visa to Jaffa without difficulty.

In the Jaffa port we yet had a bit of a fright. Jumping down into the Arab dinghies, my friend Yitzhak Beitel fell into the sea, but he was pulled out in a minute, alive. We achieved our objective.

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*Page 727:* *A group of Olim in Israel from Zamość, photographed on August 10, 1927 in Haifa.*

At the end of this memoir about the genesis of the Zamość *HeHalutz*, I would like to remember the names of the dear comrades of our first group, who are no longer with us.

**Shlomo Reichenstein**, died in Ein-Harod;

**Levi Rapaport,** died in Jerusalem;

**Moshe Baum**, died in Zamość

**Joshua Rose**, Killed in Poland;

**Abraham Harf**, killed in an automobile accident in Israel in the year 1962.

Let us honor their memory!

# The Musicians in Zamość

The unusual manifestation were the musicians in our city. They all belonged to one family – this profession was passed from father to son, and afterwards to grandchildren. They were called the **Blooms**, even though their family name was Sznycer.

How Sznycer got changed into 'Bloom' is related in the following story: once upon a time, a messenger arrived from the [sic: local] Nobleman, to summon the musicians for a ball. The peasant began to make inquiries, as to where the musicians lived, so someone responded that he most certainly was referring to **Binyomi'leh**. From Binyomi'leh, the peasant made 'Bloom' and that is the way the name stayed for generations.[296]

The 'Blooms' were simple Jews, and knew their craft well. They would enliven the parents of the bride and groom and the guests at weddings. If the wedding was for a rich Jew, then the entire ensemble went to play; to a simple wedding, middle-of-th-road wedding, part of the ensemble. When there happened to be several weddings on the same day, then the grandchildren also were incorporated with the musicians. These minors actually could not play, but they held the instruments, so that onlookers would think that they were playing. It was a bout this family, that I. L. Peretz wrote his wondrous tale about the death of a musician.

The musicians played not only for weddings. They were retained to play on other occasions. And in was in this manner that they appeared in the ceremony of escorting a new *Sefer Torah* into the Synagogue. The Torah Scroll would be carried under a canopy and the ensemble went in front of it and played. On the festival days under the rule of the Czars, at the time of the coronation of the Czar, when the *Mi Sheberakh* blessing was recited in the Synagogue, the orchestra would play the Russian National Anthem after the Cantor's *Mi Sheberakh*. No theater troupe could ever perform without the musicians – whether these were professional artists or our own amateurs. The same was true of dance evenings, celebrations, or other events. Also, the surrounding vicinity was serviced by them. Most often they would play in the gardens of the nobility, where balls took place frequently. They made good money by doing this.

The times of the Polish boycott of the Jews arrived, and this affected our 'Blooms.' A certain Pole, Namislovski, founded a peasant's orchestra, a modern one, and they usurped the place of the 'Blooms' with the nobles. The musicians then took to other lines of work, and trade as well.

After several years of the boycott, the occasion arose for a great ball at the house of a Nobleman. The young nobles invited Namislovski's orchestra. The old Nobleman, however, wanted the merriment to be like it was in the old days, and he invited the 'Blooms,' to enliven the guests in their style. When the night of the ball arrived, Binyomi'leh called his sons, and instructed them it will be necessary to prepare themselves very well for the ball. He forbade everyone in his ensemble to drink at the ball – in order to remain alert. His sons heeded his behest. For the whole night, both orchestras played, one after the other; the drunken guests were required to offer an opinion about the music. Before dawn, the old Noble asked of the 'Blooms' that they should play a '*Kanarikl.*' This was one of the really artistic pieces of this ensemble, which the Noble had heard more than once. The ensemble played this '*Kanarikl*' like never before. Their performance captivated everyone. The old Noble was moved to tears, and all the guests stood and applauded 'Bravo!' Namislovski went over and shook the hand of the boycotted Jewish musicians. Binyomi'leh's ensemble left the ball with great honor.

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296 Author's footnote: According to another version, the peasant is supposed to have said, *tak, tak, Bloomeleh*, and the entire ensemble was called '*Die Bloomelekh*,' so that each of them was a '*Bloom*.'

# Thousands of Memorial Lights

*Page 730: Illustrations to the Work of I. L. Peretz*

*Right: Arthur Kolnik's illustration for 'The Acrobat'*
*Left: 'A Pinch of Snuff' drawn by Yossel Bergner (Safed), the son of Melekh Ravitch*

The **Wechter** family was well-known in our city. All of them, like their father belonged to the medical world.

The head of the family, **Moshe Rofeh**, filled an important post in the city. Despite the fact that he did not have a physician's diploma, he was a *feldscher*, he was inundated with work. During the time of the First World War, Zamość had two Jewish doctors (the Geliebters), and two Christian doctors. So the entire population, from the city and the surroundings, peasants, came to Moshe Rofeh. Moshe Rofeh served everyone with dedication. He took [only] small change from the poor, and from the really impoverished, nothing. He was a man of the people, not following 'style,' and did not assimilate.

Like the father, so was the entire family. The eldest son Shlomo completed university studies. When he once came home from Petersburg in a military uniform of a high rank, it made a really big impression in the city. Dr. Shlomo Wechter died in Israel, in Tel-Aviv in the year 1953, where he worked in the clinic for the ill of the *Histadrut*. He was greatly revered by his colleagues and patients alike.

It was the second son, **Itcheh'leh**, who inherited his father's place. When Itcheh'leh finished his medical studies, his father took him along to see patients for quite a while. When Moshe Rofeh died, Itcheh'leh took over his father's clientele, which was the entire city and its surroundings. Even though there were doctors in the city by now, the sick people would come to Itcheh'leh, who inherited all the good traits from his father, of simplicity, and sympathy. He also carried himself like his father, Moshe Rofeh, with regard to his dignity.

Shimon Wechter was a later son. He had a pharmacy establishment. Now it can be told – Shimon prepared the medications in accordance with the prescriptions of his brother Itcheh'leh. For the sick people, this was very convenient, and cheaper. It just happened to be 'illegal' from the standpoint of the regime, because Shimon did not have a diploma in Pharmacy.

The crown of the family, however was **Baylah the Grandmother.** She was the midwife for the entire city, and she had a reputation for her pair of blessed hands.

She was considered the grandmother of most of the children in the city. One always ran into her on her way to mothers in confinement; day and night; summer and winter. When she came into the home of an expectant mother, she had to do all the work, the simplest of the preparations. Very often, she had already delivered children to the same woman, and she had not been paid for the prior births. She did her work quietly and energetically and incidentally cheered up the family.

'Baylah the Grandmother' lived to a ripe old age, it is said to over 100 years, she worked until her daughter-in-law, Itcheh'leh's wife, took over from her.

The following fact demonstrates the degree to which Baylah the Grandmother was beloved by the people. When she died, all the mothers ans grandmothers came, whose children she had delivered, and lit a memorial light in the room where she lay. There was no longer any space left in the room where candles could be put, and so they began to put them in the corridor, in the front room. For each child that Baylah the Grandmother helped bring into the world, a candle was lit. Thousands of candles burned. This was a picture that would never be forgotten by anyone who saw it.

# The Zamość Kaleidoscope

**By Shlomo Schwartzberg**

## (Personalities, Incidents, Institutions of Our Abrogated Life)

## The Physicians – *Feldschers* – In the *Neustadt*

The first person that I remember from my childhood was named **R' Shmuel Rofeh – Haaus.** His house, which was his own, was decorated on the front with two large double trees and a bench on which to sit. Later on, to the not-so-large '*podvar*' – yard – led to a variety of rooms, and there was a built wooden *sukkah* there.

During the summer, the yard was planted with all manner of flowers. His house was clean, spotless, always cleaned up, not neglected. He lived not far from the Lemberg Highway – 'In that end of the city.'

R' Shmuel Rofeh was broad in the back, of middle height, with a nice beard, which in my time was already gray, and a pair of wise eyes. Almost always, he was smiling. His profession – being a *feldscher* – he knew thoroughly, but he was a bit peculiar, – he almost never spoke.

Our Rabbi, ז"ל, respected him for his silence. Our R' Shmuel – the Rabbi would say – doesn't talk, so first of all, he keeps a secret, and who knows what stupidity and foolishness we blurt out; second – I think that we expend about half our lives in speaking, we sit around and talk – and what is the value of all this?

R' Shmuel Rofeh would go into the Bet HaMedrash every day to pray in public, never missing a single day, especially not Saturdays or Festivals. Every Saturday, he would take along between 4-5 guests with him to dine. He would also take guests in the middle of the week, just fewer of them. The storage bag for his prayer shawl was filled with '*Khok LeYisrael*,' a '*Shaarei Tzion*,' and other books, into which he would peer and from which he would recite. He had his own regular 'study session,' when he was not busy, otherwise, he would have to skip the 'study session.'

He had a large 'practice' – Gentiles, and to make a distinction, Jews as well – he had more Gentiles, who actually paid better – *Ahu Szmuliu*, – his non-Jewish patients would say – *Dobry Lekarz – Rofeh.*'[297]

His comportment was as follows – he would come into the presence of the ill person, and immediately place the thermometer under the arm, and waited a bit, then took it out. If there was a little fever, he would say – 'Yes, there is something here,' smiling lightly, writing something down and advised: 'not bad, you'll get well, we will be healthy.' He would then engage in a conversation: –

– R' Shmuel, where does something like this come from?
– What's the difference, it's here already.

He never looked at what he was paid, never counting it, rather, putting it immediately into his pocket. He gave the mezuzah a kiss, and went off.

On a trip of this type, he would make several visits. And people thought the world of him – Ahah! – R' Shmuel, *vazhneh*![298]

I do not recall when he died; I do not recall how many children he had. I only know one of his sons, **R' Leibusz Haaus** – *Feldscher* Leibusz R' Shmuel Rofeh's, which is how he was called. This one was also a good, and very competent

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297 Ah, Shmuel – a good doctor – Rofeh.

298 Ahah! R' Shmuel, [he's] tops!

physician, but he, already, had a smaller 'practice' than his father; competition appeared. He was one would dealt with children – divorced from his first wife, he had one son, Abraham, who was a hairdresser.

Abraham married in Grabowiec, near Zamość, and also didn't make much of a living.

I would come to R' Leibusz Haaus often (a portion of his children studies with me). He was a born aristocrat, was a great conversationalist than his father. He loved antiques – and had a collection of salt shakers, small glasses, pictures, and the like. He had a bit of artistic talent, and collected picture postcards, sculpture, carvings. He also 'dabbled' in songs, especially folk songs. When he was divorced (for a number of years), he organized a 'club' in his house (he lived in his father's home) for the intelligentsia. Young people would often get together at his place, getting a 'preference;' Tzunzer's and Goldfadn's songs were sung at his place. In his time, he gave me a notebook full of songs. The tables of his 'club' were covered with all manner of cards, and the rooms full of art objects. Separately locked up, he had great art pictures, which he would only show to experts.

Like his father, he also received guests (true, not to the same degree). He would often take a guest in even to spend the night, and would give him some small amount of money to take on his way.

He was identical to his father in his religious observance as well. Every day, he would go to pray with the congregation, including *Mincha* and *Maariv*. For many years, he was also a *Gabbai* in the *Bet HaMedrash*. He discharged his responsibility as a *Gabbai* with a firm hand. He ran a book of expenses and income; he would collect pledges for *aliyot*. Everything was precisely recorded, and always reported in a clear accounting.

This is our (religious) club, he would argue. In accordance with his direction, 10 chapters of the Psalms were recited every day between *Mincha* and *Maariv*. Every day in the morning, just like his father, before prayers, he would recite the '*Shaarei Tzion*.'

One of his work deeds was, for the Festival holidays, to permit the washing of the walls, doors and windows of the *Bet HaMedrash*, and occasionally to whitewash. He continued to discharge his role as a Gabbai until the time of the Hitler regime, may his name be erased. Along with the members of his household, he was killed by the Nazis. Who knows, but some member of his family may yet be alive.

Another *feldscher* in the Neustadt was **Rabbi Aharon-Leib Zimmerung**. It was told that his father (or grandfather) was a Cantonist in the time of the Russian Czar Nicholas I, having served 25 years in the Czarist Army. After his 25 years of military service, he managed to get back to Zamość, and married here. Despite the fact that he was no longer a young man at the time he got married (about 50 years old), he sired a [new] generation. One of them, indeed, was the *feldscher*, Aharon-Leib.

Aharon-Leib's father was very pious, observing the Sabbath and the Festivals, and spoke with a harsh growl...a true soldier of Nicholas. If anything irritated him, he would curse with the appropriate Russian triple 'blessing' until – pra...pra...all the way to Adam himself.

The Russian authorities gave him access to the municipal hospital (*gorodskaya balnitsa*), where he worked for the hygienist (apparently engaged in military things) and made a living from this.

He would take his son, Aharon-Leib with him, as someone who would carry his instruments. So the father 'instructed' the son in this occupation. Aharon-Leib taught himself a little bit of Latin, and began to write prescriptions.

Aharon-Leib got married, stood for his examinations and passed. He received the title of '*strashi feldscher*' and this permitted him to hang out the three mirrored plates...he developed quite a large practice. I still remember his sign, the 3 mirrored plates.

The new Polish authority did not recognize his 'diploma' and ordered that the plates be taken down. The evidence suggests that they did not approve of his Jewishness; his coarse, slightly grease-stained silken caftan; his Jewish hat

with the with the 'wide brim;' his mirrored old-fashioned spectacles, and especially his wide, already gray beard. For these new rulers of Poland, he had too little proper education.

Aharon-Leib had a custom – to recite the entire Book of Psalms every day. As much as he could get into to reciting at the Bet HaMedrash he would do. He would fold over the place where he had to leave off, and later, in the house, after grabbing a bite, or visiting the sick, where he would have to remove *bonkes*[299], he would finish up the remaining chapters of the Psalms.

Indeed, his specialty was 'applying *bonkes*.' He was a real master at this. There was a frequent fear...what would we do after 120 years, who will be there to apply *bonkes*?.....

His copy of the Psalms lay in the bag that held his *feldscher's* instruments. Having applied the *bonkes*, he took himself to the Psalms, even in the home of a Christian patient. If he was interrupted – it is time to take off the bonkes, he would quietly silence you: – soon, soon, *Mameleh,* or *Tateleh, Zuneleh, Tekhterl*, we will take them off soon. It will be good, health will return, you will be healthy, and for this [prayer] you will be healthy. Closed the Book of Psalms, again folding over the page where he was interrupted, took off the *bonkes*, assembled his paraphernalia, gave the mezuzah a kiss, with a high kiss, and went along – to complete his reading of the Psalms....

He had an unusual beard; at that time there were many such beards, but with his, one could equip a half dozen Jews in the Other World. He had a spare little beard... it could be that this didn't find favor with our new Polish authorities.

To hear a *Maggid* was a sheer delight to him – literally like 'a serving of *kreplach*.' It was not only one time, upon hearing a *Maggid*, that his eyes would be full of tears...he comported himself as a very simple Jew. One of his phrases was, 'I Aharon-Leib, the ignoramus, say...'

He didn't have much to say. When he died after the First World War, he was intensely mourned.

His son, **Chaim Aharon-Leib's Zimmerung** followed in his father's ways professionally, was a *feldscher*, and also well-known. But he was different from his father, both in his appearance and his conduct.

Not tall, slender, and shaven, to begin with, without a beard. In contrast to his father, he was voluble; a mouth to go around and around, that would never close. He could read and write a bit of Latin, more Polish, and not a bad Russian. He would (often not requested) accompany the big doctors to patients, in serious cases.

Apart from practicing as a *feldscher*, he had a 'salon' for 'haircuts and shaves.' For a long time, he was the only Jewish hairdresser by us. Later on, the hairdressing business went over to his oldest son, Yankel Zimmerung, and he dedicated himself exclusively to being a *feldscher*.

He also had a big practice. He was well regarded – 'Chaim Aharon-Leib's knows a great deal,' people used to say.

Despite being clean-shaven, he was scrupulous in going to prayers, even Mincha and Maariv with the congregation, while it is true, not as frequently as his father. He would not write any prescriptions on the Sabbath, even under the most urgent of instances. In general, none of the physicians in the Neustadt would write prescriptions on the Sabbath. He was not very observant, Chaim Aharon-Leib's, but he was also no breaker of the commandments.

At prayers, he would sing along with the Hazzan, and if the latter would make an error, which used to happen in the evenings at Maariv, when usually some guest would get up to lead the prayers – a 'Yahrzeit.' He would then remind everyone of the prayer '*Shir HaMa'alot*' for the Maariv service.

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299 The well-known 'cupping' treatment that was used in Eastern Europe in bygone days to 'suck out the evil humors' from a sick person's body. Of questionable medical efficacy, but widely believed in by the masses.

He was in his nature to use of the word 'you' in his speech.

– Listen, you, he would respond to a lady, who had taken off her wig (after the First World War), but you really pay attention! 14 monarchs waged war with each other, and did they do this so you would no longer have to wear a wig?

– Listen, you, you still don't have the prescription, – he would say to a poor patient, – and would then add some small change in addition to his visit, in order that he should be able to buy the prescriptions that had been written.

He loved children greatly – we have to save them, listen, do you hear, you? A child, a Jewish child, must live, must be healthy! – this was his constant refrain.

He made an effort to emulate his 'competing colleague,' meaning R' Leibusz Haaus. Indeed, he competed with him, and an opportunity presented itself.

Near the *Bet HaMedrash*, there was a vacant place, several hundred square meters. The owner was R' Meir Henoch's (*Shtakhel*). He constantly fought with the community (and he was a miser), so he makes up his mind that he wants to seel the place. R' Leibusz Haaus bought it for 150 rubles on behalf of the *Bet HaMedrash*.

So Chaim Aharon-Leib's decides that he has to create a fence around the property, in order to enclose it. But how? He has a plan: there are boards of lumber in the city, there are workers, carpenters, and we will publicly approach the honorable so-and-so and ask for about ten meters of board to be donated for the *Bet HaMedrash* fence; and in order to receive the adulation of the community, a Jew will go to who knows what lengths. So, with this in mind, there will be no shortage of honor, meaning wooden boards; the same will be done with the workers: the honorable so-and-so will hammer together two meters worth of the boards with his nails... and by this reasoning, he feels that he already had the fence.

Chaim Aharon-Leib's the *feldscher* began to carry out his plan. At the outset, it started off weakly; the public didn't take it seriously. But as boards were started to be donated, old ones, new ones, and a variety of materials; the carpenters worked, and Chaim Aharon-Leib's began to prevail – and a fence materialized!

So someone slipped him a thought – that the fence needs to be 'dedicated.' a **fence-dedication** should be made...and if there is to be a fence-dedication, certainly there must be musicians....

And so it was, on a nice morning, this dedication took place, and indeed, with music, Kalman Schuster's orchestra was retained. Toasts of *L 'Chaim* were made; there was singing (mostly by Chaim the *feldscher*), the chapter of the Psalms relating to the rededication of The House [of the Lord] was read... people jested about it, but nevertheless, there was a fence, and it was a fine Jewish festive occasion.

From that time on, his name remained '*Chaim Ployt* [300].'

The constant feldscher in my father's house, and later in my house, was R' Leibusz Haaus, ע"ה. One time, when my baby daughter Basha, a child of 6-7 months old, overslept several times, we called Chaim Zimmerung to attend the child. He entered, lit a match, and brought it close to the child's eyes, and moved it back and forth. His diagnosis was that, unless he was mistaken, that the child has either poor vision, or is entirely blind. With proper expressions of his sympathy, he examined the child and went on his way. The neighbors later said that he, Chaim feldscher, said that the child will not live. Several months later, after very difficult suffering, the child passed away.

Both families of these 'competing' *feldschers*, of R' Leibusz Haaus and R' Chaim Zimmerung, were exterminated by the Nazis. If any one of them survived, I do not know.

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[300] Chaim of 'the Fence.'

# A Bit of Topography, Buildings and Places

From the Zamość *Neustadt* to the *Altstadt*, was exactly two *viorst*.[301] The first, 'iron *viorst*,' with black and white stripes drawn on it, stood with concrete walls near Jablonsky's house, diagonally opposite Moshe Proshovich's place, on the way where the large Zamość post office with the large double-headed, black Russian [Imperial] Eagle. The last thing there was a Polish *Volksschule*. The second *viorst*, following the appearance of the first one, was near the house of a Christian, almost beside the Jewish cemetery, between the *Altstadt* and the *Neustadt*. The third *viorst* already was at the entrance to the *Altstadt*, adjacent to the Szczebrzeszyn Gate.

One of my greatest pleasures (and not only mine), during my childhood years, was the walk, stroll, and promenade 'into the city;' walking about for hours, looking at the scenery, the *potchinehs*, the engineers-orchard, the *Rotschule*, etc.

Before entering the city, on the right, were the so-called '*Zela Lukaszynska*,' a room, which was located in one of the long walls, which were already overgrown with grass. There were small, tiny windows there, a remnant of the fortress that had once been there. My grandmother, ע"ה told me that she remembered very well when and how the fortress was dismantled. The '*Zela Lukaszynska*' was named after the Polish freedom fighter *Lukaszynski*, who was imprisoned for 22 years in this fortress, which in its day, also served as a prison. When I later saw the restored 'Zela,' I could not understand how a person could have sustained himself in there. The entire 'room' was no wider than a single human being. It was additionally told, that *Lukaszynski* would eat from the same dish as the mice (that is how familiar they became to one another). The sun never shone there.

From my childhood years, I recall that there was an entrance to this place which were very deep depressions. The entire place was surrounded by circular blocks, in order that people passing through not fall into the many-meters deep pits. It was told that these trenches and pits were required as a protection against the attack of an enemy. It was possible to fill them up with water, and this would serve to prevent an enemy from gaining access to the city. And that was how it was done, according to the stories that were passed down, during the Chmielnicki attack on Zamość.

At the time of the First World War and even later, during the time of Poland's independence, the blocks, '*porenchehs*,' were liquidated, and the pits and trenches and battlements were all liquidated, straightened out – turning those places into promenades; this was also incorporated into the program of beautifying the city.

I can remember that during the 'beautification' of the city, how the old remnants of the fort were liquidated, and among them was '*Zela Lukaszynska*,' and it its place, a bronze tablet to Lukaszynski was put up, at which time many of the Poles wept bitterly.

To the right side of the 'Zela,' there were large walls, also overgrown with grass on the tops. The seventh Russian Cossack Regiment was billeted here. A large insignia on the wall, with gold plated letters in Russian said that this was the stationing point of the '**Seventh Don Cossack Regiment**.' Further on, to the left, by the very entrance, there was a separate stand alone one-storey building – a building with fortified walls, several steps off the ground; a large, walled yard, and in front, the insignia with the following inscription: **'The Tenth Russian Don Cossack Regiment**.'

These very two regiments cause trouble for the Zamość populace not only once (the Christians too). Attempts were made to intervene, but it didn't always help. Characteristically – the 'Cossacks' were afraid to come into the *Neustadt*. There, they would get their bones busted for them by a wagon driver, a shoemaker, or some one else, if they made an attempt to act up. Whether there was one or more of them – they would always get whacked about the sides...

Apart from these Cossack regiments, there were two infantry regiments stationed in Zamość. These foot troops were billeted in barracks outside of the city. I even remember one large wooden barracks in the *Neustadt*, in the middle of the market place itself. This [barracks] later became the home of Melekh Stoller (Schwartzberg).

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301 A linear measure used in Czarist Russia, rendered '*verst*' in English (1 verst = 1067 meters).

The contractors for the military who supplied hay, grain, meat and the like, were always Jewish. These contractors were the ones who pleaded on behalf of the city, and thanks to their intervention, the higher military leadership – generals and colonels – not once, guarded the city from 'incidents;' they would pen up their 'children,' the 'rabble,' and strenuously prevented them from exercising their will.

A very significant part of the populace – the jobbers and craftsmen – derived a rather fine living from the military.

During the Polish independence, the barracks of the 7th Don Cossack Regiment were converted into barracks for the new Polish military. The building of the 10th Cossack Regiment was re-built into a large city theater, '**Stilov**.'

The entrance into the city was significantly widened, and beautified. The city leadership built a round circle at the center, a symmetrical road, so that the entry should be entirely modern, European, and issued an order, that upon entering the city, it would be required to make a half-right turn the circle. Exit was to be made on the left. For a period of time, a policeman was stationed there, who controlled the movement and the vehicular traffic, and assuring that this regulation was observed. However, the peasants from the surrounding area did not abide by this 'reform,' and conducted themselves according to the old traditions – entering and leaving the city according to whatever pleased them to do. The ordinance became dysfunctional and abandoned; the paved road was dismantled, and chaos returned.

## 'White Mekhl'[302]

This was the way my father, Yekhiel-Mekhl Schwartzberg הי"ד was called.

When the Nazis, may their name be erased, shot him, he was about 76 years old. His shooting, along with other thousands of Jews on Saturday, 24 Nisan (?) 5702 is almost entirely described in Mordechai Shtringler's[303] book, '**In an Alien Generation**.' Both my father and myself are mentioned in the poem (even if not specifically so).

'**White Mekhl**' was something else in Zamość, he was a slice of history in Jewish Zamość...

He was called 'White Mekhl,' because he had yellow-blond, white hair, and a totally white face. He was the exact opposite of my dark swarthy mother, ע"ה. She died in 1929 at the age of 64. She was a strong woman, and a pious one, but she didn't have a single good day in her unfortunate life... but she never complained.

For a long time, my father was also called 'Mekhl the Application Preparer.'[304] On the table, by him, there always lay the thick volume of 'Свод Законов' (The Laws of Czarist Russia), the Code Napoléon in Russian. He knew all the chapters, paragraphs and points by heart, as well as the amendments of these statues. For an application, my father charged from 10-30 kopecks, depending on the ability of the client to pay.

He wrote 'applications' for Jews and non-Jews; people would come to him from the surrounding towns and villages. He would also draw up contracts. There were those who wanted these drawn up in the Holy Tongue, others in Polish or Russian. He knew these languages.

He was an educated Jewish man. He knew the entire Tanakh, practically by heart. He was familiar with many commentaries, Ibn-Ezra, *Rada"k*, and others. He had a reputation in Zamość and the vicinity as a renown Ibn-Ezra scholar. He had a counterpart – in regards to Ibn-Ezra – only a certain Fishel Zederbaum. The latter committed suicide at the outbreak of the First World War. That made a very deep impression on us in Zamość. My father had an interest in literary news in the Jewish world. He had the full year volumes of 'Восход' bound (The Yiddish-Russian Periodical).

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302 There is a great deal of switching back and forth between '*Mekhl*' and '*Mikhl*' regarding this individual, depending on the writer. One has been selected for standardization.

303 Apparently referring to Mordechai Shtrigler.

304 The Russian word used here is прошение, strictly translated as a 'petition.'

He was also well-known in the city as a chess-player; he also knew mathematics; he involved himself in philosophical hairsplitting; '*Dudel Voveh's* (Geliebter's) children, and other students of the high schools would come out of the *Altstadt* to the *Neustadt* in order to converse with my father; asking him their 'questions and answers.'

I can recall two occasions on which he organized a *siyyum* of the *Shas*. My mother prepared a feast; *Hasidim* came – *Radziner*, and others – Yankeleh Farbiazh, *Zavikhoster Rav*, the son-in-law of the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*, who got involved in an intense casuistic dialogue with my father at that occasion. Copies of the *Zohar* were riffled, and also other books of the *Kabbalah*. My father was considered to be an accomplished Kabbalist. He would especially delve into the Kabbalah texts later in the evening, or before dawn. On his table, one could always find '*Pitkhei Khokhma*,' '*Pri Etz Chaim*,' and others from the *Rakhma"l* (Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato), from the *Ariza"l* (Rabbi Isaac Luria, The 'Lion' of Safed). And nearby was 'The Guide to the Perplexed,' by Maimonides, and the *Kuzari* of Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi.

I made an attempt – later, when I was older – to emulate my father, by studying these books, but it didn't work out, barely crawling through '*Kuzari*.' The same for '*Hovat HaLevavot*;' '*Bekhinot Olam*' – the latter, I am still perplexed about to this day.

My father also read a great deal by Peretz. He wanted to understand him in a fundamental way. He would say quite often: – 'An apostate, he believes in nothing....'

Until after the First World War, my father spoke very infrequently, literally only an occasional word. When I once posed a question to him: – 'What does Peretz mean with [his work] '*Dos Glezel*?' – he barely brought himself to murmur – 'Hush....it is clear that he is talking about That Other Person (Jesus).'

'– A brilliant writer, father,' I try to extend the conversation that just started, ' it is something novel that the government hasn't sent him off in chains.'

He replies: – 'Bah, who says you have to understand him? The 'street' doesn't understand, to them it is a simple story...'

From my conversation with my father I saw that he understood Peretz very well, but he took the position that he should not be read – maybe he should be read by those who think of it as 'a simple story.'

During the 30's I said to him – 'Father, if I had half of your knowledge, I would have accomplished a great deal more than you.'

'Oh, foolishness, he says, nonsense, you would have stuck with Peretz that believer in all things, and also would have become an apostate.'

This was a reference to an incident that took place several decades before. In the year 1911 and 1912 I was in Warsaw. I had gon to see I. L. Peretz with the compositions that I had written – 'writings' and 'poems.' [I was looking] for his 'endorsement.' Hillel Zeitlin, Dr. G. Levin, and especially Yaakov Dinensohn, did this as well. Having over-extended myself, I write to my father to ask him to send me a ruble or a ruble and a half a week, and I will be able to 'sustain myself' in Warsaw. I was earning a little bit from [giving] lectures. He did not agree to this. He revealed his assessment at that time to me later – 'You would have remained there with that believer in all things...'

So I came home; I became a teacher. After the wedding – six months before the First World War – I became teacher, that is to say, a 'modern' one. It remained this way until the day of [the outbreak of] the Second World War.

Let us also relate that, in addition to my teaching, unofficially and in secret, I took up discounting and dealing in bills. I made a large sum of money, in any case, significantly more that people thought I was worth...

During the First World War, our father, along with the entire family: mother, older sister Chaya, two brothers Daniel and Moshe – went away to Russia. From the end of 1914 (or the beginning of 1915) to the summer of 1918. They were in Minsk, in White Russia.

They returned in the time of Elul, and without exaggeration, I did not recognize my father. He had become severely drawn, instead of being blond, white and gray. He was wearing a different kind of hat, and the important thing, he had gotten a tongue – he spoke! He responded to everything, and I also felt – he maybe talked a little too much....

He came back broken, impoverished, and he took up doing whatever was at hand. For a while he was the treasurer at Geliebter's, a Zamość resident with a beer brewery in Janów-Lubliner. He worked for starvation wages. In the end, he became a teacher...

His verbosity drove him to his new profession. But he never abandoned the hope that the world will right itself, and he will once again engage in commerce...

He saved groschen on groschen, and put it into a 'secure place...' with Rav Chaim Rok, ז"ל...indeed for legitimate purposes...until Chaim Rok made a 'venture,'.. And once again he bean to dream...he immersed himself in his Kabbalah books, and the 'worlds;' 'numerologies;' 'creations' – seeking an answer there for his derailed and tortured life.

And, in this fashion, having become a 'speaker,' he left a trail of maxims behind him in our Zamość – mostly angry, rather sharp. Nevertheless, the public used to repeat it, and to this day it gets repeated. Here is a summary of his maxims:

**A friend** – If someone hears that, for example, you have earned some money, and it doesn't totally skewer him through and through, such a person is already a good friend;

In praising someone: he is such and such – a giver of charity, someone who takes in guests, a completely righteous man. It is possible that he has a high opinion of that person. [However] he is far from being such a person. No matter what the situation is, you can be assured that he is no lout, or is already certainly no bad person;

Someone is being flattered, praised, compliments are said in front of them to their face. I know this to be flattery. I very much dislike such a person. It grates on me – however, it isn't possible to give such a person a good slap;

Someone confronts me, jeers at me, maligns me. He then asks for my forgiveness. In any event, I am never going to be a friend to such a person;

If someone asks you a question, don't answer hin – because for every answer that person will have 7 new questions again;

Modesty should be genuine and not contrived. A bit of 'artificial' modesty is already a gross form of pride;

Someone who is laid back, and not yet successful, people say of him: no wonder, he is just a plodder; like a fly in molasses; slow as a straw; a hapless person; [a miracle] if he bestirs himself; a *shlimazl*; a useless one; a bird made out of tin; slow to start; counts his steps; good-for-nothing; if one is lax, there is nothing to put in the mouth[305] – and so forth;

Someone prone to quickly fail in succeeding one says: a flutter head; a flyer, a spinner, so, he breaks his neck; an imposition; a calamity starting with his ever-loving name; a *khaleria*; all he has to do is jump; he never has time; no ability to stick to it; better a decision that regret [through inaction]; what's the hurry?

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[305] A couplet that rhymes in Yiddish: *oz men iz foyl – hot men nisht in moyl*

About someone who succeeds with ease, people say: What else? – he was born stinking rich; puts his hand into his pocket 7 times before he takes out so much as a groschen; His will never get lost; wise beyond wisdom; don't you worry about him; he sleeps, and what is his, grows; he thinks over carefully before he does anything; not impulsive; not forthcoming;

Is someone is successful, and quick to achieve success, one says: you want to carry on with him?; he gets up while God is still sleeping; you think, and he does; a firebrand of a man; you have a plan, and he has done it already; in his hands, garbage turns to gold; it [e.g. success] happens in his home directly; as the Lord will it, so are the ways for a man – and so forth.

With his own deportment; with his aphorisms, 'White Mekhl' was a mirror of an entire generation of Zamość. Together with the entire congregation of Zamość, he was sent to death at the hands of the *Unclean Ones* – may his memory never be forgotten.

## Rabbi *Gaon* R' Moshe'leh Epstein עצ"ל

[He was] the head of the **Epstein** family in Zamość. For many years, he was the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*. He is also recalled by I. L. Peretz. His name reverberated far and wide, throughout the width of Poland and even beyond.

Rabbi Moshe'leh was a legend even in his own lifetime, and wondrous and miraculous deeds were attributed to him. He personally would not accept this, and all his 'wondrous deeds' he attempted to explain by means of natural phenomena, as ordinary natural occurrences. Despite this, Jews did not cease to speak about his miracles. Regrettably, I do not know of any additional biographic details about him.

It is told of him:

Once in Zamość, a difficult question came up, in which the Zamość congregation found itself unable to come up with an approach, and sent a delegation of scholars and important people to Lemberg, to obtain the answer to this question, and bring it back with them. The Rabbi of Lemberg became very aggravated and with great disappointment he ordered the Zamość congregation as follows: Can it be? Has something like this ever been heard? Where was this ever heard before? You have, in your possession such a Rabbi, a *Gaon,* such as Rabbi Moshe'leh Epstein שליט"א, and you send a delegation to me to ask me questions? Go home in peace, and however he tells you to act, that is what you will do.

A further story, interwoven with a miracle, is told:

A false accusation was made once in Zamość, and it came to the point where, God forbid, there was a risk that a number of prominent Jewish leaders might be executed. It smelled like a genuine mortal danger.

It was thought that a delegation of ombudsmen should be sent to Petersburg. As it happened, a member of the royal family, a very highly-placed person, came to Zamość. Perhaps he had come in connection with this specific accusation? It was then decided that the most presentable and the best of the community of Zamość will approach this great Lord with a delegation, and beseech him in connection with this matter. R' Moshe'leh Epstein stood at the head of this delegation. When they drew near to his door, and the doorman went within to explain about the visit, the result came out that he didn't want this entire 'rabble' in his house, and that only one of them should be sent in, whomever they desire. So, R' Moshe'leh Epstein went in. However, he emerged very quickly, greatly shaken and very saddened.

–Fellow Jews – he said – it is bad; Fellow Jews, it is bitter. We require mercy! May the Eternal One in heaven have mercy upon us. He did not even want to hear me out, the tyrant. He disparaged me, and told me to leave! Only God, Blessed be He, can help!

The guest from Petersburg finished eating the good midday repast; washed down with a good bottle of wine, and made an appointment with a local artist to come back in a few hours to make a portrait of him, together with the seniors of

the Zamość garrison. Later, when the artist arrived, the door was found to be closed up. They waited until the door was broken down. The guest was found dead in his bed... all of Zamość was bubbling with this. – – – the decree was annulled.

The Jewish indeed wanted to construe this to have been a miracle. However, R' Moshe'leh Epstein gave a simple explanation, that relied on simple natural means – that this man, the tyrant, gorged himself on too much food, and after 'swilling' himself full with wine, along with a little bit of help from above, had an unfortunate attack. It is simply natural, and no miracle...

I, the writer of these lines, knew only his grandchildren. They were all called 'The Epsteins.'

One of them, **Elyeh Epstein**, a very wealthy Jew, lived very nicely (all the Epsteins had their own houses 'stone houses, with chimneys' in the *Altstadt)*; He had his own brick making factory and a beer brewery outside of the city. He was a *Dozor* of the Zamość community and a well-known public servant. He would come to the *Neustadt* quite often to [confer with] Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi Hurwitz-Sternfeld about community and municipal matters. During the last war, he was hidden by Christians. For this, it is told, that he paid a small fortune, in ready gold. He had the appearance of a non-Jew, with a Christian face, and genuine Polish aristocratic whiskers. His command of the Polish language was perfect.

His younger brother, **Moshe Epstein** (indeed, named for his grandfather), occupied the important position of Zamość Magistrate for many years. It was said that 'the Epsteins know their Polish better than genuine Poles.' Moshe also had a Polish ethnic appearance. He remained a lifelong bachelor, having never married.

The third brother was **Shlomo Epstein.** He had his own business, a 'Pharmacy.' – a portion of the *Potchineh* in Zamość, from what we gather, as part of his house.

I do not know the fate of the brothers Moshe and Shlomo Epstein. After the Second World War, Elyeh returned to Zamość. However, he didn't remain there for very long, and moved to Lodz.

The *Hevra-Kadisha* in our Neustadt, would annually commemorate and recall the Yahrzeit of Rabbi Moshe'leh Epstein's passing – 2 Ellul.

## "The Bent Little Jew"

If we are speaking of the *Hevra-Kadisha*, then we must recollect one of its principal champions, who was popular with us by the nickname '**The Bent Little Jew**.' I do not know why he was specifically called 'bent,' because this Yehuda, was a Jewish man who was a tailor, not young anymore, but rather a tall, straight, and solidly built person, with a very sure stride. He had a handsome beard, and was a pleasing countenance to behold. He was from the plain folk, and when I remember him, he was about 70 years old. [By then with] a white beard, lively and bright eyes, reddish cheeks, and often a bit sozzled (inebriated).

– Ssh... Whiskey – he would say – whiskey 'captures the heart;' 'it lightens the blood;' 'whiskey is good for regulating the bowel;' 'gives appetite;' And after all of these virtues, why, indeed, should he not love to have a small glass?

Indeed, for the *Hevra-Kadisha*, he was the one who always provided 'beverage.' After all, who was a better *maven* than him?

He always wore a hat, and a rather large one at that. A couple of sizes bigger than he needed. He would go about wrapped around in a *gartel*, whether it was a weekday, on the Sabbath, festivals, at all times, day and night.

As previously said, he was a tailor, but I do not remember him engaged in this trade. However, because of this, his 'specialty' was – burial shrouds. 'That' nobody approached, nobody dared get close to that process, this was his franchise, he, 'the cockeyed Jew,' had to carry out that obligation. And he set the price. And he set those prices in a

manner that was correct and just. He would take more from someone who was rich, and from the needy – less, in accordance with his estimate.

– Reb Yudel, he would be asked, why such a large hat?
– That's as it should be.
– Reb Yudel, why always with a *gartel*?
– That's as it should be.

On the occasion of R' Moshe'leh's Yahrzeit, 2 Ellul, Reb Yudel provided everything. The *Hevra-Kadisha* trusted him with everything; he will take care that everything is done as it should be.

And he would get us together, the young people in the *Hevra,* setting us out in a 'circle,' – he in the middle, and he gave the order:

-Nu, *khevreh*, let us sing, loudly! Open your mouths! *Hevra* youngsters! (I was then about 8-9 years old). And he would begin:

A.

And all believe —

We serve God alone,
We can serve,
We will serve,
We must serve –

Yes, let us serve God, only without troubles,
He would can delve into and examine the hidden!

B.

And all believe –

We serve God alone,
We can serve,
We will serve,
We must serve –

Yes, let us serve God from great satisfaction.
Who releases us from death and redeems us from destruction!

C.

And all believe —

We serve God alone,
We can serve,
We will serve,
We must serve –

Yes, we will serve not like some mindless creature
The Sole Judge for The World to Come!

D.

And all believe —

We serve God alone,
We can serve,
We will serve,
We must serve --

Yes, we will serve God. It's the appropriate thing,
He who allocates life to all living things!

To this day I remember the refrain; here he stands before my eyes, and directs like a choirmaster. The singing was sugar-sweet, and to this day, I feel the sweetness of it.

## Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi ז"ל

On the stamps and signatures of our *Neustadt* Rabbi, Rabbi Mordechai HaLevi his full name was engraved in its entirety: '**Mordechai HaLevi Hurwitz, designated Sternfeld, Resident Here, the Sacred Congregation of the New City of Zamość**.' Our Rabbi took pride in his relationship both to the Rabbi of Lublin, called the *Khozeh* (a number

of his grandchildren were in fact named for the *Khozeh* – Yaakov-Yitzhak)[306], as well as the 'Head of Iron,' the analytical *Mitnaged*, Rabbi Gaon Ezriel Hurwitz.[307]

The house of our Rabbi (in the domicile of Mendel Hackman – 'Carpenter') consisted of a gated-residence, three rooms with a kitchen; apart from this, a very substantive '*Bet-Din*' room and a permanent year-round *sukkah*. In the front '*Bet-Din*' part of the house (called the '*Bezin*' by the people), apart from a table with benches and desks, there was also a bookcase with books. I had not seen that many books except in the Bet HaMedrash. Not only I, but whoever entered marveled at this noteworthy library, where the oldest of the responsas could be found , and also the research books of Rashba"tz, Rashb"a, and many very rare works. Also noteworthy – there was even a catalogue, and every book was in its place. Whatever one searched for, was easily found. Current authors sent him their works. This was because our Rabbi was widely known, also beyond the borders of Russia and Poland.

He was a uniquely wise man, perceptive both in abstract matters and in practical issues. He spoke a fine Russian, and also read and wrote this language. However, the act of composing even a few written lines was difficult for our Rabbi, and even composing a letter in the Holy Tongue did not come easily to him.

When, in the year 1894, I. L. Peretz toured the region around Tomaszów, which he descried in his 'Travel Portraits,' he visited Zamość, even though the city was not on his itinerary, and first of all paid a visit to our Rabbi, whom he held in high regard, when I. L. Peretz used to meet people from Zamość, the first thing he would do is ask about the well-being of the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*.

I did not know all of his children. By the time I would come to his home, he already had married daughters from his first wife. His younger son, **Mendel**, my friend, a very smart and talented young man, was an active *Bundist*. He had a very good head, but also, like his father, was plagued with difficulty in taking up the quill. For a period of time, we were student with the well known Zamość teacher Rabbi Chaim Rosenblum from Brisk. The teacher would praise Mendel: 'A smart youngster, fast, understands everything very well, only writing is a frustration, by the time he manages to scratch out a quarter of a page in his notebook, others can write 3-4 full pages.'

As previously mentioned, Mendel was drawn into the *Bundist* movement, to which he became committed heart and soul, but you must appreciate that this was done clandestinely – imagine what it would have meant, the Rabbi's own son....when at a specific moment, during the revolutionary year of 1905, when a danger arose that the secret police might discover the secret library of the *Bund*, Mendel transferred the books from this library into his house and hid them in the attic. During that summer, the Russian Gendarmerie carried out an inspection of the Rabbi's house, and actually arrested Mendel. After that, other members of the movement were also arrested. They were incarcerated in the prison at Janowicz. On Rosh Hashana, together with the Rabbi's older son, Yossel'eh, and another friend, I went off to give a 'package' to Mendel in jail, and it happened that we were able to hear a variety of complaints, can it be possible – the son of a Rabbi is a revolutionary....

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306 Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak - The *Khozeh* of Lublin. Born: Szczebrzeszyn, Poland, 1745, died: Lublin, Poland, 1815 . Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhak, the *Khozeh* of Lublin, is one of the truly beloved figures of Hasidism. He merited the cognomen of *Khozeh*, which means 'seer' or 'visionary,' due to his great intuitive powers. While blind, it was said that the Seer was able to see directly into people's souls. It is alleged that The *Khozeh* could look into the future. He could see, it was said, "from one end of the world to the other." He could see events taking place, far away from where he was sitting. On the day he left the world (9th of Ab), he prophesied that 100 years from this day, the Russians would lose their reign over Poland. And so it was to the date July20, 1915 (9th of Av), the Austrians conquered Lublin, and the *Khozeh's* prophecy was noted in the Polish newspapers.

307 During his tenure in Lublin, the *Khozeh* was opposed by a great Rabbi, the *Gaon* Rabbi Ezriel Halevi Hurwitz. Because of his great sharpness in learning, he was called "the Head of Iron".

After his release, Mendel did not remain in Zamość for very long, he emigrated to America.

The previously mentioned son of the Rabbi, the first-born, Yossel'eh, was also quite talented, being possessed of all virtues – handsome, intelligent and educated, both in the Talmud and commentaries, as well in world literature. He played the violin, and had a talent for wood-carving. He was one of the first who took part in the installation of the electrical network in Zamość.

I would come to the house of the our Rabbi, even if it was not often. Ever such occasion was a genuine pleasure, and one would always become informed about something, or learn something. In general, there were many people who came to the Rabbi for a 'period of visitation.' I remember the brothers, R' Mordechai and R' Chaim Rok; R' Jonah Worim; R' Chaim-Leib Blum; R' Zisha Finkelstein, R' Hona Edelberg, and many others.

If the postman, a Christian, had a letter or a telegram, and didn't know the correct address, or didn't know to whom it was addressed, he brought it to the Rabbi – the *Rabbin* knew everything.

There was a custom in Zamość (from the time when Zamość did not yet have a printing press), that when it came time to pay taxes to the Magistrate, or on the occasion of the 'exceptional' instances when someone may have lost a cow, a dog, or some such thing, the person who suffered the loss paid the Magistrate a set fee and the Magistrate sent out an announcement, a notice about the matter. There was a diminutive, short little gentile, with a big drum – the drum was always bigger than the drummer – and this Magistrate-gentile would go through the streets, and beat his drum. When a group of people would gather (most of the time the ones who gathered together were children, or just plain idlers), the drummer would stop, and would announce and inform the gathering about the matter at hand in Polish: about the last date for the payment of taxe4s, or about the lost property, providing the signs by which the lost property could be identified, and with a plea to have it returned to the Magistrate. Sometimes, the 'honest' finder was promised some kind of reward. After completing the drumming march through the street, the drummer would come to the Rabbi and describe the matter to him separately. This was to enlist his help. And very often, the Rabbi's help had more utility than the notification by the drummer...

Our Rabbi was a great distributor of charity, a very good person, literally in a class by himself. His home was always open to guests, for travelers passing through, and local people. He would not spare the rich a dressing down about their obligation to give charity. A famous saying of his was: 'The wealthy give charity with their mouths, and they kiss the Torah with their hand. It should be the opposite....'

When the balebatim would go out to canvass the houses for donations, they would bring these monies to the Rabbi, there, a distribution was devised for the needy. If it happened that there was a shortfall – there were more needy than the raised sum, the Rabbi would 'borrow' from his own fund. He would sometime 'record' this debt in a little book...he was never repaid for this.

His perceptive aphorisms were known widely. Some of these words I heard from I. L. Peretz. Who got more pleasure from this, I cannot guarantee.

Here are some of the Rabbi's 'noble' sayings:

'Take a whack, and split your own head' (from '*Shkotzim* have come into the *Heder*');
'It is not my fault that the entire world is a night club;'
'When a little candle burns out, it is **not** lost, and me and my common sense **does**?

He would say:

A Rabbi who is arrogant is indeed no good, and is not nice; however, one must also know the measure of modesty. How would it look if the Rabbi stood and tapped on his window and called in passers by: be so kind, Yankel the Porter, or Water Carrier, make the effort, come inside to me here, perhaps you will help me adjudicate a question, this does not

constitute modesty... to adjudicate a question is the province of the Rabbi, not the province of Yankel the Water Carrier...

A common expression is: 'He loves **her** to the point of danger,' This is false – because he really loves **himself.**

There are certain very observant people who, were it not for the World to Come (where they will obtain a reward), would be quite content to establish that everyone should die in **this** world from hunger...

He could not stand all manner of simple statements, circuitous reasoning, casuistry and the like.

Nachman Rot, my father's brother-in-law, dealt in dairy products, with hay and oats, with kerosine and tar, and was a pauper in life, beset with the care of many children. His wife, Dvora, my father's sister, was a fiercely observant Jewish woman, and would constantly beset the Rabbi with all manner of '*shylehs*,' involving such minutiae that really did not constitute a 'question' in the first place. The Rabbi would always hear her out, and then he ruled, '*kosher*,' or '*treyf*.' On one occasion, the Rabbi was inspecting such a '*shyleh*,' in a goose, and he ruled '*kosher*.' Dvora took the goose, and remained standing there. The Rabbi then asked her why she was still standing there. She replied – I am of the opinion...that is, I mean... something is not right here...not as it should be...the Rabbi, now somewhat upset, said to her sharply: With me, as the Rabbi, there is '*kosher*' or '*treyf*.' I am not familiar with such things as 'not right...' 'not the way it should be...'

In the year 1920, when the General, Bulak-Balachowicz, who was known for his assaults and murders in Jewish cities and towns, paid a visit to Zamość, 6 Jews were killed in the *Neustadt* at that time, and a portion died afterwards from their wounds. The Rabbi eulogized them in the *Bet HaMedrash*. There was a small audience, because it was literally dangerous to go out from one's house. He, however, paid no attention to this. During the eulogy, he wept plaintively. Among other things, he said: among the dead, there are ones who are called 'free-[thinkers]' – but all of them are martyrs, and they were killed only because they were Jews, and they are martyrs, and have earned their place in the World to Come....

He made himself famous for his concern for Jewish soldiers, who would serve in the Zamość garrison (originally in Czarist times, and later already in independent Poland). He would work out endless privileges for the Jewish recruits, free time during [Jewish] holidays. His house was always full of Jewish recruits during the Festivals. He was literally a father to them. It was here that they gathered together, spent time, and sang.

He stood in contact not only with the leading scholars and Rabbis of Jewry, *Gaonim*, but also with the representatives of the Jewish community in general, famous lawyers such as Schlossberg, Gruzenberg, Winawer, Professor Mandelstam from Kiev, and others – would correspond with him about Jewish community issues.

He was also beloved by the non-Jewish populace. In the Neustadt, by us, there was a Christian woman, a Pole, **Kaszka**, who was called 'the Matriarch of the Thieves.' She spoke Yiddish with a completely correct Yiddish accent. She would often work in Jewish homes, and would give 'direction,' insisting that a 'blessing' be said, and that '*Modeh Ani*' be recited – 'say the blessing' – she would insist – otherwise, you will grow up to be a *goy*.' Her refrain was well-known: 'Our Rabbi, ma he live and be well, a complete *Tzaddik*; 10 *goyim* can be his redemption...' '*Kaszkeh* the *mameh* of the thieves,'dealt with the criminal element, of which we had a lot. She would provision them on the outside. For the sake of the truth – they did little 'work' in the local area.

In the final years, the Rabbi was deeply loved by all. However, over 50 years before, he needed to endure a spate of bloodletting because of a dispute that spread all over. I remember it quite well, even though it took place in the year 1903. This dispute was accurately written up in the *HaTzefira* of 5663 [1903]. The Rabbi was embarrassed, threatened, and maligned. It deteriorated to the point of distasteful deeds. Very often, his windows were broken. On a Friday evening, people would shout into his window: 'Mottel'eh, take off your fur hat (*shtrymel*), an ill wind in your ....' and other such epithets.

I remember at one time, three men came to us with a sheaf of paper, where on the top, there were Russian letters written out in calligraphy, indicating that the undersigned request that the authorities to drive the Rabbi out of the city. My father and grandfather signed this 'letter,' out of fear. They could be certain that if they hadn't done so, that someone would have stuck a knife in their side, or set their house on fire. I knew one of these three signature solicitors, he was a 'perpetrator' of robbery, a member of the underworld. A certain rich young man, who was on the Rabbi's side, had his own little coach, and so on the second day of Passover, they poisoned his horse, and cut up the little coach. The previously mentioned underworld figure had the audacity to brag: 'Ha, ha, ha, Y. K— l horses ate some *shmura* matzo that we gave them, and it affected them badly'.... a second Jew, also on the Rabbi's side, was dragged into a house and his gold watch and chain was stripped from him. Along with this, he was told: 'for the time being, you'll do without this.' Those who were around were warned: 'Idiots, if it should happen that one of you should speak even a word about this, sooner or later, you are going to be slaughtered...' A third person had his head split open with a cleaver.

I do not recall how long this dispute went on. I do, however, remember the end of it. In the summer of 5663 [1903] a *Bet-Din* of three Rabbis was convened, one of them was Rabbi Nahum the Rabbi of Krasnobrod, the prior Rabbis of Radzyn, a brother-in-law of Rabbi Mordechai. The trial lasted several days. During the time of the trial, the city was quiet.

It is interesting to relate that the principal leaders of the dispute against the Rabbi died a year or two after the trial; they passed away from this world at quite a young age.

The principal leader of the protagonists, a young man in his 30's, a scholar and educated person, was the first to die. A second one, who drove a wagon, died almost immediately. He left behind a wife and young orphans. The Rabbi involved himself rather intensely with these little orphans. One, he took to his table for Sabbaths, and also occasionally during the middle of the week, giving him clothing and small change.

He would always go to the funerals of his protagonists, taking no heed of the concept of revenge, anger or resentment.

The Rabbi was killed in the Second World War, during the reign of the Nazis. Many versions of his demise are told, however, it is known that he held his morale high, and maintained an impact.

The following fact is related in the name of the *Bund* activist Yerakhmiel Brandwein (killed in the Maniewicz Ghetto):

Immediately in the first days of the Polish-German War, in September 1939, Zamość was bombed, and a number of Jews were killed in the bombing, among them also the brother of Yerakhmiel Brandwein. Because of the continuous air raid alarms, the *Hevra-Kadisha* was not functioning, and the dead lay for a couple of days and were not interred according to Jewish law. It was only two days later, that the *Hevra-Kadisha*, under the direction of the *Neustadt* Rabbi Mordechai Hurwitz, came close to attend the dead. In the meantime, night fell, and the members of the *Hevra-Kadisha* decided to finish the burial in the morning, because it was dangerous to be about at night. It was here that Rabbi Hurwitz approached the members of the *Hevra-Kadisha* with the following words:

'*Rabbotai,* so long as there are still *balebatim* in my city, where I am the Rabbi for 50 years already, that have not yet been given a proper Jewish burial, I place you under a Rabbinical Decree that no one may leave, even if the burial process takes the entire night, no one will go home. We are not certain, that we will be able to come here in the morning. And in consideration, for doing that last good deed for our beloved martyrs, we will be permitted to return home in peace, because those who are appointed to go and do a mitzvah, are spared any harm.'

His words were effective, and everyone remained behind, and indeed, carried out the interment.

There is no one left from Zamość – from all of its sections – who has remained alive, who would not recall the name of this wonderful man with love, respect and sadness.

# Moshe Koval

*Page 749:* *Abraham-Moshe Tzitzman 'Koval' and his wife, Pessel Tzitzman. Both were killed during the time of the Nazi occupation. He 'in the normal course of events,' and she, during an 'aktion.'*

His family name was Tzitzman; to the extent that I know, he was never a blacksmith [*Koval*[308]]; one son of his, Baruch, had a house in the Neustadt, and was indeed a smith.

I am not aware of what Reb Moshe Koval did during his youth, but since the time I remember him, he was a teacher. He taught a variety of subjects to children – from the basic alphabet through *Gemara*, inclusively.

He was tall, lean; he stood straight, with a firm, certain step. There was a time when he went about on crutches, but this was not for long, he quickly 'came to himself,' and once again went about his business – teaching, with a firm and skillful hand.

When he came to me as help in my *Heder*, he was already past his sixties. That was during *Hol HaMoed Sukkot* of 5684 (1924), I had 'taken him' from a village, where he taught. He willingly left the village for the city, to be among people and Jews.

He worked out a condition with me – if it should happen that he misses a day, that he could not come to teach – it was winter, and he was an elderly person – that he should not be docked pay for these days; he will come every day before 9 and leave before 1 (Friday before 11); for the month of Nissan, even though we learned for only a half of the month, he wanted to be paid for the entire month. I accepted these terms. It impressed me greatly: Reb Moshe Koval is my assistant! But this didn't last very long – it only lasted a couple of weeks. They came from the village, paid him a much greater price and Reb Moshe went back to the village.

We conversed very little during the few weeks that he was with me. He was no foolish Jew, understood people and was well versed in the ways of the world and the expressions of the common people.

* * *

What I know to tell about Reb Moshe Koval is this, it is what I remember, and from the stories that I heard from my grandfather and others.

Reb Moshe owned a vale with a wooden house and stalls that had rooms, nearby the Lublin Gate. He was the third or fourth generation of that first settler, who perhaps was also named Moshe. That [first one] indeed, was a blacksmith.

This was before the partition of Poland, before the land was divided among the onetime great powers – Russia, Prussia, and Austria. During one period of war, the great-great-grandfather of Moshe Koval was the only smith and was inundated with work – at every moment, someone else came to him and asked him to discharge some specific work for the military.

On a certain morning, at the time when the smith was standing with his 2 assistants and was working, a person came running, apparently from the senior military, and yells:

– Jew, come rescue us quickly... hide me, I am lost!.....

The smith ran quickly from his place into the house, brought out a package with old, filthy clothes belonging to a smith, and ordered the arrival to quickly take off his clothes and put on the outfit of the smith and to stand himself near the

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308 The Slavic root for a blacksmith is 'koval.' The name *Kowalczyk* in Polish is equivalent to 'Smith' in English.

bellows. The latter did so with lightning speed. He is already standing, smeared with soot by the fire, and he is banging away with a hammer. The master took the military clothing, and threw it into a nearby room, covering them with a coat. All this was accomplished in the blink of an eye. The smith was standing with his newly-acquired 'help' at work, as if nothing had happened.

A little while later, other military people came running, panting, sweating, with a shout:

– One or more of the enemy have entered your place, seeking to hide, say quickly where they are. Say it, quickly! If not, we'll cut your head off immediately!

– My very dear sirs – the smith says in very subdued tones, – I have seen no one here. I am standing here with my assistants since early in the day. It is very hard, very hard for us. Nobody wants to know about anything. Everyone arrives with the complaint: do it quickly, immediately! We are standing here since the early hours of the morning and not I, nor anybody else has seen anyone who is a stranger. On the contrary, feel free to look around.

The arrivals looked around quite thoroughly. Searched the yard well, in the rooms, stalls, and the house, in all the corners, found nothing, and went away.

The war ended shortly thereafter. It appeared as if this entire episode would be forgotten. However, in about a year, possibly longer, papers came to the Jewish smith in Zamość from the government, that he should come to Warsaw (or possibly even all the way to Petersburg!) The Jew is terrified, but he makes the journey.

There he was well received, questioned in an appropriate fashion, about that incident, recorded it, and told him to go home, to Zamość. It did not take long, and papers arrive for the smith from the same high position, stamped and signed [to the effect] that the entire vale, the yard, the forge, the house with all its rooms, and everything that is found there – that all of this belongs to him, the Jewish smith, to him and to his children, children's children, to the end of generations.

The house in the vale became old; the of was overgrown with grass, and the same for the other buildings, but they stood up. When the writer of these lines visited this house, it was 'supported,' held up with blocks, wooden boards, pasting and iron supports. The windows and doors were patched, supported and very unsteady, shaking, but holding up. Reb Moshe Koval lived there with a daughter and son-in-law (he was grindstone operator) and children. Nobody complained; indeed, it was not in order, with many shortcomings, but nevertheless one's own little corner of the world.

I approached Reb Moshe to inquire about details, about him, about the vale, about the stories about his grandfather or great-grandfather, the smith, but I did not succeed. He said to me:

– You know, Shlomo, I am a teacher for more than 100 semesters (there were two semesters per year); among my pupils there were Avigdor Inlander (a well-known Zamość magnate, a millionaire, as it was thought he was worth), and other well-known rich people (he called out familiar names of people who then were already big-time *balebatim* of the city), who either themselves, or their children, and even grandchildren, were my pupils, studying by me. And why? They don't even recognize me, they treat me as a stranger....

When Poland became a free independent country – after the First World War – with 16-17 districts, with a Sejm, a city council, Sejm deputies, etc., our city of Zamość obtained a city council with 24 elected councilmen. No matter what the Poles tried to be clever about, and no matter what they did – adding many nearby villages to the city in order to achieve a Polish majority, during the elections, 16-17 Jewish councilmen were elected. Except the Jews, 'in order not to inflame *The Nobleman*' would rationalize the representation – half and half, 12 Jews and 12 Poles. The City Elder was always a Pole.

And a new King arose. Anti-Semitism grew vigorously, and a new City Elder arrived, who started to implement a burden called 'urbanism.'

Essentially it meant that the city was going to be beautified – and he came out with the wise word: 'that we have to get rid of the animals, and therefore we have to chop down the forest.' So first, he ordered that the chestnut trees be cut down and the benches – so this way we will get rid of the vermin the '*valutazhehs*' – they will have no place (in the small orchards) where to assemble.

Later, he ordered all the balconies facing the streets to be taken down... and another array of 'civilizing' measures, which happened for a variety of local relationships to affect the Jews.

A new City Elder came along, there were new decrees, until one day, the Polish authorities decide – the Magistrate, the city council, with the City Elder at its head – that the whole situation with Moshe Koval is not the way it should be. A Jewish family, Tzitzman, Moshe Koval and his family are luxuriously ensconced on Polish soil; eat Polish bread; they live in and occupy so much space, and it cost them not so much as a groschen of money... How can this be? Where has this ever been heard of before?

Very quickly, a document comes to Moshe Koval, an order from the authorities: Moshe Tzitzman, as a person, must vacate the place and turn over everything to the 'city.' The best that can be done for him, is that he will be given a residence and financial support.

Moshe Koval found himself seriously beleaguered, but he did not remain silent, he wrote, filed papers, dredged up the old story, the story with his great-great-grandfather. Moshe did not succumb easily. Paper after paper; on the one side, the city demanded that he 'vacate' the vale, and he sent lawyers to Lublin, to Warsaw. The matter reached the highest courts.

In the meantime, the events were overtaken by the Second World War.

I do not know how Moshe Koval died. I remember only, that about 18-19 years ago, in the 30's, he still went about with his firm step, and the public joked that the Angel of Death had forgotten him – he had to have been a hundred years old... in mentioning his age, people no longer added 'no evil eye intended' – it was natural.

## Moshe Dichter

**Moshe Dichter** (Jews would pronounce it Dechter) had his own single story house, stone walls made of red brick and with red roof shingles, right in the front, to the right after the '*Heyfl.*' There was a substantial yard next to the house, with residences, stalls, rooms. The really pretty thing was his 'Hotel Warshowski' with its numbering...it would appear, that this was a house that was inherited. He, Moshe Dichter himself, would often spend time on the large bench in front of his house – sometime with companions, and often alone.

When, as a child, I saw him for the first time, he made a peculiar impression on me: ... a Jew, ruddy, healthy, solid, walks like a Cossack. His red face was entirely rosy, black sparkling eyes, a reddish leather jacket, red leather trousers... a straw hat with two brims (I couldn't understand this: two brims? A Jew is dressed like this) in officer's boots with a riding crop, I once said a small whip, a whip stick in hand...that he was Jewish I heard from people. Most of the time, he spoke Russian, but I once heard him speaking in Yiddish with Jews.

Stories about him were told without end, and peculiar ones at that, which were not comprehensible. I used to sneak in among older Jewish people and snatch bits of their stories about him and his antics.

His name, **Dichter**, was used infrequently in direct discourse with him. Firstly, he was called '*Moshe Cossack*,' '*Fonyak*,' '*Katzap*,' '*Moshe Goy*,' and other names. But what was mostly caused me wonder, was what Jews had to say:

– Hmm, a peculiar set of affairs, *Moshe Fonyak, Katzap*, eats *trayf*, swine flesh, has no knowledge of the Sabbath, of the Festivals, but loves Jews fiercely...

I did not understand this, and what was of greater wonder, Jews said: – *Moshe Cossack, Moshe Goy*, is a....nationalistic Jew....

What is this, a nationalistic Jew that eats *trayf* foods,. swine flesh, doesn't pray, not on the Sabbath or Festivals, does not come to synagogue, not into the *Bet HaMedrash*, and a nationalistic Jew?... What sort of an individual is this, this nationalistic Jew?...

I was daring about this once, and stole nearby and asked what they meant by this. Well, I had a comeuppance: get away, you...one like you...also wants to know. It's entirely too soon, grow up first...get away, quickly... and I barely got away alive. In my mind, it continued to burn, what can it mean for someone like this to be 'a nationalistic Jew?'....

He was not particularly well-to-do. True, he had a nice income from his house and 'Hotel,' but he was also a big spender. 'Those folks' – Magistrate, the authorities, officers and others, – he would say, cost him a pretty penney. A ruble – he would say – to me is like '*naplievat*,' (I spit on it).

He sat on his bench, beside his house and an elderly Jew walks by, a mendicant, someone who begs from house-to-house. Dichter calls him over, tells him to sit down, and engages him in a conversation about a variety of subjects, until he comes to the question of how much he makes by going around from house-to-house.

– What do I know, the Jew responds, they give me about 60-70 kopecks apiece.

Moshe takes out a ruble or half again as much, gives it to the Jew, and says: – Listen here, my dear Jew, here you have a ruble (or more), so get going, on your way, out of the city. Until next year this time, I don't want my eyes to fall on you! Do you hear, out! *Hydah*! Begone. If you have the nerve to come back here before the year is up, it will cost you dearly.

The Jewish man thanked him, and left satisfied. And this is what he would do with a second, and a third. True, he didn't do this with all the beggars, and not often.

I do not remember when he died. He was not very old.

*Moshe Cossack, Katzap*, once sent for the Head *Gabbai* of the Zamość *Hevra Kadisha*, promised him several nice bags ful of donations for the *Hevra*, and for him personally, that is to say the *Gabbai* himself, if he will release an announcement that he, *Moshe Cossack*, had suddenly died. That he should request that one should come to 'do what is right by him.' That the purification should be carried out, that he should be carried through the streets to the cemetery, and in front of him, collection boxes should be shaken, [with the refrain] 'Charity Rescues from Death.' All of this had to be done secretly. He wanted to know what sort of an impression his death would make on the people of Zamość....

## Yohanan Morgenstern

When he came to study in my *Heder*, he was in his 12th year. His father, R' Shlomo-Chaim, a young Hasidic man, was a rich storekeeper that sold goods, promised me:

– Well, nu, I know that you are strict. Look away a bit. It can be a little more lenient... he'll learn, learn. He has an iron head...

He had no iron head, and no strong desire to learn. He was average. Iv had better pupils. Take a chapter of the prophet Isaiah, for example. To get him to memorize it, was accomplished with bitterness. Other boys, during the week, would manage 4-5 chapters before he would do one. That is why he loved to read, despite the fact that he was very young, and certainly did not understand everything that he read.

For example, I arrive in the morning from prayers, not all of the children have arrived yet, Yohanan stands with his feet on the bench, and he is searching in my home library. The books are in disarray, and he is holding a book by Moshe Stavsky in his hands.

– Hey, – I inquire angrily, – what are you doing there?

He climbs down slightly rattled, – Oh, teacher – that is how I was called – 'The Yellow Chicken,' is so nice, so nice, I want to read it.

– And do you know the fourth chapter of Job yet?

– Tomorrow, teacher, I will know it tomorrow, I will definitely know it, entirely, you will see. Let me take this book home....

– I will tell your father.

– No, no, teacher, you don't have to tell him. I will learn everything. 'The Yellow Chicken,' is so pretty. Ha-Ha, the gentile woman with the expressions...and 'Laban the Aramite,'....

When I told this once to his father, he answered me with a smile:

Nu, you have something to worry about now. You know, though – today's children. Well, nu, a concern. So he won't be a Rabbi.....

Three years – 6 or 7 semesters – he studied with me. He was a Bar Mitzvah for quite some time already. He transferred to the '*Heder Metukan*,' '*Yavneh*,' in the *Altstadt*. He would come to see me, not often, for me to help him with his Hebrew lectures and *Tanakh*.

He was already a grown young man, a brunette with coal-black hair and handsome eyes. Later on, he joined the Tz. S. Party (right-wing *Poalei Tzion*), and became very active there. I often saw him carrying periodicals and books in his pockets, deeply engrossed, driven with little time. Girls would stare after him, seeking his acquaintance. From what I could see, he didn't pursue this.

Later, he became the editor of the *Zamośćher Stimme*. After that, he went to Warsaw, called by the central committee of the Poalei Tzion party. There, he becomes one of the liaisons, traveling around Poland, holding meetings.

He asked my help – that is how my pupil Yohanan stood, and I had a small part in this....in 1935 I was on a visit in Warsaw and I went to Genszow 14, where the seat of the central offices of the Poalei Tzion were located, trying to locate him. I was told – he was in the Plotsk District, traveling for meetings.

Later, he comes to Zamość from time-to-time; in 1938; during the municipal elections. He came especially, because, after all, this was his city. He always visited with me, and shared things with me, his teacher, about his work, talked about politics, discussed things, attempted to persuade one another.

Until...one discovers things about him in the Yizkor Books about martyrs and heroes. Yes, Yohanan, the good-hearted one, was very well suited for that role, that he carried out in the underground during the dark night of the Nazis.

He died the death of a martyr and a hero.

How I ache for you, my pupil, Yohanan!

* * *

The grandson of Moshe Koval, Alexander Tzitzman (Buenos Aires) has provided the following clarifications and additions to the chapter '**Moshe Koval**' in the work of Shlomo Schwartzberg:

The correct name for 'Moshe Koval' was **Abraham Moshe.**

Moshe's father-in-law, **Gedaliah Meldung** was a smith, who, by the way, was an uncle of Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter. Yitzhak Geliebter's mother was from the Meldung family.

The story about 'rescuing a senior military official' is indeed told about Moshe Koval's father and took place in Varoslawicz, which belonged to Graf Politila. It was told that when the nobleman would go to his palace, the entire way was spread over with sugar ( the nobleman was the owner of many sugar refineries in the area), and this sugar would be gathered up by Moshe Koval's father Joseph, who was the groundskeeper, as a personal benefit.

In his youth, Moshe Koval was a student, and his father-in-law, Gedaliah, took him on as a father-in-law, and subsidized his studies.

The previously mentioned Gedaliah served in the Czar's Army and learned how to be a smith there. He was the smith for a garrison for the Czarist army divisions that were stationed in Zamość . He received title to the place and the buildings in the vale near the fortress for his good work.

About two years before the outbreak of the Second World War, these buildings were condemned by the authorities of the city, as part of an 'urban renewal' action.

He died during the time of the Nazi Occupation, and apparently was given a Jewish burial. His wife, Pessl, was killed during one of the Hitlerist slaughters of the Zamość community.

# Institutions and Public Servants in Zamość

**By Moshe Kezman**

## The '*Linat HaTzedek*'

*Page 756: A 'Program' of a Presentation for the Benefit of 'Linat HaTzedek'*

The objective of '*Linat HaTzedek*' was: to give help to Jews who were ill, who have to rely on strangers; people would come to spend the night with them ('*Linot*'), provide them with financial assistance; medicine free of charge – whether for doctor visits or for prescriptions. An account was opened with the pharmacies, where the prescriptions from the '*Linat HaTzedek*' were filled for the necessary medications or medical instruments.

At the office of the '*Linat HaTzedek*' itself, there was a certain inventory of ready-made prescriptions, preparations and instruments, which were distributed to the needy.

There was always someone on duty at the office of the institution, who always dealt with those who would come about issues concerning the sick.

The work of the members was connected to a personal dedication and dangers. It would always transpire that it was necessary to stay up with those who were seriously ill, with sick people that had frightening diseases. There were sick people, who from prolonged illness, were literally rotting away. They had to be washed, and their linens changed.... the members did work that even hired nurses and sanitary workers would decline to do.

Raising money for '*Linat HaTzedek*' was very difficult. The needed funds were obtained only with the greatest difficulty – by canvassing the houses, to collect monthly donations, collecting at times of celebration and circumcisions, and from time-to-time also at specially prepared events. Also, 'Purim Money' was collected for the institution.

I do not remember all of the leadership members, but a few need to have their names made public. The chairman was **Berel Essigmakher** (or Weinmakher)[309] – in his house in the Ghetto in the *Neustadt* was the *minyan* where prayers were said every day. That too, entailed risk to life and limb. **Shlomo David Fershtendig, Akiva Eierweiss, Mishe-Yekel Stern, Eliyahu Zwillich.**

The institution was very important, and also obtained a subsidy from the Jewish community.

## The Yiddish-Polish Gymnasium

On a certain Friday night, a group of Jews were standing around, as was the custom, in the 'little orchard,' and among other things, the talk came to the Polish Gymnasium . Part of the parents argues – they would send their children to the Gymnasium, but there was an unofficial '*Numerus Clausus*' that seemed to prevail there – often nothing is said, that they don't accept Jewish students, but difficulties are created, and that it is not easy to gain entry there.

This issue didn't affect me directly, because both of my sisters and also my daughter were already students in the Polish Gymnasium and one sister was already a student at the Polish [sic: Teacher's] Seminary. However, I felt in all of this, that perhaps something could be done, and I reacted by saying that it would be possible to establish a Yiddish-Polish Gymnasium. There is a location – a building which at one time had been built for the Jewish Hospital and is the property of the community and there does not seem to be any prospect for its use as a hospital.

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309 This is a rather interesting case of an occupation-related name. The primary name is for someone who is a 'vinegar maker.' in parenthesis it indicates a 'wine maker.' Clearly these are interrelated products that come from handling fermented grape beverages.

Among those who participated in this conversation were also my party friends and good neighbors, **Shlomo Fein**, and **Moshe Genzler**. They seized upon the notion, but the question was where would one obtain so large a sum of money, and more to the point, where would one find the qualified people who will dedicate time to this matter, and indeed, the relevant skills, specialties that are required to manage such an institution as a Gymnasium...

So, it gave me the opportunity to say: – Give me only two people who will commit themselves to this, and there will be a Gymnasium for Jewish children. Fein and Genzler presented themselves to me to make the plan into a reality.

That same Saturday, 30 me, well acquainted with one another, got together. Placards could not be prepared or posted on the Sabbath. Nevertheless, those who were interested were brought together. The assembly took place on Saturday, after the noon hour, in the location of the community.

It was decided to call for a second, broader meeting, on a Saturday that was not too far off. Placards were posted in all places where prayer services were held, and on that second Saturday, we had more than 100 parents already, who were interested in such an educational institution.

The legal owners of the building that was meant to be a Jewish hospital were Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter and Ignacy Margolies. Geliebter immediately agreed and also gave a letter to Margolies. In any event, we received the permission to utilize the planned hospital building for a Gymnasium. We had to complete the building. There were only the walls and the roof.

We brought this project before the assembly, and also the permit of the Jewish *balebatim* that were the legal owners of the building. The job of finishing the building and making it suitable for use as a Gymnasium demanded a large sum of money. On the spot, an assessment was passed for a read sum (minimum 100 zlotys for each person) and everyone had to subscribe by a promissory note. The beginning was initiated with ardent zeal, and took off auspiciously.

We needed ready cash only for the working people. Materials were paid for with promissory notes, and most of the materials were obtained through gift/donations, for the Gymnasium. This is the way we obtained the tiles for the ovens from Dichter in the tile factory (Mendel Eisenstahl worked there as the director); the half doors and the dampers we got from Aharon Feder and Yitzhak Fink; stools we got from Tuvia Fuchs; bookcases in part were obtained from the Zegens, and from Yekel Pflug – everywhere without money. Other small items were donated by other *balebatim* from Zamość.

With the building completed, came the array of furnishing it with benches, blackboards, cabinets, teaching tools, maps, a variety of instruments, and tools, especially for the cabinets used for natural sciences, physics, chemistry, etc. To do this required someone with expertise, and this raised the question of a director.

I was delegated to go to Warsaw to locate a qualified candidate for a director.

At this time, Bytcheh Pfeffer and Moshe Epstein were co-opted into the board of directors.

From Warsaw, I came with the director, **Borenstein**. He presented himself to an assembly and was accepted. He declared that, if the required funds were placed at his disposal, it will be possible to open 4 grades for the coming new year. We committed ourselves to do this. Moshe Levin was engaged as a secretary, and two Christian assistants.

The director of the Polish Gymnasium, Lewitsky helped in obtaining the [sic: official] permission, and most importantly, the endorsement of Borenstein as the director. Lewitsky did this quite willingly, both because he was truly a fine man, and also because it got rid of the 'Jewish Problem,' for him in his Gymnasium.

The director brought the appropriate personnel from Warsaw. The commission of the school-curatorium certified the personnel, the building and the Gymnasium began to operate.

Not all the students paid the required tuition fee, a part of the poorer ones paid half, and from others, nothing was taken. We were not sufficiently well acquainted with the issue of putting together a budget, and we quickly fell into a condition of great deficit.

I traveled to Lublin in order to learn about specific details of budgeting for our Gymnasium from the director of the Humanistic Jewish Gymnasium there. A townsman of ours, Yekel Geliebter, worked in the directorate of the Lublin Gymnasium. It was revealed that our teaching staff, with the director at its head, was being significantly overpaid. We wanted to align the pay in Zamość with that in Lublin. That was not so easy to do – it came to a strike by the teaching staff. In the end, there was a rationalization. The salaries were somewhat aligned, and reduced. The material situation then became a little better.

The Gymnasium developed; classes were added, until we had our own graduation. The first examinations were carried out by the director of the Polish Gymnasium, Lewitsky, indeed, in the Polish Gymnasium. The second 'Matura' was already administered by ourselves, without outside oversight.

The Gymnasium obtained equivalent standing to the Polish government one. It had a good name with the curatorium.

Suddenly, we were beset with trouble.

Communism was injected into the Humanistic Jewish Gymnasium in Lublin. As it happens, this was due to the children of the rich *balebatim*, and the way it was cut off was to expel them from the Gymnasium. So they came to Zamość, and brought it with them. This created a tumult, and there was a move to revoke the privileges of the Jewish Gymnasium.

After a great deal of intervention, the privileges were not revoked, but a demand was levied by the curatorium that a Christian would have to be engaged as the curator. It was necessary to comply with this demand.

The situation, however, became worse. The better off stopped sending their children to the Gymnasium – looking for other careers, or sending them to study out of the country. The professions where it was possible to gain entry into universities from the Gymnasium were Philosophy (in order to become a teacher), or law. For most of the parents, this was not something 'worthwhile' – they wanted medicine, pharmacy, or technology.

A crisis descended on the Gymnasium.

I came in with a proposal to transform the Gymnasium into a trade school. I demonstrated that in this way, we could get a subsidy from ORT. But at that time, Ignacy Margolies was already in the management, who supported the school, and did not permit any changes.

I then distanced myself from the activities of the Gymnasium.

Of the three founders, Shlomo Fein is in Afula, and Moshe Genzler is already deceased.

## The Merchant's Society and Small Business Society

The mission of the Merchant's Society was an understandable one. Its activity was multi-branched. They would settle all matters relating to competition among the merchants; there was a court of peers for settling disputes; there was intervention in the tax department regarding taxes that were too high; lowering of taxes, or breaking it up into smaller rates [of payment]. It also had to carry out a cultural-social activity; a local office needed to be established, where it would be possible to come together after closing the businesses; they would have to travel on specific missions to the district seat (in Lublin) or to Warsaw about a variety of legal issues from the standpoint of the merchants.

In the management were: Eliyahu Epstein (Chairman); Ben-Zion Lubliner (Vice-Chairman); Mordechai-Joseph Kronfeld, Chaim Brenner, Bytcheh Pfeffer, and me – Secretary Leibl Wechter. Meetings took place every Sunday, and later, every Tuesday.

We had enough difficulties in the work, and also internal organizational problems. It was hard for the Chairman to come to the Society. He was very strongly involved with his own many businesses – in tile making in brick making, or in warehousing. In addition to this, he had a custom that he would be out at 5AM to the market to buy a turkey or a goose – he personally had to make the purchase.... as a result, he would often doze off during meetings, or not have the focus when society issues were brought to him.

True – he would always give the stamp and his signature, often not knowing what it was about; not reading what was contained in the document that he had signed.

This was a defect in our organization – the presiding officer should have been the one to intervene – or there were instances when he did not do this, true, because he was so busy. – I left the leadership.

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In the meantime, a Small business Society was established. Indeed, this may have been because the small merchant didn't find an appropriate place in the Merchant's Society.

Shlomo-David Fershtendig and Itcheh Manzim (members of the leadership of the society) came to me, asking that I should come and work for them. At that time, the Secretary was Wolf Tuch.

First, I inquired at the Zionist Organization if I had to do this. From there the answer came – on the contrary, it is better for more inside people to take such positions.

So, in accordance with my habit, I applied myself to this work. First set up the local office. The previous local office was on the May 3 street, at Chaim Weintraub's, between his beds... we rented the new location from Bajczman, 2 rooms, renovated, installed furniture and in place of the previous secretary, engaged Hirsch Rosenberg's son, who had an application writing bureau, and his own writing machine [sic: typewriter]. Every day from 6 to nine, he sat in the office, and gave the members the required legal advice without charge, and prepared applications for a minimal cost. Every evening another member of the leadership had to be in the office to attend to the interests presented. If it was necessary to approach an official who was not at his post, then an appointment was set immediately for the next morning.

Later, the Secretary, Rosenberg, traveled to Warsaw to take a course at the central office of the small business society, to complete his understanding in legal matters, regarding statues and taxes and other administrative things to be arranged in the conduct of a small business.

In the course of a short time, the society grew and had 300 members. In that time, the director of the tax office was the Tatar Ashgray, notorious for taking the hide off people when it came to taxes. However, we ingratiated ourselves to him, and our interests received appropriate consideration.

Interventions, lowering or eliminating taxes, allowing them to be paid in instalments; confronting dishonest accusations; a variety of memorials regarding the conditions of the small businessman – the leadership did all of this. We also brought in the legal counsel of the small business society from Warsaw, the lawyer, Elkin, who, under the oversight of the previously mentioned tax official Ashgray, and the President of the finance office in Lublin, held a discourse on the issues about taxation. This had yet a further effect, and we did a great deal to loosen the screws of taxation from off of the impoverished mass of small businesses.

As a result of this work, the poorer and smaller merchants left the Merchant's Society, and joined the Small Business Society.

# Shlomo David Fershtendig and His Wine Cellar

Shlomo David Fershtendig, a son of Nehemiah Fershtendig, a grandson of Hirsch Fershtendig from Turobin, had a reputation that extended far beyond the boundaries of Zamość. It was a truly venerable wine firm, which was well-known throughout all of Poland, both among Jews and Christians.

Shlomo-David Fershtendig transferred his wine cellar from Turobin to Izbica, and later from Izbica to Zamość. According to the historical record of the firm, it was established in the year 1836!

His wine business was located in the house of Berish Luxembourg on Sztaszica 33. The business consisted of an underground wine cellar and open business up above. He serviced the entire area with the most expensive wines, and with a variety of beverages, domestic and imported. Wines for *Kiddush* and *Havdalah*, and Passover wines for the four cups. Paying no attention to the fact that he was a Jew, all of the priests, of all persuasions, would buy the wine at Fershtendig's for all of their sacramental rituals.

The cellar was configured with well-made articles for its purposes; it has something medieval about it, mixed with modern accommodations. All manner of barrels and bottles stood there, all covered with a molding... And in the middle... a gypsum figure of old Hirsch Fershtendig, Shlomo-David's grandfather... there were benches of black oak, tables of the same style, and contemporary lanterns, in which a dim electric light shone.

In a certain year, he asked Spiegelglass (the husband of the lady doctor, Dr. Rosenbush), an expert in these matters, who outfitted the cellar appropriately, and according to experts, transformed the cellar in accordance with the designs of the *Altstadt* in Warsaw.

Shlomo-David Fershtendig's wine cellar was visited by the greatest Polish personalities, who would travel through Zamość, or happen to find themselves in the vicinity. Nobility and military people; politicians or writers; natives and foreigners. They would drop into Zamość and come to Fershtendig's wine cellar, whose reputation was known throughout the entire land, and whose name literally reverberated around the world.

And these curious highly placed visitors wanted only Shlomo-David Fershtendig to attend them...he, in his long black coat, with his splayed out beard, with a yarmulka on his head, lent a further air of other-worldliness to the dim cellar.... in the cellar, there stood a machine on one of the massive oaken tables, where he fried up almonds with salt, which he served to his guests, pouring them glasses from the various vessels, depending on what kind of wine they wanted....

His guests related to him with respect, with a genuine deference to his expertise. There were certain foreigners, who were seeing such a 'service' and wine cellar for the very first time.

And he was a Jew with a big heart. A simple Jew, a member of '*Agudat Israel*' ready to help everyone, whether individuals, or the community at large. His wine cellar indeed brought him to the 'upper circles,' and not only once did he serve as an ombudsman for an individual or for many. Not only once, at his own expense, did he travel to Lublin or even to Warsaw in order to mitigate a decree.

His hand and the drawer to his desk were open for help and charity. He would not ask for what or for whom – everyone who extended his hand, that individual has to receive something.

On the Sabbath, he would personally carry food to the Jews who were arrested, and in jail. The prison warden was a real anti-Semite, a certain Renkovic. But he got control of him. It cost him quite a few good bottles of wine...

He had one daughter. At the beginning, Asher Hechtkopf acted as a business manager in his business. When Asher got married, he brought his wife's sister's son from Tarnogrod with him – Berish.

As a relative, Berish cramped him a bit – can it be, ignoring the business, too many community issues, and the like... but he didn't lose his way. With his skin and life, with his energy and money, served all who needed his help.

His end was the same as that of all our dear ones. He died the death of a martyr.

Berish and his daughter traveled to the Western Ukraine. He was arrested in Lemberg, and we do not know what happened. His daughter seemingly saved herself. After the war, she was seen in Lower Silesia.

## The Jewish Gentleman from Ploskia – Ignacy Margolies

Certainly the Margolies family is mentioned in the *Pinkas*, and among the members of the last generation of this family, **Ignacy**, the 'Pole of the Mosaic faith'.....

A couple of details about him. I happened to have to business dealings with him, real commerce, as it were.

An incident once took place as follows: There was Jew in our midst who was a wagon driver, by the name of Itcheh'leh Krasnobroder. He was a pauper. His work consisted of conveying the residents of the summer homes, during the summer season, to Krasnobrod; After that, he would bring back mail; he would also transport products to Krasnobrod from Zamość, which those summer residents could not procure locally.
It happened that his horse collapsed. So he pleads with me to discuss with Ignacy, as to whether, as an act of charity, he would give him a charitable donation to purchase a horse.

I wanted to make a stronger case, and together with Pinia Becker (who had an influence with Ignacy) and Jekuthiel Bat, I approached him with the request.

What does he do? – He does not give charitable donations, he says, however, he gave a note to his administrator in Ploskia (this is the very same village that is identified in the work of Bart in our *Pinkas*, about the first colonization initiatives by Jews in the Zamość district. – Ed.), the Jew with the wide beard, that Itcheh'leh is to come and pick out a horse to his own liking.

He would direct the '*Avigdoria*' – the *Halutz* training organization – to take straw and other products, and whatever else they needed.

Whatever he earned from his charitable notes he donated – half for the '*Gemilut-Khesed*,' treasury and the second half – for the Jewish Gymnasium.

He was the first of the assimilated Jews, who gave 50 dollars for the '*Keren HaYesod*.' However, he did not want to sign a declaration for '*Keren HaYesod*,' – it was 'against his principles'....

# Documents Concerning Hunger and Need

Here, we again bring 2 documents which starkly mirror the difficult circumstances in which the poor Jews, in particular, found themselves, and in general, the residents of the *Neustadt.*

Both letters are from 1926. Both are appeals to landsleit in America.

1. The first is from the Aid Committee of the *Neustadt*, and;

2. The second is a recommendation of two people, Moshe Freilich and Yaakov-Meir Topf, who ask the American to support the '*Linat HaTzedek.*'

These documents are presented verbatim, as they were written, in their own idiom, with changes only to spelling.

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## Document One

With God's help, Wednesday of Parsha Yitro, 5686, Zamość, *Neustadt*, 3 February 1926.

With respect to the designated leaders, revered and beloved, whose names have gone out to all cities, May the Lord bless you and protect you in your coming and going – all of you, born in our city Zamość *Neustadt*, and living today in the country of 'A m e r i c a ' 'New York,' 'Detroit, Mich.' 'Brooklyn,' and the like.

It is on you, the good and straight of heart. On you people, that I call. Listen to us, and the Lord will heed you, before all discourse grows, after his good wishes are invoked, with great love, and eternal love as is decreed..

Dear brethren, as is now known by each and every person, the current circumstances of Jews in Poland in general, this refers to the poverty that has spread to every individual, may the Lord spare us, the darkness that has covered the earth, and every cloud has emptied its storm of water on we Jews in Poland in general and on our city of Zamość, that is to say, the *Neustadt* in particular.

We have all come to be in the depths of this water, and all the waves pursue us, and our ship is at the edge of, God forbid, going under, may the Lord spare us.

You, our dear brethren with understanding hearts, must know that the current situation with us in Zamość *Neustadt*, that is, our ability to make a living is hard, somber and bitter. If you, our dear brethren recall, that a few years ago we approached you for support for our poor and sick brethren in Zamość, and you extended your hands and helped us to the extent that you could, we remember this very well. May the Blessed Lord also not forget you for this as well. But you must know, that this was not even a 'drop in the ocean.' It is true, that at that time, the situation was not an easy one, during the time of 'the call to war.' But then, it was a question of products. It was not so easy to obtain any products, but there was not 'poverty' of any sort (the goose feet belong to the writers everywhere) among Jews, meaning that many people had money. Regrettably, and to our great misfortune, the current situation throughout Poland in general, and here in the *Neustadt* in particular, the poverty had become so great, Lord preserve us, that the fire has surrounded us on all four sides, may the Lord save us, and no one knows who is being consumed, may the Lord save us, meaning – all the people about which we know nothing, and we think that he can sustain himself and be helpful to others, this type of person is now being forced to ask for help, may the Lord save us, is this not then a conflagration?

We must come to you and portray the circumstances of the *Neustadt* to you.

Up to about a half a year ago, the Jews in the *Neustadt* were living as usual – there were magnates, middle class people and poor people also. There were not, God forbid, beggars, but rather supported themselves 'from hand to mouth,' and craftsmen most certainly, without a doubt, had no need, God forbid, to ask for help from anyone.

Now, in the last half year, the 'sun' has begun to set and the night has spread, and, Lord preserve us, it has become dark. We even thought that this nightfall was not going to last long, and in a short time the 'sun' will come out again, and the 'light' will return. However, our hope has not been realized up till now. And it has only gotten more difficult, and the longer we waited, the darkness became greater, and the Immortal God has poured out the entirety of his wrath on us, may the Lord preserve us. May the Blessed Lord show compassion to the Jews of Poland in general, and the Jews of the *Neustadt* in particular.

Dear and understanding brethren, you must know that we approach the writing of this letter, our hands are really trembling, and every limb in our bodies is good and broken. For, after all, how does one go about writing such tidings to ones' brethren – only by knowing very well for a long time, and we hear today, that you extend your hands and you take on providing all the means to help your brethren, whoever it is that stretches out his hands to you. Therefore, we to are compelled to approach you, and pour out our bitter hearts, as one brother tells another.

You should know, that here in the *Neustadt,* the situation concerning making a living has gotten very bad – and were we willing to portray each and every situation, all the pens and all the ink in the world would not be sufficient. We can only describe in summary form, and you should know that almost all of the merchants have gone under, may the Lord preserve us. Many stores are padlocked, because they have no licenses with which to operate. Many merchants, who dealt in forest products, require support for basic bread, may the Lord preserve us. Almost all of the craftsmen go about idle. All the wagon drivers – nothing to do. All the porters and so forth, go about as if it is a festival holiday in the street.

It is not possible to countenance the cry and alarm. One does not hear more than: 'Bread,' 'Bread,' and from the other side one hears, wood again. Again, one hears that a physician is needed, and 'medicine,' because there are many who are sick, may the Lord preserve us, who are ill because of 'need' and 'cold,' – 'Woe to the ears that must hear this.'

It is nothing to describe the current condition by us, may the Lord save us.

Therefore, dear brethren, we have decided that we will appeal to you. From this, we may be able to heal and mitigate our pain. We know only too well that you share in our suffering, and that you feel our suffering quite realistically – despite the fact that the bodies are far from one another, the 'hearts' are very near, and are bound to one another with a secure knot, which will never be sundered. And the most powerful waters will be unable to extinguish the love that we have for you, and you for us, that exists for so long. We can say this to you without seeming to 'flatter,' because we know and we hear about what you do with each individual person, and especially with us, your own brethren, meaning the 'paupers of your city.'

Please do not think that we have not already undertaken the most draconian measures to enable us to help our impoverished brethren ourselves. We have gathered with a single heart, and like one person, and we have created a '*Linat HaTzedek*' for the ill, who are to be supported with physicians, and with medicines , with milk, and so forth. We have also created a 'Charity Box,' for supporting poor people with bread and wood, and so forth. We have also strengthened the 'Talmud Torah' with great pedagogues, with teachers, and so forth. We are doing very much to the limit of our capacity, but it doesn't help, because while we strengthen ourselves to provide vigorous help, the 'poverty' becomes more intense, may God save us. Every day, individuals come to ask for help who up till this time was in a position to help others. Now, they have a need to take.

We cannot write this down, because if your were to know who it was that needed such support, you would be incredulous, because, as we have previously mentioned, this [situation] is like a conflagration, mat God save us – here the fire is on one side, and a minute later, it appears on another side. In particular, at this time – 'Passover' is coming, for which we need 10 thousand zlotys, and all at once, and who is to know 'how the burden of gathering this sum will weigh on us' – and how will we take counsel, may the Blessed Lord take pity on us.

Therefore, dear brethren, awaken your hearts, and all of you gather, small and large, we mean every single man of you, without exception, all of you together, form a single bloc, and see to it that every single person should not be overlooked

in giving a donation, each man in accordance with the means with which the Lord has blessed him. And you shall say, let us help our brethren, and let us hear their cry, and send us the money that you will collect immediately – indeed 'by telegraph' to the bank's name, 'HIAS,' in order that it be able to arrive in time. You can also send to the Rabbi of this place, **R' Mordechai Sternfeld**, or to **Moshe Eliezer Friedling's** address, or to any of the names of the undersigned. It will immediately be distributed in the best order. And in consideration for this charity, may you be helped in general and in specific areas, and may you be saved from all manner of ill and tribulation, and you will be thrice recompensed – with your children, and livelihood.

We have come here today to affix our signatures on Wednesday of *Parshat Yitro* 5686 in Zamość, *Neustadt*.
These are all the leaders of the commission:

Moshe Reisenfeld
Moshe Eliezer Friedling
Zvi Zwerin (a Polish stamp to the side)
Moshe Freiss
Israel Zucker
Elimelech Schwartz Berg
Jonah Worim
Joseph Kalechstein
Boruch Shuv (A *shokhet*)
Mattus Mittelman – I support this letter certifying that the help is very necessary.

(The last addendum appears to have been added because the referenced Mittelman had his relatives among the activists in the American Relief-Committee, and his 'endorsement' was supposed to have added weight to the appeal – Ed.).

## Document Two

To the Zamość Relief-Committee in New York.

Comrades and Friends:

It is not the objective of the progressive proletarian social segment (of our city) to support philanthropic institutions such as the '*Linat HaTzedek*' in Zamość.

However, here in Zamość, the position of this institution is quite different! According to our perception, and also the elected representatives on the scene in Zamość, Moshe Freilich, and Yaakov Meir Topf, relative to the current crisis situation, it appears as follows:

Only those workers who are employed may benefit from the sick-funds in Zamość, and receive medical help. However, in the time of crisis, when there is no work, the sick-fund cannot be used. If one of the workers, that is unemployed, becomes sick himself, or a member of his family [becomes sick], his first source of medical assistance is the **Linat HaTzedek.**

We must also reckon with the local manual laborers, who have become impoverished. Were it not for this non-partisan institution, the poor masses of Zamość would suffer a large number of deaths.

The objective of the *Linat HaTzedek* is that anyone from the Altstadt in Zamość comes for medical help, he is given what is needed until he gets well. In the exceptional circumstances, when it happens that a more senior physician is needed from the outside, it is attended to at the account of the *Linat Tzedek*. The same also holds if someone must travel with the sick person to obtain a cure – with no distinction made regarding the individual, everyone receives support.

Despite the fact that we, the undersigned, count ourselves among the progressive socialist segment of the populace, whose objective is not to support any philanthropic institutions, nevertheless, in seeing the frightful circumstances in the Polish Republic in general,. And of the Jewish folk masses in particular, and especially the sick, and taking cognizance of the mostly non-partisan work that the Altstadt Zamość Linat Tzedek conducts, we are in favor of the need to provide support to this institution that supports the needy, in today's moment.

And we request of you as Comrades and Friends, not to evaluate this referenced institution casually, but rather to provide whatever support is possible for you to provide.

We again attest – the Jewish masses of Zamość would pay dearly if this institution did not exist in our midst.

Let us also add that if an institution exists in our midst that does not make any ideological differentiation in performing its activities, but rather, every sick Jewish person in Zamość is provisioned through this institution with medical help, and hundreds of people every year are rescued from danger – literally brought back to life from the brink of death, this is the institution that does it.

If there are funds with you, our comrades and friends, to support a variety of Zamość social institutions, you must place the Altstadt Zamość Linat Tzedek in the row of the first priority, and help us in this work, which saves, that makes the sick healthy again, and brings the dead back to life.

Moshe Freilich — Yaakov Meir Topf

Zamość, 24 April 1926

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These documents do not demand any commentary. They are documents of the time and they set out an accurate reflection of the condition of the Jewish folk masses that were impoverished by the [economic] crisis.

It is to be understood, that the recommendation of the two, who were from the 'progressive-socialists' camp was required, in order to obtain the allegiance to what was going on in the 'old country.' Especially since the activists in the American Relief were activists in the socialist, and especially the Bundist movement in Zamość.

# Zamość on the Eve of the Holocaust

**By Helena Schaffner**

Jewish Zamość no longer exists. It is therefore painful for me to recall my home town. I make an effort to distance myself from the images of old Zamość; even that unique Zamość humor no longer elicits a smile from me, but more readily a grimace of unhappiness.

Fate would have it, that I would meet with a *landsfrau* in New York, who had left Zamość years ago, and who had hidden away a vision of our home town in its complete freshness. I did not have the heart to disappoint her by portraying to her the picture of post-war Zamość. I therefore exerted myself, in talking to her, to bring out in my memory, only my memory of pre-war Zamość – the Zamość in which each and every resident took so much pride.

* * *

The beautiful municipal building in the style of the Italian Renaissance, that was located in the center of the city, with four green squares in front; the houses with their proportional forms, supported from beneath by 'potchinehs,' the modest building with its harmonious lines; the academy, the Zamoyski Palace, built in the design of the Vatican; the highly elevated bell-tower; the walls that encircled the city, giving Zamość a romantic beauty and finally – the fields outside the city, and the valleys, that spread themselves far and wide, as far as the eye can see. It is no wonder that the residents of Zamość (Jews comprised the largest majority of the population) were enthusiasts on behalf of the city, spoke with inspiration about its beauty, and called it 'Little Paris.'

Zamość did not only stand out from the other cities of the Lublin district with its external esthetic appearance, but also with its inner spiritual countenance, Zamość was the cultural center of the entire surroundings.

The residents of Zamość felt a special responsibility already, because of the fact that **I. L. Peretz** was born, and also was creative in their city. The entire Jewish population of Zamość felt that it was a partner to Yiddish literature. The library named for Peretz contained a treasure of Yiddish and Polish books, which continuously passed from hand to hand. In the long winter nights, the lit windows of the Peretz library, which shone out onto the plaza of the Rathaus, gave testimony that Zamość was not asleep, that it is thinking, is flying and striving. In the summertime, the large balcony of the library was full of young people, who would heatedly discuss and contended over a variety of literary and social problems.

The Yiddish culture and literature were the companion platforms on which all walks of life met: the elements of the middle class, the manual laborers, workers, and student youth. All the political persuasions had their adherents in Zamość: Zionists, S.S., Poalei-Tzion, Left wingers, P. P. S. But the party that was mentioned in the streets of Zamość was the *Bund*. It united all of the pan-human ideals with efforts for a unique Yiddish culture, which appealed best of all to the Jewish youth of Zamość.

The first revolutionary activity in 1905 engaged a group of Jewish intellectuals in Zamość, under the banner of the *Bund*. The following belonged to this small leadership group: Naphtali Margolies, who was killed by the Germans in Izbica, during the last war; Yerakhmiel Brandwein, who was also killed at the hands of the German murderers in Vladimir Wolynsk; Fishl Geliebter, who, before the last world war, died in New York. Where he was the photography director of the Arbeiter Ring. Many of them live in a variety of countries of the world. This first group sowed its seeds deeply on the social field in Zamość, so much so, that up to the last minute, the *Bund* remained the most active dominant party in the city. Up to the outbreak of the Second World War, the *Bund* had its representatives in the City Council, who with their dedicated work and moral authority exerted a strong influence on the activity of the municipal leadership.

I remind myself of a small but characteristic episode, which took place shortly before the outbreak of the war:

The Polish leadership could under no circumstances get used to the thought, that the leaders of the Jewish workers have the 'chutzpah' to offer an opinion about how municipal affairs should be conducted. Therefore, it used all means to exert itself to compromise the *Bundist* member of the Magistrate *(Lavnik)*, Yerakhmiel Brandwein, accusing him, as it were, of manipulation of funds. He was arrested, and brought to trial. A council member from the Endekists, incidentally a decent fellow, attended a meeting of the city council, in order to defend the *Bundist Lavnik*. We have to admit, he said, that if Brandwein were not decent, he would not have taken on the entire city council, and would not have fought so tenaciously. This argument rang a responsive chord in everyone's ears, and was persuasive. Quickly, the libel was revealed, and the court sentenced Brandwein's accusers, a group of reactionary anti-Semitic plotters.

* * *

One trait of the people of Zamość was recognized throughout all of Poland, because the guests who would come there for debates and meetings noticed it most of all, took not of it, and remarked about it everywhere they spoke – this trait was: enthusiasm. Not only among the young people, but also among the older generation, one could find enthusiasm at every turn, dreamers of dreams.

I recollect the celebration in Zamość in honor of the tenth anniversary of the University of Jerusalem. Among the speeches, one could hear tones that were characteristic of Jews in general, and especially of Zamość Jews. The speakers underscored that the University of Jerusalem has to be an outpost for human unity, a center for the Jewish spiritual struggle against all of the mean forces of the world. Just as the Jewish prophets were the carriers of pan-human ideals, so must educated Jews be the ones to spread the new general humanistic ideas.

Zamość had ambitions, which were traditional-Jewish and at the same time, pan-human.

The extent to which the Jews of Zamość felt themselves connected to all of the great problems of the world, could be seen in the feverish interest in the Spanish Civil War in the year 1936. They correctly assessed that the Spanish tragedy was merely a prelude to a world tragedy, from which the Jews will be the ones to suffer the most. The Warsaw newspapers were literally gobbled up, as soon as they arrived in the city; every bit of news was discussed in an intense fashion. My father, at that time, was seriously ill. The house was full of people (in Zamość, *Bikkur Kholim* was thought of very highly), everyone was talking about Spain, and my father also took an active part in the discussions. Somehow, he forgot his intense physical suffering, which did not let up for even a minute. This was first indicated by the doctor (Fishl Geliebter's nephew by his sister), the discussions brought him back to functioning....

It was in this manner that the Jews of Zamość would take up general questions, and in this way they were able to live the same lives as other people. The epitomized the trait, characterized their landsman I. L. Peretz – being a part of the human race, but never ceasing to be a Jew.

# The 'Kadima' Hebrew School

**By Kalman Engelstein**

*Page 773:* *Zvi-Hirsch Handelsman*

The first founder of the reformed *Heder* in Zamość was **Zvi Handelsman**, ל"ז.

Mr. Handelsman, the *Maskil*, enlightened and good-hearted, was the one who made the dissemination of knowledge to the young Jewish generation his life's ideal.

In the year 1903, after the 6th Zionist Congress, which became known for the 'Uganda'-crisis, the new kind of Yiddish educational institution began to be created – the 'reformed *Heder*.' Handelsman decides to establish such a *Heder* in Zamość. But how to do this, what sort of a thing is this, how does it get organized?

He travels to Berdichev, where such a 'reformed *Heder*' was already in existence. He stays there with the City's Chief Rabbi, Yaakov Berman. He permits himself to stay there for a space of time, and observes the ways of the new type of institution.

Upon his return, he and his friends: Jonah-Yehoshua Peretz, Chaim Brenner, Zusha Falk, Yaakov Wolfenfeld, Mordechai Brenner, Elyeh Weinrib, and others, take it upon themselves to implement this concept – founding a 'reformed *Heder*.'

The first concern was about teachers. Mr. Handelsman learns about a teacher, Sholom Weiner, who lives in Hrubieszow, and wants to work in such an institution. He brings him to Zamość, and has him stay with him for a period of time. He wants to get to know him better, see his deportment, his skills, his nature and his knowledge. Hirsch Handelsman used to say: 'I must know the wellspring from which the younger generation will imbibe its sustenance very well....'

Sholom Weiner satisfied him, and with a few children, the 'reformed *Heder*' was opened under the name, 'Kadima.'

An uproar began from the very observant circles – that the *Heder* 'Kadima' is being led by apostates, and the matter went so far, that it reached the Belzer *Rebbe*. The *Rebbe* summoned Handelsman to him. He traveled to the Belzer [*Rebbe*] together with Chaim Brenner. There, the *Rebbe* spoke with them for a couple of hours. When they returned, the 'reformed *Heder*' again resumed activity.

After this, a new teacher was hired, Anshin, who taught the Russian language.

'Kadima' was directed with the best order up to the outbreak of the First World War, 1914. Hirsch Handelsman, an owner of a cut goods store, literally did not miss a single day in visiting the school, especially during examination time.

He was forced to leave Zamość, and went off to Russia. He suffered a great deal, until he died at the age of 57 years, in the year 1921 in Berdichev.

'Kadima' was re-established after the end of the First World War. Chaim-Hirsch Geliebter joined as a teacher, who came from the Land of Israel. He began to teach in accordance of the system *Ivrit-Be'Ivrit*. (Also for girls).
'Kadima' was the first school in Poland of its type – a reformed *Heder* of boys and girls together.

Sholom Weiner also taught Talmud with *Rashi* and *Tosafot* commentary in the higher grades. The school had a choir of 30 children.

The institution was beloved by the city, especially by those segments who wanted to give their children a modern upbringing, that is based on our ancient spiritual treasures.

I remember very well how I. L. Peretz visited the school. Just at that time, we were studying the capture of Jericho. When the recess bell was rung, Peretz remarks to the children – dear children – show me how they captured Jericho. The children went out into the street, and improvised the entire story. They divided among themselves the roles of Joshua Bin Nun, with Priests, Levites, and even a girl, who was made up to be Rahab, who was then 'saved' from the captured 'Jericho,' which was a gain bin in the yard of the school...

The school grew from year to year, and reached to 7 grades.

Together with our entire community, 'Kadima' also came to an end.

# A Dispute for Reasons of Faith in Zamość

**By Baruch Sobol**

## The Dispute between *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim*

Zamość already had a tradition of *Haskala,* of Enlightenment. Never mind that the city took pride in a large number of great Torah sages, and even the Kabbala, the Hasidic movement was discriminated against there – literally having no welcome entry, and most of all in the stronghold of the *balebatim,* the scholarly *Altstadt.*

Zamość was practically the only openly expressed city of *Mitnagdim* in all of Poland – but especially, it was a sort of 'anti-Hasidic' island in the Lublin district, where all the towns and villages were Hasidic, and where one need to search for a *Mitnaged* with a candle.

*Neustadt* was an exception – there, among the simple people, the masses, uneducated Jews, *Hasidim* were found. Yet, these too, were largely those who came in from the surrounding towns.

In the large Bet HaMedrash, called the 'Loymdisher,' [310] And also in all the small places of worship around the Great Synagogue, the style of prayer was **Ashkenazic**, God forbid that anyone should dilute the prayers with the Hasidic style of **Sephard**.....

If *Hasidim* came to pray in the Great Synagogue, then they knew that they must abide by the Ashkenazic ritual. Every change, every attempt to smuggle in something from the Sephardic ritual, was met with a threat of being ejected from the holy place. Even being thrown off the *Amud* in the middle of the *Shemona Esrei.*

Up until the First World War, not a single Hasidic Rebbe thought to come to Zamość on a visit to his followers. There was an array of Hasidic *shtiblach*: Gerrer, Kotzker, Radziner, Trisker, Belzer, Cuzmirer, and the like. The *Hasidim* would visit their *Rebbes* when those *Rebbes* would visit cities in the neighborhood – in Izbica, Turobin, Szczebrzeszyn, Tomaszow and others.

If a *Rebbe* would slip in, he would stay in the ***Neustadt.***

Ignoring this contention, however, peace and tranquility reigned between the *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim*. Each conducted himself in accordance with his own ritual and way – and it never came to an open dispute. There already was an ideal tradition in Zamość – dating back to the first days of the division between *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim*, which was reflected between Vilna and Karlin. Here, one did not openly interfere with the other. Here, it is necessary to say, that the *Hasidim* had to put up with great tribulation, because they endured a great deal – their customs, their *Rebbes*, were not permitted entry into their city. But they did everything they could to prevent the fire of divisiveness from spreading about.

Both *Hasidim* and *Mitnagdim* would meet in general community institutions, foremost in the philanthropic ones, and the ones that offered mutual aid.

A greater controversy arose in 1870-1889, which became famous beyond the borders of Zamość. It was a dispute between the *Hasidim* and the Enlightened people, who mostly came out of the ranks of the *Mitnagdim*. I. L. Peretz was involved in this controversy.

The role of the *Haskala* movement in Zamość is known. After communication started to arrive from the outside world about the springtime of the free spirit, groups of enlightened people began to form, early adopters, who began to teach,

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310 The Place of Learning

simple, elementary education to the poor, deprived sectors of the Jewish surroundings. – From simple Hebrew the transition was made to Tanakh, Hebrew and Yiddish history.

I. L. Peretz took a very active part in this Enlightenment activity.

He began by learning chapters of the *Tanakh* together with simple craftsmen or their workers. Every Sabbath Peretz gave lectures to Jews who toiled at hard work for an entire week.

The education committee, however, observed that apart from these attempts to enlighten the older people, that it was necessary to create modern educational institutions – that modern Heders need to be created, where apart from Hebrew and prayers being taught, also Tanakh, Hebrew, Yiddish History, and this accomplished through educated teachers who were pedagogically trained.

It was here that the dispute arose. If it was necessary to translate a portion of the Pentateuch for older people, or a chapter of the *Tanakh*, that was not considered 'risky.' The 'danger' that threatened was that young people would be led 'astray' from the [proper] path.

This struggle was not initiated by the locally born *Hasidim*, but rather sons-in-law, who had moved in from elsewhere. They began to incite their in-laws, that Peretz and his crowd were leading the children away from the Jewish way of life, and indeed, also the older people. Fear of conversion, God forbid, became prevalent; it was even rumored that a portion of Peretz's students have already become missionaries... and, please understand, the plagues and severe decrees that would fall on the city were already in sight.

A true martyr's battle ensued – the fire of this controversy spread about.

Gatherings took place in the Hasidic *shtiblach*, and a decision was taken, that nothing would be done until Rosh Hashana – only at Rosh Hashana time would they show the apostates.... whatever will be shown, was kept secret.

The plan for the Hasidic action manifested itself later, indeed on Rosh Hashana. On that day, all the Hasidic *shtiblach* remained locked. All the *Hasidim* came to pray at the Great Synagogue, where the Mitnagdim prayed, and, you understand of course, the 'apostates' with I. L. Peretz at their head.

When the *Hazzan* of the *Mitnagdim* stood up to the *Amud*, and began to intone the prayers, a young Hasidic man grew up next to him, in a satin *kapote* (this by itself was a provocation – a satin *kapote*!....), with a wide *gartel* (literally a sacrilege!), and began to pray out loud in the Sephardic style.

The *Hazzan* begins to intone the first prayer, '*Mizmor Shir Hanukkat HaBayit LeDavid*,' in the Ashkenazic style. So the young Hasidic fellow shouts out in a louder voice, '*Hodu LaShem*...' as is the case in the Hasidic Sephardic style.

And this is the way the *Kedusha* was repeated, and also the *Kaddish* – the *Hazzan* is *davening* according to the Ashkenazic ritual, and the *Hasidim* butt in with their Sephardic ritual...

A scandal of this magnitude, a sacrilege of this sort could not be hushed up, and the conflagration spread – it bestirred the normally quiet Mitnagdim to abandon their sense of parity; but the *Hasidim* demanded – that so long as an end is not made to the modern *Heders*, they will come and pray in the Great Synagogue using the Sephardic ritual....

This first movement by the *Hasidim* was played by the young men being supported by in-laws while they studied, who came from the outside. The older local *Hasidim* however, have an array of issues that allied them with the *Mitnagdim* – first was actually the business angle. They did not have the passion of the young people, and they undertook an initiative to bring an end to this conflict.

A part of the residents traveled to their *Rebbes* and explained to them, that there was a real danger if this conflict were to persist, because the Mitnagdim were close to the authorities of the regime, and so a whole slew of trouble can begin with informing, and this can get out of hand.

As it happened, Peretz chose to leave Zamość and move to Warsaw, and the principal reason for the controversy practically was gotten out of the way...

What ensued, is that the old-style *Heder* remained, but the intelligentsia will establish a modern *Heder*. Once again, the *Rebbes* instructed their followers, that from each Hasidic *shtibl*, two young Hasidic men were to be sent to pray in the Great Synagogue, and that this should be a talisman to assure that they should not stray from the straight and narrow there. The end was, that the young Hasidic people barely paid attention to the danger from the *Mitnagdim*, since they themselves 'fell into the trap'....

In any event, the fire from that controversy was extinguished.

## White-Blue Charity Boxes and Rabbi Meir Baal-HaNess Boxes

Having gotten rid of one controversy, it was ordained that a new outbreak of hostility would occur. This time over charity boxes....

In 1896, immediately after Herzl's concept of political Zionism arose, a circle was created in Zamość among the youth in the Bet HaMedrash, which began to propagandize the Zionist concept. The older *Hovevei-Tzion* drew the youth in, and twice a week, debates would take place about issues from the Land of Israel and Zionism.

In 1902, a letter came to Zamość from the 'Odessa Committee' whose head was Menachem Mendel Ussishkin[311], in which the Zionist youth of Zamość is tasked to fulfill the challenge that Dr. Herman Shapiro had laid down at the 2nd Zionist Congress – a *Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael* shall be created. The first task was to distribute the *Keren Kayemet* '*pushka*' to each Jewish home.

We handled the question at a special assembly of the youth. We knew the difficulties in such work, and since it was worthwhile to see how this would appear, the lot fell to me and my *Bet HaMedrash* comrade David Zederbaum ז"ל, that we will be the first to visit houses and see what sort of reaction this will elicit. We knew what to say – with this money, we will buy back our Holy Land from the Arabs, settle Jews there, and so forth.

However, it was very difficult to carry this out. In the more observant, Hasidic houses especially, we were received not only coldly, but indeed in a contentious manner. As it happened, we had to endure a great deal of insults from fanatic elements, who saw in the white-blue box a sacrilege and diminution of contribution to the Rabbi Meir Baal-HaNess '*pushka*'.....

It is important to know that the Rabbi Meir Baal Ha-Ness box was one of the most important requisites of piety in the Jewish home, especially in the province of the Jewish housewife – not only before blessing the candles; not only before going to bed; not only on Festivals – always, the Baal HaNess '*pushka*' was the way to succor, to healing – in the event of misfortune, in the event of illness – always, one would throw a few groschen into it for charity. And here come these

311 Menachem Mendel Ussishkin (1863 - 1941 ), Zionist leader. He served as Hebrew Secretary at the First Zionist Congress and bitterly opposed the Uganda plan. His views were expressed in a pamphlet, "Our Program", which advocated group settlement based on labor. Ussishkin was President of the Jewish National Fund for eighteen years, and he was the force behind large land acquisitions in Emek Hefer and in the Jezreel and Bet Shean valleys. He was one of the few Zionist leaders to actually settle in Israel.

young people, who are far removed from piety, and are talking something about the Land of Israel....this was looked upon with suspicion, with fear, and indeed with hostility....

The same thing happened on Yom Kippur Eve, when among all of the 'plates' an attempt was made to place a plate for the *Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael*. In the Great Synagogue, in the *Bet HaMedrash*, in surrounding small synagogues, where there were *Mitnagdim*, it was not difficult. It was different in the *shtiblach* of the *Hasidim*, in those locations, there was not even a discussion.

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Indeed, these were controversies – but controversies having to do with matters of heaven, a fight over what was better, what was more appropriate way to serve the people, what sort of way should it choose. The Great Destruction brought an end to all 'controversies' – observant and the freethinking were eradicated; the *Hasidim* and the *Mitnagdim*; those who threw they money in the Baal HaNess *pushka* or the Keren Kayemet *pushka*. Mercilessly, they were all thrown into the cruel chasm that the *Amalek* of our generation had prepared for them – the Nazis, may their name and memory be erased.

# Ten Years of the Labor Movement in Zamość
## (1913 - 1923)

**By Lejzor Finkman**

*Page 780:* *The Leadership Members of the Jewish Trade Unions in the First Half of the Twentieth Century*

Page 782: *A Group from the Bundist Youth Group 'Zukunft,' Seeing Off a Comrade. From Right to Left, Above: David Auerbach, Moshe Zimmerman, Moshe Mittelpunkt, Chaya Auerbach, Mikhl Feinbaum, Shoymeh Fang; Sitting: Peretz Greenbaum, Falek Goldhaar, Reizl Spodek, Moshe'leh Glanz, Taibeh Khakhak, Yudel Safian, Pinchas Sorkeleh Hazzan's*[312]

The revolutionary battles of the 'fifth' year have long been forgotten; there are almost no traces left of the outbreaks of the Revolution of 1905, which took hold of all Russia and did not spare the Zamość Region, our city foremost of all.

Part of the participants in the movement were disappointed; others were devastated by the failed revolution; many moved to the sidelines because of the powerful terror of the Czarist authorities. Part of the activists were exiled, were incarcerated in prisons. Others went to foreign cities, or fled out of the country.

Superficially, everything seemed to have 'quieted down,' – the storekeeper sits in his store, and waits for a buyer; market fair days come as is normal; in the factories they have returned to the 'good' times – people worked 14 and 16 hours a day.

However, quietly, the tunes of the recently sung songs were hummed... stanzas of the Bundist '*Oath*,' were murmured:

***'Brider un Shvester fun Arbeit un Neut...'***

Also, Abraham Reisen's [song] was sung:

***'Hulyet, Hulyet Bayzeh Vinten...'***

And one dreamed of a better tomorrow.

Those who had the means, emigrated to America, with the hope of being able to ease the want back at home. Jewish houses were emptied, especially among the families of workers and craftsmen.

No community life existed at all by now, not to mention a union movement. A pall fell over everything. The one 'outlet' was to meet in the foyer of the synagogue on the Sabbath; there, it was possible to talk through the situation. There, the workers would longingly recall the times, not too long ago, which had passed.

It was not possible to organize a community movement – the required intellectual expertise was not available; also, the Czarist reign of terror was still in force.

In that time – I am speaking of 1912-1913 – there was a library under the name 'General Community Library and Reading Room.' The *balebatim* who oversaw this institution were from the *petit bourgeoisie* of Zamość, who were from the truly enlightened segment. The working masses did not patronize this facility for two reasons: first because of the long working day, and second – the unfamiliar location.

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312 This last name is to be interpreted as Pinchas, the son of Sarah (*Sorkeleh* is a diminutive form), the daughter of the *Hazzan*.

This tranquility persisted until the outbreak of the war in the year 1914.

The outbreak of the war struck the poor populace in particular. Because of the general mobilization, work and commerce came to an immediate halt. It was not possible to travel to foreign places to seek work. A few worked at free-lance work. Most wandered about without work.

A month after the outbreak of the war, Zamość was occupied by the Austrian Army. After a ten-day occupation, they abandoned the city, and the Russians returned. A shameful incitement takes place, which ends in a bloodbath. (This is described separately in our *Pinkas*).

Zamość is occupied by the Germans in the summer of 1915. The heavy yoke of the German occupation is felt immediately. Food and clothing are confiscated. The occupation authorities does not permit any assemblies – more than 3 people together is considered an 'assembly.'

Several months later, Zamość passes again into the hands of the Austrians, and things ease up a little. Trade begins to function – true, instead of traveling for merchandise to Warsaw or Lodz, the merchants travel to Krakow, Lemberg, and other cities of the former Austria[-Hungary].

Work began for the military; other work also was created; life began to normalize.

In that time, the desire to do something on a community basis was awakened among a segment of the work force that had been previously active in the 1905 movement.

At the initiative of the friends, Yaakov-Meir Topf, Getzel Schwartzberg, and Lejzor Jonasgartel, a conference was called for in the winter of 1916 of workers in a variety of trades, to which 15 men came. I recall a number of them. They are: Yaakov-Meir Topf, Getzel Schwartzberg, Lejzor Jonasgartel, Pinchas Topf, Itcheh-Leib Herring, Lejzor Finkman, Yankel Pearl, Aharon Rochman, Lejzor Deitchgewand, etc.

The conference took place in the bakery of Gedaliah Jonasgartel. After an interval of clarifying the purpose, it was decided to found a '**Workers' Home**,' where all of the workers of the city and the *Neustadt* would come together.

The proposal of Yaakov-Meir Topf, to confer with Yerakhmiel Brandwein, a prominent activist from the *Bund* in the 'fifth' year, who had just returned from exile in Siberia.

Because of his weakened health, Yerakhmiel Brandwein was not able to engage in this organizing effort of the workers, and he sent the delegation to Itzik Goldstein and Mikh'cheh Levin – also from among the active workers in the revolutionary period of 1905.

After a number of conferences with the two committed comrades, and with the support of Salek Levin, the first 'Workers' Home' was indeed established, which arranged its facilities in comfortable quarters in the Hotel '**Victoria**.'

The workers would come together and discuss various questions and also deal with their economic circumstances.

After 15 days of the existence of the 'Workers' Home,' on a Friday night, when there was a large number of workers assembled at the 'Workers' Home,' – during a lecture by Itzik Goldstein – 2 policemen and a sergeant arrived, and declared that the 'Workers' Home' was closed down, and they closed down the location....once again, we found ourselves out on the street.

Having already attempted to talk together, meet together, the workers began to look after having their meetings in secret. In this regard, the bakery of Yudel Becker was very useful, and the old cemetery.

Real-world questions were dealt with at these meetings. They were led by Itzik Goldstein and Mikhcheh Levin.

After strenuous efforts, in approaching the authorities, permission was given to again open the 'Workers' Home' in a second building.

Our comrade 'Luzer Nirenstein has to be recalled here, a dental technician, who permitted a location for the 'Workers' Home' to be arranged in his home. Jewish workers without distinction as to party, would meet there – *Bundists*, members of *Poalei Tzion*.

The first General Professional Workers' Society in Zamość was founded in the 'Workers' Home,' which was governed by a professional council. There were separate sections for each trade. Which passed a series of salary actions, and the first strike for a 10 hour workday. Until that time, one worked 14-16 hours a day.

In the 'Workers' Home' the first culture commission was founded, which encouraged the workers to become members of the municipal library, and also arranged for literary evenings.

It was also the time that the *Bundist* activities were officially renewed. The local *Bundist* organization is established under the direction of Mikh'cheh Levin and Itzik Goldstein. A press committee is created, which involved itself in the distribution of the Bundist newspaper, '*Leben's-Fragen*,' and other brochures. In this work, the member Lejzor Deitchgewand especially distinguished himself.

That is the way it went on until 1918.

Elections arrive for the library, and a number of Bundists are chosen for the leadership, from the professional council. Indeed, it is at that meeting, that it is decided to name the library after I. L. Peretz. [313]

The leadership of the library then consists of the members: Mikh'cheh Levin, Itzik Goldstein, Salek Levin, Lejzor Finkman, Yaakov-Meir Topf and Yerakhmiel Brandwein is appointed as an Honorary Chairman.

It is not only with the number of its books – about 5,000 – that the library was the largest in the area. We had 800 members in the library. Among them were also a number (not a large number) of Poles, because we had the newest publications also from the Polish literature.

The library, together with the professional council, would invite speakers from Warsaw; organize open readings on political and literary themes. In this respect, the library was the only one [to do this] in the city.

In the life of the library itself; discussions would take place in the unions; the first sympathies for communism began to appear. These members, organized themselves as a break-off group, and fought for recognition. Up to that time, which was before the establishment of the '*Combund*,' all of the unions found themselves under the almost exclusive influence of the *Bund*.

This time falls precisely in the same time of the consolidation of the professional movement, of fighting out for the recognition of the unions by the *balebatim*, for better working conditions and higher wages.

One of the resulting actions, about which it is worth pausing, was the strike of the housemaids. Up to that time, they had to work from 'full day' to 'full day.' Their 'free' time consisted of one Sabbath afternoon. Thanks to the strike that took place, they got the right to leave work every evening, and a fixed monthly wage.

At the end of 1918, when the first Polish regime was created under the leadership of Maraczewski (P. P. S.), an array of social reforms were instituted , and the eight-hour workday was decreed.

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313 This seems to be consistent with the time of the death of I. L. Peretz, and a natural desire on the part of his home townsfolk to honor his name.

The professional council designated a meeting in the municipal Bet HaMedrash, where the eight-hour working day was proclaimed to Zamość, for all the trades.

In those days, the first elections were held for the Zamość city council. A unified bloc of the Bund and the professional council ran in the election. This ballot sent 4 councilmen to the city council.

At the same time, the Bundist Youth Organization, 'Zukunft' was founded, which did a great deal for the development of the youth, and drew the young people into the interests that the working people were struggling for. They distributed the periodical of the 'Zukunft,' and an array of other offerings by the youth, and brochures. The active members of 'Zukunft' in those years included: Israel Garfinkel, David Levinson, Chaya'leh Grei, Yehudit Schatz, Simcha Arbesfeld, Leibel Cooperman, and others.

Many initiatives came out of the Bund organization relative to cultural activities: lectures, concerts, presentations, literary impressions. The income was used to support the institutions. Also the initiative to create a Drama Circle was made at that time.

My recollections end with the year 1923. I then left Zamość.

# A Wedding at the Cemetery

**By Mottel Steiner**
(Montreal – Canada)

*Page 787: A Group of Amateur Soccer Players with the Instructor Brandwein*

This was the time of the First World War – 1915 or 1916.

Zamość was occupied by the Austrian military. As all over, under the German-Austrian occupation, a great famine reigned. Everything was distributed by ration cards. We lived exclusively on potatoes.

It seems to me, that the song: '*Sontag bulbehs, Montag bulbehs, Dienstag, Mittwoch, bulbehs*,' had its birth at that time. And even the potatoes were not plentiful. People ate the potato peels, raw beets, and a variety of ersatz flours. Cleanliness was not observed, because their was not enough soap. In addition, there were all of the dead, who were not buried in a timely fashion. Many human parts would litter the fields, and nobody paid attention to this.

Many cities and towns had an outbreak of epidemics – it was called the cholera. The epidemic cut down many lives, yong and old alike.
I remember how, one time, in the middle of the night, my grandfather knocked on our door, and in one breath, shouted out:

— Come in! Come In! Faster! Your mother (meaning my grandmother, my mother's mother) has passed out....

My parents quickly got up from their beds, grabbed something to put on, and quickly went out to my grandfather's house. In, a child of eight years, dressed myself, and when In entered my grandfather's house, In saw my grandmother was in bed, not speaking, not sighing. M y father rubbed whiskey on her hands, and the feet. My grandfather sat, and recited Psalms, and wept. Several hours later, that means before dawn, my *Bubbeh Faygeh* died.

A day later, my 7 year-old sister also died, who was wept for vehemently by my mother and father.

In our area, in the Neustadt, they began to say that there is no choice but to arrange a wedding to take place in the cemetery. Older people already indicated with evidence, that here and there, there were such epidemics many years ago, and only the performance of a wedding ceremony at the cemetery caused it to stop.

Women took themselves energetically to the task. An appropriate couple was sought for, that would agree to such a wedding, and a variety of names were mentioned, all of the poor innocents were counted out, until they found....

In the *Cuzmirer shtibl* there was a deaf *Shammes*, and nobody knew where he came from; where he was born; how old he was. One thing was known: why he was deaf. He would indicate, by using his hands, that when he was little, he had fallen off a roof.

He was of medium height, with a nice, four-cornered, small blond beard. In the summer and winter, he wore an old, threadbare long coat, but everything [he wore] was clean and in good repair.

We young children, would call him 'The Deaf Prayer Man.' He cleaned the *shtibl* every day until 12 noon. Afterwards, he would go out into the city to collect charitable donations.

Briyeh the Bookbinder was a pauper in seven skirts. He lived off of binding regular books, and prayer books. Occasionally, he would be given a letter-writing book, from which one could learn how to write letters in Yiddish.

Even before the war, he didn't have any living from this, not even enough for bread and water, much less in wartime, when many Heders were closed. Who had the luxury to think about binding books when one was encircled with so many troubles?

In don't remember exactly how many children he had, In only knew two of them, a boy, Moshe, and a girl, Gittl'leh. She was called Gittel'leh Briyeh's. At that time, she was 18 or 20 years old, but she looked like someone who was thirty years old. She was short, of middling build, and very broad in the beam. She wore those clothes that were handed down to her. Do understand, that in this kind of garb, her appearance was dismal, even though she did not have an unpleasant face. In think now, that if she had lived in better conditions, and she were to have worn more decent clothing, she would have looked quite nice, and maybe even have been a real beauty.

She spoke very slowly, haltingly. When she began to express a thought, it was necessary to wait a bit until she finished it. She would help out in homes with a variety of housework. Washing floors, bringing water from the nearby well, and go on errands.

She never begged for money. When someone wanted to give her something, just to be nice, not for work, she would reply:

– I – don't – want – it.

Why not, Gittel'leh?

I – have – not – yet – earned – it.

When she would come into a house, she would stand continuously at the door, until someone from the household would ay to her:

– What do you want, Gittel'leh?

– Do you need water? In will then bring it for you.

And the *Neustadt* resolved that Gittel'leh and the *Shammes* would be the appropriate couple for the purpose at hand.

But it was not all that easy to make this happen. They started to talk to Gittel'leh, and she didn't want to hear of it. In remember one time in an evening, several women came together in my home, who lived as neighbors nearby: Yocheved Rosenzweig, the wife of the *Sofer*, Faygeh the Dairyman's wife, and the old lady *Shokhet*'s wife – the mother of Hona the *Shokhet*. They began give Gittel'leh an argument:

– Indeed, to be completely truthful, you are no longer a young girl. You bounce around among all the houses. What is this? Can your poor father support you? And to be completely truthful, what is to become of you? Such a nice young man, quiet, one doesn't hear his rustle....

Gittel'leh stood and took in all the arguments, not uttering a single word. Everyone thought that she was agreeable [to the proposition]. The women got up to leave, signifying that the issue had been resolved. In that process, the old *Shokhet's* lady remarks:

– Hah, Gittel'leh, we will, if God so wills it, make a wedding.

– In do not want a deaf bridegroom! In want a bridegroom that will be able to speak, just like me...

– Well, here you now have a new *tzimmes* with stuffing! – the women jumped up as if from hot coals – she is still being proud! The city is undertaking to clothe her, shoe her, provide beds, utensils, everything that a *balabusta* needs to have, and she stands haughty – needing to talk with him! What will you talk to him about, Gittel'leh? Will you tell him about your father's good fortune? The ships that he has that go about on the seas, will you talk to him about matters of the Torah, words of wisdom? She will talk to him! Even if one lives with a husband who hears, the less one talks to him, the better So much more so with a deaf husband....

On that evening, we saw that from that match, nothing was going to ensue.

The task of communicating with the bridegroom was assumed by the *balebatim* of the *Cuzmirer shtibl*. As was the custom, man to man.

On an evening, after the combined *Mincha-Maariv* prayers, when the congregation disperses and only a few individuals remain behind, who are studying a chapter of the *Mishnah*, others a page in the *Gemara*, and also those, who just enjoy idling the time away, talking politics, or telling stories about righteous Jews, on one such evening, the *Shammes* was taken over to a side, and, in sign language, they began to talk about the proposed match.

There were already those, who with hand signs, and other means, were able to talk to the deaf person, so that he would be able to understand. When it came time to describe the pleasures of married life, we young children were driven away. From a distance, we could see how the deaf man's eyes began to sparkle. He began to cluck with his tongue, and bray like a young ass. He put his hand in his pocket, and took out a small wallet, tied up with string, and showed that he had a lot of money.

Later on, he began to stick out his hands to the men. This was supposed to mean: – when? When will this be? Here things went easier, even though they had to deal with a deaf person....

The distaff side did not hold up, and Gittel'leh was given better pay for her work, instead of a torn dress with holes and patches, she was given clean and repaired clothing; better shoes, also better food, commensurate with the wartime means. And every day, the women would ask in an aside, as follows:

– Will you marry the deaf man?

Gittel'leh ate the expensive food, and took great amusement from it, and shot a question: – do you need water? Look, the floor looks so dirty. This was meant to be the answer to the question that had been posed.

The matter did not stay still. Women began to plot with one another, and when they would meet, they would talk in whispers. It had the appearance of a new offensive being undertaken, and they don't want the secret to reach the enemy....

As it was related later on, it was the idea of a very clever lady. She said: 'If we cannot do this by means of an 'arranged match,' let it be a 'love match...' we must exert every possible means to see that she falls in love with him.... after all, he is a man, a *mensch* right along with other *menschen*....So he cannot speak? Love has its own language!....

– Go, deliver some food to the deaf man. The deaf man, poor soul, is ill.

– You'll have to wash the floor in the *Shtibl* tomorrow, pity, he can't do anything....

In the first days, she was paid extra in food for such a trip. Later on, she no longer demanded it. A little at a time, she got used to him. He would give her money, so that she should go and buy him something. When she brought back the purchased items, he would take the entire package and give it away to her. A little at a time, she began to learn to understand what he wanted, and she also was able to answer him in sign language....

On one morning, she came into our house, because our house was closest. We lived diagonally opposite the *shtibl*. She asked for a little boiled water. She needs it for the deaf man.

– Really? For the deaf man? – my mother asked her with feigned irony.

– Yes, for the deaf man, – she answered with a smile – he is such a decent deaf man!

This was meant to convey that he was a decent man.

The good news, you understand, immediately spread all over the *Neustadt.* It shot through like a lightning bolt. From mouth to mouth, from house to house, and preparations were begun for the wedding.

An assessment was immediately put together for both of them. A table, benches, pots, bowls, glasses, were immediately brought into the home of the deaf man, all don in the blink of an eye, and the date and hour for the wedding was set.

On the day of the wedding, my mother put on her Sabbath dress.

– Mama, why are you putting such a dress on today, today is not Shabbat.

– I'm going to the wedding.

– What kind of wedding?

– G i t t l ' l e h a n d t h e D e a f M a n !

– In want to come with you.

– No! It is not for children. The wedding canopy is to be erected in the Holy Place!

My mother, along with a number of other neighbors, went off. With my childish mind, In began to think about this thing. In my heart, In took pity on Gittel'leh. It isn't enough that they are giving her a deaf bridegroom, so they couldn't find any better place for the canopy than in the cemetery.

Two hours later, the womenfolk returned. Their faces shone like the victorious warriors returning from a bitter battle that has been won. Each wished the other *Mazel Tov.* However, the *Mazel Tov* was not accompanied by the same blessings as in the case of a normal wedding ceremony, when the young couple is offered the wish that they grow old together in wealth and with honor. Their names weren't even mentioned, only *Mazel Tov*, may we no longer know any additional sorrow....let the earth be locked up from this day forward with a thousand locks....let the Angel of Death no longer hold sway, over us, and not over our kin, and let a salvation come to all of Jewry in general...

The wedding ceremony was conducted by the Rabbi of the Austrian military. On the same day, a whole slew of funerals took place, victims of the 'cholera.' Locks were placed in the graves – so that it be: 'swallow death forever...'

Indeed, right after the wedding (and with the help of a very stringent disinfection campaign which was carried out by the occupation forces) the epidemic was halted.

# The Zionist-Revisionist Movement in Zamość

**By David Kornblit**

*Page 789: The Branch of Brit-Trumpeldor, 'Betar' in Zamość, Photographed on October 30, 1936*

The Zionist-Revisionist Party, along with its many branches, had an influence, and occupied an important place, in Jewish Zamość.

The youth organization, '*HaShakhar*' was established in 1924, founded by Yehuda Kornblit and Vielitchker.

The Party, '*Brit HaTzahar*' was founded in 1927. The founders were Yehuda Kornblit, David Bajczman, Shlomo Scharf, Yitzhak Kalakh, Moniek Geliebter, Gittel Borenstein, Elkeh Kornblit, and others.

The Youth Organization, '**Masada**' was founded in 1928, which attracted academic and school youth. The founders were: Shayndel Hechtkopf, Ruzhka Herman, Moniek Zetz, Monyeh Kezman, Berek Eidelsberg, Chaim Schmutz, Lonya Goldzweig, and others.

The Youth Organization 'Betar,' was founded in 1929, which drew its recruits from the Volksschule students. The first leadership cadre consisted of: Yehuda Kornblit, Shayndel Hechtkopf, David Bajczman, Ruzhka Herman.

**Betar** conducted a highly branched cultural and sports activity. Among others, the following were active: Roiza Glazer, Yaakov Hoffen, Moshe Feldstein, Henik Babat, Nehemiah Futeer, Abraham Fertziger, Ruzha Kornblit, Michael Kleks, Yitzhak Zoberman, Tzirel Zimmerman, Tzirel Guthartz, David Goldberg, Shlomo Zetz.

Betar had a library of over 1,500 books, that was managed by Goldberg.

At the same time, a commission for '*Keren Tel-Chai*' was established, which set itself an objective of establishing funds for the Land of Israel.

The sports club, '**Gordonia**' was established in 1932. The founders were: David Kleks, Holtz, Weissman, and others. In the club, there were sections for: Soccer, handball, chess, ping-pong, fencing, and others.

The revisionist union, 'Brit HaKhayil' was established in 1935. Members were recruited here from the simple laboring folk people. Active here were: Joseph Bajczman, Heschel Babad, Magel Weiser, Ball, and others.

The 'New Zionist Organization' was established in 1935. Groups of intelligentsia with diplomas formed the membership, such as: Lawyer Eidelsberg, Magistrate Eliyahu Wellner, Magistrate Zygmunt Richter, Manya Scharf, Rushka Richter.

In the same year, the religious revisionist organization, 'Brit Jeshurun' was established. Among others, in its membership were: Shlomo David Fershtendig, Shmuel-Yitzhal Kornblit, Berel Blum, Moshe Dokhler, Feldstein, Sini Futer.

There also was a women's organization, under the name 'WRF.

Lawyer Eidelsberg represented the revisionist party of the community in the city council.

* * *

Yehuda Kornblit was the founder and spiritual leader of the Revisionist movement in Zamość. Born in Zamość in the year 1905, in a religious Hasidic home, he received a religious-national upbringing.

He was among the most active workers in Zamość for the movement. He helped to establish all of the branch-organizations of Revisionism. He also leads the work in the region. He travels through cities and towns, and directs the publicity work for Revisionism. When he was at the point of making *aliyah* to the Land of Israel,(after he had been active for 10 years in the movement), the revisionist party was in opposition to English policies in the Land of Israel, and he returns his set permission for emigration, as a protest against those policies.

During the Second World War, he becomes entwined in the Council of Advisers.

After the end of the war, he returns to Poland in the year 1945. He takes an active role in the illegal revisionist activity. He helps with the 'Escape,' the illegal organization that helped Jews make *aliyah* to Israel. The highly stressful work sapped his already weakened body, and he falls ill, and fails to recover. In March 1946, he dies in Krakow, not seeing how his striving for the Country of Israel became a reality.

# The *Linat-HaTzedek* of Zamość

**By Akiva Eierweiss**

*Page 791:* *The Zamość Members of 'Linat-HaTzedek at a Farewell Evening for the Chairman of the Group, R' Mordechai-Joseph Kornfeld at the Occasion of His Trip to Visit the Land of Israel in the Year 1935.*

Allow me, one of the founders and workers of this institution, to be permitted, among the formidable memorialization of our sanctified and martyred, to provide a recollection of the '*Linat-HaTzedek*' – the institution, which with heart and soul, worked primarily for the health of the Jewish populace without means in our Zamość.

Lo, In see it as if it were now, when we, a group of activists, on a severely frosty night in the year 1919, gathered together in the small community *shtibl* ('*kahal-shul'khl*') with the idea of creating this institution.

The war years, the transfer of city from hand to hand, Petlura and other scourges, created a stage for all manner of disease, for epidemics. The economic upheaval of the Jewish population, which had been exhausted and starved, was a good platform for all manner of disease, which indeed took on the character of an epidemic.

In recall that at that meeting there were – apart from the writer of these lines – also: Berel Bloom, Shmuel-Itcheh Kornblit, Simcha Cohen, David Gandz, Yaakov Hechtkopf, Shlomo-David Fershtendig, Moshe-Joseph Blekh, Zelig Ackerman, Eliyahu Zwillich, Tanhum Zingerman.

It is possible, God forbid, that In have left someone out, so In hope that the deceased and martyred will forgive me, and the living will take no umbrage – In have not deliberately omitted their names – it has already been many years (and what years!) That have passed – it is possible to forget.

The leadership of 'Linat-HaTzedek' was constituted of the following: Chairman – Berel Bloom; Vice Chairman – Akiva Eierweiss; Secretary – Shmuel-Itcheh Kornblit; Leader – '*Gospodazh*' – Moshe-Joseph Blekh; Treasurer – Shlomo-David Fershtendig. Members of the leadership: Yaakov Hechtkopf, Elyeh Zwillich, David Gandz, Zelig Ackerman, Simcha Cohen, Tanhum Zingerman.

It was not easy at all to establish and run the new organization. The *Altstadt* in Zamość was used to institutions with substance – and her we were lacking, we had no leadership, no financial resources, no doctors at the ready, no instruments for the sick, and the needs were very, very extensive...

But right from the start, our dear Zamość Jews immediately responded to our initiative. Everyone assessed themselves, and furthermore, in order, laid one brick on top of an other brick, until the '*Linat-HaTzedek*' institution became one of the most important in the city, in which one could indeed take pride. It was surrounded with a large number of members and had a reputation as an institution where everything was done in a proper fashion, without any dark shadowy corners.

Four doctors served with the '*Linat-HaTzedek:*' Geliebter, Rosenbush, Tzinberg, Bogutsky, and two *Feldschers*: Itcheh'leh Wechter, and Bajczman.

We accumulated a rather large inventory of instruments for the ill withing '*Linat-HaTzedek.*' And when the circumstances of need arose, those with means also took advantage of its use.

The institution became so popular, that there practically was no Jew in Zamość that was not a member of '*Linat-HaTzedek*' and paid a regular membership fee to it.

'*Linat-HaTzedek*' had regular financial income not only from membership dues. A Drama Circle would put on plays; [there were] flower days; subsidies from the community and in general, expenditures by a variety of groups – often times even from outside of Zamość. The good name of '*Linat-HaTzedek*' opened the doors (and the pockets) of everyone that the institution approached.

Indeed, a 'formidable' capital base grew within '*Linat-HaTzedek*,' which rose to 2,000 gulden (or even more) – a very significant sum for those times.

It was therefore decided at one of the meetings of the leadership, that a sanatorium would be built in the beautiful airy woods of Krasnobrod (a well-known place for summer residences) for use by the sick from Zamość.

And indeed, a beautiful piece of wooded property was purchased for 1000 gulden, and this issue was, little by little, turned into a reality.

In left Zamość in 1928, moved to Warsaw, and In was not there for the final realization of this great work. However, the sanatorium was built, and it became a model for the other support institutions of this kind throughout Poland.

# Institutions of Good Work

**By Chaim Shpizeisen**

*Page 794:* *On the occasion of the laying of the cornerstone of the 'TOZ' building in Zamość on April 28, 1931. From left to right: Mrs. Messer, Shmuel-Elyeh Schwertschaft, Hirsch Messer, Baruch Sobol, Leibl (a carpenter from the Neustadt), Moshe Herman, Jonah-Shia Peretz (A brother of I. L. Peretz), Dr. Wegmeister (lady) and her child, Dr. Rosenbush (lady), Elyeh Epstein, Dr. Wollman (General-Secretary of 'TOZ' in Poland).... Dr. Tzimberg, Mrs. Kleinerman (daughter of Hirsch-Leibusz Margolies), The last three ladies – guests from Warsaw. Except for the following four: Sobol, Epsstein, Dr. Wollman, Dr. Tzimberg, all were killed by the Nazis.*

The following articles were sent to us by Chaim Shpizeisen ז"ל, when we had begun to assemble materials for '*Pinkas Zamość*.' These articles needed to be fleshed out further by him, and many serve to supplement those works about these institutions that had been written before this *Pinkas* was prepared.

## Zamość, A City of Charity and Hospitality to Guests

Even as far back as the last years of the previous century, a **Kosher Kitchen**, for the Jewish recruits in the Czarist garrison of Zamość ,was created through the initiative of Rabbi Joseph-Shlomo-Shabtai HaLevi. (In those times, it was held to be a tragedy for the Jewish recruits to have to eat from the general unkosher common military kitchen). The kitchen was organized by **Reizl the Baker**. Apart from this, many *balebatim* of means would take in Jewish recruits for the entire term of their service. For the most part, this was in cases when the recruit was a relative, or somehow connected through business that his parents conducted with the given Zamość family head. Many *balebatim* had their steady Jewish recruits on the Sabbaths and Festivals. It was not rare for such a recruit to remain as a son-in-law in Zamość.

When the divisions were in Zamość for maneuvers, and if this happened to fall during the days of *Shavuot*, In remember that there practically was no Jewish house that would not have a guest for the holiday, a Jewish recruit.

This old tradition, from the Czarist days, persisted until the last days of Polish independence. There was no longer a permanent kosher kitchen for all of the recruits, however, they were all taken in for the Sabbaths and Festivals, and especially for Passover, general *Seders* were organized.

The means used to support the previously mentioned kitchen for the recruits were generated by the young men of the *Bet HaMedrash*, who would collect a monthly assessment from the *balebatim* of the city.

Also, the young men of the Bet HaMedrash had a treasury (collected from the worshipers at the Bet HaMedrash Sanctuary), which on demand, was used to support a meal, a lunch, and periodically also with expenditures in the nearby city.

## The Old Age Home

At approximately the same time of the founding of the kitchen for the recruits, a through the initiative of Mottel Mandeltor, an Old Age home was constructed in the yard of the mikva where elderly Jewish men and women could obtain a residence and a bit of food, and live out the winter of their lives in peace.

The Old Age Home existed up to the time of the Holocaust. Aharon Dudel Voveh's Geliebter and his wife Margalit, involved himself with providing the means for the Old Age Home in its final years.

## The Founding of '*Linat-HaTzedek*'

'*Linat-HaTzedek*' is told about in an array of writings. This institution is recalled in the *Pinkas* in other places. Everywhere, the activity of the institution after the First World War is described. However, in fact, the '*Linat-HaTzedek*' Society was established in 1911. Before this, there was an unofficial '*Bikkur Kholim*' Society. The objectives at that time were the same as they were in the later years: medicines for the sick among the poor; physicians and [medical] instruments; milk and nourishment. Special attention was placed on sending people who would spend the nigh with the seriously ill, in cases where the members of the immediate family were exhausted with dealing with a protracted illness.

The founders of the '*Linat-HaTzedek*' were: Shmuel Ashkenazi, his doctor, Sukhowolsky, Elkhanan Eidelsberg, Baicheh Pfeffer, Chaim Brenner, Chaim Huberman and others.

The work of '*Linat-HaTzedek*,' which was interrupted during the time of the First World War, was renewed during the time of the first German occupation. The Society existed up to the Holocaust.

## The *Gemilut-Hessed* Fund

In the last years before the Holocaust, there existed a *Gemilut-Hessed* Funds in Zamość, both in the city and in the *Neustadt*. The oldest of these funds was established at the beginning of the current [viz: 20th] century. The founders were: Hirsch Handelsman, Yaakov-Joseph Schneerson, Dr. Sukhowolsky, Yehonatan Eibeschutz, Elyeh Mandeltort, and others. Ignacy Margolies and Ben-Zion Lubliner took a special interest in, and supported the *Gemilut-Hessed* Fund, in the final years.

## '*TOZ*' in Zamość

The activity of '*TOZ*' is generally known, the society that guarded the health of the Jewish populace. The Jewish populace without means were the primary beneficiaries of this activity. In Zamość, the activity of '*TOZ*' was very successful. During the 20 years before the Holocaust, '*TOZ*' fulfilled one of the highest missions in our city. Every year, a summer colony for the children of the poor; in the winter, food in all schools without differentiation; sending sick children to sanatoria, and so forth. The '*TOZ*' in Zamość built its own well-appointed house for the children of parents without means. The children in this house were there from the morning until 4 in the afternoon. They were under the oversight of a female teacher, and were given food several times a day.

The founders and active doers on behalf of '*TOZ*' were: Dr. Rosenbush (lady doctor), Mrs. Tzigelman, Mrs. Kleinerman-Margolies, Stelli Cohen, the wife of Dr. Tzinberg, Eliyahu Epstein, and others. In the last years, the following assisted in the '*TOZ*' activities: Dr. Shaul Grossbaum, Mrs. Goldwag, Mrs. Dvora Shpizeisen, Joseph Luxembourg, Simcha Zwerin. The Teacher-governess of the children's home during the entire time of its existence was Mrs. Miriam Wurst.

The effective institutions that they created were also destroyed with the extermination of the Jews of Zamość.

# Memories of Youth

**By Yekhezkiel Szlak**

1926 – a difficult, cold and rainy winter. Over the holiday season, a frightful wave of unemployment overtook the working classes. First among all were the tailors. The first victims were the young people. The older workers still had a couple of days of work during the week, doing jackets and coats (which were required during the cold season); however, it was possible to get along without the young people, who were mostly employed in making trousers and vests – who in this crisis year was preparing suits?

The youth in general was poorly clothed and shod – how do you say, 'all the shoemakers go barefoot.' Also, people went about hungry. It was necessary to contribute the meager earnings, which one received during the times when one worked, to the household budget of impoverished parents. The plight of these 15-16 year-old 'wage earners' was difficult.

## A Thirst for Knowledge

It was not only about the proverbial piece of bread that young people thought of. True, this young generation was raised in the difficult time of the German occupation of the years 1915-1917. Then we were 9-10 year-old children. Want and hunger oppressed us. Not one us was missing the means to be able to attend *Heder* or another educational institution. [We were] Raised in the street, under God's only watchful eye. The hungry children sought all means to obtain a potato, a carrot, and apple. About bread, there was nothing to think about. We would have grown up to be uncivilized, held back and uncouth, had it not been for the evening courses, which at the end of the occupation were established by the *Bundist* organization. The teachers were Salek Goldstein, Mikh'cheh Levin and Chaim Shtikh. They taught us both reading and writing there, and also afforded us a little warmth.

The thirst for knowledge, the inclination to learn, remained with us. That which we had endured so much, served to drive us young people to greater acquisition of knowledge, to broader fields of knowledge. We were the ones who literally swallowed the books from the library. We were those, who sought to live our lives in the professional union – the institution that fought for a better life for us.

From our meager earnings, we needed to deduct something for the library, in order not to remain in debt to the professional union. Very often, it indeed was the library and the union had first claim and later, a part of the expense budget.

The young people were indeed among the most important consumers of the large and rich In. L. Peretz library. It was the young people who filled the rooms of the library and its reading room. We were barely able to wait for the new shipment of books from the 'Culture League,' or from American publishers.

In remind myself, that one time, a shipment of new books arrived. It had to take between 15-20 days till the books could be sorted, bound and catalogued, But who can have the patience to wait that long.... so the librarian was approached, and he was requested to release the book until it went through the entire procedure. It was necessary to submit a double 'security' and return the book immediately the following morning... these 'illegal' transactions were conducted secretly. And Maxim Gorky's 'The Mother' was digested overnight, Anatole France's 'Thaïs,' or Knut Hamson's 'Hunger.' There was no greater joy among the young people than – having
the privilege of having an unnumbered book from the library....

The library became an alternative to the poor, cold and hungry home. One stood and sat in all the corners. Often, a book was picked up, and on the spot, standing, read it in its entirety, and upon leaving – take another one home.

And the Friday evenings – the bench evenings, lectures, literary evaluations – everywhere, it was the young people in the first ranks. And they were not silent listeners. They would often speak out, react, threw in a personal opinion and

an observation. Here comes an assessment of Opotashu's 'In the Forests of Poland' – the youth comes out with an opinion that the judging panel is not the appropriate one... and there is a reaction – the intelligentsia of the bourgeoisie cannot be the right ones to judge the 'Forests.'

One sought to provision the hungry youth, that was without an upbringing, with knowledge, with more things to know about. To catch up to that which previously could not be achieved.

## Choir and Culture-Undertakings

On a certain day, the idea arose to create a choir from the professional unions. Among us was an aggressive fellow, Avigdor Felstein, who had a beautiful and very inviting voice. He was one of the first and best singers for the Rabbi of the *Neustadt*, who had the franchise to conduct the *Musaf* service during the High Holy Days. So we approached him, asking if he would organize the choir. He obtained full authority from us to become the director of such a choir, and that he should select from among the young people, those appropriate and talented singers.

A whole series of 'auditions' started – the young people passing through Avigdor Felstein's examination. The joy was great among those who were 'accepted' into the choir, to the point of tears in their eyes, and it was with great disappointment in their hearts that those who had to leave the room who had been rejected by Avigdor.

A discipline was instituted. Whoever misses three rehearsals is dropped. However, there were no such people to be found. Understandably, the repertoire consisted of labor songs and songs of struggle (it is after all a choir of the working young). The first concert was awaited with trembling and a beating of the hearts.

The concert was scheduled for a Sabbath. There were songs and declamatory readings in the program, everything from the assembled repertoire of struggle. A part of the songs were illustrated scenically. He song, 'In the Smithy,' was indeed accompanied by surrounding scenery – a smithy, a smith's forge, a bellows and the singers were indeed dressed like blacksmiths. Abraham Reisen's 'O, why do you ring, O church bells?' was accompanied by ringing bells.

As previously said, the songs were interwoven with declamations. After the song, 'In the Smithy,' the writer of these lines read a poem from an unknown author (he found this poem on a page of a calendar from Gitlin's detachable calendar), which starts with the following words:

'...the young armies struggle like heroes,
Innocent blood id shed.
More and more strongly,
The rows are more stout.
The closer the victory
The more vigorous the energy...'

The room was as if besieged. Masses of people stood around the windows and doors, who were unable to be accommodated inside. In the middle of the action on the scene, our order keepers enter with troubled faces: – youthful delegations have arrived from the surrounding towns: Szczebrzeszyn, Komarow, Tyszowce, and Tomaszow-Lubliner. How can we not let them in? They came on foot... a way out was found – we let them in through a back door, and set them up on the scenery behind the coulisses.

The impression made by the first concert was wildly great. It was said that on that Sabbath, the synagogue was half empty...

The first public appearance of the working youth – tailors, carpenters, shoemakers – overwhelmed the organizers themselves, and they begin to think that they must take an additional step – organizing a Drama Circle.

# Theater-Performances

*Page 798:* *A Group of Young People from that Time, Photographed After an Evening of Entertainment*

It is easy to say 'Dramatic Circle.' Singing is singing. What boy or girl doesn't have some sort of 'voice?' Which of the seamstresses couldn't heartily sing out Peretz's 'Three Seamstresses?' Or which young shoemaker didn't know Abraham Reisen's ' Little hammer, little hammer, tap away....' – but to perform theater?

The leaders of the professional unions themselves took to this project rather skeptically – what do these young people mean, that this is some sort of Purim play?... however, the Chairman of the council, comrade Yaakov-Meir Topf gave us an underpinning, supported our initiative – on the contrary gang, give it a try.

First, a director was needed, and a piece to perform. Well, a piece was quickly found – and in this problem, we were helped out by Volf'ishl Kornmass. He, Volvish, was a voracious reader, digesting everything; from poetry to scientific works, and political economics. It happened that he was in the process of reading a volume of Peretz Hirshbein's dramas. He comes and says – it will be necessary to produce 'Miriam.' – 'Miriam?' – we gather together, and we begin to read, Yaakov-Meir Topf our sponsor, is also here, and he becomes convinced: 'Miriam!'

Also, the second question, of a director, gets resolved. It appears that with us in Zamość there is a director from the land of directors. He had already directed great artists (it is said that he even has income from this). This was Lieber Emmer's son-in-law – **Akiva Eierweiss** (today in Israel, and had a couple of articles in our *Pinkas*).

Well, the upshot is that he is asked. A delegation goes off to him (he was a merchant) and he comes immediately, since it appears that his 'old calling' attracted him, and he took himself immediately to the task.

His first 'interview' consisted of 3 questions:

1. Had any one of us ever 'performed in the theater' already?
2. Do we know that in order to perform theater, it is necessary to have tight discipline?
3. Do we know that any piece to be performed for the theater has to first be 'censored?'

We answered the questions easily: none of us had ever performed in the theater; whatever discipline he wished to impose, he can count on us, and about 'censoring,' the piece – well, if it is necessary to do this, then it will be done; the council of the professional unions will take care of this.

It is necessary to understand the way the heats beat among us young people. Only ten men could take parts in 'Miriam.' And everyone wanted a 'big part.' But Volvish declared: 'Prima Donnas, discipline!' And the selection was put in the hands of the 'Comrade Director,' to pick the ensemble.

And the work commenced. Those who were recognized by the director as having talent to perform, were assigned to the repertory; the others drew posters, prepared the stage, did the decorations, created all the requisites.

One fine day, the piece comes back from Lublin, form the District office with a great liability – the censor had stricken the fourth and last act of 'Miriam.' We were left stricken – what will be? The very best had been excised!.... But Volvish is not deterred – he encourages the 'Show Players.' The fourth act of 'Miriam' will be performed. – When? How? In What Manner? For the time being, it is in his head. It will come to be, enemies may only fall by the way.

We prepared ourselves for the general rehearsal. Stage props (hand made) hung on all the hooks. The tickets were literally grabbed up. Commitments also came in from the surrounding towns.

In will never forget the picture how we, the young folk – tailors, carpenters, shoemakers – appeared in front of a large audience in the 'Oazow' Theater which was filled to overflowing. The theater was breaking from being overfilled with people.

We did not forget our laboring parents. They are indeed, the right in-laws at this happy occasion. They sat and received *nachas* from us. Fathers stroked their beards in pleasure, and mothers wiped a tear from their eyes – – –

On the morrow, there was a hubbub in the streets on tables and on the benches, And the success called out, as it says: 'You have won, so perform again.'

However, the diminutive Volvish comes, with Breineh Gildiner (today in America) and say – no, for the time being, we do not perform until we pay off a debt...

We owe a debt to the audience – the fourth act of 'Miriam,' that the censor had cut out....

They have a plan already – a literary-artistic evening will be arranged, and there, the 'debt' will be paid.

## A Literary-Artistic Evening

In our work to educate and enlighten the youth, the literary-artistic evenings occupied a very prominent place. They took place from time-to-time. Here, In will tell about that night, when we paid the 'debt' the fourth act of 'Miriam.'

In the program for this type of evening, there was a requirement not only for literature and art, but also a little entertainment. The complaint was – what? Is dancing only for the rich? And working class youth have no right to such a thing? So sleeves were rolled up, and an evening was prepared, that would not be an embarrassment for the prior theater presentation.

Having worked ourselves out with the preparation of the program, it becomes evident that the work was for nothing. There is no room, all are taken, it is carnival time.

So, our philosopher arrives, with his high forehead and deep-set eyes, and permanent pensiveness, Oren Arbesfeld, and proposes – Gang, In have a room! – So we begin to inquire: – where? – He replies a bit fearfully, hoping he will not be laughed at: – in the headquarters of the fire-fighters command.. Near the municipal electrical plant.

This had not occurred to anyone. We accept the plan, and a delegation went off to the Municipal chief of the fire-fighters. We took the fire-fighters headquarters for our evening.

Anyone who had hands, took part in the work, cleaning the place, decorating the room. The barrels of water were taken outside, the hoses, and the entire fire-fighting alarm system. The young carpenters applied itself to the necessary carpentry work, making the room fit for dancing. We worked at night, because during the day, we had to go to our paying jobs.

This evening came off successfully. A couple of days before the evening, there was already a shortage of tickets. The audience was also somewhat unusual, many new faces, which we had not previously seen at any of our undertakings.

A buffet with all manner of goodies was also prepared. Between dances, the participants grabbed a bite. We danced like young people can, to the accompaniment of a good orchestra (true, not symphonic).

The public got a little tired of dancing, and then the literary portion began. The first portrait presented a decoration room with Oren Arbesfeld as the director. He begins to read the 'Political Telegrams' that had been received, which are received by the audience with appropriate laughter. These are followed by 'Political Commentaries,' and then later by 'Local News'....

There is a break, and a 'Lively Post' is prepared. Everyone buys a sealed envelope 'for keeping secrets,' and little letters are sent to the selected ones. Another heady moment is achieved.

After the 'Post,' our choir appears with new songs, which the audience greets with applause. Then a variety of declamations are presented by the young people. The ecstasy is without bound. Also, the writer of these lines appeared with a declamation. Taken, as before, from the page of a calendar:

'...not in prison, decayed and weak; In will die in battle!
Where my hot blood will stain the earth red!
No weeping at my death; only music will play.
In will go into battle dancing. In will fall inebriated.
Falling with the sword in hand, from the wild slaughter,
In do not want alms boxes to be shaken by my bedside...'

It did not bother anyone that such sad songs about death and the death bed were mixed in with the dance and song – the young people took it up fervently.

It was only later that the local action took place. The 'debt' was paid – it was said that Volvish was going to recite the fourth act from 'Miriam.' It is hard to describe what took place there. The inspiration, the enthusiasm, no small thing, we had achieved such a victory! – the censo0red dangerous act form 'Miriam' got a hearing...

Later we danced again, more joy, until the early morning hours arrived.

## A Theater-Troupe Gets Out of Town

*Page 801:* *A Group of Youth Activists. From the Right to Left, Standing: Shimon Cooperman, Ber'cheh Kormuss, Bluma Plug, F. Schatz, Mendel Finkman. Sitting: Chana Bronfenbrenner, Oren Arbesfeld, Pesha-Reizl Kleiner*

When our director, Akiva Eierweiss, interrogated us as to whether we had ever played in the theater, we answered no – no one had yet trod the stage boards. However, we did have an involvement with the theater, and that had taken place about a year earlier, before we had created our dramatic circle.

On a beautiful morning (in the year 1925), a business manager of a famous Jewish artist comes to Zamość, and publicizes in the streets that on such and such a date, the play, 'The Red Cuckoo' will be performed, and 'The Lame Man.''

The 'Red Cuckoo,' in its content, would come out against the struggle of the workers, against ideals that out youth held to be sacred. Well, a delegation of the older enlightened workers went off to the Hotel 'Victoria,' (In the delegation were: 'Vigdor Rieder – a baker; Itcheh Morrer – a baker, and Yaakov-Meir Topf, a hatmaker, the chairman of the council of the professional unions). The delegation wanted to achieve an understanding with the chief performer (In do not call him by his name, because he is still alive, and performs in Yiddish theater around the world[314]). The artist, however, did not find it necessary to receive the delegation, and to ask what it wanted. When the comrades made clear to the business manager the reason that they had come, he went off to the artist and relayed their request. Then the artist came out in all his glory, personally, did not even greet the delegation, but immediately let out a shout: – Get out of here! Or In will immediately have you arrested... literally chased the delegation out.

When this became known among the workers, it was decided emphatically that this insult would not be allowed to pass. First, a boycott against this troupe was declared. Literally every house and business establishment was paid a visit, and the entire story was related. The young shoemakers thought up something else as well...

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314 Collateral evidence strongly suggests that this may have been *Jonas Turkow*, a well-know Yiddish Theater personality of the era, although there is no definitive way to substantiate this.

On the evening of the performance, several policemen strolled about the theater room. This alone was a novelty with us, and in the event that anyone came to buy a ticket, he ran home out of fear. The troupe began to perform to an empty house. There was a single family that sat in a loge seat – and this was the commandant of police with his wife and children... in the middle of the act, the play was interrupted, because the commandant as well went home.

The young shoemakers meanwhile slashed the tires of the omnibus....

The artist ran to the police; and the 'perpetrators' were hunted for. But go look for a wind in the field. It took a long time until replacement tires were brought from Lublin. It was not possible to obtain replacement tires for this assaulted omnibus in the city itself. The young people had let it be known, that whoever will provide tires for this theater-troupe, will have to answer to them... until such time as the tires arrived from Lublin, no member of the troupe was seen in the streets. Before dawn, they fled the city stealthily. Their denouement followed them for a period of time in a variety of cities and towns.

Several weeks later, on an evening, a stranger comes into the professional union. He asks to speak with someone from the leadership, of which no one was present. When he was asked who he was, and what he wants, he clarified that he is a representative of the famous Jewish theater-troupe of Julius Adler. He wants to obtain an understanding with the Jewish worker organizations about pieces that the troupe will be performing. In passing, he mentioned that he knew of what had taken place with the previous troupe... As to the question of what sort of pieces the troupe had in mind to perform, he offered two: The 'Seven Who Were Hanged' by Andreyev, and 'The Father' by Strindberg. He first was immediately accepted. Regarding the second, an answer was promised. After becoming acquainted with the contents of 'Father,' and seeing that it contained no anti-worker sentiment, the second work was approved. The troupe put on several performances, and left Zamość with great material and moral success.

In the Yiddish theater world, Zamość obtained a special reputation – one took care regarding what was performed in Zamość.

## The Bourgeoisie Youth Comes to Us

*Page 804:* *A Group of Young Activists. From Right to Left, Above: D. Levinson, Simcha Arbesfeld, Leibl Cooperman; Sitting: Israel Garfinkel, Chaya'leh Gri, Lejzor Finkman, Yehudit Schatz, Yaakov Shpizeisen.*

Our activity on the cultural-enlightenment front began to draw individuals to us who were not from working class homes. Idealistic young people from homes of the bourgeoisie began to join with us, and indeed, began to play a role in our youth activities. Among them, In will call out: Israel Garfinkel (*'Srolkeh Motzner* [315]), David Levinson (David '*Fenneh*'), Israel Wapniarsky, Shlomo'leh Gerzon (Shlomo'leh '*Tapchan*'[316]), the brother and sister, Yerakhmiel and Reizeleh Gartenkraut.

**Israel Garfinkel** was born and raised in a wealthy home. His father was a prominent Hasid, his mother, staunchly pious – a very strictly religious household. Israel was a handsome boy, with a pari of black Gypsy-like eyes, and a head of black hair. He was physically well-developed, and an unusual good-heartedness shined forth from him. He would always apologize to us for having been born 'successfully' to rich parents, and does nothing...

He would often say to us: – Yes, my dear friend! I know that you treat me courteously, but in your hearts you certainly think – what does such a person know about what work means? What does he feel that want possibly means? Does he know what it means to come home from work to a cold house, a poor one, which is lit by one small night lamp, and the mother serves a bit of cold and meager repast?...

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315 The nickname, 'Little Israel, the Strong One.' See the subsequent explanation of how he got this nickname.

316 Possibly someone who is light on their feet, or the opposite, clumsy.

He would often mourn over the porters and wagon drivers in the street, who would stand and wait for entire days waiting to earn a single zloty, and often have to go home empty-handed.

– I know, he would say, that you already have a way of life, an ideal; your theater performances, your singing – all has, after all, a purpose. When you come home from work, and lay down to sleep, you sleep peacefully. And me, what am I? – A parasite, a nothing that takes from everyone. Among you, I feel stronger and more secure...

These sort of speeches didn't last very long. Taking counsel from no one, he went away, this young boy from a *balebatish* home, and searched out a trade for himself, an especially hard one, which we used to call, 'Not thought of in terms of a Jew doing this' – he becomes a sewer-maker, a labor that demanded a great deal of physical strength.

We had a sewer-contractor in the city by the name of **Magaril**. In his house, Polish or Russian was spoken (I am thinking that he was a Russian Jew). It was to this sewer-maker that 'Srolkeh sought to apprentice himself. When the sewer-maker said to him, that this is heavy work, not for a Jew, 'Srolkeh answered him: '*Ja, Jestem Moncy*' (In am indeed strong), and he was accepted to do the work. From that time on, he was called *'Srolkeh Montzer'* by us.

It was as if a darkness had descended on his parents in his house. There was weeping, they pleaded with him that he should not defame his great pedigree.... but none of this helped.

– I want to earn my bread by decent means, he argued, earning it with my labor and sweat. He carried out his wishes.

*'Srolkeh Montzer* threw himself into community work like a starving man into food. There was no kind of work that he did not stand at the head. Whether legal, or illegal. He was a really dear guy. He is very hard to forget.

He needed to flee on one particular day. The police began to look for him. In the years 1927-1928 he went to the Soviet Union. He wasn't heard from in years. It was only after the Second World War, when the survivors from Zamość began to travel back to Poland, one of our *landsleit,* Rind, ran into him.

On a station in Uzbekistan, when an echelon of repatriated people was passing through, a man covered with hair, ran around among the train cars, calling out that he was looking for people from Zamość, and when asked who he was – he said to him, that he is *'Srolkeh Montzer.* He related that he was here to be exiled. He asked to give regards to all of those who were from Zamość.

David Levinson also came from a fine but poor family. He came to out youth work with idealism and yearning. He was wondrously handsome, tall as a pine with a blond head of hair. He would constantly say that with us, he felt newly born. He could not bear the surroundings from which he came. There is just emptiness and helplessness. Among us he can feel himself. Here is where he would absorb fresh air. With you, the working young, he would argue, there is substance to your life, you are creating something more beautiful....

He also had a sister, Leah'leh, she was one of the most beautiful girls in Zamość. Indeed, she was referred to as our Shulamit. She worked in bookkeeping for Kestenberg.

David also threw himself into the active work with fire. He, too, had to leave Poland on a certain day. He was threatened with arrest, and he fled to France. He was exterminated during the Nazi occupation in France. In the year 1941, when Hitler's Germany attacked Russia, he voluntarily went off to fight against Germany and fell at the front.

**'Srolkeh Wapniarsky** – he came from a merchant family. His father was a wood merchant. They had a big warehouse of boards in the 'Browar.' In his house, they conducted themselves like nobles, aristocratically.

His father, a modern man with a short beard, dressed in short garments, wore pince-nez on his nose, which hung by a silk ribbon to the side. His mother was very beautiful, already an older woman, with a beautifully combed head of gray

hair. In the home, they spoke Polish among themselves. However, when a Jewish person came into the house, they immediately switched to *Mameloshn.*

The lived in a very beautiful residence, with floors that were always polished. A piano, vases with flowers, added further elegance to the house. On the walls there were large pictures of Polish and Yiddish writers – among them, In. L. Peretz, Adam Mickiewicz, and on the sides, Julius Slowacki and Heinrich Heine. There house always looked like it was a holiday.

Yisroel'keh didn't feel festive in this household. There was a bitterness displayed on his metallic face constantly. He was constantly sunk in thought and dreaming. He had a disposition – he would hear everyone out, speaking very little, never wanting to carry on a discussion – not with his own friends, not with strangers.

He was very well read, and especially with serious literature. He would constantly have a variety of brochures in his pockets. He was a little alienated, not like the usual sons of the wealthy. When he looked at them, he would spit and say: – a bunch of parasites; waiting for their father to provide them with a rich bride, to get married, and then bring creatures into the world like themselves....

He related to us rather differently, the working class young. When one of us couldn't digest a tract of scientific socialism, or Marx's '*[Das] Kapital,*' we would wend our way to him. His face would then take on a different color, and his eyes would light up. He would put a hand on our shoulder, and walking this way in the street, or in the park, with fire, with emphasis, he would explain to us that which we did not understand. We thought that we were standing in front of a living encyclopedia. Every one of us envied this guy greatly, who knew so much about historical materialism. We used to think that he knew Marx's '*Das Kapital*' by heart. He would take us to his bosom with full affection, when he would make us happy, when we promised him, that every difficult question that we would not understand, we will ask him.

## Shlomo'leh Gerzon

It is necessary to elaborate some more about Shlomo'leh Gerzon, he deserves a special chapter. His name, Gerzon, was not well-known, he was better known by his nickname, '*Tapchan.*' He was perhaps one of the rarest and original types from our Zamość. In will attempt to portray him as In knew him from my childhood.

We became acquainted at the age of 12-14 years. My parents had rented a place to live from Byrakh *Tokker* in the city (this was in 1916), we left the *Neustadt*. Shlomo'leh's parents had already been living in this new residence.

When In came into Shlomo'leh's home for the first time, In found his father sick in bed. When In asked Shlomo'leh why his father was bedridden, he answered me that he father had gotten a 'short leg' (meaning simply a paralysis), and cannot walk about. The stricken leg indeed was laid on a board, bound up with iron and brick, which 'stretched' the leg.

His father was a strictly religious Jew, a *Gerrer Hasid.* Every evening, Jewish people would come to learn *Gemara* with him, and *Mishnah*, until late into the night. His mother was also religious, but a little more free already. This maybe because his thin little mother was breadwinner.

They lived in an attic apartment, but it was always clean in their place, despite the fact that the father was sick all year long.

Shlomo'leh had two brothers, Mottel'leh and Yekhiel. Also, a sister, Rachel'leh. In there home, there was always a loving relationship between the children and the parents. Even though the father was ill, his word was law.

His mother dealt in bordering, making frames or pictures. You can readily imagine that they didn't lick any honey from this in their house.

A year of our acquaintance passed, and their father died. It was difficult for the mother to support four children by herself. Tuition, one way or another, clothing them. In the house, a 'young man' of 14 years of age, wanders about. Well, as to the others, they are still small, but Shlomo'leh may begin to look after the house.

What does such a mother do? She takes him by his child's hand, and leads him off to a tailor. She asks that he 'take pity' on the child, and teach him tailoring. But Shlomo'leh had very thin fingers. And it wasn't possible to provide him with a suitable thimble that would fit....

Little Shlomo'leh would look for every way to please the master, the master's wife, and also the workers.

If Shlomo'leh delivered some garment to a buyer, and would get 'beer money' he was very happy – today he will be able to buy something to eat, and he will come home full already, and not have to take away a meal from his mother, or the younger children....

This very Shlomo'leh with the skinny fingers, begins to listen to the workers talking among themselves, that they should not allow themselves to be exploited by the bosses; that there isn't even enough time to read a newspaper, and a book is already out of the question. That after 9-10 hours of work, one comes home dead-tired...

Shlomo'leh also hears about the fact that pupils are being exploited as maidservants, helping the *balabustas* in their homes with a variety of work, even pouring out a dirty chamber pot....bringing a pail of water when a fierce frost reigns outside.

Shlomo'leh hears all of this. He decides that he is going to help those who find themselves in need. And Shlomo'leh indeed demonstrated what he was capable of doing, and how to help.

On a certain morning, a group of arrested workers were brought to Zamość from Hrubieszow. They were taken immediately to prison. When the workers in the city found out about this, they decided that it would be necessary to convey assistance to the arrested – a collections action for money and produce was carried out. In the meantime, it is learned that most of those arrested were family men, and had left wives and children behind, and ailing parents. It is decided that the money will be sent to the families and the produce to the prison.

Shlomo'leh hears about the produce collection, and the difficulties associated with it. Not thinking for very long, he proposes himself to the aid committee, for purposes of collecting produce, but with a condition, that he will do this alone, nobody is to help him. The committee formalized this, but allocated two people to help keep an eye on him...

On a certain day, Shlomo'leh arrived from home with two baskets. We see how he is deciding on where to begin. He made the fist visit to Gedaliah Jonasgartel in the bakery. From there, he emerged with two large loaves of bread. Satisfied with his initial success, he picks up the baskets and goes off to the colonial-business of Abraham Friedman. A while passes, and, apart from the bread, Shlomo'leh is carrying wrapped little packages in the baskets. He stands again for a while, spits into his hands, and went off to Manzi's, who had a big business and a factory for soap and candles in the *Neustadt*, from there to Yudel Becker... he already has full baskets. We want to emerge from our concealment to help him. But in a flash, he ran into his cousin's place, who lived diagonally opposite 'Kukeh's' (owner of a bakery) and from there he came out with empty baskets, and indeed, went into 'Kukeh's' and came out of there with loaves of bread in his hands. There he goes, running again, cutting through the 'little orchards,' and has already reached the '*Rabotnik*,' – the cooperative store of the P. P. S. (Polish Socialist Party).

We, his 'spies.' were ashamed of the fact that we concealed ourselves. Little Shlomo'leh accomplished more than the entire committee with a technical apparatus and commission...and his tactic was to go everywhere, wherever the will moved him to go.

We observe that Shlomo'leh exists from the cooperative, and looks around. What is he looking for? Aha, an empty carriage is passing by, and he gives a whistle. He takes the carriage to the cooperative store, and he begins taking our

large paper packages from there, full of produce. From there, he rides to his cousin's, taking his prior 'deposit.' It is a carriage full of produce. Here we decide to show ourselves to him, whether he likes it or not. So we ask him what he is conveying, and so he answers that some Jewish man had asked him to transport some things to the 'Browar.' So we say to him, that we have nothing to do, and we would like to ride along with him, and help him to unload the packages. He says – no, that no, the Jewish man made me promise that only he alone will do the transport, otherwise he will lose the fee.

We do not want to tell him that we have seen everything. So it ends up that we go into to see Yaakov-Meir Topf, he lived closest by, and as a threesome, we follow him to see what else will happen.

When we finally caught up to him at the prison gate, he was literally trembling from being upset. He could not forgive us for spying on him. Our reassurances, that we just wanted to help him, were to no avail. He drove us away with a shout. He alone will carry this out. The distance from the gate to the prison office was far. We want to help carry the packages, and he keeps on shouting – away! It pleased the guard – let this little Jew carry all the packages himself.

H carried everything over, and emerged victorious. It cost us a great deal of energy to persuade him to ride back with us into the city. He does not want to ride with 'spies,' he says. When we first assured him that we will present ourselves to the judgement of our comrades, he became willing to come into the carriage with us.

At night, the union was bubbling, everything about Shlomo'leh. He shouted warnings, screamed, and argued: 'there are spies loose in the union' – a comrades court needs to be convened, and it must done this very day.

He did not want to tell who the 'spies' were – he will tell this to the court.

However, he was calmed down. In the end, it was decided that Shlomo'leh would become our quartermaster, he will be the provider for the political prisoners, and he distinguished himself in this capacity.

One time, he was arrested with the baskets of produce, during the time he was making collections. He was taken to a hearing. He was asked who was sending him to make the collections. He replies – my heart sends me to collect; my dead father taught me, that it is necessary to help that person who finds himself in need.

He was beaten at the inquiry. It did no good, he kept on arguing – my heart tells me to do this. They tried to buy him off with goodness. Nothing helped. He was set free.

He sp perfected his collection work, that he was met by people coming out of their houses when he approached. There were *balabustas*, who at the time they shopped for produce, would purchase a separate package for Shlomo'leh.

The following incident once took place. It had been established that every wagon driver, or carriage, which encountered Shlomo'leh with his baskets, would take him on board, and transported him to wherever he needed to be. One time, a carriage stopped, and asked him to step in. Shlomo'leh wants to get in, but he sees that people are already seated. So he refuses the offer. The wagon driver then says that the passengers will make room for him, and it turned out that the two passengers were the commandant of the prison and a secret agent.

Shlomo'leh hesitated for a moment, and then got in. After a couple of minutes of silence, a discussion developed between the prison commandant and Shlomo'leh. The commandant tried to reprove him, asking why he drags himself around in such cold and rainy weather, after all, he could get sick. Wouldn't it be better if he were to be sitting at work, where it is warm, and hum a tune...

Shlomo'leh answered: – Would the distinguished commandant permit me a question? Obtaining his consent, he replied as follows:

– Does the distinguished commandant have children? And what would the distinguished gentleman think, if one of his children, a son or a daughter, were to be arrested somewhere in a city, where they have no relatives, would the distinguished commandant send those, in that place, who would want to help them, to sing songs? It is possible that the arrested people do not need these packages that I carry, they do have prison fare to eat and drink, but these are greetings from the free world. You, distinguished commandant, are after all, a religious man. You know what religion teaches, that it is incumbent upon us to help those who suffer with our entire hearts. My father was the one who taught me this kind of love.

The commandant was left owing Shlomo'leh an answer, and in the meantime, the coach had traveled to the prison. Here, something out of the ordinary took place. The commandant told Shlomo'leh to remain in the coach, and he, together with the secret agent, carried the baskets with the produce for the arrested people into the chancellery of the prison. He immediately came out with the empty baskets, and returned them to Shlomo'leh with the words: 'Go with God, my son.' He wanted, additionally, to pay the driver, to take Shlomo'leh to his home. However, the driver refused to take the extra money. Rather, he added a footnote: Would that all people understood that we need to help one another, then no evil would occur.

Shlomo'leh Gerzon, whom everyone knew by the nickname '*Tapchan*,' in the end needed to flee Zamość, and later Poland. He went off to the Soviet Union. He was never heard from again.

**Yerakhmiel** and **Riveleh Gartenkraut** both came from a religious home of balebatim. Riveleh completed the Polish Gymnasium in Zamość. Both were drawn into our youth circle and worked very extensively in the area of Enlightenment.

## Providing Food and a Kitchen for the Unemployed

I have already taken note – that in 1926 there was a sever unemployment crisis, especially among the young. Young people had nothing to do with their idle days. They were driven from their poor, cold and hungry homes, out into the rainy and cold streets. Therefore, they gravitated to the professional unions.

The union was located in [the home of] the Cooper family. The reality, is that we only had one 'wall' of this house – the remaining walls were taken by the homeowner and his furniture. As the family was always in the house, a small iron stove was always lit there. It was warm, how delicious... the group would sit, one person reading a newspaper, a book, or a discussion was carried on.

One of the guys chimes in: – I could eat a little piece of bread and herring right now... a second retorts: – if it was raining beans and noodles right now, it would be even better....

Among us was Shlomo'leh '*Tapchan.*' Only now, do we catch on that he is not there.

In a little while, he comes in with fresh bread, several herring, a little sugar and a small package of tea. – *Khevreh*, he called out, – Food!

Nobody stirred. We didn't know where this gift came from. I called him aside and asked him if he was not giving away that which he had collected for the arrested people.

Shlomo'leh was insulted by the question. How could I even think such a thing? He tells me, that the bread comes from the Bakery workers, they are given bread daily, and he took a tithe from them; the produce is indeed from the inventory for those who are arrested. He has an excess at this time, because there are only ten men in prison and he had collected for twenty-five (a meeting of the circle judiciary had taken place, which had released a portion). And it is necessary to take from the donors, because otherwise, they will become unaccustomed to giving when the need arises again.

It is his sense, that it will be possible to stat up an initiative, 'Help for the Unemployed.' I took up his reply, saying, that regarding such an initiative, the council of the professional unions will have to decide. Most importantly, we went back into the house, and the group began to eat. The *balabusta* provided a teapot, and from then on, it was established that a single meal could be gotten at the union: bread, herring and tea....

On a certain morning, coming out onto the street, I see Shlomo'leh at the Magistrate's Building, where he was talking to the councilman from the *Bund*, Yerakhmiel Brandwein. I was curious to know what was being said there. When Shlomo'leh spied me, he called out with satisfaction: – It's good that you are here, we have obtained two sacks of potatoes from the Magistrate, and also rock coal to keep the union local warm. He asks me to wait while he went up to Brandwein in the Magistrate Building to obtain the note for the coal and potatoes. Coming out, he told me to get a wagon driver to transport the coal and potatoes to the union. He still had things to take care of in the street.

When he came in from the street, with a package in his hands, he growled angrily: – What, the potatoes are not yet peeled? He is asked – and if they are peeled? – we shall see. He opens his package, and inside we find two livers, a pan, two fresh loaves of bread...

– From this day forward, my friends, we are done with bread and herring. Now we are going to have a real cooked meal. He had already obtained produce, there were potatoes, coal directly from the electric plant, which was across the way – a union kitchen was created.

So a problem comes up – kitchen crockery is needed. The union kitchen became popular, and patrons arrived. But, here, Shlomo'leh conceives a plan. He calls me – come, we have to go someplace. It was bitter cold, and there was no desire to exit the warm union local.

– Come, you'll find out why along the way. Along the way, he asks me – you are acquainted with Deaf Manes? Itcheh Wolchak's son? And his sister, who are in the '*Hayfl*, [317]' do you know them? – Certainly I know them – I answered, but what does that have to do with what we are doing?

It was then that he explained his plan to me. Seeing that every summer pensioners reside in the summer home area of Krasnobrod, they have large pots, plates, and spoons. So he wants to ask the elderly Itcheh Wolchak if he will not lend [this equipment] for a union kitchen. We will pay him a usage fee....

I was astonished – are you crazy? Do you know what this means, to opperate such a kitchen with utensils? And where will you get produce? Well, potatoes and liver, that's one thing, half a problem, but a kitchen?....

Are you afraid to present your poverty? – he answered me. Remain here, and I will go in by myself.

Shlomo'leh went inside, and I was swept along behind him. We came upon Itcheh Wolchak in his prayer shawl and phylacteries, at which time he remarked to us, and asks us: – Well, what's the good word? What do you require?

We felt a little bit at a loss, and I vehemently proclaimed, that we want a favor from him, but not, God forbid, for free.

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317 Author's Footnote: The '*Hayfl*' was a place of mention in Zamość and its environs. It was a large single story structure, which took up an entire quarter. It was possible to enter this '*Hayfl*' through two formidable gates. Inside was an immense yard, literally a plaza. Along the inside walls, a wooden alley steps in the hundreds of dwellings, on the first level and in the cellars. Hundreds of families lived there, especially the Jewish poor, workers, craftsmen, but also shopkeepers. There were simple Jews, teachers, and Hasidic people. The '*Hayfl*' was located diagonally opposite the 'Stilov' Theater, at the entry to the *Neustadt*. It had the appearance of a 'Majestic' building, similar to the barracks, which were in the vicinity. Was this perhaps a part of the fortress? The name is a name that makes fun of it, which was meant to contrast it to the Noble Palace of the '*Hof*.'

– If this is a favor, then I do not take any money for it, what do you need?

– From you, Reb Itcheh, we ask nothing, but rather, from your children, Shlomo'leh answered. At this moment, Manes and his sister came in off the street.

When he heard the favor that we wanted, that we wish to cook food for a set period for the unemployed, and that we are asking for a loan of the utensils, for which we are prepared to pay a usage fee.

'Deaf Manes' looked at us with bug-eyes in wonderment, and called out in his impaired voice:

– W h a t , I s h o u l d t a k e a u s a g e f e e f r o m y o u ?

He and his sister personally will come to cook. All we have to do is provide the ingredients to go into the pots....

We didn't believe our ears. Shlomo'leh's optimism even made an impact on me. We went out all over the city. The first visit was to the slaughterhouses. The first donor was Shmuel-Yossel Scheid, he was a dear Jewish man. When we declared to him that we need some bones to make a soup for the unemployed, he called out good-heartedly: – Bones? Let the dogs eat them, and you, my dear children, will eat meat. Saying this, he sliced off a sizeable hunk of meat, and added: eat, and may it be of benefit to your health. You should come here every day. While he groused to himself in an undertone: 'Bones, yet...' Wait children, – that dear Shmuel-Yossel said – I will go through the abattoirs with you. From there we went to Shmuel Nir, and so forth, from abattoir to abattoir... there was meat aplenty.

From the '*Rabotnik*' cooperative we received rice, beans, oil – the head of the cooperative, Fiedler, ordered us to come on every day.

The kitchen for the unemployed became known to middle class people. Who sympathized with the suffering brought on by the crisis, and voluntarily brought their contributions. I remember the names of those who stood out above others: 'Lame Stashek,' Shabbatson, Volvish Richtman's son-in-law, 'Luzer Nirenstein, a Dentist, Rachel'leh Morgenstern (had a big cigarette business), and more and more....

## Peretz'l *Gonif* Does Good Deeds Secretly

*Page 814:* *Shlomo'leh Gerzon ('Tapchan')*

'Peretz'l *Gonif*' was really something else. He came from a rather fine family, but he fell into this 'line of work.'

One time, when I went along with Shlomo'leh to collect produce, we are stopped by none other than Peretz'l *Gonif*, and approaches me in the following manner: – Seeing as I know you guys have set up a kitchen for the unemployed, I would like to help you out in some way – and he begins to reach for his pocket.

I, as his *Heder* classmate, thanked him for his jest, and said, that we are not collecting any money, only produce. We already have our donors.

Peretz'l remained stumped and silent for a while, and said: – I understand, you don't want to take money from a thief, you are doing a good thing – and he went away.

This incident hounded me a bit. True enough, the money came from theft, but his intention in this regard was decent....

On a certain day, a carriage comes riding up to the union, and the carriage driver begins to carry in packages with food, and a lot of potatoes. The packages were rather large. When we asked him who had sent this, he answered, that a man had asked him to deliver this, and he doesn't know any more than this. When we pressed the driver, and asked him

further questions – who the donor is: – Jewish, Christian? He replied: – What's the difference? Let it be reckoned for his good health.

When we unpacked the packages, we were even more overwhelmed – kasha, rice, sugar, two tin cans of oil...we broke our heads – who can this be who is such a broad-hearted donor?

The very same carriage driver comes riding up to the union local for a second time. Once again, he begins to carry packages inside for our kitchen. I went around to the driver and addressed him – we have an agreement not to accept any gifts from unknown sources.

The driver was left in a quandary, and then declared to us: – I am forbidden to tell you the truth, but seeing that you are really demanding this of me, I therefore tell you: it is 'Peretz'l *Gonif*'.... he warned me that if I will give him away, he will poison my horses...

We promised the driver that we will not give him away. However, we felt it was necessary to express our gratitude to Peretz'l for his very personable handling of this matter. We wrote up a letter to him, signed it as 'a group of young people.' Fate had it that I was to hand the letter to him.

I will never forget that specific moment. When I handed over the letter to Peretz'l, he broke down and wept like a child.... this was totally uncharacteristic of his stormy adventurous life. When he calmed down, he said to me:

– Yes, you are a decent guy, and what am I? A thief... having shamed my parents, my brothers. Here, both of us came out of the very same *Heder*. You set yourself on a decent path, and I became a young thief.... without a home, without friends. The best of my years are spent in jails. I am constantly escorted by beatings....

I comforted him: – Peretz, you are still young, you still can tear yourself away from this life....

News reached us about 'Peretz'l *Gonif*' under the Nazi Regime. He became a protector of the slaves in the Nazi places of oppression. Is someone was being oppressed, or if a '*Kapo*' behaved in a bestial manner to those would be martyred, he would be threatened with the fact that 'Peretz'l' will take on their defense. Not only one time did 'Peretz'l' rescue his comrades under oppression from additional beatings and tribulations.

Our kitchen progressed. We had an overflow of produce, and we began to send midday meals to the homes of the sick and the poor, who did not have any warm food prepared in their homes, and we also arranged for those who worked out of doors – firstly the porters and wagon drivers – will be able to drop into the kitchen and refresh themselves with a bit of warm food.

It would indeed often happen that a father and son would satisfy their hunger at a warm plate of food... the union took the place of the cold home, and strengthened the family ties of those, who because of want,
had their families sundered apart.

By the spring, unemployment had shrunk, the need grew less, and we liquidated the kitchen. However, the crockery had to be returned to 'Deaf Manes.'...

* * *

Youthful memories, almost entirely from one year – it occurs to me that all of this is no longer here, the young people who struggled are not here, the folk people of good heart are not here, in general, the entire Jewish generation is not here – and I am seized by a crawling sensation of the skin....

Let these pages be a memorial stone for those nameless heroes, who with their commitment and simplicity, raised up our dear Zamość, which will never be forgotten by us.

# The Sensational Trial of Two Jews in Zamość for 'Belittling the Crucifix'[318]

A certain time ago, we had already presented, in our newspaper, the story of the accusations against a pair of young Jewish persons from Zamość, that at a masked ball, that they had belittled the crucifix through the masks that they had worn, and the characters that they had portrayed. On the basis of an explanation offered by a secret agent, who presented this matter to the authorities firstly on the following morning, after the masked ball, the procurator took an interest in the matter, and a [legal] process was instituted against the 3 Jewish young folk. This trial took place in Zamość in the district court, on the 24th of this month.

Sitting on the bench of the accused were Yaakov Wechsler, age 25, a resident of Zamość, and Yitzhak Wirtzenberger, age 21, from Nadworna (Galicia). The third accused, Mendel Premminger, has until now not been uncovered by the authorities.

The accusation said, that the two defendants, together with Premminger, deliberately belittled the crucifix, the Holy Cross, at a Jewish masked ball, spitting on it several times, [that] the two accused were wearing masks of a 'jester' and a 'devil,' and attacked a person (Premminger) who was wearing the costume of a Cardinal. The latter had defended himself with a crucifix, which hung around his neck, and the first two spit at him.

The policeman, Jan Mazur appeared as a witness against the accused, and he argued that the charge was correct, as stated.

By contrast, a gendarme was called by the prosecution as a principal witness, because he was the first to take note of the fact of the profanation of the cross, and testified in court that he did not see that the crucifix, worn by the person dressed in the Cardinal's costume, was spat upon.

There were many Christians among the witnesses which were called by the defense. These Christian witnesses, among which could be found a teacher at a local school, categorically declared before the court, that they saw nothing in the behavior of the accused at the ball that would constitute a belittling of the crucifix.

A couple of witnesses from the side of the defense declared, among other things, that the policeman Mazur, on whose arguments the entire case is built, was in the room at that time, but not in a sober condition.

The renown Warsaw lawyer Henryk Ettinger[319] appeared as the attorney for the defense.

The prosecutor gave a speech, in which he mellifluously portrayed the 'unheard of fact of the profanation of the Holy Cross, the symbol and emblem of all Christendom,' and he demanded the most severe penalty for the accused according to the Codex of Discipline (Profanation of the Crucifix), with the full force of the law. – Paragraph (73) calls for a sentence of between 1 ans 6 years.

The attorney for the defense, Lawyer Henryk Ettinger, first called into question the meritorious side of the accusation, that is, did the fact of the alleged profanation ever even take place. But – he said further – even if one were to agree to the position of the prosecutor, that one cannot rely on the testimony of those who saw nothing, because it is possible that in the course of the five-hour party that something of this sort did occur, which they were not in a position to see – one must, of necessity take into consideration the fact that under any circumstance, there was no pejorative intent. The prosecutor – says lawyer Ettinger – expressed his understanding in his speech, that the accused cannot be thought

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318 Author's Footnote: The following chronicle is taken by us from the Warsaw '*Heint*,' where it was printed in its day. This took place in the twenties.

319 It is interesting that the text remains silent on the lineage of this individual, given his last name. We are left to speculate as to whether he is a latter-day scion of the Ettinger family of Zamość.

of as people acting in an unwitting fashion, who committed their act out of ignorance. Against this argument of the prosecutor, it must be noted that the Russian Synod in its time even went so far as to recognize in connection with Tolstoy, that he presented his attack against the church – 'because of ignorance.'

Finally, lawyer Ettinger took note of the fact that, that it is entirely an open question as to whether the crucifix [in question] was a sacred one, because it is only in connection with a consecrated (*swiancony*) crucifix that it is possible to speak of profanation, otherwise – the entire accusation regarding profanation loses its entire foundation.

After a short consultation, the court announced a ruling with explanations. In the explanations, the court says, that the fact of spitting on the crucifix is thought to be demonstrated. However, the court takes the position that there was no pejorative intent here, or a desire to elicit any embarrassment, but that the profanation took place because of foolishness and ignorance. Therefore, the court recognized the mitigating circumstances, and hands down a sentence of 6 months imprisonment for the defendant Yaakov Wechsler, and Yitzhak Wertzberger – a 5 month arrest in the provinical prison ( the time that thay were incarcerated due tothe trial) will not be taken into account.

The sentenced parties indicate that they will file for appeal of the ruling.

The interest taken by the Zamość Jewish community was enormously great. The small chamber in which the trial took place was overfilled, and masses of people waited in the street next to the court house for the disclosure of the ruling.

# From Life in Zamość in Times Gone By

**By Moshe Freilich**

Zamość was a Jewish city, there were hundreds of Jewish towns, and I think they were all similar to one another like drops of water, but nevertheless, each city had its own 'fine points.' – Zamość certainly had them.

The history of our city is conveyed in our *Pinkas*, from what has transpired, from the distant past to the final days. However, we have not produced a *Pinkas* of everything – many details rise from one's memory, that only this, or that specific resident of Zamość, is able to recall. May I be allowed then, to weave in a garland of recollections, into the larger history of our dearly beloved city, a little of what I remember of my surroundings, of my circle of people who were close to me, with whom it came for me to live, struggle and create.

## How the Zamość Water Carriers Came to Declare a Strike

Berish Beckerman came to Zamość in the middle eighties [sic: 1880's] as the son-in-law of Mekhl Itzkeh's, or Mekhl Toytngrebber, an Enlightened Jew. Berish and his son-in-law had a honey cake bakery.[320]

In those times, there was no Jewish community life. Berish Becker's son, a dabbler in theatrical performance, had performed in the theater at one time, and read an occasional book in Yiddish, introduced evenings in his bakery, to which workers would come, who were released from work on a daily basis to attend the *Mincha-Maariv* prayers. On Friday nights, they would enjoy the time at Berish's in the bakery. And he would sing Yiddish songs for them from the theater, and would read a variety of storybooks to them. His children would accompany him in the singing, and his daughter, Zisseleh, who was already attending Gymnasium, and his son, Moshe, who was studying music, would also help out.

It was in this manner, that the bakery gradually became transformed into a sort of community club of the workers of that era, such as: shoemakers, tailors, hat makers, carpenters, bakers, and just ordinary young people, until Berish established the first Dramatic Circle, which , from time-to-time, would put on performances, led by Berish and his children. The revenues received went towards community purposes.

The bakery used more water than in the ordinary private home. The porters, the water carriers, would always be quick to carry water to Berish's, more willingly than to other places, because he would treat them better, and afterwards give them a little baked produce.

Zamość was a rich city, with a multi-branched commercial infrastructure, many manual tradesmen, beautiful homes, wealthy ones, reaching 3 and 4 stories high, and the water carriers would have to carry water up there. Alas, this was the way they made a living. When the Festivals came around, all the workers rested, except for the poor water carriers. They needed to work on the holidays even more than they did during the regular days of the week, because then, more water was consumed.

Berish could never stand this injustice, and he argued with the water carriers: why do you not celebrate Passover like all the other Jews? As was the usual case, one would always pass the buck to a second person. Until one time, on a Sabbath, Berish called together all the water carriers, telling them to come immediately to him, first thing in the morning, before they take up their work. Anyone who will not comply, will not be permitted to carry water to him anymore. Additionally, no baker will continue to retain their services as water carriers. And when Berish said something, it was considered spoken.

Jews went off to services in synagogue, and immediately after eating, Berish invited the water carriers to him for a beer. He kept them under his oversight in this manner for both days of *Yom Tov*. A tumult arose in the streets, where was

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320 The father-in-law's name means 'gravedigger' in Yiddish. Prior memoirs confirm Berish Beckerman as a skilled baker, so the notion of running a honey cake bakery is consistent.

one to get water to prepare the good meals of the holiday? It was intolerable; here, we have to put up the samovar, and the water carrier isn't coming.

It became immediately known in the *Batei Medrashim*, that it was Berish's mind that was behind this. Observant Jews were unable to say anything, and the more worldly also needed to remain silent. And that is how it stayed in 1904, when the water carriers in Zamość declared their first strike, and their leader was Berish Beckerman, the theater producer.

## The Wife of the Orchestra Leader

Everyone in Zamość, up to the third generation, knows what happened about 50 years back, the story of 'the wife of the orchestra leader,' who was held up as an example of a proud Jewish woman, who carried her Jewishness with pride to her last breath.

The Russian 'Siberian Division' came to Zamość from Krasynstaw in the year 1908, and took up residence in the newly constructed barracks. The officers, of all ranks, and their wives, were satisfied with this change. Krasnystaw was truly, in comparison to Zamość, a provincial town. The ladies, for the first time, saw elegant stores, especially the fashion shops.

The wives of the officers were often customers in Eliashberg's business, where I worked at that time. There, all of their gossip was already well-known, among other things, the wife of the orchestra leader was a Jewish woman, and that she observes Judaism, blessing candles every Friday night, and the like. Her husband, **Winokur**, was a convert to [Russian Orthodox Christianity], and treats her very well. It was not only once, that he had already asked her to adopt the Russian Orthodox faith, but she refuses him. Seeing that it does no good, he began, a little at a time, to convert the children, indeed, without the knowledge of his wife.

When she became pregnant for the final time, she had an illegal abortion, not wanting to provide the Russian Orthodox faith with yet another soul... she became sick, and her condition became dire.

Her husband saw what was up, that his wife was dying as a Jew, and not wanting to have to deal with the Jewish 'congregation,' he took counsel with his relatives, and decided to bring the chaplain of the division, the Russian priest, to convert his wife.

However, the wife stood fast, and asked the priest, asking him to give her his hand, and seizing him by the cuff of his sleeve, so to speak, to fetch a Jewish Rabbi, because she wants to make her final confession [sic: *vidui*] according to Jewish law. She wants to die as she lived, as a Jewish woman.

In the music battalion, there was a larger number of Jewish recruits. Immediately, there came a delegation to Eliashberg in the store, and related what was happening. The Rabbi, with a a number of Jewish representatives immediately traveled to the woman, and provided her with last rites.

She died on the same day. She had a funeral, the likes of which residents of Zamość hadn't seen in a long time. All the Jewish newspapers wrote about it. The pictures, with thousands of people, who accompanied the funeral cortege was sent all over the world, firstly to the Zamość *landsleit* in America.

The incident reached the highest authorities. Police began to make an investigation, the grave was opened, and an autopsy was performed. The midwife was punished with a sentence of several years imprisonment.

# They Were Three

*Page 821: From Right to Left: Yaakov and Yitzhak Levin, Itzek Szper and Mikhcheh Levin*

The Jewish intelligentsia of Zamość, which always placed itself at the disposal of the community, regardless of party affiliation, after a hiatus of almost 12 years, in the year 1917-1918, placed itself at the head of the Jewish labor movement. They gave away their skills, their knowledge, time and energy, in order to teach and organize, and enlighten and educate the ignorant Jewish workers and simultaneously help them to organize themselves, in order that they could fight for better living conditions. I will recollect three names here, three comrades, three organizers and leaders of the *Bund,* with whose names, not only is the genesis tied up, but also the later activities and struggles of Jewish workers in our city. They came from non-proletarian homes. They dedicated their lives to the issues of working people.

In first place, **Itzik Goldstein** stands out. A swarthy, short person with strong character, and an entirely very hot temperament. He inherited characteristics and attitudes from his uncle, I. L. Peretz. Despite the fact that he then spoke a rather weak Yiddish, and would stumble over his words, he was the right leader for the right time. With his glance, he could ignite a world. He was a veritable fountain of knowledge. The loyalty that the masses had to him was boundless. If it was said that Itzik said it, then they were prepared to do everything to make it happen.

Additionally, there were the two brothers, **Mikhcheh** and **Salek Levin**; [they were] from the most important Jewish aristocratic and observant family, grandsons of R' Shmuel-Leib Levin. Their father, Lipe'leh Levin, already somewhat worldly himself, learned Jewish religious studies together with his two sons. Their mother, from an important family in Piotrkow, an Enlightened person, studied secular subjects with them.

Mikhcheh was tall and substantial in build, and everything with him had to be planned out and in order. He had already studied in Lodz to be a textile master. He knew the life of a working man from practical experience. He was very substantive in matters pertaining to organization. Everything that he did elicited respect, as one in whom one can place trust, and therefore he enjoyed a great deal of loyalty as a leader.

Salek, Mikhcheh's younger brother, was the opposite of his brother. He was, indeed, very well-educated. Nobody could study a chapter of Marx's '*Das Kapital*' with the workers like he did – but he was a very nervous type, and stormy. He could go for weeks being unkempt, and not dressed normally. And suddenly, he would appear in the street, completely decked out to the finest degree.

This same trio, from the Jewish Socialist intelligentsia, took a raw mass of hundreds of ignorant workers from tens of trades, and various vicinities — shoemakers, tailors, carpenters, bakers, makers of spats, hat makers, white goods seamstresses, domestic servants, and others, and made knowledgeable people out of them. They literally demonstrated a wonder, in raising them to such an elevated spiritual plateau, almost unbelievable. Yesterday's people, who did not know an alphabet, began to understand problems in politics, literature and arts, and themselves became the leaders and organizers of others.

This was not achieved easily. However, these three had their own system. Not to be accomplished immediately, but a little at a time, pushing here and there, they achieved this. Previously, they organized a group of workers who were more enlightened, so called 'semi-intelligentsia,' such as Chaim Shtikh, Abish Shipzeisen, Mordechai Zwillich, Hirsch Ehrlich and others. With this group, they implemented a series of familiarization works. In today's parlance, it would be called the creation of a seminar, where these workers were taught how to become organizers. With this group, they began to implement a series of technical activities and with their help, later organized evening courses for workers (first beginning with the young).

With the help of the veteran organizer of the year 1905, Yaakov-Meir Topf, this trio solidified relationships with single delegates from each trade. Following a plan, they organized one trade after another. Group after group. Without clamor, without tumult, but on a solid foundation. When this base was in place, a headquarters location was rented. Also here, they made the effort to extract the leadership and the activists from the body of the workers themselves. They put the

apparatus in place, to which they continuously provided direction. They paid attention to every little detail, taught, directed, systematically acclimatized the leadership of the movement, and never removed themselves, from the outset, and didn't overly emphasize that they were the 'leaders.' It was in this structured fashion, that the trade union movement got organized – everything in its proper place, and each trade having the various sections.

The three were everywhere. After working hours, you could find: Itzik running a meeting with the tailors; Salek organizing the carpenters to strike; Mikhcheh making plans about opening evening courses earlier than originally intended, about a fundamental cultural set of activities.

It is to wonder at the patience, force and energy of these three. They didn't have a free minute, no day of rest. During the afternoon hours they were occupied with giving counsel. In the evenings, meetings and conferences. Saturday after the noon hour, with the party, Saturday in the evening – meetings or gatherings. Friday evening – 'Bench' evenings, lectures.

These three belonged to the organizers of the *Bund*, but in their day-to-day activities, they did two fundamental things for the entire mass – the trade union movement, which encompassed all the Jewish workers, without regard for political persuasion, and the second – the cultural work, which was also implemented for everyone.

They also set up a sort of 'High School.' The objective was to prepare activists from the masses of the laboring class. Every week, at least twice a week, 3,4, and sometimes 7 men would come and they toiled over political economics, the history of socialist struggles, about literature and art. Not only one of these would later take on a prominent position in the various directions in the Jewish street.

It is to their credit that the municipal library, later to take on the name, I. L. Peretz Library, acquired a large element of readers. The readers' circle of the sphere of *balebatim* was circumscribed. It was first the Enlightened Jews, and the organized workers, that provided the mass of readers for books that had long remained untouched.

Among the items credited to these three is the establishment of a choir, which was implemented by the singer, Notteh Fishelsohn

A separate chapter concerns the strike of the weakest and most vulnerable part of the labor force in that time – the strike of the domestic servants, has already been recorded in a number of the works in our *Pinkas*.

## Guests in Zamość between the First and Second World Wars

*Page 827:* *A Group of Members of the Society of Commercial Representatives in Zamość, Shortly Before the Outbreak of the Second World War.*

Warsaw the metropolis of Poland and of the hundreds of Jewish towns and villages, would be a frequent guest in the province. There was not a Sabbath, or a Festival holiday, when the trains from Warsaw would not convey speakers, artists, singers, party-activists, to all of the cities and towns, who would 'spread light' in the 'dark hinterlands'...

It would become *Yom Tov* in the *shtetl*. Guest would add warmth, literally bringing joy and light in the towns sunken in the darkness ]of their monotonous tedium].

Zamość was one of the greatest consumers of this imported joy and light. Zamość, though, had certain specific drawing power for the activists from faraway. Other towns would 'beg,' and request for a long time until someone willingly came. Going to Zamość was undertaken more readily. We had a rather fine ancestral pedigree – the city of Ettinger and Peretz – and a good personal reputation, and auditorium that could accommodate guests in a rather fine manner. And the speakers, presenters, debaters, singers and artists, were well honored, and treated as guests.

In the period following the First World War, a veritable constellation of the best presenters, in the Yiddish word and art, came through Zamość. I will attempt to briefly mention those, whose visit are well ensconced in my memory, and elicit the warmest memories.

The **first swallow** who came to us was comrade **Lejzor Levin**. He brought the first visiting-card from the *Bund* to the Zamość audience, primarily to the workers and the intelligentsia. He was among the first visitors in our city. It took place when the *Bund* newspaper, '*Lebensfragen*' went from being a weekly to being a daily paper. The party conducted a broad publicity campaign. It sent speakers over all the cities and towns. The central committee sent L. Levin to us. Short, not very broadly built, with small glasses. He would constantly take them off when he spoke. In personal conversations, he would speak quietly, lengthily, as if he were counting each word. So we thought to ourselves: – And this person is the one who has to speak in front of an open gathering? He doesn't have any 'voice!' But wen he went up on the dais, and took hold of the word, he showed his great talent as one of the best orators that the *Bund* had. From then on, he was a guest who came to us often – – –

And if the Bund had such a success with its first speaker, the others could not rest. It appears that the *Poalei Tzion* arranged to bring **Dr. Sh. Uris**. The title, 'Doctor,' already told us that there will be a 'ferocious debate.' And, indeed, that is what was the case. The confrontation was scheduled for a Saturday, and indeed, Dr. Sh. Uris came to the *Poalei Tzion*. The theater auditorium was filled to overflowing. The speaker, then something of a young man of pleasant appearance, was well received by the weaker sex, and did not disappoint with his presentation, 'living up to the measure.' The leaders of the *Poalei Tzion*, Millstein, Moshe Garfinkel, Meir Adler, subsequently thanked the Bund with great grace, which had filled the theater auditorium. In general, a rather far-reaching tolerance reigned in our Zamość, and the tactic of boycotting the speaker of an opposition group was practically unheard of.

But it was not only the [political] parties that brought their speakers. A very great, and deciding factor, was the I. L. Peretz library, especially when its management was transferred under the direction of the local Jewish labor group (about this, there is more appropriate details provided in other works). **Boris Eisurovich** came on the first occasion. It is my impression that he tried out his wonderful lectures about India on us, the residents of Zamość...up to eight days before his coming, right along with when the notices depicted the themes and theses of his talk, the tickets were snapped up. His two lectures about 'The Two Lands of the Legendary ast,' remained in the memories of the audience for a long time, and comrade Eisurovich repeated these very same, identical lectures in our city not only once. He allowed himself to 'rest' for a couple of years, and he came once again with his India.... and once again, the audience hung onto hearing about the Indian wonders and miracles....

Not rested up from the impressions of India, and the notices already depicted that the singing duet, **Ruth Leviasz** and **Moshe Rudinov** are coming for a concert, in which they will be accompanied by the composer, **M. Cohn.** The concert took place in the municipal movie theater. Since our anti-Semites couldn't stand this, and instead of Saturday, as originally agreed, they allocated the hall for Monday, and thereby, 'secret hands' took out parts of the piano, in order that it will not be able to be used. For the second concert, they provided a fire, which had been ignited from old film, and the continuous smoke indeed disturbed the singers.... but ignoring all of this, this visit by artists was a very big spiritual and material success.

He was called 'the Bohème of the *Bund*' – and I refer here to our beloved and hearty friend, **A. Litvak**. We had a fine bit of aggravation with him. Which of the activists in the various towns did not live through the heartache of having a speaker that didn't show up. A room has been made ready, notices have been posted, tickets have been sold, a delegation goes to the train, and in the end.... the guest is not here. The pain for us, and the shame for those who were opposed to us... Comrade Litvak caused us this kind of a bit of aggravation in that winter. It is Friday, the first lecture is supposed to take place that night, everything is ready, and he's not here! However, a couple of hours later, my friend, Hella Ashkenazi (today Schaffner) brings me in a frozen comrade Litvak... it then becomes apparent, that at the Zawodo Station, where one has to change (coming) from Lublin, Comrade Litvak was late for the train, and was stuck there. So he grabbed a peasant wagon, and rode into Zamość. We were barely able to warm him up; hot tea, and a big feather covering from Zamość brought him back to 'form,' and for our aggravation, we had a tenfold pleasure from his two lectures: in the hall of the city council on Friday night, on the theme, 'New Directions in Yiddish Literature.' And

Saturday afternoon, on the theme, 'Criticism in Yiddish Literature.' All of our expectations were exceeded. Comrade Litvak 'held forth' on the Sabbath at the home of the brother of I. L. Peretz. Later, in the year 1927, when Comrade Litvak had arrived, now as a guest of the Jewish School Organization, for the tenth *Yahrzeit* of Peretz, he rode immediately to the Peretz family.

That winter, we finished the literary season with a lecture from Comrade **Kh. Sh. Kasdan**. Comments were made for a long time about this wonderful speaker, who enchanted the audience with his half-Russian-Litvak accent.

The Zionists also were not silent. If they didn't bring their speakers for literary themes, they would bring from among their best speakers for election campaigns. The Zionist organization brought the well-known writer and speaker, **Nathan Schwalbe** to the campaign for the city council. He was beloved by his followers, admired by others, and respected even by his opponents. One went to his appearances eagerly – imagine, Schwalbe!

Yiddish theater had loyal friends in Zamość. Yiddish theater troupes would be received by us in truly royal fashion, and the Mother of the Yiddish theater, **Esther Rachel Kaminsky**,[321] never missed an opportunity to be in Zamość during her tours in Poland. When she appeared by us for the last time in the year 1919, she came with the entire ensemble of the 'Central' theater. For those who participated, this was one of the greatest holidays. Older people told, that when Esther Rachel first came to Zamość (she was then performing in Ptachinsky's theater, where there later was a restaurant and candy store) many sat up all night in order to be able to buy a ticket.

**Artur Zygielboym**, a person of ethical character, was a frequent guest with us. This was because Zamość belonged to his 'territory,' – born in Krasnystaw, and later active in Chelm, he considered Zamość to be his own nearby location. He would come either on party missions, or on matters of the trade union movement. One time he was together with **Herschel Himmelfarb**. This was on the eve of a party conference, and they appeared in two separate factions of the *Bund.* Comrade Artur, on a specific occasion, left a rather unique impression with his lecture, 'The Child, The School, and The Masses.' This lecture was commented on for a long time.

Comrade Herschel Himmelfarb would especially come to us for election meetings. He had opponents in our ranks from many sides – either Zionists, or communists – but people came to hear him eagerly. With his turn of phrase, and his beautiful rhetoric, he would smooth things out, and have a rather great success.

The Zamość cultural activists become aware that the poet **Ch. Leivick** is in Warsaw, on a trip to the Soviet Union. What does this mean, that he is going to be in Poland, and not come to Zamość? The I. L. Peretz library gets in touch with Warsaw. Undertakings, correspondence – Leivick can come on a weekday. Well, let it be a weekday then, we will arrange a holiday in the middle of the week. And that's what really took place. That wondrous day with Leivick was recalled for a long time, and he was not forgotten. He immediately became friendly and familiar with us. This was especially the case when he met up with someone from his home town, – the friend, Rachel Korngold, who came from his birthplace of Uman.[322] We strolled with him outside the city, in those places immortalized in the work of Peretz; he had conversations with is fully committed followers. In the evening, in a fully packed hal, he held his lecture about the new Yiddish literature, and he read chapters from 'Golem,' from 'Behind the Castle.' Zamość was overjoyed, and in its chronicles, it was recorded that – Ch. Leivick, the Yiddish troubadour of our generation was its guest.

The Neustadt library, named for Dr. Sh. Ansky also laid bricks towards the cultural building up of Zamość. In her manner and with its means, it too illuminated our spiritual lives. Here, before my eyes, stands the handsome **Peretz Markish**, who was invited by this library to deliver a lecture[323]. He stands up on the stage of an overflowing hall, his

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321 A *Grand Dame* of the Yiddish Theater, she is perhaps not as well-known to those in contemporary times as her equally famous (perhaps more famous) daughter, **Ida Kaminska** (1899-1980), herself a dominant force in Yiddish theater in the mid-to-late 20th century.

322 In Ukraine

323 Peretz Markish (1895-1948) was a Soviet Yiddish poet, novelist and playwright. In his many works during World War II, he expressed hatred of the enemy, Soviet patriotism, and sorrow at the extermination of the Jews. In 1948 he was accused by the Soviets of Jewish nationalism and

white face, with the fiery eyes, enchant the audience, which is literally entranced. Handsome, and splendid is he, and it was not for naught that a *kibbitzer* expressed himself by saying – he is 'The Ladies' *Rebbe*,' and the majority in the hall were indeed members of the fairer sex...

The news that **Joseph Opotashu** was coming to Zamość, elicited a tremendous reaction, in the provinces as well. [324] Neighboring towns – Szczebrzeszyn, Krasnobrod, and Hrubieszow, sent delegations to us in order to 'borrow' Opotashu, and that it was unjust, that Zamość should 'keep this dear guest for itself.' What do you mean, only one lecture in Zamość? Give us something too. However, we held ourselves haughty – Opotashu is for Zamość. In the hall, where Opotashu was to speak, there was an very unusual audience, not the usual one, which we normally had at such events. Velvet hats, silk hats, black hats.... everyone came to hear the author of 'In the Forests of Poland.' Very much earlier than the scheduled hour, the hall was completely seated. However, we had to endure a disappointment – Opotashu, the master of the written word, was no speaker. In general, he read his lecture from paper, and the audience, which was waiting for something of a novel word, remained cold.... Opotashu was supposed to give two lectures with us. We feared that his second talk would not be well attended, and we 'approached' the movement from Hrubieszow, indicating that we didn't want to 'monopolize' Opotashu only for ourselves. On that same evening, he did, indeed, travel to Hrubieszow. But we had no regrets over his visit. Also, without the scheduled lecture, Opotashu's visit was a point of pride for Zamość.

We had a different kind of disappointment with **Sholom Asch**.[325] We carried on negotiations with him about coming to us. Everything was discussed; dates, themes, an honorarium. However, he set a condition, that before his trip to Zamość was to be publicized, he needs to be paid 200 dollars (in real dollars, not Polish zlotys). This irritated us, and Zamość felt used. The demand was not met. Zamość was even proud of this as well. Sholom Asch is, indeed, Sholom Asch, but Zamość did not want to allow itself to be put on a level where it could be taken for granted....

Our first teacher from the I. L. Peretz School, which was part of the Yiddish School Organization, Rachel'leh Gershuni, once dug her heels in – [that] we had to invite **Yaakov Pat** (she called him Yankeleh). She was a strongly capricious person, our teacher, and it was necessary to let her have her way. As it happened, Yaakov Pat brought the key to open the I. L. Peretz School in Zamość. The lecture that he gave at that time, 'Half a Century of Yiddish Literature,' literally enchanted the audience. From that time on, Zamość no longer waited for someone to 'capriciously' demand that Yaakov Pat should come. There was no season, when Pat would not visit our city with his beautiful lectures.

Can it be, that the globetrotting **Melekh Ravitch** should find a way and not come to see us? His first visit to us, was actually a 'business' one. He had come to Zamość to urge greater distribution of 'literary papers' – a minimum of 50 additional subscribers have to be generated – it cannot be any other way. And if Ravitch is in the city, how can you imagine that he wouldn't hold some sort of a lecture? However, a limitation is encountered – there is no permission. Actually, a request was submitted; it was sent into the City Elder's office on time; however, if no refusal has come in the final 48 hours before the lecture, then everything is OK. All is well, but the police require 'black on white,' the permit.... and it just so happens it is now the Sabbath, and the office of the City Elder is locked, and the hall, filled to overflowing, together with the speaker, sit and wait.... Finally, a little money changed hands, and we had the great pleasure of hearing not only the lecture, but also a preview reading of his work on the excommunication of Spinoza.

The talented writer and speaker, **Baruch Sheffner** could not skip over our Zamość, who, incidentally, nearly became a son of the city here. He came to us often with his spiritually rich lectures. For many years, Zamość long remembered and retold his lecture, 'Twelve Weeks of Being Psychotic.'

It would warm up (and often get really hot) during an election campaign. At that time, every group, and political persuasion would reveal itself to us with the most attractive and best of what it could muster. In the 'center' we knew

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killed. His novel of Polish Jewish heroism during WWII, was published posthumously

324 Joseph Opotashu (1886-1954), author, novelist. Father of the actor, David Opotashu.

325 Sholom Asch (1880-1957), a prolific author and novelist, widely translated into English. Often controversial for his iconoclasm.

– one must send first-class material to Zamość... **Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer** [326] had a franchise with us during election campaigns. He was actually elected in our 27th election district, on the ballot of the National Minorities. He was very popular with us. One of his relatives, Leibusz Szyfer was something of a local resident, and had lived in Zamość for many years already. People ran to hear him speak.

The leftists at that time also brought a cannon of theirs, one of the most famous speakers. It was in the time when Zinoviev still occupied his leadership position in the Comintern, and this speaker was called among us, 'The Polish Zinoviev' – his name was **Yitzhak Gordin**. He really had a mighty voice, and a sharp tongue.

On a second occasion, the leftists brought a *Litvak*, a tailor – no family name was known – only '**Comrade Yakov.**' He also had a well-earned success as a speaker.

**Shlomo Mendelson,** in those years was a 'free agent,' – not belonging to any political persuasion that had adherents in Zamość. He joined the Bund only in later years. However, he had supporters among all.

People didn't want to believe it – he, **Henryk Ehrlich** – is he really here in Zamość? He came at the time that Yerakhmiel Brandwein was elected as a councilman to the City Council. Two hours before the advertised schedule, the hall was filled to overflowing. The cit council had never seen an audience like this before. No community activist from Zamość had ever experienced such an occurrence – such an audience, such sympathy in such a presentation. People from Zamość, not only Bundists, expressed wit pride – H. Ehrlich had been with us.

So religious Jews got envious – they, the more liberal, will bring speakers, and we will remain silent? And they attempted to retaliate. On one Sabbath, they brought the Senator, Rabbi **Kowalsky** (from Wloclawek). Kowalsky was indeed a Polish name, but he happened to be a first class orator in Yiddish.

I received the last notification of a grandiose visit to Zamość when I was already in Argentina. I moved away in 1926 and the notice was from the year 1927. **Beinish Mikhailovich** came to Zamość. I received correspondence about this visit. It was something colossal – Zamość could not recall when a Jewish, or non- Jewish personality had attracted such an audience. People came from all of the surrounding cities and towns. Mikhailovich came, at that time, to a special 30 year jubilee meeting of the *Bund.* This visit remained as an historic date in Zamość.

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[326] Also know in Polish as Dr. Ignacy Schiper

# Memories of Former Times

**By Itcheh Leib Herring**

Zamość was not an industrial city, but it had a large number of Jewish workers who were employed in small industries, in handicrafts – tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, baking, lock making, were practically [sic: exclusively] 'Jewish' occupations. Together with the tradespeople, the laboring element was the largest majority of the Jewish population of Zamość. To this, it is necessary to count the very significant number of Jewish employees in commercial businesses and bureaus, employed by merchants and industrialists. One also must take the large number of house servants into account. It is from this element that organized Jewish labor arose in our city.

I am gone from my home city for more than 35 years. The following lines would be more precise, and would contain more accurate facts hen I would have the necessary facts at hand. I am writing from memory, and therefore it is possible that an inaccuracy may creep in, an incorrect piece of data, a name that was omitted.

My memories belong to the period of 1916-1917 and onward.

The beginning of the renewed labor movement during the very years of the occupation of the First World War, has its roots in the stormy revolutionary time of 1905-1906. Paying no heed to the fact that the uprising of that time was suppressed, that almost all the people in leadership positions of the movement were in prisons, and a part exiled to Siberia, nevertheless, the foundation remained in place. The seeds sown in 1905 sprouted again more than 10 years later.

On a Saturday afternoon, on a hot summer day an advisory meeting took place of a very tight circle of people in the bakery of Gedalia Jonasgartel. Despite the fact that he personally was the owner of the bakery, he was a close sympathizer of the movement. A representative of the central committee of the Bund came especially to attend this meeting, and if I am not mistaken, this was comrade **Emanuel** (Novogrudsky).

At that time, not only the *Bundist* organization was put back in place. At that time, the trade union movement was built up, which at that time was one and the same, and filled out rather extensive activities in Zamość, in economic as well as political and cultural areas.

At a gathering of the Lublin region, the Zamość branch of the Bund organization was tasked to organize the surrounding towns, Szczebrzeszyn, Bilgoraj, Tomaszow, and others. In this manner, Zamość becomes the center of *Bundist* work in the area.

At the same time, community life, in general, begins to get organized. The Zionist movement comes into being, manifested by all of its various groups, among which can be found *Poalei Tzion*. A contesting political ideological struggle begins, which elicits a great deal of liveliness in Zamość. Meetings, gathers, lectures. Do understand, that there is no lack of fights that break out between opposing factions, with regard to hegemony over the masses.

From that time, a memory remains with me of an election fight that took place during the municipal council elections.

An election meeting had been called to take place in the synagogue of the *Altstadt,* at which time, speakers were to appear, both Zionists and from the *Bund.* The principal speaker from the Zionist camp was Hirsch-Chaim Geliebter. The Bundist speaker was supposed to have been Zak. But during the gathering, the Bundist was not given the opportunity to speak, and the Bundists then disrupted the meeting.

The second meeting already, was held in the *Bet HaMedrash* of the *Neustadt*, organized by the *Bund.* The editor of the periodical of the Bundist Youth organization, '*Zukunft*,' came to this meeting (apparently Mr. Nathan Shafran). The police got involved, and it came to a confrontation, and an array of people were arrested, among them also, the writer of these lines.

At that time, the *Bundist* Youth Organization, '*Zukunft*' organized itself, and began quite an extensive set of activities in education, and Enlightenment work (it had a choir, took part in the Drama Circle). I am certain that this activity is recorder by other Zamość writers, and so here, I will further relate (to the extent that my memory permits me) who were those first activists of the trade unions, who in their larger majority, except for a small number of exceptions, were mainly *Bundists*.

From the men's and ladies' tailors, the first leadership committee was: Getzel Schwartzbier, Yudel Platz, Anshel Eisenkopf, Gittl Gantz, Sarah Herring, Yossel Karp, Lejzor Finkman, Yidel Spodek, Shia Binn, Hinde Karp and others.

By the hat makers – Yaakov-Meir Topf, Pinchas Topf, the writer of these lines, and others.

From the commercial employees – Nahum Korngold and others.

From the carpenters – Michael Cooperman, Zalman Gershon Gewirtzman, Shlomo Schwartz, and others.

The shoe top makers and shoemakers in general – Lejzor Deutchgewand, Ephraim Zitser and others.

From the bakery workers – Lejzor Jonasgartel, Itcheh Mohrer, Little Areleh, and others.

A central body was elected from all of the representatives of all trades. This management committee was accompanied by a worker's advisory council, which represented the Jewish labor movement, directed their economic actions and cultural activities.

A few minor items in connection with a strike by the men's tailors. The smaller owners of tailor shops had already given into the demands. Two, as it just so happens, the biggest of the shop owners, Moshe-Chaim Grossman, and Volvish Richtman, held out stubbornly.

Several employed workers were at Moshe-Chaim's business. They did not hear the call to strike. They went into work. This was a set back to the action. On a certain day, a delegation from the union came into this business, and ordered the workers to put down their work. Seeing that the two Grossman brothers were getting angry at the delegation, and that the workers aren't budging from their places – -the delegation then did what it held to be necessary under the circumstances... after that, it was no longer possible to work at that location.

Seeing the destruction about him, Moshe-Chaim Grossman fell to his feet, pleading that he be left in peace, and he signed the demand made by the workers.

The workers at Volvish Richtman actually did go out on strike, only one, Yankel Buterman remained (he was called *'The Compromiser'*), who had convinced himself that he would be a witness at 'Fat' Volvish's (That's how the boss was called), and remained working. It was not possible to 'do' at Volvish's what was done at Grossman's, because Volvish had good connections to the *balebatim* of the city. Therefore, on a specific night, the strikebreaker was awaited, and he was set straight to the extent, that the following day, he passed up the opportunity to even show up at work....

Several workers got arrested as a result of this action. At that time, a member of the P.P.S., **Zaba** was the Burgomaster of the city, and thanks to him, all those who were arrested were released.

A very difficult action came to be carried out at the time of organizing the strike of the house servants. Of all people, it was the not-so-rich, but liberal households, close to the movement (the Brandweins, Peretzes, Epsteins) who imediately gave into to proposed demands. A battle needed to be waged against the Indlers, the Biebers, the Funts, the Templedieners, and other extremely wealthy Jewish families, who could not comprehend the 'chutzpah' of the housemaids.... the strike, however, was successful.

The economic situation in the city got more difficult in later years, (as was the case generally in all of Poland), and political reaction got stronger. An outward migration began, first and foremost among the working classes. As a result of this activity, important activists were torn out of our midst, and they went off to America, or Argentina, an part to Warsaw.

However, even from afar, we thought of our home city in general, and of the labor movement in particular. From America, a group of us former activists in the movement – Michael Cooperman, Shia Binn, my modest input, and others, did not cease to maintain a contact with Zamość, and to help its institutions.

We created financial means to support the I. L. Peretz School, which was directed by Chaim Shpizeisen; we sent help for those arrested on political accusations; we sent money for the trade unions and for a variety of other institutions.

# There Was a Life, and It Was Cut Down

**By Nekha Rok-Schwartz**

## (Memories of the Age of Youth in Zamość)

Images and pictures of my home city are intermixed among my memories – from my one-time and cut down Zamość, of our Zamość. Page after page of those bygone years open up in my memory – childhood at home; the young years at school; involved with community activity.

With eyes close, and I see the familiar image of the city, at the beginning of the *Altstadt*, the majesty of the copper 'cupola,' the roof of the Russian Orthodox Church, which winks at the second end of the city – to the gothic spires of the Catholic Cloister, and between them, like a binding link, the clock of the city in the tower of the magistrate's building, that would at regular intervals, toll the hour, reminding [listeners] of the passage of time.

Lo, it was just yesterday that we went for a stroll in the 'little orchards....' discussions are carried on in the fine alleys of the park, where on one side there are hills, and on the other side is the renown '*Stak Vasser*....[327]'

And here – here are the buildings, the representative official buildings, and the finer houses, which were woven into the history of all community movements of our time.

It was here that Jonah-Yeshiya [sic: Yehoshua] Peretz lived – the brother of I. L. Peretz; his sister *Hesseleh* Peretz from the hat business, her son, Itzik Goldstein – named for his uncle; and over here, lived Peretz's friends, Ashkenazi, the Geliebters, the Zederbaums, the Pfeffers – every name a milestone in the history not only of Zamość, bot also of the entire modern Jewish community movement. It is from these families, that both the founders of Zionist movements, and those who began to disseminate the Jewish Socialist concept among Jews, came forth – the leaders of the *Bund* and the '*Fifth*' year and also later in independent Poland.

Aimlessly, I wander the streets in my mind – our streets – here is the colossal Peretz Library – and you do not pause because of the wondrous canopied walkways, for the artful cornices, the vaults that conjure up the middle ages – I know however – that the Epsteins lived here, there the Mendelssohns, and further up, the Shpizeisens....

Perhaps we should take a walk to the old cemetery – there, Peretz's parents are interred; here can be found the memorial on the grave of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger; great Rabbis, well-known scholars, important people lie here in repose...

And a second thought rushes by – all of this **has been**, indeed was here **yesterday** – but is now no longer here... not one of those mentioned, or their children lives in these houses any longer; those who have departed into eternity, 'repose' not on their final resting places, even the memories of them, the grave markers, are no longer there....

And maybe yet another jaunt? – to the Neustadt, the neighborhood of the Jewish masses, of the common people with their needs and struggles – Let us perhaps go into the 'Poor Person's Place,' the collective Matzo Bakery....

And I see myself in my home, it is the Eve of Yom Kippur. My father had many things to take care of – as every Jew has to do on the eve of that Great Day — he went to the cemetery, he went to the bath, and one must go immediately to the confessional prayer, to fortify one's self. And I feel like I am standing by the annual, year-in and year-out ceremony of my father's hands outstretched to give a blessing, before he goes off to synagogue.... my mother is also integrated into these blessings – may a good year come to all Jews, and for the entire world....

And so we go out to see out parents off, and now I see how an entire city is on the move, being drawn there, to that place where the Gates of Mercy stand open, which have to take in the entreaties of father and mother, and of all Jews...

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327 A *stakan* is Russian for a 'tumbler' or 'glass.' The reference appears to be to a body of water, likely the lake in the park.

And where were the Gates of Mercy at a later time? Years later, when these very Jews of Yom Kippur Eve, these Jews of the *Tefila Zakah*, were led, were driven to their wrathful destiny....

But that was later – now, I am still in the world of memories.

My house, a home that was Jewish, suffused with piety and goodness. On the contrary, my mother would argue: first be good, then you will also become pious. I remember the way she would make sport of Baylah Zalmeleh Pflug's who would take the doorknob in her hand, using her apron, so that she shouldn't make the doorknob *trayf*! This was because the hand sometimes held meat, and sometimes held dairy....

The Sabbath day with us was the day of being 'examined.' My mother had already finished reading the portion of the week in her *Taytch-Chumash*[328] for the neighborhood ladies, and waited for the teachers to arrive, who would bring the children to my father to be heard out. My father loved to pose really vexing questions to the children, seeking to 'catch them on something.' Since my mother could not put up with this, she would help the children, as well as their teachers.

Here is Natan the *Melamed*, or Wolf Bik (it appears that he got this name because he was big, and fat, and had a thick black beard). These were teachers of the Pentateuch and composition. My mother assisted them. It was a little more difficult when Isaac Abeles would come, or Mordechai-Jospeh – the Gemara teachers. Here she would stand behind the teacher's back, and with eye signals, asked my father for a bit of 'mercy' for the kids and their teachers....

Afterwards she would distribute some Sabbath refreshments, and the teachers would drink the 'Special Sabbath' baker's tea, and snack on the characteristic Zamość salted cookies.

The years of youth took the place of childhood. It is already after the First World War – 1917. Pogroms – Kolczak, Petlura, Balkhovich – pogroms against the Jews and the Balfour Declaration. The Zionists open up Hebrew courses. It was then that I, along with my friends, Sara Hackman, Faygel'leh Orenbaum, and three girls, built a circle. Our Hebrew teacher was Shlomo Schwartzberg. His instruction is imbedded in my memory to this day.

The pressure to acquire knowledge grows, the desire to do something. A call arises within us to be useful to humanity, we search for how we can realize this call of ours.

A path opens up for me and others of that generation. At the house of Yekel Orenbaum, young people get together, among them Getzel Schwartzberg and Shia Binn. They led me into the *Bundist* organization.

New thoughts, new feelings...The first of May 1919-1920... new winds are blowing across the world, revolution in Russia, Poland is independent, and we, the young people are no longer something of a raw [sic: untried] element, we already know ways along which the struggle is proceeding.

The Neustadt is seething; From all the streets and byways, from the Hrubieszow Gasse, the longest in the Neustadt and the surrounding byways, from the 'Bomba' Gasse, from all sides, young people are being drawn – everything is flooded, the marketplace, the center, which divides the Neustadt into four quarters. The crowd is marching – the specific day aids the air; here we are, passing the 'Luxe' cinema theater. The banners are fluttering and the shouts of the solutions to achieve freedom and justice ring out... and opposite this demonstration, here comes the Polish Socialist Party, the P. P. S. It comes out of the alleys of the Browar side [of the city]. The banners join – the banners of the Jewish demonstration of the *Bund*, and those of the Polish group... internationalism – equality, freedom, brotherhood.

Decades separate me from that time, and yet I still feel the beating of my heart, the boiling of the blood, and the flood of emotions – – – it seems to me that I am marching **today**, in this fiery demonstration with songs being sung, and with

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328 Literally, the *Chumash* that was translated – into *Yiddish*. Also known as *Tzena U'Re'ena*, it was a tool of learning for Jewish women who generally did not receive training in Hebrew. At that, not all women had the good fortune to be taught to read and write. Hence the custom of having a literate woman read to others who could not do so themselves.

solutions to our struggle....Look, from the magistrate's building I can hear our comrade Zak speaking, from Hrubieszow... the world hears us!

And here we are, back from the demonstration. In the marketplace of the Neustadt, a finale of the demonstration is supposed to take place; Lieber Morgenstern is supposed to speak. There is some sort of commotion, a provocation, and then a tumult. The crowd dissipates.

My father greets me with the derisory comment: – what, from the shot of a pistol you ran away! – Fine heroes!

There indeed is an irony in his words. But also a connection to significance – such a parade! He suggested that in the forthcoming elections, he will take the ballots from everyone, but he will vote for Yerakhmiel Brandwein, that is to say, for the *Bund.*

Youth, storm and force – fight for ideals: old programs and new solutions. It is cooking with us. The Soviet Union is close, here comes the revolution also to us. And the pointed discussions ensue – the *Combund* arrives.

Our martyr, Artur Zygelboim stand before my eyes to this day, who carried on discussions with Yidl Platz, who worked in Warsaw. The latter was from the *Combund.* At the conference of the tailors, the *Combund* won. Again, a new chapter in Jewish Zamość.

Part of our activists go off to foreign places – some to the Soviet Union, some to North America, and others to other cities.

An intensive amount of work begins on the cultural front; a struggle for culture positions. Even though it is with great resistance, the I. L. Peretz Library is established; a Yiddish School Organization is founded, which created a Yiddish *Volksschule*; a Drama Circle. A local library is founded in the *Neustadt.*

As I take to leafing through these pages of my memory, I see how alive and vital my male and female friends all were – here I am, really, in the midst of the leadership group of The 'Y. Sh. O.' I see them, the active builders, the older generation with the colleagues, Shpizeisen, Shtikh, Jonasgartel, and the younger Rachel'leh Morgenstern, Meir Sternfinkel, and I am among them. Where are they today, these peerless builders of the culture? Singly, literally to be counted out on the fingers, they managed to survive this last catastrophe as if by a miracle.

Those who built up the library in the Neustadt did not have any better fate either – apart form myself, those belonging to the group that took this initiative were: Pearl and Sarah'leh Morgenstern, Yohanan Morgenstern, Moshe-Chaim Greenberg, Shimshon and Yekkel Feigenbaum, Simcha Zwerin, my sister, and others.

As if on the frames of a film, those performance evenings and discussions swim by; our presentations and study circle; the full location of the library, and trade union; the rows of books and periodicals....

And the gallery of speakers from faraway – the happiness of our youth in receiving all those who came to beautify us from all parts of the big world, and to enrich our lives – P. Markish and J. Opotashu; H. Leivick and Melekh Ravitch; Yaakov Pat and B. Sheffner....

I left our Zamość in 1928, at a time when community life stood at the highest level of activity.

On the evening of my taking leave, which by circumstance was carried out at the Neustadt Library, there were Bundists, communists, members of *Poalei Tzion*, and just plain young people – all 'colors' were represented, who graced our young percolating lives. As was inscribed in my going away album at that time by Leibl Rosen, the secretary of the library:

'Green, red, blue, yellow – mix all of you together;
All are brothers, all are sisters, from one father, and one mother.'

In this re-phrasing of I. L. Peretz, he wanted to impart the universality to his expression, that we had created around our library.

May these fragments of memory be a modest sprig to be placed on the unknown graves, where the bones and ashes of these dear and unforgettable ones were tossed – the builders of a generation, that was cut down.

# The Trade Union Movement

**By Wolf Kornmass**

## In the *Neustadt*

*Page 836:* *Leadership of the Woodcutters Union in Zamość in the year 1927. Right to Left, Standing: Yossel Greenbaum ('Brumistch'), Hirach Zissmilkh, David Biederman; Sitting are: Yossel Szyfer (Secretary), Volvish Kornmass (Chairman) and Elyeh Schatzkammer (Treasurer).*

*Page 838:* *Leadership of the Zamość Woodcutters Union in the Years 1930-1931.*

After the explosion at the Citadel in the year 1922, the entire [scope] of community life died off; the large Peretz Library was subjected to a pogrom; the greater majority of the parties and institutions, especially the Jewish ones, were shut down; the trade unions were closed. An exception was the woodcutters union, which was joined to the central Krakow office, which was managed by the P. P. S. This party was untouched. However, it was in the same location as the rest of the unions, and because of this, found itself unable to carry out any sort of activity. A large portion of the activists and leaders of the unions and parties were arrested, or they were searched for.

This condition did not last long. After the intervention of Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer, who was the deputy of the Zamość district in the Sejm, first the Peretz Library was opened, after that also the parties and the other institutions. The trade unions, however, could not be opened so quickly. From one side the chicanery and subterfuge of the police continued, and from the other side it was difficult to find an appropriate location for the unions.

Employers took advantage of this situation, who found an opportune time to cut wages, and in general to settle accounts with the 'strikers.' This forced a large part of the workers, and the activists of the trade unions, before everything else, to become self-employed. Part of them went away to unfamiliar destinations, in the larger cities, and others entirely out of the country.

Specifically, almost all of the trades were left without **any older workers**, and there were only young workers employed by those hiring labor. The conditions of those young people became unbearable, and grew worse from day to day. There was a threat of losing all the gains, that were previously fought for and achieved through strikes that had lasted for many months.

The thought of re-opening the unions occurred to a part of the young people. A number of difficulties came to the fore. First, permission was required in order to have a general assembly. So a number of us young people: the writer of these lines, together with the young people of that time, Mekhl Hackman, Itzik Oytzer, Israel Cooper, David Biederman, Nehemiah Kalechstein, Fyvel Drong ('*Koyletch*'), decided seeing that our woodcutters union was not officially closed down, that we should request a permit to have a trade gathering.

But the trouble was that the only ones who could sign such a request were grownups of age, and we were 16-17 years old young people at the time. The second difficulty was with a location – in the request for the permit, it was necessary to provide an address, where it was intended for the meeting to take place, and in general, the address of where the union was located. Seeing as all of us (apart from Itzik Oytzer) were from the *Neustadt*, we decided we will arrange to establish the woodcutters union in the *Neustadt*.

After many difficulties, we obtained a location for the meeting, from the parents of Israel Cooper, the son of Naphtali Yayechnik. Having the location, we went to the last secretary of the woodcutters union, to Leibl Cooperman, who at that time was already self-employed in partnership with his brother-in-law, Leibl Kleiner, to have him sign the request for a permit that would go to the labor inspector, in order that we be able to carry out the meeting. Leibl laughed at us, 'ragamuffins,' who would not be able to run the union, and he didn't even want to turn over the stamp to us, and the 'Legalization' (the official document) of the woodcutters union.

Having no choice, we, a group of young people, went off personally to the Labor Inspector, and obtained a permit from him to carry on the general meeting, not even informing the police.. Not a single older woodcutter came to the meeting; only the young people took part in it, and the elected leadership indeed consisted of exclusively young people: Chairman Itzik Oytzer, Secretary Wolf Kornmass.

First now, the absence of a location for the union was felt, from where it would be possible to direct our activities. First, no one had the desire to rent out their house to a union of 'strikers.' And on top of that, from the *Neustadt* as well.

We, the carpenters, however, learned that Yaakov-Moshe Weinmakher had begun to renovate an old inn, which he had received as an inheritance, changing it over into residences, and he had remained stuck in the middle because he lacked money to finish the work, so we decided to take advantage of the situation. We came to him with the proposition, that we will assist him to complete the entire house, carrying out all the needed carpentry work, and because of this, we should then have the right to make use of the house for a period of two years.

Well, we concluded a deal with him: we will complete the carpentry, and the house is ours for two years, and he and his family had the right to come there to sleep. We will be the *balebatim* of the house for the two years, and we have the right to take in other unions. Also, we have the right to carry out all manner of events in the house, such as concerts, speeches, for which we will separately have to pay a specific sum of money for clean up.

This news spread rather quickly over all of Zamość. Immediately on that same night, we already had a delegation from the tailors, saying that they wanted to sublet from us; later, a delegation from the baker's union also came to us, which at that time had conflicts with the bakery owners, and carried out their activities (just like the other unions) out in the street. The leather workers came also, and the commercial employees, and rented space from us for their union secretariats.

This enabled us to quickly succeed in the collection of the funds that we, the carpenters had announced, would be needed for the house. In a matter of numbered days, we had already purchased all of the needed wood stock to finish the residence.

But, here a new problem reared its head – most of our members, apart form the fact that they were young folk, and not qualified workers, all were employed in the furniture end of the business, and had never even seen how one does ''white work' (doors, windows, flooring), and the only one who had even a shred of a notion, and not too much of one at that, was the writer of these lines. However, we decided to do what was possible, and not rely on any 'help.'

In connection with this, it is necessary to take note of the fact that during the entire time, not one of the prior leadership took the trouble to even come in and take a look how the new wood workers union was coming along, for whose creation they had expended so much energy and indeed paid for with their blood, during fights with strike-breakers. There was one, single exception – he helped us with advice, and even lent us tools (because the 'white work' required tools that were different from those used in furniture making). This was Abish Schildergemein, who last lived in Buenos Aires, and passed away here.

It is necessary to note, that all the carpenters from the *Neustadt* voluntarily left their places of work, and came to help us. Even my personal friend, Mekhl Hackman, who had a nature in every situation to be the leader, and the dominant one, carried out my 'orders' at this work exactly as if he was never Mekhl Hackman... together with all the rest of the guys, he carried boards, handling them from before dawn, until quite late at night.

We did everything, in order to have the location ready by the winter. It was actually done by the time of the Holidays, and we had a festive housewarming to which a large number of people came, which could not fit into the local, and stood around in the street.

Thanks to the existence of the wood workers union, all the remaining trades began to organize themselves, and rather quickly, the unions of the tailors, bakers , leather workers and commercial employees, to their place in our location,

along with all the youth sections. This had the effect of causing the one older carpenter to join our union, from the prior leadership, Leibl Nudel, which had worked in the other one. Incidentally, he was the only mature member of our *Neustadt* wood workers union.

Our existence and activity compelled the prior leadership to turn over the 'Legalization,' from the central Krakow office and also its seal.

The two year that the union (more correctly the unions) was located in the Neustadt, were the most fruitful for the young people, which, up to that point, had no place to belong to. Every Friday night was utilized for events (meetings, literary discussions, evenings of singing, or speeches). It turned out that the young people wanted to absorb as much as possible, in order to catch up with what had previously been missed.

In the course of these two years, the members of the youth-sections (the active part of the unions) educated themselves, and later, when the unions united in the council of the professional class-unions, they were already the doers of the movement, together with the elected older activists, which had remained working in the other one. The number of the latter was very small.

In general, the situation was such at that time, that the element of the '*balebatim*,' did not want to have any sort of relationship with the union people, which for the most part came from the working classes. The situation was a bit different with the carpenters. Because of an array of special reasons, the children of families with means also took up this trade, coming form wealthy homes. They began to learn carpentry, not out of need, not to earn a living. Their attraction to this particular trade was because of the 'aliyah' to the Land – The Land of Israel. Here, indeed, they didn't want to, didn't need to work, but for the Land of Israel, it was necessary to have a trade, and construction trades there were among the best. But these individuals did not want to have any dealings with the '*schlepper*' element from the 'leftist' wood workers union; as it was called, 'not having any interest for the work of 'diaspora.' If, for whatever reason, one of them didn't move away to the Land of Israel, and remained to work locally, that individual did not join the union.

Now first, with our appearance in the *Neustadt,* the situation changed a little. Our salary actions; the struggle for better working conditions, and also our cultural activities, brought along an effect that a part of the [sic: unaffiliated] carpenters joined our union. This led to the fact that the wood workers union was the only one in our area which had an opposition from the 'right...'

An idealistic struggle arose in other unions for hegemony. Discussions took place everywhere, but among the proletarian parties, so to speak – between the *Bund* and communists. In the wood workers union (or as it was called in Zamość , the wood trade), there was also the issue of the various Zionist groupings, which were united among themselves, and amounted to a rather large percentage in the union. True, they could not create a single majority of their own, because they didn't have the people, who would be popular with the membership, and have the capacity to direct the union, but they always had representatives in the leadership, who were tolerated.

For the sake of the truth, it is necessary to set down firmly, that among them were very talented people, who often respected our accomplishments and level of activity in the union, despite the fact that they did not agree ideologically, and contested us over a large number of questions. It is worth recollecting my personal friend from my youth, David Biederman (David Israel-Meir's) in connection with an unfortunate incident that took place during his 'training' for *aliyah.* Both of our fathers were *Gerrer Hasidim* from the *Neustadt.* He served form many terms with us in the leadership of the wood workers union. His party point of view prevailed all year. That same Biederman, was not only once the 'fire extinguisher,' when a heated discussion ran out of control in pointed directions.

It is also appropriate to remark that in the course of the entire time that the unions found themselves in the Neustadt, which reeked of the underworld and violent people, there was not even one instance of a fight breaking out during a discussion, and discussions took place quite often – this was during the time of the Third '*Aliyah.*'

This is the way it continued until the year 1926, until our agreement with Yaakov-Moshe Weinmakher came to an end (incidentally, this is the very same Moshe-Yaakov Weinmakher which is also portrayed by M. Shtrigler about the clandestine minyan, that was organized at his house, and which Sholom Tzibeleh[329] uncovered).

We had to vacate the residence and seek a new address for our unions. At that time, the unions were well organized. Not only the wood workers, but also the tailors union (needle trades), which was the largest in the city, and encompassed all sections of the trade. The other unions also stood on a good foundation. We took the decision that were going 'back into the city. ( that is the way we expressed ourselves in the *Neustadt*).

## The 'Council' of the Professional Class-Unions

*Page 840: Leadership of the Wood Workers Union in Zamość, photographed on May 15, 1934.*

In moving to the *Altstadt,* we were, in fact tow well organized unions – needle trades and wood workers. Later on, the leather workers and immediately the confectionery trades ( bakery union). Even though the building which we rented in the Altstadt from Shimmeleh Cooper (Shimmeleh Saksar), was not as good and comfortable, a large conference room table had already been installed there, a railing wall (grillwork) with four small windows for the four unions. The previously young leadership had already gotten their licenses in the trades they practiced, and the solution to organize all of the unions is tossed about. This specific action was turned over to an organizing committee, which was officially known as '**The Management Committee**.'

This 'Management Committee,' begins its practical work when the general wood workers strike breaks out, in a short while later, the strike of the needle trades. In both cases there was a need for material help and the 'Management-Commission' implemented this support initiative. It is necessary to affirm that the population of Zamość gave of itself generously, both in monetary terms, as well as produce, for the workers' kitchen, which had been set up during the strike of the needle workers.

These two great strikes were carried out with a model of order. Up to that point, every strike was accompanied with manifestations of strike-breakers, and beatings. These general and unified strikes elicited respect also from that part of the Zamość working classes who up to that time did not wish to have anything to do with such issues. The most significant response came from the commercial employees, who began to organize themselves. It went so far as to the point that there was not a single worker that remained outside of a union.

The 'Management Committee' which encompassed all of the unions together, had an additional objective, and had to provide a legitimate framework, so that activists from one branch will be able to take part in actions and the work of a second, as for example, a tailor taking part with the carpenters, a leather worker with the bakers, and so forth. This was necessary, because in a given trade, there might have been a lack of activists and it was necessary to rely on support from the other trades. It was decided to create a 'council,' from the professional unions then already in existence. The first council consisted of the following comrades: David Fiedler, Israel Zitzer, Itcheh Schiff, Yaakov-Meir Topf, Yaakov Koyl, Chaim Ber, Itcheh Morder, Yaakov Mittelpunkt, Abish Spodek, Aharon Miller, Yossel Greenbaum, Shlomo Arkaveh, Itzik Oytzer.

## The Union of the House Servants

The first work of the 'Council' was to help organize those trades that did not have their own resources and also no experience in the unionization area. In the first place, was the element of the house servants. His union attempted to get organized over a long period of time, but to came together weakly. The 'Council' allocated a group of its comrades, who were supposed to help along the already existing leadership of the house servants. The number of members that had been attracted was negligible, in comparison with the number of households in Zamość . The comrades allocated

329 The Yiddish word for an onion, indicating some linkage to habit, appearance or trade.

to this task were: David Levensohn, Meir Zitzer, Wolf Kornmass, and Yossel Greenbaum (with the nickname of '*Burmistzh*'[330]), Israel Garfinkel.

In general, this was a very difficult and complicated situation. Most of the house servants were a rather separate element, almost all of them came from the surrounding small towns. A large number of them served at the home of their relatives, who used them in an inhuman way, not giving them so much as a free minute for themselves. There was another shortcoming. It was very difficult to take a girl out for a conversation. We already had organized about twenty girls who were house servants, but we could not send them to speak with the unorganized ones, because those suspected that they were coming to take away their jobs.... the mistresses of the house also adopted the tactic of maligning us, and interfering with our ability to speak with the girls, saying that we were going to take them, God knows where, and they had complaints against us, that it was not seemly for 'communists' to take these poor servant girls out on unsupervised outings.

The organization of this element was without a doubt more difficult than with all the other trades. It would happen here, that if a servant girl finally agreed to belong to the union, and when the mistress of the house would receive the first demand of the union (recognizing the union and giving the servant girl a day of rest) the mistress gave the servant girl a real scolding and immediately fired her. No strike here, as was the case in other trades could help here. If such a girl was let go, it meant that not only was it necessary to provide food and drink for her, but also lodging for the nights. And who wold take on a servant girl that was let go by a *balabusta?*.....

One must, therefore, hold in awe the commitment and the literally stubborn persistence pf the active members of the house servants union, which consisted of the following active house servants: Henneh Gross (today in France), Leah Keitel, Chaya Blei, and others – all from the outside, not natives of Zamość; Miriam Rosenplatz; later, Shayndel Kleiner, Sarah Mehl, Esther Hochman joined from the red factions with a little political allegiance.

After barely a year, it fell to us to be able to organize almost all of the house servants, who later took part in all of the activities of community life – wether political or economic.

The same was true of the comb makers, which up to that time had never been organized. Since they did not have the appropriate professional union, they were appended a s a section of the wood workers union.

Together with the broadening of the general professional movement, the 'council' also becomes strengthened in its activities, and becomes quite popular on the Jewish street.

## Libraries

*Page 843:* *A group of activists from the Jewish trade union movement in Zamość in the years 1926-1927. From right to left, first row, standing: Zelig Karp, Yekhiel Laffer, Lutek...., Elyeh Schatzkammer ('Kopf'). Yossel Kiniger, Yankeleh Koyl. Second Row, sitting: David Levinsohn, Binyomi'tcheh Greenbaum, Lejzor Gandz, Abish Spodek, Yossel Greenbaum ('Burmistzh'), Abraham....*

It reaches the point that the professional unions take over the I. L. Peretz Library, which at the time was counted among the largest in Poland. The library becomes full of visitors, whether in the reading room, or the check-out room, full of the young people of the working class standing about.

In that time, the library carried on quite a lively set of activities. For each period, the council of the professional unions (the commission, which was dedicated to the library) brought in the well-known personalities of the time to give speeches to us. I remember that at that time, at an invitation from the Library, there came to Zamość: J. Opotashu, Ch. Leivik, B. Eisserovich, Peretz Markish, Melekh Ravitch (who still had his beard), the swarthy one, Z. Segalovish,

330 From the Russian, for a 'bailiff' or a 'steward of an estate.'

Duber Malkin, and others. The commission set up for the Library consisted of: Itcheh Schiff (son of the *shokhet*), Yerakhmiel'keh Gartenkraut, Aharon Miller, Yaakov-Meir Topf. The librarian was Abish Spodek.

On a certain day, the police called the management of the library and ordered it to shut the library down, and during a specified period of time (I think it was a month), a liquidation meeting was to be called, at which only members of age could attend (no young people), under the oversight of a police functionary, and a liquidation commission was to be elected. After several days, the library ceased to exist.

Months later, at the intervention of an array of distinguished city balebatim, headed by the brother of I. L. Peretz – Jonah-Shia Peretz – took the library under their protection, with the intent of attracting whoever, according to their view, are capable of directing the library, at their responsibility.

Seeing that they, themselves, didn't want to, or were unable to, manage the library, they turned it over to the *Bund* organization, with **Yerakhmiel Brandwein** at its head. An array of activists also stood up to become part of the leadership from the ranks of the library-management from the prior years.

The library was no longer opened under its previous name, I. L. Peretz Library, that the police had shut down, but under the name of 'Tz. Sh. O.' (The Central Yiddish School Organization). The supporters of the trade unions, the entire populace that was sympathetic to the left-wing, did not subscribe to the library as a protest against the name change.

For the sake of the truth, let us recollect, that under the new cadence and new direction, the library carried on a lively activity, making use of the wide locations (checkout room and reading room). Speeches took place, bench-evenings. The auditorium was that of the school. Also, the 'red bloc' would often participate in the bench-evenings. Having this bloc in the library necessitated demonstrating to their adherents that on mitigates against one's own points of view. Later on, the unions created their own library, which we will tell about, later on.

## May 1, 1926

It is necessary to append to the great popularity of the 'council' with the trade unions, the fact that we were fortunate in the year 1926, to achieve an understanding with the Polish Socialist Party, 'P. P. S.' to carry out a unified May Day demonstration, and after long undertakings, we carried such a demonstration out. The celebration was so imposing, that it was not possible to stop recollecting the events of that first of May for a very long time.

In fact, this was the largest First of May celebration that Zamość ever had. Already, quite early in the morning, masses of people began to stream towards the 'Browar,' to the headquarters of the P. P. S. , where the demonstration was supposed to begin. It was a beautiful day, and the crowd arrived earlier that the appointed hour; also we, the leaders, could not contain ourselves, and we came early....no one was mission from the organization of our unions.

The train of marching Zamość workers was very large in this instance, it elicited a recognition of the solidarity of the marching Jewish and Polish workers. The train had already reached the Lublin Gate and in the 'Browar' there continued to arrive more and more rows of demonstrators.

When we reached the 'little orchards,' in front of the Rathaus, the traditional May Meeting took place, at which time, a variety of speakers appeared. After the speeches, the action was brought to a close. The representative of our trade unions proposed that we should extend the march route from here to the location of the unions. Hen the train moved, a large part of the general populace came along and escorted us. In this way, we marched with our union banner to the local, where the train of demonstrators dispersed.

## Municipal Council Elections and Self-'Parceling'

The success of the cooperative May demonstration and the success on the unionization front, especially the organization of the house servants, and the complete organization of the commercial employees, an element that came from the *petit*

*bourgeoisie* circles, which lacked a professional union, especially when it was designated as sympathetic to 'communists,' raised the authority of our 'council' even further in the general street. This brought to the situation where the thought arose that we should put up our own ticket in the forthcoming municipal elections. Our ticket did indeed experience success, and we seated four councilmen: David Fiedler, Itcheh Maurer, Israel Zitzer, Shlomo Rothman. In general, the city council had a socialist majority. Our councilmen made a considerable effort to see that our Jewish union movement should obtain visibility, so to speak, on the official street. Among the other achievements, it is necessary to recall the following: we worked in order to achieve the result that if a worker was compelled, because of unemployment, to travel elsewhere to seek work, he received a note from the Magistrate, and he received a train ticket with a discount of fifty percent. Also, each such individual could get a free ticket to the municipal bath.

When the Magistrate decided to parcel out the land area beside the apartments near the new electrical station (so-called 'Moshe Bader's Orchard'), thanks to the intervention of our councilmen, a rather substantial parcel was allocated for our trade unions, indeed, not far from our local. A building commission was immediately designated, of the following members: Elyeh Richtman, Wolf Kornmass, Yossel Greenbaum, and Moshe-Yiddl Bronfenbrenner, Tchipeh Freilach (Treasurer).

We immediately began to plan building our own home for the trade unions. Our first approach to the comrades who were *landsleit* in America, former activists of the trade union movement: Itcheh-Leib Herring, Mikhl Cooperman, and Shia Binn. The reply was positive. We received the first sum of 200 dollars. This gave us energy and we immediately stepped up to the practical work. We also carried out a fund-raising campaign in Zamość proper, and we bought the first of the materials required for the building.

## We Secretly Put Up a Fence

*Page 846:* *The Carpentry Business of Leibusz Pflug ('Kapusz') in Altstadt, in the year 1927.*[331] *First on the left, the boss, second, Wolf Kornmass. Most of them took part in putting up the boundary fence around the parcel.*

First of all, we needed material in order to fence off our 'parcel' (that was the popular way to refer to this place with us). The first shipment of wood was indeed bought for this fence. When we began to bargain for the wood with the lumber merchants, it became apparent that finished lumber was going to be too expensive, and we decided to buy plain material and the members of the wood workers union will finish it. Indeed, we did purchase the appropriate number of boards, rented our own joining tools to join the boards, which will end in a sharp point. The carpenters that we mobilized, worked the slats, cut and shaped them, and prepared them to be of the required lengths. The work lasted for two weeks. Only four people knew that the finished wood would come from my grandfather's yard in the Neustadt, where the material was being worked on, to the place where it was required, a distance of approximately 2 kilometers. When this 'material' was finally finished, on a specified Friday evening, all the members of the unions were already briefed, that we are to gather at the 'parcel' at 6 in the morning of Saturday....

At 4 AM on Saturday, before dawn, the son of the owner of the house, where we had the local of our trade unions, Ephraim Cooper (Ephraim Shimmeleh Sakser's) came riding on his horse-drawn wagon to us, into the yard, so quietly, that we ourselves were suspicious that none of our neighbors were awakened.

As soon as he peaceably passed into our yard, which was closed, and from the outside one could not see what transpired within, we, a group of ten fellows, who still did not comprehend what was going to happen here, began to quickly, and without noise, loading the [finished] wood work into the wagon. When everything already was ready, it became apparent that it was too great a load for the horse....and that the small horse would barely be able to get the load outside, much less over the *Neustadt*, so we felt literally lost....We will surely get beatings, but who knows how this was going to end. We had to take care, because we lived on the famous Hrubieszow Gasse, and we needed to ride past the Rabbi's house....

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331 Shown as 1727, but obviously a typographical error.

But we couldn't think for very long; it was almost half past six, and the community can begin to rise, and then all is lost. We risked it.

As soon as we rode out from our yard onto the brick-paved road, the little Neustadt began to arouse itself from its torpor on that Sabbath morning. The clatter was louder because of the [horse's] gallop, with which we drove the horse in the direction of the Lemberg Road.

Over the entire way, windows were opened, and sleepy Jewish men and Jewish women peered curiously at this unusual scene, where a loaded horse-drawn wagon is being accompanied by a group of guys and at the head is Hirsch Vojtchek's '*Anek*' (Grandson)... a part came out in their underwear, but the raised incline held us back a little.

In the course of a half hour, we barely made it to the 'parcel' with the sweat-soaked horse, where more than 150 young people, and older comrades, were already waiting for us, who were already digging the footings for the fenceposts, under the direction of the Polish joiner Miczuk, who had been hired [for this purpose], who later in the year 1929 was revealed as a provocateur.

During the course of the later early morning hours, before the city woke up, practically the entire membership of the trade unions worked in order to set up the boundary fence around their 'parcel.'

This event spread like lightning in all three sectors of Zamość. There began a running of the **mothers** (the fathers didn't come, either because they did not want to see the disgrace, or they were not permitted to come in order to avoid fisticuffs). Mothers begged their children, trying to convince them not to violate the Sabbath. It also happened, that a heated father would come running, who thought that he could forcible extract his son or daughter from the work. However, coming to the place, and seeing the camp of young people, he would cool off and go home...

What took place afterwards in the houses cannot be written about. We took the position that we had, at that time, pulled off a great victory, and at 3 in the afternoon, the completion of the fence was marked in a festive manner. Two prizes were given to the two most diligent workers. One of the prize-winners was Leibusz Gershtengroipen, and I no longer remember the name of the second.

## Enlightenment and Cultural Activity

After a summer of success in the professional and general community areas, in the fall of 1929 we began an initiative again to develop our old dream to open a library at the trade unions [local]. The culture commission developed an understanding with our councilmen in the city council, that they will intervene in the question of a subsidy for the cultural activity of the unions. We received a one-time subsidy, truthfully, not very substantial, a sum total of 50 zlotys, but this gave us official legitimacy to carry on with the cultural initiative.

A library commission was designated of the comrades: Abish Spode, Zilog Kara, Aecial Greenbaum (*Burmistzh*). As the first basis for the new library, the youth library, that had lain for two years with the writer of these lines in the attic, was transferred over. A book acquisition initiative was proclaimed. In a short time, our library was enriched with several hundred Yiddish books, and also a certain number of Polish books. As the number of readers was larger and kept growing continuously, we decided that for the approaching winter to carry out an undertaking for the creation of a fund to buy books, and using the first subsidy from the city council we put ourselves in contact with all the Jewish publishers. We paid a little in ready cash, and also issued notes. We received books from all over.

Again, thanks to our councilmen, we obtained the possibility to obtain the sitting hall of the municipal building under rental('*Die Resuren*') at discount prices. We made use of this privilege, and indeed, implemented a whole array of literary evenings, parties, which had great success and made substantial amounts of money for the book fund.

In time, our library became very popular, a portion of the refined, so called *balebatisheh* children used to drop into the library. The crowded hall became even more crowded. But, paying no attention to the limited number of conveniences, it was always full of young people, even on the hottest days. For a person, who came in there for the first time, into the

local, a peculiar montage unfolded before him: – servant girls and students hand in hand in the process of looking for something to read, asking about a book that had recently appeared.

The culture commission used its legal powers liberally, from having been officially listed in the list of institutions , and from enjoying the subsidies of the city council, and indeed with a wide reach, carried out debates, bench-evenings, and other literary undertakings.

## Our Landlord Cannot Rest...

I request the permission to add a specific detail, which will round out the extent and the relationships regarding our activity in that time.

The owner of the residence, where we had rented the space for the local for the unions, Shimon Cooper, (Shimmeleh Sakser), was a hard-working, laboring Jew, had a horse and wagon, was '*vozhe-voido.*[332]' On Friday evenings, after a week of hard labor, after the bath, and the regal Friday evening meal, he couldn't wait for us to finish our business (since as a rule, our activities usually took place on Friday evenings). He would battle with sleep for a long time, and in the end, he would harumph, and begin to disrobe, and get into bed. There was no separate bedroom in the house.

It was not rare that in the middle of a heated discussion, in the course of defending a specific question, one would hear Shimmeleh's sonorous snoring, in the highest notes. Not once, would he sometimes think, in his sleep, that one of us was smoking, and he would jump up with a shout, that he is getting himself dressed, and is driving us out – he does not want any '*Khaleh-shabesnikehs*' (Sabbath Violators). Bad enough he had a crowd of girls and young boys in his house... not finishing his lesson in morals, sleep would overtake him again, and we again heard Shimmeleh's snoring and the discussions resumed again....

## Artistic-Dramatic Initiatives

*Page 850:* *Facsimile of a Membership Pamphlet from the Needle Trades Workers in Zamość. This Membership Pamphlet is from Yitzhak-Meir Herring, signed by the Chairman Shia Binn and the Secretary, Lieber Morgenstern.*

Our own comrades would step forward with recitations, declamations and songs at our large literary celebrations. So the question became real with us, as to whether the 'council' should create a chorus at the trade unions. We joined up with comrade 'Vigdor Feldstein, asking him to take over the practical work and also to be the director.

Very quickly, we carry through our first large concert morning in the 'Oazow' Theater, where a number of our comrades appeared with declamations.

The question of forming a dram circle becomes ripe. At the closest sitting of the council, such a resolution is indeed taken up. It is proposed that a dramatic collective be put together. The following individuals are designated by the 'council:' Meir Zitzer, Mendel Mangel, Breineh Gildiener, Khaskel Szlak, Tchippeh Freilach, Gittel Kiniger, Accial Kiniger, Yiddl Finkelstein, Lanya Gliklakh, Wolf Kornmass. These individuals receive full authority to deal with the director. Jewish Zamość did not have a large number of people who wanted to involve themselves with theater. The one person, who had any skill as a director, was Bencheh Zeidner, but he was the director of the '*Y.Sh.O.*' (Zamość branch of the central Yiddish School Organization), and we did not even consider approaching him, that he should become the director. After long negotiations, we engaged Mr. Akiva Eierweiss.

He trained us to do 'Miriam' by Peretz Hirshbein in our repertoire, which was performed in the 'Oazow' Theater. Despite the fact that we were all beginners and almost all of the 'actors' were appearing on the stage for the first time, the performance came off with great success. This gives us energy to try further challenges.

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332 Someone who comes and goes.

From that time on, there was not a single dance, or celebration evening that was not interwoven with a variety of appearances by our drama circle (mini-scenes, songs, declamations). This would draw a large part of the young intelligentsia, that would come on its own to ask for invitations to the evenings – without an invitation, generally, no one was allowed to be admitted.

These fortuitous initiatives made the unions popular, and this led to the fact that even though we were under a leftist influence, the director of the dramatic circle of *Y. Sh. O.* which belonged to the *Bund,* agreed to tie up with us, and take over the direction of the drama circle of the trade unions.

Let us here recognize, that under the direction of Bencheh Zeidner, we first got the right sort of instruction. We occupied ourselves with carrying out Mendele's '*Der Priziv*;' Peretz Hirshbein's '*Der Intelligent*;' and other things. Bencheh Zeidner who directed, also took a role in the ensemble.

This, in general, helped draw close, and warm up a little the cold relationships that then held sway between the trade unions and the *Bund* and vice versa. This proceeded so far, that when the drama circle of the *Y.Sh.O.* put on Ch. Goldfadn's '*Gevalt, Ven Shtarbt Er*' – there was a need for a larger collective [performing ensemble], we were invited to take part, and we eagerly accepted the invitation. I, personally, felt proud with the fact that their drama circle invited us, 'the youngsters' and permit us to take part. Not one person from Zamość, who saw us that night in the salon, asked the question, – 'What's going on here?' – Are we going to have a blow up? – This makes no sense!....But the wonder became even greater, when they saw us as participants in the presentation....

Our Zamość circle became intensely popular and we were approached from the surrounding towns to come and give performances. Regrettably, we could not accept these invitations, because each of the 'actors' apart from his involvement, was a member of the leadership of this or that trade union, and this did not permit them to leave our posts. Only on one occasion were we at a performance outside of Zamość, in the town of Krasnobrod, a sanatorium, where we put on Peretz Hirshbein's '*Der Intelligent.*'

## The Youth Council

*Page 852:* *Members of the first 'Youth Council.' From Right to Left Standing: Shia'leh Krampf, Mottel'eh Goldhaar; Sitting: Mendel Finkman, Feivel Schatz, Mottel'eh Gerzon.*

With the increase of more and more initiatives by the 'council' of the trade unions, a great deficiency was felt in people with dedication, who would carry out the necessary work. It was then that the '**Youth Council**' was created, which was formed in the same way as the older 'council,' – from each youth section of the unions, two people were designated. The first 'Youth Council' consisted of the following comrades, to the extent that I can remember: Moshe'leh Zaltzman, Aharon Ebersfeld, Mendel Finkman, Nehemiah Eltzer, Feivel Schatz, Zisha Hackman, Mottel Hirschsohn, Yisroel'keh Bukovich, Yossel'eh Brand. (If I have left anyone out, I beg your pardon, after all, it is a story that goes back 30 years ago).

The 'Youth Council' had its two representatives, who attended the meetings of the older 'council,' Also one representatives of the 'council' attended meetings of the 'Youth Council.' The 'Youth Council' broadens its area of activity. Apart from the parallel professional activity between the youth that aims to take care of their interests, the 'Youth Council' is tasked to become the technical implementer of all the necessary technical work of the 'council.' It is necessary to recall one such piece of work that had a special character.

In the year 1927, the Polish police initiated a large follow-up campaign against the worker organizations, trade unions, and especially those that it suspected of having left-leaning sympathies (and what worker organization was not suspected by the Polish police of having heavy involvement in communist activity?).The little towns around Zamość had to put up with troubles that consisted of continuous raids frm the police on their locals. The police made use of an underhanded vanguard. Its emissaries (provocateurs, or they themselves) would throw illegal communist literature in the legal union locals, and then would come to 'find' these illegal leaflets that they themselves had thrown under, and

this would be their 'evidence' and the motive for locking down the organizations, arresting the activists, and to break the movement.

We in Zamość also prepared ourselves for the possibility of such provocations. We therefore decided, that we would not leave the local of the union unattended even for a minute – for the entire 24 hours of any full day, someone had to always be present at the local, in order to deny the possibility that uninvited guests would not toss in an 'unclean' package... this work was turned over to the 'Youth Council.' A strict regimen was instituted, without conflict, a group of young people was found, and a group of the older members, who guarded the local from any sort of 'surprises.' The 'council' of the unions was already concerned about the Police employee (*pzhodvonik*) Schelling, who understood Yiddish, and had oversight over the unions, that he should know that in Zamość the local was under guard, and that it would not be so easy to carry out their provocative tricks there so easily.

The young people also acquired prestige in professional activities. During a variety of professional actions, strikes, negotiations about salary matters, and other questions, the representative of the youth sections was already present.

## Inter-Community Relations

In that time, the years 1927-1928, a more liberal relationship was instituted in inter-party relations, and the 'heated' discussions ceased, that previously would end up in fights. True, there were no lack of epithets, such as 'reactionaries,' 'social-fascists,' 'yellow socialism,' and other such elegant expressions. But no organized assaults took place, such as disrupting someone else's meeting or undertaking. I remember one. Single incident from that time, it was one of a kind, and therefore it is worth recalling it.

At one of our meetings, an opponent, Hirsch Elbaum, a son of Yossel'eh Tomaszow, received a slap from a young 'patriot' (I think it was Yoshkeh Zitzer, a brother of Meir Zitzer). This elicited a great scandal and painful consequences. This incident was talked about for a long time. The perpetrator was given disciplinary punishment (in reality, we were found guilty ...) But it didn't come to an earnest incident.

In that time, I was invited to a literary review of the book, 'Uriel Acosta.' We did not believe that an activists from a trade union would be admitted to a Zionist organization, to an open undertaking, something that had, until that moment never happened. As I was at that time the secretary of the 'Council' of the trade unions, I decided to ask a few of the members of the presidium about this, and only first after getting their agreement, did I accept the invitation. When the chairman of the review, Yudeleh Wagner, needed to pick his two deputies (*lavnikehs*), I was selected together with a young girl member, whose name I no longer remember.

In that same period, the incident also took place that I have previously recalled, when the *Bundist* drama circle approached me, so that we should take part in the performance of '*Gevalt, Ven Shtarbt Er,*' which that circle had put on.

It was in this way that our Zamość trade union movement carried out its finest period of blossoming, until the Pilsudski '*sanatzia*' began to carry out its 'new' changes in Poland, which did not miss having an impact on our Zamość labor movement.

It was no longer possible to carry out general gatherings so easily, because... because the ceilings began to 'break open,'.... the walls began to 'shake,' ... the people who assembled were threatened with mortal danger... the elected city councils, where there were opponents of the regime, were dispersed and appointees of the commissars of the regime carried on as they saw fit. Investigations of the unions, parties and organizations became a frequent occurrence. Even though arrests were still as yet infrequent, the movement was broken; this gave rise to the fact that a part of the activists began to withdraw from active participation.

## The Arrest of Ephraim Cooperstein

*Page 854:* *The Popular Neustadt Ladies Tailoring Business of Pesheh-Reizl Rosenberg. – From Right to Left, Standing: Basheh Berman, Masheh'leh Mehl, Rachel Hoffenwasser, Bina Rosenberg. Sitting: Malka Katz and the Business Owner, Pesheh-Reizl.*

If the general situation in the country, which did not skip over Zamość, caused a general weakening of the movement, a reason came to us that shook us up very considerably. This was in the year 1928, when the police arrested our comrade Ephraim Cooperstein, together with Ber'tcheh Kornmass (my brother), then 14 years old.

They were tortured for several days in the military barracks. Ephraim did not hold out, and he revealed the names of the local trade union movement leaders to the police, who were at the same time members of the local communist organization. We learned of this simultaneously, and immediately as Ephraim was released by the military police, a specific group of comrades was waiting for him, which had the objective of investigating whether it was true whether he had told about what and whom.

It is worth telling how we came to find out about this. The bride of one of our leadership members by the library of the trade unions, Abish Spode, had a soda water concession with snacks not far form the barracks, indeed, near the prison. Among the patrons there were all manner of agents and secret police, among them also the secretary. On that morning, the secretary came to the concession to 'have a drink.' Being in his cups, he relates the following: –You have a little Jew under arrest there, and he is a *vzukh* (a hero), he was hit so often with the 'whip,' and didn't sing (that is told anything). By contrast, there is a big Jew, who after two blows immediately started to sing...

And it was in this manner that through the police themselves, we immediately go the information as to who can be found on the list, and who was 'sung about,'

After Ephraim and Ber'tcheh were set free, we knew everything exactly. Ephraim confirmed who exactly was on the list that he had written out. This individuals then had the opportunity to travel away to other cities, and who could, out of the country. We also have the opportunity to send the informer to Warsaw, where he is presented to a court of comrades and he is sent away to the Soviet Union, where, I think, he received a sentence of 4 years.

It is the needle trades that suffers the most from this incident. A new leadership is immediately elected, consisting of the following comrades: Shia'keh Platz, Reuven Immerkopf, Aharon Abersfeld (today in Buenos Aires), Zisha Hackman (died in Siberia in the Soviet Union), Yaakov-Meir Forim, Mendel Finkman (today in Buenos Aires)b and others, whose names I no longer remember. A little at a time, it becomes possible for us to normalize the work in the trade unions. But we never achieved the same level as the prior years of blossoming.

## The Petlura Pogrom in Zamość

**By Gita Ackerman-Grosser**

*Page 856:* *A Hanukkah evening in the Zamość hand workers union in the year 1937. In the middle of the group is Ben-Zion Lubliner, then the President of the community.*

It was on a Saturday evening, it took place at a return performance of our drama circle, being directed by Shlomo Reichenstein and Yohanan Morgenstern. Suddenly the door opens and a Jewish soldier comes in, who had served in the Hetman Petlura's army. He passes the following in this language:

– Children, go tell from house to house, that on this night, the Petlura troops are preparing to carry out a pogrom against the *Neustadt.*

We cancelled the return performance, and divided ourselves up into small groups, and indeed went off from one synagogue to the next, from house to house, and in the span of a half hour, the *Neustadt* was seething like a pot from this news.

Everybody looked for a means to mitigate the danger, preparing a place where to hide, and a part of the Jews took to an old Jewish method – 'to buy off' the decree... money was put together and a delegation went with it to the commandant of the military garrison.

The commandant indeed took the money, but he could not stop the pogrom, or didn't want to. At night, the Petlura troops, following the direction of the local Poles, fell upon the *Neustadt*, and began their plundering. The Poles, indeed, were accomplices to robbing the Jews.

When I reached home from the city, it was still tranquil. But immediately, shouts of danger were heard from a variety of directions. And among the shouts, I hear the scream of my friend, **Frimcheh Lusthaus**:

– Jews, help!

After this, the wail of small children in that house.

To her good fortune, at this heated moment, a Polish priest arrived – **Dzubya**, who literally saved them.

Further shouts were heard from across the beer brewery of **Saneh Garfinkel.** The *pogromchiks* killed the employee **Cohn** there.

The shouts became more frequent and stronger, they came from a variety of directions. On the Hrubieszow Gasse, near the synagogue, the wife of a butcher and her daughter were severely wounded. The gold teeth were torn out of her mouth. Many had their fingers cut off on which they wore golden rings.

We sat silently in our house, with us also was our neighbor's daughter, Rukhama Baylah Draykopf. Precisely at this highly tense moment, she was seized with a cough. Under no circumstances could she suppress it. The fear was vert great with us. My father was in the middle of reciting *Tehillim*. We heard a knocking on the shutters. This was our neighbor, a Bondar, a Pole, a Jew-hater, a known drunk. We had no choice, and we opened the door to him.

He had knocked because he had heard Rukhama's cough. He was awestruck to see that we were all in the house, not in a hideout. Well, he demanded that the 4 young girls that were in the house should go with him, and he would hide us...

We did not go with im in a light frame of mind. There was no purpose in refusing his help, despite the fact that we could not know what he would do with us. However, it was necessary to go with him, keeping quiet and following him, in order not to attract the cognizance of the Petlura *pogromchiks.*

We took leave of our parents, and went off with him. He took us into his smithy, where it was very stuffy, hot. Rukhama began to cough again. The smith became very upset. With her cough, she will attract the bandits to come here....

So he took us out through a secret door, led us into the garden, and there was a hidden cellar there. He led us into this cellar.

I found myself in a frighteningly difficult situation – Rukhama coughing, and responsibility for the girls who were with us, the fate of my parents – all this oppressed and tortured [me].

What happened afterwards, I do not know... on the following morning, I awoke into the house of Bondar. Beside to me was a doctor.

The doctor told me about the efforts made by the Christian Bondar, who had exerted himself to return me to consciousness.

I turned gray that night.

# Individual Personalities from Our Zamość

We are at the end of our substantive history. In the pages of our *Pinkas* up to this point, are found the chapters of our dear home city, from its genesis, through all of the periods of its life, creating and struggling for its existence until the Holocaust. In the course of the hundreds of years, which the Zamość community existed, she had builders and activists in every generation, those who with their personalities and with their work, helped with the building up and the development of a community, and made Zamość renown in the larger world. Many of these self-same individuals are mentioned in tens of the memoirs of our *Pinkas* up till now. There are special essays about a portion of these individuals, a portion of which have been incorporated into general writings.

However, the number of those n o t m e n t i o n e d is even larger. This was not done intentionally – the editors of the ***Pinkas*** had not received from everyone the appropriate materials about everybody. In the following pages, an entire gallery of individuals is presented, about which news has been received. This gallery is multi-hued, and a rainbow of many colors is reflected in it, which illuminated out city; every one of these people obtained a place here – and all the places are important ones. There is no priority in this section, as to who comes first and who comes later, there is no chronological order, and no group-selections. This was caused primarily for technical reasons: the material about the later activists was in hand earlier, and the material about the earlier activists was only now later received. And perhaps it is good that there is no sort of 'order' in this section about the individuals. Each stands in our memorial book in a place of honor.

In this section, there are individuals who passed away from this world in the normal course of human events, dying a natural death, and also martyrs, killed by the unclean hands of the Nazis.

Also, we did have an intent in this regard – let the generations and eras of our Zamość become interwoven, which with all of its hundreds of years become as one, one great example of martyrdom, as holy as all of the many communities that were cut down by the Nazis and their accomplices, may their names and memories be erased.

We are providing an accounting, that this section is far from being complete, and filled out. However, this is not our fault. All materials that was under our control were utilized.

**The Editors**

# Profiles of Activists

## By Chaim Shpizeisen

Once again, I bring here a series of personalities, activists in the socialist movement, people who were active in cultural doings, Jewish people of the spirit, free, enlightened and observant, with which our Zamość was sufficiently well-endowed. I bring those names that I remember; without a doubt, their number is much larger; perhaps these others are recalled elsewhere in the pages of this *Pinkas*. I am also assuming that even for those that are introduced here, many facts are missing, primarily biographical. However, not looking at these deficiencies, they must be in our *Pinkas* to be memorialized – let them be an example to the generations, about the spiritual wealth, of all kinds, which we had, and which this last calamity has annihilated.

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There was Jew amongst us named **Chaim Huberman**. He had a son, Leon, and two daughters, **Lonya** and **Andzheh**. All were students. They were drawn into the socialist movement even before the 'fifth' year. Both sisters were also among the founders of the '*Bund*' in Zamość. Andzheh remained in Russia with S. Ashkenazi, after the First World War. Lonya was in Zamość, and worked in the municipal hospital as a *feldscher* until the year 1939. She was killed by the Nazi murderers.

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We has a little Jewish man named **Shmuel Ashkenazi**. He was a scholar, an enlightened person, a sympathizer with socialism, even with communist tendencies. All of [his] children entered the socialist movement. He prayed every day. He was a member of a variety of groups. In old age, he worked as the treasurer in the People's Bank. He was a genuine pearl of the city. He passed away a number of years before the Holocaust. He was a childhood friend of I. L. Peretz. He was always the Honorary Chairman of the I. L. Peretz Library.

* * *

Jonah-Joshua Peretz – brother of I. L. Peretz. A scholar, a sharp mind, worldly educated; he was often a councilman in the city; beloved by Jews and Christians – everyone related to him with deference; a free-thinker; he supported all the institutions of all parties in the city; he intervened on everyone's behalf; he never refused anyone; a real gem. He passed away close to the beginning of the Second World War.

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**Hessia Goldstein** – the sister if I. L. Peretz; a woman full of intelligence; very straightforward; her two sons, Moshe and Yitzhak were students, and were socialists; she had a genuine Jewish heart. She had a confectionery business[333]. Her patrons were only Christians, and all the prominent Jews. During the Second World War, she was already an older woman; she was killed in a bestial manner by the Hitler-beasts, in her home in the ghetto, during an *aktion*.

* * *

A Jew was with us by the name of **Elyakim**. His family name was not known. He sat day and night in the Bet HaMedrash, and studied. During the Sabbath, he did not utter words having to do with the regular days of the week. His wife, 'the kerosene lady,' would feed him – she would go about selling kerosene from door-to-door. He didn't lecture anyone. He did not get involved in community matters.

* * *

Who did not know the Gorlitzer *Hasid* **Azriel Bokser** – a short, scrawny Jewish man, who prayed in the *Belzer shtibl?* He came from a shtetl near Kreszow. He had a wife who was a true Woman of Valor, who had a colonial business. During the Russian periods, she dealt with the officers. They were important people to them. They loved him, and thanks to that, many Jews were excused from military service. He was extremely pious, but **for himself** – not lecturing others; a simple man, not seeking aggrandizement.

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333 In this case, the sense seems to be a store that dealt in women's dresses (*Konfekcja damska* in Polish).

* * *

**Shmuel Grossbaum**, or as he was called: Shmuel'keh Dovidl Voveh's. A Torah scholar of a Jew; he had certification to be a ritual slaughterer; he was a Hasid, and became an atheist, a freethinker; erect in his bearing, and wearing long Jewish garb; active in community affairs, which had to do with education, enlightenment, upbringing. Did not seek honor; his children were educated in the Jewish and secular spirit.

* * *

We had a person known as '**Aharon Deftak**.' However, his [sic: real] name was **Aharon Goldgraber**. He was a Jew who was a scholar. He was very well read and educated. He was a son of the *Dayan*; Dressed in long garb; He became a freethinker. He did not conceal his free-thinking – he made himself a 'short jacket' and became a frequent visitor to the I. L. Peretz Library. Before he 'went bad,' he was a *Gerrer Hasid*. He enjoyed to engage with his former Hasidic friends. He was a fine, and good-hearted person.

* * *

**Yaakov-Meir Topf**. A son of an elementary school teacher. A hatmaker. He always worked as an employee. An enlightened socialist, who joined the *Bund*, after the 'fifth' year. With regard to his position towards the communist party, he was neutral. He was a perennial chairman at worker assemblies. For a time, he was a member of the management committee of the Peretz Library. He was a member of the management committee of the trade unions. Killed by the Hitler-murderers.

* * *

**Chaim Shtikh**. – Born to Hasidic parents at the end of the previous century. Received an orthodox upbringing. At the age of 15 he begins to learn languages, and read books. During the time of the Austrian occupation, he enters the ranks of the *Bund*, where he belongs to the ranks of the active doers. After this, he is one of the founders of the *Y. Sh. O.* and becomes its chairman. He teaches cultural history in the evening classes of the *Y. Sh .O.* He is among the most active to get the closed Peretz Library re-opened, and supports the Library in a material fashion. After the outbreak of the last world war, he takes up residence in Kremenic (Volhynia). There, he is murdered by the German-Ukrainian Nazis.

* * *

**Israel Zitzer** – a son of a butcher. He studied, and became a bookkeeper with the Markfeld brothers, and afterwards in the mill of the Cohen brothers. He was not understandable. In the elections to the city council, he was a candidate on the communist ticket. He became a councilman. He was honest to a fault. He exerted himself to carry out all directives, that the initiators of the ticket had provided. Because of this, he lost his position with the Cohens. After that, he suffered a great deal. He lost his mind. This sort of task was too much for his mental faculties. He was killed by the Nazi beasts.

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**Meir Sternfinkel** – Was born to Hasidic and intelligent parents, a grandson of Aharon Pfeffer. Apart from a traditional education, he also received a secular one. He was a graduate of the Polish Gymnasium. He joins the ranks of the *Bund* in the year 1923, and becomes the secretary of the organization. He is also the secretary of the *Y. Sh. O.* division in Zamość. During the 30's, he becomes a city councilman from the Bund, where he defends the interests and the dignity of the Jewish folk masses. An incident occurred with Sternfeld in the city council, which is among the very few in the history of Polish city councils. At a particular sitting of the city council, a 'patriotic' proposal was put forward by the Endekists, that the general of the Zamość military garrison should be given the title of 'honorary citizen of Zamość.' Meir Sternfeld came out against this. He justified his position by saying that the city doesn't have to award an honorary citizenship to persons that are seen to be hated by the populace. This general does not permit Jewish carriage drivers onto the premises of the barracks. He ordered that Christian carriage drivers should wear a metal badge on their hats, with the words: '*Drozkarz Chrzescianski*,' meaning a Christian carriage driver, in order that there be no 'mistakes.' For this act of 'chutzpah,' Sternfeld was locked out of his position as a councilman in the city council. He left Zamość after the Hitler invasion of Poland in 1939. He was killed in Bialystok by the Nazi beasts.

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**Leibl Zetz.** – A fanatic and totally committed communist. Honest. However, this did not help, and during the war he was exiled to Siberia. He constantly argued that all of the impermissible things were being done without the knowledge of Stalin. He also held, that it was important to find any means possible to make Stalin aware of these things. One time,

on a Sunday, he went off to the Regional City, 50 kilometers from the place to which he was exiled, and met there with an officer of the Red Army, and told him 'everything that he knew,' and requested that this be relayed to Stalin. Returning to the place of exile, he happily repeated: 'Now, it's going to be all right.' 'Stalin will know everything.' After the liberation of Polish citizens from the exile colonies, on the strength of an amnesty, he died.

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*Page 861: Portrait of Yerakhmiel Brandwein*

**Yerakhmiel Brandwein** – was born in the year 1887 to parents who had means, 'freethinking.' Up to the age of 13, like all the Jewish children of the time, he attends the religious *Heders*, but at the same time, also the Russian *Volksschule*. At the age of 13, his parents send him to Brisk in Lithuania, where he studies in 'reformed' *Heders*. There he begins to read books. Coming back to Zamość, he studies with the students Salek Ashkenazi and Aharon Peretz (then already *Bundists*) and takes the test for the 4th class of the Gymnasium. Under the influence of his teachers, he becomes a socialist, and in the spring of 1905 he is drawn into the *Bundist* movement. He remains its leader until the last times. At the end of 1905, he returns to Zamość and chairs the work for the revolutionary workers movement. He is arrested, and after spending 4 months in jail, he is exiled to the Vologda Province[334]. There, he becomes spiritually ill, and after less than a half year of being exiled, it becomes possible for his parents to bring him back home. Returning to health, he once again commits himself to community work. He becomes one of the founders of the Zamość Community Library and Reading Room, which later became famous as the 'I. L. Peretz Library and Reading Room.' When Poland liberates itself from Czarism, after The First World War, he is active in the trade union sector, and also in the educational sector. At the end of the twenties, he is elected as a councilman of the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.) And is elected as a *Lavnik*. Thanks to him, Jewish laborers and manual craftsmen gain access to all municipal projects and undertakings. He defends the interests of workers in general, forcefully and energetically, and those of the Jewish ones in particular. At a variety of opportunities, he battles the reactionary regime authorities of that era (the Pilsudski adherents) – the authority of the renown militarists. Brandwein becomes a thorn in the eye of the city elder of that time, a former Army Office. He permits him to be arrested for malfeasances. He is thrown into prison, but is then set free, because the [sic: retired] army officer has no evidence for his accusation. The *Bund* put forward Brandwein's candidacy for the second election of the city council. The city elder, however, placed obstacles. He called the wife of Brandwein, and literally threatened her, to make her cause Brandwein to resign. The local *Bund* organization accepts Mrs. Brandwein's request by a majority. However, he is elected as a councilman of the *Bund* in the community. Before the seizure of Zamość by the Germans in 1939, Brandwein leaves Zamość, to which he never again returns. First he travels to Lutsk. When he learns that his wife and children are to be found in Ludomir, he comes there. He voluntarily signs up to go to the Soviet Union. He is sent to Vologda, where he had been exiled to during the Czarist regime. He gets no employment there. He attempts to get settled in Moscow, Kiev, but to no avail. He doesn't fit in. From the Soviet Union, he travels back to the Western Ukraine, to Kovel. He obtains from the national 'Kantor' 'Les-pros-khoz' (wood-industry) a post at his establishment, with wood working, in the city of Maniewicz, not far from Kovel. There, he is killed by the Nazis, together with his wife and two children.

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*Page 862: Hirsch Fruchtgarten*

**Hirsch Fruchtgarten.** – Born in Zamość in the year 1888, to Hasidic parents. He was taught and educated in orthodox *Heders*. Influenced by the Enlightened atmosphere in Zamość, he began o read, and to study languages. In the year 1905-1906 he is drawn into the ranks of the '*Youth-Bund*.' When the reactionary forces strengthened (1907, 1908), when all the leaders of the *Bund* were not around – some in prison, some exiled or having fled – Hirsch stepped into the leadership. He is exiled. In the exile journey, he meets up with a *Bundist*, Paula Boxenbaum, with whom he gets married. He returns from exile, and takes up residence in Chelm, where he worked as a bookkeeper, and his wife had

[334] During the nineteenth century, Vologda gained notoriety as a place of exile for political prisoners. Among its most famous inhabitants-in-exile were: Peter Lavrov, a revolutionary populist exiled to Vologda Province from 1867 until 1870, when he escaped to Paris; and Joseph Djugashvili (Stalin), who was exiled to Vologda and the surrounding towns three times between 1909 and 1912, Each time he was able to escape after a few months, a leniency that would have been unthinkable under his Gulag system.

a fashion salon. He is the *Bund* councilman in the city council of Chelm. In the year 1935, he and his family take up residence in Warsaw. Here also, he is active in the movement. Right along with all other Warsaw residents, he, together with his wife and three children, are killed by the Nazi murderers. His oldest son, Moshe, survived the war, and the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, and is found today in Israel.

* * *

*Page 863:* *Shayndl Hechtkopf*

**Hechtkopf, Shayndl**. – Born in Zamość in May 1911, into a working-class family. Her father was a tinsmith. Making a living in the family was difficult. The mother was forced to open a store for cookware in order to help in supporting the household. Shayndl previously studied at the Hebrew *Volksschule*, '*Kadima*,' and afterwards at the Polish National Gymnasium. She excelled in her studies, and her marks were the best in the Gymnasium, despite the fact that an anti-Semitic atmosphere reigned there. At the age of 14-15 years, being in the 5th class, she began to give lectures and many non-Jewish students made their way specifically to her. Her income [from this] represented a large portion of the household income. In 1932, the family moved to Warsaw, and she presented her credentials to the university. She graduated from the Law faculty, and was appointed as a judge.

While she was in the Gymnasium of her home city, she belonged, for a short time, to the revisionist youth organization, 'Masada,' which she left, and went over to the general Zionist Youth Movement. Coming to Warsaw, she joined 'Freiheit,' and the Zionist-Socialist Student Organization (also, her two younger brothers became members of the Zionist-Socialist Student Organization), in which she was one of the most active members, and she dedicated a lot of time to it. She was also active in the *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Party, participated in the leadership of the Peretz Library, organized education circles for workers, evening courses, summer colonies, etc. Alert and good-hearted, loved by all of the comrades. She responded to every calling made by the movement.

With boundless commitment, she remained at her post in the depression time. Tirelessly, and with great energy, she carried out the requests of the movement in every critical moment. She was secretary of the Warsaw party committee, and one of the most active people in the organization. She worked as a director in the people's kitchen, which at the same time served as a meeting place for the membership. She recreated anew, the Zionist-socialist Academic circle – together with Meir (Mark) Meirovich Ruth Maliniak. Meetings and discussions of the party committee would take place at her home. On September 6, 1942, she was arrested, and on the 10th she was taken to the death camp at Treblinka. The movement expended great effort to free her, but she did not want to leave her mother, who was deported along with her. Her name is found among those on the is of those 'Leaders Who Fell At Their Post,' who are recalled in the letter of the party to the United International *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Organization of November 15, 1943.

[Molech Neustadt – 'The Destruction and Resistance of the Jews of Warsaw' – Second Section: Those Who Fell at their Post, pp. 433-534. Tel-Aviv 5708 (1948)]

* * *

*Page 864:* *Yohanan Morgenstern*

*Page 865:* *A postcard from Yohanan Morgenstern to Molech Neustadt, the author of the book, 'Destruction and Resistance of the Jews in Warsaw.' The postcard left Warsaw on June 1, 1942, and was sent to Constantinople. The return address, Shakharson, is the former pseudonym, of Morgenstern Shakhar.*

**Morgenstern, Yohanan**. – Born on Hanukkah in Zamość in 1905. His father was a pious Jew, a manufacturer-merchant, also had an interest in worldly and national issues. Yohanan was educated in *Heder*, and attended 7 classes of the local *Volksschule*. He grew up in a progressive national-Jewish atmosphere, and remained loyal to it for his entire life. While still in his youth, he edited the periodical *Zamośćher Stimme*. In 1929, he was summoned by the *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Party to Warsaw, to become the instructor of the central committee. He assumed this position partly in the name of the League for Labor in the Land of Israel, and partly in the name of the *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Party. He was among those who popularized the ideals of the movement in all quarters of the Polish nation. He belonged to that type of individual who was a party activist, on whom the mass movements rely. He literally had contact with comrades

among the masses in the province, and he was one of the committed and loyal chief activists during over more than two decades. Not many comrades visited so thoroughly the large, expanse of Polish Jewry in its fullness from one end of the country to the other, – whether this was Eastern Galicia, or the Vilna Region, Zaglembia or the Bialystok Region. The comrades from these locations, always received him with satisfaction. He was a talented orator, and also, with his external appearance, he inspired sympathy among the comrades. His personal inclination was to literary themes. However, the needs of the movement directed him on other paths. He was employed at the daily newspaper of the Party, '*Befreiung-Arbeiter-Stimme*,' and later in the daily newspaper, '*Das Wort*' (under the pseudonym Y. Shakhar). He portrayed life in the provinces in small works, he delineated ugliness, and fought for improvements. He visited the Holy Land and during a period of several weeks, traveled throughout the land, and learned about the problems and happenings. From that time on, he dreamed of freeing himself from party work in Poland, in order to take up residence in the Land of Israel.

In the final years before the war, he was among the active members in the central committee of the party, and in its name, he also was active in the Bureau of the Jewish World Congress. Almost immediately before the outbreak of the war, he was designated as the secretary of the League for Labor in Israel in Poland. He was a delegate from the Poalei-Tzion (Tz. S.) Party to the 21st Zionist Congress in Geneva, and held many conferences and discussions with comrades from the Land of Israel on the strength of his prior activity of working in the Land of Israel and in Poland in the recent period.

During the German occupation, he was arrested and sent to a labor camp in Lublin. Many successful attempts were made to help him escape from there. He returned to Warsaw, and was among those, around whom the underground activity of the *Poalei-Tzion* (Tz. S.) Party coalesced. It was only in these gruesome years, that his commitment and loyalty revealed itself in full force. He was at the head of *JEAS*, he was the chairman of the movement in 'Joint,' he was one of those, whose task it was to maintain contact with the outside world, and up to a short time before his death, we had much news from him. He was one of the principal initiators and member of the presidium of the Jewish National Committee. He belonged to the staff of the Jewish Fighting Organization – the leader of its finance division. His participation is mentioned in all areas, partaking in all activities. Lastly, he worked as a construction worker in the '*kleines shoppe*,' with Schultz. During the principal battles, in April 1943, he was in the Warsaw Ghetto. In the first telegrams to the outside, about the ghetto rebellion, his name appears among the signatories in the name of the Jewish National Committee. On April 29, he was in the group that was taken out by way of the sewer system on the Aryan side. About 30 members of the movement were hidden in a bunker of the Jewish Resistance Organization on the Aryan side, at Agrodova 29. On May 6, the Gestapo discovered the bunker, and all those found there were taken to the S.S. Commander. The women were sent to the death camp of Majdanek and the men were murdered on the spot (among them was also the member of the Poalei-Tzion (Tz. S.) Party in Warsaw, Yehoshua Malevanchik, an energetic fighter from the Jewish Resistance Organization, who was a talented and loyal employee of the espionage division). Yohanan Morgenstern's name is found in the lists of the fallen in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, in the fighting division of Poalei-Tzion (Tz. S.). From a very well-branched out family – a wife, parents, 4 sisters, and a brother, only his older sister, Esther, remained alive, who came to Israel at the end of 1947, and a second sister, Pearl, who went off to Russia in 1940.

[The notice, as well as the photograph of the post card are from the book by M. Neustadt, about the battle and destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto, published in Tel-Aviv, 5708 (1948).]

## Abraham Zvi Ehrlich (Hershkeh) ז"ל

*Page 866:* *Abraham Zvi Ehrlich*

Born on January 13, 1918, one of the best of the youth that studied to become a *halutz*, pale, thin, scrawny, with a delicate and laughing face, which bear witness to a good-heartedness, and a commitment to the way of life that he had selected.

A student of the Gymnasium of the Jewish community of Zamość. The program of study in this Gymnasium was an exact copy of the teaching program in the Polish government Gymnasiums, the language of instruction was Polish, the studies in Jewish studies were meager, because the leadership of the Gymnasium were from the half-assimilated circles. It is no wonder, that as a result of such an upbringing, the concept of a national way of life was alien to most of the students, and because of the anti-Semitic wave, that had engulfed the Polish youth in the schools, the young Jewish students turned their eyes to revolutionary ideas, from which their entire salvation was expected to spring. Most of the students belonged to the assimilated circle of the so-called 'salon-communists,' who were strangers to the Zionist concept.

Hershkeh had the temerity to swim against the current, and his commitment to the Zionist-socialist concept was boundless, he was intensely active in practical Zionist work, in the fund-raising for *Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael.*

Endowed with great skills, he was one of the first students in the class, in which learning came to him with special ease, and he dedicated his free time in the evenings to cultural and educational work among the youth, especially in '*Freiheit-Dror.*'

He did exceptionally well on the graduation examinations, which were extra (because the Jewish Gymnasium did not have the same right as the government Gymnasium), and the chairman of the examinations committee, a Pole, and anti-Semite, predicted a brilliant future for him. His parents, from the 'middle-ranks' of the middle class, did not have the necessary means for him to continue his studies, and he was compelled to occupy himself for an entire year in giving lectures, in order to amass the necessary sum for continuing study.

In the university as well, he was active in the Tz. S. circle, this was in the time of the wild predations of the Endekist anti-Semitic students and when they proclaimed 'A Day Without Jews,' his proud nature did not permit him to knuckle under, he and one other friend came that day to learn at the university – and he got a gruesome beating that day from student-pogromists and lay ill of a longer period of time.

In the fall of 1939, fleeing from the Nazis, he became tossed into the part of Poland invaded by the Soviets, and then worked as a teacher of mathematics in the Volksschule of Svislucz (Bialystoker area), in the 6th and 7th classes. Because of his striving to come to the Land of Israel, he declined to accept a Soviet pass and he was then send to the Siberian wilds of Vologda by the N.K.V.D. He spent 15 months in the camp, doing hard physical labor, bad food, and deprived of liberty. His health was undermined at that time.

After the amnesty of the Polish citizens, after the attack by Hitlerists against Soviet Russia, he wandered into South Russia in the steppes of Uzbekistan, with a clear goal to cross the border at the first opportunity, and to reach The Land. Yet another year went by, of fresh wanderings, hard physical labor, an absence of bread and a roof over the head – his spiritual and physical strength were undermined.

With the mobilization of the Polish 'Anders' Milit6ary Force, the Russians suddenly transferred 400 Jewish refugees from Poland, to Teheran, who were located in Turkestan. They paid no mind to the opposition of the anti-Semitic 'Anders' Battalions, who did not want to accept any Jews into the Polish military. Hershkeh was to be found among these refugees. In Teheran, he made contact with an office of the Land of Israel, and in July 1942, he arrived in Israel.

Arriving in The Land, as someone who had been attracted by '*Dror,*' he joined Kibbutz '*Etz HaYam,*' in Atlit. There he found his brother, who was the sole survivor of his entire family. His sister was murdered by the Nazis, his parents, who were refugees in Russia, died there.

He was in the kibbutz for four years, and he was active in all areas of kibbutz life, and especially in the '*Haganah.*' Life on the kibbutz influenced him greatly, and it was there that all the energies of his spirit and soul were revealed. He married there, and a daughter was born to him.

A day came when he decided to transfer to another kibbutz. He was not given the opportunity to do this, and he was compelled, despite his wish to live a city life, to transfer to *Kfar Atta*. There, he worked as a construction worker, and he prepared himself to return to his studies at the Haifa Technical Institute, and to slake his thirst for continued education.

On May 30, 1948, he was mobilized into the *Haganah L'Yisrael* and was transferred to the '*Giveati*' Brigade. Paying no heed to his weakened health condition (affecting his eyes and feet), he refused to work in the military command structure, which was proposed to him, but rather he presented himself to be put in the front ranks of battle. He participated in all the battles to liberate the Negev.

In the battle of the night of 15 Tishri 5709 (October 19, 1948), he fell in the action to capture Sulikat. He had the great privilege of being among the ones who opened the way into the Negev. His memory, and the memory of his fellow combatants, who were heroes will never be forgotten by the Jewish People.

**Moshe Schliam.**

## Israel Rosett

*Page 868:* *Israel Rosett*

Israel Rosett was one of the most visible of the personalities in Jewish Zamość.

He was a member of the Zionist Party Council in Poland, and the chairman of the Zamość Zionist Organization. A councilman in the municipal council and a member of the leadership committee of the community.

He was the model of an honest community activist, known for his upstanding nature and commitment. The Jews of Zamość remember very well his energetic stands in the city council against the anti-Semitic councilmen.

Being active in many philanthropic institutions, he was personally among the greatest spenders, setting an example, in this manner, for others.

He was killed by the Nazi murderers in the year 1942 in Kremenec (Volhynia), where he had gone to on the eve of the occupation of Zamość by the Hilterists.

**Asher Zegen.**

# R'Moshe'leh Strekher-Zilber, נ"ע [335]

**By Yaakov Rothenstein**

*Ner Elohim Nishmat Adam* – Man's soul is a candle of God. The candle burns, and it illuminated with light – so long as the man lives. If the man dies, the light is extinguished. But only the 'surrounding light' goes out, the 'reflected light' remains with the living, nestling into the memory, and shines their like an Eternal Light.

It was in the year of 1908, and my need was such that I was a 'son-in-law being under support' at the home of the Rabbi of the Zamość *Neustadt,* of blessed memory. I was approximately 20 years old at the time. Through my window, I would see – every day, and possibly several times a day – a Jewish man walking by, clean, handsome, dressed immaculately, with an already silvery combed beard, with a patriarchal appearance, and with a straight step, and in general different from the average *Neustadt* Jew. And it was precisely this difference that intrigued me, to want to know: who is this Jewish man?

It was springtime, during the days of the counting of the *Omer,* between Passover and Shavuot, on a morning. Not far from the open window, the Rabbi sat and studied – deeply immersed in an issue, and I also was at that moment in the courthouse room – needing to 'look into' a book, and I hear:

– A good morning to you, Rabbi!

– A good year, Moshe'leh.

I look about – it is the 'interesting' Jewish man... I slide myself into a corner, perhaps I am not supposed to hear.... and a couple of minutes later, I hear how the Rabbi says to Moshe'leh:

– Regarding the second issue, we will talk at another time, because I do not want to disrupt my study.

And R' Moshe'leh answers the Rabbi in a friendly way, with a smile:

– Rabbi, when we retained you as a Rabbi, you already 'knew enough,' and you can relax a bit from studying...

This very answer made me even more curious to know, to know – **who** is he, this very R' Moshe'leh?

On that sam day, a *Shammes*, – R' Berel Pagoda – came into the *Bet HaMedrash*, and when R' Berel was at the point of already departing, I asked him to come into my room, and I honored him with a *L' Chaim*, and in this manner, speaking with R' Ber'eleh, I posed a question to him:

– Who is this R' Moshe'leh?

– Oh, you undoubtedly mean R' Moshe'leh Strekher – his family name is actually Zilber.

– So why then is he called Strekher?

– Oh, this is quite a story: at one time, R' Moshe'leh was actually a teacher– he taught children. He would also write briefs for the courts – he was not a lawyer – but he knew the work, and he would write them up free of charge for poor people, a very decent person, very decent, and finally, he began to work in, of all places, a brick factory, where bricks were manufactured for houses. He would straighten out the bricks, so they would be smooth, and that's why he is called R' Moshe'leh Strekher, but – R' Berel adds further – he is an 'enlightened' person, he is not a Hasid, he does not travel to, nor attend the court of any Rebbe, and believe me, this very R' Moshe'leh knows more that other religious fanatics

[335] Acronym for the Hebrew, '*nishmato ayden*,' meaning that his soul is in Eden (i.e. deceased).

who hold themselves to be big *Hasidim*. R' Moshe'leh is a smart man, a happy person, you need to hear some of his *bon mots* – they are profound... a really special person...

A day later, I was already personally acquainted with R' Moshe'leh. How does the expression go: where there is a will – there is a way. True, I was a 20 year-old, and he, a 60 year-old, but the difference in our ages was not a barrier to our friendship. And immediately after our first meeting, we became intoxicated with mutual friendship. Our names got switched: instead of R' Moshe'leh Strekher – friend Zilber; and instead of the Rabbi's R' Yankel'eh – friend Rothenstein...

It is not possible to forget, that one time, in an intimate conversation, when I had asked my friend Zilber: can you exp0lain to me, how a Jew like yourself comes to work in a brick factory? – And the answer came immediately: – I hold very strongly by the saying in *Pirkei Avot*, that any learning which is not also accompanied by work, is in the end useless, and also brings one to sin...

It is also not possible to forget one of our conversations, where my friend Zilber was practically embittered about the methods of Jewish education in the better part of Poland – to wit: Children are not acquainted with Jewish history, and not even *Tanakh*. With the Torah, there is only half a problem, because the portion of the week is reviewed each Sabbath, but Prophets and Holy Writings, this is practically entirely omitted, and if a young man happens to know a little of *Na"kh*, it is only thanks to [what he picks up from] the *Gemara*, in which he is likely to learn, 'and as it is said..' and also, 'why is it written,' and this gives the young Jewish lad a perfunctory grasp about our prophets, and in place of familiarizing a young boy with Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Micah, Zechariah, etc., his mind is perversely directed to the jurisprudence of 'an ox that gored a cow,' or 'gold is more valuable than silver,' etc. which it would be better to start teaching to a 15 year old pupil....

One time, I say to my friend Zilber: – Do you know that you are considered a 'free-thinker' in the Zamość *Neustadt?* And freethinking is thought to go hand-in-hand with apostasy!....

— Yes, my friend Zilber answers me, I know this. And why shouldn't they think of me as an apostate? For the strokes [against my breast] that I make at the recitation of '*slakh lanu*' are barely audible; the extent to which I bow while reciting '*modim anakhnu lakh*,' is not so deep as one bows before a nobleman; my three steps back at '*oseh shalom bimromav*' are perhaps barely three foot lengths, and my expectoration on the floor at *'kekhal hamonam*' is barely detectable, and the really important thing: I don't attend *Tashlikh*... Nu... is it any wonder that the *Neustadt* considers me to be an *apikores*?...

My friend, R' Moshe'leh Zilber, נ"ע, was a talented storyteller, it was a genuine pleasure to hear him talk about facts and inferences... he was also a cheerful and carefree man. He did not suffer contrived haughtiness. He loved simple folk people in general, and cultured people in particular. He did not take the measure of a man solely by the size of his store, or according to the extent of his dealings with the nobility... rather, he placed his emphasis on the quality of intelligence, of refinement, and decency. He also had a 'special love' for the Jewish working man and the masses.

I remind myself about one evening, about sunset, several Jews are standing about, having a serious conversation, and my ear catches: R' Moshe'leh is, sad to say, very sick, he suddenly 'fell upon'... when I heard this, I stood rooted with a terrible heat sickness. Well, the Jews shortly went on their way, since it was time for afternoon prayers. As it happens, the Gabbai of the Hevra-Kadisha happens to cross my path, Yaakov Koch, and I ask him: – Have you heard anything about R' Moshe'leh? – I am, after all, his neighbor, and I am just coming from there. Regrettably, he is seriously ill, dangerously ill...God help him... but as it happens, I saw something of a peculiar smile flit across the face of Yaakov Koch, so I ask him: – I think, rather, that you are smiling, how can that be? He answers me: – If I tell you, you may also smile. And he tells me, in the following language:

– Before I left, R' Moshe'leh calls me over, and with a barely audible voice, he says to me: Listen, Yaakov, tell your '*Hevra-Kadisha*' that for the '*Tahara*[336],' they are not to scratch the soles of my feet, because I am ticklish, and I will burst out laughing.

Being a 'son-in-law under support' was like a being yoked under a horse collar, not suitable to me.... and, as it was, commercial conditions made it necessary for me to return to Ludomir, and in this way, the thread of contact between my friend Zilber and I was cut – may his soul rest in paradise.

In general, my friend Moshe'leh Zilber was a man of the people, and an intellectual, in which wondrous creative forces lay dormant, but they did not find proper expression for themselves in the *Neustadt*. He stood heads higher than those about him, taller 'from his shoulders and upwards...'

It is almost half a century since I have left Zamość and my friend R' Moshe'leh Zilber, that beautiful bright companion and friend, whom I will never forget.

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336 The ritual purification of a dead body prior to interment.

# The Margolis Family

**By Chaim Shpizeisen**

A half century ago, the two **Margalit** (Margolis) brothers lived in Zamość, Berish and Hirsch-Leib. Both rich, Jewish, 'dressed like Germans,' who occupied themselves with the general welfare, retaining Jewish scholars in their businesses, who had a surfeit of means to earn a living.

The children all studied, and left Zamość. [Descended] from Hirsch-Leib, there remained in Zamość 3 sons, and a daughter – **Kleinerman**. She also was well-known for her activity on behalf of the general welfare. She took an interest in the *TOZ* Children's Home, and was the President of the leadership. She lived up to a few years before the [outbreak of the] Hitler War. One of her daughters was murdered during the Hitler-occupation.

The oldest son, **Yaakov** (among us, he was called Motkeh) was an engineer, lived in Bukhara, after that in Warsaw and in the end, in Zamość, where he was the municipal engineer. He comported himself simply, and loved returning to the common people. His wife was a former cook from our neighboring town of Komarow. All the wagon drivers from Komarow, horse and cattle handlers, had access to him; he would hear out their tales, helped them with their difficulties, assisted with advice and money. He did not involve himself in community affairs. He spoke a plain Yiddish. He was murdered by the Nazis.

The two other sons, **Naphtali** and **Ignacy**, were students at the [St.] Petersburg University. During the student strikes at the university, in the '90s of the previous century, they were sent out of Petersburg, and came to Zamość, where they then remained, with minor interruptions.

**Naphtali** was among the founders of the *Bund* in Zamość. He distinguished himself with his Enlightened work among the Jewish working class. His calling card were free lectures for those who were drawn into the movement. At the time of the stormy 'Fifth Year,' when arrests took place among the activists of the *Bund*, he was given an alert before the gendarmerie (where the Margolis family had connections) and he fled out of the country, where he remained until after The First World War.. At the time Poland became independent, he came back to live in Zamość, married Gutsha Epstein (also a former member of the *Bund* in the 'Fifth Year'). The wife managed a rich home, typical of the *balebatim*. However, Naphtali stuck to his modest demeanor; he spoke Yiddish; he wore his worn out student coat; helped all of the Jewish institutions, such as the Library, Volksschule, and others. He was murdered by the Nazis.

**Ignacy** held himself aristocratically. He dressed in the European manner. He took an interest in municipal issues. For a period of time, he was the President of the Jewish community. He donated a great deal to charitable causes; He was the President of the *Gemilut-Hasadim* Bank, and helped it a great deal. He was in the leadership of the Yiddish-Polish Gymnasium, and supported it; He helped to erect the building for this Gymnasium. A couple of years before the last World War the community had a debt to the treasury for the ill. To settle this debt, the treasury for the ill wanted to seize the building of the Gymnasium. Ignacy was approached. At that time, he was already sick. After hearing out the issue, he ordered that the demanded sum be paid.

There is quite a litany of stories told about him and his deeds. One of them is this story about the coach driver from Lublin. Being in Lublin, he had ridden in a coach, and the circumstance was such that during this trip, the horse fell. The wagon driver, a Jew, began to weep out of sheer sorrow. At that point, Ignacy Margolis handed him his visiting card, and told him to come and visit him in Zamość. In Zamość, Ignacy sent him to **Ploskia**, to the yard, with a check, and ordered that the Jewish man should be allocated a horse that would be satisfactory to him.... (see a second version of this 'horse story' in Moshe Kezman's work).

These Margolises are the ones descended from Yehoshua Margolis, who are often mentioned in the various works about the previous century in Zamość.

# Leah'keh Brokh

**By Sarah Shlafrok (Yankeh)**
(Translated from Hebrew: Zvi Gebet. Tel-Aviv, 1953)

It will soon be 15 years since she was murdered, and the heart does not wish to accept the fact that Leah is no longer with us.

The images of her life pass before me life like the frames of a film; healthy, erect, proud, from the time when we first met in Zamość, at the conclusion of our schooling. The wondrous blending of external elegance with inner intelligence in her personality. Her beautiful carriage, her quietness, drew me to her and we became friends.

It is hard to grasp, where did she draw the inner tranquility of her soul, in the time, when all of Jewish life at that time bubbled and stormed? From where did this wondrous harmony come to her, when everything about her was full of conflict?

When the war broke out in which Nazi Germany attacked Poland, Leah remained in Zamość. I met her when we were giving first aid to wounded soldiers. She fulfilled this mission with a serious quietness, immersing herself completely in it.

I will not forget the first meeting with Leah in Warsaw, at the time when the Zamość ghetto had already been liquidated. I recognized her from afar. I was alone under difficult conditions, and I was positioned as an 'Aryan' servant in a gentile home, which exploited me effectively for all manner of work. My clothing was pitiful. For Leah, it was the opposite, she was dressed very handsomely. I picked up my pace in order to be able to speak to her from up close. Leah sensed that someone was following her. She did not change her pace.

We met. We spoke very little, I inquired how she was sustaining herself. I told her of my situation. She told me that it was possible to obtain assistance from the 'Joint.' She told me that she was living at the home of a Christian family, and we decided that I would come to meet her at her residence, or in the street. Despite [sic: these difficulties] we met once a month. Other girls from Zamość came along with her. Each one of them told about their specific pack of troubles. All were surviving on 'Aryan' papers.

One time I met her, and she told me that she is being spied upon, and she has big problems. Her gentile mistress had told her to change the hair on her head, and Leah took this to mean that her mistress also has some part in her being investigated.

Everything did not come to an end with this. One day, I was told, that Leah is no longer alive. They came into the place where she worked, she was taken away from there, and vanished from that time on.

She was a delicate plant, a wondrous one, and she was uprooted from among us, and she was all of 22 years old when she was murdered.

Her persona will live forever in my memory.

# Sholom Shmucklar

**By Zvi Gebet (Tel-Aviv)**

To be a Shammes was a well-known occupation in the service of the community in the city, in a variety of respects; in prayer and study, in the synagogue and the Bet HaMedrash; they served the community at festive times – at weddings, at a *brit milah*, a bar mitzvah, and other events. For all of these services, they had the right to solicit a

couple of groschen from the relatives of those attending the festivities, and the invited guests, placing a plate for this purpose, and circulating among the tables.

After all the salaries and collections, the occupation of Shammes was a lowly one, and the Shammes was typically a pauper, always relying on the charity of the community.

It is this way that I remember the Shammashim of that day, **Yekhezkiel** and **Ber'keh**.

When one saw Yekhezkiel Shammes running through the street with a couple of small pillows knitted from velvet, with a tablecloth (also out of velvet), one immediately knew there was a *brit milah* in the city. In that time, 50 years ago, a ritual circumcision was conducted in the synagogue. For this purpose, there was a special Prophet Elijah chair, where the *sandek* sat, brought the child into the Jewish fold.

Mazel Tov! When one saw Yekhezkiel Shammes running with the canopy poles, one knew that a wedding ceremony was to take place on the Schulhof. In that time, almost all wedding ceremonies took place on the Schulhof. The bride and groom came, their parents, all the relatives, guests (invited and uninvited), and children. At the end, came the musicians and the Rabbi.

After the wedding ceremony, and a blessing over the wine by the Rabbi, the musicians began to play a cheerful air, and the entire procession marched from the Schulhof to the wedding hall. Afterwards there was a *Sheva Berakhot* celebration, and after that, *lashchinehs*. [337]

From time to time, the occasion would arise for escorting a scroll into the synagogue. The 'escorting' took place under a canopy, with music and carrying on, with song and dance – a regular Jewish celebration!

A bit of a holiday for the school children was a '*galivka*,'[338] a 'parade' for the Russian Czar, when the Rabbi would come to the synagogue, the Cantor recited a special prayer, music was played, Боже Царя Охранний (God Save the Czar...), and there was another bit of celebration – when the Rabbi went to swear in the Jewish recruits at the location of the Neustadt road. Where the division and its commanders were standing. Following the Rabbi was Sholom Shmucklar with a small box, containing a small Torah scroll.

*Shammashim* with us were fated to be perpetual paupers, and the greatest of these among them, was indeed, Sholom Shmucklar. On top of everything else, he was a hapless individual with no luck.[339] He was a very uneducated Jewish man, who could never find a way to be without dependence. He was the Shammes in the Bet HaMedrash, and there, Netanel'eh was also the Shammes. The latter was held up to be learned in Torah, and he was related to with respect. This Netanel'eh, when it came time between afternoon and evening prayer, when the congregation sat down in the Bet HaMedrash to study, he would walk around and distribute candles to the congregants – a single candle per individual.

He also was involved in the matter of allocating honors of being called to the Torah reading on the Sabbath and Festivals. By contrast, Sholom Shmucklar stoked the heating stove, saw to it that there was water in the barrel, and hand towels; pouring off the dregs that always remained. He always escorted the Rabbi whenever he went forth on municipal matters.

Sholom Shmucklar had an important and significant role during the eight days of Hanukkah. At that time, he blessed the Hanukkah candles every night. Groups of young school children waited for this with great impatience. Shmucklar

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337 Author's footnote: *Lashchinehs* – In the local Zamość Yiddish patois, this meant – the movement of the musicians to the home of the parents homes to 'play a mazel tov' before the ceremony, and after the wedding, escorting the bride and groom along with important parents to their home. At large weddings, the *lashchinehs* lasted late into the day. (From the Russian word, *lastkatzya*, meaning to fawn over. – JSB)

338 From the Russian word for giddiness

339 An attempt to translate the Yiddish sobriquet, *shlimazl*.

was called by the *Gabbaim* to bless the candles, and as he began to approach the lectern on the small *bimah*, the young boys began to chant like a choir:

– He's going! He's going!! He's going!!!

[That was] until he reached the Hanukkah candelabra. Then he began to prepare the Hanukkah menorah.

– He's preparing! He's preparing!! He's preparing!!!

– He's pouring! He's pouring!! He's pouring!!!

– He's lighting! He's lighting!! He's lighting!!!

And when he concluded the blessings, the young ones shouted out:

– Shmucklar! Shmucklar!! Shmucklar!!!

Sholom Shmucklar, who was, in addition to all of this short-tempered, on his way back from the lectern to the heating stove, would still want to grab one of the young boys, and give him a good twist of his ears. They knew this only too well, and they would stick out a foot [sic: to trip him], the result of which was that he would fall and be spread out on the floor. If, indeed, he managed to grab a hold of one of the group, and managed to twist his ears, then, to make matters worse, it would turn out to be an elderly Jew, who sorry to say, was not much taller than a young *Heder* student....

And so, it was left for him to wait until the following year, when this same 'honor' awaited him, to bless the Hanukkah candles in the Great *Bet HaMedrash* in the sacred congregation of Zamość.

## R' Shmuel Yitzhak Kornblit

**By David Kornblit**

*Page 876: R' Shmuel Yitzhak Kornblit (untitled)*

Among the activists that had an impact in Jewish Zamość after The First World War, the persona of my father, R' Shmuel-Yitzhak ben Avigdor Kornblit stands out most prominently. He was born in the year 1885 in Zamość, into an aristocratic Hasidic family. He received a very strict religious upbringing. He is drawn into community activity, especially religious activity even while still very young. While still studying in the *Bet HaMedrash* as a young boy, he created a 'Circle of Guardians for Torah Study.'

After The First World War, when hunger and disease ruled in the city, he was among those who created the '*Linat HaTzedek*.' Not only once did the very observant approach him with complaints – is it possible, how can he allow himself to participate in organizing balls and theater presentations for the benefit of the institution, where looseness reigns, may God protect us. His answer was: 'Let Jews be healthy – within a healthy Jew there will be a healthy Jewishness.'

At the establishment of the '*Agudat Yisrael*,' he becomes the Chairman, first with the '*Tze'Irei Agudat Yisrael*,' and later, of the '*Agudat Yisrael*' itself in Zamość.

He dedicates himself considerably to the '*Talmud Torah*' concerning himself with assuring its ongoing existence, and also for the content of its curriculum of study. He looks after the creation of a commission that will take up these issues. He wanted to transform the '*Talmud Torah*' into a religious trade school. In connection with this matter, he undertook negotiations with 'ORT.' The Second World War disrupted his plan in this respect.

When the German hordes seized Zamość, may father, and the entire family, abandon the city, along with the larger part of the Jews of Zamość, and they move over to the Soviet side. We take up residence in Koval. Also there, his home was a place of refuge for people from Zamość.

After this, the family is tossed about into the faraway Urals. Under the most difficult of circumstances, my father was a model of religious fidelity an observance.

Immediately after the Soviet amnesty for all former Polish citizens is proclaimed, the family travels to Turkestan (Kazakh Republic). This was in the year 1942, when the gruesome Typhus epidemic took its bloody cut from among the Jewish refugees. The dead lay spread out over the streets and roads. He organized a Hevra-Kadisha there, which went from street-to-street, from wreck-to-wreck, gathering the dead, and giving them a proper Jewish burial.

He also creates a help committee to help the hungry and the sick.

At the same time, he organizes the religious life there. He creates a synagogue, under the direction of the Rabbi of Dnepropetrovsk, and later the Rabbi of Biala. My father becomes aware, that 25 years before, the Jews of Turkestan their sacred implements in a filled in brook in the local [Jewish] cemetery. So, on a dark winter night, without anyone knowing about it, he went off to the cemetery, found the brook, and with great joy, brings back 2 Torah scrolls and other books, which he donates to the synagogue that he had created.

Seeing the difficulty in properly observing the Sabbath and Festivals, because of the absence of a Jewish calendar, he creates such a calendar – simply, he writes out such a calendar and distributes it among the Jews.

He continuously comforted those of his acquaintance – God will help, we will live to see the downfall of the Hitler-bandits. We will again rebuild Jewish Zamość.

However, the Red Army freed Zamość from the Nazis, and the dark, horrid news began to arrive from Poland in general, and from our Zamość in particular.

My father was utterly broken, his sorrow knowing no bounds – he leaves this world on 14 days in the month of Heshvan. He was brought to rest in faraway Turkestan, in the Soviet Kazakh Republic in middle Asia.

## R' Shmuel Reisen

**By David Kornblit**

Who among us in Zamość didn't know R' Shmuel Reisen? – the 'Father of the Jewish Arrestees,' the quiet activist on behalf of those detainees who were in need?

Quiet and self-effacing, without pomp and pride, without anyone's help, neglecting his business, he would go from house to house, from business to business, and collect the groschen here, a groschen there, in order to provide for the Sabbath of those who were without means.

And on the Sabbath, wen all the Jews would sit with their families at provision tables, R' Shmuel would go out with his 2 children (a little boy of 9 years and a little boy of 6), with baskets in the hand, and gather challahs from the houses for those who sit in the dungeons.

It was a long way to the prison – and he would drag his children there, who would help him carry his heavy bundles, in order to bring some happiness to the hearts of those who were robbed of their freedom, and from homey, family, Sabbath tables.

He was murdered in Ludomir. For an extended period of time, he had hidden himself in a bunker. One time, it was a couple of weeks before the liberation, the Nazis took note of him leaving the bunker, and shot him. May the Lord avenge his spilled blood.

## Israel Sheck

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

*Page 878: Israel Sheck (untitled)*

A Jew who was learned, and had a sharp mind, and knew how to learn very well. He was a student of the Zamość Rabbi, Rabbi Joseph-Shlomo-Shabtai Hurwitz, ז"ל. Simultaneously, he knew perfect Polish, Russian, German and Hebrew.

After The First World War, he worked in the municipal government in the bureau of registration. He is let go from his position because he refuses to work on the Sabbath.

Later on, he becomes an expediter at the railroad, where he remains employed up to the Holocaust.

He was a member of the revisions committee of the community.

He was killed by the Nazi murderers in the year 1942 in Izbica.

## Dr. Philip Lubelski

**By ERE"Z**

The following biographical details about Dr. Philip Lubelski were published by the editor of 'HaMelitz,' Aleksander Zederbaum, [whose] pseudonym was ERE"Z, in "HaMelitz," Number 7, 1879.

I knew Dr. Lubelski from my childhood, and I heard his story from my mother, she should rest in peace. In the house of my grandfather, R' Natan HaKohen, he was an assistant and teacher, by whom my mother and my older sister were taught. When my grandfather went off to Berlin, he took this assistant along with him. Coming to Berlin, he is influenced by the Enlightenment movement, and he took himself to education. He requested of my grandfather that he give permission for him to remain in Berlin. My grandfather did this, and he even recommended him to an array of local important people, indicating that they should offer him support. Indeed, he graduated from the Medical faculty (I do not remember if it was Berlin or Vienna).

It was wartime, and he became a staff doctor in Napoleon's army. When the war ended, he returned to Zamość, where he became the doctor in the hospital for the Polish military. He rose to the rank of Major.

Upon arrival in Zamość, h went immediately yo my mother (Zederbaums), whom he remembered by her first [sic: married] name after her first husband, R' Abraham Edel (the son of the Maggid Rav Yudel of Slonim, the author of '*Afikei Yehuda*'[340]) and proposed that he would become our house doctor without pay, because he had become wealthy, and did not want to take any stipend from my parents in the form of money. From time-to-time he would be given something in the way of a gift.

When I was in Warsaw in the year 1856, I went off to see the doctor in whose hands I was brought up, I was told that he had relocated there. As soon as I had said who I was, the elderly man got up from his seat, embraced me, kissed me, and tears appeared in his eyes. He began to interrogate me about the story of my parents up to their deaths. He made me take an oath that I would come to visit him from time to time, which indeed, I did. I visited him in the years 1857, 1869. These visits gave him much pleasure.

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340 Author's Footnote: See the compilation of Dov Ber Mandelbaum in this *Pinkas*.

In the periodical, 'Israelita,' which appears in Warsaw, I found an obituary about Dr. Lubelski. I found an array of details there about him that I did not know. He participated in a series of wars. He was aware the honorary order of: *Officier de Légion d'Honneur.*

He also had an honorary award from the Polish Army. In Warsaw, he had the reputation of being a rather great medical specialist, and important people came to be treated by him, military seniors, and the gentry. However, he also attended the sick among the poor, where he healed free of charge.

He lived as a Jew, and he died with the words of the '*Shema*' on his lips.

According to the description in 'Israelita,' thousands of people participated in his funeral procession, who filled the streets that led to the Jewish cemetery. There were people from the educated world, and the leadership of all persuasions.

He was born in 1778 in Zamość – died in Warsaw in February 1879.

## Feivel HaKohen Geliebter

Feivel's father – Zvi-Hirsch Geliebter, was a descendant of a family of scholars, writers, and people of many virtues. His youth was spent in the *Bet HaMedrash*, where he studied the Talmud with the Classical Commentaries, as well as looking into a variety of contemporary books of explanation and research text, which were found in the *Bet HaMedrash*. The will to fulfill himself through acquiring secular knowledge was aroused in him, and he began to visit the house of Joseph Zederbaum (the father of Aleksander Zederbaum) where there was a true 'Headquarters of the Wise;' R' Shimon Bloch, his brother Shlomo-Wolf and others would come there. There, he became friendly with Yaakov Eichenbaum, Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, deputy to the Kohen (who moved to Brod), Y. Levinsohn, and others – friends of the same age. There, he also began to study German and Polish.

He becomes a teacher, and earns a living this way. However, he was not typical of the teachers of our time. He loved the logical simplicity of the *Gemara*, and not the web-spinning of casuistry. Apart from the *Gemara*, he studied the *Tanakh* with his students, using Mendelssohn's '*Bay'oor*,' as well as the principles of grammar. He was therefore acceptable only to those parents who had sympathy for the *Haskala* and understood its significance – at that time, such [parents] were a rarity.

It didn't take long, and fanatics began to hound him, they argued – he as become 'corrupted,' he is a *Maskil*, he looks into 'Outside Books,' of the 'Berliners,' teaches foreign languages, and reads foreign books... because of this harassment, he was compelled to stop his teaching, and begins to give lectures ('hours') in Hebrew, German, Polish and in Mathematics. He would also write letters and applications in the language of the land.

R' Zvi-Hirsch had three sons: Feivel, Yaakov and Simcha, and one daughter. All were talented, but Feivel was the best among them.

Had he received a proper pedagogic education, he could have enriched the base of knowledge with is deep understanding and his wondrous insight, especially in mathematics. His father, who was occupied with giving 'lectures' in order to provide a meager sustenance for the family, could not properly dedicate himself to [teaching] his son. Apart from this, Zamość did not have a Volksschule at that time for Jewish children. It was impossible to send a child to a secular school – this carried the odor of harassment with it, and possible excommunication.

And it was in this fashion that Feivel spent his best years in the study of the Talmud with Classical Commentaries. First with teachers in *Heder*, and later on between the walls of the city *Bet HaMedrash*, where books were in abundance: *Shas*, Commentaries, Responsa, Explanatory texts on the *Tanakh*, and a variety of scientific textbooks about computation and technology, as well as Kabbala and exegesis.

The young Feivel began to peer into, and really study, these books which were found in the *Bet HaMedrash*. There, he had the books: 'Complete Arithmetic,' 'The Work of Computation,' and others. In his love for mathematics and geometry, he literally ingested them.

Before he showed himself to be capable of accomplishment in some learned profession, he was already consigned, as was the custom in those times, to be under support by his father-in-law (a baker), not a rich man.

Feivel was compelled to become a storekeeper of a food outlet, sitting there in order to extract a living for his family. In free moments – in the store, at home, or in the *Bet HaMedrash*, especially at night, he would continue to study. He strikes up a relationship (true, in secret) with the few educated people who were found in Zamość at that time. He also teaches himself German, Polish, and later also Latin and French. He also accustoms himself to read and write them perfectly. He doesn't do this to find a means by which to earn a living, but rather in order to be able to understand the works of mathematics and geometry which are written in these languages.

He first directs his attention to the work of Euclid; later he learns Euler's work, Wolf's and others of that generation. He is like a brook that doesn't lose a single drop of what it takes in.

Being set apart form people, nobody from his surrounding paid much attention to him; nobody knew that such a genius was to be found among them. To the contrary, he was often mocked, when they would see that the papers in which the butter or honey, or pepper, was wrapped, were written over with peculiar symbols, ciphers, calculations and geometric figures.

His great knowledge was unwittingly disclosed and he began to be spoken of in the city as a great scholar . ERE"Z (Aleksander Zederbaum) relates in his memoirs, the occasion that led to the disclosure, as follows:

> 'On a specific time, he (ERE"Z) was strolling with his friends among the walls of the fortress, and Feivel Geliebter joined them. When they got close to the new bastion, which was being built, Feivel halted, and in examining the work, he called out to the overseer that was there (the contractor was R' Hirsch Krasnopolsky), that according to his calculations there is an error. With his finger, he pointed to a specific spot. Those standing around began to laugh, but on the following day, the overseer conveyed this to the engineer, Engbrecht (with the rank of Colonel), the most senior of the builders of the fortress. How embarrassed were those who chose to laugh, when they saw, that the engineer ordered the structure to be taken down that had just been built up, and to rebuild it according to the way Geliebter had indicated.'

Because of his circumstances and situation, time and place, neither he himself, nor anyone else, gave him the encouragement to study fundamentals in a school of higher learning, covering theory and practice of construction and technology. He projected his day-to-day life, sat in his little store, sunken deeply into his books, and studied for its own sake.

Nevertheless, something does remain from his knowledge that is for the use of others. He applied himself to the discovery of a new system for the movements of a mechanical mill. He wrote once about this invention to Zederbaum. Aleksander Zederbaum heard afterwards, that Feivel Geliebter found a man in Warsaw, who began to publicize his invention. He invented even other machines – whether he showed any evidence of applying them, is not known.

Abraham Leon, a scion of Zamość settled in Kishinev in 1848 and thereafter, wrote in the Russian periodical, Хроника Восхода (1888), that many students who thirst for knowledge from among the youth, would come to him in the store, to hear his words. Also in the *Bet HaMedrash*, he would answer the questions posed by the young men regarding geometry and mathematics. For the interested, he would also give lectures on calculating fractions, mechanics, physics. He maintained letter correspondence with an array of professors about difficult questions in theoretical and applied mathematics. Engineers would find their way to him, who were working on the fortress, about difficult questions concerning their work. According to the words of ERE"Z, he wrote a book about geometry in Hebrew. His modesty did not permit him to submit it for publication.

ERE"Z personally was tutored by Feivel's father, Zvi-Hirsch as a 7 year old boy, in the year 5629 (1869) ERE"Z visited Zamość , and met with F. Geliebter, who was ten years older than him. They visited in the circle of his city adherents.

He died at the age of 80 in the year 5645 on the 11th of March 1888.

(From the obituary by ERE"Z, published in 'HaMelitz' N. 95, of 1888)

## Bronish Huberman

**By David Shifman (In '*HaTzefira*' Number 31, of 1892)**

The musical genius, Bronish Huberman was born in Zamość. It was of him that our Sages of Old said: 'Beware of the children of the poor, for from them will arise Torah.' His father, also, despite the fact that he was born into a poor household, exhibited great talent. He was the first one to attend the four-grade state school, when it was opened in 1872. The people of Zamość called him '*Tze Tameh*' (Begone, unclean one), and looked upon him ad one who forsakes the faith of his parents. The young boy made great strides in his studies. In order to further anger those who hated him, and those who didn't feel he deserved his rewards, paying no mind to the hunger that came from the poverty in which he found himself, he completed his studies in Warsaw. He became a teacher in the city of Bendin, and he is now a poet in Warsaw. Blessed is the father who has lived to see this. As to Zamość , one can say: 'There are many types of people who are born there.'

## R' Moshe Yehoshua Heschel Wohl

**By Yaakov Reifman**

Regarding the passing of the Bet Din Senior of Zamość , Rabbi Moshe Yehoshua Heschel Wohl [who passed away on 13 Nissan 5633 (1873)], the writer and researcher, Yaakov Reifman published a special article in '*HaMaggid*' of the same year (No. 19), under the title, 'A sobbing voice is heard from Zamość .'

The deceased, whom the notice writer knew personally, was among the most interesting of all personalities. He gives him the title, 'The Rabbi who is a great light, honed and analytic, in command of all aspects of law and jurisprudence, righteous in his ways, charitable in his deeds, and known throughout.' He was a son of the Rabbi of Turobin, and was himself a student of the well-known *Gaon*, Rabbi Meshulam-Yaakov Orenstein, the Bet Din Senior of Lemberg, the author of '*Yeshuot Yaakov*.'

Reifman portrays him as a man with the greatest virtues, especially his goodness, full of good deeds. He would distribute his money to the poor, and was modest to a fault. Before his death, he ordered that no eulogies were to be made, and on his gravestone no titles or praise were to be engraved.

He had a great pedigree, from a family where Torah and greatness were wedded together – the family of the legendary **Shaul Wohl**, about whom it is told that he had spent one night as the King of Poland.

## Mordechai-Joseph Kornfeld

**By Simcha Harrari-Kornfeld (Kiryat Amal, Israel)**

*Page 883: Mordechai-Joseph Kornfeld (untitled)*

The beloved image of my father accompanies me constantly; his spirit swirls around me always and everywhere; lo, to this day, I can see his loving smile in front of me; his friendly looks. Here he strides, with pride, and energy – full of certainty in his way of life.

He was born in 1867 to a simple family. He was educated in the shadow of the walls of the *Bet HaMedrash*. He absorbed the spirits from piety. He was set upon the path of traditional Judaism. Suffused with the customs of the older generation, but he also could take up the reverberations of the new chant, that could begin to be heard on the Jewish street.

He was a man of the people, and a committed worker for the general welfare, who also had an open ear for the concerns of the individual – helping with advice and action, whoever needed his help or advice.

He founded a modern school in the name of his daughter, who was torn away from the world in the bloom of her years.

He supported the Hebrew *Volksschule*, '*Kadima*' and also the Yiddish Gymnasium in Zamość.

His great important task was dedicating himself to the Cooperative Bank. He did everything so that poor people, hard-pressed, could obtain loans. However, he stood rather at a distance from the rich Merchant's Bank.

When The Second World War broke out, he took up his wandering staff, and left with the stream of refugees, fleeing far from the Nazi Beast. He reached Lemberg. And also here, he did not evince any signs of down heartedness. Even in an unfamiliar place, his home became a place where exhausted people came for comfort, where the despondent could imbibe some hope.

Also, in the far reaches of exile in Russia, he recalled the responsibility to those near to him, and happily tried, in keeping with the means of the time, to fulfil the commandment of 'love thy neighbor as thyself.' Under his broad and warm wings, many unfortunate Jews received protection and advice, with whom he shared the last of what he had.

After a serious and severe illness, he passed away at the age of 64. May these lines serve as a garland of flowers on his grave, far away, deep inside of Russia.

## Shabtai Hollesch

> The following obituary appeared about the death of one of the prominent members of '*B'Nai Zion*,' in Zamość, who died at the age of 25, Shabtai Hollesch, in 'HaTzefira,' No. 84 in 1910:

The deceased did a great deal for the development of the Zionist concept in our city. He was among the first founders of the 'B'Nai Zion' society and because of his great integrity and commitment, he was elected as treasurer. He discharged the duties of this post with great understanding and knowledge, because his heart was full of sacred feelings to his people, and he wanted to be of assistance.

When he was just a child, his father died, and he was left with his mother in great penury and need. From that time on, until today, he had a life full of pain and need, which literally oppressed him. However, he would not complain about his bitter lot, rather, he would find solace in his Zionist ideal, which he served with all of his heart and soul. It was only here, that he saw the hope for his people, and their success in the future. His cherished idea was the 'Colonial-Bank,' which was founded for the development of the *Yishuv* in the Land of Israel. A few hours before his death, when his severe illness intensified, he instructed his sister, that she should carry out all of his tasks. He very strongly identified with the situation of the worker in the Holy Land.... he was raised on the lap of Torah study, and its lore. The will to knowledge was very great with him. However, for known reasons, he could not realize his requirement to travel abroad, in order to round out his knowledge.

The terrifying news of the loss of such a dear soul has shaken all of the residents of our city. His coffin was escorted by masses of people on the final journey to eternity. Many shed tears.

## David Shifman

**By Zvi ben Ramalyahu (Chelm) – ('HaMelitz' No. 49, 1903)**

He was the last of the older generation of the first *Maskilim* in Poland. He accomplished a great deal in his life, worked a great deal, and exerted himself considerably. He was a friend and a brother to the *Maskilim* of Zamość – with ERE"Z, the editor of 'HaMelitz,' with Yaakov Eichenbaum (in *Luakh Akhiasaf* of the year 5657 he published a selection of poems by Y. Eichenbaum, which were in his possession). He was one of the students of R' Yaakov Reifman. The community that surrounded him had a very positive influence on him. He strove for a specific goal in life, and the circle of his friends, who were writers, also influences him to become a Hebrew writer as well.

From the day that 'HaMelitz' was founded by ERE"Z, in the first years as in the last, David Shifman took part as a permanent partner, writing a great deal under his own name, and sometimes under a pseudonym. He knew the Hebrew language, the old and the new literature. In the last years, he expended a great deal of energy to bring some order to his books, which he had worked on for many years. These are, a commentary on the Ibn Ezra, and a critique of all commentaries that had interpreted the Ibn Ezra.

... the material circumstances of D. Shifman was good enough. In his elderly years, he was not in the same sordid state as was the poet Natan Neta Shapiro, who often went about with an empty stomach, but did he sing.... Or like those Maskilim from those in the shadow of the Torah, where there wasn't even so much as a stool to sit on. D. Shifman was always cheerful and sated. With his passing (28 Shevat 5663, 1903 – in Zamość) Zamość sustained a great loss, especially the young people, the self-educated, for whom his house was open, where he would direct people onto a good path, and would give them books and periodicals to read.

## Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter

**By Dr. Yitzhak Szyfer**

(Translated from the Hebrew book, 'Zamość in its Glory and Denouement.')

*Page 885:* *Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter (untitled)*

Born 25 Sivan 5612 – 13th of June 1852.
Died 24 Iyyar 5691 – 11th May 1931.

With the death of Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, the last of an era has passed into eternity, whose inner beauty was poured out onto him. This era is still close to us, but it appears that it has vanished, and will never again return. The deceased was not a man of our generation, who is full of restlessness and wanderlust, with appetites and desires, with pursuit of frivolities without end. With Dr. Geliebter, possibly the last of the romantics of the old type was laid to rest in the grave. He was the romantic up to the last step he took on the earth, loving to people in his bearing and in his deeds.

Several years ago, I made the personal acquaintance of Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, though I had read about him already years back. I read, and found out about him in the memoirs of I. L. Peretz, where he dedicated many pages to his loyal childhood friend, 'to my beloved friend, Itzig...' and at that time I thought, was Geliebter indeed the way the artist Peretz had chosen to portray him? Or perhaps Peretz has given us an idealized portrait, which he had refined, in accordance with his good style?

After I had met Dr. Geliebter face-to-face, and we conversed for long hours and the gates to the soul of this 'old young man' opened up, I saw something else: Peretz did not gloss over anything. Dr. Geliebter was truly just like Peretz has apprehended him, and he remained that way until death: a loyal son of Jewish Zamość, from the days of Dr. Shlomo Ettinger, Yaakov Reifman, the brothers Shimshon and Shlomo Bloch, Zederbaum and other activists and writers of that city, whose names light the sky, like stars, in the chronology books of our history.

Jewish Zamość in that half of the 19th century was truly wondrous, within whose walls Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter grew up and received his education, that individual who had the privilege of later becoming a '*Maskil*,' and a community activist. Peretz calls this city, 'Little Paris,' and adds: 'A cit of Mitnagdim, with lofty thoughts, a Jewish kingdom, that knows its own worth, the wise and understanding.' In Zamość, indeed, there never was a religiously fanatical nest at to this day, a special magic hovers over the Jews of that very city.

Only in that fine Zamość, the residence of Graf Zamoyski, where the renaissance architecture buildings rise in their splendor; the city with its reflection from the marketplace and the specific colors – only in such a place, which is ringed with fruit-bearing fields, could this type of a Jew come into being, who in his spiritual wholeness, stood higher than the average Polish Jew. The Jewish mind and the Jewish heart integrated with each other here, and became as one.

I could be said that only here, on the earth of Zamość, could this type of Jew grow up, who simultaneously is a *Maskil*, and a *Hasid*. That's how they all were: Dr. Ettinger, Dr. Wolf-Ber Schiff, Yaakov Reifman, Peretz, and in the end, Dr. Geliebter, who died not long ago. Here were *Hasidim* and *Maskilim*, who melted these attributes together to a very high degree.

Here is the story of the father of Dr. Geliebter – R' Feivel Geliebter. He weirdest sorts of legends circulate about him, most of which are quoted in Peretz's memoirs. He was a very rich man, and had a vast amount of property holdings; he was a *Maskil* who delved deeply into the 'Guide for the Perplexed' of the *Rambam*, who listened to the tones that emanate from the fiddle of that 'heavenly daughter' – the *Haskala*. An '*apikores*,' about whom it was said in the city, that his lot in The World to Come was not worth the peelings of a garlic clove.... and despite this, he was a *Hasid* in the most minute of details!

When he was already a man of advanced years, he would travel out of Zamość on his distant journeys, barefoot, hanging his shoes on a walking stick, in the manner of the peasants. An Enlightened peasant, with a high forehead; a peasant that feels himself to be a part of all creation. He used to say: 'A Jew is obligated to be familiar with the *Rambam* and be as healthy as a peasant...'

This was the kind of person who was the father of Dr. Yitzhak Geliebter, ע"ה. His son inherited his mind and his heart, the heart of a simple peasant, his wisdom and his health. He was among the first of the young people in Zamość, who entered the Gymnasium after completing studies in the *Heder* and the Yeshiva. In another city, such an occurrence would cause a 'revolution,' and such an individual that would have the temerity to do such a thing, would have been stoned as one who had renounced the essentials of his faith. In Zamość, nobody opened their mouths... that's how different and wonderful it was in Jewish Zamość. Peretz tells: 'When my friend Itzik'l (meaning Dr. Geliebter) registered in the Gymnasium, there was no uprising that took place against the *Haskala*. 'The Heavenly Daughter' was born here without birth pangs.'

About the year 1874, after he completed his Gymnasium studies, Geliebter came to Warsaw. Here he studied medicine for a number of years at the university.

Afterwards, when he came back to Zamość with a diploma in medicine in hand, he worked for approximately 50 years in his city in medical practice. He was always prepared to hurry with help and give his best energies for the people. His *landsleit* took great pride in him, and he was their comfort and solace, their help in times of poverty. 'Our Dr. Geliebter,' he was called. Yes – **Ours!**

He was very modest in his life; he would scrimp from penny to penny, as if it was not his own income that he had saved up during the course of his long life, full and splendid. He allocated his money for a purpose... what kind of purpose? From the outset, he, himself, did not know. However, one thing was clear to him, that his money did not belong to him or his heirs. In his old age, the purpose became clear to him. News began to spread about the Land of Israel, which was building itself up. These notices made a strong impression on Dr. Geliebter. – The fatherland is being built! A Jewish peasant! – Meaning, a *Maskil* and a peasant in one – just like his father, R' Feivel! In this way, he found a goal for his life, his work was not in vain.

The Jewish doctor from Zamość identifies with this sacred thought immediately. Even before The First World War, (of 1914), he decides to will his entire estate for the purpose of building up the Land. When *'Keren HaYesod'* is established, Dr. Geliebter travels to Warsaw, not mindful of the fact that such a journey is difficult for an old man such as he. He takes all of his accounting books with him on this trip, where all of the deposits are entered, both from the medical practice and also from his beautiful home, which he had bought in the city of his birth.

Arriving in Warsaw, he presents himself to one of the employees of the '*Keren HaYesod*,' and asks that they should run a control of his accounting books, so he may donate a tithe...

That was the way of this wonderful man, in the wholeness of his soul, in which he excelled with his great knowledge. He loved the *Tanakh* and the Land of The *Tanakh* – The Land of Israel. Year in and year out, he would disburse his assessment and brought his sacrifice to the altar of his great love. He was a *Hasid* in all manner and all details.

Many great thing transpired in the Land of Israel. The lofty concept that the modest doctor dreamed about in the depths of his soul, slowly became a reality: on Mount Scopus, a Hebrew University is built. Very soon, 'And Learning will Emanate form Jerusalem' becomes a reality, that knowledge will come from there, and be spread throughout the world. Even before the gates of the research institute on Mount Scopus were opened, Dr. Geliebter began to buy a microscope every year out of his savings. Every year, he gave a new expression to his longing for the realization of his high ideal. When the news of the celebration of the opening of the university in Jerusalem became known in the Jewish world, Geliebter comes to Warsaw to the founder and first Chairman of the 'Society of Friends of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem,' to the lawyer Stavsky, and conveys to him that he has decided to will his entire estate to the Hebrew University.

After this accomplishment, Geliebter felt, in his youthful energy, that he was a student once again – this time, a student that draws his nourishment from the wellspring of knowledge on Mount Scopus. All of his letters which he would send to the 'Society of the Friends of the Hebrew Univerity of Jerusalem,' would be ended with 'with greetings from the University.'

Think about this: this wonderful man carries the yoke of more than 70 years of living on his already slightly humped neck – but his spirit is still young, fresh, like the spirit of a young student!

It is necessary to recall that this doctor from Zamość carried about yet another ideal, to which he was bound with extraordinary love. He was one of the advocates of Esperanto, and he would say to me: the way that leads to the hearts of men, and to a permanent peace in the world – is Esperanto. He mastered the language completely, and it was in Esperanto that he wrote his work about the impulses to create capital punishment, about the concept of peace, and the like. He was among the recognized Esperantists in Poland, and would travel to the congresses of the Friends of Esperanto, considering these to be the leading representatives of all mankind.

When it was necessary, Geliebter also knew how to defend justice and honesty in a struggle. In the course of years, he was the Chairman of the Jewish community in Zamość, and was the defendant for Jews against the external world. The image of this old man will never be forgotten from my memory, when, with great difficulty, he would drag himself up onto the platform during the elections for the Sejm, in the year 1922 and later in the year 1928. He would proclaim the Jewish national platform in a high and spirited fashion, as if he were a young man.

That is the way he was, this good doctor – the healer of bodies and of the soul! It was a man like this that Zamość gave us – the city of Ettinger, Zederbaum and Peretz. This is the same Zamość, where the Jews that were driven out of Spain received asylum, which the great Polish Graf beckoned them to.

A refined spirit and a modest man together, a good-hearted person, whose spirit is bound up with the Jewish people. May his memory be for a blessing.

# Aryeh-Leib Naimanovich

**By Naphtali Naimanovich**

The following obituary appears in 'HaTzefira,' Number 238, of 1892, regarding one of the *Maskilim* from the Zamość coterie, Aryeh-Leib HaKohen Naimanovich, who died in Warsaw in 1892.

R' Aryeh-Leib Anshel HaKohen Naimanovich passed away on the Second Day of Rosh Hashana, at the age of 59 years. He was a Maskil, a loyal to his spirit. He was among the numbered few who stood between the old and the new generation. He wrote the Holy Tongue perfectly, and had a great knowledge of Russian, German, and Polish. He was a friendly man, and was beloved by the community. Years ago, his heritage became visible, when he was a land tenant in the Zamość vicinity. He was a supporter of those who lost their means of support during hard times. Up to his last day, he dealt honestly and was a bulwark with good advice and efforts for the members of his family and in general for anyone with a soul in sorrow. Those who knew him love him, and respected him, and they assembled in a large crowd to pay him their final respect.

From the Editor:

The N a i m a n o v i c h family, from around Zamość, owners of land parcels, are mentioned a couple of times in our *Pinkas*. N the work of Y. Bartis (pp. 376-413) is mentioned, from Zhdanov, that individual to whom the Jews who wanted to settle on the land had to come to (in the year 1833); In the work of Dr. Y. Shatzky 'Zamość and Peretz' (pp. 451-457) H i r s c h ' k e h N a i m a n o v i c h is also to be found, who was one of the most important of the wealthy people who were Maskilim (Footnote 6 on page 453). There isno question that the deceased, Aryeh-Leib Naimanovich, who passed away in 1892 at the age of 59, a member of this family tree, and possibly even a son of this Hirschkeh.

# Issachar Ber Falkensohn

He was born in Zamość in the year 1746. In his youth, he occupied himself with commerce, and in this manner came into contact with Germany.

His book of poetry in German: '*Gedichte Eines Pölnische Jude*,' which appeared in 1771, attracted the attention of the poets Goethe, Herzer and Wiland. In the Germany of that time, he became known as a poet with great talents. Thanks to R' Israel Zamość, his fellow city scion, he was admitted to Mendelssohn's circle.

He studied medicine in the University of Halle in Königsberg. When he received his title of Doctor of Medicine, he returned to Poland.

He was harassed by the members of his community, because of the thought that he was going to convert. He occupied himself with medicine in Hasenpot (Courland)[341], from where he moved to Mohilev on the Dneiper.
He died in 1817 in Hasenpot.

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Note by the Editors:

The prior biographical notice was translated by us from 'Zamość in its Glory and Denouement.' There, the date of his death is incorrect. It needs to be 1817, not 1781.

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341 The greatest number of Courland Jews lived in Hasenpot, where they carried on a considerable export trade; but at the last division of Poland toward the end of the 18th century only 896 males among the Jewish inhabitants were registered as citizens. They enjoyed all civil rights and were often chosen to fill honorable positions. Thus in 1797 the Jew Euchel of Hasenpot was elected councilman ('Rathsherr'). Jewish affairs were governed by a *kahal*; and the Jews paid a special tax on their synagogue which tax was called *Jüdische Capellengelder*.

In that notice, as in the case of an array of other bio-bibliographic sources, it is reported that he was the victim of harassment from his brethren b e c a u s e o f t h e s u s p i c i o n that he may convert.

In the Yiddish-German 'Encyclopedia Judaica,' published by 'Eshkol,' Volume 6, Berlin 1930, it is, however, explicitily stated that in the year 1781, he assume the Greek Orthodox faith, and that at the time of his conversion, he took the name 'Gavril Grigorievich.' In the same source, it is further related that inthe year 1817, he worked as a doctor in the military hospital; in Kamenets-Podolsk.

In all of the sources, it is reported that Issachar Ber Falkensohn was born in Z a m o ś ć . It is differently reported in the study of the martyr Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum. In his work, 'List of Jewish Doctors in Poland,' the birthplace of I. B. Falkensohn is given rather as S a l a n t i n Z h m u d . That is what is found in his dissertation work, which he submitted in the year 1722[342] to Halle University, where he received his Doctor's degree.

Incidentally, in the referenced work by Dr. Ringelblum, a Jewish doctor from Zamość, Shlomo Klein is referenced, who studied medicine at Frankfurt am Oder in the year 1762. There also was a R' Moshe Doctor from Zamość in Lublin, who died in the year 5515 - 1806.

## Oytzer Hirsch

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

*Page 891:* *Oytzer Hirsch (untitled)*

Born in the year 1906 in Zamość, came from a poor family, but they were *balebatim*.

He was very talented. He finished Gymnasium with the best grades, and later completed the course for medicine at Warsaw University and became a doctor.

He was a loyal and committed *Bundist*. For a number of years before the last Holocaust, he was a doctor in Ludomir. Almost every Festival holiday, he would come to Zamość to his parents. He would utilize these visits to tarry, and give lectures at the I. L. Peretz Library, the Yiddish School Organization, and group gatherings of the *Bundists*.

He was murdered by the Hitler thugs in the year 1942.

## Abraham Gerson

**By Shoshana Herman-Rikhman**

*Page 891:* *Abraham Gerson (untitled)*

When you would enter the Jewish Bank in Zamość, your eye would catch a picture with an understanding and engaging look that hung on the wall, among the official portraits of the leaders of the country. If it was a stranger, and asked who this was – he would have gotten the answer – this is **Abraham Gerson**, a Jew of Zamość, whose life was woven into the life of the Jewish community of Zamość, like a beautiful legend.

Araham was born to poor parents. His mother was the breadwinner of the family, she had a store that sold salt in the 'long *potchineh*.' This woman did not have any children for many years; those who were born, failed [to survive]. So, she traveled to a 'Good Jew,' and he told her – that she will bear a son, give him a name from the *Tanakh*, and he will have a long life, and that is what happened.

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342 This must be a misprint, since Dr. Emanuel Ringelblum was born in 1900, and killed by the Nazis in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1944. Very likely the intent was to print 1922, at which time he may have been student submitting a dissertation.

During his childhood years, the little *Avreml* demonstrated considerable skill in acquiring knowledge. H did not content himself with the studies in the *Heder*. He decides to enter the municipal Gymnasium. But this was not easy to accomplish. The observant Jews of Zamość looked considerably askance at those who attend this Gymnasium, they held that this is a way that leads to conversion. Quietly and secretly, the little Abraham went to the Russian Gymnasium every morning, which was located in the building of the former academy. At the home of an acquaintance, that lived close to the Gymnasium, every day he would exchange his traditional Jewish garb and put on the uniformed clothing of the Gymnasium and with bated breath, he would run to the Gymnasium, in order that no one who knew him would recognize him.

Abraham studied in the Gymnasium for a long time. After two years, he was compelled to discontinue his studies for financial reasons. However, these two years were sufficient to lay down a foundation for his own independent education, more comprehensive and fundamental. He was diligent in his studies even then, when the yoke of making a living for his family, which had become larger, fell to him.

He stood for the examination to obtain the title of a lawyer. From that point on, he became the spokesperson for his brethren in regards to the external world. He took no money from the poor regarding his advice concerning inheritance. Abraham Gerson quickly becomes well-known as a lawyer. Also, the official regime must recognize his exceptional skills and as an indication of this recognition, he receives three gold medals.

Thorough suffused with European education, in constant contact with the Russian and Polish intelligentsia, and in government circles, nevertheless, he is far from assimilation. Strong bonds tied him to his people. He was proud of his Jewishness.

To many of his generation, he was taken to be assimilated, because of his modern bearing, and liberal values. Higher than everything else, he treasured humanity, and the life of a human being was sacred to him.

On one occasion, when it happens that he was in Warsaw, he was a witness having to do with an attack by anti-Semitic hooligans upon a Jewish carriage driver. The policeman took the side of the attackers. Abraham Gerson went to the nearby police station, in order to bear witness for justice. His testimony did not find favor with them – 'Who are you?' to which the reply came, – 'A *mensch*!' Which was his proud reply.

In the time of The First World War, when Zamość found itself under the German occupation, he was the City Elder. They did this in a peculiar way. The occupiers sent out staff into the streets that they needed the first, whomever they will meet, to ask: 'Who is the most honest man in the city?' The answer given simply was: 'Abraham Gerson.' So they came to his house, and proposed that he become the City Elder. He indeed was this, for the entire time of the first German occupation.

In the time of the independence of Poland, the struggle for 'our and your freedom' was very quickly forgotten. The anti-Semitic rulers looked for excuses to throw out the Jews from all the prominent positions. They found a rumor, and as a result, Gerson was deprived of his right to appear in court. It was of no matter that he had again taken up giving help and advice for those who needed it. He stood on guard for justice. Masses of people would be attracted to his little office, who were seeking advice against the injustice that grew from year to year.

He became the founder of the Jewish Bank in Zamość, which did a great deal for the benefit of its interested parties, also for many years after his death.

The sorrow in the city was great at the time that he died, his coffin was taken into the Schulhof despite the fact that he was a freethinker. On his gravestone, the following words were carved:

**"Slow to anger, and easy to forgive –**
**And to us he was a shield"**

His entire personality is well expressed in this phrase. A good heart and wisdom – these were the prominent elements of his character.

About these type of people it is said: 'Woe unto us when we lose them, but we will not forget them.'

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## Shlomo (Lomeh) Luxenbourg[343]

*Page 893:* *Shlomo Luxenbourg (untitled)*

He was one of the best sportsmen among our young people. During the first of the evacuations of the Zamość Jews there stood a group of Gestapo and S.S. officers, who were supervising the *aktion*. Lomeh called to them out loud:

– You rotten murderers. You have just about lost the war, and for every Jew, they will shoot 10 of you!

An SS officer walked over to him and shot him on the spot. The following day, this was related in the ghetto, in the *Neustadt*, by ear. This heroic act made a great impression.

## Rachel Kornfeld

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

She was one of the most interesting female personalities in the city. Though she was active in the *Bund*, she was beloved and respected by all circles that were with us in the city. She was the initiator of all of the activities by us that were cultural activities. She was among the group who took the initiative to establish the Y. Sh. O., where she indeed plays the principal role. Her home is the 'place for guests' for everyone who comes as a guest in connection with culture – a speaker, an artist, the first reception was at her place, with a glass of tea.

Her house truly was a sort of club for the Yiddishists and the democratically sympathetic segment of the Zamość Jewish intelligentsia – here politics was discussed, literature, theater, and also Yiddish folk songs were sung. Her husband, Nahum, had a reputation in Zamość for being a good singer.

When the Russians retreated from Zamość, and the Germans came into the city for the second time, she traveled away to Krzemieniec – there, indeed, she is murdered by the Nazis.

## Emanuel Zoberman

*Page 894:* *Emanuel Zoberman (untitled)*

(A Manzim grandson). Born on September 25, 1925 in Zamość. In the year 1939, when the Red Army abandoned Zamość, he went to the Soviet Union. Being in the faraway Soviet areas, he learns of the great destruction of Polish Jewry, and he resolves to take revenge for the spilled innocent blood. In the year 1943, he presents himself as a volunteer to the Polish Army, which had formed itself in the Soviet Union. In the army, he went through an officer's training school. With the army, he went through a hard rod of battle. He participated in liberating Zamość, Chelm, Lublin, Warsaw and other cities, from German occupation. In fording the Oder River in Silesia, he was hit by a bullet from the murderous enemy on April 16, 1945. He was interred with military honors in Nowa Ruda, in Lower Silesia. He received many citations for his heroic actions during battles.

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343 As previously noted, the text is silent on whether or not this man was related to Rosa Luxembourg (note slight difference in spelling). This incident is also reported elsewhere in the *Pinkas*.

# Fishl Geliebter

*Page 895:* *Fishl Geliebter (untitled)*

Born about 1884 in Zamość – died December 14, 1935 in New York.

His religious parents, who had a saloon on the Zamość marketplace, were prominent and beloved in the city as honest good-hearted people. Fishl studied in Heder. When he grew up a bit, he took to secular studies, and had it in mind to prepare himself for the graduate examinations as an extern.

At the beginning of this century, a *Bundist* organization was established in Zamość. Fishl, in a cut off *kapote,* no less, was one of the founders, and became a tireless doer. The leaders of the organization were from the intelligentsia, children of the most prominent families. A lively and well-tempered young man, Fishl had an influence on the youth that was sympathetic to the masses. Thanks to him, the strongly conspiratorial organization found a way to access a broader audience. He had a suffix to his name in those years – 'Women are people too.' This peculiar suffix was taken from the fact that he would begin his speaking with the words, '*Khaverim un khavertehs*' – and thereby add deliberately, 'Women are people too'....

Apart from 'civilian' work, the *Bundist* organization also involved itself in 'military' activity – by distributing propaganda among recruits from the Zamość garrison. To this purpose, local gatherings were called for, in which Fishl was strongly active.

In the revolutionary year of 1905 the first open socialist demonstration took place in Zamość – a demonstration of Poles and Jews, organized in partnership with the P. P. S. and the *Bund.* The Czarist authorities reacted to this with arrests. Afterwards, a number of *Bundist* activists were arrested. Fishl Geliebter, who was very popular in the city, had to flee. He was later active in the Bundist movement of **Lublin, Chelm, Brisk** and other cities.

In 1907, he comes to New York. In the first couple of years, he led the hard life of an immigrant that was not yet settled. He did a variety of work, he became impoverished and suffered want. In 1910, Geliebter settles in Pittsburgh, and gets work in the hard, dirty factories of the Westinghouse Company.

By coincidence, he met the engineer, Joseph Baskin in the factory, also an active *Bundist* from back home. After work, both of them would go to meetings of the Workmen's Circle, and of the Socialist Party. From that time on, a strong friendship set in between the engineer and the common laborer, as well as a close relationship of common effort for many years.

Both later returned to New York. Baskin became the General Secretary of the **Workmen's Circle**, Geliebter, who worked for a bit of time at **HIAS**, and '**Die Zukunft**' – took on a responsible position in the Workmen's Circle, and here, like his friend Baskin, he remained for the rest of his days.

Geliebter was active in the Jewish Socialist Federation even while he was still in Pittsburgh, and later became one of its most prominent doers, and belonged to its central leadership (executive). The Bolshevist Revolution in Russia made a strong impression on him, and he found himself among the first who attempted to plant the seeds of communist planting on American soil. In 1919 he becomes the co-editor of the newly-created communist periodical, '**Der Kampf**' and in the same year, he participates in the first schism of the Jewish Socialist Federation.

After a certain period of time, Geliebter perceived his fatal error, and returned to the Socialist movement. He joins the Jewish Socialist *Farband* and is active there as a member of the editorial board of '**Der Vekker**,' and is a member of the National Executive Committee.

At the time that the Socialist Party split from the *Farband*, in the middle of the thirties, Geliebter went, together with militants (a majority from the Socialist Party, and a minority from the *Farband*).

From 1915 to 1926 Geliebter occupied the position of Executive Secretary of the Workmen's Circle and from 1926 until his death (1935) he was the Educational Director. He has much to his credit in putting the Yiddish school of the Workmen's Circle on a solid foundation. As an editor of the workmen's Circle press – '**Der Freind**,' and '**Unser Schule**' – he wrote a great deal and had much influence, so that the organization of the workers should further broaden its activity, especially in the area of culture.

Geliebter remained an ardent socialist up to the last minute, with a strong interest for a broad community life. In all of the actions on behalf of the Jewish working class on that side of the ocean, was all because of his active part. The boundless loyalty to the Bund, that he brought with him from Zamość, stayed with him to his last breath.

(Y. Sh. H. in 'Generation of *Bundists*,' New York 1956, Vol 1, pp. 445-447)

## Philip Geliebter Bibliography

**By Yefim Jeshurun**

This list of references contains twenty items. The interested reader is referred to the original text for details.

## The Zwillich Family

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

My father was called '**Elyeh Kopf**' by the Jews of Zamość, because he had the reputation in the city for being a clever Jewish man. He was beloved by all the Jews and Christians.

He was active in an array of municipal philanthropic institutions, and societies of mutual assistance. However, he did not involve himself in community affairs.

During periods of distress, they would come to him for advice, and often, really, for some sort of financial assistance – truly a boon, without interest.

Until the last minute of his life, he was full of certainly, even at the most difficult times of the Nazi occupation.

He lived a little more than a year's time in the *Neustadt* in the ghetto. Until the *Judenrat* handed him over to the Gestapo, and he was shot by the Nazis on May 26, 1942, on the Szczebrzeszyn Place near the 'Rotunda.'

## Mordechai Zwillich

*Page 898:* *Mordechai Zwillich (untitled)*

When my brother Mordechai became a Bar Mitzvah, my father sent him away to Komarow to a well-known teacher and *Shokhet*, B e n j a m i n H e l f m a n , to study there. He returned to Zamość at the age of 20 years. He came back as a worldly person, without side locks. He immediately became the secretary of the I. L. Peretz Library. He joins the *Bund* and is later a member of the **Bundist** committee. He is also a member of the leadership of the Zamość branch of the *Y. Sh. O.* Up to the outbreak of The Second World War, he is the voluntary secretary of the transport union in Zamość, which found itself under the influence of the *Bund.* He was murdered in Izbica in the year 1942.

## Chaim Zwillich

*Page 898:* *Chaim Zwillich (untitled)*

Brother of Mordechai Zwillich. Like Mordechai, he belonged to the active doers in the *Bund* in Zamość. After the liquidation of the Zamość ghetto, Chaim went to Warsaw on 'Aryan' papers under the name A n t o n K a t o w s k i . In Warsaw he worked with the underground movement of the *Bund*. On November 5, 1943 he left his residence with illegal literature. He never returned. What happened to him is unknown.

# Other Portraits

### Shlomo Wohl *(P. 899 Top Right)*

One of the known and respected community activists in Zamość. He was a good scholar, and could speak and write Polish also. For a number of years, he was a councilman in the Zamość City Council. Killed by the Nazi murderers in Lemberg on November 5, 1941.

### Ben-Zion Lubliner *(P. 899 Top Left)*

For a certain period, he was the Chairman of the Jewish community in Zamość and an active society doer. Murdered in Izbica (or taken from there to Belzeč) in the year 1942.

### Aharon Geliebter *(Page 899 Bottom Right)*

For many years, leader of the Old Age Home in Zamość. Killed in the year 1942 in Belzeč.

### Yossel Finkman *(Page 899 Bottom Left)*

Brother of Mendel and Lejzor. Fell in the year 1939 at the defense of Warsaw against Hitler's armies.

## Rabbi Joseph Shlomo Shabtai Hurwitz

Page 900: *Rabbi Joseph Shlomo Shabtai Hurwitz (untitled)*

We have already recalled in part of prior writings, the Rabbi, Y. Sh. Sh. Hurwitz, who not only occupied the position of Chief Rabbi, but was also the Rabbi in a day-to-day capacity, and was the founder of the Yeshiva '*Yagdil Torah*,' which was founded before t\The First World War.

Rabbi Y. Sh. Sh. Hurwitz was born in Woldowo in the year 5621 (1861). His father, Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi was the Rabbi there, a descendant from a family of distinguished pedigree, from the 'Seer' of Lublin, and also the שלה"ק.

He was retained as Rabbi in Zamość in the year 5649 (1889), that means at the age of 29 years.

He passed away on the first day of Hanukkah 5703 (1943) (according to the information from his grandson Yehuda HaLevi Hurwitz, who published this in 'Zamość in its Glory and Denouement.').

## Jonah Szper

*Page 900:* *Jonah Szper (untitled)*

Born in Zamość (around 1895–?), in the Lublin neighborhood. His father was a scholarly and Enlightened Jewish man, the son of I. L. Peretz's sister, was a forest products merchant. He received a Jewish upbringing, finished the commercial school, and after the outbreak of the [First] World War, was evacuated with his parents to Ekaterinoslav, after the revolution, came to Poland, studied in the University of Krakow; In 1920, he came to Vilna, where he, during the so-called mid-Lithuania, took the position of an advocate on behalf of Jewish issues with the government of General Zheligovsky, and was a co-worker of the daily newspaper, '*Neuer Morgen*,' 1921; Later, he was the teacher of Yiddish and Polish literature in the Yiddish Middle School of Vilna and New-Swentsian; From time-to-time, he participated in articles of literary criticism in a variety of publications that came out in Vilna, such as M. Shliat's '*Leben*,' the Vilna '*Tag*,; In 1927, he took up residence in Lodz, where he occupied the position of an advocate on behalf of Jewish issues before the provincial authorities. From his translations, the following appeared in book form:

(Detailed list omitted. The interested reader is referred to the original text).
(Zalman Reisen – 'Lexicon of Jewish Literature, Press and Philology' – Fourth Volume, pp. 871-872)

# Activists in the Professional Movement

Page 901 (Mid-Right):
From right to left: Ber'tcheh Kornmass, Faiga Handwerker (the 'Boss') and Yankeleh Koyl.

Page 901 (Mid-Left)
The first activists among the housemaids union: from right to left: Malka Schwartzberg (from Komarow), Henneh Gross and Leah Keitel.

Page 901 (Bottom)
**Aharon-Yohanan Traub** – Active doer on behalf of the *Bund*; A candidate for the *Bund* for the elections to the Bank for the Ill. Murdered together with his family by the Nazis.

Page 902 (Top Right)
**Moshe'leh Zaltsman** – An active doer and speaker. Dies in the Soviet Union.

Page 902 (Top Left)
**Fishl Gelernter** – Was the secretary of the clothing workers union for many years.

Page 902 (Bottom Right)
**Shia Hirschhorn** – Former treasurer of the municipal library named after I. L. Peretz: Secretary of the trade and office workers union. An active doer for the *Bund*. Murdered by the Nazis.

Page 902 (Bottom Left)
**Dr. Shaul Grossbaum** – Among the known activists in the Bund. His biography can be found in our *Pinkas* on Page 632.

Page 903 (Top)
**Abraham Hartz**
Born in Zamość in the year 1901. He was among the first in '*HaShomer HaTza'Ir*' and later went over to '*Tze'irei Tzion*' and belonged to the pioneers of '*HeHalutz*' in Zamość in the year 1917.

In the year 1920, the '*Tze'irei Tzion*' organization in Zamość decided to kill Petlura, when he was then in Zamość. A. Hartz proposed himself to volunteer to carry this out. Petlura, however, was in the company of Pilsudski; therefore, the attempt was called off out of a fear that this might elicit a general anti-Semitic repression.

In 1921, he made aliyah to the Land of Israel. He was active in the *Haganah*, and in The Second World War, he joined the Jewish Brigade along with his son.

He was killed in a traveling accident on the Acre-Safed highway on June 23.[344]

Page 903 (Bottom Right)
**Chaim Aharon-Leib's** (Zimmerung) – 'The Doctor.' See page 737 in our Pinkas. The work of Shlomo Schwartzberg.

Page 903 (Bottom Left)
**Leah'keh Brokh**. Her biography is found in our *Pinkas* on pp. 873-874.

Page 904:

**Activists in the Professional Movement**

**From Right to Left, Standing: Sh. Feldstein, Sh. Topf, Mendelson, Shia Kramp;**
**Sitting: Yisroel'keh Bukovich, Mendel Finkman, Yaakov-Meir Forim.**

344 No year is given.

**This is the Way Zamość**

**Was Cut Down....**

**...*Ani Hagever*, I am the man,**
**Who looked on**
**Who saw —**

**How my children,**
**My women,**
**My young and old people**

**Were thrown into wagons,**
**Flung in there like rocks,**
**Like wood chips,**
**And beat them without mercy and spoke to them obscenely.**



**I looked out through the window pane, saw the beaters –**
**I contemplated the beaters and contemplated those who were being beaten –**
**I wrung my hands... a disgrace and a farce,**
**The Jews, oh, with the Jews – my Jews have been murdered!**

**Woe is me, there is no one left anymore...**
**There was a people, they were, but are no longer...**
**There was a people,**
**And they existed, and now...**
**No more!**

(From Yitzhak Katzenellenson's: 'The Song of the Murdered Jewish People')

## As a Symbolic Gravestone for their Murdered Families

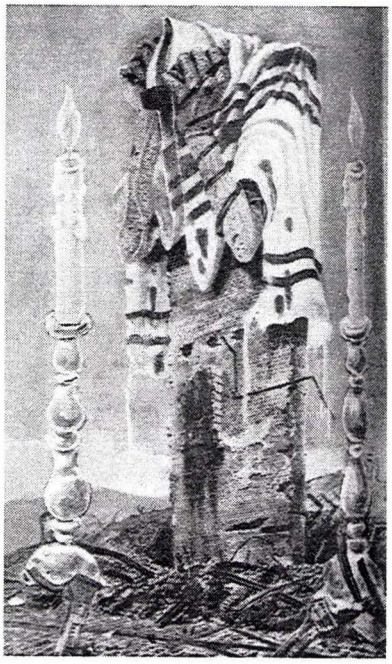
**The following *landsleit* have separately contributed a special amount:**

From Buenos Aires:

**Sarah Miltz de Eisenberg**
**Shlomo Goldzweig**
**Moshe Wiedler**
**Hirsch Zimlich**
**Hirsch Elbaum**
**Wolf Kornmass**
**Yitzhak Schwartz**

**Israel Zilber** (New York, USA)
**Faiga Orenbaum da Shklau** (Rio de Janeiro)
**Pinia Weintraub** (La Paz, Bolivia)
**Menashe Appelzweig** (La Paz, Bolivia)

**The picture on the reverse side is a reproduction from the artist B. Linke (Poland), the artist called it '*El Moleh Rakhamim.*' The eternal light candles are added by the artist Granat.**



Yekhezkiel Shlack covered the expenses for the reproduction, as a symbolic gravestone in memory of his murdered family

Note: A miniature black & white reproduction of this artistic work appears above.

# The Destruction of Zamość

**We have arrived at the last chapter of our *Pinkas* – identical with the chapter on the sunset of our home city of Zamość.**

**In the prior chapters, we have proceeded in the footsteps of our home that was cut down, in a chronological order. We saw its genesis, accompanied its growth, its development; peered into all of the generations, who with their energy, created, with their minds and muscles contributed both to the securing of the Jewish community, and to the growth of the city itself.**

**In the realm of what was possible, we have attempted to memorialize the splendorous yesterday of our home city – we have exerted ourselves to bring out e v e r y t h i n g a n d e v e r y o n e, that had anything to do with giving our city its coloration, it uniqueness among the hundreds and hundreds of Jewish communities in Poland.**

**With all means that we had at our disposal, we attempted to raise up materials and documents, from the ravages of time and the confines of archives, dealing with almost 500 years of the history of our city, which from the first years of its establishment was tied and bound up with Jewish life and creativity.**

**During these centuries, Jews lived a unique life in aristocratic Catholic Zamość. It is precisely about this u n i q u e way of life, that we have attempted to bring an excerpt, of their struggle for their survival and continuity. Many means and many approaches in Jewish life sought to right way to carry out this mission. We have done everything, s o t h a t a l l a p p r o a c h e s in our Zamość will receive their place in our *Pinkas*.**

**Each person served this goal in their own way and approach – each person has their chapter here, their place; the works and achievements; oftentimes also the pitfalls and disappointments – everything that lived, and was then cut down by the modern day *Amalekites*, the Nazis and their servants, [all this], we have attempted to put down as an eternal monument.**

**So we stand at the end, the gruesome, terrifying end.**

**Also about this chapter, we have attempted to gather together as much material as possible, so that nothing should be forgotten, so that all the pains of our near ones should remain forever in this *Pinkas* and in the memory of our people.**

**We have attempted to achieve this by giving voice to those who actually were in that Hell – let them tell it, they, the witnesses of the bestial transgressions.**

**In this section, we have the chronological order of the destruction from the first days of September 1939 when Nazi Germany attacked Poland.**

**We have the events that took place in our city from 1939 up to the extermination of the community.**

**From the first victim of the first bombs in 1939 until the tragic bestial murder of the last Jew.**

**Ghetto, camps, *aktionen*, evacuations; exile and the partisan resistance; bunkers and forests; heroism and resistance.**

**All these heroic-tragic chapters are covered in the following chapters.**

**It is complemented by a list of our holy victims and martyrs.**

**A list of authentic documents and materials make the picture even fuller and more complete.**

**We begin our threnody, our lament and our section on the destruction with the behest that was told to us:**

**Remember what *Amalek* did to you!**

**Remember, and never forget what the Nazi *Amalekites* did to our people.**

# The Beginning of the Destruction [345]

**By Mendel Sznur**

September 1, 1939. The day began as a beautiful, clean and bright day.

Already in the early morning hours, on the Zamość streets, and in particular in the 'small orchards' on the *Rynek*, pockets of people were standing about, not like on normal days. The question on everyone's lips was:

– What's new? Will there be war?

There was a dark fear that had been poured out upon everyone's faces, as if one displayed the feeling that the outbreak of war implied, in the first place, a misfortune for us Jews. It felt like each of us was taking stock of what the war was going to bring upon us. Yet each of us permitted ourselves to be comforted, driving off the sorrowful thoughts, and 'maybe' everyone speculated – maybe the world will not permit it to happen....

With a weak hope, the crowd dispersed, whoever to the factory, in the warehouse, or store. The merchants still stood with the keys to their businesses in their hands, continuing to talk, not making any haste to open the stores. It was as if the intuition has said: 'don't rush, it is as if everything is already lost.'

Employees began to appear from the Christian streets, who rather uniquely, nervously rushed to their positions. In going by the 'small orchards,' they remarked to the Jews standing there, that they should disperse. The storekeepers, with sad hearts and trembling hands, opened up their businesses.

The storekeepers had barely been seen to open their businesses, and as usual wanted to bring their display windows into order, when a stream of people cascaded upon them, who began to snatch up and buy anything that came to hand, whatever was on the shelves; merchandise, that in normal times nobody demanded and didn't need.

The storekeepers smelled the symptoms of war with their mercantile sense – the last, possibly only, spark of hope was rejected.

The merchants, being unable to respond to the demands of those who had come running, especially the Polish buying masses, had to listen to 'remarks' by the mob – just you wait, *zhidek*, the Germans will come, and then we will settle up with you....

This kept up for about two hours. Suddenly, the droning of airplanes was heard. This halted the frightened and disorganized running to the stores. Both people in the streets, and inside at places of work, ran outside and began to look at to steel 'birds,' which appeared in the clear sky, glistening and shimmering so in the rays of the sun.

The people were of the opinion that these wee Polish airplanes, 'Our own,' 'ours,' was murmured from all sides, that are making 'our maneuvers' – nobody had any idea that these were German attackers, that will soon begin to sow death and destruction...

After the noon hour, the public knew the truth already, it was communication in the official dispatches – it is war, and a mobilization is being declared.

The harmony was disrupted. The streets were abandoned. Places of business were locked up – the ardor of the buying public dropped; the 'sense' of the storekeepers for some rescue was not a great one. One senses that a storm of fire and blood was coming.

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345 Editor's footnote: M. Sznur began to write this work in the camp in Germany after the liberation, and was interrupted because of his sudden illness and death.

On the second say, September 2, immediately from the early morning hours on, masses of people were drawn from all directions to the military conscription office, they came to the 'P.K.O.' in accordance with the order for the mobilization. It was possible to see many Jews in the long rows – they, especially this time, went with eagerness to become mobilized – the war is with the Germans, with Nazi Germany, our common enemy.

War fever and panic begin to rise. The stores were fill again, and again, everything was 'snatched up.' It was 'quiet' for about three hours.

The military authorities issued an order, that all citizens, men up to 60 years of age, have to take up shovels, and place themselves at the disposal of the inspectors, in order to dig 'shelters,' trenches for protection against air attacks. All men, and especially Jews, immediately responded to this call. They immediately began to dig 'shelter trenches' – in the city, in all places, also in the 'little orchards.'

Suddenly, the sirens began to wail, and the 'peace and quiet' was disrupted, replaced by a deathly silence that took its place. On the blue horizon of the sky, white steel birds showed themselves. Everyone fled to hide, some in houses, some under the '*potchinehs*.' Yet not everyone showed themselves to flee from the exposed streets, when one heard the report of the first bombs.

The first bombs were dropped on the '**Hayfl**,' an old fashioned house, occupied by a couple of hundred Jewish residents. Characteristic of so many military objectives and important economic-industrial points that Zamość had, the Hitler extermination machine had selected the first victim for its bombs to be the one that was thought to be the one house occupied by Jews, and fortunately, the bombs fell several tens of meters far from the 'Hayfl.'

The first victim, indeed, a Jew, was found after the steel destroyers had disappeared – this was **Shlomo Brandwein**, the brother of the *Bund* activist Yerakhmiel Brandwein.

In the city, the news of this first death made a shattering impression on all the residents. But who even could foresee the fact that there will yet come the later bestial murders with millions of victims?

All places of work were closed. Each individual went home.

On the 3rd day of the war, September 3, movement in the streets began in the later hours; stores were opened later than usual; workers also went to their jobs being very late. Everyone had strained to hear – does one not again hear the thrumming of the angels of attack.

Half the day went by without disturbance, the public work of the civil populace, in digging the 'trenches' went on again. However, immediately after the noon hour, one began to hear the wail of the sirens – a harbinger of a new visit from The Angel of Death, and, indeed, immediately afterwards, one can hear the sudden reports of bomb explosions.

Everyone hid themselves in the corridors of houses, in the byways, that had old crypts, like in catacombs. It was thought that this was the safest place – apart from which that no better hiding places had been prepared.

The bombardment lasted for about a half hour. First, it was thought that the murderers were bombing the train station, or the barracks, which were to be found about 2 kilometers from the city. However, it became apparent, that this time the bandits had picked out mor important 'military' targets – they bombed the **Neustadt** heavily, the quarter most densely populated with the Jewish poor. He result –several dead, many wounded, among them children, and a great number of wrecked Jewish houses.

In the evening, it became quieter from the air attacks. In the darkened streets, human silhouettes began to appear, which would fil quickly in the streets from one side to the other.

In the evening, in the house at Armenianska 19, which was called Baruch Mendel's house, in the residence of Yekel Baruch-Mendel's, a group of people gathered, myself among them. We dealt with the question of providing a proper Jewish burial for those victims of the air attacks. We immediately took to calling the *Hevra-Kadisha* together, and to organize ourselves, so that regardless of whatever trouble befell us, under any circumstances, that the *Hevra-Kadisha* should be prepared...

Let it be remembered here, that R' Yekel Baruch-Mendel's was the first one who took upon himself the initiative to bury the dead. Already, that same night, he ran about, and brought several additional people and the victims were interred.

On the fourth day – September 4 – the first refugees from afar appeared, such as from Kalisz, Czestochowa, Kielce and other cities, which were located closer to the German border. The stream became bigger, the longer time went on – with the train, and with autos, they came from all parts of western Poland.

The majority of the first refugees were Jewish intelligentsia, and a large part of them without means – having fled their homes as they stood ans went.

The people of Zamość, with their traditional friendship and custom of taking in guests, did not consider their own dangers, the dangers of air attacks and immediately took to get the refugees in order. Those who had more means, were provided with a place to sleep with various citizens; for those without means, places were also provided where they could eat. We attempted to make the fate of these refugees lighter, so that they could feel somewhat at home. And interestingly – very quickly, literally in a matter of hours, they became close relatives.

The refugees had already conveyed the first news of the plundering and murder of the Hitlerist bands in the places where they had entered. They told how the Nazi fliers would fly down, with the death machines, very low, over the unarmed non-combatant masses of refugees on the roads, and literally sowed death, shooting from machine guns at women and children.

That is how the fourth day passed. Every person in Zamość exerted themselves to accommodate someone of the refugees in their home. Anyone who had several rooms, crowded themselves together, giving the refugees the vacated rooms.

On that day, there was yet another bombardment – this time, finally against military targets – the train station, and community economic objectives. However, even now, they did not forget the Jews. They dropped incendiary bombs on the Neustadt, which caused fires, and led to many human sacrifices.

On September 5 in the morning, a strong thrumming of aircraft was heard, and an immediate report of bomb explosions. It drove everyone out of bed. One ran to hide in 'secure' places – some in cellars, pits, and other hiding places – we ran to the '*potchinehs*,' under the medieval crypts. In house number 19 of Ormianska, where the entrance was to a crypt system, up to 100 people squeezed themselves into a corridor – men, women, children, mothers with tiny babies in their hands. We stood like this for several hours, pushed together. A deathly awesome silence reigned. Even the nursing infants did not utter a peep.

Among the crowd, was also the Rabbi of the city with his family. An elderly woman could not contain herself, and asked the Rabbi:

– Why does The Master of the Universe not send a rain, then we would be rid of the bombardment.

The Rabbi didn't think for very long, and he replied:

– Rain is a blessing of good fortune, when human blood is being spilled that is absorbed by the earth, this cannot be purified by the blessing of rain....

(The writings of Mendel Sznur end here)

# And This Is How It Happened...[346]

**By Mordechai Shtrigler**

1.

**Over Izbica, Lublin and Piosk – for a long time already**
**The bloody scythe had cut with its elimination of people**
**Except Zamość... the city by the edge –**
**With bribes, with weeping...for the time being it was effective...**

**Regardless, we are restive.... for – every city! Every city!**
**Only learned Jews, hoary, with the wisdom of the law –**
**Make it simple, showing clearly, that especially in Zamość –**
**These Jews are needed! So say the local authorities in control –**

**Until now, they have retained: a refuge... a building...**
**In addition, 'don't harm;' not this one, or that one**
**And because of this, a promise: 'there is no talk about you at this time'...**
**But other cities? Let the entire world itself go up in flames!**

**The Head of the *Judenrat*, an important person with entry 'there' –**
**Knows one thing: Let us send!... gifts, Jews...gifts!**
**He has said – he knows what will go over better:**
**Gold! The best to wipe away malevolent intentions...**

* *
*

**The danger flitted over our heads**
**And left a fetid odor in the air**
**The heart responded to it with intensified beating**
**And perceived, in fear, its watchful shadow, all about**

**Mind and will permit themselves to be captured by seats of comfort**
**And sing into the nets of crystal lying there**
**But the heart is continuously attuned to threatening rumors**
**Even though it, itself, does not know: Well, what should we do!?**

2.

**A city is here propped up with all manner of people –**
**They were dragged here from all ends of the land**
**And the streets of the Jews were cut down in size, row after row**
**So that you could become suffocated by the overcrowding of one on the other – – –**

**But Jews continue to multiply, one in the other's house**
**Fantastic sums are paid to gentiles for stables**
**And yet one jokes: How do you like my club?**
**And securing one's self yet: Just not to personally fail! – – –**

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346 Editor's Footnote: From his book, 'In an Alien Generation.'

**Christians are still permitted to go about freely**
**The byways of the ghetto – not yet cordoned off...**
**A gentile, someone familiar...if he can only manage it – he comes...**
**And he goes away satisfied, cheerily buoyant...**

**It is good for them that Jews need to eat –**
**And they have flour, groats and potatoes...**
**– of what use is money to them today – under German locks?**
**That jewelry for a loaf of bread! Lacquered slippers...**

**Peasants for the villages come loaded down –**
**They have bread, and pounds of butter!**
**And for this they pat down the furniture... they want the prettiest clothing...**
**He became an expert on merchandise, quickly like this – Stefan!**

**The whiskers smile coldly, with a cunning peasant cast;**
**As far as he's concerned, well, it could be the pianoforte...**
**And the horses outside neigh, from this kinship born of sorcery**
**And tug in satisfaction from the peasant's harnesses – – –**

**And really!... One hears one's self saying:**
**Who today needs to play, when the terror is so great!?**
**Let Ivan take away the wail of the clavier –**
**And let it be a source of moaning in his furnished house**

* *
*

**They come here with their sledges from the villages –**
**The come, and need everything...**
**Sell them your urban possessions**
**Pay them with your life for salt...**

**The house is covered with paper**
**Now, give them mirrors, divans...**
**He will take them to his home now –**
**The war – it is at the service of the Stefans – – –**

**He will make the room full of flowers –**
**Place mirrors on the loam walls**
**The daughter will study the clavier**

**And make her hand soft with perfume...**

**Should Jewish women come to the village –**
**If they will only let them live**
**To plow and sink into the turf –**
**So that their hand will become coarse...**

**He will take the money to the bank**
**And buy their houses for groschen**
**Abandon the stench of burning**
**And learn how to sit with splayed feet in slippers – – –**

**Yet – there are still Jews!**
**Despite the fact that rumors abound, and circulate**
**So the wagons still have to be hitched**
**And make a fortune off of hunger...**

**3.**

**Everything here has been done exactly, as everywhere else, supposedly**
**Police have been appointed, with screaming-red caps...**
**One mut pay no small sum to *'Pan Presess'***
**Or protection... and other things...**

**A rod with thorns grows there, with which**
**The police and their appointed – find what is 'necessary for the *Judenrat*'...**
**From cities and from far away – scented already... learned –**
**And everything is ready...clear and timely....**

**Explicitly set down in German offices**
**Stamped with the red Gestapo emblem...**
**They strut around with a satisfied air**
**That the sign of the Swastika has been spread upon them**

**The now take bribes and carry staves**
**They now can beat you and drive you from homes...**
**They know how to utilize fear**
**How to sell morsels and make a fortune – – –**

**In the lairs of the underworld, in assimilated homes**
**The dreams of control were nurtured**
**And the hoary slime was released**
**Placing themselves at the disposal of erecting barbed wire fences...**

**The go, it can be sensed over the heads**
**They look at people only when it is necessary**
**They thirstily mirror themselves in the shining buttons**
**And derived a mighty temerity from that...**

**And Jews they go, quietly at the side –**
**One makes an accommodation, or one shows them special deference...**
**'Sometimes also the fox – has his moment' –**
**So the adage helps to rescue some dignity – – –**

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**The area has not yet been totally enclosed**
**Where Jews have to be entombed –**
**People opine: One can see...**
**Here they have an issue, a difficult one...**

**After all, the border with Russia is not far**
**Columns are drawn and draw [there]...**
**The battlefields are aflame, and the road is needed**
**They will not be able to close this off – – -**

**Analogies are made with Warsaw and wherever...**
**Bit it will not be...there is no equivalence!**
**One wants to gird one's peace of mind with words –**
**Common sense would suggest that the Germans would inquire...**

**Suddenly the thought comes:**
**Open... this is even worse!...**
**This means though – they don't intend anything for long – – –**
**Only doubts, they must be awakened...**

**4.**

**...and there, behind the city walls of Lublin**
**The quills scratch out anger, typewriters sing: get done with it!**
**Papers fly already, half finished and completed:**
**Zamość! A paper blade before the cut of the barracks – – –**

**Thousands are yet asleep under the subservient roofs of the ghetto**
**One still lives with women there, and girls are smiled at thus so**
**Out of habit, the merchants intone: *Butro...Netto...***
**And before dawn, stealthily, a small sack of grain is filched from a gentile...**

**And there is time in the offices, where they prepare themselves as if for a battle;**
**They will not tarry! Meanwhile we have to squeeze out what we can!**
**The fat chief with the medals – all he does is laugh:**
**– And what will you do, my dear city Jews, will you flee?**

**In the meantime, a community delegation is appointed: what harm can it do?**
**'They should only not appear anxious!...Everything is lies! Lies!'**
**Some story – like identical drops of water – in the case of all the *Judenrats*:**
**The decrees of Haman...Only – thanks to the President: they were shouted down!**

**And in the nights – the community – all they do is write and write: Perhaps ...**
**A story for you...in the event somebody has to be sent...then it is – you, *schnorrer*!**
**Women come...tearing out their hair, with insane whimpering...**
**Screaming... and kissing the hands of every community leader...**

**Only they – cold robbers! One keeps silent or one is discarded**
**The list of 'the protected' is prepared: those who pay...givers of contributions...**
**These still have the means with which to heal their fright**
**And it is possible from these to extract a lung and liver....**

**– They can be left for the last! – Sholom Tzibeleh rules with deliberation...**
**A former messenger to the villages... now a liaison to 'them' –**
**And the community? Did anyone ask an understanding from somebody?**
**What is set remains set – ans no rooster gives a crow...**

**And Sholom knows the town! And he avers that he also understands the world:**
**'– A shortage will occur...and the impoverished will in any event die of hunger...'**
**And he mocks Goldstein, the indigent one, on whom pity was taken:**
**'Believe me, it is a sin to neglect one's appetite...'**

**And about the milkman's son – when it is told into his ear:**
**– that guy is coming from a camp...and he will record all of this...**
**Sholom smiles to himself this way...sweet and sour:**
**–Go, already...he surely won't tarry here for very long...**

**...Money! Where did the people get so much money!?**
**Everyone eats to excess! Swills! And alongside there are so many ranks of the hungry!**
**Just a little more soup from the kettle...a raw potato and a kilo of coal**
**As if the world here had been split into two – – –**

**And through the windows, the members of the *Judenrat* look at the ranks**
**And drone on with certainty: Another day! Another day!**
**The *schnorrers* are standing!? What – they are standing!**
**They are all going on the first train – – –'**

**But there, the lists are taken from the President**
**With a coldness that masks laughter;**
**If you have eyes, look and read it:**
**–You too will go...along with your sons and daughters – – –**

# The Last Day in the *Neustadt*

**By Leib Gewirtz**

On September 1, 1939, the first day of the outbreak of the war, the radio already reported about the bombing of cities and the many human casualties.

On that same day, the sirens already sounded the alarm about this, indicating that we should hide ourselves, that the enemy's airplane's were getting nearer to the city.

A number of days went by peacefully. In general, one did not sense any increased nervousness or pressure in the city, during the first days.

A number of days after the outbreak of war, the first refugees began to appear, those who fled from western locations, close to the border, where the place of war was located. The stream of refugees grew with each day, all straining towards the east, to the Russian border.

The first two weeks went by in this manner, without any special events or occurrences.

## *Neustadt* is Bombed

It was Saturday, September 16. The day began sunny and warm. I left the house at about 9 o'clock. The Hrubieszow Gasse has, as always, its normal appearance. People strolled about. Jews were on their way to prayers. One could not recognize any signs of the gruesome war, which had been going on for 15 days already.

It was told that the radio communicated that the Germans would no longer bomb any open cities with a civilian population; this was in accordance with a demand made by Russia. We wanted very much to believe this.

I entered [the house of] my neighbor and friend, Leibl Kornmass, where there was a radio on. I asked, what was being heard – there was no special news to report.

I went out to the center of the city. Also here, the movement about was full of life; the street were full of strolling people; the mood was quite fresh. I met with acquaintances; we walked on the city road.

An acquaintance approaches us from the opposite direction – Moshe Schwartzberg (Moshe Mekheleh's). He proposes that we accompany him to L. Kornmass, perhaps we will hear something on the radio that is news. I decline, he takes his leave of me, and he goes off alone.

It is already 11 o'clock. Jews are returning already from their prayers, and one is thinking about going home to eat. When we find ourselves at the pharmacy, suddenly the sky becomes overcast...a cloud-like sheet of airplanes suddenly appeared with a loud thrumming of their engines, and we thought that they were literally flying right over our heads. Before we orient ourselves, we already hear shooting. A frightening panic ensues.

We run into Haskel Hertzberg's house (Blonde Haskel). A Polish officer also comes running. He is frightened to death, and can barely speak. We continue to hear fresh bomb explosions.

After a set period of time, it gets quiet. We look out and see how a thick column of smoke reaches the sky. Also, a heavy plume of smoke is visible from the side of the Hrubieszow Gasse.

I run home. For fear and thoughts about my near ones, my feet don't carry me. The short distance seems to be unusually long. I come to the Hrubieszow Gasse. Shayndel – the daughter of Yidl Szczebrzeszyner, is being carried out killed, from Kornmass's side street. Later on, her father, Yidl, was also found burned, lying in the side street, under a tree.

In the same moment, along with them, the previously mentioned Moshe Schwartzberg was killed, while going out of Kornmass's house, the same person, who an hour before, had called to me to [accompany him ] back to Kornmass's...

I ran into nobody at my residence. The door knocked off, the windows shattered. I run out of the house – not a person is to be seen. From the neighboring houses, smoke is seeping out. The surrounding houses are on fire. Finally, I become aware that the people are hiding themselves in the field, which is past the Hrubieszow Gasse.

I search for my kin in the field. All are sitting with frightened looks, helpless and lost. Nobody knows what to do, where to go. Everyone has run away from their houses, along with abandoning their pittance of poverty. They fled just the way they were standing. The houses stand and wait for the fire to engulf them.

I take my wife, and quickly return to our dwelling. The house stands intact yet. I go into the house and take out a baby carriage. I put bedding on it, a little bit of clothing, a little bit of linens, and other necessities. We go back to the field to the children.

Airplanes fly overhead again. The people hide their heads in the ground. This time, we get through peaceably – there were no casualties. It appears that the pilots returned only to have a look, to see if their bit of work had the desired effect.

Slowly, the sun begins to set. It gets chilly. Night is falling. The question that looms foremost is – where does one go now? The house is already burned down. Those, whose homes remained intact, are too frightened to return to them. So it remained that we would go off to the villages [in the countryside].

And what Jew didn't have a gentile acquaintance in the villages? And from him, he will request protection, 'until the hostilities pass' – until the storm is over. Night fell, and the people took themselves over the fields to the villages.

I reminded myself of a Gentile of my acquaintance in the village of Bozhy Dor and we decide to head in that direction.

I put my few belongings on my 'wagon' and even was able to seat my children in it, and set out on the way.

The night was dark and cool. It was the end of the month of Elul, the beginning of Tishri. The road was at that time a very difficult one. Full of refugees, who feared traveling during the day, or to move, because of the bombing, now beleaguered the road with wagons, autos, motorcycles and rovers, not to mention the mass of people on foot. Seeing that it was forbidding to use any form of light, you can imagine what the road looked like.

On our way, we stumbled upon a Jew who was a refugee from Galicia. He is almost two weeks on the road. He has already been through several bombings. But also, here, it caught up with him. Here, he waited until nightfall, and would then start out again on the road. His goal is the Russian border. He also told us, that more than 40 people were killed in the Neustadt from today's bombing. In the end, covered the 8 kilometers and arrived peacefully in the village.

## In the Village

The peasant received us in a quite friendly manner. By this time, we were not the first ones to come to him. He led us into a silo, where there already were two families. Straw was brought in, and we arranged bedding for a place to sleep. In the mornings, another few isolated families arrived, and the peasant took all of them in. There were also Jews in the other houses already.

That is the way several days passed by. We bought food from the peasant. We were out of contact, and did not know what was happening in Zamość.

On the third day, Tuesday morning, someone we knew arrived, Simcha Grindler, he was with a second peasant, and proposed that whoever wanted to, could come with him to Zamość. Since I had thought of this before, we both went off.

We arrived at the Neustadt, on the Hrubieszow Gasse. The Gasse lay in ruins, blackened, naked chimneys stuck out. Individual people approached me, dispirited and saddened. There was still a bit of activity in the market. People walked about with wrung hands, with the question – what further will happen to us?

We went to the *Altstadt*. There, appearances were a little different. Here, the sorrow and sense of loss did not manifest itself the way it could be seen in the *Neustadt*. I speak to people that I know, and I become aware that all the appointed officials have been evacuated. The police is also immediately at the point of leaving, and the city remains abandoned. It is said that this will not be for long, because today or tomorrow, we will certainly have the Germans here.

In the city, businesses are open. There is not a great deal of traffic, and it is apparent that the people are full of nervousness and feel pressure. We take ourselves back to the *Neustadt*. On the way, we encounter loaded autos full of police, who are leaving the city.

There is sorrow and confusion in the Neustadt, here it is possible to see the destruction in front of one's eyes. Suddenly – another air attack, the thrumming of aircraft. We run into Kowalski's orchard, laying ourselves down under the trees. There, we run into other Jews already. The *Neustadt* is again bombed.

When it quiets down, we wend our way back to the village, to our families, who certainly were contemplating our fate. Going along the Hrubieszow Gasse, we learn that there are already more dead and wounded Jews. On the way to the village, we are told, that the Germans are already quite near.

In the village, we found everything as it was. In the air, however, one senses that something was going to change. It is the Eve of Rosh Hashana. Jews come to a decision to conduct *Mincha* and *Maariv* services as a group. A small village shack was located which was vacant, and it was cleaned up. The women washed it up a bit. A table was put in, and it became a place prepared for prayer.

Meanwhile, it was yet early for prayer, so we were sitting outside. All around, it is still, like on the eve of a storm. Suddenly, we hear shooting from not a far distance. Again it is quiet, and immediately, louder shooting, this time from artillery. People begin to run out of fear.

Someone shouts out: – Jews, come to prayer!

This is Akiva Drozhkasz (Lame Motteh's), and everyone runs into the little shack, also the women and children. Akiva takes a *Makhzor* in hand and stands at the side of the table, and begins to pray. Wailing starts among the women and a choked coughing from the men. Coming out of the wailing, the voice of the leader of the service, Akiva Drozhkasz pierces through, '**U'Vekhen Tayn Pakhdekha...**'

The shooting continues to get louder all the time. The panes in the windows shudder. One thinks that the walls are shaking. The crying becomes stronger, more rending.

The prayers are completed, and it is a little bit quieter, the gathering calms down a bit, and one wishes each other 'salvation.'

We go out into the street laden with fear. It is still. The peasants are hidden in their houses. When it gets good and dark, someone comes running with the 'news' – he saw a German. Afterwards, a second person comes, saying that two Germans had asked the way to Zamość. This means that the Germans are already here.

We go to sleep in fear and with worry on our minds. In the middle of the night, we hear intense sounds of movement from tanks on the highway that leads to Zamość.

On the second day, the Jews come together to pray – a little calmed down. We know that the Germans are in Zamość.

What else should we do? Go home? Of this we are fearful, who knows how the Germans will relate to the Jews. It is Rosh Hashana, so we will wait these two days, remain in the village.

Before evening, the peasant comes and tells us the Germans are in the *Neustadt*. The houses are vacant. No person is seen in the city.

We get the same news on the second day. Meanwhile, the 'Holiday' passes, and we decide to go 'home.' True, only a few families, the rest still were afraid.

We put our belongings on our 'wagon,' and we head for the city, not by the normal way, but through the fields. Until we reach the outskirts of the city, everything proceeded peacefully. But already before we reach the city, airplanes appear. This time, we think these are Polish aircraft. The Germans shoot up at them. We lay ourselves down on the ground. The airplanes disappear. Around us we find a lot of bomb craters. Only now do we see the danger that we were in.

## Back in the *Neustadt*

Going through the fields, we come to the so-called colony 'Avromuvka,' which is opposite Jekuthiel Yukal's. As we come upon vacated houses, we go into one residence. From the neighbors that live nearby, we learn that up to no it has been still, the Germans have up till now not done anything, but the fear is great. I go out into the street – one doesn't see a living soul from among the civilians. On the marketplaces, German vehicles stand, and soldiers are putting barbed wire around, as if nothing had happened. The empty streets instill fear, and I hurry home.

Before nightfall, several additional Jewish people come to the house, familiar to us, who want to spend the night here. It is outside the city, and therefore, the thought is that it will be safer. We lie down in the dark, and we are afraid to light a candle. We are four men sleeping under the table. At night – there is a knocking. It is German soldiers, three men enter, with weapons on their shoulders. They light the house, and taker away two men. In the morning, we learn that they took men out of practically every house. It meant that they were taking them to work. Those who were taken out were led around for the entire day, everyone was soundly beaten, and released at night.

It was a Sabbath day, the second day with the Germans, and for the time being it is tranquil. We go out into the street, one at a time, because we are curious. A bit of traffic is generated. One meets again with acquaintances, and we exchange the experiences that we lived through of the last several days.

At about 11 o'clock before noon, a motorized German column begins to emerge from the *Altstadt* along the Lemberg highway. There are in it, a variety of tanks and vehicles. The people array themselves on both sides of the sidewalks, as they once did during a defensive maneuver on the Third of May. One looks at the stern marvel of the German technology. During the span of two hours, without stopping, several hundred German war machines passed through in the most precise order.

The Sabbath day went by quietly. That night, once again, we slept in fear, that perhaps the bandits would come for a visit.

In the following days, the Germans once again seized people for labor; if they didn't find anyone in the streets, they dragged them from the houses. It was at that time that the mentally disturbed boy, the brother of Tzipkeh Kerbus, was shot.

These were the days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. It was difficult to manage with food and other necessities of life. The bakers almost did not bake at all, and one could really feel the dearth of bread.

Yom Kippur, immediately in the morning, suddenly heavy shooting started. The Germans shot over the city. It appeared that in the nearest forests, there were still groups of armed Polish soldiers, who put up resistance. The shooting kept up until after midday. Later on, a motorized German detachment rod through the Hrubieszow Gasse in the direction of the forests. When they subsequently returned, they were already leading along captured Polish soldiers.

It became still. Polish soldiers then wandered around all over the streets. There was a tendency on the part of the Germans to free the captured Polish soldiers. Among these were many Jews, who served in the military. They were helped to get civilian clothing, and they changed their dress.

A rumor was spreading that the Germans were leaving and the Russians were going to come in. This was quickly confirmed. We observed how the Germans were preparing themselves for travel. In several hours later, we didn't see a single German. We breathed freely, and an inner happiness reigned over everyone – we are rid of the Germans.

But, for the time being, the city was left without any control. Anti-Semitic Polish elements utilized this opportunity, under the leadership of former officers from the released prisoners, and they prepared to take over authority in the city. Groups of armed Polish soldiers immediately showed themselves, preparing themselves to offer resistance to the Red Army, when it would enter the city. They ordered the bakers that they should bake bread for the Polish soldiers. In the city, there was the essence of a pogrom in the air. I do not remember how it happened, the band resigned from its opposition, and the city avoided the [mis]-adventure.

## The Red Army Arrives

After midday, those who lived outside the city heard the arrival of the Soviet tanks. As if they had grown out from under the ground, a procession of two hundred tanks appeared with a red flag. A the head of the procession was the well-known communist in Zamość, Josef Ionczak. When the tanks arrived, a tank driver came out and addressed the procession. After the shouting of Hurrahs, in honor of the Red Army, and for Stalin, he asked the audience to disperse. The tanks arranged themselves on the marketplace.

Meanwhile, the young people, and others, utilized the situation and grabbed the weaponry that the Polish soldiers had turned in. With the consent of the Soviet military command, this armed group took over the authority in the city. The result of this was to guard against the occurrence of any provocation.

People dispersed, heroic doers, all over the city. Hope ran through the streets. Wherever a Polish soldier was encountered, he was searched, to see whether or not he was armed. If any sort of weapon was found on his person, it was confiscated. In the evening, a detachment of Soviet soldiers arrived, who patrolled the city.

The next day, an official citizens militia was created to safeguard the peace and security of the city. It was possible for everyone to sign up for the militia. In the first few days, indeed, it already numbered in the hundreds.

Immediately on the second night, a tragic incident took place. It was in the middle of the night, at the location of the militia (in the former municipal building of the *Neustadt*). A number of comrades were sitting – Yekel Eltzter, Aharon Schor, and others. They were playing with revolvers. At a certain moment, the revolver held by Aharon Schor discharged, and the bullet hit Eltzter in the heart. He died a couple of hours later. This tragic incident made an impression in the entire city. Yekel Eltzter was one of the most talented and intelligent of the group. He was 26 years old. He had a military funeral. A Soviet colonel gave the eulogy.

In the city, it became again like it was in the days of the fighting. Businesses remained practically all closed. No added municipal appointments were made. Apart from the militia, there was nothing. Several days passed in this manner.

In the Altstadt, the military authority occupied the Magistrate Building, and there, comrade Zisha Hackman was also to be found (died in the Soviet Union). I am not familiar with his work there during those days.

A rumor came out in a couple of days, that terrified the entire Jewish community. It was said that the Soviet Army is pulling back to the other side of the Bug [River], and the Germans were going to reoccupy Zamość. The very thought created shivers. When the Soviet authorities were approached about this, they categorically denied it. However, the rumors did not abate. At a specific moment, the official Russian authorities gave notification of this. Afterwards, we found out that in those days, a treaty was concluded between Germany and Russia, that the Soviet Army from the Lublin region is required in a number of places to withdraw to the other side of the Bug.[347]

The level of sorrow and anxiety among the Jews can readily be understood, once they found out that the Germans were coming back. It is true, however, that everyone was given the option of being evacuated with the Red Army.

Here, however, in my opinion, a profound error was made. The option for evacuation should have been made into an **order**, that the Jewish population should leave the city. If the Soviet army could not do this officially, then the coterie of Jewish leadership, should have communicated to the Jewish populace that for their own safety, the city should be abandoned, and they should go with the Soviets. Such an official declaration did not come. Therefore, many were not committed to evacuate. In general, at that time there was a true state of confused thinking. One did not know how to take a decision.

I recall the discussions that were carried on at the time. The questions that came from neighbors and acquaintances, who tried to figure out what to do. Groups stood around helplessly in the streets, discussing the situation. There stands a group of Jews, the Rabbi among them, Rabbi Mordechai Sternfeld, ז"ל. He was helpless just like all the rest. He surveyed the city with deep sorrow and pain, where he had occupied the rabbinical seat for more than 50 years. What can he do? Abandon the congregation? And here at the militia – the militia members stand and are talking among themselves. In that moment, Mendele Glazer approached with a cry and called out: – Tell me friends, you are all going to flee and abandon the city, why don't you see your way to do something for the city?

But what could the militia, who had discharged their duties for only a few numbered days, do? They were in general in the situation of being 'and he knew not of Joseph.' Not only did they not know the city, and the city didn't know them.

In the end, however, thousands of Jews did evacuate, leaving the city. To our great regret, however, thousands of Jews remained behind, and took part in the sorrowful fate of all the Jews of Poland. The militia were the last to evacuate themselves. I, personally, evacuated with the militia. Families were sent ahead a day earlier by train.

This took place at *Simkhat Torah*, when we left the city.[348] Going to the train station, and being near the Magistrate Building, I said to a companion, who was walking beside me: 'Let us look at the city, perhaps for the last time.' And indeed, this is how it came to pass, since we never saw Zamość again.

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347 A consequence of a supplementary German-Russian protocol, signed on September 28, which also transferred most of Lithuania from the envisaged German to the Soviet sphere. The three Baltic Republics were given no choice but to sign a so-called *Pact of defense and mutual assistance,* permitting the Soviet Union to station troops in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania .

348 This would have been October 6, 1939 – one week after the German-Russian protocol was signed.

# An This Is How a Sabbath-Observing Congregation Traipsed Off to God [349]

**By Mordechai Shtrigler**

**1.**

**The Last Day of Passover. 5702 (1942).**
**Literate Jews are chewing their way through verses at the *minyan* at Bereleh Weinmakher's**
**Seeking...if there is no news in the paper – well then seek in the Torah, in inferences:**
**R' Joel!...according to how the Zamość Kabbalist wrote, the exorcist of the dybbuks**
**By him, with God's help, it will not be necessary to blow the *shofar* already...**

**And here, it is now Passover season... and it is said...Oy, it is still said!**
**A young lad came from Piosk...barefoot and in tatters: he personally saw!**
**'Belzeč' – he says...he tells about things that can cause a rock to tremble...**
**Only – Jews...take comfort and holler at him: what do I know of that place!**

**One must be insane to hear out everyone in this way:**
**What does it mean? Taking people, entire cities and – just like that!...simply to – – –**

**Though – before dawn, at the first sprouting of the young dew**
**All the crooked arteries of the city were provisioned with armament by the blond men...**

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**Plik...Plik...plik...how the black muzzles of guns would puncture the white day**
**In his golden Sabbath sleep...Hah, what is this shooting off about here!?**
**Father is still tranquil...ritually washing off his fingernails, in piety**
**And through the crack in the window shutter, he looks at the inert alley way.**

**– 'Well, now!' He bellows into the house... that means: It really isn't that!**
**Look, there goes a little boy in tears...a child is aggravated somewhere close by**
**And from there, the larger street, at the very place fronting on the market**
**A woman with hair parted shrieks in a disheveled state – – –**

***Bukh! Bukh-bukh-bukh!* Little tendrils of smoke pass over the wooden rooftops**
**And the ghetto shacks, with their eternal submissiveness, bow themselves, and bow**
**And father: maybe, they have come to shoot birds in the middle of the city!**
**Despite the fact that the screaming from all around becomes ever clearer and louder – – –**

**Aha! It paralyzes the head... in the suddenly frightened brains**
**And everything pulls at once...shouting...hide yourself, and creeps out:**
**Can it really happen here? Or is the fear truly for naught**
**And the insane breaking of window panes and chopping down doors is also for naught!?...**
**Father finally says, in the middle of reciting from out of the *siddur*:**
**– This panic can, God forbid, bring down a misfortune on us...**
**Though God knows how the wailing had become so widespread**
**And frightened footsteps scuffle about the entire house...**

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[349] Editor's Footnote: *ibid*

**They are already chasing out the neighbor...they are already running from all about...yes, they are driving us!**
**To the marketplace...and I am among the multitude: Tramp! Tramp-Tramp!**
**It seems as if the young Piosker lad's laugh is being echoed,**
**The frozen one, from yesterday: Fools! And yet, we too did not believe...**

**2.**

**We have sought to protect ourselves with something for a long time already:**
**Sought to get ourselves listed for work... have some kind of excuse...**
**Because rumors do not come from just themselves**
**And even a lie needs something on which to attach itself...**

**Such an adage, came from Pinia Pearl, the ghetto pessimist:**
**Flies need a dung heap on which to grow from – – –**
**So everyone quietly decided to himself:**
**Well, it is lost...yet it is always better if one has a piece of paper...**

**So Jews went of to cut the turf and to dig out canals**
**One registered for coal mining and for building of barracks...**
**Watched one's self, that the information in the book should be accurate**
**And in general, to be in order with them in all respects – – –**

**Despite this – Pinia... wow, did he become a skeptic, Pinia!**
**— Jews! He says – let us lie; we cannot trust him!**
**He is shouted down, he's stopped from talking – when he speaks – except...**
**Even though one knows that he understands the situation...**

**Only – *Shabbes*! Oh, woe, how can one pick up and go!?**
**Means are sought to get out of doing this and leaving it for a weekday**
**They don't come... and on the morrow come beatings... or just plain screams...**
**And sometimes the book is sent – let it be there...**

**The foreman pushes it into the office with all his force**
**And the conscript stamps it, signs it hurriedly –**
**The people are, in the meantime, allocated to the labor**
**And he doesn't have the exact count in his head...**

**Of course the heart pounds all day and flutters**
**– Will the game not fall through this time, on this day?**
**It is possible that the German control will swarm over the ghetto...**
**But you can see how it has come to be up until now!...**

**Also the Sabbath has become shrunken and run lean**
**Many streets have been cut out of its trembling wings**

**Many of its friends have avoided it like a danger...**
**But who, at a time like this, can complain!?**

**Like its Jews, it must cram itself into a crowded little shack**
**And satisfy itself with a quiet hum on its behalf – – –**
**And if the lair of its Sabbath is trampled underfoot along the roads**
**It knows that it is forbidden to hold this against anyone...**

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**It has become strictly forbidden to carry on any contact with God**
**Since he has permitted the Jews to be driven out from everywhere...**
**Only wood gaped out of the holy ark-like skin**
**When the horses of the conscripts crossed the threshold of the *Bet HaMedrash* – – –**

**The covers of the Torah scrolls and the Ark covering blushed red in shame**
**As if they wanted to spill blood here**
**But only God himself suspended with his munificence**
**And did not even attempt to exercise his own powers – – –**

**When the curtains, pale and blanched wrapped themselves about the writ**
**And in shame, tore itself in mourning at the foot of the balustrade**
**And a horse neighed, victoriously from its pail**
**When the earth, with piety, kissed a Torah fragment – – –**

**Later on, Germans went from house to house**
**Looking for prayer shawls, volumes of the Pentateuch.... Phylacteries and *mezuzahs*...**
**And they – like children whose mother had become nakedly abused**
**Permitted themselves to be taken into custody, with a tiny orphan-like whine...**

**For a bit of time, the windows in the synagogues let rain run on them like tears**
**Screaming through the panes with the formerly sacred wastes...**
**But the requisite stable-like condition eagerly enveloped it**
**And the shouting of the '*Heils*' of the conscripts and the horses drowned them out...**

**Later on the *Judenrat* relocated there...**
**In the stable that the *Bet HaMedrash* had become, the destroyed one, laid waste**
**Quietly Jews were slaughtered... gathering them on lists**
**And kept the synagogue ready – as a place to store a legacy – – –**

**By day, weeping came from there, and it reverberated imploringly –**
**Wanted to obtain a hearing – to extend another month...**
**But the hearts had turned to wood – like a Holy Ark without a Torah Scroll**
**And poisoned by a night, that had been dissipated in a drunken revelry – – –**

**Jews with prayer in their hearts had already resigned from there**
**And went to hide themselves in nooks along with God**
**At least there was a need to scream, to find a way to split open the heavens**
**And not to hammer the shutters closed and listen to the door – – –**

**3.**

**I looked as if God himself had been tossed out of the heavens**
**His mission was taken over by killers, and at their head – Sammael...**
**They covered the soft blue skies with Panzers made of heavy steel**
**And left him to stew their along with his congregation....**

**Yet the Jews took him up like a king in the rags of a mendicant**
**Giving him – in Bereleh's *Heder* – what they could – a tiny corner**

**And on a Sabbath morning, eyes squinted with vows:**
**No matter what will be – we do not break the oath – – –**

**It is Pinia that came there – to pour his gall out there**
**And his father-in-law Nehemiah – with the velvet eyes of a saint**
**And also White Mekhl was there, an octogenarian research scholar**
**Who looked for the heart of the world – that had been cut out by knives – – –**

**And Yohanan Ka"tz, the sharp-minded one – the old gray genius**
**Who swayed so with those who surrounded him**
**And Herschel Zhimnovodow – a *Shokhet* in white socks**
**Who had been driven from the 'Torah and Greatness' of Wloclawek**

**And Yossel'eh Kalechstein the orator; a mouth that pours forth pearls**
**And the guardian of the ledgers – the elder Chaim Yosheh**
**With the smile of a doer of good deeds that can douse but is itself not extinguished**
**Even those trachoma-tears drip from reddened eyes – – –**

**And more like these and more... sullen Jews...silent...**
**Having filled the small room to its brim**
**And once God shimmered over them anew**
**And left with a sack full of charity where the last of the prayers had burst – – –**

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**And Bereleh Weinmakher alone... an old man of over seventy**
**With an enchanting white beard, tall and straight as a tree...**
**Protected the softness with his voice**
**That from the beginning of time had become frightened...**

**He remained with only a grandchild, a frightened sickly girl**
**Whose eyes pierced everything crookedly, like a stinging bee**
**And a face that colored the reddest dress with a skeleton's green**
**Even the strapped down hair on the honed visor – – –**

**But – this Esther was clever... constantly pleading: Grandpa!**
**You'll see...they will take note...Jews are coming here...so many...**
**I don't know, Grandpa...I have such a peculiar premonition...**
**But Bereleh... – a master he was at glossing over!**
**And so he smoothed her tousled hair, wanting to braid her locks with his fingers...**
**And wanting to make her spears of hair softer with the quiet, soft words:**
**Esther...I don't have to tell you what's going on inside of me...**
**And I do not know what you have gotten into your head – – –**

**She was not left with more than this one grandfather – so she became still...**
**Standing outside and watching when the Jews were at prayer**[350]

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[350] We bring forward this excerpt from Jekuthiel Zwillich's account of the Extermination of the Jews of Zamość, to clarify the role of the little girl, Esther:

The *Judenrat* represented that it is strictly forbidden for people to gather in one house in the *Neustadt*. However, in the ghetto, no great mind was paid to this order. Jews would come together and pray in a congregation. So the police

**Though the thoughts painted peculiar undecipherable thoughts on the sky**
**Which awakened fear in her constantly and upset her – – –**

**So she always would fall upon and hammer on the locked door:**
**Once it was because a conscript happened to be running by**
**Or a curious gentile, who thought, why is this not open...**
**So she would insert her voice into the crevice: Jews! And *vey iz mir*!**

**And so an unnatural silence gripped everyone's throat**
**Prayer shawls were mercilessly kneaded into black-striped bunches**
**The swifter would hide a prayer shawl under the bench**
**And the shutters thrown back from the windows...**

**But a little at a time, one became inured to her alarms**
**Once again, we sat and prayed...discussed...**
**Even once took a flyer at politics, toyed with predictions...**
**And feverishly went along with war to conquer *Jaecke* – – –**

**4.**

**On that Sabbath, nobody had a prior inkling...**
**Before dawn, one wrapped one's self in a prayer shawl under the overcoat**
**Until the time to pray came, a small volume of Psalms was opened, once conversed with acquaintances...**
**And a Bar Mitzvah was even called for his first *aliyah* [to the Torah] – – –**

**Only a portion were missing, who had picked up a rumor from somewhere**
**They had acquaintances among the police... members of the *Judenrat* as friends;**
**So they were secretly told: don't go today...**
**Only in that moment of exigency can one indeed see who has come or not?!...**

**The prayers stretch on...paying no mind that the heavens are locked to them...**
**Colliding together in the air...angry, and begging each other's pardon...**
**It is good that they tear up hearts, warm the lips**
**And for the pain of their attempt – no one has the proper measure...**

**And – Esther, as always...looks with her sleepy eyes out into the street**
**Looks and ferrets out ever hair of unrest from the womenfolk...**
**But the byways are still, sleep on like lambs**
**And the sun, not well-kempt, gives off hairlike rays in jest...**

**Only at the former *Bet HaMedrash* – Oy, all the police!**
**They are going there on the run...jumping hither and thither...**
**A taxi cruises over there... Gestapo with arms....**
**And the command shouting rides above the unrest – – –**

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would come, and detain the Jews, and it was then necessary to pay a fine. The Jews, however, arrived at the following stratagem – when they wanted to pray, they would set small boys outside in front, who would indicate if they saw Jewish policemen coming. The Jews would then flee. The older Jews, who did not have a capacity to run, had to pay a fine. My father, for example, paid the fine three times for this 'infraction' – twice 10 zlotys, and the third time – 20 zlotys.

**And the roaches scatter, in boots...with red heads**
**They crawl all over the ghetto, storm to wherever there is a doorway – – –**
**A thought comes with a nail, and strikes one in the head:**
**– What's going on, what? Listen how blows are falling!**

**The grandfather instructed her: don't come disturbing us every minute!**
**She discards what she has newly seen, and takes herself back**
**Even if an insane fever wildly is consuming the sight**
**And the report of machine guns already laughs in through a window – – –**

**This time she did not knock, she did not tear the lock from the door...**
**Her teeth clamped together, and the scream came out soundlessly...**
**The fingers only scrabbled in a fainting grasp**
**Like an echo that is lost in the distance – – –**

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**Everything crashed down at one time, like a lion cornered in a trap – – –**
**The stillness tore the mouth, and cackled like an animal made wild**

**The guns speared cynically into the naked mouth of the street**
**And on the bare surface of the earth, the growth grew green in military order...**

**They tore themselves from their place, glistening with steel heads**
**Springing through windows and houses and dragged the naked out from there**

**From a porch, a man rolled down, and stained the boards with blood**
**His jacket flew off separately, and was bunched up in covering the ground...**

**Outside, police ran in a stream – paid with the thirtieth silver**
**With Stars of David in glistening shame, like a sacred symbol profaned...**

**5.**

**The transfixed girl was swept aside with boots**
**And the little door was dealt a blow – so as to make it groan**
**The threshold , with quiet pain, gritted its teeth**
**And the bolt braced itself – as if it was threatened here – – –**

**And it got still there – as if the world had been struck dumb**
**And with sign language they signaled to each other with hands white from fright**
**Only the reverberation from the door echoed from the pale walls**
**As if it would have playfully bounced off of them...**

**And suddenly a bit of life – along with a man who jumps from the window...**
**The fingers wrapped around the fringes wring themselves in the folds of the prayer shawl**
**Heads wearing yarmulkes grow in holes**
**And with a lament, they fall into the green-helmeted ring – – –**

**There is no choice, and the hands of despair fall apart**
**And the congregation is ripped apart like a prematurely born infant taken out in pieces...**
**The housed are sealed with manufactured blinds**
**As if they never knew who the congregation was – – –**

**Small arms fire is heard, beatings cause wreckage –**
**The fenced in marketplace awaits the Sabbath congregation**
**And his stinging mouth gapes: How strong Jews are!**
**Everything is bloodied, and nobody can die – – –**

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*Page 931: 'Evacuation' of Jews from Zamość in the Belzeč death camp*

**Later on, one of the Jewish police told:**
**The job of leading the group into the market – was given to me...**

**The S.S. again ran through the houses, the attics**
**As if it were a holiday long awaited by the devils**

**The first ones, that had been shot early, laid about the marketplace...**
**Several heads of children, covered in blood.**

**And behind the wires – the first of the captured multitude...**
**'It cannot last two – even not one minute longer!'**

**Such was the command from the Gestapo Chief**
**So they seized this way...according to chance, a convenient encounter...**

**The President had even prepared his list;**
**He wanted for us to go search... to win some time...**

**But that other one, with his hard Gestapo-like demeanor:**
**"– Four Thousand Jews – Until exactly two o'clock...**

**Did you understand that, you piece of shit?!**
**And now, get you and your dogs out of here..."**

**...It was not possible to do selections, to broker...**
**If you found a Jew – you had to take him to the [market] place...**

**Eyes are looking from all sides – and you are accountable for the result!**
**Yet it hurt, it cut the heart;**

**Woe and woe, if you had seen this picture!**
**In front went Bereleh – mildly stroking his beard**

**As if he was taking a stroll here of his own free will...**
**(Esther had been forgotten under the door that had been knocked down...)**

**And Herschel Zhimnovodow – goes, and is praying**
**And joyfully pats with his hands – the prayer shawl that enfolds him like a crown –**

**And his blooded eyes are actually shining! – – –**
**His head raised up straight – he suddenly bent it forward ahead of him...**

**The blood dripped from his face – and it dyed his prayer shawl red**
**Herschel bends over: not to be a h y p o c r i t e on this day...**

**And the gray of White Mekhl again wisely stayed silent**
**As if he was searching himself, whether all of this was not a falsehood...**

**Only the frail Rabbi 'of the people,' Yossel'eh Kalechstein**
**Has become the emissary for everyone's crying – – –**

Zamość - 1942; Buchenwald, May 1945

# The Extermination of the Jews of Zamość

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

When the Russians withdrew from Zamość (1939), the city remained for several days without a governing authority – neither Russian nor German.

Most of the Jews of Zamość left with the Russians, and it was especially older people who remained behind. In the course of several days, one didn't see any Jews in the streets. Everyone was hidden in their houses.

However, in the streets, one saw many of the local Poles and the peasants from the villages around Zamość. With each passing day, they became increasingly arrogant – began hacking up Jewish businesses and robbing the merchandise. If they would notice a Jew, they would run after him and shout at him: 'Guldov zhid jedz do raju' – that means: Jew, go travel to the Garden of Eden (meaning passage to Russia). They would also fall upon and beat some of the Jews.

Through my window, I saw how a band of crazed Poles fell upon a Jew they didn't know, who was wearing new boots. They threw him about, beat him, and pulled off his boots. The Jew was barely able to tear himself out of their hands alive, and he fled barefoot.

The gates to all of the Jewish houses were closed. They would be opened towards nightfall for a half hour, and the women would carry out the dirty water and bring in clean water. The brooks stood empty for the entire day; Towards nightfall, one could see a large row of Jewish women. Who were standing with a variety of vessels by the creeks for water; Each of them wanted to draw the water as soon as possible and take it home; many women would run to the baker, provision themselves with a loaf of bread, and later, the gates were once again bolted shut.

For the entire day, the Jews lay hidden in the houses in the attics, at night they would silently gather in the house and discuss 'politics.' It was said that Izbica would be the border with Russia, which is what the Jews of Zamość wanted..

At that time, a meeting of the Poles took place in the hall of the Magistrate, in the 'resources.' The Poles were very happy that the Russians were leaving and that the Germans were coming. They discussed among themselves how to receive the Germans. A large portion of them held that the Germans need to be received with 'Bread and Salt.' The lawyer, Legicz said that the Germans do not need to be received collectively, that each Pole can handle the situation in accordance with his own understanding.

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The Germans arrived in Zamość along the Szczebrzeszyn Road. Many Poles stood on the sidewalks and shouted: '*Niech Zhieh*' (Live long!). The Germans immediately occupied all of the government buildings. An hour after their arrival, they went through the Jewish houses, led by the students of the '*Rada Opiekuncza*' (Oversight Council of abandoned children). The students showed where the Jews lived.

Jews were taken to work, and they would return by nightfall. Parts of them were severely hurt by the Germans. [Yet] a part of the Jews were rather pleased by the work, because they would bring home, sometimes a loaf of bread, sometimes a pack of cigarettes, or a bottle of kerosene. The work consisted of cleaning houses or polishing cars. Also, young Jewish girls were seized for this type of work. Many of the women were forced to take off their underwear, and in the process, clean windows, and wash the floors.

In Zamość, at that time, there were still to be found many Jewish conscripts in the Polish Army. Most of them came from places which had been occupied by the Russians, and they could not return to their homes. They slept in the small synagogue. The set the benches from the little synagogue out in the yard, and inside the synagogue they spread out straw. In being grabbed to do work, they were the first victims, because they didn't have any place where they could hide.

Then three Jews – Zelik Ackerman, Berel Dekel and Yaakov-Borukh Mendel's undertook an action to collect all the valuable articles in the various houses of worship and study. They went to all the *Batei Medrashim*, got all the books together and other articles of value, and hid them in one place.

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Two days after the Germans marched in, they posted an announcement, that all businesses have to be open; and those businesses that will stay shut, means it is a sign that the owners have fled with the communists, and then the businesses will be opened and the merchandise confiscated.

Indeed, on the second day, the director of the 'Rolnik,' (Cooperative of Polish Land Industries), Viszniewcki, with two members of the Gestapo and two Polish workers, and they broke open the doors of those businesses which were closed and they took the merchandise away. Several days later, they took away the merchandise of those stores that were open as well.

In those days, Memek Garfinkel with Elyeh Epstein set letters with a list of about thirty names of Zamość Jews, about coming to the '*Linat HaTzedek*' about creating a *Judenrat*. The list carried with it a specific calamity. Later on, his son became the servant of the *Judenrat*.

The following Zamość Jews attended the first meeting in 'Linat HaTzedek:' Memek Garfinkel, Elyeh Epstein, Sholom Tischberg, Todres Nickelsberg, Ben-Zion Lubliner, Itcheh-David Schloss, Azriel Sheps, Berel Deckel, Sholom Topf, Leib Eisen, Monik Cohen, Avigdor Inlander, Baruch Fishelsohn, Yehoshua Rapaport, Yehoshua Fuchs, Shimon Bajczman, Baruch Wilder, Leib Rosen, Aharon Shlafrok, Sholom Tzibeleh, Yosheh Mendelson, and myself with my brother Chaim.

At that moment, no one knew what sort of character the *Judenrat* would assume; what its functions would consist of. Otherwise, many of these Jews would have fled to Russia. 12 men were elected in the *Judenrat*. Later on, the membership was enlarged to 24 men.

The *Judenrat* immediately put together a census of how many Jews were to be found in Zamość. The count at that time showed that there were approximately two thousand Jews in Zamość.

After the establishment of the *Judenrat*, the Gestapo ordered that it had to submit a contribution of one hundred thousand zlotys.

In the course of time, the Zamość Jews were compelled to make three such contributions.

The *Judenrat* was obligated to provide the Gestapo and the SS with a variety of things, such as pillows, beds, bureaus, curtains, covers, stools, towels and other items. Also, the *Judenrat* had to provide items for women, such as dresses, blouses, and underwear. The SS would send the dirty underwear to the *Judenrat* to be washed.

Later on, the *Judenrat* received an order that it had to provide 250 Jewish laborers daily. The *Judenrat* therefore created a labor post, and staffed it with the leaders, Aharon Shlafrok, Azriel Sheps and Todres Nickelsberg.

The *Judenrat* sent a note to each Jewish family, that the head of every family must fo for either one or two days to do forced labor. Those who do not wish to participate in this forced labor, must pay 5 zlotys per day into the *Judenrat* treasury, and the *Judenrat* will substitute a second worker in his place. The Judenrat paid the workers that were sent to work 2 zlotys a day. Those who went to work for the SS Received 4 zlotys a day – this was a form of 'indemnification' for the beatings that they would get there. The workers who worked for the SS would often return home beaten up.

The workers would report at 6:30AM near the Magistrate. The leaders of the labor committee of the *Judenrat* would also come to this gathering place: Azriel Sheps and Aharon Shlafrok. Every morning, representatives of the Gestapo,

the SS and *Wehrmacht*, and would approach the labor committee heads about the necessary number of workers. Sheps and Shlafrok would allocate the workers to the appropriate points according to these demands.

The Jews, paying no mind to the sort of 'organization' of how they were sent to work, lived in terrible fear at that time. They were afraid to show themselves in the street. Jews would be seized and put to work, tortured, or simply beaten. On a certain day, Yosheh Mendelson was standing on a *potchineh* with two Jews from Wloclawek, and passed by the rifle butt of a known Gestapo man. He stopped all three of them and told them to enter the Gestapo. There, each received 25 lashes on their bare skin...Yosheh Mendelson lay sick for several weeks.

A second incident occurred involving Moshe-Chaim Pearl. He was going to pray in the morning. As he was going, wearing his prayer shawl and phylacteries, two SS men met him at the '*Hayfl*,' and the took him in hand, and from that day on, he vanished.

The same happened to Shmuel Hayber and Behyeh Klieska. They were taken into custody, and they vanished. Nobody knew how, or where to.

Despite this, each evening, people from each family would try to slip into the *Judenrat*. There, a variety of people would get together, and one could learn news of some kind...later, this news would be relayed to those who lay hidden in their houses.

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*Page 936:* *Zamość Jews at Nazi slave labor. From the right, the second person is Elazar Bukovich, a brush maker, the third person is Yizhak'l Stolar from Browar.*

A periodical appeared in Chelm at that time in Polish and German. This periodical literally cast a terror on the Jews, because it was filled with the darkest libels against Jews. Signs appeared in the streets of Zamość, that all Jews – men or women, 10 years old and up – have to wear a yellow Jewish Star on their left arm, and anyone who does not conform with this order, will be severely punished.

At the same time, transports full of Jews begin to arrive in Zamość. First from Wloclawek, afterwards Jews from Lodz, from Vienna and other places.

The foreign Jews took up residence in the *Batei Medrashim*, where one prayed. At that time there were also many empty houses, belonging to those families that had gone off to Russia. The foreigners, a little at a time, began to occupy these empty houses.

Near the *Judenrat* that was a large field kitchen, and soup and coffee was prepared there for the foreign Jews.

A medical clinic was created in the small Bet HaMedrash. The doctor from Wloclawek, Friedhoher-Mandelman treated patients there, with the nurse Masha Offenbach.

The year 1939-1940 had a very cold winter. Every nightfall, there was a long row of people would be standing in front of the clinic, who had frozen fingers, noses, or had been beaten by the Germans while at work. They received first aid there.

The following incident occurred with the Jews on the transport from Wloclawek:

Many of the Jews from Wloclawek were sent to the neighboring town of Szczebrzeszyn. So, several of the Wloclawek Jews came from Szczebrzeszyn to Zamość, and made an effort at Memek Garfinkel's to have him speak to the German authorities to permit them to come to Zamość. After 2 days, Memek Garfinkel said to them, that he had spoken to the Gestapo and the SS and they said that they have no objection to having the Jews of Wloclawek, who are in Szczebrzeszyn, come to Zamość. So 18 Jewish men from Wloclawek and one woman hired 3 sledges and rode from

Szczebrzeszyn to Zamość. When the Jews rode through the village of Janowica (3 kilometers from Zamość, the place where the SS had its station) the SS came out of its station and detained the Jews.

The Jews in the city did not know what had become of these Wloclawek Jews. However, after some time, the Christians who lived in Janowica related that the Jews were stripped naked, and cold water was poured on them and they were held out in the cold for a long time and later they were all shot.

Later, the Jews were told that they were not permitted to make use of any means of communication and they are not permitted to travel out of the city. If a Zamość Jew is encountered out of the city, he will be shot.

Very often, two SS staff would come to the *Judenrat* for a variety of things, that the *Judenrat* was compelled to provide to them. One of them was named Pinkovsky. This Pinkovsky was a tall German who was overstuffed. He spoke in a coarse bass voice. When he would shout (and he would always shout), it seemed as if someone was shouting out of a barrel. All the Jews trembled before him. It was not only Jews who were afraid of him, even the Christians would start to quake when they heard his name.

Out of the Jews, Poles and captured Russian conscripts, that had been killed in Zamość, this bandit personally shot between 80-90 percent. When children would cry, and mothers would utter 'Pinkovsky is coming...' the child would stop crying and begin to tremble....

These two S. S> staff would come to the *Judenrat* always with batons in hand, and whoever they encountered along the way or in the *Judenrat*, would get beaten.

In order to gather up all the things that the Gestapo and the SS demanded be given, the *Judenrat* organized 'strong arm people,' with Abraham Malkeleh's at their head. When the *Judenrat* taxed the Jews of Zamość with a variety of levies or it needed to have furniture for the Germans, or laundry, and would send for it, it would often happen that a part of the people would complain: – why must we give away all of this? – why don't they take from the next person ? – Why do the members of the *Judenrat* themselves not give? Then the 'strong arms' would be sent, with Abraham Malkeleh's (and he was always drunk). First he would curse your great-great-grandmother...and before the Jew had a chance to even look around, the items were already outside...at best, they felt that they were coming to take things from elderly people, whose children had gone off with the Russians...

On a certain day, the Gestapo arrested Abraham Malkeleh's. In the city, it was said that he was taken off to Lublin and shot there.

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Along with the Jews of Lodz, there came to Zamość a certain Goldhammer. He had a wife who came from the *Neustadt* in Zamość. This individual teamed up with a certain Messinger from Wloclawek, and these two men became sort of the 'liaisons' from the *Judenrat* with the outside – that means the Germans.

Messinger would resolve a variety of issues from the *Judenrat* with the Gestapo, and Golhammer would resolve a variety of issues from the *Judenrat* with the SS The *Judenrat* would send a variety of things with Goldhammer to the SS He would come with demands to the *Judenrat* with increasing frequency.

Initially, he was nothing more than a 'liaison.' Later on, however, he would exploit the *Judenrat* more and more. He would always arrive with all manner of stories, that the SS was demanding that they provide this thing, or another, that really was not the case. This Goldhammer became rich on the account of the *Judenrat*. Every week, he would make a new trip and buy himself a variety of valuable articles. He loved to partake of strong drink to excess. Often, he, with another member of the *Judenrat* would come to Yankel-Baruch Mendel's, and get drunk there. He would often come to the *Judenrat* inebriated, and make a tumult there; he would shout at the members of the *Judenrat* to the extent that all would simply flee.

He reached 'elevated' positions. Once, the Major of the SS (his name was Poritz[351]) rode through the city on horseback, and Goldhammer rode along with him on a second horse...for him this was a great honor, and caused him gratification...after this incident, Goldhammer became very arrogant, and he came to the Judenrat on the second day, and shouted, that Memek Garfinkel is not a good President, and that he would be a better President...until a certain day, when the Gestapo shot Goldhammer, they went to where he lived (he lived a at the home of Todres Nickelsberg) and confiscated all his valuable possessions.

In the city, it was said that Memek Garfinkel subverted him... also Messinger came to a similar end.

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In the city, Zamość Jews began to appear in greater numbers, who had gone away with the Russians, and had come back. They negotiated the border, and returned to Zamość. They told about conditions in those areas; that many people had flooded those areas from those places that were occupied by the Germans; that one lives under difficult circumstances there; that they sleep in the *Batei Medrashim* there, and that people live there in the streets like Gypsies; that all places of business are locked and empty; that in order to obtain bread, one must get up in the middle of the night in order to grab a place in the line at the bakery; many of them had already bee deep into Russia, and had returned. These very people related that those who had gone away with the Russians were rather envious of the Jews that had remained in Zamość.

The border with Russia was not yet strictly closed off, and there was still a possibility to cross it to the Russians. This sort of news, however, that the returnees from the other side told, discouraged the residents of Zamość from fleeing.

The Jews of Zamość, generally held the opinion, that Germany could not long continue to conduct the war; that in the spring, the war with France would begin, and Germany would be broken.

What is interesting is, that the *Judenrat* would immediately know about those Jews that had returned from Russia, and it would immediately issue him a chit for work [sic: slave-labor] or to pay 5 zlotys. These specific Jews were severely frightened (suspected of sympathy with the Russians) and the *Judenrat* would exploit this condition and would very often (several times a week) send chits to them to go to 'forced-labor....'

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In the first winter, many Jews bought licenses and the women sat in places of business. In reality, these businesses were empty, but if a Christian acquaintance would come along, some bit of merchandise was dragged out of hiding, and it was sold. The Christians would pay with either money or produce.

When the Russians (at the start of the war in September 1939) left Zamość, they burned all the papers of the property registry. Despite this, the Polish executors of the taxing authority canvassed the Jewish businesses and demanded tax payments for past years. Also all the Jewish promissory notes were collected, which were found in the various banks and the Jews had to honor them. The Germans took control of these funds.

The first winter with the Germans was a very difficult one (by the second one, people had already inured themselves...) And a cold one. It was difficult to procure coal. In the 'syndicate,' a bit of coal was sold from time-to-time. At the outset, it was possible for Jews to buy coal there. On a certain day, it was a very intensely cold day, when a long row stood to get coal, among the customers, there stood a small group of Jews, the director of the 'Syndicate' came out,

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351 The following excerpt is from the ***Dereczin Memorial Book***:

> On November 17, a contingent of 11 S.S. troops arrived to take over the town governance into their hands. At the head of this group was a young, dangerous sadist named *Poritz*. He was as bloodthirsty as a wild animal. The Polish authorities are replaced with Byelorussian police, who are no better than their predecessors. The Germans set themselves up in the movie theater, and from there, spread their bloody rule throughout the town. *Poritz* was the *Leiter* for the 'Jewish Question.'

Garlitsky, and communicated gently, that those who have the yellow emblem on their arms, will not be able to obtain coal. If Jews wanted to acquire coal, they were compelled to pay exorbitant prices.

In general, the Polish merchants and storekeepers took a hostile attitude towards the Jews. They were unwilling to sell the Jews any merchandise; at every opportunity they would embarrass and insult them; they would always accuse the Jews, indicating that the Jews had armed the Polish military. The Polish police searched all of the Jews, who during the time of the Russian rule, were militiamen. These Polish police were looking for a certain Elyeh Richtman, and when they could not find him, because he had gone off with the Russians, the police arrested his father, the well-known tailor, Volvish Richtman and incarcerated him in the Zamość prison. Various rumors circulated in the city – some said that he was shot there, and others said that he had died from the beating he received.

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An order was issued, that the Jews have to accord respect to the German soldiers, that means, that Jews needed to take off their hats when approaching a German soldier. When Jews used to go to work, or come back from work, they had to pay careful attention to make sure that no German soldier was approaching, in order to properly greet him. If such a German was espied, and the honor nor accorded to him, one received a beating.

In Zamość, there was tall, overstuffed Gestapo member from the forest police. He would always go about in the street with a dog, and a crop in his hand. This individual would play the following game: when he would spy a Jew in the distance, he would turn his back to the Jew. The Jew then thought that the German did not see him, and therefore did not greet him. At that point, the Gestapo man would turn around, and call the Jew over, and began to beat him with the crop on the head, because he hadn't carried out the order about greeting Germans. Therefore, if a Jew saw a German in the street, even if he was turned away with his back to him, he would 'greet' him. There were, however, instances of the exact opposite – when the Germans would beat the Jews for greeting them. Their excuse was: 'You wretched Jew, how dare you raise your hat in front of me, are you my comrade...'

One of the German criminal police, he was called Meyer, was well known for his wild murdering. He always had a crop tucked into his boot. His 'specialty' was going through the Jewish houses, looking for goods – he was especially interested in leather. He would confiscate any merchandise found, and would beat the owner murderously.

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A transport of matzos and medicines arrived in Zamość for Passover of 1940 from Switzerland. At the same time, several bakeries in Zamość were baking matzos. The matzos and medicines from Switzerland were stored in the Great Synagogue. Before Passover, the *Judenrat* distributed the matzos to the foreign Jews, and the local needy Jews, taking a small measure of these matzos as a form of payment. There was a variety of goods in the Great Synagogue, which belonged to the *Judenrat*.

At the same time, before Passover 1940, the German-Polish papers carried announcements that labor camps were being created, where each and every Jew will be compelled to work.

On June 4, 1940, the Judenrat send notices to several hundred Jews, that on the following morning at 6:00AM, they are to present themselves at the offices of the SS – in Janowica. Jews would will not promptly report will be severely punished. The Jews of Zamość already knew what 'severely punished' meant, and they, indeed, did present themselves at the appointed time.

The largest part of them were poor Jews. These Jews were led off to the village of Bialobrzegi, near Wisokia to do forced labor. The work consisted of regulating the local river. They worked under terrifying conditions. They slept in barracks on the bare earth. They were guarded by *Volksdeutschen* , these were gentiles which the Germans imported from a village outside of Chelm. They were dressed in black uniforms, and that's why the Jews called them

'*schvartzeh.*'[352] Poles directed the actual work. Among these was one who came from the *Neustadt*, a known thief (I have forgotten his name). This individual made life miserable for the Jews, and beat them. One worked in a state of constant hunger. Every day, 8 men received a bread weighing 2 kilos, a liter of watery soup, and a half liter of black coffee (so-called 'black coffee'...). Several Jews were shot by the *schvartzeh* at this forced labor.

Several days later, the *Judenrat* again sent out notices to 500 men that they must present themselves at Janowica, to the SS, concerning being sent off to work. All 500 men presented themselves on time, that being Friday, June 12, 1940, 7 o'clock in the morning. From the *Judenrat,* Memek Garfinkel, Azriel Sheps, and Yehoshua Fuchs, were also present. Out of the 500 Jews, 150 were selected, who remained to work in Janowica, on that spot, for the SS, which at that time was building a riding hall there. The remaining 350, under the guard of a company of S. . troops, were taken to the 'Kavalier,' – the headquarters near the 'Stilov' cinema theater.

Along the way, the SS troops, who were armed with guns and staves, beat the Jews murderously. Also, the women and children that had accompanied their husbands and fathers to Janowica, were murderously beaten. Near the train station they shot Avreml Lerner (who was known among us as Avreml 'Petter').

In the 'Kavalier' the SS Turned the Jews over to an SS man, that commanded a group of 13 *Volksdeutsche – schvartzeh.*

There, were found Jews from other neighboring towns. It was a sort of work camp. The Jews immediately had the hair on their heads shorn in the form of a zero (0). Every day, at 6 in the morning, the *schvartzeh* led the Jews to work, and back from work at 3 in the afternoon. The work consisted of regulating the Zamość river. The *schvartzeh* guards were armed with guns and staves, and at every opportunity, would beat the Jews without mercy. They took special pleasure in hitting people in the head. When they led the Jews to and from work, they ordered the Jews to sing, and if they didn't, they would beat them. Mostly, the Jews sang 'HaTikvah,' and a little song that these workers had composed themselves. (This song is documented on page 998 [353]).

The work was directed by Poles. They would relate to the Jews in a very bad way – beating, insulting, and making fun of them. However, for the sake of the truth, it must be noted that there were those Poles who related [to the Jews] in a humane manner, and attempted to help the Jews.

The Jews received a loaf of bread for every 8 men, a liter of soup (three times a week the soup had horsemeat in it) and a liter of coffee. It was not permitted for those detained to obtain food brought from home. The commandant, however, did permit that families could bring beverages for the detainees. The families took advantage of this, and they would give a variety of soups in bottles. It was nominally indicated that the detained person was receiving tea to drink.

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352 Here is an excerpt from the Simon Wiesenthal Center Website, that records the formation of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police: The Ukrainian Auxiliary Police were equipped with captured Soviet light weapons and wore black uniforms. On some occasions a collective fine was imposed upon the Jews in order to defray the costs of providing the police with uniforms and boots. The senior commanders of these units were Germans. In the first few days of the occupation, Ukrainian police, as an organized group or on an individual basis, participated in pogroms against the Jews, in Lvov, in the cities of Eastern Galicia, and in Volhynia. Later, when Ukrainian police escorted groups of Jews to places of work or were on guard duty in the ghettos, they extorted money from the Jews, harassed them, and frequently shot Jews merely for the sake of killing. When the ghettos were being liquidated, units of the Ukrainian Auxiliary Police took part in *Aktionen:* blockading the ghettos, searching for Jews who had gone into hiding, and hunting those who had escaped. They escorted Jews to their execution in pits and served as the guards surrounding the murder sites, barring access to them. They were known for their brutality and killed many thousands of Jews who could not keep up on the way to the execution sites, or who tried to escape.

353 Page 602 in this translation.

During the initial time, they slept on bare wooden boards. Later, straw was brought on which to sleep. From 7 o'clock in the evening until 5 in the morning, it was strictly forbidden to exit the bunkers. Every day, at 5 in the morning, a *shvartzer* would come in and shout out: 'Get up!' – everyone had to immediately get on their feet. Since it was forbidden to the Jews to go out at night, even to perform bodily functions, part of the Jews set aside bottles, and used them in the night to relieve themselves. On a certain morning, a *shvartzer*, upon awakening the detainees, saw such a bottle, full of bodily waste, in with the straw. At his order, that he should be told to whom this belonged, nobody responded. He then went to the window, and called in two additional *shvartzeh.* The selected 10 Jews, lined them up on a side, and ordered them to drink the contents of the bottle that contained the bodily waste... among these 10 Jews was a certain Hirsch Ringler, his father was called Baruch Tepper. When it came to his row, he let go of the bottle, and it fell and broke. The *shvartzeh* went into a murderous frenzy, and beat him fearfully. Anyone else in his place would not have been able to withstand it. On that day, he did not go to work. On the following day, he went out to work.

The relatives of the detainees would go to the *Judenrat,* and plead that the Jews in the camp should be given more bread. The bread that was used for this slave labor was charged to the account of the *Judenrat.* Also, complaints were lodged with the *Judenrat* as to why these men were being held in confinement. The Jews held that it should be possible to work out that these [men] should be able to come home to sleep in their houses, and leave in the morning to go to work. These representations yielded no results.

In the meantime, they found out that the water inspector, meaning the German, who had the say regarding the work to regulate the rive, is having sewing done for himself and his wife by Yehoshua Fuchs. So, a number of people, who had relatives in this work camp, went off to Yehoshua Fuchs, asking him to discuss this with the German, that he should permit the men to go home at night, and they will come by themselves to work in the morning. A few days later, Fuchs informed the Jews that he spoke with the water inspector, and that individual demands payment of several thousand zlotys, and then the Jews will be set free. Indeed, that sum was gathered from those that had means, and it was turned over to Yehoshua Fuchs. The Jews were set free, with the condition that they must come to the river by themselves daily The Jews came to work by themselves, and they began paying them 3 zlotys and 20 groschen a day.

It remained this way for 8 days. After 8 days, the German gendarmerie, police, and Gestapo surrounded the entire city, and went from house to house and arrested all the Jewish men, seated them in autos, and took them away to the 'Rotunda.' The Jews were kept in the 'Rotunda' for several hours. After that, the work permits from the labor committee were audited. On the work permit, they put a stamp and ordered the men to go to work. In the Rotunda, there were also older Jews, would did not go to work, and as a result, did not have work permits, so the Gestapo put the stamp on the foreheads of these elderly people. They laughed quite heartily at this, as if they had carried out so very clever thing... all the other Jews, who were there, who according to their assessment were capable of work, but had no work permit, were taken to the train and sent off to Belzeč.

There was no gas oven in Belzeč yet at that time. They brought Jews there from many towns from Poland. The work consisted of building up a mound of sand. As to what this mound of sand was needed for, nobody knew.

The Jews lived there under frightful conditions. The slept in a large filthy barracks, the walls were full of lice and flies. The SS administered this camp, under the direction of a Major, with the name Dolf. This Dolf, was known as a great bandit, and sadist. He would ride around on a horse with a revolver in his hand, and whoever came under his hand, he would shoot. He shot many people. The Jews in this camp got virtually nothing to eat. From time to time, the Jews of Zamość would send out a wagon with food for their near ones, who found themselves there.

The city became aware that Memek Garfinkel had obtained a letter of recommendation from the Zamość Major Poritz to Major Dolf in Belzeč, that whosoever Memek Garfinkel wishes to, he can do him a favor and have him taken out of Belzeč. So people went off to him to request that he liberate their near ones. Memek Garfinkel was a haughty man, and it did not look seemly to him to have to deal with the people, and he turned this over to the members of the *Judenrat.* For these [members] this opened up a good business. When people came to plead, that some member of their family should be taken out, the members of the *Judenrat* demanded that they be given money. They would take between 300

and 1000 zlotys from a person. It was necessary to bargain and weep, that one didn't have any more, and they would indeed drop the price. They turned this money over to
Memek Garfinkel, and it is understood, that they kept a specific percentage for themselves....

In the city, it was said that the members of the *Judenrat* made a lot of money out of this. There were many people who had no money with which to pay. These people remained in Belzeč until the end of November 1940. Then the camp at Belzeč was disbanded, and the Jews were set free. The liberated came to Zamość on foot. They were severely dirty, and it took a long time to wash them clean...

## The First Signs of a Ghetto

At that time, Poles came to Zamość who became *Volksdeutsche*. There were a very large number of them, and they came to the *Landart,* that is the *Starotsa*, asking to be given homes in which to live. The *Landart* told them to go inspect the Jewish houses, and select homes. The *Volksdeutsche* then went around the Jewish houses, and looked for homes. If a home was satisfactory to them, they described it to the *Landart,* and the *Landart* ordered the Jews that they must vacate the premises withing 24 hours and turn it over to the *Volksdeutsche.*

It was at this time, that talk began in the city about a ghetto. Part of the people said that the ghetto would be in the *Altstadt* – that on the two streets, Peretz and Zamenhof, the Jews would be permitted to live. Part said that the ghetto would be in the *Neustadt.* Later, the members of the *Judenrat* conveyed that the ghetto would be in the *Neustadt.*

From the start, the Jews did not want to believe this, that the ghetto would be in the *Neustadt*. However, when they saw that the members of the *Judenrat* were renting homes in the *Neustadt*, and were really moving themselves over there, the entire city ran to the *Neustadt* to rent homes. Some rented entire houses, while part rented only rooms, a part attics, and a part shops, where they lived. Yet, many Jews remained living in the *Altstadt.*

Two days before Purim (1941) the German police surrounded the *Altstadt* and went from house to house and searched for Jews. Wherever they found a Jew, they detained him, and took him to the '*syndikat.*' They gathered several hundred Jews together, and took them off to Komarow, and represented that from this day forth, they would remain living in Komarow.

In the ghetto of the *Neustadt*, about 10-12 thousand Jews lived. They lived in a frightful overcrowding, and a typhus epidemic broke out there. In the Sjemik-Hospital no Jews were taken in, and the *Judenrat* therefore opened a hospital in the *Neustadt.* The hospital consisted only of beds, there were no sort of medical equipment available. The director of the hospital was Dr. Rosenman. The doctors, who visited the hospital were: Dr. Rosenbush, Dr. Friedhoffer, and two other doctors who were from elsewhere. The nurses were: Mrs. Huberman (she worked for many years in the Hospital of the Sjemik), Masheh Offenbach, and a young lady from Lodz.

Many Jews from Zamość died of typhus. There were also those, who did not believe that the Germans would be beaten,, and they took their own lives.

On the Neustadt road, near Wenger and near the old post office, in the Neustadt, on the Hrubieszow Gasse, there were large signs with a skull, with the legend: **' Warning! Danger of Typhus. By order of the *Wehrmacht* – Strictly Forbidden!'**

In the *Neustadt* ghetto, the Jews felt more free than in the *Altstadt*, because all one saw were [other] Jews, and you felt that you were among your own kind. The ghetto was not strictly closed off. Poles would come, singly, to the *Neustadt,* and the Jews would transact with them – they were sold a variety of household goods, and they provided produce.

Every nightfall, one would see groups of Jews in the ghetto, in the *Neustadt*, that would discuss 'politics.' There were also, however, those who loved to recount 'memories' – how we lived before the war, what we ate... we would stand around like rabbits, with cocked ears, listening to every little sound. Perhaps someone from the Gestapo or SS might

be riding in. Then the streets would empty out, as if during an alarm sounded before bombing. When the Germans would ride through, they would beat the Jews with murderous blows, or seize them to do work.

One time, at night, two red [hatted] police rode into the ghetto and happened to enter the baker's and discovered two unknown Jews there. They told them to go out, and on the marketplace, where the roads cross, they shot the Jews. The shot individuals lay there until 12 o'clock noon, until the *Judenrat* received a notification from the Gestapo that the two Jews should be cleaned away.

At that time, apparently in connection with the German plan to attack Russia, many Jews began to work for the German military. The military had a variety of jobs [available]. In Lavin, an airstrip was being built; in the forests of Tomaszow, roads were being put through; they started to build a new train line to Lublin, which would bypass Zawodow; also the headquarters generated many jobs.

You appreciate that the worst was to be employed by the SS and the red [hatted] police. They would beat and insult the Jews at work: and if it pleased them, they would also shoot them. The Jews preferred top work for the German *Wehrmacht* or *Luftwaffe* – because one could find some ways to help one's self there, but woe betide any Jew if the German soldier who led them to work could speak Polish...

Every day, between 6:30 and 7:30 in the morning, the *Neustadt* road was full of Jews, who were on their way to work. Every individual was encumbered with packages of food carried under their arms. Before night, at about 4-5, one could see the Jews returning from work. Some had a small sack of potatoes, some with a bit of coal, a small package of wood, some with a loaf of bread, and some empty-handed...

A Polish periodical appeared in Lublin –'*Glos Lubelski.*' In reality, this was a German propaganda paper, written in Polish. Apart from the agitation, that urged the Poles to travel to work in Germany, the newspaper presented the official communications about the war at the front.

Despite the fact that it was forbidden for Jews to read newspapers, this '*Glos Lubelsky*' would get into the Jews. An elderly Christian, a newspaper distributor, would bring the newspaper into the *Neustadt*. The price of the paper was 20 groschen, and the Jews paid 60 groschen. You understand that it was read clandestinely, and only a numbered few had the paper.

The Jews knew what to winnow out from the communiques. True, they read about the German victories, but they also discovered which German cities had been bombed by the enemy. The Jews calculated how many German cities, houses and people were destroyed. The news was transmitted from mouth to ear, so that if a Jew was asked: – what's new, one would hear the answer: – Jews, it is good...

In Zamość, the following sort of expression circulated: there are three things in the world that are incomprehensible: first, the Germans took in Poland, seized France, and despite this they send a communique to England that they want peace; Second, England lost Poland, and such an ally in France, and the Germans want to sue for peace, and she still doesn't want to, and third, The Jews have taken away all the assets of the Jews, stuffed them into ghettoes, they have no rights, work under the most difficult conditions, are pursued and harassed, and if you ask a Jew: – What's new? He answers you – It's good...

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The *Judenrat* was located on the first floor of the synagogue in the *Neustadt.* Many tables were set out there, and at each table, there was a designated individual who dealt with resolving the various issues that pertained to the *Judenrat.* The President of the *Judenrat,* Memek Garfinkel, sat in a corner. He was divided off form the rest of the room by a Spanish wall. A policeman stood by the wall. When someone wanted to talk to the President, he had to approach the policeman. [He had to] tell who it was that wanted to speak, and what was the issue. The policeman conveyed this to the President. If the President said that the person could be admitted, the policeman let them in, if not, the policeman said to go home.

People came to the *Judenrat* with a variety of issues. As an example, here a woman would come with a cry, that here monthly payment was increased and she doesn't have a source from which to pay; a second would come to try and reverse the decree for seizing her bureau and chairs; another had her pillows confiscated; a woman bemoans the fact that the police drag her son or her daughter off to work each day, even though they are sick, and can't work. Part of the women would wail, a part would silently curse the *Judenrat.*

## The Zamość Jews That Belonged to the *Judenrat*

Memek Garfinkel (President), Elyeh Epstein, Sholom Tischberg, Todres Nickelsberg, Rosenman, Azriel Sheps, Julek Lubliner, Itche-David Schlam, Sholom Topf, Leib Rosen, Moniek Cohen, Golass, Avigdor Inlander, Yehoshua Rapaport, Yehoshua Fuchs, Leib Eisen, Boruch Wilder, Lawyer Goldstein, Sholom Tzibeleh, M. Pfeffer, Yaakov Levin, Glatt (from Lodz), Shmuel Rosen, Boruch Fishelsohn (later on, he became a policeman). The fact was that only a small group of the *Judenrat* had real influence. The prime authority resided with the President.

One could already recognize the members of the Judenrat from a distance. First, they were dressed in nice clothing, always shaven, and nicely combed, as if they were on their way to a wedding. On their armbands, which they wore on their left hands, sown in gold thread, was a Yellow Star of David with the letters for *Judenrat* in Latin characters. The appointed members of the Judenrat also wore such armbands, with a difference, where in the case of the members of the Judenrat a number was sown on additionally (numbers were from 1 to 24). The appointed members had no such numbers.

The Germans instituted bread cards. All the peasants had to turn over their produce to the Germans, and despite this, it was possible to buy everything in the ghetto in the *Neustadt* – but understand, at exorbitant prices. In the ghetto there was a woman named Goldhammer. This was the wife of that Goldhammer who initially was the 'liaison' with the Gestapo, and whom the Gestapo subsequently shot. She had a restaurant in her house. It was possible to obtain the best of everything there; fried and roasted meat; fish and a variety of beverages. The members of the Judenrat would come to her, and other 'Big Shots' with their loved ones. Each of these people had their own 'food servant' (the title was appropriate). The wildest orgies took place in her house. He neighbors, who lived close to Mrs. Goldhammer were in a position to be able to tell about all these happenings...the *Judenrat* would often conduct its sessions in her restaurant.

In Zamość, there was a family from Krakow, a mother with two daughters and one son. They were named Lieberman. One of the daughters was the 'friend' of Memek Garfinkel. The city referred to her as 'The Blonde Beast.' She had a considerable influence with the *Judenrat*. If someone wanted a favor, or couldn't get something done by ordinary [sic: legal] means, they would go to her at home, and she already got it arranged. Understand though, that one had to pay quite well for this.

The Poles confiscated all the Jewish carriages, and on the carriages, written in a red color was: **'Forbidden for Use by Jews.'** Only two Jewish carriages were allocated to the Judenrat, and on them the sign: **'For Use by Jews Only.'** One saw the persona of Memek Garfinkel riding in carriages, or other members of the *Judenrat,* and quite often they drove around in a state of inebriation.

It was strongly prohibited for Jews to come to the post office. In that time, many letters arrived from Wloclawek for the Jews from Wloclawek, who had been transported to Zamość. Also, letters came from Zamość Jews, who had gone off into Russia. The Zamość Jews obtained mixed feelings from the letters that arrived from Russia – [sometimes] they would cause concern, and other times, they would be buoyed by them. It would bother them that – their children are found in Siberia...on the second hand, they were happy that – it should better be Siberia, the important thing is that they are alive and well. For this reason, the *Judenrat* organized a postal branch. The letters were turned over there. The manager of the post office was Yasheh Mendelson. The letter carrier that would carry the letters home was Moshe Hoffman.

Later on, when the war with Russia broke out, the post office [branch] was liquidated, and Moshe Hoffman became a policeman for the *Judenrat.*

# The Zamość *Judenrat* Policemen

Dudek Garfinkel, David Weissman, Beryl Schwartzbirt, Stakh Fleischman, Simcha Feldstein, a son of Sholom Tzibeleh, Boruch Fishelsohn, Moshe Hoffman, Lejzor Schultz, Abraham Artzt, and a son of Elyeh Epstein.

The policemen wore police caps with a Star of David, and each one wore a rubber jacket with a strap that ringed it, and with police truncheons in hand. The mission of the police was to collect the monthly payment from the populace, who had not turned it in by themselves to the *Judenrat*. From time-to-time, they would go about, with a list from the *Judenrat*, and collected bureaus, pillows, coverings from the people, hangings, and a variety of household articles. They also knew which of the men did not go to work. They would come, every time, and drive them to work.

The *Judenrat* represented that it is strictly forbidden for people to gather in one house in the *Neustadt*. However, in the ghetto, no great mind was paid to this order. Jews would come together and pray in a congregation. So the police would come, and detain the Jews, and it was then necessary to pay a fine. The Jews, however, arrived at the following stratagem – when they wanted to pray, they would set small boys outside in front, who would indicate if they saw Jewish policemen coming. The Jews would then flee. The older Jews, who did not have a capacity to run, had to pay a fine. My father, for example, paid the fine three times for this 'infraction' – twice 10 zlotys, and the third time – 20 zlotys.

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When Germany attacked Russia in 1941, and captured Lemberg, many Jews, who initially had gone off with the Russians, came to Zamość by a variety of indirect means. On a specific day, the Jewish police went around with a list, and gathered 18 Jews together. The police told them that they were needed at the *Judenrat*. This involved, actually, those people who had come from Lemberg, which the Germans had captured.

When the 18 came to the *Judenrat*, the Gestapo was contacted by telephone. The Gestapo took them by auto, and they were taken away to the 'Rotunda' and they were shot there.

The families of those who were shot, came to the *Judenrat* with a wail, and asked why this was done, to which the *Judenrat* offered the excuse that they are not responsible, that a certain Lejzor Schultz handed over the list to the Gestapo, that contained these people, and the Gestapo forced the *Judenrat* to gather these people.

Lejzor Schultz, and a certain Blonde Jonah, from the 'Hayfl' had the reputation in the ghetto of being informers.

From among those who were shot, I remember the names: Yekhezkiel Citrin, Chaim Frank, Zalman Ackerman, Dora Schwartzbier, Kayla Holtz, Chaim Miltz.

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In the ghetto, news spread that in Izbica, and in other additional towns, the Jews were subject to 'evacuation' in an unfamiliar trial. By us, they began to say , that such an 'event' has to take place in Zamość (in Zamość, this type of an 'evacuation' was referred to as a '*khasene*'[354]). Many argued that it was better to work at military jobs, because during such an 'evacuation' those who are working at military jobs will not be sent out. For this reason, many Jews, who had up till now not worked for the military, began to look for ways to obtain such work in military locations.

There was a camp on the 'Vikrent,' which belonged to the German Luftwaffe, where several hundred Jews worked, the majority from the towns around Zamość. The Jews of Zamość therefore began to seek ways how to get employed in this type of work for the Luftwaffe.

In general, the idea was widely held that it is generally better if one is employed at work. Also, Jewish women began to look for work. On the Neustadt road, a Polish woman, Mozelewska (the wife of the obstetrician Mozelewski), had

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354 A euphemistic and ironic use of the Yiddish word for a 'wedding.'

a vegetable garden. Therefore, Jewish women ran to her, asking her to be retained for work. On the strength of a note from her, the labor committee would issue a work booklet. This woman, exploited this opportunity, she had female laborer at no cost and additionally asked to be paid from 100 to 200 zlotys.

The Jewish labor committee was located in the home of the Mozelewskis. The labor committee was led by Aharon Shlafrok and Fishl Grossbaum. A Jewish policeman always stood at the door. Also, groups of women stood there, who waited to be sent to work.

In the first times, the Jewish police would have to run around before dawn from house to house, with the lists in their hands, and forcible drag the women to the labor office, from which they were dispatched to a variety of jobs. Also men were seized to be sent to work. Later, however, when the news arrived about the '*khasenes*,' in the surrounding towns, people came of their own volition to the labor office and asked to be sent to work.

There were instances when Jews, who worked for the Germans, provisioned themselves with notes, indicating that they were good workers and that the Germans have a need for the work provided by these Jews. In general, the Jews strongly believed that if they work, the will not be 'evacuated.' However, it would also happen that people would be sent to work, and they would never again come back.

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*Page 949: The group of people driven together for the 'evacuation.'*

Saturday, April 11, 1942 (this was two days after Passover), at 1:30 in the afternoon, the Gestapo, S.S., Red [Hatted] Police, and the German gendarmerie surrounded the entire ghetto and did not permit anyone to exit. An auto drove up to the *Judenrat*, with several men from the Gestapo. The Gestapo was in the *Judenrat* for about 10-11 minutes. After this visit, the members of the Judenrat and the police went into the ghetto through the houses, and told everyone to go outside onto the marketplace. Two members of the Judenrat and one policeman went about this way. They divided the streets of the ghetto among themselves, in order to visit everyone. Apart from these individuals, two appointed members of the *Judenrat* and one policeman, went with a list, and gathered up the family members of the *Judenrat* into the *Judenrat* building. At the gate to the *Judenrat,* a member of the *Judenrat* and a policeman stood guard, to assure that nobody sneaked into the building that had no relationship to the *Judenrat.* The Gestapo had promised that nobody in this category would be taken at this time.

From one thirty to two, people began to arrive at the place. The gathering place was at the market, on the left side, where Lehman had his restaurant. Entire families came to the market – men, women, and children – and also families whose husbands were at work.

They came dressed in their Sabbath finery. Almost all were carrying packages on their backs, [containing] whatever one could grab. Jews came with noted from the German workplaces, that they are needed for work. They were certain, that with such a note, they will be sent home. The Gestapo staff, however, would take such notes, and immediately rip them up, and then supplemented the presenter with a whack in the head from a truncheon.

Those who had been gathered in the place, did not remain in their place. They were very seriously unnerved. They would wander about from one corner to the next. The Gestapo went about and hit people with truncheons right and left, and ordered the Jews to remain 'still.' It was estimated that there were more than 3000 Jews on the [market] place.

At 5 o'clock, before nightfall, the Gestapo ran through all the houses with revolvers in hand, and whoever they ran into in the houses was shot.

At 9 o'clock at night, a column was formed, which consisted of 5 to a row, and set out for the train. The Germans discarded their sticks, and took guns in hand. They began to shout, chasing after the people, demanding to move faster, and anyone who paused was shot immediately. The men, who came along last were indeed killed.

The Jews were driven to the 'Vikrent,' diagonally opposite the school, there stood several and thirty wagons, into which the Jews were packed. Near the train, when the Jews were loaded into the wagons, a certain Luxenbourg (Menashe Grober's son-in-law) stopped and shouted at the Germans: 'You low-life murderers, you have in any case lost the war, and for every Jew that you shoot, 10 Germans will be shot...' The Germans shot him on the spot.[355]

The wagon driver Eleshberg was advised that he should come with his platform and all the dead, that were lying on the road, which leads to the school, were gathered up and placed on the platform. The killed people were driven to the train, and loaded into the wagons together with the living people.

Loading the people lasted the entire night. At 4 o'clock before dawn, this train that was stuffed full, went off to Belzeč.

The entire Neustadt road lay covered with strewn packages, which the Jews had discarded during their tortured march. The road was also covered in spilled blood from those who had been killed. The Jewish police gathered up the packages, and delivered them to the Judenrat. The blood was covered in sand.

It was only on the second day, that it was possible to see the extent of the destruction that had been wreaked by the Germans. In many houses, the dead lay, and people who mourned them were beside them. In many houses dead lay, for whom there was no one to mourn, because the remaining members of the family had been 'evacuated' [sic: taken away]. In general the entire city wailed. I do not have the power to portray what that weeping looked like.

Among the dead that lay in the houses, I remember the following Zamość Jews: Yitzhak Shpizeisen, Hirsch Messer, Chaim Boxer, Berel Deckel with his entire family of 5 souls.

At 12 o'clock noon, Eleshberg rode around, and the group of carriers gathered and put the shot Jews on his platform, and they were taken to the Jewish cemetery, where they were interred in a mass grave.

When this 'evacuation' took place, many were at work, and when they came back home, they did not encounter their wives and children already. So they came to the *Judenrat* with a cry, and asked: why did you not order your own wives and children to go to the [market] place, and you came only after our wives and children...

Despite the fact that one already knew that we would never again see those who were 'evacuated,' nevertheless there were those who did not believe this to be the case. They got together money, and gave it to the Polish railroad station workers, so that they should exactly determine to where the people were being taken off. There were those that said the Jews were being taken to do labor in Russian territories. There were those who said that the notion that the Jews were being taken to work in Russia stemmed from the *Judenrat,* in order not to increase the panic in the city.

The Judenrat and its policemen went around the houses of the Jews, from which they had taken out the people and confiscated all their things, and conveyed it to the *Judenrat's* magazine. The person in charge of the magazine was Shmuel Rosen.

In 2 or 3 weeks time later, Czech Jews were brought to Zamość. All of the Czech Jews looked well. All were dressed well, and wore good Czech shoes. The Jews of Zamość took a reserved attitude toward them. More accurately, these newcomers held themselves at a distance from the Zamość Jews , it didn't displease them that they had been brought to Zamość, but rather why was it that they had been mixed in together with Polish Jews... they were assimilated Jews – we called them *Jaeckes*. Many went to church on Sunday to pray. They were settled in the houses of Jews, that had undergone 'evacuation.' A number of them immediately became policemen for the *Judenrat.*[356]

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355 This individual is identified as Shlomo (Lomeh) Luxenbourg in the memoir on page 516.

356 We know today, that the parents of former Secretary of State Madeline Albright, and the paternal grandparents of Senator John F. Kerry (D-MA) were Czech Jews who either hid, or abandoned their Jewish origins. In an article that appeared in Reform Judaism, Fall 2003 Vol 32, No1, the following observation is made in an article by Jennifer Anne Perez, regarding the situation of Czech Jews during the *fin du siècle* period :

Those who understood 'politics' said that there will be no more 'evacuation' in Zamość, because Zamość had already contributed its contingent.

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*Page 953: Men, women and children are driven in the death march*

On May 17, 1942, a notice appeared at the *Judenrat* in German and Polish: 'To all older people' and the names were listed. Within 2 days, those listed were required to present themselves at the *Judenrat* with the purpose of being forcibly taken from Zamość [e.g. 'evacuated'].

They need to take along food and underwear for 3 days. The older people, who will not present themselves on time, will 'have their children evacuated.'

After the appearance of this notice, a violent tumult broke out among the Jews. Everyone ran to the Judenrat in order to plead that their elderly people should not be 'evacuated.' So Memek Garfinkel, Azriel Sheps, Sholom Tzibeleh, and other members of he Judenrat replied to the people: – 'If you don't want your older people to go, well, then you go in their place...'

In relation to this decree, everybody prepared a hiding place in their homes, where the elderly could be hidden. In order to grasp what such a hiding place consisted of, it is worth relating what they looked like. There were a variety of hiding places already in the homes of many Zamość residents, not only for people, but also for a variety of household articles, primarily bedding, which was carefully guarded, so it would not be confiscated by the police. In the house where we lived, we made a camouflaged Spanish Wall, with a secret little door. Behind this little door lay the packed bedding. Later on, under the packs, a camouflaged entrance was made to a space under the floor. The boards could be lifted up through a crack in the floor, which was cured underneath, and lead to a dark cellar, where many barrels of herring stood. In a corner of this cellar, there were two empty barrels, which if they were moved, there was yet another camouflaged entrance, where, crawling on all fours, you could crawl into another cellar. It was in this cellar that my parents hid themselves.

The Jewish police went around during the day, and night, and looked for older Jews, which were on their list for 'evacuation' and wherever they did not find these people, they arrested the children. They undertook to search for my parents several times, and when they did not find them, they arrested my brother Mordechai, and held him for two days and nights and attempted to force him to reveal where our father lay hidden. Thanks to Mottel'eh Sznycer, who worked strenuously at the *Judenrat*, my brother was set free.

When the police did find an elderly Jew, they took him off to the 'keep' of the *Judenrat*. The 'keep' was found in a building where before the war there was a soda factory that had belonged to a certain Zucker. The windows of the 'keep' were nailed over with boards. Outside, across the door, there was an iron bar. During the day, the 'keep' was guarded by one policeman, at night, by two.

However, the *Judenrat* and the police applied themselves vigorously to find my parents, and they gave one of our neighbors a bribe to disclose the hideout. Police came, and indeed, did discover my hidden parents. The joy of the *Judenrat* knew no bounds.

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*Many Jews hid their religious identity, posing as Gentiles. "It was easier to do business as a Christian," says Prague-based genealogist Julius Miller, who specializes in tracing Jewish lineage. "Many Jews just stopped practicing Judaism during this period and had no belief at all."*

When my brother Chaim returned from work, he went immediately to the Judenrat, to make an effort to compel them to free his parents. The President, Memek Garfinkel let my brother wait a long time, and afterwards, received him courteously, even asking him to sit. In response to the please and crying of my brother, the President declared that he can do nothing, he cannot set the elderly parents free, but he does have a suggestion... you are, he says, a relative, so I have this advice for you: there are many elderly people in the city, whose children went away with the Russians, and they are alone. You are three brothers – go out into the street, and bring me 2 other Jews, then I will set your parents free. My brother answered him: first, I do not understand why you must seize all the older Jews. If the Gestapo wants them, let them do it themselves; secondly, you want to turn us into kidnappers of people... the President, Memek Garfinkel became greatly enraged, and gave my brother a hard slap across the face and accompanied this with an insult: 'Get out of here, you dirty Jew...'

The Jewish police permitted me to go into the 'keep' for 10 minutes to take leave of my parents. In the 'keep' there were my parents, Yaakov Mendelsohn (he had an iron business in the *Altstadt).* A certain Schatzkammer – from the *Neustadt,* who before the war, dealt with fowl, a Jew from Wloclawek, and a certain Nettel – his father was called Lejzor-Ber, he used to live in the '*Tchyneh,*' selling cigarettes. Despite the fact that this Nettel was still young, he was packed in among the elderly; his sin consisted of being all alone, extremely poor, and was dressed in torn clothing...in the 'keep' everyone sat and wept. The only one who did not cry was my father. He comforted the Jews, and he argued to them, that weeping will do no good, that it is to all intents and purposes it is in God's hands... however, he himself broke down, and began to weep intensely.

Aharon Pfeffer's house was occupied by the Germans, where the local commander was to be found. Several Jews worked there, and I among them. So I approached a certain adjutant of the commander, Reich, who had influence in the command structure, requesting that he intervene on behalf of my parents. I gave him one thousand zlotys and a gold ring, so that he would make an effort to free my parents. The adjutant rode to the *Neustadt,* to the *Judenrat* on his motorcycle, where he was for a half hour. After the visit of the adjutant Reich, the Judenrat freed only my mother. Immediately, my sister-in-law Helena Sznycer, went to Memek Garfinkel and wept before him, pleading for him to release my father. The President then gave a shout: – 'Go home, all the Zwillichs have pissed enough...' The Judenrat and the police picked up Memek Garfinkel's 'quip,' and when others would come to plead for the release of the elderly, they had the same answer: 'Go home, you already have...'

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News spread through the city that a new 'evacuation' was being prepared. The Jews who worked near the train had observed that a train had arrived with empty wagons, and boarded up small windows. So Jews began to search for hiding places. In the *Altstadt*, there were Jewish manual laborers living in the house of Hannan Eidelsberg, who worked for the Germans. From that occupation as a manual laborer, those Jews brought their parents there from the *Neustadt.* Understand that this was done clandestinely, hidden from the Jewish police.

The same thing was done by the Jews who worked at the local command, and had some influence over the hotel 'Victoria.' They brought their parents over, and hid them for a day in the hotel.

Azriel Sheps became aware of this, and at midnight, he came with a carriage to the hotel 'Victoria,' with the recognized Gestapo murderer Bohlmann. Sheps remained with the carriage, and Bohlmann went in, up to the second floor with a truncheon in his hand, and he began to beat all the Jews that were found there, in a murderous fashion. At the same time, he shouted and insulted – You, lice, quickly, go to the Neustadt to the ghetto. A woman from Wloclawek remained lying, severely beaten and bloodied. The others barely fled with their lives.

The same thing was repeated at the house of the manual laborers. From there as well, the hidden Jews were driven out with beating.

It became apparent that all the wagons were standing ready for the Jews of Tyszowce and Komarow.

On May 26, the Jews from Tyszowce and Komarow were transferred in by wagon. When the wagons drove by the *Neustadt*, many Jews fled from the wagons. A panic ensued in the ghetto. Gestapo staff and SS troops arrived, and seized Jews off the streets and took them to the train. On the same day, Eleshberg drove up with his platform, escorted by several policemen, to the 'keep,' and took out 16 Jews from there. These Jews were first taken to the *Judenrat,* and from there to the train. The policemen who escorted them were Simcha Feldstein, Stakh Fleischman, Abraham Artzt and a policeman who was a Czech Jew. At the train, Simcha Feldstein went up to the SS and presented himself in a military fashion, saluted and reported: I have the honor to inform you that we have brought 16 Jews. At the same time, two members of the Judenrat came and selected 16 other Jews from the wagons, and were taken away on the same platform back to the ghetto. You may appreciate that for these 16 Jews who had been 'bought out' the relatives paid quite handsomely, and gave 'gifts.'

Later on, the SS went through the wagons, and gathered up all the elderly Jews, and took them off near the 'Rotunda,' and to the tune of the well-known Horst Wessel Song, [singing]'When Jewish blood spurts from the knife...' they shot all of them there.

Among the Jews who were shot was my dear, good father. Related Jews later asked the Judenrat – And if you would not have brought the elderly Jews to the train, would the 'event' been more distasteful?... The members of the Judenrat answered: – What do you want? We turned over old Jews and brought back young Jews...

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After the evacuation of the elderly Jews, it was still until July 15, 1942. On the 15th of July, at 6 o'clock in the morning, the Gestapo, SS and the German police again surrounded the ghetto. Again, an auto from the Gestapo rode up to the *Judenrat*. The Judenrat and the Police no longer worked with the same tempo as in the prior 'evacuations.' This time the Jews knew how to hide themselves more effectively. During the 'evacuation' several hundred Jews were rounded up – the largest portion, Czech Jews and small children.

In Zamość there was a Jew from Lodz, who was named Jonasewicz. This Jew was designated by the Gestapo to collect scrap iron. Under him, he had a group of, and every month they provided two wagons full of iron material. When the first 'evacuation' took place, the Gestapo ordered him, and all of his people, with their families, who were standing on the [market] place to be taken away, to return to their homes. Because of this, he became extremely popular in the ghetto. No other workplace enjoyed this right. After this incident, many people ran to him, asking to be taken into his group. He exploited this opportunity, and demanded that he be paid from 800-1000 zlotys per person, and because of this, during the following evacuation, he received an order from the Gestapo that he and his people must assist in the 'evacuation' itself. The largest part of this group concealed themselves, and never again returned. However, a small number of his people brought small children to the 'evacuation.'

The Landart (*Starotsa*), the Burgomaster, Ziftzer, Memek Garfinkel from the *Judenrat*, several women from the Gestapo, and two tall officers from the SS from Lublin, came to the gathering point. They stood for about 10-15 minutes, and observed the Jews, who stood at the gathering point. Afterwards, they took out 2 poor children from the group, they photographed them, and then the 'guests' departed.

Among others, Itcheh-David Schlam was brought to the 'evacuation,' along with his wife; Shalia Herenrut; Sarah Beitel (Yosheh Mendelsohn's wife) and her little daughter; the lawyer, Goldstein with his wife and child. The lawyer Goldstein spied Memek Garfinkel in the distance. He called out to him several times: 'Memek Save Me.' However, Memek did not answer at all. At a specific moment, the lawyer Goldstein and his wife sat themselves down on the ground. So a Gestapo man approached them with a truncheon in his hand, and beat them on the head, and told them to stand up. To which, the lawyer Goldstein replied, that he knows they are being taken to their deaths, and therefore they might as well be shot here on the spot – and therefore, we will not raise ourselves from this place, he declared to them. So the SS man Pinkovsky went up to them, and replied: – You want to be shot? Then go to the wall. The picked themselves up and went to the wall near Lehman's restaurant, and there, indeed, they were shot. The lawyer Goldstein with the child were killed immediately. Mrs. Goldstein was still alive, and she was taken into the Jewish hospital. After two days, she died. All the people, who were on the [market] place, were taken off to the train, loaded onto wagons, and taken to Belzeč.

On that same day, a Pole from the *Neustadt* came to the *Judenrat* (I am frustrated that I have forgotten his name), and represented that the Gestapo had shot two Jews in his attic. The *Judenrat* immediately sent its detail of carriers to take these two Jews away. It became apparent that these were Yankel Hertz and his wife. Later on, Jews said among themselves, that the Pole who had hidden them in his attic, had indeed informed about this to the Gestapo, saying that there were two Jews lying hiding in his attic...

In Tzersky's house (diagonally opposite the church) was the Gestapo office. Every Jew or Christian, that was brought to this house, did not ever emerge alive again. From Tzersky's house, people were taken to the 'Rotunda' and shot there.

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*Page 957: A fragment of the 'Evacuation.' The bodies of martyrs can be seen in the rear.*

I have already made note of the fact that the *Judenrat* had set up a field kitchen, where poor people were given soup. On time, on a Sunday, more than 100 Czech Jews were standing in front of the kitchen, with eating utensils in hand, waiting to be given the soup. Then 2 or 3 autos came up, with SS troops (it was said that they came from Lemberg), and rode up to the *Judenrat*. They were there for several minutes, and afterwards came out together with the Jewish police and surrounded all the Jews, ordering them into the cars. They were taken to an unknown location. Among these more than 100 Jews were 2 0r 3 people from Zamość. From among them, I recall only Nettl Yom-Tov (a son of Shlomo Kliskeh's). After this incident, people avoided going to the *Judenrat* for soup.

After this specific 'evacuation,' the Jews, once again went to work and talked 'politics.' At that time, General Rommel's army in Africa was dealt a severe blow. Simultaneously, it was said that the Allies were preparing shortly to open the second front. Jews were interested in seeing the second front opened as early as possible; they hoped that then Germany would become preoccupied with its own fate, and leave the Jews alone.

There were three Jews in the ghetto, who would bring 'good news. 'Good news' meant those kind of information that do not come from German sources. One took this kind of news into account [sic: seriously].

These three were: Kaplan, Bajczman's son-in-law; mt brother Chaim, and Israel Scheck.

Kaplan was able to hear English broadcasts at the home of a *Volksdeutscher* acquaintance. My brother Chaim worked at the business of the known Zamość engineer Krantz, and from time to time would hear English broadcasts in the Polish language. Israel Scheck was given a Russian language newspaper, which appeared in Berlin, and also *Der Sturmer*, where articles would appear by the Nazi propaganda minister Goebbels, by a Christian. Scheck would read the articles by Goebbels, and to each paragraph, he would add a personal explanation. He would say that it is necessary to read these articles by Goebbels between the lines, and from these 'between the lines' he declared that the Germans are in deep trouble... Sunday was the usual day for such 'news.'

On a certain Sunday, several Jews were eating in our house, and were waiting for my brother Chaim. They said, that they had heard a bit if news, but they first want to hear from Chaim, to see if he will confirm it. When my brother came, he related that: – Jews, I have important news for you. The detail was that the English announcer, before he would begin to broadcast the communiques, would repeat the phrase several times: 'Hello, Hello, Germany – where is Hess?' Today, he also began with this phrase, and immediately passed on that [Hess] is found in England. That he had come to negotiate for peace and the English police had immediately arrested him.

The Jews, who had waited for my brother, were buoyed by this, because they too had heard this, and they wanted this should be confirmed by Chaim. Meanwhile a Jew from Wloclawek entered, and related: he had spoken to a member of the *Judenrat,* who, today, heard a German communique, in which it was related that in the last several weeks, Hess had shown signs of derangement, and now he had gone completely insane. The Germans are ashamed to say that they sent Hess to sue for peace. To this he added – Jews, don't worry, we will yet take our revenge on the Germans.

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The Gestapo staff, which was stationed with us in Zamość was rather well -known: Bohlmann, Kalb, Langenkaempfer and Bernard. The entire city trembled before them. It was mostly Bohlmann who would come to the ghetto. This Bohlmann was a great bandit and murderer. When he would come to the *Neustadt,* all the Jews would conceal themselves in their houses. One Jew would already inform the next person – don't go out in the street, Bohlmann is in the *Neustadt.*

For most of his visit, Bohlmann would sit at the house of Avigdor Inlander. He would sit for an hour or two. He loved to talk about art and literature. In Avigdor Inlander's room, there was a rather large collection of art objects. When he would leave, he would always take along something of value. One time, Bohlmann came to Avigdor Inlander, talked with him for a long time, and then ordered him out of the house, and then shot him at the door...

A certain Itcheh Schwartzbier lived in the Browar. The Jews of Zamość used to call him Itcheh *Khezekalles.*[357] He was a butcher by trade. During the war years, he worked for a *Volksdeutsher* in a slaughterhouse as a meat cutter. He made a good living, and he was always jovial, full of humor. The *Volksdeutscher* for whom he worked was very pleased with him. Not so much by his work as he was with his witticisms.

On a certain day, 2 Gestapo men came to the slaughterhouse where he worked, and shouted out: '*Schwartzbier hier!*' and immediately rewarded him with several truncheon blows in the head, and ordered him to follow them. They did not even permit him to take off the white apron that he wore while at work, and led him off the the Gestapo office in his white apron.

There, they held him for several hours, and later on, they took him to the 'Rotunda' and shot him...

In the city, they said that the *Volksdeutsch* had been charged with mishandling meat that he had sold, and he gave the excuse that he was not responsible, but rather it was the fault of the *Jude,* Schwartzbier, who was employed by him....

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I have already related that Jewish manual laborers were living in the home of Hannan Eidelsberg, who worked for the SS The well-known Zamość shoemaker, Yaakov Gutheit (Yankel Shchigel) also lived in that house. He created shoes and boots for the Gestapo, as well as for their families, which they would send to Germany. He would be well paid for this work, even giving him gifts. Every Sunday, Gutheit would come to the *Neustadt* (Many Jews didn't work on Sunday, and it was more possible to walk the streets). He would get togather with the Zamość tailors, such as Shalia Finkelstein, Chaim Blank, Ben-Zion Lubliner, Itcheh'leh Wechter and Pinhas Flescher (a son-in-law of Finkelstein's). He would relate news to them, which the Gestapo had discussed among themselves when they would come to him, to collect the work and in that process, make a 'round,' meaning, that they partook from a whiskey bottle and a bite, which would be put out for them.

Gutheit's news would then be relayed in the *Neustadt* from one to another. Israel Scheck would call this, the 'News for the Common People.' Once, at such a get-together, Gutheit told that the Gestapo people receive letters from Germany from their families, that Germany is being intensely bombed by the Americans, and things are going very badly on the Russian front. The Russians are mounting a strong counter-attack. The Jews were very happy about this news, and in honor of it, an entire liter of whiskey was consumed, with herring being eaten along with it. Eggs and bread. Each person toasted the other with the whiskey and food, expressing the wish that they would survive the war, and take revenge on the Germans.

Later on, Yankel Gutheit went on the 'Bomb' Street to resolve an issue. On the way, a gentile began to harass him, cross words were exchanged, and the gentile hit Yankel in the head with a stick. Yankel fell and died on the spot. About an hour or two later, the familiar Gestapo man, Kalb, came to the *Neustadt,* with another individual, with truncheons in their hands. They searched for the gentile, and beat him severely, and afterwards threw him about. When the gentile

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357 This nickname joins together two Yiddish words that impart the meaning of 'makes sport of everything.' The implication is that the person is a jokester of sorts.

lay on the ground already, Kalb danced on him, jumped on his belly, on his throat, and on his head. For the entire time, he screamed, that to hit and kill Jews was a right only for Germans, but not for Polish swine... the gentile lay dead.

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At that time, an order arrived, that all Jews who work for the *Wehrmacht* are to be confined, that means, that each evening, after work, they may not go into the ghetto in the *Neustadt*, rather, they must remain in the barracks that had been erected on the Szczebrzeszyn place, near the 'Rotunda.' There were many barracks there, and each 'workplace' had its barracks. There were also barracks for the women. Those that worked, received 3 zlotys and 20 groschen for a day's work. After cashiering them, the workers were given produce in place of money. The Jews slept in the barracks for three to four weeks.

One time, on a certain day, at 6 o'clock in the morning, the Gestapo and the SS surrounded the barracks, and audited all of the Jews that were there. They ordered the largest portion of them to go back to sleep in the ghetto in the Neustadt, and they sent a small number to Izbica.

At the same time, an order went out that the ghetto in the Neustadt is being cut in half, that is, all the Jews have to live only on the right side. The road from Zamość to Tomaszow is the boundary. The Jews were given 3 days time to relocate. After these 3 days, no Jew is permitted to be found on the left side of the ghetto. The Poles who lived on the side streets of the right side of the ghetto, obtained an order from the Gestapo that they must immediately abandon their dwellings. The dwellings must be turned over to the *Judenrat*. All the Jews from the left sides obtained an allocation from the Judenrat of the dwellings vacated by the Poles, for a specified fee.

The office of the *Judenrat* was transferred from the synagogue to the house of Janacek on the first floor. On the second day, already in the new house, the *Judenrat* posted a sign that all the elderly Jews who are found in the ghetto, must present themselves to the *Judenrat*, that they are going to be transferred to Izbica. There were those who said that in the German periodicals, it was indicated that Izbica was remaining a Jewish town, where the Jews are permitted to live. The elderly Jews did not believe in this idea, that Izbica was going to remain a Jewish town, and did not present themselves to the *Judenrat*, [rather], they began to hide themselves. The Jewish police went through the houses, looking for elderly Jews. Whomeever among the elderly tha they did encounter, were sent to Izbica.

The Jews already saw, and felt, that dark days are coming, and yet despite this, there was hope that at the last minute, a change would come in favor of the Jews.

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*Page 961: The Zamość Jews Driven to the Death March*

At the same time, the Gestapo man Langenkaempfer went around with another person from the Gestapo over all of the workplaces where Jews were employed. Every place that they went to, they stood the Jews up 2 to a row. Every one of these that was pleasing to them, had his name recorded and was told to come to the labor office and bring along a photograph.

Two days later, the labor office took away the old work books from the Jews that were registered by the Gestapo man Langenkaempfer, and gave them new ones. The new work books consisted of what wason the first page which was a large Star of David, and in the middle of the Star of David was the letter '**J**'. On the second side was the name and the photograph of the owner of the book, and where he worked. In the ghetto of the Neustadt, these books were called the '*Yot-kartes*.' The Jews who did not receive a '*Yot-karte*,' were envious of those who did have one, because it was being said in the ghetto that the Jews with '*Yot-kartes*' will not be taken in the 'evacuations' that are drawing close. The Jews of Zamość therefore exerted themselves, with money, or through protection to obtain such *kartes* from the labor office.

At the same time, when the Jews were preoccupied with getting themselves '*Yot-kartes*,' on Friday October 18, 1942, at 5 o'clock in the morning, the Gestapo, the Red [hatted] police, and German gendarmerie surrounded the ghetto, and went house to house, ordering the Jews to go out onto the [market] place. The gathering point was on the [market] place,

where Janitzky had his colonial-business. A large part of the Jews were visited by the Germans, who took away everything that they had in their pockets, and in addition beat them on the head with truncheons.

At the market, where the roads cross, stood a large auto, in which several German gendarmes stood, with machine guns, aimed at he Jews with the barrels, who stood on the marketplace. The Gestapo selected members of the *Judenrat* out of the Jews that stood on the marketplace, and set them to a side.

The commandant of the Luftwaffe came to the [market] place, the German, Raffert, and selected 50 Jews for work. In general, according to my estimate, there were between 3 and 5 thousand Jews on the [market] place.

The Jews were lined up 5 men to a row, and at 11 or 12 o'clock, the order came to march. The Jews were led through the 'Vikrent,' towards Izbica. After every several rows in the train, a German went on both sides with either a gun or a truncheon in hand. For the entire way, they continuously kept shouting: – 'Move it! – March!' The largest number of victims came from the last rows, those who stopped, those were mostly beaten and many of them were shot.

The members of the *Judenrat*, set off to the side, came to Izbica on the following morning in an auto. After this 'evacuation,' it meant that Zamość was left *Judenrein.*

On the way to Izbica, each family made an effort to stay together. They held each other's hand. If someone stopped, then the members of the family offered help, dragging them along, in order not to be left last. The largest number of fallen victims were from the village of Stary Zamość, on the hill leading to Izbica: here on the ascent to the hill, many stopped, fell from lack of strength, and here the Germans shot them mercilessly. One cannot know exactly how many people were shot along this way. The Jews who went in this train, estimated that approximately 100 Jews were killed.

The Jews came to Izbica before nightfall, and in Izbica there already were many Jews from Czechoslovakia, and from villages around Izbica. In every house, wherever you went in, it was full of people, and each person sat on their own bundle. Also, the streets were full of people, who sat on their bundles and slept... Izbica looked like a train station, where people are waiting for the train...

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A Gestapo man named **Engels** held authority over Izbica. He had a reputation throughout the entire area as a great bandit and sadist. He would ride around on a horse with a revolver in hand, and he would shoot anyone he ran into in the street. When Jews would catch sight of him in the distance, they would flee into their houses.

The Jews of Zamość who already were in Izbica, said among themselves already, that an 'evacuation' was being prepared, and that the *Judenrat* of Zamość had made an effort with this Gestapo man not to send the Zamość Jews away. So, many Zamość Jews ran to the *Judenrat* and paid them money, in order that they be among the candidates not to be sent away.

On Monday, October 21, 1942 at 5 o'clock in the morning, an auto arrived on the Zamość road, which stopped on the hill, where one rides from Izbica to Krasnystaw. One could see recruits sticking out of this auto, dressed in black, but who spoke only Russian. There were two Gestapo staff with them. They made a chain, shouted wildly, and descended on the city. They held guns as if they were going on a military attack on the city.

They descended on the Jews at the train and took away their money. Specifically, they were looking for watches and boots. When they saw a Jew in boots, they first mad a traditional Russian blessing and shouted 'давай сапоги!' (turn over the shoes!). There were an insufficient number of wagons for all the people who stood on the place, so they first started to load the women. Among the women was also my dear mother, and my sister Bluma, and the other people were told to go home.

Many dead remained in the streets. Several days went by before the dead were removed from the streets.

As in the case of the neighboring villages, the Jewish police took a rather significant role in the 'evacuation' in Izbica, which consisted mostly of Czech Jews. They conducted their work with German punctiliousness. They took a direct part in driving and shouting at the Jews, that they should get into the wagons more quickly. A few minutes, however, before the wagons were locked, the Gestapo man Engels ordered the police that they should also get into the wagons....

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*Page 963:* *On the [Market] Place After the 'Evacuation.' An Abandoned Child Blinks About*

*Page 964:* *Images from the Zamość 'Evacuation'*

After this specific 'evacuation,' several thousand Jews continued to remain in Izbica. Again there was talk of a new 'event,' that is being readied. Because of this, many Jews went off into the forests, and other Jews made themselves Aryan papers. In Izbica, there was a Jewish policeman who for 1000 zlotys, in the course of 2 days made an Aryan passport with a photograph.

There were also those, who could not manage going into the forests, and they didn't want to leave their families behind, the wives and children. They also argued that the Aryan papers will be of no help because of their 'accent,' in Polish. These were the ones who got themselves dwellings in Izbica. For such dwellings, one had to pay a goodly sum of money. A Zamość baker lived in Izbica, Sholom Hantwerker, who was a member of the Izbica *Judenrat*, and it was he who allocated dwellings. For a good house, he took between 500 and 1000 zlotys. A 'good' house meant one in which there was a secret place to hide, which can offer protection during an 'evacuation.'

Two weeks elapsed from the first to the second 'evacuation' in Izbica. Again, a similar number of wagons came, again the Russian 'blacks' came. The second 'evacuation' lasted for 2-3 days already, because people had begun to hide themselves by this time. The Russians went along with small gentile boys to look for Jews. They gathered together several thousand Jews, and loaded them up in the wagons, and the transport went off to Belzeč.

On the second day, Polish fire fighters were brought into Izbica from the surrounding villages. They came with hoses and hammers. They went through the Jewish houses, not missing anyone, banged on the walls, tore up the floors. Wherever they felt there was an empty space, they made a hole and piped in water with their hoses. It was in this manner that they were able to drive Jews from their hiding places – they would run out wet, frightened and pale. The fire fighters would fall upon them with wild laughter and beat them, looking in their wallets, and take away everything they had. In the end, they took them to the Izbica cinema house.

Among these Jews also to be found were: my brother Mordechai, with Hirsch Bott. The Jews were held in the cinema for 6-8 days without food or drink, and not letting anyone out even to attend to bodily functions.

After that, a small number of Jews was selected, and they were taken away to a work camp. All the rest were taken out of the cinema, in a group of 30-40 men, and were taken to the Jewish cemetery in Izbica, and shot there.

That is the sum totality of what happened to our Zamość.

Haifa, June 10, 1953

# On the Day of the Unjust Sentence [358]

**By Mordechai Shtrigler**

H. Leivick's – Small Confession Splitter

1.

**The horses always pull the wagon sorrowfully on the Sabbath**
**They are unhappy but cannot fully express it**
**They pull, and then they stop...as if they want to take some counsel...**

**These horses have already been in the city today...**
**The street seemed somewhat restless and washed with tears...**
**But, after all, what is this a matter for horses to get themselves involved in?!...**

**And despite this, they will suddenly come to a stop**
**They turn their sad-looking equine heads about**
**And their eyes ask something of the young boy on the wagon...**

**Later, both of them whinny over the silence**
**Hastily giving the heavy wagon a strong pull**
**And begin to run in a frightened madness...**

**The peasant Jantoszczak holds the reins on the wagon, engrossed in thought**
**The silence of the road cries out something that only he alone hears**
**Snapping his whip in the air – to drive away the sounds...**

**And Mordkeh[359], his assigned Jewish assistant**
**Sits on the sacks of corn and murmurs something silently...**
**Well, is it possible for a little Jew to continue to believe in God today! – – –**

**He had well received him for a while, this little one**
**A little Jew – he was a 'Rabbi,'.. Working side by side with gentiles**
**And you don't ever hear an abusive word from him...**

**Several months earlier, the German officer brought him**
**They dogged his steps and used all their means to inflict suffering**
**They persecuted him and he was not permitted to remain in one place**

**But Mordkeh had stubbornly and cunningly swallowed their nasty tricks**
**Answered with a single word to their hundred**
**And quietly did everything that was ordered...**

**Even that poured oil on their fire;**
**You talk...shout...and he is silent...it vexed them!**
**But they got sick of this game quickly...**

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358 Editor's Footnote: *ibid*

359 It is very likely that the poet is referring to himself throughout the narrative. In other parts of this *Pinkas*, he is identified as Mottel Shtrigler.

**So, a little at a time, they cut his sheaths**
**And got used to his awe-inspiring donning of his hat**
**When he has to render his debt of prayer to his God – – –**

**He carried on and tilled just like the rest**
**And in the winter, just like the rest – fertilized the field with manure**
**And it is useless! That a Jew should simply wander about in the yard...**

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**Today, Jantoszczak must transport the corn to the mill with Mordkeh...**
**Jantoszczak knows something already...and a premonition oppresses:**
**— Mordkeh! You know... I wouldn't give you advice...**

**But Mordkeh wants to get done early today**
**It is possible today, to offload the sacks of grain at the mill more quickly**
**And snatch a visit with one's sister and father...**

**So Jantoszczak furrows his darkened brow:**
**Well... I say – I know... but if you don't want to hear**
**At least follow this one thing: take off your Jewish emblem!...**

**And in the midst, he abruptly halts his words**
**His eyes begin to film over in a sorrowed green fever**
**And the hands seek something in the air, but reach nothing...**

**2.**

**Along the road, long columns of police and SS are drawn along**
**Small pins and needles prick the young boy, Mottel, as he sits;**
**To where are all of them being drawn in this stormy manner?!**

**The peasant looks after them with a silent hidden knowledge**
**As if they would shatter his glance with their haste**
**And leave a green languishing worm in his eye – – –**

**A cunning little peasant limps by happily;**
**– Hey, you! What are you thinking about so much?!**
**All the *zhids* are going to be 'taken care of' today! – – –**

**And he doesn't say this with any meanness**
**And his glee is not rooted in any mockery**
**Rather, it is a foregone conclusion; That's the way it is!...**

**Jantoszczak throws a side-glance at his neighbor**
**Whose face has paled... and whose eyes – have bulged out...**
**And himself does not believe his retort: why must you lie!**

**But the little gentile has limped off in the direction of the city**
**And dreams already of plunder with every springy step –**
**They both were silenced and shaking on the small wagon – – –**

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**Well, yes... now there is nothing to make well**
**The smoke of threatening bullets rising to heaven**
**Which show him who in the world today possesses the might...**

**And from the other side, where Jews are living for a time in trembling**
**An angry snap of the whip is carried aloft like a harbinger of a tempest**
**That measures out the way to the battlefield – – –**

**So now the gentile first begins to pour salt into the wound:**
**– See, Mordkeh, how the [sic: your] reckoning was incorrect...**
**To begin with, this God of yours, He has cut Himself off [from you]...**

**He made you alien... separated you from everyone else...**
**So that no one else will partake in your fate...no one will have any sympathy for you...**
**And now He Himself conceals His marvels – – –**

**It is now not possible to fix anything**
**No form of human intelligence will help**
**You can't look for an alternative because – you have none...**

**I simply want to understand you, I want to grasp:**
**How do you stubbornly hold on, to all the demons!**
**Understand, Mordkeh... a loyal God – does not abandon – – –**

**As speech no longer comes to Mordkeh's mouth!**
**Everything turned over insanely in his head**
**And dragged off his thoughts in a wild dance**

**And here, an entombed philosopher suddenly awakened within the peasant...**
**Extending, extending the skein of his questioning without an end... without an end...**
**As if he had here engaged the Jewish God in a debate...**

**But Mordkeh jumps already distracted, carrying himself off the sacks:**
**– Jania... I beseech you...stop it! Stop it...**
**And in a fevered delirium: Do me a favor... ride to the mill – alone... – –**

**Mottel's glance soars, following that distant smoke already...**
**A suspicion gnaws at Jania's head**
**So he implores: Fool! Where to? Where do you want to go?!...**

**But the wind had already given wings to the feet of the other**
**And like an incidentally forgotten stalk to the harvest**
**Drew him to the green scythe of the recruits – – –**

**And the horses looked after him only with feeble regret**
**And Jania's heart was scalded by an alien stony sadness**
**And the whip snapped to the sky with vexation...**

3.

**The sun sports a harlot's gift – a bloody red little box**
**She daubs her face to find favor with someone...**
**Night intrudes, that always tells her to go —**
**So she daubs herself, and colors the yellow mottled skin...**

**That blue simpleton, the sky, rocks a cloud's cradle**
**And doesn't see how his daughter plays the coquette all rouged up**
**She smiles, having made her journey, and offers her golden favors fleetingly**
**To every soldier separately, that sucks the blood from victory...**

**She goes with them into cavities, jumping ahead of them**
**She climbs up on the attic, exposing concealed walls**
**And permits her golden skin to be like a candle in their hands –**
**That goes to murderously storm one Jewish house after the next – – –**

**Like a point on the roads,. She goes forth to touch every step**
**And carries back to eyes each one's pallid contour**
**And thereby mirrors herself in her cloud-white shoes**
**As if she sought a piece of jewelry in gratitude for this...**

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**Lo, here already is the rich, caparisoned city!**
**Jews have already been forbidden to live here any longer**

**And she stands there, the one with proud pedigree, with her Aryanized businesses**
**She stands and blows off those made foolish with the roof covers**

**Under which Jews here made their days full of wisdom**
**Today, she takes pride, this Zamoyski-connected doyenne with this easily acquired wealth**

**[She] doesn't recognize anyone anymore... decorates herself with red swastikas.**
**And with a newly-acquired German she smiles at the elegant taunting**

**That her locks secured for centuries – – –**
**She takes pleasure rather that her beautiful ring has become gentile!**

**From the verdant gardens with their welcoming and coquettish smile**
**The trees along the road bow chastely and cleanly.**

**Like regal harlots that come out into the street fresh – – –**
**They pretend to be deaf when the humor of a recruit hits home**

**And dreaming again about gabardines hung with roses...**
**But Jewish faces have appeared in the mean time...**

**Now they run around with poison in their eyes.. Searching... scraping themselves sideways...**
**They stop at a house... looking, stabbing it with pain...**

**As if they wanted to inject it with terror from their origin**
**But the houses have already acquired the legal police-like mein**

**So they keep still with the gray color of ash and a heart-robbing confinement**
**And they say with astonishment: What sort of temerity is this, what!?**

**They have come here to look for a place to hide.. In what was their previous family home**
**No longer like *balebatim*... but like a trapped fleeing mouse...**

**That doesn't need anything more than a hole... to hide from human eyes – – –**
**But the guard no longer wants to let himself be flattered**

**Today, all he can do is slam the small iron door on you**
**And wonder to himself: What do the Jews have left to speculate about fate!?**

**So one runs... like wheels that have ricocheted out of a spiral...**
**We run!... But do the Jews of the *Altstadt* have any idea of where to run?!**

**4.**

**It is no longer necessary to knock at the city gate on arrival**
**One way or another, the air has scared out a frightened wail**

**And everything is shaken up already from fired artillery...**
**But Germans do not touch any Jews fleeing on the road**

**Just blocking off the crowded streets with walls of recruits and steel**
**And it is from there that the required number must be derived**

**The others meanwhile need to be reduced with fright from predatory beasts**
**And a hundredfold like this with a opportunity to free oneself by fleeing...**

**No matter what, none of these will worm their way out of this**
**When the set number will demand that he line himself up!...**

**But meanwhile, the young boy Mottel goes, and no documents are asked for**
**Even though the thought nags each recruit: I don't recognize him!**

**And he doesn't recognize – many like this, that are running hither and thither**
**As they examine the loaded weaponry with searching eyes –**

**What is lost in the reverberations of the plunder of one street after another**
**They even let him pass by the large shooting ring**

**Bloodies his beard in the midst of his flight on the road**
**As if he needed to repay the Jew a debt here**

**And it seems as if his hands, stomped to death cry out;**
**Don't you see the danger? You crazy-deaf person!**

**But the insane thought had already penetrated Mottel's thinking**
**So he pushes feverishly in the middle of the pressure from the peasants**

**He avoids the dead covered in blood, lying in heaps**
**And sucks and smells a silent scream with tongue and lips....**

**Is he going then? What is it that he carries... and deters him primarily –**
**Like all the gentiles around him, he robs every house**

**And he stuffs his mental reservoir with distraught screaming**
**That seeks to restore a life into someone yet – – –**

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**For them, it is a festival, the neighbors**
**From them, no one will be so much as even touched**

**The stand there, diagonally opposite the fenced place**
**With gleeful and curious nearby chatter**

**And to see who there has been taken captive...**
**One learns from the epaulettes of the guards what the German ranks are**

**And one thinks through which of the Jews will remain behind...**
**And in the middle of this, the round women bubble:**

**– How they trembles over each and every thing! Over a bowl...**
**Pleaded: Sell! And they: Let us wait a little...**

**It is if there was a housemaid there...**
**Except that now, the Germans will sweep them all out with their broom..**

**Someone spies Mottel's black hair...his glasses...**
**And one winks to one's self with angry murderous desire:**

**A little Jew, no doubt...so, what is he doing loitering around here?**
**A gentile points this out to a gendarme with an all-revealing silence;**

**It means: here is yet another one... that belongs there...**
**But the big day has already tired the other one out**

**So he makes a dismissive gesture with his hand and says:**

**We have enough for our count for today –**

**And on a second time they will also not take him in...**
**And he is again thrown into his dumb, blank, unthinking consciousness.**

**So Mottel pushes his way to the second side of the marketplace**
**Every step is harder than trying to climb a mountain**

**So many eyes peer out from afar... so many glances full of final confessions!**
**It is the last glance of four thousand Jews –**

**Who are taking their leave of one, one who was too late for the fright...**
**Their hastily thrown together farewell reverberates like swollen pain**

**Under each one's step, and prevents any further striding**
**Everyone wants to be seen, wants to show themselves to him**

**That he should weave into his remaining days – – –**
**A policeman halts in the middle of this hasty departure**

**And what a shame, a fright chills the wandering anger in him:**
**– You?! It looks like you have gone completely mad!**

**And a second now grows... Mottel lies in a fist grip:**
**He needs to be stuffed somewhere into a room...**

**Do you not see that the youngster is not in his right mind?!**
**And Mottel doesn't know what it is that begins to flow warmly**

**Over his cheeks that have turned blue – – –**
**Blood sighs quietly over his neck that was the target of anger**

**And permits himself to be dragged like some unnecessary piece of noisy crying...**
**The teeth even give up on trying to grit themselves – – –**

**5.**

**A splinter of the one-time Mottel now sits in the room.**

**He has come back from wandering, and came to himself:**
**So he sits before me and bears witness to me:**

**Woe, and woe again – to his great human shame!**
**He has after all remained in his right mind!**

**Crazy? This, he has not become**
**Even later, after drawing himself from years**

**And this time he remained, oh, woe, as strong as iron!**
**His father and sister were at that time on the marketplace**

**And their blood was put up for a pittance of groschen for amusement**
**And in him, the flame of his soul was simply extinguished**

**The sorrow didn't penetrate to the full depth of a brother**
**That everything in him should do a devastating shudder**

**That should blow apart the mind with explosive crashes**
**And lead to the force of full resignation of a delicate young boy;**

**That would toss him into worlds that had undergone upheaval**
**Where the suffocated laugh with the plaintive wail of those who are not heard – – –**

**He is ashamed to the point of reddening that he was not taken**
**And his own memory wreaks vengeance on him – – –**

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**There were seventy in the house – two have remained...**
**Only from sixty eight did the walls contain the scream**

**Permitting all the dumb desires to be shouted out**
**As if the others were God, and they – heirs...**

**What good will it do you, if you can no longer sleep at night**
**That even for the watch, the door has remained open for them**

**You go out before dawn – it is a totally empty area**
**The walls continue to scream, and you are lost in them**

**You hear that little Zoshka, here, the little blond angel**
**Did not make it to the unending journey**

**A bullet silenced her in her mother's embrace**
**And as the first victim – sanctified our house**

**And Malkeleh with Breineh – two little female doves**
**Who wounded their hands smashing glass out from the windows**

**And Shia, the Jewish manual laborer, who blood was lapped up by the threshold**
**And the earth made bubbles for itself from the drops of his sweat...**

**And in house after house like this... pallid, quiet, Jews**
**Who before going – forgave God**

**It is like this in every house...until they stayed too late**
**So their hide stayed there...and sated the air with death...**

**Four hundred went into the city...who were not led to the market place**
**Only the sign – of blood, that the floor and bed were smeared with...**

**And the thousands who were hemmed in – immediately at the first steps**
**Were showered with a hail of bullets that had teeth of fire...**

**And the entire Lemberg *Gasse* – up to the farthest wagon destination**
**Became like a bloodied block in the hand of the slaughterer of people...**

**The sun became red as if it was undergoing death throes in sympathy**
**But on the morrow, it emerged again once more positioned with laughter...**

**And hundreds with hearts pierced, remained in the murderous pocket**
**And the stones refreshed themselves on a slobbering snack of blood**

**And the moon again went for a stroll with her little bastards, the stars**
**Only the night wailed windily, with unwept black tears...**

**Before dawn the ghetto was empty and the prayer shawls lay in mud puddles**
**Wagons – like thieves in the night – gather up the dead**

**They are taken tossed together to that place of graves**
**The entire city looking like a great coffin**

**The police polish off the red wounds from the earth:**
**Every trace must be obliterated by eight in the morning!**

**Jews stand here – like banners engulfed in shame**
**And erase the traces – so the destruction will not be recognizable...**

**Hands shake back and forth from the wagon, from bodies pressed together**
**But for them it is too late to take a measure with anyone**

**So they shake about and stick out in sweat covered death**
**Their fingers knead out a pale, last curse**

**Just yesterday, the Germans drove – today they move quickly on the roads...**
**So their curse remains hanging in the air – having taken their leave from no one...**

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**The people begin to emerge from the attics and the holes**
**Murder was sated yesterday – so today the feeling is one of security...**

**A spark comes out of a burning hearth**
**And a Jew runs to look for a *minyan*, to flatter God with '*Gomel*[360]'...**

**In the *Judenrat*, the office works fresh under steam**
**The people cover the ghetto freshly like a cloud**

**There is work available today – there are dead to be buried...**
**So hands are signed up anew – grave diggers are needed!**

**The maw of the earth needs to be opened and gorged with Jews**
**[It] must be given the clothing to suckle for the red drops...**

**And one receives a [loaf of] bread to compensate for the stench of burial...**
**Go see...Jews are going... covering the privilege of the altar**

**Burying the martyrdom, the plaintive cry... the memory of yesterday's day...**
**And a small loaf of bread swings with reproach on the scale – – –**

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360 The shorthand name for the blessing offered after having survived a great danger.

*Page 975:* *Zamość Jews are 'transported' to oppression. This picture was found in the possession of a German. On the second side this note is found:* **Totenmarsch im 1939, 4 Dezember**

**Mottel goes about for an entire day, with an unheard tread**
**He wants to hide the shame-stricken places from his eye**

**He goes... he wanders aimlessly the disrupted thoughts**
**Like a child, he wants to offer a caress, to play with gifts...**

**He blows coolly there, around all the flames of ire**
**And puts them tiredly to sleep, with the compassion of a mother...**

**And later, when he senses the time of Mottel's idle hour**
**He shouts out identifying himself: And I am here once again!**

**– Here?! The unfamiliar tread of arrival dissipates...**
**– How is it that you are here if you are – God!?**

**I am here in the slit throat, the burial sacks are choking me!**
**I come here to carry along the great stain of silence**

**And to bemoan my powerlessness together with you – – –**
**But Mottel's thoughts don't let themselves be neatly combed out**

**They collide destructively with and uninvited fear:**
**– Good... but you have to remain with someone... well, who will that be?**

**There is no price – to take you up in the heart**
**Your arousal will rinse off life again**

**Again, you will carry your limbs like stones, and then... and then...**
**What sort of words do you have, if I am not here?!**

**Do you mean that without me, you can have heavens? Eat the heart?**
**– Go away now! I'm not prepared to listen...**

**You are not permitted to exist now... not intrude into my mind**
**Because if you do exist – you cannot slip away from being judged...**

**I will have to dress you in a sword and despise you and curse you**
**Don't exist – or go oversee your [other] worlds! – – –**

**He no longer laughs, God does, and he can no longer make still...**
**Here in his springtime, he has the last of his birds**

**So he wants to detain him on these bare, frozen rooftops**
**He wants to stuff himself into the huge wound holes:**

**Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!**
**But the arrows have burned in poisonously already**

**And the entire world with the heaven is a muddy fragment of cotton**
**Together with all areas ... that were lost or at one time possessed...**

**He remains standing for a while, and Mottel strides on further –**
**Sundered from himself, split in tow**

**A spark of regret pursues him, wanting to bring him back**
**Only the surrounding horror quickly erased its trace – – –**

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**And the other, on the second night yet, Mottel ate bread – – –**
**And it flicked the skin off of him in bitter horror**

**It screamed in him, spitting out... the physical contents chewed in his mouth –**
**It was, however, the death rattle of a subsided pain**

**That which imposed constraints on him by the demands of hunger...**
**[Now] demand of him to return back to the requirements of the flesh,**

**All that he had seen was discarded into a pit of forgetfulness...**
**Demands of the unseeing blood shook the body back [into life]**

**Pulling him back to sleep, to think, again and again...**
**How to obtain a loaf of bread, how to strengthen one's limbs...**

Paris, July 1945

# Residents of Zamość in a Fight for Life During the Hitlerist Occupation

**By Beryl Eisenkopf**
(Montreal)

Thousands of our *landsleit,* who evacuated themselves with the Red Army from Zamość, fleeing the Hitler-murderers to the western territories of the Ukraine, to the Soviets, have written up a separate chapter in the martyrology of the Jews of Zamość. Tragically, it was fated that a part of them, once again, fell into the Hitlerist Hell, in June 1941, when the Nazi barbarians attacked Russia. These are the life experiences lived through by three residents of Zamość: **Beryl Eisenkopf,** my wife *Rosa* from the **Fleschler** family, and my father **Anshel Eisenkopf.**

## Zamość During the First Two Weeks of the War

1 September 1939

It is a beautiful, golden Polish autumn. Like thunder out of the clear sky, the news comes over the Polish radio, that the Germans have attacked Poland and motorized German Panzer divisions have easily broken the resistance of the Polish Army, marching to the east. Happy Zamość is roiled up. It is possible to detect a great sense of nervousness and fright in the populace. Already, in the very first days, one can see masses of refugees pouring through from the western territories of Poland – they communicate sad news of their destroyed cities.

The murderous German aviation sows death over Polish cities and villages.

Zamość distinguishes itself with its extraordinary friendliness in receiving the refugees as guests. It was not only one Zamość family that vacated its sleeping places to accommodate refugees. German airplanes appear over Zamość, the first 'swallows' that tell of the forthcoming destruction...

We were living in the Hotel 'Victoria' at the time, which was a refuge for hundreds of Jewish refugees, who at each air attack seek shelter in the deep, massive cellars. Victims fall from the air attacks – mostly in the *Neustadt.*

Not a large number of houses in Zamość are destroyed. From day-to-day, one sees in great fright, in the disorder, senior Polish army officers fleeing through Zamość with their families. One gets the feeling of complete chaos...in the city, long lines appear for bread and other produce of primary utility. Zamość is engulfed in darkness at night, as if paralyzed. A terror hangs over us, which is only increased as we hear the sad news bulletins from the front over the radio. It doesn't take long, and looking out of the windows searchingly, we see the first heavy German tanks riding into the Zamość Magistrate, that arrange themselves along the length of the streets around the *Rathaus.*

This was the Eve of Rosh Hashanah, 14 September 1939.

## The Germans and Soviets in Zamość

There is no bounds to the fright. The Germans march through the Zamość streets with bayonets. We sit hidden in the houses and hear the wild voices of the soldiers. Immediately a wild bacchanal begins. Jewish assets are plundered. The wince **cellar,** renown throughout all of Poland, that belonged to Shlomo David Fershtendig, is totally plundered. The iron **jalousies** of many businesses are hacked up – the merchandise robbed.

Many young working people and students from Zamość arrive, having fled, for the most part, the city of Warsaw that had been mostly destroyed. They tell about, and describe the terrifying deeds of the Nazis – of the roads that are full of those killed and of abandoned valuables....

At night, heavy gunfire is heard. The bullets ricochet off the walls. All of us are lying on the ground. We survive a terror-filled morning the following day. The Germans break into the houses like wild beasts, all the men are taken outside and are stood in the four-sided square yard of the Hotel 'Victoria,' surrounded by Germans. A German officer demands that all those who shot at the Germans be turned in – this must take place in ten minutes, and if not, all of us will be shot on the spot... the wailing and outcry of the women reaches the heavens. They say their goodbyes to the menfolk...

A lawyer from Krakow comes forward and in a fluent German he speaks specifically to the officer's concern – he is prepared to pay with his own head if they find anyone, that would have shot at the Germans. It appears that this helped, and all of us are released.

This same thing was repeated almost in every house in the center of the city. About 900 Jews, apart from Poles, are confined to the barracks in the Browar. Yentl Cohen brings them food by small wagons. After a number of days of difficult survival and oppression, all are released.

The predatory Nazis do as they please. We live in great fear, but like a ray of hope that penetrates our quandary, comes the news that the Red Army is on the march in the Eastern territories of Poland.

The older Germans, who are more tolerant, murmur to the Jews incessantly: your comrades, the Russians, are coming immediately. And we become aware, that the demarcation line between the Germans and the Russians will be set at the Vistula. No one, simply, wishes to believe this. However, after 13 days of German presence in Zamość – they leave the city.

Zamość is left without authority in charge. A citizen's militia is put together, in which the well-known Zamość anti-Semite and Endekist Hanary is found. The Poles are hoping that the Polish Army will march into the city at an opportune moment and take over the city. But when the first of the Red Army tanks make their appearance in the Neustadt, a citizen's militia is created lead by the professor from the Yiddish Gymnasium, **Schnelling**.

I am witness to the negotiation undertaken by Schnelling at the Rathaus with Hanary, regarding the transfer of weapons, and the dissolution of the militia. They offer no resistance. Our Jewish brethren have ammunition, and together with left-leaning Poles, they take over the city.

After having lived through so much terror and degradation at the hands of the Nazis, the Zamość Jews receive the Red Army with great joy. The Magistrate is decorated with red flags. The Jewish youth of Zamość is especially active in greeting and receiving the marching divisions of the Soviet Army. One now sees Jews with beards in the streets of Zamość talking to members of the Red Army. Here, you can see how the Zamość porter, David Kaplan dances a *kazatsky* in the middle of the street with a group of Red Army soldiers.

A 'Revcom' is created, lead by three Zamość Jews: Hackman, Goldvarg, and Schnelling. Hundreds of Zamość young people take part in the militia.

Also, a tragic mishap occurred, which deserves to be recalled. Yekel Eltzter is killed by a bullet that is accidentally discharged from a revolver being handled by a friend. Thousands of people from Zamość escort this well-known anti-fascist fighter to his final rest. His coffin, decorated with flowers, and guarded, is set out in the Yiddish I. L. Peretz Library, where each person can pay his last respects. Hundreds of floral wreaths are carried during the funeral, and for the first time in the history of Zamość Jewry, he is bidden farewell by a representative of the Red Army.

The Soviets were in Zamość for a short time, in total, for a bout two weeks. It becomes known that the demarcation line will not be as previously thought, the Vistula, but rather the **Bug** River, and that the Germans will again take control of Zamość . This, naturally, elicited a panic among the Zamość Jewish populace, knowing that one needs to flee anew.

# The Evacuation

With a difficult exertion, thousands of people from Zamość gathered about the Rathaus, heard the announcement (it had been postponed for several times at this same place) from the representative of the Red Army, that Zamość must be turned over to the Germans. With that, he offered the assurance that all those who wish to leave the city, will have load trucks placed at their disposition, free train transport, etc.

For the sake of the truth, it is necessary to add that this was carried out completely [as promised]. It was a sad picture that was presented to me in those days in Zamość . There was packing going on everywhere. Families were separated. Part remained in Zamość , and a part, mostly the men, left the city with the calculation that the Nazis will not touch women and children, and after a specific amount of time, the situation will change, and they will once again be able to be re-united with those nearest who remained behind...

My wife and my father also left Zamość on October 2, 1939, setting out for **Ludomir**, which was on the other side of the Bug.

The roads were full of wagons, heavy trucks, loaded with the valuables of the people from Zamość . As if to make matters worse, the skies opened up, and served to make matters that much more difficult... thousands of people from Zamość became homeless...

The streets of Ludomir were overflowing with 'displaced persons,' as we were called, as was the synagogue, the *Batei Medrashim*, the barracks and other public buildings. Because of this extraordinary influx, many had no place where to spend the night. According to my estimate, more than 50 percent of the Jewish population of Zamość left their home city.

I am reminded of a rainy Friday evening, and Sabbath candles are shining out of the Jewish homes, which strongly remind us of our homes in Zamość , and we search about, slogging through mud, a place to spend the night... it is possible to add the unnatural influx of people into Ludomir, and also from other locations – however, it remains a fact that we, the people from Zamość , did not feel the friendliness towards guests that we ourselves showed to refugees, during the first days of the war, who had halted their journeys in Zamość. Characteristic were the words that circulated around in those times: when a mother would say to her daughter in anger, that 'even a displaced person won't take you in.' On a rainy day, one said: 'It is a sin to drive a displaced person out into the street,' etc., etc.

Already in the first weeks, terrible news begins to arrive from the other side of the Bug. We learn of the Chelm-Hrubieszow death march. Our landsman, Meir Fershtendig crosses the border at Ludomir illegally, to Zamość, maintaining a continuous contact between Ludomir and Zamość . We become aware of the German predations. Pressures, levies, etc.

Also here in Ludomir, life is exhausting, and very hard. This compels our numerous *landsleit* to sign up voluntarily for work deep inside Russia.

And in so-called '*tieplushkehs*' (heated heavy wagons) , hundreds of Zamość families travel to the Vologda forests and other territories of Russia. But being unable to acclimatize themselves to the heavy labor in the forests, and the living conditions there, they almost all return to the western Ukraine and White Russia (would that they had remained there, then many more would have survived the war).

Then the famous 'cleansing' of June 28, 1940 comes, when all the displaced persons are sent off to faraway places in Russia. It was our fate, nailed in from the outside in a slaughterhouse, on the Ludomir marketplace, to peer out of a keyhole at the arrests, and in this way, for example, we see Yiddeleh Wagner taken into custody. We hear many familiar voices. This lasts for a couple of days – in the end, we too are discovered. The lock on the slaughterhouse is torn off by the Soviet militia, but to our fortune (and as you will see later, to our misfortune), the last echelon, with hundreds

of people from Zamość, had departed, and therefore we were set free on condition that we have to take a Soviet passport and leave Ludomir in a radius of one hundred kilometers from the border line.

The same thing happened to many other of our *landsleit* from Zamość. Together with a group of Zamość families, among other: Frimer, Genzler, Tzitrin, Fleschler, Edelsberg, Koppelman, Schneiderman, Ziss, Strassberg, Scherer, Futter, Gershtengroipen, Yoder, and many, many others, we take up residence in a tiny, tine town, between Lutsk and Rovno, and there is were we remained until the outbreak of the German-Russian war in June, 1941.

## The Suffering and Killing of the Zamość [Jews] in Ludomir

As is known, almost the entire western Ukraine was captured by the Nazis in the first days of the war, and hundreds of Zamość Jews fell yet again into the hands of the Nazi murderers.

Ludomir, a city near the border, was seized immediately on the first day. The wild German hordes fall [on the city] like bloodthirsty animals. The slaughter of the Jews begins, and many Jews are killed, among others, the *Neustadt* grave digger. An indescribable terror resonated throughout. Jews are seized for the worst kind of work, working on roads, cleaning out stables, cleaning out barracks; bombs are loaded on freight tricks. This is the worst of the work, because there, it is possible to be shot on the spot. Under a hail of staves, two Jews must load half and one ton bombs. The work is under the supervision of the Hitler Youth.

When our landsman, Heshel Kalechstein, an exhausted man, stops, he is ordered, along with 6 other Jews, to dig a pit. He is shot there and buried on the spot. My brother-in-law, Yidl Fleschler comes home from work so badly beaten, that it is necessary to wrap his whipped and broken body in wet sheets.

When the Gestapo comes to our landsman Schmutz, looking for hidden merchandise, and one of the hooligans speaks to his wife in a brutal manner, he slaps him. She is taken into custody and never comes back.

Many from Zamość work at digging out turf. The work is provided to them by Lutek Reiner. One goes to work there eagerly, in order to avoid being seized.

The so-called '*lafankehs*[361],' begin. The Gestapo seizes 300-400 Jews each time, and none of those seized ever comes back...

Among the first to be seized in this manner, were our *landsmen*, Meir Tzitrin and Shabtai Tuchschneider.

In April 1942, all the Jews are crammed into two ghettoes. In a 'living' ghetto, and a 'dead' ghetto...

In the 'living' ghetto, Jews were admitted who appeared to have the capacity to work, and they believed that they will not be affected. By contrast, the 'dead' ghetto was prepared for the worst, because here they put the Jews who did not appear to be able to work.

Everyone exerted themselves to the utmost to get into the 'living' ghetto. In the 'living' ghetto the following of our landleit went in: Israel Bekher with his family, the Rolniks, the doctors Grossbaum and Oytser, Moshe Monk, Joseph Goldgraber, Yossel Scharf.

We, despite the fact that we were craftsmen, went into the 'dead' ghetto, to Mattus Teiger and his family.

In place of the armband with the Star of David, in the ghetto, we already wear two yellow badges, as up till now – one on the back, and the second on the breast cage.

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361 A sarcastic play on the Russian word, лафа, meaning 'good luck,' or 'good fortune.'

In August 1942, all Jews are engaged in allegedly digging for an airstrip in the village of Piatidin, near Ludomir. At the site of the digging of this deep ditch, the refined German murderers utilized water wagons, in order that it come out straight.

At that time, I was ill with typhus, and lay in the ghetto hospital. However, from the nervousness of the doctors, I deduced that something was going to happen. My wife and father, as well as the Teiger family, prepared a hideout. The dwelling of the Teigers was close to the marketplace, and there, there was a sort of stall full of chicken coops. Under one of these coops, we dug out a pit, and the entrance was through the door of the coop.

On August 31, 1942, my wife comes running to the window of the hospital with a wail, and tells me that the ghetto has been surrounded by Ukranian militia and the German gendarmerie. I was, at that time so naive, that I thought they would spare the hospital.

On September 1, 1942, at five before dawn, laying on my sick bed, I hear a wild cry of 'Hurrah!' Alarms from people, and a huge upset ensues. I see how all of the nurses run down to the hospital laboratory. I pull on my robe, and run after them. In the laboratory, there is a kitchen set up, and through the little door of the kitchen , people are pushing themselves into a camouflaged small room. I do the same. In the little room, there is room for about ten people. However, over 30 actually entered. The heat was unbearable.

About five minutes later, we hear the voices of the predatory Ukranian militia, they are sniffing around everywhere. Here, we hear single shots on the upper levels, and the report of those thrown out of the windows, who were sick people that were shot. We are not discovered. The heat and thirst in the little room are unbearable. The night barely arrives, and I exit from the hiding place, run over to a nearby house. This is the house of the Ludomir magnate, Rothenstein. In the house, there are fur coats strewn about, and other items. The first thing is to lay down and stretch out on the silk blankets.

In the stillness of the night I hear footsteps. These are Jews from Tomaszow-Lubelski – the Ehrlich family with two small children. They say that they know about a hiding place in the house. We provision ourselves with water and go into the hiding place.

For fifteen days, the search goes on all over. We hear the terrifying scenes that are played out outside. We hear how they discover the 'cache' in the hospital, the voices of the nurses known to us. We refresh ourselves with tomatoes that we tear from the garden at night.

On the fifteenth day, we hear Yiddish being spoken. It is a group of Jews, set free, that have to clean up the ghetto...we discover that the pogrom is over.
In praise of the Ludomir Judenrat, it must be said that they refused to turn over contingents of Jews to the murderers, and as a result of this, they were all killed (regrettably, in Zamość this was different – B. E.).

This was the first *aktion* in Ludomir, in which hundreds of residents of Zamość are killed. The3 'living' ghetto was completely liquidated. The Zamość doctors, Grossbaum and Oytser are killed. The first thing that my wife and father, who were saved, did, was to run to the hospital. A girl from Lublin, who knows about me, tells them about my hiding place, and you can imagine what it was like when we were reunited...

Piatidin, the so-called airstrip, is a mass grave of thousands of Jews, among them hundreds of people from Zamość. The victims were stripped naked there, and laid them out by rows, like herring, and shot them...

Macabre scenes would play themselves out in the vicinity of the grave. Those that returned from there with the clothing of the martyrs would tell about it.

It is not possible to conceive in the mind of the human fantasy that took place in the various bunkers, where people had to hold in their breath, not giving any sort of a cough, or sneeze, because it was possible you would have to pay with

your life for it, and that actually took place in hundreds of instances. It went so far, that in a bunker, where there were from 70-80 people with year-old or even younger nursing children, that mothers clutched their children so tightly, that the children suffocated. We are aware of two such instances.

Our *landsman*, Itcheh Schneiderman, found himself in such a plight, his wife was Malka Hudes. Not wanting to suffocate her own child, but in order not to get into conflict with the other people in the bunker, they emerged from their hideout in a specific moment, and surrendered themselves as a threesome to the hands of the bandits.

They wish to spare the life of a *landsman* of ours, Shmuel Schmutz. All he has to do is part with his little daughter (she was a pretty as an angel). He does not go along with this, and goes to his death together with her.

Shmulik Millstein and Mendel Kruk, as we are told, committed suicide by hanging themselves.

After the first pogrom, the Jews are concentrated into a smaller area, where a new *aktion* is expected at any moment. Work permits are distributed among craftsmen. This time, we luck out, and we get such a permit. I live with the Teigers on the Rivno Gasse. The house was a burned down wreck. We continuously keep a rope ladder attached to the chimney of the house, so that in the event of need, we can pull ourselves onto the roof. The stairs, naturally, were burned out.

In those days, the Germans uncovered a large Jewish warehouse of wine, and fearing that the wine was poisoned, they seized a group of Jews from the ghetto, among others, my father, and Feivel Peckler. All were confined under arrest, and each was given a separate quarter liter of wine to drink, to see what effect it would have. After detaining them for a couple of days, and convincing themselves that the wine was good, they were beaten really well, and then released.

The second pogrom begins on November 13, 1942. The ghetto is surrounded before daybreak with Ukrainian militia and SS detachments. One hears indescribable outcries from the ghetto, wailing. We climb out onto the roof, and hide between the chimneys. We hear how a strong group of about 100 Jews attempt to break out of the ring of Ukrainians and Germans with a shout of 'Hurrah!' Regrettably they are not successful, and are thrown back.

This time, the Ukrainians snoop around on the roofs as well – the metal is hacked at, and we are uncovered. With raised hands, we descend from the roof. The house is surrounded by Germans with automatic weapons in their hands.

We are pushed off the roof by the Ukrainians without giving much time to thought. To our good fortune, this is just a one story building, and [yet we do] come down banging ourselves up really well. With our hands in the air, we are led of to the jail which is the collection point for the captured Jews. From there, we are taken on freight trucks on our last journey to Piatidin...

Here, a terrifying picture unfolds in front of us. On one side, men stand, separated from the women, and between the two there lie the wounded and the sick. I am separated from my wife, and pushed in among the men. Our *landsman* Elyeh Birkman approaches me, and tells me that since I have a work permit, there is help for me. He engages in conversation with the monsters, and I, in the meantime, take my work permit out of my wallet. I have my wife's work permit with me, and by sheer coincidence, also my father's. As it happens at precisely that time, he was working outside of the ghetto. In the blink of an eye, someone from Ludomir treats my father's permit out of my hand.

Elyeh Birkman sees this, and cries out: Berek! Save me, give me your aunt's permit! – But it was too late. That Jew was already standing in front of the Commissar of the locale, who was separating him out and sending him to a group that is to be immediately released.

I am able to get my wife her permit, only with a tremendous effort. Beaten, trampled by the feet of the German gendarmerie, she tears herself over to our group after a number of previously unsuccessful attempts.

Gruesome scenes are enacted in front of us, which literally congeal the blood in the veins. There, a mother tears herself away to a get to a child, which the gendarmes fling away like a ball in a melee. There, Esther'l Wachs and her little

daughter are bidding farewell to Meitcheh Wachs, and when the selected group is led out of the jail gate thousands of hand are raised skywards. The outcry is heard:

– Save us! Avenge us! Don't forget us!

The following of our *landsleit* stand ion the foreground: Pesha Goldhaar and Adamashkeh, the Brokhehs, Eli Brikman, and Meitcheh Wachs. Close by us, Yossel Scharf is being led into jail. With his daughter, Shmuel Tzitrin, Gula Meller.

The remaining Jews are collected together in the red school on Wodoponia *Gasse,* to sort the clothes and possessions left behind by the martyrs.

The Germans create a so-called manual labor association. The area now occupied by the Jews is now very small. The only ones who have a right to live here are those with work permits. The others, who are 'illegal,' must hide out.

We have the opportunity, along with Lutek Reiner, to transfer over Rachel'eh Raphel, who had been hidden in a cellar in the prior ghetto. The number of people from Zamość by this time is very small. Among the others who were later killed are: Eli Ruf (Tango), Leibl Pfeffer, Lutek Reiner, Rachel'eh Reiner, Tepkeh Hertzberg, Manzim, Yossel Lichtenberg, Meiseles, Shyeh Sterfinkel, Nahum Stern, Segalmans, Ethel Tzitrin, Sima Steinmerder, Lieber Morgenstern and Vevi Hitt.

Mendel Kopflash's son, the lawyer Eisenstahl was for a bit of time the chief of police. He vanished while abandoning his post, and there is no news of his fate to this day. His replacement was Leibl Feldstein. There are Zamość people in the police (*Ordnungsdienst*) however, one does not have to have a bad take on such policemen as Yossel Lichtenberg. Or Tepkeh Hertzberg, who always relate to their fellow ghetto inmates in a humane manner. Not only once, did they risk their own lives in order to hide 'illegals.' Such as the case when Yossel Lichtenberg is forced into going down into a cellar hideaway to see if there are any 'illegals' there or not. He goes down into the cellar, and encounters a girl, whom he covers up with rags, and coming out to the Germans he says, that there is no one in there. They threaten him that he will be shot if it later turns out to be otherwise. He maintains his position. With other Jewish policeman, to our everlasting sorrow, it was otherwise...

The situation with the German is like with the buttered side down. After Stalingrad the Germans hang out black banners of mourning. The front continues to draw nearer. It feels like the hour of liberation is near. We hear all the news from the front accurately by radio, which is installed in a cellar. We think about putting together a resistance group. It is difficult to obtain weaponry. Our *landsman*, Lutek Reiner, makes an effort to establish contact with the Soviet partisans through the remaining Soviet bookkeeper Goykin. Regrettably, the Ukrainian Fascist UPA (Nationalists)[362] and the Polish AK[363] are reconnoitering around Ludomir. Both are fighting each other as opponents[364], and each separately, is killing Jews....

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362 In the spring of 1943, Ukrainian police in large numbers deserted with their arms and joined the *Ukrainska Povstanska Armyia* (Ukrainian Insurgent Army). Others, especially those who served in the mobile battalions, retreated westward with the German forces, and in the final stage of the war were incorporated into the *Ostbataillone* or into divisions of the Ukrainian National Army.

363 Acronym for *Armia Krajowa* (Polish Home Army) representing the Polish government (in exile in London).

364 *From Working Paper #9 of Professor Timothy Snyder, History Department, Yale University:* The crucial matter, though, is the basic disagreement between Ukrainians and Poles over the legitimate rule of particular territories, sharpened by Poles' uncompromising belief in their continuing right to lands populated by Ukrainians, and fear of making concessions in time of war.

Every one of us had made provision for a place to bed down with Christians outside of the ghetto, so that in an exigency, we will have somep place to flee. We had such a lodging with a Polish woman Huzarczikowa on the Hospital *Gasse* in Ludomir.

In those days, *aktionen* are carried out continuously against 'illegals.' The following of our *landsleit* are killed: Itcheh Meiseles, The Segalman brothers.

During this time, our *landsman*, Lieber Morgenstern (brother of Yohanan Morgenstern, the hero of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising) is known as the poet of the ghetto. He writes mostly about ghetto themes, and refreshes the people, during periods of respite and quiet, with his creations. Velveleh Hitt, a grandson of Kalman Klezmer, does the same, as a musician.

On December 13, 1943, before daybreak, the ghetto is surrounded by Vlasovites.[365] We are awakened by heavy gunfire, an indescribable tumult and tumult. We show ourselves only to the extent needed to get down into our ghetto hideout. The entrance to our bunker is through a hole in the entrance. The box, with excrement in it, is moved over onto previously prepared boards. When we are in the bunker, we push it back into place.

During the night of the 13th to the 14th of December, it becomes possible for us, as a group of 10 Jews, to get out of the ghetto, and to reach our place of lodging peaceably.

As we later become aware, both Lutek Reiner and Rachel'eh Raphel got out of the ghetto as well. Rachel'eh, however, is shot close by the ghetto garden. The same happens to the wife of Shmulik Bergelson, during an attempted crossing of the frozen river. The Jews seized in the ghetto, among them all of the previously mentioned people from Zamość, were taken to Falemitch, a village near Ludomir, there they were shot and cremated. As Christians told us, it was possible to smell the smoke from the burned bodies in the city.

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365 In the *Dereczin Memorial Book* reference is made to *Ukrainian Vlasovite* troops aiding the Nazis in their extermination campaign against the Jews of Byelorussia. This brings to light one of the more bizarre and tragic aspects of the eastern front campaign during WW II.

General *Andrei Andreyevich Vlasov* was the son of a Russian peasant from the Nizhni-Novgorod district who, although far from rich, had been classed by the Bolsheviks as "kulak" and treated accordingly. These roots would ultimately place him at personal odds with the Soviet system. By the late 1930s, Stalin would forcibly collectivize the Ukraine, disenfranchise the kulaks, utilizing starvation imprisonment and exile, at the cost of over 5 million lives. By March, 1942 *Vlasov* had become Deputy Commander of the Volkhov Front. In mid-June of 1942, his forces operating on the Volkhov River were forced to surrender, and General *Vlasov* became a German prisoner of war.

As with members of many other brutalized minorities under the heel of the Soviet boot, General *Vlasov* allied himself with the Nazis to combat Stalin. Droves of anti-Stalinist Russians began to surrender to the Nazis, mostly Ukrainians. Anti-Stalinist deserters serving in the Nazi forces reached 900,000 in June 1944 under General *Vlasov*. At war's end, hundreds of thousands of *Vlasov's* supporters fled westward to for refuge from Stalin's vengeance, but were handed over to the Soviet Union to be murdered outright or sent to slave-labor camps in Siberia. The dimensions of the human suffering involved in this whole situation is beyond the human imagination. On May 12th, 1945, *Vlasov* was handed over by the Americans to the Soviets to be tortured and executed for treason in August, 1946.

A Russian historian, after the fall of the Soviet Union, makes the following observation:

*In my opinion there is one reason which explains everything: the general hatred of the Soviet system, a hatred greater than inborn patriotism and loyalty to one's own government. Those who have not seen the limitless degradation of man in what was the Soviet hell cannot understand that a moment may come when a man out of sheer desperation will take up arms against the hateful system even at the side of an enemy. The responsibility for his mutiny falls on the system and not him. Here the notions of loyalty and treason lose their meaning.*

The Chrisitan [woman] had prepared a bunker for us. The pit that was dug out, was in her garden, lined with boards. Near a tree between junk and old iron goods, there is a pipe that leads into the bunker, to give us a little bit of air. The entrance is from the cellar of the Christian woman's home, which in the case of need, can be covered by pouring potatoes on it. Anyone who has not survived such an ordeal is not in a position to grasp the travails and suffering and need that we lived through, while sitting (because standing was not possible) in the bunker. Only the Christian woman, and her two daughters know about us, even the owner of the house is not permitted to know about us...

We think about fleeing to the partisans, with a large number of the 'AK' located in Bielin, a village near Ludomir. However, we become severely discouraged and conflicted, when we become aware from our Christian woman that the 'AK Troops' have created a ghetto for those who saved themselves and had fled to the Jews. They finish off what Hitler was not given to carry out to a full one hundred percent. Namely, to completely eradicate the Jews.

Many Jews from Ludomir and its vicinity are killed by the 'AK' murderers, among them, our landsman Lutek Reiner. In these newly created circumstances, our noble Christian lady does not permit us to stir from the spot.

It is February 1944, the front is already at Lutsk. It is a cold winter evening. We come up out of the bunker for a while, and we sit in a darkened little room.

We become very moved when through the covered windows we spy the arrival of Jews. These are Jews from Hungary and Czechoslovakia, who are employed on the front line digging trenches. Our Christian lady spreads out hay for them, and makes lodging for them for the night. We request of our Christian lady to permit at least one of them to come in to us. She doesn't want to, but she becomes more pliable on the second day, and one of them, a young man from Hungary comes down to us in the bunker. We all cry together. He tells us that in the city, he has visited with other hidden Jews in an identical fashion.

We owe our thanks for surviving to war to this meeting with the Hungarian Jew, as you will later see. We become aware, that Feivel Feckler is confined to a bunker with five Jewish doctors. Our situation at that point was very critical, we are starving. The Christian woman, simply has no means with which to purchase food for us. The Hungarian Jew does what he can. He provides us with bread, candles, razor blades, and most important of all: he leaves us an address, shortly before his departure, where we can go to, in the event of trouble.

Through his intermediation, I send an S.O.S. letter to Feivel Feckler and Rokhcheh Rothenstein. [She is] a woman from Ludomir(today in America) who brings us financial help, putting her life at risk (she is seized along the way, arrested and beaten murderously). She is released thanks to the intervention of a friend of hers, who testifies that she is a Christian.

In May 1944, the front is now not far from Ludomir. Our Christian lady fears, that upon evacuation, the Germans will burn everything, confiscate and drive out the populace in haste, as they are doing in other cities. She fears pogroms coming from the Ukrainian nationalists. They took advantage of these times of anarchy and massacre the Poles. The Poles would respond in kind. At night, the skies would be red from burning Polish and Ukrainian villages.

The street, on which we were hidden, bruited that Huzarczikowa must be hiding Jews, this being inferred from the large pots that she used to cook with, etc. All of this caused her to abandon us, fleeing across the Bug, deep into Poland.

Soviet aviation bombs Ludomir. One literally can smell the close liberation and here we are utterly abandoned. We are compelled to abandon the bunker, and in the middle of a clear day we are perfectly silhouetted to be shot.

We go to the address in the destroyed ghetto that the Hungarian Jew had given us. We are pale from being confined underground for so long. Our pallor literally assaults the eyes. At the first fire, I proceed, with my wife about twenty feet behind me, and my father goes, disguised as a peasant with a shovel on his shoulder, to give the impression that of working at digging trenches. At a given moment, we look about, and see how an SS man has stopped our father. 'We are lost!' My wife cries out. A half minute goes by this way. We look about again, and we see that our father is again

proceeding. It evolves that the SS man had asked my father something, who in turn had replied to him, stammering on his Polish. Not being able to understand him, he drove him away with a blow...

A Soviet woman greeted us at the wreckage of the ghetto. It was about her that the Hungarian Jew had told us. Her name was Klara, and as it appeared, she was Jewish. She lived like a Marrano among gentiles, having fled from the burned down surrounding villages, she brought us down into a cellar which was lined with boards. Under the boards was water. On the boards, they lay a Jew from Ludomir. In an identical manner, the Jews from our previous bunker came over.

A day later, the Gestapo uncovered our prior bunker, pursued our Christian woman, and as we were later informed, after the liberation, she, together with her sisters and daughters, were shot.

This was a sort of good and honorable woman, who has to be counted among the most righteous of the nations of the world. During the course of long, painful months, she hid ten Jews and handled us like tiny children... at a time when she stood under the threat of a death sentence. And was paid practically nothing for it.

We were 6 weeks with Klara. These were 6 weeks loaded with pain, fear, and waiting. One can hear a hefty cannonade around Ludomir – the Soviet 'Katyushas' and heavy artillery are playing a 'symphony,' which for us is the most beautiful music that our ears could take in...

On July 20, 1944, Klara runs into our cellar panting out of breath, and shouts out in Russian:

– 'Ревята! Наши Зст! Неходите Пожалуста!'(Children, ours are here, please come out).

We become suspicious, and we do not want to believe her, and continue to remain in the cellar. It does not take long, and a group of Soviet military people comes to our cellar. We are carried out in their hands, we are embraced around the throat – the joy is boundless, indescribable...

The Soviets assure us that no matter what how the situation develops at the front, they will not abandon us. A few Jews from Zamość are saved: Feivel Feckler, Jonah Schatzkammer, Abraham Wachs, with his wife (Rivkeleh, the cutter), Benjamin Stern, Shmulak Bergelsohn, Rachel'eh the candy lady. That is the sum total out of hundreds of Zamość Jews in Ludomir.

* * *

During those same days, Zamość is liberated. Regrettably, here the total is even more sorrowful. Only 4 Jews have survived in Zamość proper.

We are not able to travel back to Zamość immediately. Only first, in February 1945 are we repatriated to Zamość. A small wagon, with our poor possessions takes us through Hrubieszow, Monczin, toward Zamość.

The way is filled with danger. Various bands are reconnoitering and preying in the area, that kill Jews, Soviets, and robbing the peasants. Shooting is heard in the surrounding forests. In the end, we finally see the tip of the Zamość Magistrate building. This elicits tears – which attract hateful stares that ask: You are still alive?

The city did not appear to be different on the outside. However, the Jews are missing in every aspect, no Jew can be seen in the *Neustadt*, and there is not a single Jew in the stores, on the byways, on the marketplace – the same is true in the *Altstadt*. The merchants in the factories are Poles. The situation with housing is frightful for the surviving Jews. Our domicile in the Hotel 'Victoria' is in the midst of being rebuilt by the P.P.S. as a club. The broken down walls mirror our exhaustion.

I wander over the Zamość streets – here where each stone is so familiar to me, where everything elicits nostalgia, I feel like a stranger.

Here is the Sabbath, and I take myself into the Zamość park. It is more beautiful than ever. The trees are grown together, thicker. Under the trees are the same benches. And unwillingly, the question nags at me:

– Where are you, beloved youth of Zamość, with your heated political discussions, with your striving for a better more attractive world?

Lo, these very benches, only a few years ago, were full of your laughter and anger. And now?... here the silence of a cemetery reigns. Diagonally opposite the sports place, stands a large beautiful monument, with the names of a group of Polish military servicemen that fell in combat against the Polish N.S.Z. (Polish Fascists) and isolated graves of Red Army soldiers. All of this is like a gruesome memento of that which took place.

I flee from here, to the new houses, where the sidewalks are paved with the headstones from Jewish graves. Here is the abandoned and desecrated old Zamość synagogue – this is the memorial to what 400 years of Jewish life was in Zamość.

In Zamość at that time, there were about 200 Jews – these were Jews primarily from the area around Zamość. The head of the community was Elyeh Epstein. The Jews then lived in fear, because of the unsettled times. Many Jewish victims fall on the way to Zamość and in the city proper. A Jewish soldier is shot, who is serving in the Polish military in Zamość.

Dudl Safian (Rebaleh) is killed under extraordinary circumstances. Dudl Safian becomes the manager of Bazhan's mill after the war. On a certain day, he is invited by two Polish officials of the Security Service to travel with them in their carriage. As it later was made known, they arrested him, and later, tortured him to death is a terrifying way. In order to cover up their act, they carried out an arrest of a group of young Zamość Jews, and brought out a libel that they had, so to speak, sold weapons to the 'AK.' The Jews remained in jail for several weeks. Among them Yidl Safian, a brother of the murdered man, Mordechai Goldberg (his brother Hona was in Argentina).

After an intervention in Warsaw, at the Security Service, they were set free. A commission that conducted an exhumation of Dudl's body, established clearly, that he was massacred (teeth knocked out, many wounds all over his body).

The copntinued presence of the Jews in Zamość, under these conditions, was temporary. A number were in the process of selling their houses; part of the Zamość people were recent arrivals from Russia. After spending a day – two in Zamość, they left the city, traveling to Warsaw, Lodz and the largest part to the newly liberated territories of the western German areas, such as Lower Silesia, Szczecin, etc.

We remained in Zamość for a number of months after the Second World War. Later on in Lodz, and then after the pogrom in Kielce, were approximately forty Jews were massacred by the feral Polish mob, we traveled to West Germany; We were there with hundreds of people from Zamość that were saved in Russia, in the D. P. camps and afterwards emigrated to Canada.

# The Last Jew In The Ghetto[366]

**By Mordechai Shtrigler**

**The nib of the pen scrawled for the final time: *Judenrein!***
**Bribe money, and the worn out whining will no longer suffice:**

**What do they think of themselves, these better-type Jews, *Judenrat* and Police?!**
**Finally! Everyone has been sent away... and well, now their turn has come.**

**They were left for last...let them spy...liquidate!**
**The last of the big-shots left behind to gather up [things] for the authorities**

**And it is now... now comes the final payback for this:**
**These last ones will be taken away to Belzeč —**

**For the final time, the Chief of Police goes and simply indicates with his finger:**
**"You! You! You!" He speedily walks down the line, and he moves briskly.**

**There are so many of them, and he – ... the possibilities are few and circumscribed...**
**His adjutant is tired and lazy...and yawns:**

**"It might be enough... "There" they said"– –**
**In a corner at the end of the row, a scrawny little girl wails:**

**"Here Chief! Why not me?...Me! Me!! Me!!!"**
**And her father, by her side, steps on her shoe:**

**"If you are speaking up already – put in a good word for your dear father!"**
**Only – he... a heavy mask! He stands downtrodden**

**Just the thick lips suck on the fat end of the cigar...**
**... to someone nearby he replies: "Well, now it is clear**

**You must vanish, and there is nothing to be done about it!..."**
**One can even still see the last fawning chuckle from the others:**

**"And yet, if the Chief would only try one more time!..."**
**But here, the other seethes, as if heated over a coal fire:**

**"You are bags of garbage, all of you! When I say No! There is no more word!**
**...and yet the masses stand – scrawny skeletons! –**

**You are Jews, and therefore no one in the world will come to save you!"**
**And the verbal exchange is – nothing...that a hope still exists!**
**Maybe...every countenance is scrutinized and something is learned from it:**
**"Look! He's upset! And is he the only one whose well-being is affected, you think?"**

**A uniformed person runs from a distance...concerned, preoccupied:**
**Hah! "Save them!" He said it! Do you, or don't you hear it!!!**

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366 See the note on p. 361

**A shudder passes down and over the line: a paper...to...him..to the Chief!**
**It hammers not only inside of one head... disturbing him in his sleep:**
**The possibility that amused the daughter? Or the one with the diamond?**

**Miracles on gilded rails can sometimes arrive!**
**Quiet – – – deathly silent around... every tongue sticks ashamedly to one's gums —**

**Everything that could be said was spoken... now, only – waiting!**
**Except for the obstinate one, a stubborn Jew –**

**He cannot be silenced: the paper is for him! For him!**
**Immediately, an electric shudder passes through – a voice:**

**"Rappaport Moishek step out of the line!"**
**In the row, it is murmured: "Well, yes...they need him..."**

**A stiff, scrawny personage pushed himself forward out of the line**
**A frail feminine voice follows him through the rows:**

**"Moishe!...I'm staying here... with the children...remember!"**
**But — Moishe! It shouts within him, from the fortunate dispensation,**

**He shouts something into the ranks...he will see, it means...**
**That a piece of paper can work such magic, then.... the Devil knows!**

**Two set of children's eyes look on sadly as their father disappears**
**Into the dead ghetto alleys, without so much as a wish to "Be Well!" – – –**

**In the distance, the very same street flickers for the last time,**
**Over which searchlights carried forward the looks full of hate**

**Feeling the protective walls of hundreds of years of "Life" underneath oneself.**
**But for nothing! What do you want, man, from a little house made of brick and loam,**

**When – hearts...when hand! When everything drives you, beats you and pursues,**
**When even in your heart, it burns and consumes you –**

**Your house turns over those loyal walls to others now,**
**And you... go to the ends of the earth! Travel "There" and be incinerated! – – –**

**2.**

**Dust...dust and fragments of bricks left of a city...[left of] generations!**
**Vultures abound...undeterred at every stone and bed.**
**Jewish walls – also the Jewish homeowners are driven from the city**
**The peasants come together from the surrounding villages,**
**The roofs are torn off the pitiful houses, The tables are dragged out, the walls, benches and beds.**
**– The era of Jewish towns and Ghettoes is over!**
**[Be done with] Jewish home property and small town wealth! – – –**

**And it is not only once that the denuded streets relate**
**From cellars...from ancient cellars! Where they searched for hidden gold,**

**And they found there – trembling, wrapped in an overcoat,**
**A young girl...who did not want to share in the fate of her kin...**

**What? Did she really think that nobody would discover her?**
**That she could hold out in this cellar, not daring to show herself?**
**Becoming tortured by hunger and consumed by lice?**
**No! Her dry, wracked breathing never know the enchantment, never know destroyed homes! – – – –**

**The baker's oven spews out its smoke with anger in the night,**
**Like a well-fed aristocrat, puffing on his cigar,**
**Hey, the baked goods must be left on full heat!**
**Presenting the work of the Jews, "Rappaport and Klein."**

**The only Jew left in the city – let him toil here!**
**The S.S. barracks are hungry, and the hungry – must be fed!**

**And every once prosperous small-town baker's oven**
**Is full of bread flour, and the dream of rolls...**

**Moshe...Moshka...Moses...you must have a different name for everyone.**
**For "Moshka" you must smuggle, for "Moses" you must toil hard!**

**At night, fingers knock at the back doors and at the windows;**
**– Moshka, sell us a loaf of bread, don't hide everything for the Swabians![367]**

**And occasionally, Moshka must – secretly bake a small sack of flour for a neighbor,**
**And watch himself, and tremble, lest "Moses" not pack it away.**

**And – Moshe..Moshe himself also has personal needs...concerns.**
**In a subterranean cellar, where someone else lies hidden away,**

**And one's heart...the wife and children left behind, and now — and now**
**He carries away a loaf of bread into the cellar – his heart pounding, and pounding...**

**Not far away there is a Jewish bunker,**
**He stealthily steals an hour to go there,**
**Except the Chief of the Gestapo, by whose graces he has remained alive,**
**Once excoriated him in the middle of eating his meal as follows:**

**"Foul Jew! I talk to you, and drink schnapps with you,**
**And you... are still drawn to your old haunts."**

**And the Senior Chief adds: "The Jews in the bunkers, the last ones,**
**"Even the locksmiths and chauffeurs, with the oversized overalls,**

**Nothing will help even them to try and escape – – –**
**"Moses" should be aware: all of them are being kept in mind...**

**Only he – Moses – he is different – not like any other Jew!**
**"He doesn't belong in any bunker! He will remain...at his post!...**

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[367] An indirect reference to the Germans.

**"Nobody will know – he can be sure of it! – He is saved!"**
**– – – and at night – there in the bunker – they roll around in the cramped beds:**

**"Every day we have to anticipate "The Event!"**
**And from other bunkers... terrible tales are heard!**

**3.**

**A frightened fingernail scrapes on the window of the bakery:**
**No, one of "Them" never knocks in that fashion!**
**It is a plea and a warning; a cry and a shout for help...**

**An angry rain pelts the empty streets with its rod-like wind,**
**And it would be a sin to let even a dog out on the street...**
**...leaving the entire work in the hands of the gentiles there, his assistants,**
**And returning...coming home by himself.**

**A shack near the bakery; the oven is lit, and in the house – there is warmth.**
**Alone... And yet – As if someone has tapped on the window with the tip of a fingernail.**
**Wherever he goes, the sound follows him...is someone signaling him? Looking already?**

**With timid steps, he approaches the window to see what is going on:**
**Pale fingers drum against the window pane...familiar fingers of a woman –**
**Anger...fear...curiosity...everything mixes inside him with astonishment:**
**Ho, the finger of a woman! The youthful woman's nail is like a spear in his heart...**

**Wordlessly, he pries open the door...blindly, he takes a hand in his hand,**
**In the darkness, he senses that the fingers are familiar to him from somewhere:**

**Who? Who? Who? – –**
**Everything within him roils with curiosity and desire. –**

**Come! Come! [the words] rumble within him in all manner of language to the dark visage,**
**And everything in the mind erupts in flame; boundaries to thought fall in one crash –**
**"Tzivia!!! he cried out at the first shine of the light,**
**How do you come so late without being seen?"**

**And his one-time partner, his seventeen year-old daughter weeps on his bosom,**
**She was certain she knew she would find him here;**

**Hiding out in the forests, in ruined, abandoned cellars...**
**Cooking food, after a fashion, on branches, sort of unseasoned, grass-like,**

**And, here, it is already two days that she lies hidden this way in a hole,**
**And with only another loaf of bread – she will manage to get through about another week –**

**Tzivia! Did she become beautiful? Or is it the feeling of one's kin nearby,**
**A face – nearby... young, and in its first blush – – –**
**And the night is fierce and threatening, and the man in him is turning the grindstone!**

**He knows: it is forbidden! But the shadow is cast across all of them – death,**
**But she blushes with the first loss of redness;**

**In the darkness of the night, in its toothless mouth, and by the fire of the oven,**
**A minute of life is an eternity that beckons! Not to be squandered – – –**

**4.**

**Someone with the arrogance of a master is rapping angrily on the door:**
**"Who is in here?!"**
**------ "Hide yourself!" Everything in him cries out to her.**

**A hailstorm of blows are already rapping, when she is already in the hideaway,**
**But her breath still simmers in the air; the coverlet is yet warm from her.**

**Through the open door, the Chief forces his way in, with his assistants,**
**With the gleaming eyes of hungry, angry wolves:**

**"So, Moses! We have disturbed your deep sleep!"**
**– What is it? Has he already seen something? Heard something?**

**"Drink! Let the Jew bring us something to drink!"**
**But why is he so frightened, pale and enervated?**

**Nothing, he'll drink a little with them, and keep them company somewhat...**
**Interesting, he says finally, Moses is so pale, so pale!"**
**– Is the Chief serious about this, or is he just joking?**

**But the adjutant, the *Oberleutenant*, doesn't allow for protracted thought:**
**"What is taking the Jew so long with the shitty drink?!"**

**So... he drinks with, Moses... so he can show how a Jew really drinks!**
**And another thing... he has to show them something else...that he is unconcerned!**
**What is he doing standing there, what? Where is she, the "Rachel'eh" hidden?**
**With his "Rachel'eh!", with his "Rachel'eh", that he always talks about, let him –**

**Ho, look for her! And he – stretch himself out naked in a corner!"**
**Ha! Why does he stand there so silently, and gasps out of fear!**

**A hand gropes wildly towards the place where the girl lies.**
**Are they just joking in drunkenness? Or are they crazy?**

**...and so she finally stands in the middle of the house...hands tear off her last chemise.**
**The voice of the Chief shouts out in anger, fiercely and in an alien manner:**

**"And tear off everything from him...like ths! Like this!**
**And now, Moses, show us now – – – of course, as is usual, with a woman! – – –**

**Epilogue**

**One day before dawn, the S.S. took four Jews from the bunkers there.**
**Afterwards, the last spark in the oven was extinguished**
**And gruesomely flickered on the two corpses intertwined in the middle of it....**

**...Silently each of the four stifled their last sigh within themselves**

**As the went to lift up the two bodies that were like one – – –**
**... and in a corner of the field on a leaden dreamlike night**
**The terrified hands of Jews carved out a burial plot**

**For Moshe Rappaport and Tzivia Elbaum – the last of the Zamośćer Marranos**
**Skewered and shot through their private parts – – –**

*In April 1943*

*Page 994:* *Men and women, old people and children – all were driven to their Last Journey. A Fragment from the Zamośćers "Depredation"*

# On Aryan Papers

**By Rosa Rosett**

The following writeup is taken out of a letter that R. Rosett sent from Paris on December 26, 1945. It was written freshly after the tragic experiences. We have omitted certain parts of this letter, which are covered in other memoirs, witness testimony, and materials.

...To record what I lived through in the six bloody years of the war, would imply writing a book. However, I will underscore the general sorrowful picture in brief segments:

Shortly before Rosh Hashanah 1939, the Germans took control of Zamość. You can well imagine what our holiday was like.

After only a few days, in which we did not lick any honey, the Germans fall back and their place is taken by the Russians. The joy is great, but regrettably not for long. After a few weeks, the Russians draw back to the Bug River, and the bandits return.

Many Jews flee with the Russians, among them also my husband, because the community activists are the first to be sent to the concentration camps.

Our troubles begin with the assumption of authority by the Germans. They immediately called together the Jewish community, and co-opted marginal people, among them Memek Garfinkel, as the president.

After paying in a large contributions, every day, Jews have to be provided for labor. A large number of young people are sent to camps for heavy labor, from which they return sick.

It is ordered that we wear the yellow badge. Later on, it is exchanged for a white armband with a blue Star of David.

In the City Synagogue, Ziftzer's factory is organized.

In the Old Cemetery, a vegetable garden is created; from the new on, all the headstones are torn out, and are used to pave a sidewalk.

Arrests and murders are daily occurrences. In this manner, Voveh Totengreber is killed, with his son Itzik, Leib Rosen, and others.

Jewish homes are requisitioned and furniture is taken away.

In the winter of 1941, the executioners issue an order, that all the Jews must leave the *Altstadt* with the exception of a small number of manual laborers, who remain living in Hona Eidelsberg's house, as 'Needed Jews.'

We move to the *Neustadt*. A Jewish police force is created, and a Jewish post office. The overcrowding is great. Want reigns, hunger, cold, and the consequences of it are epidemic diseases which take their toll in a large number of people. However, those victims have the best of it. They have stopped suffering.

We are still privileged – we have a 'roomy' area, and it is possible to enter it. This does not last for long, and we are driven together to one side of the *Neustadt*, where can open ghetto is created, without barbed wire. But no Christian is permitted to enter. A shortage of life's necessities ensues.

The Jews would have perhaps been able to bear all of this, were it not for the modern slaughterhouses, which are created with the outbreak of the Russian-German War.

In the beginning of the winter of 1942, all the Polish Jews are compelled to relinquish their overcoats for use by the German military.

On Purim of that same winter, the first large deportation takes place in Lublin, and a day after Passover, the same happens to us. 2000 Jews are sent to Belzeč into the death camp. A certain number are shot on the spot, among them: Chaim Boxer, Berel Deckel, Hessia Goldstein, Elkeh Zetz, Yankel Hertz with his wife, Julek Goldstein with his wife and child, Ab. Inlander and others.

From this time forward, periodic deportations occur. One lives in a state of frightened panic and awaiting death each day.

After five gruesome deportations, an insignificant number of Jews remained, and then the *Neustadt* is also made *Judenrein.* We are all driven out to Izbica.

The march there, under the oversight of the SS bandits is terrifying: It is *Sukkot*, it is cold, snowing. The weaker ones, who cannot keep up so rapid a pace, are shot mercilessly. In this fashion, the following were killed along the way: Ziota Inlander and her 15 year-old daughter, Freyda Ehrlich, Henya Grossman, and others.

On arriving in Izbica, each individual tried to obtain quarters wherever they could, and here the same form of evacuation starts up – one deportation after another.

On a certain day, we learn that Memek Garfinkel has run away. We reason from this, that our final liquidation is arriving. Then, each person attempted to save themselves by whatever means was possible.

I am of the opinion, that since my husband is in Russia, I have a hope that possibly I may see him again, and I have Aryan papers created for me.

On November 4, 1942 I flee Izbica under the threat of been recognized and shot. I come to a family of my acquaintance in Radom.

After six weeks in Radom, I become aware that my situation is becoming dangerous. My acquaintance declares to me that she cannot keep me any longer, because she is under threat of a death sentence for concealing a Jew.

And I must go away – but to where? Solitary, alone, in a foreign hostile world. To whom shall I turn for help?

My Christian acquaintance advises me to go to Chestnokhov.

I am prepared for the worst, and similarly to my future fate. I take up my bundle and I go.

Arriving in Chestnokhov, and after long searching, I found a furnished room for a hefty enough price. I obtain the room only with a condition – only to spend the night. I may not be in the house the following day.

And where am I supposed to spend entire days?

It is winter, cold, and I must walk the two streets of Chestnokhov, which is laden with danger of being recognized and not to be hurt for it.

So I stand on a different street each day, in the lines for meat, sugar, and when the cold becomes unbearable, I go to the railroad station to warm up, where I am under threat every minute, because for the slightest suspicion, one is arrested and shot by the Gestapo agents.

After two weeks of tiring myself out like this, my protector declares that I can no longer remain here, because she is not prepared to give her head for me.

What does one do, then?

I had enough of this dog's life, and decided to return to my brethren, the Jews and let be what will be.

I decided on this the same day, and under the triple danger of death, I went into the Chestnokhov work camp, which was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by SS bandits.

Life in the camp is one long chain of hunger, need, cold and pain. At six o'clock before dawn, the gates of the camp are opened, to let out the workers, like a flock of sheep, each marked with a number, under very tight watch, to go to work. At six in the evening, we return, deathly tired from the labor, in the ammunition factories, and the gates are locked behind us. At nine o'clock, with a special signal, all lights must be extinguished until 5 in the morning.

But even this wretched dog's life is not begrudged to us by the bloodhounds. I had not even turned around to survey my surroundings, and the old familiar deportations start up again, with their terrifying incidents.

Death reigns almightily. On Purim of 1943, the executioners took out all of the intelligentsia, with the exception of a few, and all are bestially murdered.

I lived wretchedly like this for five months in the camp. It becomes known that in very few weeks, the camp is to be dissolved; there will be a selection – the younger workers will be held in the factories, and the older ones? Sent to the gas chambers and crematoria.

It is imperative to save one's self. With the help of an acquaintance, I once again create Aryan papers, and I flee the camp to the 'Aryan' side.

On May 22, 1943, I am deported, as a Christian, to Germany for labor. I come to Lottringen, where I work for a German firm for 40 months, doing heavy hard labor. In the end, on August 1, 1945, the Americans liberate me, and at my wish, they send me to Nancy and afterwards to Paris, where I am found now for 11 months....

# The Men of Zamość in the Barracks

**Author – unknown. Zamość 1940**

**1.**

**There are people in the city who say,**
**That we don't look bad;**
**Let them come to us in the camp**
**Their souls will fly from them out of fear,**

**Refrain:** **Hup, hup, just like this,**
**The flies fly on the straw (2 times)**

**2.**

**The *Judenrat* says to our parents**
**That we have enough bread;**
**Let them come to us in the camp**
**They will wish on themselves death.**

**Refrain...**

**3.**

**We work for the entire day**
**We are hounded and harassed;**
**Every low-life that has the power**
**Orders us to sing, and then beats us.**

**Refrain...**

**4.**

**It would be the highest time**
**That we should work in our land;**
**And it would be even better**
**If Yoskeh[368] were not our commandant.**

**Refrain...**

Communicated by: Jekuthiel Zwillich. (The Central Historical Commission 229)

* * *

This song appeared in Number 6 of the periodical for the history of Jewish life during the Nazi regime '*Fun Letzten Khurbn*,' that appeared in Munich. The periodical (pp. 77-78, Augist 1947) offers the following note:

This song was sung by a group of young people, who were put forward by the Zamość *Judenrat* in a locale barrack for labor. Marching every day to work, under German guard, they were forced to sing. Mostly, they sang this song to the tune of '*Oyfn Boydem Ligt a Dakh*.'

As the Historical Commission in Trontstein, which had presented this song in the Central Historical Commission explained, this song had 5 additional stanzas, but I do not remember the others any longer. – Ed.

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368 Editor's footnote: *Yoskeh Bukas* from the *Neustadt* was some sort of a leader in the work camp.

# A Chronology of the Nazi Occupation

Cut off from the greater outside world, from time-to-time, a bit of news would work its way out about the horror of the Nazi bestiality in those areas that were occupied by the Hitler Army. Through underground channels, the details about the murders would come to outside lands, of bestial slaughter as well as news about resistance. The underground movement. Which fought against the Nazi occupation, would communicate details facts and events, through a variety of channels (couriers, radio), that the official German information sources would not pass through. It was from this news that the world truly became aware of the immense German cruelty in regard to the occupied lands, and first and foremost about the extermination campaign against the Jews.

We take the following news briefs from '*Unser Zeit*,' the organ of the expatriate representation of the *Bund* in Poland, which appeared in New York. In this periodical. There was a permanent heading, '*News from Poland*' where details of the war and the resistance were presented, of the destruction and extermination. News of hundreds of Jewish cities and towns; from the camps and extermination locations.

From this source, we bring here those news items, that have a relation to Zamość, and its close-by areas. We maintain the order of the original publication.

* *

'**Unser Zeit**,' Number 5, (28) May 1943:

In the vicinity of Krasnobrod, not far from Zamość, in the time between the 1st and 2nd of February, armed fighting took place between German military and Polish divisions. The fighting began when the Germans began to search for Poles that had hidden themselves, during the time that they wanted to deport them to Germany to work. The Poles, mostly peasants, organized divisions in order to better oppose the Germans. They took away the weapons that had been hidden in the fields, and went to obtain help from the secret military organization.

A regular battlefield evolved between the Germans and the Poles. The Germans brought approximately 2000 troops, airplanes, tanks and artillery. In the clash, the Germans lost over 50 dead, and many of them were wounded.

In reprisal, the Germans torched several villages, many people were shot, and their homes were flattened to the ground.

As it appears, the Germans deported the population *en-masse*, not only for forced labor in Germany, but also to settle German colonists in place of the Poles. Part of the colonists had already arrived, and the action of the armed Polish divisions was directed also against the foreign colonists.

## Children

In the Zamość vicinity, Polish children were taken away from their parents and they were sent away to a variety of places. A transport of children in a frightful condition arrived in Warsaw. Many had frozen hands and feet, many were just plain sick. The children told that everyone who was over the age of 13 was sent to do work in Krakow.

* * *

'**Unser Zeit**,' Number 1, (36) January 1944:

## Greetings of Death from Zamość

We have received the following account from the leadership of the P. P. S. from Stockholm:

In July 1943 a Jew from Poland came to Stockholm (a second person, after Khatzkel Litman, who had previously arrived illegally from Germany on a Dutch ship). The one who had just arrived is named **Severin Freint**, a merchant

from Zamość. From the beginning of the war, until the fall of 1942, Freint was in Zamość. He was a wealthy merchant from the manufacture of bronze, son of the owner of a factory.

When separate designation was instituted for Jews, Freint obtained papers for 8,000 zlotys under the name of Jan Wisotsky, and he had freedom of movement as a Pole. He tells, that in the summer of 1942, terrifying reports reached the Jews of Zamość about the murders in Warsaw. In Zamość, (at the time?) There was no ghetto; there was just a *Judenrat*. The Jews did not live badly in a material sense. The relationship of the Poles was not friendly, in the best case – it was reciprocal. It was possible to do quite a bit with money. It was in this manner, for example, that Freint secured a hiding place for his 19 year-old wife for the sum of 12,000 zlotys. This was the summer of 1942, when they had begun to liquidate the Jews of Zamość. The Jews were driven out of their houses onto the marketplace, and many were murdered immediately right at the houses. The remainder were arrayed in columns, and led off to the forests 8-10 kilometers from the city, where they were all shot. Freint tells that often, the Germans would force the Czech Jews to help drive the Zamość Jews from their houses, and later they suffered the same fate.

In one instance, 8,000 Jews were taken out of Zamość to be killed, at the time that Zamość had in total 17,000 Jews.

The hiding place of Freint's wife was compromised; when he came there at one time, he found her already shot. In the room, there was a veritable mob of local residents, who snatched up the belongings that remained from the murdered individual. Also, Freint's father was murdered by the Germans.

Later on, Freint found a place for himself to conceal himself from the Germans, for which he paid with 22 pieces of linen from Widzew, worth 500 zlotys apiece. The owner of the dwelling sheltered him for six weeks. He was treated well, and he would sit at the table like a member of the family. When not a single Jew remained in Zamość, the homeowner advised him to travel to Germany for work, because he was afraid to shelter him further, hiding him at his home. He left; he was seized on the train, and sent for labor in Hamburg. After a number of months, he was taken to Norway, along with other workers. In Oslo, the Norwegians helped him to cross the border illegally to Sweden. He was taken part of the way on bicycles, and part of the way on foot. Ixty kilometers from the Swedish border, he encountered a German patrol. He was shot at, and was wounded in the hand. However, he was fortunate in being able to escape, and he came to Sweden.

* * *

'**Unser Zeit**,' Number 6, (41) June 1945:

## A Surviving Jew from Zamość Relates:

*Page 1002: After the 'Evacuation.' – This is what remained of the Jewish Community of Zamość*

The story of how the Jewish community of Zamość was annihilated by the Germans is told by a Jew, who has just not long ago arrived in a neutral country. He was – as he tells – the last of an entire community, who had the good fortune of saving himself alive, from Zamość.

> 'In the course of two years, the Germans did not institute any kind of ghetto there. The Jews were permitted to live in their houses, except for a few houses that were vacated for use by the German authorities.
>
> The extermination began in the summer of 1942. In the month of August, an order was issued to the Jews to leave their homes, and to gather in the marketplace. There were members of the Gestapo gathered there, soldiers and police. They began to shoot at the mass of Jews. A large number were killed.
>
> During the time that the shooting was going on in the marketplace, we could also hear shooting from the Jewish houses, because anyone who had remained behind there, was shot on the spot. Later, 8000 Jews were arrayed into rows and they were marched off into the forest, that is approximately 6 miles

from the city. There, they were all shot with machine guns, and buried in graves that had been previously prepared. Their clothing was taken from them before, and loaded into wagons, to be transported to Germany.

Immediately after this, the Germans took a second group od Jews from the city, and killed them in the same way.'

* * *

We have included this information rom the three issues of '*Unser Zeit*' as they appeared there. Part of these stories are also related in the memoirs of the survivors, which appear in the *Pinkas*. These news items arrived in 'the heat of the moment,' right after the events took place, and confirm again, and yet again, the facts related by those that remained.

The last two chronicled news items are almost identical, and perhaps are derived from the same source (Severin Freint). However, in the second one, there a re facts that are missing from the first.

# Zamość People in the Ludomir Ghetto

**By Shlomo Stern**
(Haifa)

At 2:00PM on July 22, 1941 the Germans entered Ludomir and on the morning of the 23rd they removed 20 Jews from the Kovler *Gasse* and shot them, among them were two people from Zamość, **Shepsel Tuchschneider** and **Elyeh Birkman**.

On the third day of their occupation they began to seize people for work, but they did not yet begin to seize women. I was sitting at home when three storm troopers came in and began to beat me because I was sitting at home. I was led out to a group of 200 Jews. After forming us into 4 in a row, we were taken about 3 kilometers from the city. They beat us the entire way. The work consisted of loading ammunition, which was in autos, in the middle of the field. We were beaten again while at work.

After work, we were again arrayed in rows, again beaten, and led back into the city, and along the way, the beating did not stop. Before coming to the city, we were subjected to a lecture, that on the following morning we will no longer be seized to come to work, but we were to come by ourselves. Whoever wore a beard was to shave it. Before dispersing us, we were again beaten, and we fled.

The city saw that the Jews were running, but thet did not know what had transpired; in great fear, they began to close their houses. We got to our homes, barely alive.

In the end, a *Judentrat* was created. The *Judenrat* provided the workers to the extend demanded by the Gestapo.

On a certain day, the *Judenrat* received an order to provide 100 men at the train. As always, the *Judenrat* carried out the order, and sent over the 100 men asked for. Among these, was also one person from Zamość, **Heschel Kalechstein** (Chaim's son).

After the work, they were told to go home, but 10 men were detained, and they were ordered to dig a pit. When the pit was completed, the Germans gave an order that the ten men should get into it, and they were ordered to dance and sing. In the middle of this dancing, they were shot. Among those who were shot, was also Heschel Kalechstein.

Someone came running to the *Judenrat* with a shout and told the frightful occurrence, that the 10 Jews were shot. The *Judenrat* was shaken by this misfortune. They ran to the train. The grave was found already filled in. The Germans 'explained' that these Jews didn't want to work.

The *Judenrat* immediately intervened with a request to permit these 10 to be buried in the Jewish cemetery. The negotiations tood two days. In the end, permission was given to disinter those that were killed, and to transfer them to to cemetery. But, five coffins had to be provided (one coffin for every two martyrs). In transferring those who were murdered, only 8 men were permitted to go along to the cemetery. From the people of Zamość, two were at the cemtery – myself and **Schwertschaf** (Leibl Shpizeisen's son-in-law). I did not recognize Kalechstein any longer. It was only by the sweater that he wore, that I was able to recognize that it was him.

On the 1st of August 1942, the Gestapo came to the Judenrat and indicated that it needed 1000 workers the following day to be taken to Fatidin, which is approximately 7 kilometers from the city, where they will have to work on the construction of an airfield for aviation. They also need two engineers, to control the work.

The work consisted of digging a massive pit. The pit needed to be rectangular, and had to have steps at each of the four corners in order to get into it. During the first few days, the Germans were believed, that this was, indeed, a '*lotnisko*' – an airstrip. The people who worked there, were satisfied, because each day they were sent home with provisions that

contained god food, even with meat. On departing for home, the workers would take their shovels home with them. On the following morning, the workers would go to work of their own volition, and they were really satisfied.

After 15 days of work, the workers began to talk among themselves, saying that something didn't seem right to them about this 'airstrip;' that in fact they are digging a grave for themselves and all the Jews of Ludomir. This suspicion grew stronger every day. However, there was no choice. They went to work as they had done before.

The day that the work at the 'airstrip' was completed, all the Jews that lived in the villages were driven into the ghetto in Ludomir. At that time, the Zamość men, Yankel and **Abish Goldgraber** also came. By that time, they had been living in a village. They had traveled to their brother, **Joseph Goldgraber**. I went to them, and we talked about the tragic situation.

Hat very same evening, when the workers returned from work, they encountered a guard of Ukrainian militia at the ghetto gates. They ordered the Jews to lay down their shovels in front of the ghetto gates, and go into the ghettos without them. This was Sunday, August 30, 1942.

We already had a premonition that something was going to happen tomorrow. People ran around as if they were crazed. Bunkers were sought. We were not prepared for the 'news.' Those who tried to jump over the barbed wire around the ghetto perimeter were shot by the Ukrainians. There were Ukrainians in transport trucks arrayed all around the ghetto.

On the following day, September 1, 1942, the pogrom began. Whoever had a good bunker, temporarily saved themselves. The pogrom lasted for 15 days. During those days, masses of Jews would be transported daily to Fatidin. In total, approximately 18 thousand out of the 22 thousand Jews that were then found in the Ludomir ghetto were shot and killed.

On September 16, 1942, the area commissar created a second *Judenrat,* because the first was eliminated with the 18 thousand, who were taken to the slaughter. The commissar indicated that the *Judenrat* has to persuade the Jews who are in hiding outside the ghetto to come into the ghetto. He indicated that a new life would begin, which would be normal. Whoever remained alive to this point would remain living. I came out of the bunker along with others.

The *Judenrat* indicated that it was necessary to be dressed cleanly, and shaven. A kitchen was created, and food was provided. One went to work, and one began to believe that perhaps we really will remain alive.

`At that time, I met with our *landsleit,* **Gershon Inlander**, and **Hirsch-Chaim Brokh**, and his wife. They told me the following about what they lived through in the 15 days in a bunker. Brokh got a fever, and screamed that he should be let out of the bunker. He wanted to get something to drink. They attempted to make him understand that people are being seized, and that it is dangerous to go outside. He argued that he didn't want to hear anything of this, and that if he is not allowed to go out, he will start to shout. There were many people in the bunker at that time. Everyone became fearful that he could, God forbid, condemn all of them. So, his wife led him out of the bunker, and led him into a house. There was no potable water. There was a pail full of loam, and water stood above it. Brokh drank that water. After that. His wife led him back to the bunker, where then held out for 15 days.

The area commissar had a secretary (called Fraulein Jana, may her name be erased). Her dearest mission was to kill Jewish children without the use of ammunition. An piece of iron rail track was dug into the ground, and this 'Fraulein Jana' would take Jewish children up to the age of two, and kill them on the piece of rail track.

On November 13, 1942, the second pogrom began. At that time, Jews were taken to be killed in a different direction. It was three kilometers from the city. About two thousand Jews were taken there. It was said that there, they were shot in their clothing, and afterwards burned. I personally do not know this to be so.

The second pogrom lasted a longer time. In the ghetto, only those remained who had 'permits,' that they are craftsmen. I was not a craftsman, and therefore lay in a bunker. From time to time I would sneak out, in the middle of the night.

In order to find some form of sustenance. In the ghetto, in the houses, there was sufficient abandoned produce. It was a bout a kilometer from the bunker to the ghetto.

In the ghetto was the storekeeper, **Yossel Scharf**, from the Neustadt. E would give me produce to the extent that I was able to carry. I was compelled to return to the bunker, because in the ghetto, only those with the 'work cards' were allowed to be found. If an individual was found without such a card, he was threatened with danger. Also, a demand was issued that whoever in the ghetto would permit a person without a 'work card' inside, will be shot. Therefore, the Jews in the ghetto were indeed afraid, and did not permit those [without cards] entry.

I, along with **Nahum Stern** went to get produce in this fashion a couple of times. On February 20, 1943 I went once into the ghetto and did not then return to the bunker ever again. That is because, it was no longer possible to remain there.

The commandant of the Jewish militia in the Ludomir ghetto at that time was **Leibl Feldstein**. I met with him secretly, and asked he what I should do – return to the bunker, or remain secretly in the ghetto. He told me that if I have a good location in the ghetto, where no one could see me, I should remain in the ghetto. He also told me, if I can receive protection from the president of the *Judenrat*, that he should have me sent for some sort of work, I will then receive a 'work card.' The president does not have to know that I am already in the ghetto, however, so that it appears that I am located outside of the ghetto.

I got such protection. The president was told that I am found in a bunker, where I no longer am able to sustain myself. They then went to intervene, and after 3 weeks, he ordered me to come to the ghetto and go to work. I was at that time fortunate, that I was able to attain this – to be in the ghetto! No longer needing to lie in a bunker, in constant fear. I had food and I 'was at liberty!'

At Passover time, we baked matzos legally, lead by **Herschel Adamczyk's** son-in-law (Rov).

During Hol HaMoed Passover, 20 men were taken into the city to work, and I was also among them. The work consisted of tearing out the headstones from the Jewish cemetery, and to smash them up into little pieces. The Ukrainians came riding, and took this away to their houses and made sidewalks out of it beside their homes. This work lasted for five days.

Later, 300 men were taken and they worked at disassembling the empty houses, from which the Jews had been driven out, and exterminated. That meant that the enemy could still be hidden in these houses. The front was still far away, they had already seen the enemy – they were planning for their own defeat.

On December 12, 1943, it was a Sunday, the area commissar arrived in the ghetto. It was a rarity for him to come this way. He observed the ghetto, looked around, and nobody knew the reason for which he had come. He was there for a while, and then immediately left. Everyone got scared, and went to the president of the *Judenrat* to ask what this might possibly mean. The president replied that this was noting that, God forbid, was bad. He had just come from a meeting, and everything is 'in order.' Hearing such words from the president, enabled everyone to go to bed in peace. In total, we were about a thousand people in the ghetto at that time.

On December 13, 1943 the last pogrom began. Very early, the Gestapo and S.S. troops surrounded the ghetto, and shot into the air, in order to prevent anyone from running away. The panic, however, became frightful; people began to flee, and eyes looked about. **Itcheh Stern** (Nahum's son) jumped over the ghetto wire, and therefore he was shot there. I found myself about 300 meters from my bunker. In the ghetto, it was boiling like a pot. I had about 150 meters to reach my bunker. In front of me, the members of the Gestapo had detained a number of Jews, and they also called me to them. I turned off into another direction. I reached my bunker in peace. Two meters from my bunker, Nahum Stern had his bunker. Nahum began to open the little door to the bunker, and wanted to get in, but the Gestapo bandits took note of him, and shot him on the spot, together with his daughter **Sonya**.

The Zamość families of **Reisfeld** and **Bergerson** were with me in the bunker. We sat in the bunker for eight days. We could not remain beyond that, the bunker was two meters and a half on the side, and there were ten people inside; we had no means of sustenance. One kilometer from the ghetto, we had prepared a second bunker, and we decided to transfer ourselves there. This bunker was on the property of a Pole. We arrived at the second bunker peacefully. Do understand, that the Pole extracted a tidy sum from us. This bunker was 3 meters from the Pole's cellar. We remained there for eight months. We did not know when it was day or night. Twice a day the Pole would bring us food. He took enough money for it.

Finally, we survived, and Ludomir was taken over by the Soviets. That was on July 23, 1944.

About 200 Jews came crawling out of holes and bunkers, of which 20 were from Zamość. That is what remained from the 22 thousand Jews that were [originally] found in the Ludomir ghetto.

Three weeks or so after the liberation, we rode out to the huge mass grave in Fatidin, to see the extermination place of our martyrs. It was not easy for us to find the place, because the earth had already been smoothed over, and it had absorbed the blood of the thousands of martyrs. In the end, a shovel brought up a tuft of hair... you can imagine what happened at that point. People fainted, had spasms, the weeping reached the hearts of heaven. We cordoned off this sacred place with wire. We recited a couple of chapters of the Psalms, recited *Kaddish*, and took leave of our martyrs.

# Through Forests and with the Partisan Movement

**By Itkeh Herring**

## Surviving the Period of the German Occupation[369]

Eye-witness account of I t k e h H e r r i n g born in Zamość in the year 1924.
Education: Three grades of gymnasium
Father's occupation: Forest broker
She lost her parents and sister.

*Page 1012:* *Youth in the Zamość Ghetto: From Right to Left: Leah, Velvel, Fradel and Herschel Peltz. Photographed in February 1941.*

I was born in the Lublin District in Zamość in the year 1924. My parents were middle class. I received a good and attentive upbringing at home. The concern of my parents was to raise their children to be decent and reliable people. My father was a Zionist, and did a great deal for this movement, and absorbed the costs involved. I was bound up to my nearest with my entire heart, and I let them feel it at every opportunity. This is the way the years went by, in the warm domestic nest, in the company of loving parents and family – until September 1939.

Indeed, at that time, when the dark cloud descended on the world, our tranquil, quiet family life was also disrupted. It was very painful to say goodbye to our eldest brother, who was the beloved of the family. He – feeling young and strong, could not reconcile himself with the thought of remaining under the Germans, and paying no heed to the fact that he had to part from his parents, he went off to Russia.

Together with the entry of the Germans, a storm ans hurricane began to wildly blow over the Jews. Seizures, beatings, torture, and retribution for every incident. Despite the fact that the days were frightful, they went quickly – accelerated by the beating of the heart. With eyes fixed on the distance, we yearned to see a better tomorrow. Provocations began immediately in the city, and as a result, many tens of innocent Jews were slain.

A *Judenrat* was established in the city, which was elected by the Germans. From the outset, it was thought that these people were needed, in order to assist the poor, and those who had suffered 'evacuation.' Every (Jewish) resident of the city, exerted themselves to come with assistance for the 'evacuated' – whether with a place to live, or with produce.

The stern character of the *Judenrat* was recognized at that time, when the seizures of people began, who were designated as '*schmelz*[370].' At that time, they took money from the wealthy, and sent the indigent off to the contingent.

During these seizures, my parents had the opportunity to hide themselves in the forest, because we had connections with the Poles who notified us about everything in a timely fashion.

As previously said – m father was a very energetic person, and he also foresaw the tragedy that was forcing itself ever nearer over our heads. He therefore negotiated with a forest watchman, with whom he shared trust, that in such an instance, he was to prepare a hiding place in the forest. [In payment for this] we transferred all of our household effects to him.

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369 Editor's footnote: Eye-witness account provided by the Yiddish Scientific Institute, YIVO in New York. Translated from the original Polish.

370 From the German word to melt down. The satirical metaphor alludes to dregs and waste to be smelted and turned into something useful.

In the fall of 1942, 5 in the morning, the Gestapo staff surrounded the city, and prohibited anyone from leaving the city. The frightened people hid themselves in the hiding places in their homes, and which had been made in every Jewish house.

I, together with my entire family, did not lose a minute, and leapt into the hiding place, which had been prepared to accommodate fifteen people. About 40 people were actually crammed in there. We sat in this overcrowded condition for 5 days, comforting ourselves with the hope that this wave will pass through, and that perhaps we will not be found.

When we learned about what was happening in the city, and also that the entire *Judenrat* had been taken away, and that old people and children were being shot indiscriminately without any mercy; men and women; that the streets look like a bloody sea; that people are walking over dead bodies, and that hiding places are being discovered continuously, from which the people are dragged out to be slaughtered – then we understood that we were lost.

Streets, bearing the legend '*Judenrein*' were hung out in the streets.

Being in the hiding place, we wracked our brains unceasingly as to how we could get out of this situation – I could find no counsel. It could be that if I were egotistical, I could have saved myself, throwing myself in the direction of life-rescue by myself. However, I adopted the thought – to live or go under with my dearest. Therefore, I waited to see what fate would bring.

On the sixth day, of this seizure, Gestapo staff and local Poles burst into our house with laughter and outcry. The hearts of those in the hideout were dead, and everyone held their breath. And like wild animals, they threw themselves into the search for hidden people. Suddenly, something over our heads gave a bang – this was the scraping of the canopy that they had pushed aside, under which there was the secret entrance to the hideout. We saw light through the cracks (of the floor), and our hearts started to pound like hammers. In thought, each person was saying goodbye to his life.

I will never forget how on my pained and tortured breast, I felt the tears of my mother, and heard her loving voice: 'my child, let us say goodbye to life, die like a true Jewish daughter. Cry out *'Shema Yisrael.''*

In that moment, we heard a stern call from above us, which rang in our ears like a solution: 'there is no one here, come, let us go somewhere else.'

Everyone's hearts eased, we felt like someone who had risen from the dead at resurrection. After this incident, my father decided to get out of this Hell at any price.

That night, we mustered our last energies, and we entered into the dwelling. Paying no mind to the difficult conditions and the risks of the journey, we decided to flee.

The night was a beautiful one, moonlit, light as day. With bated breath we went traversed the streets, treading on dead bodies and puddles of blood. When we were already at the outskirts of the city, bullets began to whistle over our heads. With bated breath we began to run, and run, like a tornado driven by some sort of wind. We ran for over two kilometers at that sort of a gallop, and our strength could not take us any further. We quietly sat ourselves by the river, catching our breath, taking some cold water. We quietly thanked God for this great gift – being able to live through this terrifying night.

Our continuing path was, indeed, to go into that forest, where father had arranged the hideout. We made contact with the forest watchman, who provided us with food, and we took up residence in the forest.

From the outset, we suffered only from the cold, because we were able to bring food from the village. In any event, we were lucky that our ears no longer hear the Hitlerist shouting.

There were however people to be found who envied us. On one night, bandits fell upon us, who took everything away from us without mercy – the clothing, underwear and money. We were forced to change the place where we lived, going to a second forest. These followers, however, followed our spoor, and revealed our second hiding place, and again robbed us of our last things. They left us naked and barefoot – without the energy to live.

It was in the winter. I walked on the snow barefoot, in the most severe cold, to a peasant in the village, in order to plead for some help. We were frightfully exhausted from hunger, literally close to death.

Regardless of everything, we sought to exert ourselves to survive; we comforted ourselves with the hope that the end of our troubles was drawing near.

A fatal incident occurred once. When I was not present, the AK troops surrounded the forest, and not giving anyone time to flee, they murdered everyone. I didn't know about anything, going home with great joy, because I was carrying a bit of nourishment for my nearest. My heart was filled with sorrow, when nobody responded to my summons. A deathly silence reigned in the forest. I began running around like a crazy person, looking for my dear ones, with dead bodies in front of me – and I found them after a long period of blundering around. I fell beside them in tears, they were still warm. My soul is devastated, and I lose the will to try and struggle and overcome the difficulties ahead. But, precisely at this moment, when I lost all my near ones, when it would have been possible to think that I had nothing further to live for, a strong impulse and conviction was elicited from inside of me – to live and take vengeance for the innocent blood that had been spilled.

There were partisan groups located in this forest, which consisted of Russian prisoners (who had escaped), a small number of Poles, and rather few Jews. I enter a Russian camp, because I had begun to feel an antipathy to the Poles, because of this last blow that I had received from them.

Our first mission was to cross the **Bug** [River] into White Russia, in order to join up with the brigade from **Pinsk.** I, however, asked for some help at the time, in order to be able to bury the dead bodies of my loved ones. I help to dig these graves with my own hands, and I cover their eternal resting place with my own hands.

The group who forded the **Bug** consisted of 30 people. I received weaponry – a rifle with ammunition. The way was a very difficult one, and very dangerous. On this side of the Bug, the AK forces still lay in ambush for us, and they managed to kill one of our people.

We crossed the Bug at night. The water was very deep, but because we had a good guide, and we had scouted the area of crossing very well, we got across to the other side successfully.

We had barely been able to change into dry clothing, when we heard shouts in German, and bullets began to fly. Again, a victim fell. The others fled to whatever point they could. Since the forest was nearby, we fought our way to it, and that's where our following movement was initiated.

We would make 30-40 kilometers a day on foot. The local residents in the villages did not receive us particularly well, because they were largely inhabited by Ukrainian nationalists.

Not far from Brisk, we again fell into an ambush, and we lost three men.

After a month of wandering, we first reached a place about 40 kilometers from **Pinsk**. The oldest, and everyone, received us well, and gave us the best at their disposal, that one could wish for.

We formed a division called **Tchapayev**. The commandant of the brigade was a Georgian, a very fine man. He made no distinction based on race. The brigade consisted of five groups. Each group had its commander and its own seniors. Order and discipline reigned throughout. A part of the young women concerned themselves with support activity, others were soldiers: they stood guard, went on battle missions together with the men.

I was with the second battalion, and carried out an array of missions with it that had been allocated to us. I made an effort to be energetic, and took part in planning for the various situations – and because of this, everyone liked me.

Not far from us, there was a Jewish partisan group. Not only once, because of my insistence, they were given assistance. We had things in surplus, because we would the villages and cities [occupied by] the Germans.

The Germans sent spies among us in the spring of 1944, who represented themselves as being a Red Army detachment, and they exploited out hospitality to research our positions. A couple of days later, a frightening bombardment of the forest began, and we were forced to abandon the 'palaces' that we had built with our own hands.

This was insufficient for them. The Germans concentrated great forces and we were forced to retreat under their pressure. We retreated 20 kilometers and the Germans pursued us. The local population appeared to be loose-lipped [about our whereabouts].

At this precise critical moment, help arrived. We held our positions for two weeks – but our strength was not equivalent. We lay for an entire day in the foxholes, and the bullets and grenades would explode over our heads.

Finally, the long-awaited hour arrived. The first divisions of the Soviet Army. The German army pulled back under pressure from them.

On May 5, the partisan groups were dissolved. For the young women, whoever wanted to, could return to civilian life.

A beautiful discharge ceremony took place. Everyone exchanged salutes as a sign of unity. We were given full recognition, which established that we were in the partisan movement. I obtained good work in Kiev. I received assistance there, because everyone there took account of such people who brought honor to the fatherland.

Now, I am back in Poland, in order to again mourn at the grave of my family.

* * *

This correspondence, is accompanied by the copy and translation of the following document of recognition:

**RECOGNITION**

White Russian Branch of the Partisan Movement

Given to Comrade **I t k e h H e r r i n g** the daughter of **Yekhiel**, that she was active in the partisan division named Tchepayev, Pinsk Brigade, from January 1942 to May 5, 1945, in the character of usual soldiers.

All local officials are requested to render assistance to Comrade Herring in arranging for work and a place to live.

The White Russian Branch of the Partisan Movement

General-Major (Strizhko) – A circular stamp.

# Ghetto, Slaughter, Forest, Majdanek

**By David Meckler**

## (The Story of a Survivor from Zamość[371] )

## 1. In the Zamość Ghetto

The entire Jewish population of Zamość, a beautiful city that is found about 80 kilometers from Lublin, was led to a condition of great need by a whole array of German demands,

In the Lublin District, which was densely populated with Jews, the deportations and slaughtering began earlier than otherwise in Poland. We [now] know, that these frightful dealings should have served as a model to carry out collective murders.

If I need to relate everything of what took place in the ghetto of our city, then my story will be very long. Therefore, I will speak only about my family and myself. Our fate was not a tragic exception. Thousands of Jewish families suffered along the same martyrs' journey. I am 20 years old. I was 14 years old when the war broke out. I was barely 17 years old in 1942, when the slaughter took place. My father was a shoemaker, and my mother, a seamstress. We did not have any rich people in my family. Even at quite an early age, they began to teach me a trade. I am a mechanical locksmith.

From the occupation onwards, ignoring my tender age, I was, together with my father engaged in extremely tiring labor.

The Germans undertook a project to change the course of a river.[372] The Jews were compelled to labor at this from morning until evening. [In the] summer under a burning sun, and in the winter in mud and snow. We ate, but we were always hungry.

The chief of our watch, a Pole with the name **Leon Szymanowski** (who had the rank of 'foreman') and his subordinates, beat us mercilessly. Many men died from this hard labor, whether because they starved, or whether because of the beatings that they would receive.

## 2. The Slaughter of April 11, 1942

On Saturday, April 11, 1942, The SS and the S. D. (men of the Gestapo) and the 'Red Police Division' fell upon the Jewish quarter of Zamość like a wild horde. This caused a great reaction.

A panic separately cause the 'Red Police' to be called out. They fanned out into the streets, and with wild cries, beat [people] right and left.

The terrorized populace thought that this was a predation like the previous ones, with the objective of plunder. But no, The animals were sent this time after human blood.

The Jewish community numbered ten thousand souls. In a wink of an eye, without the possibility of being able to give an accounting, as to why this was happening, a mass of three thousand persons was assembled, men, women and

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371 Editor's Footnote: This document was sent by the Yiddish Scientific Institute, YIVO, in New York: this eye-witness report in the original French was submitted in France, it appears, in the year 1946-1947.

372 Editor's footnote: Similar work was carried out by the Germans not far from Ciechanow, also with the help of Jews.

children, who were grabbed opportunistically off the streets, and driven out of the houses, and already, they were being driven to the train station, from where they were taken off in an unfamiliar direction.

During the summer of 1942, until the month of November, four such assaults took place on the ghetto, and one was more terrifying than the other. The picture that the ghetto presented after each one of these assaults, gradually drove the remaining people, a letter at a time, to insanity. There were killed people everywhere: in the streets, in the yards, in the houses. Tiny children, who had been thrown down from second and third stories, lay on the sidewalks smashed. The Jews themselves had to gather up the dead and bury them and then afterwards wait for their turn to be brought down.

Long convoys and merchandise trucks went off to Belzeč, to the extermination camp, where ten thousand men, women and children were killed every day.

After the seventh, and last, deportation, Zamość was declared '*Judenrein*' – free of Jews. The remainder of the Jews were taken, a part at a time to **Izbica**, not far from Zamość, to the concentration camp for Jews, who lived in the smaller towns in significant numbers not far from this town. Also, from here, they were later taken to Belzeč into the gas chambers.

Seventy Jews yet remained in Zamość. The SS came to liquidate the ghetto. The best furniture and clothing were taken out of Zamość, apparently sent in the direction of Germany. All old stuff was gathered together in a warehouse in an 'asset storage facility' on the Jewish cemetery. Poles and *Volksdeutsche* came to purchase these things for very low prices. The SS cashiered the money. Money has no odor...

During this frightful slaughter, I lost my father, my mother, my two younger sisters, Sonya and Hella, and my small brother Hirsch. Beaten and alone, like a stone by the side of the road, I survived the fifth massacre by virtue of the fact that at the last moment, I entered an old, abandoned house. Dying of hunger, I joined a group of 70 who remained alive in Zamość. They hid me.

**Yaakov Meisel** with the nickname '*Zapolka*' (the matchstick), because he was very scrawny, and others, helped me.

Many emerged from their hiding places. Certain people came back from the forests. Winter was approaching, and in order to find a place for shelter one needed to be a millionaire.

The group of 70 rapidly became a group of 500 people. The SS took the position that there were already too many of us. They therefore took 300 people to **Lavunya**, about 12 kilometers frm Zamość to an old sawmill.

Czech Jews worked for a period to erect barracks. The newcomers, however, did not remain for long in this place.

Our executioners were the SS Officers: **Landkaempfer**, **Kolb**, and **Eisleben**. These animals went with a group of 300 people to Lavunya. They said to them: 'Give us your diamonds, and everything that you have with you, and you will have an easy death, and if not....'

Nobody stirred, nobody said a word. So the officers gave an order to the soldiers, that they should begin to search. The soldiers fell upon the Jews. They tore the earrings off the women, and they pulled out the bread [hidden] in the clothing, in the hope that they would find pieces of gold, or paper money. A Pole was found with a pair of pliers, and tore out the gold teeth from those who had them. He did this under orders from the SS

After this, the murderers led the group to the sawmill, near a pit, which was wide, but not deep enough, which was to serve as a grave. A Polish witness related that everyone died in a worth manner. No one among them shouted, and no one cried. Men and their wives took each others hands, kissed each other, and remained standing quietly before guns. The victims were laid out singly in rows, one next to another, and later, one row of victims on top of another. The

murderers covered the graves with several shovelfuls of earth, and then went off to a distance, taking with them several diamonds, and gold teeth that they found.

## 3. The Last Jews in Zamość

The last two hundred Jews in Zamość were brought for forced labor in an ammunition factory. In this Hell, only Jews and Soviet prisoners of war worked. In the course of just several weeks, 40 percent of us were killed. The SS man, **Resfert** was the chief of the camp. Every day, he personally, accompanied by SS troops, murdered thirty, forty 'liabilities,' slaughtering them for being 'unsuitable' to do the work.

The SS man, **Landkaempfer** found a young Jewish boy, age 12, that had hidden in the camp. He led him into his office, and shouted at him:

– 'Lay down, you are going to be killed.'

– No – the young child answered, – I will not lie down, kill me as I stand here, in the forehead, in the heart.

Aroused, he kicked him in the head with his boot. After that he emptied his revolver...

Will this murderer be found and punished? How is it possible to set aside his punishment? How can all the murderers in the camps be found, in ghettoes? There are so many of them....

## 4. A Partisan

I was not the only young Jewish man who wanted to become a partisan, in order to take vengeance on the murderers of my family. If the Poles would have helped us, we could have formed brilliant divisions throughout Poland, which is so well endowed with forests and swamps, which are inaccessible, but the way the Poles helped us, I will yet tell about an incident that occurred to me alone.

Ten young people among us, all orphans, decided to escape from the concentration camp, in order to get into the forest, and there build a small division which would operate under its own initiative, or might join up with the partisans. At the cost of a great risk, and colossal danger, we were able to get in contact with a Polish peasant. For a sum of 30 thousand zlotys, he promised to give us several guns, and show us the way to the nearest forest, where we would be able to hide ourselves.

We jointly stole and gathered this sum, and gave it to the Pole, and on one night the guard had been bought off, and we came out of the camp. The peasant gave us the guns, but later, when we reached the forest, it became apparent that the guns had little value. Even worse, the bullets were of a different caliber than the guns. On that same night, we were attacked by a band of peasants, which seemingly were set upon us by our peasant, because he knew very well where our hiding place was. The band beat us, took away all of our money, and even all our clothing. Only with great trouble, were we able to save ourselves. Understandably, they also took away our guns, in order to sell them to other Jews.

Hungry and dazed, we remained in the forest for the entire day, knowing that at every step or turn, death lay in waiting.

The Germans distributed ammunition to certain designated Poles. These Poles went through the villages and the forests, in order to search for Jews who had fled. We were left with practically no alternative, but to turn back to our imprisonment. Embittered, we had one outside chance in order to get over the barbed wire. Thanks to the help of our comrades-in-woe, we were able to buy off a German in the office, who again took us into the camp as slaves.

Because of this, we didn't lack any ardor in our will to fight the Germans, but the circumstances for us, sadly, were not advantageous.

# 5. In Majdanek

On June 1, 1943, along with another 400 Jews, I was taken to Majdanek.

What can be said about this place?

There are tragedies in which we refuse to believe, because we cannot conceive of them.

At the time that I lived beside the massacres in the streets of Zamość and saw the suffering in the forced labor camp, I thought to myself, that I had seen everything already. However, I still needed to live through the most terrifying of all in Majdanek.

Arriving in Majdanek, and after a very cursory interrogation, we went into barrack number 19. At the time we entered there, the SS happened to be in the midst of hanging many of the inmates of the camp, sick people – skeletons, and already dying.

On the following day, I was a witness to another spectacle.

An elegant SS officer, with the name **Reichmann**, occupied himself with a selection of people, with a very subdued disposition (with gritted teeth), he would indicate with his index finger: 'Right, Left,' what this meant... to go to death immediately, or for the time being not to go to death. This time I was sent to the right, but I did not make myself any illusions, as to what awaited me later on. The clouds of black smoke which came out of the tall chimneys of the crematoria, ceaselessly reminded me of it.

It was certain that I would be killed, but in what way, that I did not know. Will I be hung by the *Kapo* **Widerko**? – or will I be choked to death by the suffocator, or drowned in the basin of the camp; or maybe I will be killed during exercises, or torn apart by wild dogs? The possibilities were quite numerous to be enumerated.

To escape at any price...there are so many ways to die at any time, but there are no possibilities to flee. How can one get one's self out of this circle of guards, from the murderous SS And through the barbed wire, which are electrified?

In July 1943, the SS arrived, in order to take out one thousand workers for the camp in **Skarzysko,**[373] craftsmen, qualified workers, who will become free, and well treated and paid.

Understand, that nobody believed a word of this, but everyone wanted to get out of Majdanek. I have the good fortune to be among those thousand. I had yet to savor the 'Garden of Eden' in Skarzysko and Buchenwald.

Those that remained alive from those camps, will tell all from their side, because it is my opinion that this is the mission of all these, who lived through the Nazi camps.

I have done the minimum, telling about the transgressions that the Germans committed in our city of Zamość.

Out of the ten thousand Jews of Zamość, I have not yet encountered a single survivor.

* * *

Now, the Germans have been defeated. The torture, the slaughtering are ended. But not for us Jews. Ten years ago, before Hitler declared war on the world, he declared war on the Jews.

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[373] Known by the full name, Skarzysko-Kamienna

He tortured them, exterminated and murdered them, and the world that saw it all, remained silent. The world continues to remain silent. At a time when all the nations are getting their independence back, when all the thousands of French, Dutch and Russians who, precisely like us, found themselves in the extermination camps, are now returning home, we, those who survived in Poland, have no place to go.

Pre-war reactionary Poland was a stepmother to us, and the current regime – a truly democratic one – is favorable towards Jews, but this [is a] fable, and until such time that a little understanding and love will be shown to us, a lot of water will have to flow under the bridges. And we have no time. We cannot wait any longer. We want to have our share of a human life also.

Or haven't we earned this yet after so much suffering?

David Meckler, from Zamość (20 years old).

# Through Seven Hells [374]

## By Henoch Nobel

The District Jewish History Commission in Lublin

May 19, 1946

**P r o t o c o l**

Declaration

By **H e n o c h N o b e l** , born November 1, 1896 in **I z b i c a** , lived in Izbica before the war, and now in Lublin, Kowalska 4/2; a tanner by trade, completely alone. Now the owner of a leather store in Lublin at Kowalska 4.

Taken down by: **I r a n a S z a j o w i c z**

*Page 1021: The first side of the protocol*

In 1939, when the Germans entered, there were 6000 Jews in Izbica; mostly these were manual craftsmen, workers and merchants. There also were several doctors, teachers, and manufacturers. Before the war, our town was a place that had means.

The first Germans who came riding into Izbica as patrols on motorcycles, organized a sort of welcoming pogrom. Already on the first day of the occupation, there were several killed among the Jews. In two days time later, a levy was imposed on us. The Jews paid it. A few days later, the Germans issued an order, that Jews have to turn in any gold that they possessed. After that, they ordered that Jews have to surrender merchandise that they had, as well as any paper of value. After completing this *aktion*, they increased the term of the *aktion* for an additional three days to turn in all of these items and added: if they will find any gold or merchandise, or paper of value, those who possess it will be killed on the spot. A few days later, they, indeed, began to carry out investigations in the houses. If they found even the smallest item of merchandise anywhere, they shot, and no excuses helped, that these were rags, etc. These searches lasted for several months, day and night.

They also issued an order that the Jews may not have any store, and may not leave the city. If you went past the town boundary line at least 20 centimeters (? – Editors), you were threatened with death An order was also issued under the threat of a death sentence, to the Polish populace, that it may not provide Jews with any form of produce for sustenance of life. At night, I would steal out to the village, and buy something there to eat, otherwise, my children (I had four) and my wife would be sentenced to death by starvation. Other Jews did the same thing. Almost every night, victims fell – if someone would go out to bring some refreshments, and one never saw him again alive. Later on, this going out (even at night) of the city became totally impossible – so my little son who was then 9 years old, and who used to accompany me on these night expeditions, began going out to the village and he became the food provider for all of us. Almost all of the Jewish families at that time survived in this way, through their children, especially by their little girls.

At the beginning of 1940, Jews from the following three towns were transferred after 'evacuation:' **Kolo**, **Glowno**, and **Kalisz**. Many families were living in each Jewish household, several tens of people. In the room where I had previously lived with my family, we were given 15 additional people, among them small children. We could not obtain any hay, and also nothing with which to cover ourselves – we literally slept on the bare ground. There was nothing with which to heat the place, we starved, and it was unsanitary. A typhus epidemic broke out, and there were no medicaments, because pharmaceuticals were not sold to the Jews. There were up to 100 fatalities a day.

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374 Editor's footnote: This document (original in Polish) is an eye-witness account take up in the Lublin District Historical Commission on May 19, 1946. It deals mostly with *Izbica*, but seeing as the killing of the Zamość community is connected with the frightful expulsion to *Izbica*, we bring it here, and incidentally, it is now (like other previous documents) presented for the first time. The document was sent to us by YIVO in New York.

In the time of the most severe cold, in February, and order was issued to surrender all jackets and fur coats. Once again, searches began, and if even the smallest bit of fur was found, they shot [people for this].

The commandant of the police, was the former Polish policeman.... (the name is missing from the original – Ed.). The *Burgomaster* was the *Volksdeutsche,* **Schultz**, a tall, heavy blond. He would communicate with us brutally. An order then came out that we had to wear white armbands with a blue Star of David on the right arm. Schultz had an aggressive dog that would immediately attack people, at a command from his master, who were wearing the armband, and tear them apart. Nobody was permitted to offer the victim any help. One time, I personally saw how at an order from Schultz, a woman was torn apart, who was returning from the well with water.

The Gestapo came to Izbica in the spring of that year, and immediately instituted a *Judenrat.* At the head was **Schneidermesser** and the following: **Millstein**, **Zulberger**, **Braun**, **Kleiner** and others whose names I cannot remember. A Jewish militia was created, that consisted of 40 young people. All Jews from age 14 to 50 was registered.

In May, 500 Jews received call-up cards, indicating that they had to present themselves to the *Judenrat*, with a certain amount of clothing and that they are to be sent out to work. Germans were already waiting at the *Judenrat* who took them away and led them off with automobiles to **Ruda**, near Chelm, where they were straightening the river. We sent messengers to them (Poles), who brought us frightening news. People died like flies; they were beaten and starved. In the fall they were bought back from the Germans (sic: with bribes). About 30 remained alive.

In July, I also, along with another 1500 (500? In the original it is not clear – Ed.) Jews received a call-up card. We were supposed to be taken to **Belzeč.** At the last minute, I fled to the forest. Every second night, I would come home at night, and during the day, I would hide in the forest. This lasted for 3 months. On a certain day, when I was getting ready to go home (from the forest), the city was surrounded by the German gendarmerie, and I, not sensing anything, fell right into their hands. I was beaten, and taken to the arrest house. There were already many Jews there, and during the night, they continuously brought new people. It was so crowded, that we nearly suffocated. The SS man, **Engels**, who at that time was the commandant of Izbica, directed this '*aktion*,' he was of middling height, blond, about 30 years old, and a vicious executioner. His right hand man was a *Volksdeutsch*e from Biala-Podolsk, **Ludwig**, a brown-haired tall person.

We were loaded into autos in the morning. Before that, each of us received ten blows with rubber truncheons – and we were taken away to Belzeč.

The autos stopped in front of the camp. Rows of SS troops stood, and we were told to move quickly. Every one of us received a beating from the SS troops from both sides of the row. We were chased into a barrack. There was barbed wire all around. We dug... (in the original, the end of this paragraph is missing. – Ed.). There were dead bodies every morning. There were special brigades, whose mission was to look for the dead bodies under the bunk beds. On a certain day, it was some sort of a holiday, we worked for only a half day. Among us, there were 4 singers (Cantors? – Ed.), so they began to sing. An SS man overheard this, and he gave an order that they should sing those songs out loud that he asked for. When they finished (singing) three additional SS men came and ordered the singers to be pointed out to them. They were put up against the wall and shot ! ! !

Fall began, and it was cold and it rained. On a certain day, we were visited at work by **Barcheko**. He ordered us to strip bare, and work that way. The rain stuck us as if with pins. For us, it was all the same, and when Barcheko left, each of us threw something over ourselves (a garment) which he had at hand. But, he had hidden himself and observed us, and when he noticed that we had covered ourselves with the rags, he began to shoot at us. He killed 12 men.

On a certain evening, I escaped. I went during the night, and slept by day. I got lost in the darkness, but in the end, after two days, I reached Izbica, and came home. Here I became aware that the conditions had gotten even worse. Every morning, Engels and Ludwig would shoot at the Jews. If they didn't have a couple of tens of victims, they couldn't enjoy their breakfast. During the day, Engels would torture, and at night, Schultz with a band of *Volksdeutsche* would rob, and rape women.

The Jews constructed hiding places, and they would spend the nights there, and not infrequently, during the day. Schultz would come with his dog, and sniff out people, and if he found anyone, he would kill them. Day in and day out, we would be seized to go to work. This is how the winter and the spring passed.

After the outbreak of the war with Russia, they began to bring Jews from **Germany**, **Czechoslovakia**, **Holland** and from all over Poland. Every transport was numbered, and those would came with those transport wore the number of their transport on their left breast. They were told that when an order will be given, the entire transport will have to get up. In the meantime, everyone worked in straightening the rivers. Women, children and the men.

Transports arrived without any stop. There were days, when there was insufficient water from the well. The number of Jewish policemen was increased to 400, among them were Czech and German Jews. Every day, 2 hours of exercises were conducted.

In the fall of 1941 came the first 'evacuation,' in which those policemen took part. Only the local Jews were gathered together. The only ones who save themselves were those who fled, and those who temporarily affixed a yellow star, in a manner that the foreign Jews wore (instead of the armband that the local Jews wore). Those who were gathered (and deported) vanished without a trace. Later, we became aware that they had been taken to Belzeč, where the death camp was already in existence.

After this '*aktion*,' transports began to arrive *en masse* with German, Czech, and Dutch Jews – men and women, very few children. At the same time, transports with Jews were being sent out – whether with natives from Izbica, or foreigners – to a variety of camps, such as: **Sorov**, **Terezin** (near Chelm), **Bialobrzegi** (near Zamość ). I was taken away from the house at night and sent to Terezin. Our work consisted of waiting at the train station (our barracks were located close to the station) until a train arrived with carloads of sand. The train would not stop, but would slow down its speed. We would have to jump onto the cars, and as they were moving, we had to throw off the sand. If someone did not jump around in a flexible enough fashion (on the moving train), or if someone's work was not satisfactory to the Ukrainians, who guarded us, they threw that individual down under the train. In the time that I was in this camp, I personally saw 64 Jews that were killed in this fashion. These were, in particular, educated Jews from Germany and Holland, who were not used to the physical work. The train would take us to a station, which was about 4-5 kilometers away, and it would stop there. We would then go back on foot, and on the way, at the same time, spread the sand that we had thrown down from the moving train. There were on average 6 such trains a day. Not only once, were we awakened in the middle of the night, if a train happened to be coming in. After returning from this labor, almost every evening there were exercises for punishment (*Podni! Povstan!* – Fall! Get Up!); We would have to slap each other in the face, etc.

The commandant of the camp was a *Volksdeutsche* **Frankovsky**, from Chelm. He would torture people inhumanly. Apart from him, there was ab SS man who was a chief, as was the case in all camps, but he would seldom look in on us. We suffered frightfully at the hands of the Ukrainian *Volksdeutsche*. They were especially fond of having an 'election:' they would search for elderly, and especially hapless Jews, and during the time that the train would run through, they would order them to jump from one car to the next. Out of six, one would succeed in making it – the rest would be killed under the wheels of the train, and the Ukrainians would take great pleasure in this.

When most of the Jews in my transport had been killed off (during the course of nine weeks), new Jews were brought. I saw that I must be killed, if I was to remain any longer. So I decided to save myself by escaping. On a certain day, an opportunity arose for me to sneak into a wheat field. I was sought, but not found. I sat in the wheat until night and then went off to Izbica. In the house, I no longer found my wife: she had been taken away with the little daughter. I found the three children who remained, in a terrifying state. At the request of my 14 year-old daughter, I obtained work from the *Judenrat* as a canal worker, and I received the status of a laborer, which was supposed to offer me protection.

After two weeks, when we were working, an auto came by with SS staff, and all of us were loaded up – one person, who had hidden in the canal they shot on the spot – and took us away to **Zamość** on the airstrip. There, I worked for 4 months. We were not beaten extraordinarily, but we were very hungry, and worked hard. It was autumn, it rained,

and no one of us had any warm clothing. We would go to our work 7 kilometers and then 7 back. The Germans would ride on cycles, and we had to keep up the same pace on foot (as they rode). Masses of people died. Every morning we were asks if anyone is sick. If someone presented themselves, he was taken away, and we never saw him again. The camp was guarded exclusively by military forces. I felt very weak, but I did not put myself forward as being sick, because I knew what awaited me. I tried to devise a way to escape, and not be killed.

On a certain evening, volunteers were called, to carry straw over. I presented myself, with the hope that I will find an opportunity to escape, and indeed, in the field, I had the chance, in the dark, to vanish. Again, I came to Izbica. In the house, I hid myself in the attic, and only the children knew that I was present. My older little daughter would go to work, hiring herself out to the better-situated German Jews. She would bring wood from the forest – and it was in this fashion that she sustained herself, her sisters, and me.

The militia found me. I was away at work to the train station in Izbica. This was already the year 1942. A long time went by in this fashion. Every day there were victims. Day-in and day-out, transports of Jews would pass through. Approximately 70,000 Jews transited through the town of Izbica.

On October 15, 1942, they (the Germans) organized an '*aktion*.' We had anticipated this, and whoever was prescient had already run off to the surrounding forests. Approximately five thousand Jews were seized at that time. Initially, they were detained on the place, and afterwards they were driven to the train station, through the fields and not by way of the road, so it would be harder. Engels came up from the rear, and the leader of the *Judenrat* had to walk close to him. Engels propped his automatic weapon against his arm, and shot into the mass of people in this way. There were 50 cars waiting at the train station already. The hapless martyrs were packed into them. Several hundred people were not able to get in, seeing as they were fulled stuffed. Engels told those who remained that they should run home. Then the SS people began to shoot into them. Most were killed. On that day, 700 Jews were killed, and dead bodies were taken 9to burial0 for two days straight.

I, and the children, hid ourselves in the forest. When the gunfire died down, I returned to the town. After this, there was an hiatus of about 10 days for complete lack of activity. This took place in October (the 15th) 1942.

During this tranquil interlude, the Jews from the surrounding villages were driven together into the town, in flat wagons, where they worked. This process of driving the Jews together continued until the 1st of November.

On the First of November, at night, the Germans and the Ukrainians surrounded the city. The Jewish militia came, and informed us that the city was surrounded, and apparently, something was new was going to happen. At 4:00AM, the '*aktion*' commenced, with gunfire. The Jews were driven together onto the square, and everyone was told to take along baggage. On the square, we sat for two days and two nights with our effects, and during that time, more and more Jews were driven together. After all this, they were driven to the train station, and the baggage remained lying on the square. The elderly were shot on the spot, and the young were chased into the train cars. The '*aktion*,' continued further. One train left, and they continued to drive a new group of Jews. A veritable mountain of baggage was created on the square. A second transport was loaded up. The better things were taken away by the Germans, and the rest were set on fire.

A number of Jews had good hiding places, and they hid themselves. An order came, that all the furniture was to be carried out of the houses, onto the square, and afterwards, the houses were to be gone through (to be searched). The floors were ripped up. In this manner, hiding places were discovered, and hidden Jews were dragged out of them.

In the city there was an inactive cinema house, a big building, All the Jews were driven into that building that had been dragged out of hiding places. The cinema house was stuffed to such a degree that people were standing on top of one another, and they continued to cram new people in. When it was severely cramped a huge alarm and outcry ensued, so one of the Gestapo people made a sign and hung it at the entrance: *Hier liegen verrikten Juden* (here are crazy Jews).

Polish firemen kept order. They took up to one hundred zlotys for a glass of water.

After this, they began to dig graves in the cemetery– 10 meters long, 5 wide, and 3 meters deep. A part at a time, up to 100 people, the Jews were taken out to the cemetery, told to take their clothes off to their underwear. A board lay over these pits, on which they led ten people at a time. A report of automatic gunfire was heard. Into the pit also fell those who were only lightly wounded, and they were later covered up by other bodies.

This was the beginning of the '*aktion.*' It lasted for the entire length of the month of November. Approximately 6-7 thousand people were killed, in particular Czech and Dutch Jews.

When wagons were in short supply during this *aktion*, in the evenings, 1000 small (peasant) wagons were driven together, and (the Jews) were taken to **Trawniki**, where they were loaded on wagons, and taken to **Sobibor.** The remainder of the Jews were all killed out on the cemetery.

The remaining 400 militia men and from (something is missing here from the original print – Ed.) Were driven off to the cemetery, where they dug a pit, and they were shot there. Also **Rabbi Simcha** was captured in a hiding place.

Engels took part in the shooting at the cemetery, the *Volksdeutsche* Zates (?) Landan and Josef Gut from Izbica was shot together with his family on the cemetery (the end of this section is not comprehensible – Ed.).

On November 30, placards were hung out in Izbica, indicating that the town was '*Judenfrei.*' I his in the forest. We got lost in the forest in December, we were approximately 50 men, and together with us were women and children.

The Germans hung out placards saying that Izbica was to become a '*Judenstadt,*' and that Jews will work for the government and have the right to live there, and that it will be forbidden to shoot at the Jews.

Winter set in, frost, snow, and there were no places to hide, and because of this we had nothing to lose, because in any event, every day people were dying. It was decided to return (to Izbica).

From the outset, 4 men were sent out who were selected by lottery, to observe, and I was among them. The rest remained in the forest, and paid attention to what would be done to us. When we came to the city, we saw that all the houses had been hacked apart. The *Burgomaster* Schultz came to us and said, that there is an order, which prohibits shooting at Jews. He will assist in putting the houses in order. We informed the people in the forest, and in the city, the Jews began to come together in a terrible state, with frozen hands, ears, etc.

When the Jews in the surrounding forests found out about this, they all gathered together in Izbica. Many came who were ill, and (a word is missing here in the original – Ed.). A hospital was put together, and immediately, 50 sick people were accepted, especially those who were frostbitten. A *feldscher* was found, who began to heal the sick.

Schultz came and said that we should create a *Judenrat*, register the Jews, and he will issue us bread cards. Everyone received a registration card with a serial number. My number was 200. These were distributed in March 1943.

After this, Schultz came and advised that we should immediately go to work in...(the original is lost – Ed.), in order to receive authorization to work, without which, there is the threat of punishment for anyone caught [without one]. In the 'klinkernia' we were all given typed 'visas' where it was indicated that the holder of the 'visa' is employed at a critical work *Zur dringende Arbeiten; in Klonkenwerk eingestelt worden*, and we worked from 6 to 6 without a break or food.

We carried up to 12 bricks up to the third story. On one occasion, three taxis with SS people showed up unexpectedly, they surrounded our houses, shooting into the houses with automatic weapons and threw grenades, to the extent that many houses collapsed. The entire hospital (and the sick) was murdered, a part managed to flee. Half of the Jews were killed at that time. Again, we fled to the forest.

We were in the forest for three days during the most severe cold and great snow. There were no incidents, only hunger and the cold gnawed at us. Having nothing to lose, we returned to the city, in order that they put an end to us more quickly, because those who were already dead, were better off than we were.

We came at night. Quietly, we went into the houses. Everything had been plundered, and we found nothing. In the morning, we were afraid to go outside, and we remained in the house. They shot at us, and again killed half of the Jews. We fled to the forest. It was very difficult in the forest. Terrible cold and snow. We were not properly dressed, we had nothing to eat. We lacked strength. We went off to the city, in order that these sufferings come to an end. We worked yet again.

This is the way it was until April 17, 1943. On that day, in the morning, the Germans and Ukrainians surrounded us, they had to (finally) put an end to us. It was not possible to flee, and anyone who attempted to run was shot. I had the fortune of falling into a sort of hiding place, in which there previously was a woman and a child. I was there for 3 days. On the third day, the child began to cry from hunger, and we were discovered there. I, along with the entire group of Jews, that was found there, were taken out, and told to undress down to our u8nderwear. I indicated that I was only going to take off my jacket, when I was shot at. They (the shooters) were drunk, and it appears that they were in a big hurry. I fell. On top of me, other dead bodies fell. After a set time, I came to – it was quiet already. I understood, that the murderers had departed. I felt a pain in my side. I was able to stand up, and around me were dead bodies. I walked a couple of steps, and I heard moaning – from another person who was wounded. I picked him up. A while later, there was another one. There were seriously wounded. Somehow or another, we bandaged our wounds. When we had gone a distance of about 100 steps, one fell down and died. The remaining two of us went on further. We went into the forest. We sat for two days in the shrubs. My companion died – I remained alone. I wandered aimlessly for 2 days. Feeling that I was coming to my end, I went off to a Pole that I knew – **Jan Maxilla** in Polka Orlowskia, and pleaded for him to take me in, and if he does not want to, then he should bury me, because I feel like I am dying, that I am near death. He made an arrangement for me in one of his structures. He changed the dressing on my wound, and gave me food. I remained there for several weeks. His wife, however, was very angry because he was hiding me, and thereby placing the entire family in danger. Therefore, he led me off into the forest, and dug a pit for me there. He brought me food. I sat continuously in a pit, not coming out during the day, only at night. It was very difficult for me, especially in the wintertime, but thanks to this help from the previously mentioned **Maxilla**, I survived.

This was the way I managed to suffer through, until the Red Army came in.

**H. Nobel**

Irana Szajowicz (Stenographer)

# Ghetto, Majdanek, Skarzysko, Buchenwald, Schlieben,[375] Theresienstadt[376]

**By Abba Friedling**

My recollections encompass the time when the 'Reds' left Zamość and the city was taken over by the Nazis – that means October 1939, until the final liquidation of the Zamość Jewish community and later, my wanderings through a variety of Nazi places of torture.

The *Judenrat* that was created in accordance with the direction of the Gestapo consisted of: Memek Garfinkel – President; Azriel Sheps and Sholom Tischberg – Vice Presidents; Todres Nickelsburg – Trerasurer; Moshe Levin – Secretary; Gallis – Operations Direction; The remaining members were: Sholom Tzibeleh, Eliyahu Epstein, Sholom Topf, Baicheh Pfeffer, Fishel Langbaum, Boruch Fishelsohn, Boruch Wilder, Dudek Garfinkel, Shmuel Rosen, Leib Rosen, Yaakov Levin, Mali Cohn, Ben-Zion Lubliner, Leib Eisen, Itcheh-David Schliam, Shmuel Totengraber, and Dr. Rosenman.

The following worked as employees of the *Judenrat*: Moshe Levin's son, Fishel Grossman, Aharon Shlafrok, Isser Rosenman, Meir Tischberg, Miss Sarah Tischberg, Yasheh Mendelsohn, Yaakov Schwartz, Mottel Sznycer, Antshel Maller, Frimcheh Peckler, a daughter of Mottel Willner's, Moshe Zimmerung's daughter.

This was a time of a variety of contributions and chicaneries, robberies. For a period of time, the 'liaison' with the SS was a certain Goldhammer from Warsaw, and a son-in-law of Nachman Melamed from the Neustadt, he was someone who had free access to them.

In 1940 (month of March), in Zamość, in the Lukaszinski barracks, diagonally opposite the '*Hayfl*,' a forced-labor camp was established, where about 400 Jews worked. The Gestapo, that had the oversight over the camp, tortured people severely, and was very rough with them. At that time, a couple of thousand Jews from a variety of Polish cities were brought to Zamość, and they were quartered among the Zamość Jews. We took them in like our own brethren, and shared food and drink with them.

Then, at the order of the Gestapo, the Judenrat established a '*Friedhof-Bedingung*' which was a sort of Hevra-Kadisha. This '*Bedingung*' consisted of the following people: Shmuel-Yaakov Fleschler, Itamar Fleschler, Abba Friedling, Meir Weintraub, Itcheh Schartz, Mordechai Richter, Zalman Ackerman. The mission of this *Hevra-Kadisha*, or as it was officially known, '*Friedhof-Bedingung*' was to immediately remove those who were killed, when the beasts shot people on the spot, from time to time.

In the month of April 1940 an array of work camps were created around Zamość. At the start, the Zamość *Judenrat* sent 500 men to these camps, and after that, an additional 800 Jews were sent. They were sent to the camps at Belzeč, Narol and Ciechanow.

The Jews of Zamość would provide food for the workers in the camps on every Sabbath.

During the month of September, Itcheh-David Schliam and Shia Fuchs exerted themselves with the SS to get permission for the Zamość residents to be permitted to come back into the city. Their request was satisfied in stages. In general, these camps were liquidated in October 1940, and all the Zamość residents returned to the city.

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375 Also associated with the camp at Hassag

376 Editor's footnote: This was an eye-witness testimony which was taken from *Abba Friedling* by *Mendel Sznur*. In the narration of A. Friedling, there is a repetition (especially at the beginning) many details that are already known, but because of the integrity of the eye-witness testimony, these details have not been eliminated.

In Belzeč, at that time, there sat a commission of the Lublin *Judenrat*, who carried out a certification of Jews that were sent to those camps.

In January 1941, the Gestapo ordered that an '*Ordnungsdienst*' be created in Zamość, that was called 'the Jewish Police' by the Jews.

The following people entered into the Jewish Police that was created by the *Judenrat*: David Garfinkel (Commandant), Shlomo Rosen, Elyeh Epstein's son, Stakh Fleischman, Berel Schwartzbier, David Weissman, Moshe Hoffman, Shlomo Rosenman (Browar), and a number of the foreign Jews, who had been brought to Zamość. The mission initially was to bring those to work who did not want to go willingly by themselves; they assisted in the collection of the monies from all of the contributions levied; providing oversight regarding sanitation among the Jews.

In the month of March 1941 a sorrowful order was issued to create a ghetto. The ghetto was created in the **Neustadt**. All the Jews of the city and the 'Browar' were compelled to take up residence there. Because of the great overcrowding, a couple of hundred Jews left Zamość and took up residence in **Komarow**. In that time, approximately 5 thousand Jews were brought from various cities in Poland and from Czechoslovakia, and they were crammed into the ghettoes of Zamość and the nearby province.

On the 24th day of Nissan, two days after Passover (end of April), was the **Black Sabbath** of the Zamość Jews. At one o'clock in the afternoon, the Gestapo surrounded the entire ghetto. Gestapo, SS and also police, chased the Jews out of the houses. They were told that those possessing work cards will be sent home immediately, and the rest will be sent to do labor. By 5:30PM, a mass of 4000 people stood on the ghetto square. The Gestapo surrounded them, and began to lead them to the train station, which was located near the '*Szkola*.' Along the way, the murderers shot those who could not move so quickly. Until reaching the train station, 120 lay dead already along the way.

These dead were gathered up by the *Hevra-Kadisha*, and taken to the *Bet HaMedrash*. In the evening, the Gestapo ordered the martyrs to be transported to the train station, where they were packed into a train wagon.

The murderers declared that they are required to send **28 full train cars from Zamość**. 27 cars were filled with the living Jews, so they must fill the 28th car also, German punctiliousness and order....

The entire *aktion* lasted until 3:00AM.

After this, the chief of the Gestapo summoned the entire '*Friedhof-Bedingung*' and ordered them to assemble all the dead who were killed, that are located in the houses. This was to last until 8 in the morning. He would then come to check and see if the work was carried out precisely in accordance with the order.

The *Hevra-Kadisha* went through all the houses in the ghetto, and gathered up an additional 96 people who had been killed – men, women and children. At Berel Deckel's they found 12 people dead in one room. All the martyrs were taken to the cemetery until 8 in the morning, and placed in the *Tahara*[377] chamber.

The martyrs lay there until Tuesday. On Tuesday, the *Hevra-Kadisha* arrived, and also Itcheh-David Schliam and Shmuel Totengraber. Totengraber counted the documents, wrote down the names. Separate mass graves were created – for natives of Zamość and foreigners; separate graves for men, and separate graves for women.

It was quiet until June.

In June, the second *aktion* took place. The Gestapo and the SS tore into the ghetto before dawn. With the assistance of the police, inspections were made of all the houses of the ghetto, and all the people that were found, were taken out

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377 From the Hebrew word for 'purity,' signifying the place where the body of a deceased was ritually cleaned in preparation for burial.

– men, women and children, also they seized whatever people they encountered in the streets. In total, about 2000 Jews were gathered together that time.

The inspections and seizures lasted from 4:00AM to 12 noon. The captured Jews were driven to the Gestapo pens near the train station. All the elderly, sick, women who could not go along as quickly, chasing after those being driven, the murderers shot along the way. The dead were tossed into pits by the bandits, and covered them up with earth. It was not possible to exactly establish the number who were killed.

Those who had been seized in this way, were sent by transport to Belzeč.

Several days later, an order came to rationalize the ghetto down to half its size. All the Jews who remained alive were driven out of the right side of the *Neustadt*, to a small area on the left side, near Sholom Tischberg's house.

In August, an order came out that everyone is required to work, even children 12 years of age. Everyone who worked was given a so-called 'Yot' card, which meant **Jude.**

At the end of August 1942, the third *aktion* took place. Once again, the Jews were dragged out of the houses; again, people were killed – up to 100 went away on a transport.

Two weeks later, the *Judenrat* received an order, that all the elderly Jews have to present themselves, and they will be sent to Izbica, which is to become a Jewish city. Jews will be permitted to live there. A couple of hundred elderly folk were indeed transported to Izbica.

It was quiet for a couple of weeks, until Sukkot. Then the fourth *aktion* took place, which made Zamość **Judenrein.**

It was then that the frightening expulsion of the Jews to Izbica took place. They were dragged from the houses; beaten to death, shot, driven on foot to Izbica. Countless people were killed along the way. People were shot whether they could not keep up with those being driven along, or those who stopped because they were tired or sick, as well as those who made an attempt to escape – among them were Itcheh'leh Wechter[378], Leah'keh Sheps, and others.

In Zamość, the only Jews that remained were those who worked in the camps.

One of the *Luftwaffe* camps was located between the *Neustadt* and the *Altstadt* near the military stables. There were up to 500 Jews there.

Another camp was on the Janowica, on the Szczebrzeszyn road – there, about 500 Jews word, among them a small number of Zamość residents.

One hundred men worked in Ziftzer's factory.

About 2 weeks later, about 20 Zamość Jews came running from Izbica, and told that the Jews who had been driven together there from the surrounding villages (about ten thousand), were sent off in transports to Sobibor. That Izbica too, had become *rein* from *Juden* – the Jewish population had been liquidated.

Later, 30 Jews were taken from the camps and led into the ghetto, where they went from house to house gathering all the belongings, which had been left behind in a state of disarray, by the Jews who had been driven out. The cleaning out of the houses in the ghetto lasted for three months. During that time, the ghetto was surrounded by Germans, and no one was permitted to enter, apart from the camp workers, until the houses were completely emptied, down to the last

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378 Editor's Note: The following is told about Itcheh'leh Wechter: He was a *feldscher*, and greatly beloved by the peasants. Along the way, peasants indeed wanted to save him. He declared, however – he wants to be with all the Jews and share in their fate.

thread. These plundered items were confiscated by the Germans for themselves. The less desirable items, were sold by the Germans in the market on market days.

This is the way things remained until March 1943. In that month, and epidemic broke out in the *Luftwaffe* camp. The Germans then removed about 100 Jews, both sick and healthy, among them several women, and they were taken to the 'Проховя' ('Rotunda') and shot them on the spot.

Among those who were killed were the following residents of Zamość: Shimon Mahler, Richter's hairdresser, Shmuel Edelsberg, Israel Langbaum, Berel Langbaum, Moshe Brumer – Feivel's son, Hona Meil, a son of Benjamin Elbaum, Abraham, son of Shlomo Pikarchik, the rest were not known. Women: Mrs. Shpizeisen, Shia Shaffer's wife with a child, Shprinza Feigenbaum, Mrs. Elbaum, Miss Rosenman, Mrs. Zilberman with a boy, Mrs. Friedrich.

It was quiet for a bit of time. Again, we worked in the camps until May 1, 1943. On May 1, before dawn, at 3:00AM, the Gestapo surrounded all the three camps of Zamość. All the Jews from those camps, approximately 1000, were brought together in the '*Luftwaffe*' camp. These people who were brought together were loaded up on auto transports, and taken to **Majdanek.**

In the '*Luftwaffe*' camp, two Zamość Jews hid themselves – Shlomo Elbaum, a baker from the 'Browar,' and Chaim Babat, from the *Neustadt* – they were both shot on the spot.

SS staff and Lithuanians accompanied the transport to Majdanek. Entering Majdanek, everyone was ordered to strip naked, and everyone was taken to a bath. After the bath, we were given different clothing to put on, torn rags, and wooden sandals.

All those from Zamość were driven into Barrack Number 19 – the so called '*Toten-Barrack*' on Punishment Field Number 3.

The German *kapo* came into the barracks at 12 midnight and asked which of the people were 'Mussulmen,' meaning that they were sick. About 20 men came forward presenting themselves as sick (it was thought that the implication was to be taken to the hospital). These 20 people were separated from everyone else, and in plain sight of everyone, they were garotted with a leather strap. This garotting lasted until the morning.
On the morning, the remainder were distributed to various barracks.

Yasheh Mendelsohn died on the third day.

We worked about 3 months until August 1943.

In August 1943, a commission from the camp at **Skarzysko** came to select a transport of workers. A contingent of 1000 men was selected and about 500 women. Only the healthy were taken. If during the transfer, someone was discovered with any sort of defect, they were immediately sent to the crematorium.

The following people from Zamość went to the crematorium at that time: Shimshon Feigenbaum, Heniek Wechter, and others.

Those who were taken away, went to an ammunition factory in Skarzysko. This was the first transport from Majdanek to Skarzysko.

The Majdanek Camp had the following configuration:

There were five 'fields' – 4 for men and one for women. On each 'field' there were 30 barracks. The crematorium was on the third 'field.' That was also the location of Barrack Number 19, the '*Toten-Barrack.*' If anyone fell sick, then he was taken to the 19th Barrack and from there to the crematorium.

We worked each day for 12 hours at the hardest labor. Also the women worked up to 12 hours.

The children, up to 10 years of age, were in a separate barrack.

Later, another transport went off to Skarzysko, also of 1000 men.

In Skarzysko there were three camps: '*Werk A, Werk B and Werk C*.' The '*Werk C*' camp was the camp for punishment. After working for several days in this camp, one became yellow. People were beaten unceasingly. If one became sick, that individual was taken away to be shot. Every eight days, they would make 'selections' — health inspections. Anyone found to be sick was taken away to be shot.

Among the overseers at Skarzysko were also many Jewish police. There were many thousands of people in the camp.

The following people from Zamość died of torture and hard labor at Skarzysko: Heschel Lemberger, Yitzhak Meckler, Pinia Ehrlich, Isser Gershtengroipen, Moshe Rophel, Fishl Feldman, Zingerman (a harness maker), Itamar Feschler, Beryl Werner (Aryeh's son), Yaakov'l Feigenbaum, Yekkl Zimmerung, and many more.

In September 1943, yet another transport arrived in Skarzysko from Majdanek. The people from this transport related that at that time, about 500 men were taken from Majdanek to Zamość , among them many natives of Zamość . A marmalade factory was created there, and they worked there. They continued to work there until the Red Army drew near to Zamość . On the eve of the taking of Zamość by the Red Army, all of them were shot at the 'Rotunda.'

One of them managed to save himself – this was a son of Leibusz Kapusha.

In Skarzysko, we worked for 14 months, and afterwards we were sent to **Buchenwald**. From Buchenwald we were sent to Schlieben, 60 kilometers from Buchenwald, in an ammunition factory.

In Schlieben, we worked for 8 months, until the Red Army drew near. Several people from Zamość died there: Shlomo Pflug, Yisrael'keh Scheks, and others.

From Schlieben, 5000 men were sent to **Theresienstadt** in wagons (150 men in a wagon), 50 kilometers from Prague.

The trip took 15 days. On the way, we were given a little bit of dried out bread with a little bit of water. Approximately 2000 people died on this trip. We traveled together with the dead.

We arrived at Theresienstadt tired and sick. Many Jews were waiting for us at the train station, and gave us immediate assistance. The sick were taken to a hospital.

Those local Jews took the ones who were well to bathe, and took care of us very well. This was in March 1945.

That is where we were when the Germans capitulated. There were about 37 thousand people there – Jews, Poles, Czechs and Russians.

We were told, that a death factory was being prepared here with a crematorium. There was a red cross on every building, in order to guard against air attack. Three days later, were the liberation of that vicinity not to have come, a mass execution would have taken place. Military officials from the Red Army showed us the prepared execution place. Indeed, we would have been brought there in order to be exterminated.

**Dr. Y. Szyfer** was located with me in Majdanek in the 4th Block. He worked in the block. He sat for whole days and wrote. He was killed there.

Of Zamość residents who saved themselves from the Ghettoes and camps, I know the following:

Elyeh Epstein and his son, Memek Garfinkel, Dudek Garfinkel, Shmuel Rosen, Baruch Wilder, David Levin, Itcheh Kaufman (Neustadt), Yankel Schatzkammer (Newustadt), Abraham Feldman (Neustadt), Jekuthiel Zwillich, Abraham Weintraub (Neustadt), Avromcheh Baum, Mottel Marman (Neustadt), Yekhierl Friedrich, Simcha Lemberger (Neustadt), Stakh Fleischman, Ephraim Zitzer with his family (Neustadt), A son of Itzeleh Radoshitzer, Malya Lichtenberg, Yitzhak Zinger (Neustadt), Chaim Shtibl (Neustadt), Shmuel Litvak (Neustadt), Nettl Greenspan (Neustadt), Khosn David Plug, Yisrael Spodek (Neustadt), Malka Zitzer, Salia Zimmerung (Neustadt), Avromcheh Plug and his wife (Kapusz), Mordechai Shtrigler (Neustadt), Issachar Sobol, Leibusz Sobol, a son, tow little boys from Moshe Schatzkammer, Tzitzman – a grandson of R' Moshe Koval, Tepikh, Moshe-Yekkl Osovsky, Abraham Winiaver (A son of Yekkly Winiaver), Wagner, Nathan Avruch (Neustadt), Abba Friedling. There were otheres, but I cannot recall them.

*Page 1036: The 'Rotunda,' The Extermination Place of Hundreds of Martyrs.*

# Expulsions and Extermination of the Jews in the Zamość Vicinity

**By T. Brustyn-Bernstein**

## (Data, Facts, Tables)

*Page 1038: [Map of] Work, Death and Concentration Camps in the Lublin District*

The following work consists essentially of excerpts from the work of T. B r u s t y n - B e r n s t e i n , which appeared in Folio Number 1-2 of the third volume (January-June 1950) of the 'P a g e s for H i s t o r y ' which was produced in Warsaw (as a quarterly periodical of the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland).

The work of T. Brustyn-Bernstein is divided into two parts:

1. Expulsions, as an example of German extermination politics in relationship to the Jewish populace.

2. Expulsions and extermination of the Jewish settlements in the Lublin District in the form of statistics and data.

From this basic research work, we take excerpts from the first chapter, which are important to generally illuminate this question, and are necessarily relevant only to the Zamość area. In the work, there are tables that relate to:

1. The Lublin City area; 2. Biala-Podolsk area; 3. Bilgoraj area; 4. Chelm area; 5. Hrubieszow area; 6. Janow-Lubelsk area; 7. Krasnystaw area; 8. Lublin area; 9. Fulow area; 10. Radzyn area.

We convey the second chapter in its entirety.

We also insert a map of the Lublin District with the Nazi torture and extermination camps that were located in that area, such as: work camps; death camps; concentration camps. Bitter fate decreed, that on the territory of this area, were, apart from tens of Nazi 'institutions,' three of the most horrible Hitlerist death camps: M a j d a n e k , S o b i b o r and B e l z e č . The last, and most gruesome of all, was indeed in the vicinity of Zamość.

In bringing the excerpts from the work of T. Brustyn-Bernstein, we omit all of the sources and footnotes; all comments and references to sources.

In thinking about the problem of the expulsion of the Jewish population in the Lublin District, in the time of the Hitlerist occupation, it is necessary to show the relationship between the movement created by this forced emigration, and the Hitlerist plans to wipe out the Jewish population. By acquainting ourselves with these plans, will enable us to understand the reasons for the Hitlerist 'evacuations' – and the 'evacuation *aktionen*.' Without exhausting this theme, we will further we will further direct the reader's attention to the plan of the Lublin Jewish host, to the plan to transfer all of the Jews to Madagascar, and similarly to the plan of the so-called 'evacuation,' of the Jews to the East.

During the period of The Second World War, 6 million Jews were murdered in Europe, of which 4 million were killed in death camps.[379]

In his speech that Hitler gave in January 1939, he pronounced upon the extermination of Jews. With the practical realization of 'The Solution to the Jewish Question,' *Reichsmarschall* Goering promoted Reinhard Heydrich, on

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379 Reputable sources differ on this matter, in no small amount, due to the destruction of records and the level of chaos that ensued with the ultimate defeat of the Nazis. There is, however, little disagreement among such sources on the *order of magnitude* of the catastrophe.

January 27, 1939 to be chief of the '*Reichssicherheitsdienst-Hauptamt.*[380]' A central emigration authority for Jews was established under Heydrich's leadership, which was to intensify and accelerate the emigration of Jews from the Reich, Austria and the Protectorate. At that time, systematic pursuit of the Jewish populace was already being instituted, including confiscation of assets, arrests and being re-settled in concentration camps.

After the outbreak of the war with Poland, the Jewish Problem was put down sharply on the current agenda. Even before the war operations were ended in Poland, Heydrich, on September 21, 1939,sent out identical instructions on how to handle the Jewish population, to all the chiefs of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the *Sicherheitsdienst Polizei* in the occupied territories. Through them, a boundary is created between the 'end state' and the general themes, which have to be realized in order to reach the final goal.

Heydrich's instructions recommend to concentrate the Jewish population in cities that lie along communication links; these instructions formulate the missions of the *Judenrats*, the goals of the economic-politics opposite the Jewish population, and touch on the question of driving the Jewish population, in these territories, which had become integrated into the Reich, to the margin.

The outbreak of the war had simultaneously precipitated a strong migration-movement in Polish territories. Even before the end of the September campaign, while war operations were still going on, a mighty wave of refugees goes, especially from Western Poland to the East, to seek a place of refuge in the larger cities, especially Warsaw.

As a result of this, specific transformations took place in the territorial distribution of Jews. After the end of military operations (end of September), until December 1939, there was again an outflow of the Jewish population from the territories to the areas that were occupied by the Red Army, and in other countries. A large portion remained in their new places, resigning themselves to not returning to their homes.

In connection to the plan to set the Jews to the side in the German 'lebensraum,' the Hitlerist authority decided to create an 'Evacuation Area' in the General Government District of the Lublin province, which it designated as a 'Reservation' for Jews. It was intended to take in Jews from Europe, as well as Polish areas, which had been united with the Reich.

In October 1939, the Jewish community of Vienna received an order to present 1000 Jews for the 'Reservation.' By October 20, 1939 the first transport with Viennese Jews had already left in the direction of the General Government District. During October, 1,672 Viennese Jews arrived in the General Government District. In the final months of 1939, a couple of thousand Jews were deported from Czechoslovakia, a certain part of them had hoped to be able to cross the border into the Soviet Union and hoped thereby to save themselves. On the strength of Hitler's order of October 30, 1939, a wave of Jewish refugees streamed into the General Government District from the incorporated Polish territories. Those driven out of Kalisz, Kwil, Lodz, Suwalki, Serock, Naszelsk, and from other cities of Western and Northern Poland, spread out in almost all of the cities and towns in the General Government District.

Over 1,000 Jews from Sczuczin were brought into the Lublin vicinity in February 1940. In the process, a large number of victims fell.

The broadly-based deportation into the General Government District was only now supposed to start. Namely, the arrival of 400,00 Jews was foreseen, starting on May 1, 1940. After the incidents with the first of the transports, the difficulties of dividing up the mass of humanity not only in the Lublin vicinity were very great, but also throughout the entire General Government District.

The Governor of the General District, Frank, began to make efforts with the decision making elements in the direction of abandoning this plan. Simultaneously, the debate over Jewish issues in the division, 'Internal management, population oversight, and direction,' in the General Government District, having information about the projected deportations of foreign Jews into the General Government District, distributed, on April 6, 1940, a questionnaire to all the District

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380 This was the Reich Main Security Office, also abbreviated RSHA.

Governors, in order to be able to orient itself regarding the options, and to find a suitable parcel for the Jewish 'Evacuation-Area.' The Governors were required to reply to the following questions:

1. In which districts are there mostly Jewish residents, and what sort of percentage are they in proportion to the local populace;

2. What areas have the least value according to the quality of the land;

3. Which areas are the least occupied and why? Are these areas suitable for an array of Jewish colonies?

It was recommended to the governors to work out proposals in connection to the distribution, engagement and timely methods of settling those who would be transferred over to the camps.

Paying no heed to the preparations, the projected mass deportations didn't come to pass. On March 23, 1940, Goering issued an order to stop the anticipated evacuation of the populace. On the strength of available source material, it is hard to pinpoint precisely if this came about because of the pressure applied by Frank. It also appears there is the possibility, that in connection with the planned German expansion into Western Europe (Norway, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg) in April, May 1940, and with the preparations for the French campaign, it was held that it was not timely to absorb the transport [demand] occasioned by the Jewish deportations.

In the elapsed time of the French campaign, which began on May 10, and ended shortly thereafter, in the months of July-August of the year, the Hitlerists engaged themselves with the 'concept' of 'solving' the Jewish Question through the forced emigration of European Jewry to colonies occupied by colored races...

... Regarding plans to deport the Jews to the French island of Madagascar, which France would cede to Germany as part of a peace agreement, is also discussed in the correspondence of the Hitlerist diplomats. As late as August 1940, such a 'solution' to the Jewish Question remained under consideration in these circles.

At this point, it is difficult to establish if the abandonment of this plan about Madagascar was really decided on by Himmler as a result of his realization. It is possible that this was a convenient screen for complete extermination of the Jews at that time, when it was not yet possible to carry out the deportation plan simultaneously. One thing can be definitely established: The technical preparations for deporting the Jews to Madagascar had not yet even been started. It was the opposite – at the end of the summer of 1940, the name of Madagascar is no longer mentioned entirely. Rather quickly, Frank made peace with the idea that the foreign Jews were going to be deported to the General Government District. The order to evacuate the Jews to the East was issued in the early fall of 1940, in the time when the date for the invasion of the Soviet Union had already been set...

...On July 31, 1941, Goering tasked Heydrich with the mission to make all of the organization and financial preparations for the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question,' in those territories under German control in Europe. Simultaneously, Heydrich received an order that, in a short time, [he was] to send Goering an exact plan about the organizational, materiel and practical measures which are necessary for the desired 'solution,' of the Jewish problem. In other words – Heydrich received the task to work out a plan to construct the processes for the mass murder of human beings, as well as those for the deportation of the Jews from a variety of lands into those places.

Hitlerism approached the realization of its ultimate goal, to eradicate the Jews of Europe. The Governor of the General District, Frank, at a government meeting on September 9, 1941, informed the participants as follows, regarding Jewish issues:

> 'The Jews must disappear! They must remove themselves from this place. I have engaged in undertakings to drive them out to the East. In January, a conference on this matter will take place in Berlin, to which we will send the government secretary Beuhler. The conference is supposed to take place at the *Reichssicherheits-Hauptamt* sponsored by SS *Obergruppenfuhrer* Heydrich. In any event,

> a great displacement of Jews is going to take place. But what is to happen to the Jews? Do you think, they will be settled in the lands of the east, or in the *Reichskommisariat* (Ukraine) in the 'Evacuation-villages?' In Berlin we were told: Why are all of these excuses being made? We can't do anything with them in the Eastern territories, and in the *Reichskommisariat*, liquidate them yourselves.'

Frank expresses himself here frequently: The two and a half million Jews have to be liquidated. He is only interested in the techniques of extermination. And here are his additional thoughts:

> 'We cannot shoot them all, we cannot poison them all, but we will have to adopt such methods, whatever they may be, that will lead to their extermination.'

These mass methods are today generally known, these are the gas chambers and crematoria.

For Jews in the '*Wartheland*[381]' whom they decided not to bring to the General Government District, but exterminate on the spot, a camp was built in Chelmno, near Kolo which began to function on December 8, 1941. In this extermination camp, the larger majority of the Jewish population in this [sic: Kolo] province met their death, as well as 20,000 Jews from Prague, Vienna, Berlin, Köln, and other German cities, who, in the period from October 17 to November 4, underwent 'evacuation' [in which people were sent] to Lodz.[382]

The conference in the *Reichssicherheitedienst-Hauptamt*, promised in September 1941, took place in January 1942, and had as its objective to coordination of all resources, which were needed to prepare the extermination of European Jews in the death camps.[383]

Heydrich acquainted the attendees with the numerical status of the Jews in all European countries, not excluding England and Switzerland. According to his data, Europe had 11 million Jews...

...At the end of October 1941, the construction of the first extermination camp in the General Government District began at **Belzeč**, and it was completed at the end of February 1942. It began to operate in the middle of March. Initially Jews from the Lublin District were sent to Belzeč, later on, especially from the two southern districts: Krakow and Galicia. In May, the extermination camp at Sobibor began to operate, and in July – in Treblinka.

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381 Reichsgau Wartheland included the Poznan Province, most of the Lodz Province, five Pomeranian Districts, and one county of the Warsaw Province.

382 From the more than 300,000 Jews transported to Chelmno, only 4 survived (data of inquiry).

383 In January 20, 1942, fifteen high-ranking Nazi party and German government leaders gathered for an important meeting. They met in a wealthy section of Berlin at a villa by a lake known as Wannsee. Reinhard Heydrich, who was SS chief Heinrich Himmler's head deputy, held the meeting for the purpose of discussing the "final solution to the Jewish question in Europe" with key non-SS government leaders, including the secretaries of the Foreign Ministry and Justice, whose cooperation was needed.

The "final solution" was the Nazis' code name for the deliberate, carefully planned destruction, or genocide, of all European Jews. The Nazis used the vague term "final solution" to hide their policy of mass murder from the rest of the world. In fact, the men at Wannsee talked about methods of killing, about liquidation, about "extermination."

The Wannsee Conference, as it became known to history, did not mark the beginning of the "Final Solution." The mobile killing squads were already slaughtering Jews in the occupied Soviet Union. Rather, the Wannsee Conference was the place where the "final solution" was formally revealed to non-Nazi leaders who would help arrange for Jews to be transported from all over German-occupied Europe to SS-operated "extermination" camps in Poland. Not one of the men present at Wannsee objected to the announced policy. Never before had a modern state committed itself to the murder of an entire people.

In March 1942, transports with foreign Jews began to arrive. They were distributed to places along the Deblin [sic: Deblin]-Rejowiec [Fabryczny]-Belzyce rail line.

The German administration in the Lublin District, in accord with the Full authority of the SS and leaders of the police, firmly established that to the extent that Jews were to be 'evacuated in' from foreign locations, a like amount of local Jews will be 'evacuated out.' The organs of the police recommended sites for such 'abusing out,' first of all the element that was incapable of doing work. In the General Government District, the extermination *aktion* against the Jewish population began in March 1942, and by November the majority of the Jews that were displaced in this manner, were already murdered...



# Expulsion and Extermination of the Settlements in the Lublin District In the Form of Numbers and Data

The Hitlerist occupation washed all the Jewish settlements of Poland off the surface of the land.

In the annals of the research about Jews under the Hitlerist occupation, the Jewish Historical Institute approached the task of working out the problem of the extermination of Polish Jews in the hundreds of cities and towns, in a systematic manner in the form of tables.

In connection with this, it was necessary, first of all, to establish with certainty, the condition of the Jewish population in each settlement that was ultimately destroyed.

Seeing that the population in all of the settlements underwent significant change in comparison to the pre-war figures, it is necessary to take figures into consideration from both periods. The difference in the figures of the Jewish population of both periods in the different settlements is a result not only of the wanderings of the period during war operations, or mass flight to the Soviet Union, sporadic '*aktionen*' and high death rates, but especially because of the 'outward expulsions' or expulsions into locations, of the Jewish populace, which the occupying Hitlerist forces carried out with force. In specific locations, a concentration of the Jewish population took place, and in others –the opposite – the Jews were gradually, or entirely deported to other places.

In this so-to-speak chaos there was, however, a planned process: all the forced emigration-movements, that means – expulsions of the Jewish populace during the time of the occupation, were aligned in accordance with the concepts of the so-called 'solution,' of the Jewish Problem, and were, generally speaking, a realization of the related themes of one process of the 'Final Solution,' meaning the physical extermination of the Jewish population. Accordingly, it was deemed necessary to confirm the table of the related rubrics, which contain the given methods of the 'forced expulsions' and 'forced concentrations,' which took place as a frequent prelude to the extermination process.

However, it is not always possible to depend on the available sources to quantitatively apprehend the given expulsion movements, and part of the time, one can only estimate the number of people that were forced to change their place of domicile to date, and there are times when one must simply resign one's self from the possibility of providing concrete figures. Also, because of a lack of sources, we have to resign ourselves from providing even estimates relative to the extermination *aktionen*.

Seeing that the local police and administrative organs took part in the extermination of the Jews, it appeared to be necessary to include in the tables the participation of the occupied administrative agents in district. In each district, there were allocated principal leadership positions, which represent more-or-less our locations, but in general, a 'circle' was greater than a 'location.'

The Lublin District, divided into ten '*kreis-hauptmanschaften*' encompassed 14 '*Powiats*' of the former Lublin '*Voievode*.' The remaining 4 *Powiats* of the Lublin *Voievode* were integrated into the Warsaw District.

The following *Powiats* became part of the Lublin District: Biala-Podlaska, Bilgoraj, Chelm, Hrubieszow, Janow, Krasnystaw, Lublin, the larger part of the Lukow *powiat*, Pulawy, Radzyn, Tomaszow, Wlodawa, as well as a small number of settlements from the former Lemberg *Voievode*: Lubachow (Ciechanow settlement), Nisko (Ulanov settlement), Rawa-Ruska (Belzeč settlement), Sokol (Belz settlement) and Tarnobrzeg.

Moving now to refer to the introductions to the various representations in our tables, we will stress that for the first two representations we especially took materials from the two act-complexes – 'Joint' and 'Jewish Social Independent Relief Organization' (Y. S. O.) In the Lublin District, there were a hundred and several Jewish settlements to be found, who, during the time of the occupation, had contacts with the 'Joint' and the central [office] of the 'Jewish Social Independent Relief Organization.' in Krakow.

In order to place the statistics from before the year 1939 on a solid foundation, we made use of the monthly compilations of the central [office] of the Jewish Social Independent Relief Organization' in Krakow. These compilations were assembled from printed formulas, which addressed in the first point, a question about the number of Jews before the war. We have, in part, aligned these numbers with the statistical submissions, which the municipal leadership offices sent into the Institute in the years 1948-1949.

The number of the Jewish population changes in the separate settlements from month to month. At the beginning of 1940, during the first wave of refugees that cascaded over the General Government District, the 'Joint' made efforts to gather together materials about the number of refugees from every individual location. However, no precise replies came back to the 'Joint' from the various *Judenrats*, in response to their inquiries, seeing that the mass of refugees found itself in an very fluid situation, that is, in a condition of being constantly on the move, and in general, a large number of them missed out entirely on being registered, not wanting to be counted among those who receive aid. The reason for this ricocheting from place to place is clarified in a 'Joint' report in the following manner: 'The refugees, being compressed in some location or another, in an impoverished and destroyed *shtetl*, without any prospects to order themselves there, often wander off to neighboring towns, where they hope to find some small possibility to sustain their existence.'

In the middle of February 1941, the order of the Lublin Governor Zerner went into force about limiting the rights of domicile of the Jewish populace, which expressed itself in the prohibition to leave whatever was their current residence.

The possibilities for a legal move were taken to a minimum. In the referenced period, there were between 250,000 and 300,000 Jews living in the Lublin District.

At the end of March, or the beginning of April 1940, the Advisor to the Head of the Lublin District of the 'Jewish Social Independent Relief Organization,' Dr. Alten, sent a special questionnaire to all the divisions of the Jewish Social Independent Relief Organization, on behalf of the Organization for Social assistance. The statistical material so assembled enables us to set with some certainty the number of Jews in the separate '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaften*,' as well as in the locations. Underneath, we bring a list of the number of Jews, in the '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaften*' from the Lublin District in the years 1941, 1942, on the basis of Alten's inquiry from March, April 1941, as well as from the material from the Y.S.O. on July 1, 1942.

But first we will note that the differences in the figures of the Jewish population in the '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaften*' Lublin, Pulawy, and Radzyn consist not only of the 'evacuations both in and out,' but also because of changes to the boundaries between these areas. In August 1941, a portion of the Radzyn '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaft*' was integrated into the '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaften*' of Lublin and Pulawy. That is, the former region of Lubartow with the cities of Lubartow, Firlei, Kamienka, and Ostrow was detached from the Radzyn '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaft*' and united with the '*Kreis-Hauptmanschaft*' of the Lublin-Land. By contrast, the village areas of Wielki, Mikhov, and Lisowiki, were integrated into the Pulawy *Kreis*.

These totaled figures that are presented have to be considered to be lower that reality, since in the material from Alten's questionnaire there are figures missing for specific cities, for example: Cuzmir, Konskowola, Baranow. Apart from this,

it appears that the Jewish populace was scattered in the villages and therefore there was no contact kept with the Y. S. O. and therefore not captured in this questionnaire.

Looking through the representations of the count of the Jewish population in the separate locations and aligning the pre-war figures with the numbers from the time of the occupation, in a part of the places we will take note a catastrophic drop in the population count in the time of the occupation. In other places, a contrast mostly – an increase. A drop in the population occurred in those places which were bombed and destroyed during the September campaign of 1939 (for example, Frampol, Bilgoraj, Krasnobrod, and others).

In general, the number of the Jewish population grew in a meaningful amount in almost all settlements, disregarding the fact hat thousands of Jews in the fall of 1939 abandoned their homes and saved themselves [by going ]into areas which were liberated by the Soviet Union. In part of the towns, the number of refugees and exiles exceeded the count of the local residents (in Turobin, for example, from 1,400 – a growth of 3,300, Belzeč – from 2,200 to 4,854).

| ***Kreis-Hauptmanschaft*** | **Population in March, April 1941** | **Population on July 1, 1942** |
|---|---|---|
| Biala-Podlaska | (12,132 Natives + 5,542 Refugees) 17,674 | (almost 5,000 Refugees) 14,500 |
| Bilgoraj | (3,069 + 9,181) 12,250 | 13,500 |
| Chelm | (3,669 + 24,528) 28,197 | (3,437) 20,955 |
| Hrubieszow | (1,279 + 8,514) 9,793 | 4,650 |
| Janow-Lubelsk | (4,713 + 13,368) 18,081 | (1,735) 17,243 |
| Krasnystaw | (5,187 + 11,399) 16,586 | (3,569) 8,435 |
| Lublin | (3,866 + 13,356) 17,222 | (10,500) 23,800 |
| Lublin (City) | (6,000 + 39,000) 45,000 | In Majdan Tatarski 4,000 |
| Pulawy (*Kreis*) | (5,213 + 15,388) 20,601 | 26,000 |
| Radzyn | (12,998 + 34,988) 47,986 | (14,431) 42,239 |
| Zamość | (3,700 + 11,512) 15,221 | (3,500) 9,000 |
| **Total** | **(55,245 + 193,366) 248,611** | **184,322** |

It is necessary to remark that not every rise or fall in the population count can be explained by the entries in the table, since not all the movements of the Jewish population in the District can be established on the basis of the available sources. Apart from this, the impact of deaths, shootings and deportation to labor camps, changes in domicile (illegal, or for other reasons) etc. have not been taken into account.

Looking through Table X, we observe an expulsion of the Jews from Lubartow and Radzyn in the last months of 1939. Later, the implementation of the order concerning the expulsion was annulled and part of the populace returned home.

Pulawy was the first city in the Lublin District, from which the Jews were driven out into a variety of towns, as early as December 1939. No Jewish laborers were even left behind to work at cleaning out the city. First later, when the press of the lack of a labor force was felt, several tens of Jews were brought to Pulawy, for whom a camp was built on the spot.

The expulsion of the Jews from Lublin, and a couple of the larger cities, was carried out from February - May 1941, at the time that German forces were being concentrated in Lublin for the attack on the Soviet Union.

In February 1941, part of the Jews from Krasnik, which was overflowing with German military forces, were driven out to Radomysl, Tzhidnik and Koszyn. Over 10,000 Jews from Lublin were, in the months of April-May 1941, were tossed into the cities and towns of the District, the rest were closed off in a ghetto. The places, into which the Jewish populace was driven, were agreed to by the administrative organs, in concert with the military authorities.

In April, 800 Jews were driven from Bilgoraj to Goraj, and over 600 from Zamość to Komarow and Krasnobrod, and in May there took place an expulsion of over 1,000 Jews from Krasnystaw into a variety of locales of the area.

Analyzing the representations of the 'evacuations in,' it is possible to establish with confidence three waves of 'evacuations in,' that took place from outside the General Government Province, which stands in relation to the so-called 'solution' of the Jewish Question on a European scale. The first wave falls out on the last months of 1939 and the first months of 1940, that means, in the period, when the concept was adopted of creating a Jewish 'reservation,' in the Lublin District. In that period, the Jews of Serock, Suwalk, Nowy Dwor, Kalisz, Lodz, Szeradz, Zgerz, Kolo, Konin were driven in, and an array from other cities, that had been absorbed into the German Reich. In February 1940, the transport arrived from Szczecin. It has not been possible to establish, based on the sources, where the Jews who arrived from Vienna at the end of 1939, settled down.

The second wave of 'evacuations in' falls at the end of 1940 until March 1941, that is, in the period when the decision had already been taken to send the European Jews to the East.

In December 1940, part of the Jews from Mlawa (the Ciechanow *Kreis*) and its environs were driven out, into the General Province. Initially, they were held for a couple of weeks in a camp in Zaludowo. They cam in a frightening condition, without baggage, and without the means to sustain themselves. They were thrown into Biala-Podlaska, Wisznica (In the Biala Ariae), in Kamienka (Lublin), Mikhov (Pulawy), Cziemierniki and Lukow (Radzyn). A small number of the Jews of Mlawa were settled in Sosnivka near Parczew, in January 1941.

In March 1941, a transport arrived with 1,100 who had been driven out of the Kanin area (Warthegau), a portion were let off at the train station in Izbica, and the rest at the station in Jozefów near Bilgoraj. Seeing that the Jewish communities in those places were in no position to share in the fate of the uprooted ones, the latter sought a place of refuge in the villages in the entire *kreis*. In the months of February-March 1941, 5,000 Jews were evacuated from Vienna, who were divided up among the communities of Modliborzyce, Finiz (Janow Area), in Opole (Pulawy). Close to 200 Viennese Jews (over 100 from Opole) got the chance to illegally return to Vienna, but they were looked for there, and arrested. At that time, they declared that they would rather sit in the Viennese jail rather that go back to the General Government Province, but the *'Zentralstelle fur Auswanderung'* in Vienna send them back to the General Government Province anyway.

In December 1940, a transport of 5,000 Jews arrived from Krakow, and additional transports from Krakow arrived in the months of March and November 1941, in connection with the *aktion* to 'Clean Out the Jews' from Krakow.

The third wave of 'evacuations in,' brought the Jews from Mielec, in March 1942, and between March and June 1942, tens of thousands Slovakian, Czech, German and Austrian Jews.

The preparations to marginalize the 4,500 Jews from Mielec and its environs began in January 1942, the *aktion* took place on the 9th of March, [and] on the 11th and 15th of March two transports left Mielec. Young, able-bodied men who could work were separated from their families, and sent to work.

The first transport was tossed into the ghettoes of Miedzyrzec, Wlodawa, Sosnivka, and into the abandoned houses of Ciechanow. The second transport was divided into three parts in Zamość, one was sent off to the Hrubieszow area (Belz, Dubienka), the second was let off at the station in Susiec, from where it arrived quickly at Belzeč – to death.

In March 1942, together with the administrative apparatus, the Hitlerist police authorities undertook to research places where it would be possible to accommodate 60,000 Jews from outside the country. The intent was to select locations that lay along the rail lines from Deblin to Trawniki, and Deblin - Rejowiec - Belzeč. It is difficult to specify exactly how many Jews from outside the country came into the Lublin District. Part of the transports were sent directly to the extermination camps of Sobibor, Belzeč, or to the concentration camp at Majdanek.

According to the calculation of the *'Reichsicherheits-Hauptmacht'* who in January 1942 planned the extermination of 11 million European Jews, there were in Germany 131,800, in Austria 43,700, in the Czech Protectorate 74,000, in Slovakia 88,000. The sum total for these previously mentioned four countries came to 340,000 Jews.

In the spring of 1942, these Jews from outside countries were deported and distributed to locations that lay close to rail lines that lead to the extermination camps of Belzeč and Sobibor. In Piaski, a large concentration point was created for the Jews of the Reich. In March 1942, the Jews from foreign transports were debarked in Izbica, Krasniczyn, Gorzkow (in the Krasnystaw area), in April – in Izbica and Krasniczyn, as well as Rejowiec, Siedliska, Wlodawa, Ostrow, Piaski; In May – in Rejowiec, Chelm, Krasnystaw, Ostrow, Belzeč, Deblin, Konska Wola, Opole, Ryki, Lukow, Miedzyrzec, Zamość, and Komarow, and in June – in Konska Wola. Most of the time, when the foreign transports would arrive in the Lublin area, an 'abusing out' would take place from the local ghettoes.

On March 16, 1942, Hofle[384], the representative of 'Operation Reinhard' presented the status for Jewish issues in the section 'Population Indicators and Management Issues,' from the Lublin District, that he is in a position to accept 4-5 transports a day of 1,000 people apiece at the Belzeč station, cynically assuring that 'these Jews will never again get through the [camp] boundary back into the General Province.'

On the morrow, March 17, the Hitlerist executioners began their murdering work, in the General-Government District, of 'abusing out' the Jews of Lublin to Belzeč. This *aktion* lasted for the entire month, and in the end, a couple of thousand Jews, who remained alive, were transferred to a ghetto in Majdan-Tatarski, near Lublin. At the end of March all the Jews were 'evacuated out' of Cuzmir near the Vistula, and only a small camp remained for the Jewish laborers who worked in a stone quarry.

In March, 3,400 Jews were 'evacuated out' of Piaski, to which, at the beginning of April, 4,200 Jews were brought in from the Reich and its Protectorate. In the same month, a second 'abusing out' took place. Simultaneously, close to 1,000 Jews were 'evacuated in' from the Protectorate. This same thing was repeated in Izbica: in March 2,200 Jews were 'evacuated out' and in their place, two transports were brought from the Protectorate; in April the second 'abusing out' took place, after which three transports from the Reich arrived in Izbica, one transport from Vienna, all together – nearly 7,000 Jews.

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384 The following is extracted from an article in the *Wairarapa Times-Age of Masterton, NZ*, 19Aug00, regarding *Helga Tiscenko*, the daughter of Hermann Hofle:

> By the time of Germany"s surrender in May 1945, her views were very different. But as if the teenager"s discovery of Nazism's true nature was not enough, she also had the emotionally difficult task of reconciling her love for her parents with their adherence to what had been revealed as an evil ideology.
>
> Her parents, **Hermann and Elizabeth Hofle**, were committed followers of Hitler. Hermann Hofle had been with Hitler on the abortive march on Munich's war memorial in 1923 that produced Nazism's first martyrs and after rising through the army ranks, ended the war a general in the elite SS with responsibility for Slovakia. After surrendering to American forces, he was extradited to the newly-formed communist state of Czechoslovakia and was executed in 1947.
>
> Mrs Tiscenko writes lovingly of her father, who she says was a patriotic German and a proud, gentlemanly soldier who was executed for Czech political reasons, not for war crimes. But the faith that he and her mother shared in Hitler remains a huge burden.
>
> *"I cannot understand how my parents, two decent and intelligent people, could ignore all the signs pointing to Hitler's madness and megalomania," she writes. "How they could turn a blind eye to the manifestations of racial hatred that led to the Holocaust, how they could swallow all that nonsense of the Aryan pure blood and how they could reconcile their personal compassionate actions with those of a callous regime .... The conflict of loving my parents and yet knowing that were followers of an ideology I reject remains forever in my heart. This is a burden I have in common with many Germans of my generation."*

The *aktionen* to 'evacuate out' took place in the Lublin District without interruption until November 1942. The gas chambers of Belzeč, Sobibor, Treblinka, digested fresh victims continuously.

From the 6th to the 12th of May, 16,822 Jews from the Pulawy area alone were exterminated. Along with the 'abusing out,' *aktionen* would take place, that means that the sick and the old, who did not have the strength to make the trip, were shot on the spot, as well as those who were dragged out of hiding places. There were instances, when instead of being sent to the death camp, the liquidation was carried out on the spot through mass shootings. In Jozefów, for example, in July 1942, 1,500 Jews were shot outside the city, in Lomazy (The Biala-Podlaska area)all the local Jews, in the amount of 1,700 souls, were murdered in the forest near the city, in August 1942

The concentration of Jews in ghettoes, who lived in the village settlements would take place shortly before an 'abusing out' *aktion* in those ghettoes.

It was in this fashion, for example, that the Jews of Biala-Podlaska were permitted to remain in their place only until the end of September 1942, after which date, everyone had to be transferred to Miedzyrzec. Starting from the beginning of October, daily transports would leave Miedzyrzec for the extermination camps. In that same month, the Jewish population from the surrounding settlements was concentrated in the cities of Lubartow, Lukow, Wlodawa, Krasnik, Zazolkiew, almost directly before the 'abusing out' in those very cities.

The extermination *aktion* in the month of October was carried out very intensively. At the beginning of November, the last of the Jewish settlements in the Lublin District were wiped out.

In between, however, a police order was published on October 28, 1942, signed by the senior SS and Police leader in the General Government Province, Krüger, 'Concerning the Creation of Jewish Residential Districts in the Areas of Warsaw and Lublin.' The order included a list of the cities and areas of the Lublin District where such Jewish districts were being created, such as: Lukow, Parczew, Miedzyrzec, Wlodawa, Konska Wola, Piaski, Zazolkiew, and Izbica.

In the second paragraph of the order, the date is specified – November 30, 1942 – until which time, all the Jews in the Warsaw and Lublin areas must select a place to live, in the Jewish districts. The order did not apply to those Jews engaged in wartime or ammunition industries, who were located in closed camps. Violation of this order was seen to be punishable by death. Also, punishment by death was the threat that appeared to be the case for those who would deliberately shelter a Jew outside the ghetto.

This order, which was manifestly seen to create the illusion of security, simply served as a net to trapped the dispersed stragglers among the Jews, who had managed to save themselves from the slaughter. The 'lifetime' of these 'Jewish Districts' was a very short one. It is worth emphasizing that from these eight cities, which were enumerated in the order of October 28, 1942, three cities: Parczew, Konska Wola, and Zazolkiew were already *Judenrein* by December 1, 1942. In October and the beginning of November, these ghettoes were entirely brought to extinction. On December 1, 1942, there still existed five ghettoes in the Lublin District (Piaski, Wlodawa, Izbica, Lukow, Miedzyrzec), they were largely liquidated in 1943, that is, –In February or March, the ghetto at Piaski; in April-May – all the others. In May 1942, almost all of the Jews were 'evacuated out' of Miedzyrzec and the ghetto officially ceased to exist. The last *aktion* in Miedzyrzec took place in July 1943.

The Jewish labor force that remained alive in the camps that were populous, and work places, were employed in improvement works in the land areas and in the peat bogs, Jewish craftsmen – in factories, who produced the necessities for the *Reichswehr*. The ghetto of Miedzyrzec, where there were factories with 900 qualified brush makers, the German manager of these brush factories demanded that a guard of firemen be placed during the time of the *aktion*, to protect his Jewish workers...

However, these Jewish workplaces and Jewish work camps, with few exceptions, were liquidated in the year 1943. The liquidation of the Jewish labor forces came about in the following order: the Jewish workers at the workplaces in Chelm

were shot on March 31, 1943, at the end of April, the work camps in Leczna and Wlodawa were disbanded, from Rejowiec, part of the workers were sent to Majdanek. The camp residents in

## Kreis Hauptmanschaft Zamość[385]

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Number :** 7 | **Location:** Zamość | | |
| | **Pre-War** | **1941** | **1942** |
| **Number of Jews:** | 12,000<br>(2,500 local<br>5,000 outsiders) | 7,500<br>(4,056 - sp. Footnote) | 7,500 |
| | **1941** | | |
| **Transfers:** | 400 - To Komarow<br>248 - To Krasnobrod (People evacuated in from Wloclawek and Lodz) | | |
| | **1939** | **1941** | **1942** |
| **Evacuated In** | 175 from Kolo<br>From Wloclawek | 78 from Chestnoczow | 2,100 from the Reich<br>Protectorate |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **1942** | **1943** |
| **Evacuated out and Exterminated** | 3,000 to Belzeč<br>To Belzeč<br>500-600 to Belzeč<br>Close to 400 to Belzeč<br>Close to 400 to Izbica<br>The Camp Remained in | Beginning of 1943<br>To the Camp in<br>Majdanek |

Belzeč were sent to Budzyn (Majdanek-Filia) in May, from one camp in Deblin, everyone was sent to Poniatowo, in July the residual stragglers from the Jewish work forces were transferred from Rejowiec to Majdanek. 200 people, employed in Hrubieszow in the sorting of effects of Jewish origin, were in July or September 1943, sent off to Budzyn.

In the first days of November 1943, an enormous slaughter took place in Majdanek, of over 18,000 Jews, among them, the Jewish workers from two Lublin camps at Lipovo-Gasse and also on the airfield (Plaga and Leszkewicz), and at the same time, the Jews in the camps of Poniatowo and Trawniki were murdered.

Up to July 22, 1944, that means up to the day of the liberation of the Lublin District from German occupation, there were, in sum total, two Jewish work camps active in Deblin and Krasnik. At the last minute. The management of the camp sought to evacuate part of the camp inmates to the west.

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385 Translator's Note: This represents only the data presented about Zamość, which was the seventh of thirteen cities and towns in this table. Detailed footnotes of the Editor have been omitted. The reader interested in greater detail is referred back to the original text on pp. 1050-2 in *Pinkas Zamość.*

# The Nazi Death Machine at Belzeč

*Page 1054:* *The Geographic Location the Death Camp at Belzeč*

*Page 1059:* *The Layout Plan of the Belzeč Death Camp According to Reder's Narrative. Rendered by Josef Bau.*

The Hitlerist strategy was so organized as to conceal the bitter fate from the victims themselves; until the very end, they would attempt by every means, to mesmerize their hapless victims, so that they would not know, that they are being led to their death.

There is no doubt that the Nazis did not do this for any 'humanitarian' objectives – that the victims should suffer less. The real reason behind this tactic was – to create the illusion that they are being transported 'to work,' and that this is simply a 'relocation,' in order not to arouse the elements of a revolt or resistance. It is from this that the adopted 'ceremonial' found in almost all the camps was taken – of undressing, that is to say, to 'bathe one's self;' from the instruction to lay out the clothing in order, in order to be able to find them more easily later; from making marks on the baggage, in order not to lose track of them after bathing, and the other means of care, in order that the audience not catch on to what they really had in mind to do.

Despite this, news and facts, and even accurate pictures about the Hitlerist death camps spread among the Jews in the ghettoes and work camps. Those who escaped from 'transports;' those who managed, miraculously, to get out of the extermination camps; Christians from nearby villages; railroad employees, who caught on to what was happened to their 'cargo,' – all of these popularized the Hells of **Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, Sobibor** and **Belzeč**.

**Belzeč** was already a name that inspired terror from the time of the German occupation. Although the total scope of this death machine was not known, its gruesome name had been spread among the Jews crammed into the ghettoes, and work camps in general, and in the Lublin District in particular.

The following materials are put together on the basis of a variety of documents and eye-witness accounts, scattered and spread in a variety of collections, and primarily from the following publications:

1. Dokumenty i Materialy, Tom I Obozy.
2. Rudolf Reder – Belzeč

The first publication contain documents and materials about the Nazi camps in Poland, which were worked over by Mgr' **N. Blumenthal** and were published by the Central Historical Commission of the Central Committee of Polish Jewry, in Lodz, in the year 1946.The second work is the writings of **Rudolf Reder** containing a description of Belzeč, from which he escaped. His work will be cited more extensively later. This writing appeared as an offering of the District Jewish Historical Commission in Krakow, in the year 1946.

These facts which we bring further on, appear here in **Yiddish**, nearly for the first time. The largest part, and majority of the populace of all Zamość and its environs were exterminated in Belzeč, and firstly, indeed, the Jews of Zamość about which an array of witnesses testify about, and other material in our *Pinkas*. Whether because of relevance, or because of the geographic circumstance (Belzeč administratively belonged to Zamość) we felt it appropriate to incorporate the following facts.[386]

———— :: ————

In reality, at different times, there were two separate camps in Belzeč: – the first was a work-camp, that was put up in the first half of 1940. We tell about this camp in a variety of works in the *Pinkas*. On August 14, 1940, there were

386 A complete portrait of the 'Perpetrators at Belzeč' can be found at the website: http://www.deathcamps.org/Belzeč/perpetrators.html

over ten thousand Jews in the Belzeč work-camp from the General Government District. This camp complex had the following 6 points: **Belzeč-Yard; Belzeč-Mill; Belzeč-Train Depot; Ziszanal, Lipsko** and **Plaszow.**

Then, the German authorities created a so-called '***Gremium* for the Issues of the Camp in Belzeč.' This '*Gremium*' approached 57 *Judenrat* organizations about providing support for the camp inmates. It is necessary to understand from this, that the *Judenrat* organizations were approached in those cities from which the inmates had come. Only 9 *Judenrats* responded. On August 20, 1940 this '*Gremium*' was transformed (by the Germans, it is understood) into a 'Help-Committee.'

This specific work-camp existed for a certain period of time, and afterwards, it was dismantled. When this happened exactly, is not known, but seemingly in November 1940. There were a part of the German officials who didn't even know what had happened to this camp, where certain 'occupants' had come. It will be very characteristic to introduce the letter of the official division of the 'Internal Management Settlement Oversight and Management Concern.' The letter was written on October 21, 1940 and addresses the 'Government of the General Government District' in Krakow, to the hands of Dr. Fehl, the director of the 'Division for Management Concern.'

The letter is a reply to the question about: **'Resolution of the Jewish Camp in Belzeč and the Mis-located Found There.'** The letter has the type of content that it deserves to be presented in its entirety:

> 'Regarding your inquiry whether the Jewish camp in Belzeč is already being rationalized, or had already been rationalized, I share with you that, it is regrettably not possible to obtain a snapshot of this matter currently, with suitable final clarity. The Labor Authority of the Jews in the Jewish Division have this matter before them in their hands. At the expressed communication of the director of this division, he declared to me that as a consequence of the absence of joint cooperation with the SS Brigade Commander, G l o b o c z n i k [387], it is not possible to provide definitive information.
>
> The Jews in the camp at Belzeč, who were to have been rationalized, were transferred to take on work in the area of the A u t o - P r o g r a m. This implies that the Jews of Warsaw and Radom will be able to return to their homes. The *Judenrats* are even willing to bring their racial kin home by themselves. However, a mysterious lack of clarity pervades the implementation of such a thing, because the correct cooperation from the organs of the SS and the police chief is not attainable in practice. The current factual situation is such, that the need for 8 trains is foreseen to effect the transport. Two trains have, in the meantime, departed. One train went to Hrubieszow with 920 Jews. It was escorted by 9 SS men, or self-defense men. Only approximately 500 of these 920 men arrived at the destination. What happened to the other 400 is presently not known. It does not seem likely that they would have shot so large a number. I heard the rumor that it may be possible that they bribed themselves out (and disappeared from the transport), but I underscore that this is no more than a speculation. The second train, with approximately 900 Jews went to Radom. With it, it would not have been difficult to take along the 300-400 Jews of Radom to send them out, but their wish did not materialize, and only 16 Radomers traveled (to Radom) with the transport. Apparently, a larger number of Lublin Jews will now be found in Radom, and it will be difficult for them to reach Lublin from there. The *Sturmbannfuhrer* D o l f refused to take the Lublin Jews off of this train.
>
> At the upcoming discussion of the situation, this condition between the Labor Authority of the Jews with the present mis-detainees, to the SS and police chief, the characteristic expression, 'circus' is used, a word to which nothing else needs to be added....'

Up to here is the letter. As if it should not be word for word clear, that the existence of the Jewish work camp had come to an end.

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387 Odilo Globocznik (1904–1945), Nazi executioner of Polish Jewry. Born in Trieste, Italy, Globocznik joined the Nazi Party in Austria in 1922 and was nominated *Gauleiter* of Vienna in reward for his part in the preparation of Austria's annexation in 1938, but was later dismissed for embezzlement

In the Fall of 1941, Belzeč began to construct a new camp shrouded in secrecy. A wall of sand was shaken out around it, on which cut down pine trees were set up , set so thick, as to prevent anyone from seeing anything. A rail line, branching off the railroad was built, leading to its interior.

Transports began to arrive in this camp, in the Spring of 1942, first from the District of '**Galicia**.' Later, also from the rest of Poland, and even Western Europe. The purpose of these Jewish transports was clear – they were being taken to their death. **Belzeč** was the place **from which Jews will no longer return**.

Let an extract from an official German document be presented here, from March 17, 1942.[388] It is an official report, in which we read, among other things[389]:

'I had a conversation with *Hauptsturmfuhrer* H o f l e this Monday, March 16, 1942, which took place at 17.30 hours. During the course of this conversation, the following was declared by *Hauptsturmfuhrer* Hofle:

1. It would be useful with, regard to the transports of Jews, that will have already arrived at the entry stations in the Lublin District, to divide them into 'work-capable' and not capable of work...

2. Those Jews not capable of work come to Belzeč, which is the final border station of the Zamość area.

3. *Hauptsturmfuhrer* Haefle favors the construction of a large camp, where the work-capable Jews will be taken in according to their craft skill, in order, and they are to be sent out from there to work, to whatever place makes the demand.

4. P i a s k i , (Piusk) will be made free of Polish Jews, and will become the assembly point fo the Jews that will come from the Reich.

5. Jews will not be living in T r a w n i k i in the future.

6. Hofle asks where such a place might be, along the Deblin-Trawniki line, where it would be possible to offload 60,000 Jews. Regarding the transports of Jews currently sent by us, Haeflele declares that of the 500 arrivals in Sosniec, Jews should go to Belzeč.

   At the end, he declares that he daily capable of taking in 4-5 transports of up to 1,000 Jews with the final destination B e l z e č . These Jews will cross the boundary and will never again return to the General Government Province.

What took place with these Jewish transports, through what sort of 'boundary' they went through, and why they 'did not return,' we will be informed by Rudolf Reder, one who was in the Hell of Belzeč, and came out of there alive.

In the volume of documents and materials about the camps, which we have previously mentioned already, we find a short declaration that the previously mentioned Rudolf Reder provided. His declaration is in Document Number 93 of this volume (pp. 221-224).

This declaration, that was taken down formally by the stenographer M a l e c k a in the Krakow Division of the Central Jewish Historical Commission, contains a very short overview about the death machine in Belzeč. The same **Rudolf Reder** tells about this more extensively in the brochure named '*Belzeč*,' published in Krakow, in 1946.

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388 Editor's Footnote: Translated from the original German, which was published on pp. 32-33 in the volume: Dokumenty i Materialy do dziejów okupacji niemieckiej w Polsc, Tom II "Akcje i Wysiedenio" czec 1. Sides 32-33. Published by the Central Historical Commission in Poland, Lodz, 1946.

389 This very reference can today be found on the internet at: http://www.mtsu.edu/~baustin/ghetto.html

**Rudolf Reder** was born in **Dembica** on April 4, 1881, a soap factory manufacturer.[390] He lived in Lemberg at Poznanska Number 7. He was in the camp from August 17, 1942 to the end of November 1942. Here is what he relates:

...We traveled on (he is talking about the transport 'evacuees out' of Mielec. – Ed.), nobody uttered so much as a word. It was clear to us, that we were riding to our death, that for us, there was no rescue; we were apathetic, not even a groan was heard. We all thought about only one single thing: how to escape; but there was no possibility. The wagon, in which we were riding, was entirely new, the little window was so small, that I could not squeeze myself out of it. In other wagons, it seems someone may have knocked down a door, because we shooting after those who had fled. Nobody said anything to anyone; nobody attempted to comfort the women choked with crying; nobody tried to interrupt the children and quiet them. All of us knew: we are riding to a certain death. We wished for ourselves for it to be over already. Maybe someone of us saved themselves, I do not know... one could only try to escape from the train.

The train arrived at the **Belzeč** station at around midday. This was a small sort of station. Houses stood around it. The staff of the Gestapo lived in these houses.

Belzeč lies on the **Lublin -to-Tomaszow-Lubelski** line. It is 15 kilometers from Rawa Ruska.

On the Belzeč station, the train was pulled up to the main road, and pushed onto a siding branch, which ran for yet another kilometer right to the gate of the death camp. Near the station, the Ukrainian train workers also lived, and the small post office building was located there. At Belzeč, an elderly German, with thick black whiskers boarded the locomotive, – I do not know what he was called, but I would immediately recognize him – and he looked just like an executioner; this individual took control of the train, and drove it right up to the camp.[391] The time to the camp took two minutes. During the course of the entire four months, I constantly saw this same bandit.

The rail siding ran through fields. On both sides were completely open areas, without any buildings. The German that drove the train into the camp, descended from the locomotive, and 'assisted' (unloading the train), beating, yelling, he drove people out of the train. He personally went into each wagon, and personally took count to make sure no people were left behind. He knew about everything, and when the train was finally empty, and having been inspected, he gave a signal with a pot, and he drove it out of the camp.

This entire area of Belzeč was taken under control by the SS Nobody was permitted to show themselves there. Civilians, who strayed into the area, were shot at. The train drove up to a place that had approximately a kilometer in length and width; it was surrounded by barbed wire, and with iron nets laid on top of one another, to a height of 2 meters. The wires were electrified.

At that place, one rode through a wide wooden gate, which was covered in barbed wire. A small guardhouse stood by the gate, where a guard sat by a telephone. In front of the house, SS staff stood with dogs, [and] when the train drove through the gate, the guard closed the gate, and went into the guardhouse. At that moment, the 'transfer of the train' took place. Several tens of SS staff would open up the wagons with the shout: 'Out.' With whips and rifle butts, they drove the people out of the wagons. The doors of the wagons were more than a meter higher than the ground. Those

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390 Independent sources confirm this date, though there is a misprint in the *Pinkas*, showing the year as 1981. These same sources indicate he was a chemist in the soap industry.

391 **GÖCKEL, Rudolf** (?/?/? - ?/?/1965)
BACKGROUND:Unknown.
SERVICE AT BELZEČ: Reichsbahn official. In charge of Belzeč station who drove the trains into the camp.
FATE: Imprisoned in Zamość for three years, never charged. Died 1965 in Laufen/Neckar near Stuttgart.



who were chased out with whips had to jump – all, old and young. Hands and feet were broken, and they were forced to jump to the ground. Children injured themselves, all fell, filthy, drained and frightened.

The so-called '*Zugsfuhrer*' has utility beside the SS staff. These were the Jewish overseers of the permanent death brigade in the camp. They were generally dressed in the camp insignias.

The sick, the old, and the small children, and also those who could not go under their own power, all were put on stretchers and they were situated at the edge of enormous pits that had been dug out. There, the Gestapo official **Jirmann**, who was a specialist in the killing of old people and children, shot at them.[392] He was tall, with fine brunette hair with normal general appearance. Like the others, he lived in Belzeč, beside the train station, in a little house – just like the others – without a family and without women.

He would come quite early to the camp, and he stayed there for the entire day, and received the death transports. Immediately after the unloading of the victims from the train, they would be gathered together on the camp square, which was surrounded by armed **Askaris**,[393] and it was here that U h r m a n n would hold forth. It was deathly still. He stood close to the mass of people. Every person wanted to hear; a sudden hope suddenly rose among us – 'If they are talking to us, maybe we will remain alive, maybe there will be some sort of work, maybe....'

Jirmann spoke very briefly and to the point – 'You are now going to the baths. Afterwards, you will be sent to work.' That was all. Everyone took comfort and felt fortunate, that after all, they are going to work. People applauded, 'Bravo!'

I remember these words of his, which were repeated each and every day, at most three times a day, during the course of the 4 months that I was there. This was a minute of hope and illusion. People breathed easily for a while. There was absolute rest. In the stillness, the entire mass went on further – the men immediately, along the length of the square to the building, on which, in large letters was written:

Bade und Inhalationsraume (Bath and inhalation room)

The women went about 20 meters further, to a large barrack. Its length was 30 meters and it was 15 meters wide. In this barrack, the women and girls had their hair cut off. They went in, not knowing why they were being taken inside. It was still a time of peace and quiet.

Later on I knew, that when they were given wooden stools and lined up across the width of the barracks, when they were ordered to sit, and eight Jewish barbers, robots silent as the grave, approached them to shave their hair down to the scalp with clippers, the awareness of the whole truth hit them at that instant, and none of the women and also none of the men on the way to the chambers could have doubts any longer as to what awaited them.

All, expcet for the few men, who had been selected out as craftsmen who were useful there – all, whether young, whether old, children and women – were going to a certain death. Girls with long hair were driven to have their hair shorn. The little girls, with short hair, went along with the men, directly into the chamber.

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392 **JIRMANN, Fritz** SS-Oberscharfüührer (?/?/? - ?/09/1942)
BACKGROUND: Unknown.
SERVICE AT Belzeč: According to Franciszek Piper (member of the editorial staff of 2nd edition of Reder's testimony) Jirmann served at the reception area and in the Lazarett. Apart from this he was responsible for training and discipline among the Ukrainian crew (Trawnikis).

393 Editor's Footnote: This is the name given to the former Soviet soldiers who went over to the side of the Germans. Dr. Blumenthal brings the following word in his work, 'Words and bits of sayings from the period of the Holocaust" ("Jewish Language" July-September 1956, New York) and adds: 'The name comes from the Germans: The colonial army was called in this way in the German Colonies in Africa." – Ed.

Suddenly – with the passage of hope in regard to the last doubt – tumults arose, screaming. Many women succumbed to attacks of insanity. Yet, many women went to death with complete *sang-froid*, especially the young girls. In our transport, there were thousands of intelligentsia.

I stood to the side, on the square, together with a group that had been selected to dig graves, and I looked on at my brethren, sisters, friends and acquaintances, driven to death. From that moment, when they drove the women, naked and shorn of their hair, with whips, as if to the slaughter, not counting – quicker, quicker – the men had already been killed in the camp. Shearing the women took about 2 hours, and that also is how long it took for the preparation of the murder, and the murder itself.

Several tens of SS staff, with whips and bayonet points, chased the women to the buildings fo the chambers through three steps, which led to a front house, and the '*Askaris*' counted out 750 into each room. The women who refused to go, were stabbed through their bodies with bayonets by the '*Askaris*.' Blood flowed from them....

I heard the way the doors were closing, moans and screams; I heard the heart-rending cries in Polish, in Yiddish; the pleading of women and children, which made the blood freeze in the arteries. Later – a terrifying general scream....

This lasted 15 minutes – the machine worked away for 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, it became still. The '*Askaris*' pushed the doors back open, from the outside, and I, along with the other workers like myself, who remained from the prior transports, without any marks or tattoos, began the work.

We dragged the corpses from these people, who had just been alive; we dragged them, with the help of leather straps, to the already-prepared mass graves, and an orchestra nearby played, played frm morning until evening....

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After a certain amount of time, I knew the layout of the camp very well. It was in the middle of a young pine wood. The forest growth was thick, but in order to prevent the light from penetrating, other (chopped down) trees were tied to the [standing] trees, and thereby made the cover doubly thick around the location of the chambers, and behind them (the trees) there was a sand roadbed, through which the bodies were dragged. The Germans covered the place with a roof made of plain wire, on which they spread out greens. They did this to shield this parcel from observation by airplanes.

Through the gate, one came to a large yard. On the yard there was a large barracks, in which women were shorn [of their hair]. There was a small courtyard by the barracks, which was enclosed in a thick wall of boards, without the slightest crack, 3 meters high. This large fence, made of large boards, led directly to the chambers. In this fashion, nobody knew what was going on behind the barrier.

The building, in which the chambers were found, was not particularly tall, it was long and wide, made from gray cement. It had a flat roof, covered with paste, and over it, was a second roof with a net, which was covered with greens. Three steps led to it from the small courtyard, a meter wide, without bannisters. In front of the building stood a large decorative vase with multi-colored flowers. On the wall, was written in legible and comprehensible writing:

Bade und Inahationsraume

The stairs led into a dark corridor, a half meter wide, but also very long. It was empty – four cement walls.

From the corridor, from both sides – right and left – doors led into the chambers. The doors, made of wood, a meter wide, closed together with the aid of a wooden handle. The chambers were always kept dark, without windows, entirely empty. In each chamber, all that could be seen was a circular opening as large as an electrical outlet. The walls and the floor of the chambers were made of cement. The corridor and chambers were lower than ordinary rooms in a dwelling – they were no taller than two meters in height. At the side opposite each chamber, there were also doors in the walls, that would close together, 2 meters wide, through which the dead bodies were thrown out, after gassing them.

Outside of this building there was an addition built on, perhaps not more than 2 meters by two meters, where the 'machine' was located, the motor was fueled by benzine. The chambers were about a half meter higher than the level of the ground, the ramp and the door was on the same level as the chamber from which the dead bodies were thrown out onto the ground.

There were two barracks in the camp for the death brigade; one for the general workers, the second for those designated as craftsmen. Each barrack took in 250 workers. The bunks were two-level. Both barracks were identical. The bunks were bare planks of wood, with a small crosspiece of wood for head support. Not far from the barracks was the kitchen, further on, the warehouse, the administration, the laundry, the *Neu-Wahrstadt*[394], and at the end, the elegant barracks for the '*Askaris*.'

On one side of the gas chambers there were full or empty mass graves. I saw a whole row of filled graves, already covered in sand. After a set time, the (sand mound) would fall and become flatter. There always had to be one empty mass grave, in reserve....

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From August until the end of November 1942, I was in the death camp – this was at the time of the greatest mass gassing of the Jews.

The few tortured comrades, the very few who had the fortune to hold out longer, told me that this was the period of the largest number of death transports. They came daily, without interruption, mostly three times a day. Every train totaled 50 cars, in each of which there was 100 people. When a train would come at night, the victims would have to wait in closed up cars until 6 o'clock in the morning. On average, ten thousand people would be killed each day.

There were times when larger transports would arrive, and also more frequently. Jews were brought from all over – and only Jews. There was no other [type of] transport ever, Belzeč was used exclusively for the extermination of Jews. Gestapo staff and 'Askaris' would offload the Jews from the wagons, as well as '*Zugsfuhrer*;' a few steps further on, at the place where disrobing took place, there already were Jewish workers, – in a whisper, they would ask: where are you from? And in the same whisper, they were answered: from Lemberg, from Krakow, from Zamość, from Wieliczka, Jasle, Tarnow, and so forth. I saw this day after day, three times a day.

The same thing took place with each transport that arrived as did the one that brought me. We were ordered to undress, to leave our things on the yard; it was always **Jirmann** who spoke in an imperious manner, and it was always the same thing. The people always were happy in that specific minute; I saw that same spark of hope in the eyes of the people. The hope that they were going to work. However, a while later – the young children were torn away from their mothers; the old and the sick were thrown on stretchers; men and young girls were driven with rifle butts through a cordoned off path further and further, on to the chambers; the naked women were driven brutally into the second barrack, where their hair was shorn off. I knew the precise moment when everyone understood what awaited them. In the fear, doubt, screams and frightful groaning, mixed into the notes coming from the orchestra. The men, stabbed with bayonets, were the first driven into the gas chambers. 750 men were counted off by the 'Askaris,' into each chamber. And before all 6 chambers were filled up, the people in the first chamber were already undergoing torture for 2 hours. It was only first, when all six chambers were stuffed full with people, and the doors were closed up only with great difficulty, that they put the (gas) machine into motion.

The machine was large, not quite a half meter by a meter; it was a motor with wheels. The motor made noise with larger time intervals, it ran very fast, so fast, that it was not possible to detect the motion of the wheels. The machine ran for 20 minutes clock time. After twenty minutes, it was stopped. The doors were immediately opened to the chambers, and from the external side, which led to a ramp, the dead bodies were tossed onto the ground; this consisted of an enormous mountain of bodies, several meters high. Upon opening the doors, the 'Askaris' did not observe any safety measures, we also didn't smell any odor, we also never saw any gas canisters, as well as no mixtures (chemical) that might have

394 The name given to the new place of work and/or storage facility set up for the slave laborers.

been introduced, – I only saw cans of benzine. Every day, 80-100 liters of benzine was consumed. Two 'Askaris' were employed at the machine. However, one day, when the machine broke down, I was also called, because they called me 'The Knowledgeable Talented One;' I examined the machine, and I saw glass pipes, which were connected to the wheels, which led to each of the chambers.

We were of the opinion that the machine operated at a high pressure, or creates a vacuum, or that the benzine produces a carbon oxide that kills the people. The cries for help, the screams, the bewildered groaning of those sealed inside and suffocated in the chambers, lasted for 10-15 minutes; initially, frightfully high, later on, the groaning grew stiller, until, at the end, everything became still. I heard confused cries and calling out in a variety of languages, because there were not only Polish Jews in there, there were also transports with Jews from outside the country. Among the foreign transports, there were especially Jews from France, and Holland, Greece and even Norway. I do not recall any transport with German Jews. There were, however, Czech Jews. They came in the same wagons as the transports of Polish Jews, but with baggage, well-prepared for the journey, and with provisions. Our transports were full of women and children. The transports from outside the country consisted mostly of men, very few children. It appears that their parents were able to leave them with their relatives, to protect them from this gruesome fate. The Jews from outside of the country came to Belzeč in absolute ignorance, they were certain that work waited for them. They were very well dressed, and very well prepared fro the journey. The relationship of the German bandits to these people was the same as to Jews from other transports. They were killed by the same system of murder, with the same cruelty and confusion.

For the period in which I was in the camp, it was possible that one hundred thousand foreign Jews went through it; all of them were gassed.

When, after the 20 minute suffocation, the 'Askaris' pushed back the tightly closed doors, the dead bodies were in a stone-like position; the faces, as if they were asleep; unchanged, not blue, blood here and there from wounds produced by the stabbing they received with bayonets from the 'Askaris;' lips slightly open; hands curled up; often pressing up against the lungs. The bodies standing nearby fell out like dolls through the door that had been swung wide open.

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All the women were shorn before they were murdered. They were driven into the barrack. The others waited outside the barrack in their row – naked, barefoot, even in winter on the snow. A hue and outcry, and a bewilderment reigned among the women. In that minute is when the screaming and rioting began. Mothers pressed themselves to their children, they literally lost their minds. My heart was cut every time, I could not stand the sight of this. The group of the shorn women was driven on further, and others stepped on the hair of varied colors, which was spread out like a puffed up divan on the entire floor of the huge barrack.

When all of the women from the transport were shorn, 4 workers with 4 brooms, made from linden trees, would sweep and push together the hair together in a huge, many-colored mountain, in the middle of the barrack. They packed it into sacks by hands, and turned it over to the warehouse.

The warehouse for the hair, undergarments and effects of the victims of the gas chambers, was located in a separate, small barrack; it was perhaps 7 by 8 meters. There, hair and other things were gathered together in the course of 10 days. After these 10 days, they were loaded into special sacks, the hair separately, and the other effects separately, and a train of goods would then come in, and take this plunder away.

People who worked in the office told that this hair was sent to Budapest. Principally, one Jew from the Sudetenland, a lawyer, **Schreiber**, who participated in the office work, conveyed this information. He was a totally decent man. Jirmann promised him, that when he would travel on furlough, he would take him along. At a specific time, Jirmann went to take a short furlough. I heard how Schreiber asked him: –'Are you taking me along?' And Jirmann replied: –'Not yet.' And it was in this manner that he duped Schreiber and it is certain that he was killed along with everyone else. That same person (Schreiber) told me, that every few days, an entire wagon load of hair was sent out, addressed to Budapest. Apart from the hair, the Germans sent full bags with golden teeth.

On the way from the gas chambers to the burial pits, that is, a stretch of several hundred meters, several dentists stood, with small pliers, and detained each body being dragged; they opened the mouth of the dead person, looked in, and pulled out the gold teeth and threw it into a bag. There were 8 dentists. In general, they were young people, left over from the transports, who had to carry out this function. I knew one of these somewhat more intimately, he was named **Zucker,** who came from Rzeszow. The dentists occupied a separate small barrack, together with the doctor and the pharmacist. Towards evening, they would bring the filled parcels with the gold teeth into the barrack, and there the gold would be divided up, melted down, and recast into ingots. The Gestapo man **Schmidt** guarded them, and he would beat them if the work proceeded too slowly: one transport had to be completed in two hours. The recast gold ingots were one centimeter in thickness, a half [centimeter] wide and 20 centimeters in length.

On each day, the valuable items would be taken out of the warehouse, money, dollars. The SS staff alone would gather all of this, and place it in valises, that a worker would carry off to Belzeč to the office of the commander. One of the Gestapo walked ahead, and the valises were carried by Jewish workers. It was not far from the Belzeč train station. A 20 minute walk.

The camp in Belzeč, meaning the Hell in Belzeč, was under the oversight of the same commander. The Jews who worked in the administration told that the entire transport of gold, valuable possessions, and money, were sent to Lublin, where the senior commander was located, to whom the commander of the Belzeč camp also reported. The torn clothing of the unfortunate Jewish victims, were taken away by the workers and were carried off to the warehouse, there were ten workers there, who had to go through each piece of clothing with great care, under the watch and whip of SS staff, who divided up any found money among themselves. Special SS personnel were also assigned to this control task, and it was always the same ones. The Jewish workers, who were involved in sorting of the clothes, and in their examination, were not able to take anything, and they also did not want to. Of what possible use would this found money or valuables be to us? We could not buy anything, we also had no hope whatsoever to sustain our lives. Not one of us believed in any sort of miracles. Every worker was searched very throughly, but very often we passed over dollars that had been thrown aside, which hadn't been noticed; we didn't even pick them up. It made no sense one way or another, there was no use for it. On one occasion, a shoemaker took 5 dollars on purpose and openly. He was shot, along with his son. He went to his death satisfied, he wanted this to come to an end already. Death was certain, so why extend the suffering any longer... the dollars in Belzeč served us to make it easier to die.

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I belonged to the permanent death brigade. We were altogether five hundred, only 'craftsmen' were two hundred fifty, but also of these, two hundred worked at jobs that did not require any specialists: digging the mass graves, dragging the corpses.

We dug huge ditches and mass graves, and we dragged the dead bodies there. Also the appropriate tradespeople, after finishing their special work, were compelled to participate in this work. We dug with spades, and there also was a machine, which loaded and pulled out the sand. The machine discharged the sand into mounds near the pit, and thereby create a mountain of sand, with which the grave filled with corpses would be covered.

Approximately 450 men were always at work in the vicinity of the mass graves. Digging out a mass grave took a week's time: The most frightening for me, was when we were ordered to pile on higher than the already full grave, and cover it with sand; the black, heavily blood-soaked mass would come out from the graves, and would cascade over the covering like a sea. We would have to pass through from one edge to the other, in order to come to a second mass grave, our feet would squish in the blood of our brothers; we stepped on the backs of bodies and this was the worst, the most frightening.

The bandit Schmidt guarded us while we were at this work, and he beat and kicked. If someone was not working – according to his definition – quickly enough, he ordered him to lie down, and he gave him 25 lashes with a riding crop. He ordered him (the victim) to count, and if that individual made a mistake, he gave him 50 lashes instead of 25. The

whipped man could not take the 50 lashes; the victim could barely drag himself to the barrack, and would expire by morning. This would be repeated a couple of times a day.

Also, from thirty to fifty workers were shot daily. As a rule, the doctor would provide a note of those who were worn out; or the so-called '*oberzugfuhrer*,' the chief overseer of those arrested (would provide) a list of 'lawbreakers' (which have to be shot); in this fashion, every day, thirty, forty arrested individuals were shot.

Every day, this list would be complemented with a so-called (new) number of selected people from the several transports that would arrive daily. In the office of the administration, former and newly arrived workers – were managed without evidence – and it was calculated that the number who should be arrested should always be five hundred. The evidence of the number of victims from the transports was not recorded.

We knew, for example, that the Jews had built this camp and installed the death machine. No one any longer remained from that brigade. It was a miracle if one of those, who had worked in Belzeč, managed to survive for five or six months.

The machine was run by two bandit '*Askaris*,' always the same ones. (When I arrived at the camp) I met them at their work, and left them at this work. The Jewish workers had no contact with them, as was the case with any other '*Askari.*' When people on the transports pleaded for a bit of water, the '*Askaris*' shot at the Jewish workers for bringing them water.

Apart from digging the pits, the mission of the death brigade was to drag out the corpses from the chambers, throw them onto a high level, and later, to drag them to the pits. The area was sandy. Two workers were needed to drag one body. We had leather straps with buckles that we would attach to the hands of the corpse. The head would often cut into the sand, and we would pull....we were ordered to throw the bodies of small children two at a time over our shoulders, and carry them away in this manner. When we dragged the bodies, we interrupted the digging of pits. When we were digging the pits, we knew that in the chambers, thousands of our brethren were being suffocated.

We had to work like this from morning until it got dark. Twilight brought an end to the workday, because this 'work' took place only during the daytime.

At 4:30AM, the '*Askari-Post*' who would circulate in the barrack at night, would bang on the door and shout: '**Auf Heraus!**' Before we even had a chance to get up, the bandit Schmidt would fall upon us with a riding crop, and chase us out of the barrack. We would run out with one shoe in hand, or barefoot. In general, we did not disrobe (to sleep), we would even lie down with our shoes on, because in the morning we would not show ourselves to get dressed.

It was still dark in the morning when we were awakened; lighting was forbidden. Schmidt ran through the barrack hitting left and right. We arose, so hapless, exhausted to the last degree, just as we were when we lay down to sleep. We were allotted one thin cover; we could either cover ourselves with it, or put it under us on the bunk.

From the warehouse, they selected old, torn rags for our use, at night we had light for a half hour; later, it was extinguished. The '*oberzugfuhrer*' circulated in the barrack with a whip, and did not permit anyone to speak; we spoke among ourselves quietly. When someone as much as gave a sigh, he would get it in the face.

The brigade consisted mostly of me, whose wives, children and parents were gassed – many managed to obtain a prayer shawl and phylacteries from the warehouse, and when the barrack was shut down form the night, one heard the murmur of the **Kaddish** from the bunks. We recited the prayer for the deceased. Later on, it grew quiet. We did not bemoan our situation. We were entirely resigned. It is possible that the 15 '*zugfuhrers*' continued to harbor illusions – but not us.

We all conducted ourselves as people who no longer possessed any will. We were a single mass. I know a couple of names, but few. It was without meaning; what he was, was past, and whatever his name was. I know there was a young doctor from outside **Przemysl,** he was named **Jakubowicz.** I knew the merchant **Schlissel** from **Krakow**, and his son.

The Czech Jew, Elbogen, who had a business in wheels, the chef **Goldschmid**, known from the Carlsbad restaurant 'Haniczka Brothers.' Nobody took an interest in the other, we went through this frightful life mechanically.

We would get our midday meal at 12 o'clock – we would pass by two small windows: in one, we received a small pot, at the second a half-liter of hulled barley soup; that is, water, sometime with a potato. We had to sing songs at lunch – before the coffee, in the evening, we also were compelled to sing. At the same time we could hear the gasps coming from the chambers of those who were suffocating, the orchestra played, across from the kitchen stood a high gallows...

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The life of the S.S. staff in Belzeč and in the death camp proper was without the participation of women. The men carried out all of the work. That is the way it was until October.

In October, a transport arrived from **Zamość** with Czech women. This was several tens of women, whose husbands worked in the 'death brigade.' A decision had been taken that several women were to be held back from this transport. Forty were designated to do work in the kitchen, in the laundry, and in the *neu-wahrstadt.*
It was forbidden to visit with the men. I do not know what happened to them. It is certain that they partook in the same fate as everyone else.

These were women of the intelligentsia. They came traveling with baggage. A few of them even had bits of butter. They gave us whatever they had. And they helped if someone was working in the kitchen, or in proximity to the kitchen. They lived in a small, separate barrack, and they had a '*zugsfuhrerin*' [sic: female] over them. At work I saw (I repaired the ovens everywhere, and was able to get around all over the camp), how these women spoke to one another. They did not become as devastated as we were. There work ended with twilight. They lined up in pairs, after soup and coffee. As with us, they did not confiscate their clothing, they were not given the 'striped uniforms' (the prison garb with stripes). For such a short time, it was not worth creating such a matching uniform.

Straight from the wagons, dressed, and without a shorn head, they were sent into the work locations and the kitchen. Through the windows of the kitchen and the *neu-wahrstadt* they watched the death transports arrive daily.

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Day in, and day out, the death camp was redolent with mass murder. Every day was a chain of mass terror and mass murder. But apart from this, there were separate incidents of personal beatings. I lived through and saw this as well. In Belzeč there never was any roll call. It was not necessary. Gruesome scenes occurred without any prior announcement.

I must tell about the transport from **Zamość**. It was around November 15. It was already cold, snow and mud lay on the ground. It was in such a snowstorm that a large transport, one among many, arrived from **Zamość**. The entire *Judenrat* was in this transport. When everyone was already standing naked, in accordance with the usual array of events, the men were driven to the chambers, and the women, to the barracks to be shorn of their hair. The President of the *Judenrat*[395] was ordered to remain on the place.

The '*Askaris*' drove the transport to the extermination, and an entire group of SS staff stood themselves around the President of the *Judenrat*. I do not know his name, I saw a young man of middle age, pale as death, and entirely calm.

The SS staff ordered the orchestra to relocate itself to the place, and to await the orders. The orchestra, which consisted of 6 musicians, usually played on the stretch between the gas chambers and the mass graves. It played without stop on instruments that had remained behind those who were murdered. At that time, I was working nearby at a wall construction site, and I saw everyone. The SS staff ordered the orchestra to play the melody:

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395 Editor's Footnote: Evidence suggests that this was someone else from the *Judenrat*, because the President is alive. See the declaration of Memek Garfinkel in our *Pinkas*.

*'Es geht alles forüber,*
*Es geht alles derbei.*

*Drei lilien, kommt ein röter*
*Gefahren, bricht drei linien.'*

They played on fiddles, flutes and harmoniums. It lasted for a certain interval of time. Afterwards, they stood the President of the Zamość Judenrat against the wall, and beat him bloody with riding crops that had metal edges – first around the head, and in the face. He was beaten by: Jirmann, the fat Gestapo man – Schwarz, Schmidt, and a few '*Askaris*.'

The victim was ordered to dance, and to jump between the blows and the music. After several hours, he was brought a quarter of a loaf of bread and he was forced to eat. He stood drenched in blood, indifferent and serious, I did not hear a single groan from him> The torture of this man lasted for seven hours. The S. S> personnel stood and laughed: Dos ist ein hochere Person, President des *Judenrats*, they laughed, with a loud hooligan's guffaw. It was first at six o'clock in the evening, that the Gestapo man Schmidt drove him to the pit, shot him in the head, and pushed him onto the mountain of gassed corpses.

There were other special occurrences. Not long after my arrival in Belzeč , among others from one transport, I do not remember what city (not always did we know from where the transport came), a youngish little boy was detained. He was a model of good health, strength and youth. He caused us to wonder at his good-natured spirit. He looked about him, and asked, almost happily:

– Has anyone escaped from here yet?

That was enough. One of the Germans heard this, and the child was nearly tortured to death. He was undressed, hung on the gallows with his head down; he hung for three hours. He was strong, and he was still alive. He was taken down (from the gallows), put on the sand, and sand was pushed into his throat with sticks. He expired.

It used to happened, that transports arrived which were larger than ordinary. It happened that instead of 50 wagons, 60 or more would come. Not long before my escape, in November, it was necessary to set aside 100 men from such an overfilled transport, already naked, for the work of digging pits, because the Gestapo staff had calculated that the permanent brigade will not be able to inter so many suffocated [corpses] into the pits in so short a time. Only young men were set aside. During the entire day, they dragged the corpses to the pits, driven with whips, they were not given so much as a drop of water, naked in the snow and cold – in the evening, the bandit Schmidt led them off to a pit, and shot them with a Browning [automatic rifle]. He did not have enough bullets for part of them, so he killed one after another with the handle of the weapon. I heard no groaning, I only saw how they exerted themselves, in the row of the dead, to be first, one before the other.

Helpless splinters of life and youth.

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The entire camp was under guard by cordons of armed 'Askaris' and several tens of SS troops. But only a few in number (of the SS) were active. A few of them demonstrated their cruelty at every opportunity – literally bestiality. Only a few of them killed and beat in a 'cold-blooded' manner, others with relish; there would be a smile on their faces. I saw how gleeful they were, when they gazed upon the naked people, skewered by bayonets, who were being driven to the chambers.

They looked upon the confused and resigned forms with great pleasure, especially that of the young people.

We knew, that the senior commandant of the camp lived in the nicest small house near the train station in Belzeč. This was an *Obersturmfuhrer* whose name I cannot recall, despite the fact that I exert myself to try and extract this name

from my memory.[396] He would rarely come into the camp, he would only come down in the event of an incident. This was a bandit who was tall, coarse, approximately 40 years of age, with an ordinary visage – that is generally what a born bandit looks like. He was literally an animal.

At a certain time, the death machine broke down. On receiving the news about this, he came, he ordered the machine to be repaired, and did not let the people out of the suffocating chambers: – let them suffocate and expire for another couple of hours. He was beside himself with murderous rage, he roared and literally became disassembled. In view of the fact that he appeared so rarely, he was a irritant to the SS troops. He lived alone with an orderly, an '*Askari*,' who served him. The '*Askari*' would bring him the reports daily.

The senior commandant and the Gestapo staff did not have ongoing contact with the camp. They had their own dining facility and chef, imported from Germany, who cooked for all of the Germans. No one from any of the families ever approached them; non of them lived with wives. They raised gaggles of geese and ducks. People related, that in the spring, they would be sent entire cartons of cherries. Boxes of hard liquor and wine were brought each day.

I repaired the oven there. There were two young Jewish girls there, who flicked the geese, they would throw an onion to me, and something of a beet. I saw a village girl that worked there. Apart from this, all that were there, were orderlies.

Every Sunday, in the evening, they brought the orchestra, and they arranged a drunken binge. Only the Gestapo staff would gather there, and they gorged themselves and swilled. The musicians were thrown the scraps from their eating.

When the commandant would show himself in the camp for a few minutes, I would see how the Gestapo staff and the '*Askaris*' would literally tremble with fear.

Apart from him, – four other bandits – carried on with the Gestapo staff and had an oversight and directed all of the murder. It is difficult to conceive of bigger murderers.

One of them, **Fritz Jirmann**, a person of close to 30 years of age, a *Stabsfuhrer*[397] was the quartermaster for the camp; he was a specialist in shooting the old people and children. He would carry out all the most gruesome murders with stony silence, would keep to himself inscrutably, and quietly. Every day (at the arrival of the transports) he would be the one to speak to the victims, telling them that they are going 'to bathe and then to work.' This was a scrupulous criminal.

The *Oberscharfuhrer*[398] **Reinhold Feix** carried out his brutality in a different manner. Feix practiced cruelty in a different way. It was said he came from Gablonz on the Neisse and was married and the father of two children. He spoke the way intelligent people speak. He talked quickly. If someone failed to understand him at once, he beat him and screamed to the high heavens like a madman. Once, when he ordered the kitchen painted, and a Jewish doctor of chemistry was doing it, standing right at the top of a ladder just under the ceiling, Feix ordered him to climb down every few minutes and beat him across the face with his riding crop, so that the man's face was swelled up and covered with blood. That was how he did his job. Feix seemed abnormal. He played the violin. He ordered the orchestra to play the Polish melody 'Highlander, have you no regrets?' until they dropped. He commanded people to sing and dance and he toyed with them and tortured them. The beast went amok.

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396 It appears likely that this was Christian Wirth, *SS-Obersturmführer* of the *Stuttgart Kriminalpolizei*, who arrived in Belzeč along with a number of SS men shortly before Christmas 1941. Christian Wirth was appointed inspector of the Action Reinhard death camps at the end of August 1942, and was replaced by honorary *SS-Hauptsturmfüührer* Gottlieb Hering as camp commander. Hering, an old acquaintance of Wirth, served with him in the *Stuttgart Kriminalpolizei*. He was thought by the Jews to be more "humane" than Wirth.

397 More accurately, *Stabsscharfuhrer*, equivalent to a Sergeant Major (non-commissioned officer).

398 A Senior Sergeant

I do not know which was more of a murderer or more brutal – was it the previously mentioned Feix, or the fat, bloated dark-haired murderer **Schwarz** (who came from the Lower Reich). He was in charge of the '*Askaris,*' determining if they were being sufficiently bestial towards us and if they were beating us vigorously enough. He kept watch over us at the time we were digging pits, that means, he didn't give us even a minute to rest. With shouts, with the whip, he drove people to the chambers, where mountains of the dead already waited, for their continuing journey to the pits. He drove us off there, and ran by himself to the pits. At the edge of the pits, with mixed gazes, and moods, there stared – children, the old and sick, into the abyss. They waited for death. They were given ample opportunity to look at the dead bodies, at the blood, and to absorb the odor of decay, in order that in a few minutes time, they also would be killed by the shots from bloody Jirmann. Schwarz constantly beat everyone. It was forbidden to cover one's face when receiving a lash. – '*Hände ab!*' (Hands down!) He would roar and he assaulted his victim with relish.

The Volksdeutsche, **Heni Schmidt**, apparently a Latvian, got even more pleasure from his bestial mission. He spoke German in a peculiar fashion, instead of an 's' he would say a 't' (not '*was*' but '*wat*'). He spoke Russian with the '*Askaris*.' He did not want to leave the camp on any single day. Nimble, quick, thin, perpetually drunk, from 4 in the morning until nighttime, he would be running around the entire camp; he would beat people, he would peer intensely at the torturing of the victims, and would take great pleasure in this picture. – This is the worst beat – those who were arrested would whisper among themselves, and would immediately add: – 'All of them are the worst.' There, where people were tortured most severely – he would always be the first. He was always there when the victims were driven into the chambers, and he would eavesdrop on the penetrating screams of the women, which would pierce through the nightmarish chambers. – he was the 'soul' of the camp, the lowest of the low, most frightening, and bloodthirsty.

It was with great pleasure that he would gaze upon the exhausted, extinguished faces of the workers, who were at their last limits, who would return at night to the barrack. He would dish it out to each of them, with his entire strength, with the riding crop over the head. When any of us made an attempt to avoid the blow, he chased after him, and had to beat him.

These Gestapo staff, and other, more subordinate, who would not show themselves – were true monsters. Non of them was at all human for even a minute.

From 7 in the morning until dark, they beat thousands of people in a variety of ways. In the evening, they would return to their houses near the train station. The '*Askaris*' manned the night watch at the ammunition dump. During the day, the death transports were greeted by the Gestapo staff with 'fanfare.'

The greatest holiday for these animals was the visit of **Himmler**. It was in the middle of October. From the very early morning, we saw how the Gestapo criminals were moving about furtively. On that day, the entire procedure for the murder of thousands of people was abbreviated. Everything happened more quickly. Jirmann announced: 'Es komt eine hohere Person, muss Ordnung sein.' (A high-level person is coming, so there must be order). He did not say who, but everyone knew, because the '*Askaris*' bruited about it silently.

At about three o'clock in the afternoon, Himmler arrived with General-Major [Friedrich (Fritz)] **Katzmann**, the chief murderer of Lemberg and its environs, with an adjutant and several tens of Gestapo staff. Jirmann and others escorted the guests into the (gas) chambers, from which, at that precise moment, the bodies were being thrown out on a large mountain of young people, of very young children. The arrested ones were dragging the corpses. Himmler looked, and continued to watch for a half hour, and then traveled away. I saw the glee and the exalted approval of the Gestapo staff, I saw the considerable extent to which they were satisfied, how they laughed. I overheard how they spoke of advances.

I cannot describe the sort of circumstances in which we lived, we the arrested ones, who were exhausted to the point of death, and what we felt, day in and day out, about the screams and pleading of the suffocating people, the cries of the children. Three times a day, we saw thousands of people, who were close to losing their minds. We were also close to insanity. We managed to get through day by day, never knowing how. Not for a minute did we harbor any illusion (that we would remain alive). We would die a little every day, along with all of the transports, who would live yet for another short minute through torture and disappointment.

Apathetic and resigned, we would not even feel hunger and cold; each of us waited for his turn; he knew that he will be killed and tortured in the most inhuman fashion; It was only when I hear the children cry out: Mamusiu! Ja przeciez bylem grzezny! Ciemno! Ciemno! (Mama! I behaved myself! Darkness! Darkness!) Our hearts would be rent into pieces. But later on, we stopped feeling anything.

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At the end of November, it was already 4 months that had passed of my unbearable tenure in the hell of Belzeč. On a certain morning, the murderer Jirmann told me that there is a need for tin in the camp, a lot of tin. I was then swollen and blue, suppurations were oozing from my wounds. The Gestapo man Schmidt had beaten me with a stick on both sides of my face. Jirmann said to me, with a poisonous smile on his face, that I am to travel, under an escort, to Lemberg, after metal: – 'Don't you get loose!' (He warned me).

I traveled to Lemberg in an auto with 4 Gestapo staff and a guard. After a whole day of loading up the tin, I remained in the auto under the watch of one bandit – the others went off to take their leisure. I sat for a couple of hours, thinking nothing, and without moving. Fortunately, I observed that my guard fell asleep and was snoring. Automatically, not taking any time to think, I eased myself out of the auto; the murderer slept. I stood myself on the sidewalk, and gave the appearance of being occupied with the tin, and a little at a time, I eased myself out onto the **Legionov** Gasse, where there was a lot of movement. I pushed my hat down further; It was starting to get dark on the street, and nobody saw me. I thought about where a Polish woman lived, my landlady, and I went off to her. She hid me. She nursed the wounds all over my body for twenty months. Not only the wounds. The images of the horrors that I lived through followed me constantly. In dreams and about the truth, I heard the groans of the tortured martyrs; the calling of the children; the thrum of the motor. I could not tear the criminal faces of each of those Gestapo men out of my mind. I held out until the moment of liberation.

# Accusation Speech in Dachau

**By Yaakov Schwartz**

**Given by a scion of our city, Yaakov Schwartz, who appeared as a witness in the War Crimes Trial in Dachau, March 7, 1946.**

To the High Court!

In the name of the six and a half million slaughtered Jewish martyrs, and in the name of those who remained alive, the *Shearit HaPletah*, I have taken upon myself the sorrowful but sacred duty to articulate our point of view about the executioners of our people.

The minutes, and in general, the days of this sacred process are great and fruitful in an unprecedented way, which to me is the greatest occurrence in bloody martyr's history.

Great – because, with my own eyes, I have lived to see the rebirth of justice, in the avant garde of humanity; and fruitful – because that is on me, in particular, someone who survived, a totally broken weakling, that the immense burden has fallen to be the accusing witness for millions of innocent souls, who were brutally slaughtered and shamed, at the hands of the Nazi murderers.

To the High Court!

I am a Jew, and I was born a Jew, and this was my single crime. This was the sole reason why I was tortured, beaten, shamed, slaughtered and butchered. Only for **this** single sin, was I physically and spiritually bloodied, and I was tossed about for 6 years in the Nazi hell. Because we were Jews, we were subject to mass extermination!
It is self understood, that I will try to read into the 'Juridical Boundaries' precisely to answer if I have seen **this one** or **that one** (of the murderers) committing murder with my own eyes.... however, I want you representatives of justice to know the following. I accuse, in the name of all the exterminated Jewish souls, not only those accused cannibals, also the entire 'SS' and other hyenas that bathed in our blood, and robbed us of our assets – all those who right along with those who directly or indirectly took part in the greatest pogrom of all time, against us. In addition to this, they derived a sadistic mehpistophelian satisfaction, as well.

Seeing as we are always presented by our enemies as 'seekers of vengeance,' you, **men of justice, of best knowledge, that we are not so, and were never such!** To the contrary, we Jews have been the first, to give humanity the Holy Ten Commandments, which to this day, serve as the foundation of justice and will do so for all eternity!

But here, nothing has to do with the feelings of vengeance. We detest vengeance! We reject it. Here we are dealing with two physically ghostly creatures! Murderers of my little sisters who were close to my heart! Of my mother and father! Of my people, and of all freedom-loving people!

And while the cannibals were, and still are the roots of my tragedy that cannot be healed, and of the global cataclysm, it is therefore entirely the same to me whether the accused has a criminal 'number' or whether the free Nazi has a document that allows him movement in the street.

Whoever wore the Death's-Head, was the devil incarnate!

My heart, sadly ran blood on that day, when I heard the question that was put to the American witness, among others that were answered:

– 'What would have happened to that guard, who had the civilian under detention if he had not shot him?'

The answer of the witness was:

– 'They would have put that person in a bunker, or subjected him to some other punishment.'

My answer, however, is thus: Such an instant never took place! I have not yet lived through such an incident! Since I came to know the Nazis, I have from them not detected, nor heard, nor seen and of the most elementary human feelings.

The only who simply wore the 'SS' uniform, only sought the opportunity to murder. The conversation was only around when he would become a guard at a concentration camp. There, he already obtained a free hand over the lives of the civilians in general, and over our Jewish ones in particular. Here, he felt like a fish in water. Here, not only could he unleash his animal instincts, but also earned additionally for someone shot 'on duty' 10 cigarettes, or a medal!

The posted guards I think of as partners, as co-murderers of the people who were killed. These were the pillars, the ground on which the entire murder apparatus sustained itself! It is not true that they were compelled to do so! **This was a band of accursèd bandits in whom the higher bandits had full faith! Himmler could depend on them in complete tranquility!**

Who exterminated the thousands of ghettoes in the East?

Who exterminated the Jewish people?

Who shot us 'while on duty?'

Who murdered the civilians during the camp evacuations?

Who killed up to 60 percent of the fifty thousand civilians while they were marched on the way to Mauthausen?

Who washed the roads of Europe with our civilian blood?

All the post guards! 'The innocent watch personnel, forced to do their work...'

And now, our fate, the bloody fate of we Jews in the Mauthausens, Dachaus, Buchenwalds, and others. We suffered three times as much as other civilians!

First, we were recorded with the letters R. U., which means '**Rickert Unerwunscht**.' – This person is not required to come back!

Second, we were trodden under by the vulgar caprices of the bloodthirsty *Kapos* and block leaders, who did with us as they desired! Who received compliments and distinctions for every smashed Jewish head!

And third – the worst of the worst. The '*selektionen*,' that terrifying nattering in the head, that I am, at any time, at any minute, a candidate to go into the crematorium. This beat us down so badly from a morale standpoint, that we became crippled before our time!

And the cannibal-doctors, like the Kraftsbachs, Jabsts, and their like. Before our eyes we saw the most beautiful and shining of our youth torn out of us – boys and girls – who with complete awareness went either into the burning ovens or the murder factories, the so called '*Revier*!' Or such '*Medikers*,' who carried out various murder-experiments on us, as if we were rabbits.

Therefore my concluding word is:

High and Sacred Court!

**May the sacred right of your human hearts triumph!**

**Let the mass-murderers on the bench of the accused, and those who circulate about freely know:**

**That – the world is not a place of chaos!**

**That – the world is not a saloon!**

**That – from tears, rivers are formed – seas, and from seas a flood, that will take revenge for all the murders perpetrated!**

Let them know: that freedom and right is God-given; that no man has the right to humiliate another man! And every transgression of this ends on the gallows!

In the name of all the Jewish lives that were taken; in the name of all the exterminated, freedom-loving people; in the name of justice, I demand categorically:

**A death sentence for the accused executioners!**

# Yizkor

The holy congregation of **Zamosc**, which was annihilated by the Nazi beasts and their servants; where its Jews were tortured, humiliated, and exterminated in the '*aktions*' – the mass-slaughtering and 'evacuations' in the following days:

| | |
|---|---|
| Saturday April 11, 1942, two days after Passover | – in Belzeč; |
| May 27, 1942 | – in Belzeč; |
| July 15, 1942 | – in Belzeč; |
| August 11, 1942 | – in Belzeč; |
| Beginning of September 1942 | – in Belzeč |
| October 15-17, 1942 | – Death March to Izbica. |

## Yizkor

The precious pure souls of our fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and children, whose guiding lives were hacked down, and their souls demand vengeance to be taken on their murderers and torturers;

## Yizkor

The holy little Jewish children, who were butchered in their cradles, whose golden little heads were split with wooden staves, who were tortured before the eyes of their own parents;

## Yizkor

Our dear Jews, so close to our hearts, from the *Altstadt, Neustadt* and Browar, who were sent together into the ghetto, who underwent the tribulations of hell on a daily basis, and later humiliated and tortured at the hands of '*aktions*;'

## Yizkor

Our martyrs, who could not keep pace with those being driven to their deaths, whom the chief of the Nazi murderers, the Gestapo, shot to death at the 'Rotunda;'

## Yizkor

All the sick, weak, elderly, women and children, who could not keep pace with those being driven to their deaths, and were shot 'on the spot;'

## Yizkor

The martyrs, who were exterminated by the Nazis in the terrifying 'M a r c h' to Izbica, whose bodies that were shot through, made this long road red;

**Yizkor**

Our dearest men, women and children, who were tortured by the thousands, suffocated, poisoned in the gas chambers of the death factory in B e l z e č ;

**Yizkor**

Those who fell in the woods and fields, brought down by Nazi bullets, or betraying hands;

**Yizkor**

Those who expired from hunger and cold in their hiding places, in the bunkers and fields, and could not make it to the liberation;

**Yizkor**

Those who were tortured in the Hitlerist Death camps: Majdanek, Sobibor, Treblinka, and Auschwitz;

**Yizkor**

Those under the yoke of slave labor, who expired in the Nazi camps – T r a w n i k i , S k a r z y s k o , B u c h e n w a l d , and others;

**Yizkor**

Those from Zamość who were killed, and those from more than 30 other ghettoes, where the hand of the Hitlerist executioners reached them;

**Yizkor**

All the wanderers; all the refugees who became dispersed from our city, who because of the Nazi crimes, were torn out of their homes and lost their lives as a result of their nomadic existence;

**Yizkor**

All those about whose death we know, and all those about whom we don't know when, where, and how they died;

**Yizkor**

Those known to us, and those not known to us; those recalled, and those forgotten;

## Yizkor

Those interred, who departed this world in a natural manner, and were brought to a proper Jewish burial, and their final resting place was afterwards destroyed by the vandals; their headstones torn out; broken, and used to pave the streets of Zamość;

## Yizkor

All the dear places of our Zamość, which were consecrated by our parents through their learning and their labor; with their blood and sweat; with their energy and toil, and were humiliated and polluted by the Brown *Amalekites*;

## Yizkor

Our S i x  M i l l i o n  tortured brothers and sisters.

Let the death tribulations, of our martyrs and pure ones, rob their executioners of rest by day, and sleep at night!

Let the shadows of our martyrs forever, and everywhere, follow their torturers!

Let these holy souls of our martyrs, always swim before our eyes, always live in our memory, always remind us of the sacred obligation:

Remember What Amalek Did Unto You !

Remember, and do not forget the terrible misfortune that the Nazis brought upon our people!

# Our Sanctified Ones and Martyrs

***Translator's Note:***

*The order in which these names appear has been made to conform to English alphabetization, and therefore does not follow the same order as they appear in the original Yiddish text. To assist the interested reader, each entry has been given a serial number that corresponds to its place in the original Necrology in Yiddish, found on pp. 1081-1112.*

*This Necrology contains many instances of names that appear to be duplicates. However, without the intimate knowledge of this community, it would be presumptuous for an uninformed third party to suggest that such duplications constitute errors (see also the after word of the Editors at the end of the Necrology). Accordingly, special care has been taken to assure that all of the entries in the original document were carried over into the translated version. Additionally, special care was taken to preserve 'nicknames' or 'names of endearment,' that were used to help better identify individuals in that community. While such nomenclature may not serve future generations quite in the same way, it is undoubtedly a sacred obligation to assure that they are brought forward for posterity, as they were used during their lifetimes.*

## A

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399 The editors appear to have erred in their identification of the Babi-Yar ravine. It was outside of Kiev, not Kharkov.

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## C

| | | | |
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| Cahan | Gittl | ? | 2025 |
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| Citrin | Chaim | ? | 1972 |
| Citrin | Esther | Belzeč | 1962 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Citrin | Ethel | Ludomir | 1970 |
| Citrin | Feiga | Belzeč | 1969 |
| Citrin | Lyuba | Belzeč | 1965 |
| Citrin | Meir | Belzeč | 1964 |
| Citrin | Meir | ? | 1971 |
| Citrin | Mordechai-Hirsch | Belzeč | 1968 |
| Citrin | Mottel | Belzeč | 1966 |
| Citrin | Yekhiel | 'Rotunda' | 1963 |
| Cohen | Chaya | Krzemieniec | 2008 |
| Cohen | David | Krzemieniec | 2011 |
| Cohen | Erik | ? | 2024 |
| Cohen | Feiga | Krzemieniec | 2007 |
| Cohen | Gittl | Lublin | 2013 |
| Cohen | Guta | Belzeč | 2020 |
| Cohen | Henoch | Belzeč | 2014 |
| Cohen | Herschel | Belzeč | 2022 |
| Cohen | Itcheh-Meir | Belzeč | 2027 |
| Cohen | Leib | Ludomir | 2031 |
| Cohen | Lejzor Joshua | Belzeč | 2035 |
| Cohen | Martzel | Belzeč | 2018 |
| Cohen | Mendel | Belzeč | 2016 |
| Cohen | Milleh | Belzeč | 2019 |
| Cohen | Mindl | Lublin | 2012 |
| Cohen | Moshe | Krzemieniec | 2005 |
| Cohen | Moshe | Krzemieniec | 2034 |
| Cohen | Pinia | Ludomir | 2032 |
| Cohen | Rachel | Warsaw | 2009 |
| Cohen | Rivka | Krzemieniec | 2010 |
| Cohen | Sarah | Belzeč | 2006 |
| Cohen | Sarah | ? | 2030 |
| Cohen | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 2036 |
| Cohen | Simcha | Belzeč | 2029 |
| Cohen | Stella | Belzeč | 2017 |
| Cohen | Steni | Belzeč | 2015 |
| Cohen | Tasha | ? | 2023 |
| Cohen | Tradzhik | Belzeč | 2021 |
| Cohen | Tzippa | Belzeč | 2028 |
| Cohen | Yenta | Ludomir | 2033 |
| Cooper | David | Belzeč | 2196 |
| Cooper | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 2197 |

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| Deckel | Berel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 617 |
| Deckel | Charna | 'Aktion' Zamość | 618 |
| Dicker | Dora | ? | 606 |
| Dicker | Ethel | Belzeč | 608 |
| Dicker | Mindl | Lemberg | 604 |
| Dicker | Moshe | ? | 605 |
| Dicker | Shmuel | ? | 603 |
| Dicker | Shmuel | Belzeč | 607 |
| Dickler | Chaim | Belzeč | 609 |
| Dickler | Feiga | Belzeč | 611 |
| Dickler | Moshe | Belzeč | 612 |
| Dickler | Riva | Belzeč | 610 |
| Dickler | Zippora | Belzeč | 613 |
| Dolkher | Chaim | Ludomir | 599 |
| Dolkher | David | Ludomir | 596 |
| Dolkher | Dora | Belzeč | 594 |
| Dolkher | Ethel | Ludomir | 597 |
| Dolkher | Faleh | Belzeč | 595 |
| Dolkher | Henoch | Ludomir | 602 |
| Dolkher | Itkeh | Ludomir | 601 |
| Dolkher | Maleh | Ludomir | 600 |
| Dolkher | Moshe | Belzeč | 592 |
| Dolkher | Taibeh | Belzeč | 593 |
| Dolkher | Yankl | Ludomir | 598 |
| Dorfsgeier | Benya | Belzeč | 619 |
| Dorn | Shmuel | Lithuania | 616 |
| Drong | Rosa | Belzeč | 615 |
| Drong | Yudel | Belzeč | 614 |

## E

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| Edelberg | Shmuel | 'Rotunda' | 1602 |
| Edelman | Aharon | Belzeč | 1596 |
| Edelman | Brania | Belzeč | 1597 |
| Edelman | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1600 |
| Edelman | Meir | Lemberg | 1598 |
| Edelman | Sima | Belzeč | 1599 |
| Edelman | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1601 |
| Efros | Frumka | Belzeč | 1604 |
| Efros | Mordechai | ? | 1603 |
| Efros | Yefim | Soviet Union | 1605 |
| Ehrlich | Chana | Belzeč | 1563 |
| Ehrlich | Chana-Pearl | Volkovysk | 1562 |
| Ehrlich | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1567 |
| Ehrlich | Esther | Belzeč | 1556 |
| Ehrlich | Feiga | Belzeč | 1568 |
| Ehrlich | Frieda | Belzeč | 1554 |
| Ehrlich | Haninah | Belzeč | 1553 |
| Ehrlich | Hertz | ? | 1552 |
| Ehrlich | Hirsch | Siberia | 1557 |
| Ehrlich | Joseph | Siberia | 1560 |
| Ehrlich | Lejzor | Belzeč | 1565 |
| Ehrlich | Lipa | Belzeč | 1555 |
| Ehrlich | Mirel | Belzeč | 1559 |
| Ehrlich | Mollie | Belzeč | 1558 |
| Ehrlich | Pinchas | Skarzysko | 1564 |
| Ehrlich | Riva | Siberia | 1561 |
| Ehrlich | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1566 |
| Ehrlich | Taibeh | Belzeč | 1569 |
| Ehrlich | Tzivia | ? | 1551 |
| Eidelsberg | Berel | ? | 99 |
| Eidelsberg | Berish | Ludomir | 91 |
| Eidelsberg | Chava | Ludomir | 92 |
| Eidelsberg | Chava | Belzeč | 97 |
| Eidelsberg | Esther | Ludomir | 95 |
| Eidelsberg | Ethel | Ludomir | 93 |
| Eidelsberg | Feiga | Belzeč | 98 |
| Eidelsberg | Hella | Ludomir | 87 |
| Eidelsberg | Henoch | Ludomir | 85 |
| Eidelsberg | Leibusz | Belzeč | 96 |
| Eidelsberg | Malka | Ludomir | 88 |
| Eidelsberg | Miriam | Ludomir | 94 |
| Eidelsberg | Rachel | Ludomir | 86 |

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| Eidelsberg | Shmuel | 'March' Izbica | 100 |
| Eidelsberg | Toby | Ludomir | 90 |
| Eil | Abraham | Soviet Union | 81 |
| Eil | Eliezer | Belzeč | 77 |
| Eil | Jocheved | Belzeč | 78 |
| Eil | Rachel | Belzeč | 79 |
| Eil | Tzirel | Belzeč | 80 |
| Einhorn | Baylah | Lutsk | 131 |
| Einhorn | Shia | Lutsk | 130 |
| Einhorn | Child | Lutsk | 132 |
| Eisen | Leib | Belzeč | 101 |
| Eisen | Shayndl | Belzeč | 102 |
| Eisen | Child | 'March' Izbica | 103 |
| Eisenberg | Deborah | ? | 38 |
| Eisenberg | Noah | ? | 37 |
| Eisenberg | Sarah-Leah | Belzeč | 35 |
| Eisenberg | Sima | ? | 39 |
| Eisenberg | Yaakov | Village of Sitaniec | 34 |
| Eisenberg | Yaakov | ? | 36 |
| Eisenfeld | Feiga | Ludomir | 134 |
| Eisenfeld | Joshua | Ludomir | 133 |
| Eisenfeld | 2 Children | Ludomir | 135 |
| Eisenkopf | Lejzor | Belzeč | 84 |
| Eisenkopf | Levi | Belzeč | 83 |
| Eisenkopf | Sarah | Belzeč | 82 |
| Eisenstadt | Mendel | Belzeč | 114 |
| Eisenstadt | Yaakov-Israel | Belzeč | 112 |
| Eisenstadt | Zippora | Belzeč | 113 |
| Eisenstein | Shlomo | Belzeč | 129 |
| Eisenstein | Simcha | Belzeč | 128 |
| Ekus | Chaya | Belzeč | 1547 |
| Ekus | Feiga | Belzeč | 1545 |
| Ekus | Leib | Belzeč | 1544 |
| Ekus | Nehemia | Belzeč | 1546 |
| Elbaum | Aydl | Lodz | 1582 |
| Elbaum | Basha'leh | Lodz | 1585 |
| Elbaum | Bayl'keh | Ukraine | 1571 |
| Elbaum | Benjamin's Son | 'Rotunda' | 1588 |
| Elbaum | Esther'l | Belzeč | 1581 |
| Elbaum | Ethel | Ukraine | 1572 |
| Elbaum | Feiga | Belzeč | 1579 |
| Elbaum | Fradel | Belzeč | 1576 |
| Elbaum | Frim'cheh | Belzeč | 1575 |
| Elbaum | Gershon | Belzeč | 1574 |
| Elbaum | Herschel | Lodz | 1583 |
| Elbaum | Hirsch | Ukraine | 1570 |
| Elbaum | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1578 |
| Elbaum | Nahum | Lodz | 1584 |
| Elbaum | Shlomo | 'Luftwaffe' Camp | 1586 |
| Elbaum | Shlomo-Hirsch | Belzeč | 1573 |
| Elbaum | Tzivia | 'Last Victim' | 1587 |
| Elbaum | Yeshaya | Belzeč | 1577 |
| Elbaum | Yossel'leh | Belzeč | 1580 |
| Elster | Hannan | Belzeč | 1548 |
| Elster | Itkeh | Belzeč | 1549 |
| Elster | Yekkl | Accidental Death: Red Army | 1550 |
| Engelstein | Brandl | ? | 1594 |
| Engelstein | Chava | ? | 1593 |
| Engelstein | Feiga-Lyuba | ? | 1592 |
| Engelstein | Frimet | ? | 1595 |
| Engelstein | Leah | ? | 1591 |
| Engelstein | Wolf | ? | 1590 |
| Engelstein | Ze'ev | Ludomir | 1589 |
| Evigkeit | David | Belzeč | 1538 |
| Evigkeit | Gedalia | Belzeč | 1542 |
| Evigkeit | Henoch | Soviet Union | 1541 |
| Evigkeit | Lolleh | Belzeč | 1540 |
| Evigkeit | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1543 |
| Evigkeit | Ziss'l | Belzeč | 1539 |

## F

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|---|---|---|---|
| Falek | Hen'cheh | Ludomir | 1754 |
| Falek | Hessie | Ludomir | 1755 |
| Falek | Leib | Ludomir | 1753 |
| Falek | Malka | Ludomir | 1756 |
| Falek | Sholom | Ludomir | 1752 |
| Fang | Chaim | Majdanek | 1813 |
| Fang | Liebeh | ? | 1815 |
| Fang | Manya | ? | 1819 |
| Fang | Rivka | ? | 1816 |
| Fang | Sender | Auschwitz | 1818 |
| Fang | Shmuel | Sobibor | 1817 |
| Fang | Shosha | Majdanek | 1814 |
| Fass | Abraham | Belzeč | 1746 |
| Fass | Anshel | Belzeč | 1742 |
| Fass | Chana'leh | Belzeč | 1747 |
| Fass | Chan'tcheh | Belzeč | 1749 |
| Fass | Gittl | Belzeč | 1744 |
| Fass | Malia | Belzeč | 1750 |
| Fass | Mindl | Belzeč | 1745 |
| Fass | Moshe | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1748 |
| Fass | Sarah | Belzeč | 1743 |
| Fass | Yenta | Belzeč | 1751 |
| Feder | Chaya-Sarah | Lemberg | 1916 |
| Feder | Shlomo | Lemberg | 1917 |
| Feder | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 1915 |
| Feigenbaum | Malka | ? | 1896 |
| Feigenbaum | Shimshon | Majdanek | 1893 |
| Feigenbaum | Shprinza | 'Rotunda' | 1894 |
| Feigenbaum | Yaakov | Skarzysko | 1895 |
| Fekher | Abraham | ? | 1923 |
| Feldman | Aharon | Ludomir | 1706 |
| Feldman | Aharon-Wolf | Belzeč | 1707 |
| Feldman | Elke | Belzeč | 1708 |
| Feldman | Fishl | Skarzysko | 1710 |
| Feldman | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1709 |
| Feldman | Moshe | Ludomir | 1705 |
| Feldman | Sheva | Ludomir | 1704 |
| Feldstein | Abraham | Ludomir | 1694 |
| Feldstein | Chana | Belzeč | 1692 |
| Feldstein | Esther | Soviet Union | 1699 |
| Feldstein | Ethel | Belzeč | 1696 |
| Feldstein | Feiga | Siberia | 1693 |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Feldstein | Feiga | Lemberg | 1700 | Fishelsohn | Israel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1877 |
| Feldstein | Golda | Belzeč | 1703 | Fishelsohn | Notteh | Koval | 1871 |
| Feldstein | Henoch | Soviet Union | 1697 | Fishelsohn | Pearl | Warsaw | 1876 |
| Feldstein | Itcheh | Belzeč | 1690 | Fishelsohn | Rachel | Koval | 1873 |
| Feldstein | Jekuthiel | Belzeč | 1695 | Fishelsohn | Salek | Koval | 1874 |
| Feldstein | Joshua | Belzeč | 1702 | Fishelsohn | Sarah | Koval | 1872 |
| Feldstein | Leibl | Ludomir | 1691 | Fishelsohn | Yehuda | Died in Zamość | 1875 |
| Feldstein | Mottel | Soviet Union | 1698 | Fleischman | Dobbeh | Belzeč | 1934 |
| Feldstein | Zippora | Lemberg | 1701 | Fleischman | Feiga | Belzeč | 1935 |
| Ferstendig | Beracha | Died in Zamość | 1670 | Fleischman | Moshe | Belzeč | 1933 |
| Ferstendig | Chaim | Belzeč | 1671 | Fleschler | Bina | Belzeč | 1688 |
| Ferstendig | Chaya | Belzeč | 1669 | Fleschler | Chana-Shayndl | Belzeč | 1675 |
| Ferstendig | Gittl | Belzeč | 1672 | Fleschler | Chava | Belzeč | 1676 |
| Ferstendig | Sarah | Belzeč | 1673 | Fleschler | Dvorah | Ludomir | 1684 |
| Ferstendig | Shlomo-David | Belzeč | 1668 | Fleschler | Feiga | Belzeč | 1678 |
| Ferstman | Abraham-Chaim | Belzeč | 1869 | Fleschler | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1677 |
| Ferstman | Chaya-Freida | Belzeč | 1870 | Fleschler | Itamar | Skarzysko | 1689 |
| Ferstman | Israel | Belzeč | 1867 | Fleschler | Mindl | Ludomir | 1686 |
| Ferstman | Rivka | Belzeč | 1868 | Fleschler | Nunya | Belzeč | 1682 |
| Finger | Ser'keh | Belzeč | 1900 | Fleschler | Pinchas | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1679 |
| Finger | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 1901 | Fleschler | Rivka | Belzeč | 1680 |
| Fink | Chaya | Belzeč | 1911 | Fleschler | Rokh'cheh | Belzeč | 1683 |
| Fink | Fishl | Belzeč | 1910 | Fleschler | Saul | Belzeč | 1687 |
| Fink | Lejzor | Ludomir | 1913 | Fleschler | Shmuel-Yankl | Belzeč | 1674 |
| Fink | Yossel | Belzeč | 1912 | Fleschler | Velvel | Belzeč | 1681 |
| Fink | Zisha | Ludomir | 1914 | Fleschler | Yiddl | Ludomir | 1685 |
| Finkelstein | Chana | Belzeč | 1759 | Frank | Chaim | 'Rotunda' | 1866 |
| Finkelstein | Isaac | Belzeč | 1757 | Frank | Chaim | 'Rotunda' | 1937 |
| Finkelstein | Itteh | Belzeč | 1765 | Freed | Chaim | Belzeč | 1824 |
| Finkelstein | Joshua | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1764 | Freed | Fradel | Belzeč | 1825 |
| Finkelstein | Leah | Belzeč | 1761 | Freed | Israel | Belzeč | 1822 |
| Finkelstein | Malka | Komarow | 1763 | Freed | Rivka | Belzeč | 1823 |
| Finkelstein | Mordechai | Belzeč | 1760 | Freed | Sonia | Belzeč | 1821 |
| Finkelstein | Wolf | Komarow | 1762 | Freed | Yiddl | Belzeč | 1820 |
| Finkelstein | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1766 | Freid | Baylah | Belzeč | 1798 |
| Finkelstein | Zisha | Belzeč | 1758 | Freid | Berish | Belzeč | 1797 |
| Finkenberg | Benjamin | Auschwitz | 1771 | Freid | Dobbeh | Camp? | 1796 |
| Finkenberg | Bran'cheh | ? | 1770 | Freid | Elke | Belzeč | 1793 |
| Finkenberg | Chaya | ? | 1769 | Freid | Grineh | Belzeč | 1792 |
| Finkenberg | Lyuba | Majdanek | 1768 | Freid | Hinde | Belzeč | 1805 |
| Finkenberg | Mordechai | Ludomir | 1767 | Freid | Israel | Koval | 1801 |
| Finkenberg | Sarah | Auschwitz | 1773 | Freid | Itteh | Camp? | 1795 |
| Finkenberg | Shlomit | Auschwitz | 1772 | Freid | Kayla | Belzeč | 1807 |
| Finkman | Chaya'leh | Warsaw | 1903 | Freid | Leib | Red Army | 1799 |
| Finkman | Moniek | Ghetto | 1909 | Freid | Lejzor | Camp? | 1794 |
| Finkman | Moshe | Warsaw | 1904 | Freid | Malka | Belzeč | 1804 |
| Finkman | Rivka | Belzeč | 1905 | Freid | Masha'leh | Koval | 1800 |
| Finkman | Temmeh | Belzeč | 1906 | Freid | Moshe | 'Aktion' | 1791 |
| Finkman | Yaakov | Majdanek | 1902 | Freid | Rachel | Belzeč | 1809 |
| Finkman | Yossel | From a Bomb | 1908 | Freid | Rivka | Belzeč | 1808 |
| Finkman | Zelda | Belzeč | 1907 | Freid | Shlomo | Belzeč | 1803 |
| First | Miriam | Chelm | 1931 | Freid | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 1806 |
| First | Rachel | Belzeč | 1932 | Freid | Zelig | Koval | 1802 |
| Fishel | Fishl | Belzeč | 1897 | Freiman | Chaya | Auschwitz | 1781 |
| Fishel | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 1898 | Freiman | Feiga | Auschwitz | 1779 |
| Fishel | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1899 | Freiman | Hannan | Auschwitz | 1778 |
| Fishelsohn | Boruch | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1878 | Freiman | Hannan | Auschwitz | 1780 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Freiman | Hirsch | Auschwitz | 1777 |
| Freiman | Hirsch | Auschwitz | 1782 |
| Freiman | Joseph | Auschwitz | 1774 |
| Freiman | Pinia | Auschwitz | 1776 |
| Freiman | Sarah | Auschwitz | 1775 |
| Frenkel | Beracha | Hrubieszow | 1828 |
| Frenkel | Leib | Hrubieszow | 1826 |
| Frenkel | Temmeh | Hrubieszow | 1827 |
| Frenkel | Yekhiel | Soviet Union | 1829 |
| Frenkel | Yitzhak | Soviet Union | 1830 |
| Friedling | Abraham | Belzeč | 1839 |
| Friedling | Baylah | Belzeč | 1834 |
| Friedling | Berel | Belzeč | 1847 |
| Friedling | Berel'leh | Belzeč | 1854 |
| Friedling | Bluma | Belzeč | 1851 |
| Friedling | Chana'leh | Belzeč | 1852 |
| Friedling | Chaya-Freida | Belzeč | 1842 |
| Friedling | Chaya'leh | Belzeč | 1836 |
| Friedling | Esther | Belzeč | 1843 |
| Friedling | Fishl | ? | 1857 |
| Friedling | Freida | Belzeč | 1838 |
| Friedling | Grina | Belzeč | 1850 |
| Friedling | Hinde | Belzeč | 1831 |
| Friedling | Hirsch'leh | Belzeč | 1856 |
| Friedling | Israel-Yekhiel | Belzeč | 1844 |
| Friedling | Kandl | Belzeč | 1848 |
| Friedling | Makhleh | ? | 1858 |
| Friedling | Maleh | Belzeč | 1835 |
| Friedling | Mottel'leh | Belzeč | 1855 |
| Friedling | Nehemia | Belzeč | 1832 |
| Friedling | Rachel-Leah | Belzeč | 1845 |
| Friedling | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 1846 |
| Friedling | Shlomo | Belzeč | 1849 |
| Friedling | Sima | ? | 1859 |
| Friedling | Yehudit | Belzeč | 1841 |
| Friedling | Yiddl'leh | Belzeč | 1853 |
| Friedling | Zvi | Belzeč | 1833 |
| Friedling | Zvi | Belzeč | 1837 |
| Friedling | Zvi-Hirsch | Belzeč | 1840 |
| Friedman | Chaim | Koval | 1862 |
| Friedman | Chaya | Koval | 1860 |
| Friedman | Itzik | Koval | 1863 |
| Friedman | Rivka | Warsaw | 1861 |
| Friedman | Temmeh | Koval | 1865 |
| Friedman | Yaakov | Koval | 1864 |
| Friedrich | Abraham | Lublin | 1810 |
| Friedrich | Leah | Belzeč | 1812 |
| Friedrich | Malka | Belzeč | 1811 |
| Friedrich | Wife. Child | 'Rotunda' | 1936 |
| Frischman | Esther | Auschwitz | 1783 |
| Frischman | Hirsch | ? | 1784 |
| Frischman | Sarah | ? | 1785 |
| Fruer | Abraham | Belzeč | 1926 |
| Fruer | Fruma | Belzeč | 1929 |
| Fruer | Khuma | Belzeč | 1930 |
| Fruer | Koppel | Belzeč | 1927 |
| Fruer | Maleh | Belzeč | 1925 |
| Fruer | Malka | Belzeč | 1928 |
| Fruer | Meir | Belzeč | 1924 |
| Fuchs | Chana | Soviet Union | 1882 |
| Fuchs | Esther | ? | 1890 |
| Fuchs | Feiga | Komarow | 1886 |
| Fuchs | Feivel | Komarow | 1879 |
| Fuchs | Fradel | Komarow | 1880 |
| Fuchs | Hendl | Belzeč | 1892 |
| Fuchs | Joshua | Belzeč | 1891 |
| Fuchs | Meir | Soviet Union | 1881 |
| Fuchs | Mereteh | ? | 1889 |
| Fuchs | Mordechai-Hirsch | Soviet Union | 887 |
| Fuchs | Moshe'leh | Soviet Union | 1884 |
| Fuchs | Sarah'leh | Soviet Union | 1883 |
| Fuchs | Tuvia | Komarow | 1885 |
| Fuchs | Tuvia | ? | 1888 |

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| Garfinkel | Frimet | Krzemieniec | 473 |
| Garfinkel | Miriam | Belzeč | 476 |
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| Geier | Benjamin | Warsaw | 439 |
| Geier | Dora | Warsaw | 442 |
| Geier | Mietek | Warsaw | 441 |
| Geier | Risha | Warsaw | 440 |
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| Gelernter | Gedalia | Belzeč | 535 |
| Geliebter | Aharon | Belzeč | 523 |
| Geliebter | Berish | Belzeč | 520 |
| Geliebter | Margalit | Belzeč | 524 |
| Geliebter | Pinia | Ludomir | 521 |
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| Gendzler | Dvorah | Ludomir | 435 |
| Gendzler | Esther | Ludomir | 438 |
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| Gendzler | Miriam | Ludomir | 434 |
| Gendzler | Moshe | Ludomir | 431 |
| Gendzler | Pearl | Ludomir | 432 |
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| Gering | Chaya | Rovno | 591 |
| Gering | Taibeh | Rovno | 590 |
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| Gershgroppen | Leibusz | Belzeč | 529 |
| Gershgroppen | Manya | Belzeč | 528 |
| Gershgroppen | Moshe | Belzeč | 525 |
| Gershgroppen | Rachel | Belzeč | 530 |
| Gershgroppen | Reizl | Belzeč | 526 |
| Gershgroppen | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 527 |
| Gerson | Boruch | Warsaw | 446 |

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| Gerson | Chaim | Belzeč | 443 | Goldschmidt | Gittl | Belzeč | 550 |
| Gerson | Esther | Belzeč | 444 | Goldschmidt | Golda | Belzeč | 552 |
| Gerson | Rivka | Soviet Union | 445 | Goldschmidt | Hirsch | Belzeč | 551 |
| Gewirtz | Golda | Belzeč | 540 | Goldschmidt | Itcheh | Belzeč | 549 |
| Glantz | Gittl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 583 | Goldschmidt | Jocheved | Belzeč | 546 |
| Glantz | Naphtali | 'Aktion' Zamość | 582 | Goldschmidt | Joseph | Belzeč | 545 |
| Glantz | Yankel'eh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 584 | Goldschmidt | Moshe | Belzeč | 543 |
| Glaser | Aydl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 568 | Goldschmidt | Riva | Belzeč | 544 |
| Glaser | Chaim | 'Aktion' Zamość | 569 | Goldschmidt | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 542 |
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| Glaser | Yossel'eh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 572 | Goldstein | Chana | Ludomir | 407 |
| Gold | Berakha | Siberia | 430 | Goldstein | Chana'tcheh | Belzeč | 401 |
| Gold | Chaim-Mekhl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 429 | Goldstein | Chaya | Lemberg | 411 |
| Goldberg | Abraham | Belzeč | 468 | Goldstein | Esther | Ludomir | 409 |
| Goldberg | Baylah | Belzeč | 471 | Goldstein | Esther | Lemberg | 418 |
| Goldberg | Benjamin | Belzeč | 467 | Goldstein | Feiga | Belzeč | 399 |
| Goldberg | Benjamin | Belzeč | 470 | Goldstein | Frimet | ? | 426 |
| Goldberg | Chaim-Azriel | Belzeč | 465 | Goldstein | Gut'sheh | Belzeč | 400 |
| Goldberg | David | Belzeč | 463 | Goldstein | Henya | Lemberg | 415 |
| Goldberg | Elyeh-Wolf | Belzeč | 466 | Goldstein | Hesseleh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 419 |
| Goldberg | Leibusz | Belzeč | 472 | Goldstein | Itteh | Ludomir | 406 |
| Goldberg | Malka | Belzeč | 462 | Goldstein | Itzik | Ludomir | 408 |
| Goldberg | Malka | Belzeč | 469 | Goldstein | Julik | 'Aktion' Zamość | 420 |
| Goldberg | Notteh | Belzeč | 461 | Goldstein | Leah | Lemberg | 416 |
| Goldberg | Sarah | Belzeč | 464 | Goldstein | Masha-Esther | 'March' Izbica | 404 |
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| Goldfeder | Feiga | Ludomir | 578 | Goldstein | Rachel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 422 |
| Goldfeder | Henyeh | Belzeč | 576 | Goldstein | Ranya | Lemberg | 414 |
| Goldfeder | Moshe | Belzeč | 573 | Goldstein | Sarah | Ludomir | 424 |
| Goldfeder | Moshe | Belzeč | 575 | Goldstein | Sarah | ? | 428 |
| Goldfeder | Rachel | Belzeč | 574 | Goldstein | Shlomo | Ludomir | 405 |
| Goldgraber | Abraham | Rovno | 509 | Goldstein | Shlomo | Soviet Union | 410 |
| Goldgraber | Aharon | Rovno | 512 | Goldstein | Shmaryahu | Ludomir | 423 |
| Goldgraber | Aharon | Belzeč | 519 | Goldstein | Shmuel | Lemberg | 402 |
| Goldgraber | Chaya-Jocheved | Belzeč | 515 | Goldstein | Sima | Lemberg | 413 |
| Goldgraber | Esther | Rovno | 511 | Goldstein | Taibeh | Lemberg | 412 |
| Goldgraber | Israel | Lemberg | 506 | Goldstein | Yiddl | Belzeč | 398 |
| Goldgraber | Joseph | Lemberg | 518 | Goldstein | Yiddl | ? | 425 |
| Goldgraber | Leon | Lemberg | 505 | Goldvarg | Aydl | Belzeč | 453 |
| Goldgraber | Leon | Rovno | 513 | Goldvarg | Bernard | Majdanek | 454 |
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| Goldgraber | Shlomo | Belzeč | 517 | Goldvarg | Moshe-David | Lublin | 451 |
| Goldgraber | Sonya | Rovno | 508 | Goldzweig | Ethel | ? | 589 |
| Goldgraber | Yaakov | Ludomir | 514 | Goldzweig | Hinde | ? | 586 |
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| Goldman | Henoch | Belzeč | 459 | Goldzweig | Shmuel | ? | 585 |
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| Goldschmidt | Chava | Belzeč | 548 | Grad | Zila | Belzeč | 538 |
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| Goldschmidt | Eizel | Belzeč | 547 | Greenberg | Tzirel | Belzeč | 482 |

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| Grie | Hirsch | Krasnouralsk | 566 |
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| Griener | Berel | Belzeč | 492 |
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| Griener | Herschel | Belzeč | 485 |
| Griener | Hona | Belzeč | 489 |
| Griener | Leib | Belzeč | 498 |
| Griener | Mina | ? | 502 |
| Griener | Mordechai | ? | 499 |
| Griener | Pessl | Belzeč | 486 |
| Griener | Pessl | Belzeč | 491 |
| Griener | Rivka | Belzeč | 495 |
| Griener | Shayndl | Majdanek | 487 |
| Griener | Tzivia | ? | 500 |
| Griener | Volvish | Belzeč | 494 |
| Griener | Yaakov | Belzeč | 497 |
| Griener | Yossel | Ludomir | 488 |
| Griener | Zlata | Belzeč | 493 |
| Gringler | Berel | Belzeč | 533 |
| Gringler | Eliezer | Belzeč | 534 |
| Gringler | Sarah-Itteh | Belzeč | 532 |
| Grossbaum | Chan'keh | Ludomir | 557 |
| Grossbaum | Fishl | Ludomir | 561 |
| Grossbaum | Henyeh | Ludomir | 562 |
| Grossbaum | Julie | Ludomir | 560 |
| Grossbaum | Miriam | Ludomir | 558 |
| Grossbaum | Saul | Ludomir | 559 |
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| Hacker | Chana | Klevan | 707 |
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| Hacker | Sarah-Riva | Klevan | 708 |
| Hackman | Zisha | Soviet Union | 793 |
| Hammerstock | Chana | Belzeč | 713 |
| Hammerstock | Lipa | Belzeč | 710 |
| Hammerstock | Sarah | Belzeč | 711 |
| Hammerstock | Shmuel | Belzeč | 712 |
| Handwerker | Chana | Belzeč | 700 |
| Handwerker | Joseph | Belzeč | 698 |
| Handwerker | Min'cheh | Belzeč | 699 |
| Handwerker | Nahum | Belzeč | 695 |
| Handwerker | Peretz | Belzeč | 696 |
| Handwerker | Sholom | Belzeč | 697 |
| Harfin | Braneh | ? | 778 |
| Harfin | Feiga'leh | ? | 781 |
| Harfin | Mordechai | ? | 780 |
| Harfin | Pesha | ? | 779 |
| Harfin | Shimon | ? | 777 |
| Hartstein | Leah | Belzeč | 702 |
| Hartstein | Levi | Belzeč | 701 |
| Hartz | Abraham | Lemberg | 672 |
| Hartz | Hasia | Lemberg | 671 |
| Hartz | Joseph | Lemberg | 670 |
| Hartz | Maleh | Lemberg | 674 |
| Hartz | Moshe | Lemberg | 668 |
| Hartz | Nesha | Lemberg | 675 |
| Hartz | Rivka | Lemberg | 669 |
| Hartz | Shmuel | Lemberg | 673 |
| Hartz | Sholom | Lemberg | 676 |
| Hartz | Yitzhak | Lemberg | 677 |
| Hayber | Shlomo | Belzeč | 766 |
| Hayber | Shmuel | Zamość | 764 |
| Hayber | Yaakov | Warsaw | 768 |
| Hayber | Yehuda | Warsaw | 767 |
| Hayber | Zelda | Belzeč | 765 |
| Hechtkopf | Abraham | Warsaw | 627 |
| Hechtkopf | Hirsch | Khodorov | 623 |
| Hechtkopf | Hoodis | Warsaw | 626 |
| Hechtkopf | Leibl | Warsaw | 628 |
| Hechtkopf | Moshe'leh | Khodorov | 622 |
| Hechtkopf | Sarah | Zamość | 621 |
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| Hechtkopf | Shayndl | Warsaw | 629 |
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| Hechtman | Abraham | ? | 787 |
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| Helfman | Baylah | Tyszowce | 630 | Holtz | Bron'tcheh | Lutsk | 660 |
| Helfman | Esther | Belzeč | 632 | Holtz | Child | Lutsk | 661 |
| Helfman | Masha | Belzeč | 633 | Holtz | Anshel | Lemberg | 642 |
| Helfman | Riva | Soviet Union | 635 | Holtz | Anshel | Lemberg | 654 |
| Helfman | Sima | Belzeč | 634 | Holtz | Chana | Belzeč | 647 |
| Helfman | Yaakov | Belzeč | 631 | Holtz | Chana | ? | 657 |
| Heller | Maleh | Belzeč | 705 | Holtz | David | ? | 666 |
| Heller | Yekke'leh | Belzeč | 704 | Holtz | Gittl | ? | 667 |
| Heller | Yenta | Belzeč | 703 | Holtz | Joseph | Belzeč | 658 |
| Herman | Basha | Koval | 692 | Holtz | Kayla | 'Rotunda' | 646 |
| Herman | Moshe | Koval | 691 | Holtz | Leah | Belzeč | 645 |
| Hernhaut | Berel'leh | Belzeč | 737 | Holtz | Malka | Lemberg | 652 |
| Hernhaut | Eizel | Radom | 734 | Holtz | Mendel | ? | 665 |
| Hernhaut | Max | Radom | 735 | Holtz | Mireh | Belzeč | 648 |
| Hernhaut | Shy'eleh | Belzeč | 736 | Holtz | Mirel | Lemberg | 643 |
| Hernhaut | Yaakov | Zamość | 733 | Holtz | Moshe | Lemberg | 649 |
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| Herring | Yekhiel | Partisans | 693 | Holtz | Nunya | Lemberg | 653 |
| Hertz | Eliyahu | Belzeč | 680 | Holtz | Pesha | ? | 663 |
| Hertz | Leibusz | Belzeč | 678 | Holtz | Rachel | Lemberg | 650 |
| Hertz | Pearl | Belzeč | 679 | Holtz | Rivka | Lemberg | 651 |
| Hertz | Wife | 'Aktion' Zamość | 682 | Holtz | Tzesheh | Lemberg | 655 |
| Hertz | Yankl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 681 | Holtz | Yaakov | Belzeč | 644 |
| Hertzberg | Itcheh-Meir | Radom | 683 | Holtz | Yerakhmiel | ? | 662 |
| Hertzberg | Itteh | Trawniki | 685 | Holtz | Yoskeh | ? | 664 |
| Hertzberg | Malka | Ludomir | 687 | Hoot | Chana | Belzeč | 740 |
| Hertzberg | Moshe-Nathan | Ludomir | 689 | Hoot | Feiga-Esther | Belzeč | 743 |
| Hertzberg | Rivka | Ludomir | 690 | Hoot | Joseph | Belzeč | 744 |
| Hertzberg | Shlomo | Trawniki | 684 | Hoot | Kalman | Belzeč | 745 |
| Hertzberg | Tevkeh | Ludomir | 688 | Hoot | Leah | Belzeč | 739 |
| Hertzberg | Yaakov | Ludomir | 686 | Hoot | Malka | Belzeč | 746 |
| Herzon | Gittl | Belzeč | 641 | Hoot | Velvel | Ludomir | 741 |
| Herzon | Israel | Belzeč | 636 | Hoot | Yaakov | Belzeč | 738 |
| Herzon | Moshe | Belzeč | 640 | Hoot | Yudel | Belzeč | 742 |
| Herzon | Sarah | Belzeč | 637 | Horn | Tevye | ? | 791 |
| Herzon | Saul | Belzeč | 638 | Hornfeld | Chaya | Belzeč | 775 |
| Herzon | Temma | Belzeč | 639 | Hornfeld | Hirsch | Belzeč | 774 |
| Hilf | Abraham | Lemberg | 757 | Horowitz | Baylah | Belzeč | 725 |
| Hilf | Baylah | Lemberg | 756 | Horowitz | Berish | Belzeč | 716 |
| Hilf | Lieber | Lemberg | 762 | Horowitz | Chaya | Belzeč | 723 |
| Hilf | Mordechai | Lemberg | 760 | Horowitz | Chays | Belzeč | 715 |
| Hilf | Pearl | Lemberg | 763 | Horowitz | Ethel | Belzeč | 720 |
| Hilf | Pinia | Lemberg | 761 | Horowitz | Fekkeh | Belzeč | 717 |
| Hilf | Rachel | Lemberg | 759 | Horowitz | Fradl | Belzeč | 729 |
| Hilf | Yiddl | Lemberg | 758 | Horowitz | Lyuba | Belzeč | 721 |
| Hilf | Yitzhak | Lemberg | 755 | Horowitz | Malka | Belzeč | 724 |
| Hirschhorn | Baylah | Ludomir | 754 | Horowitz | Moniek | Belzeč | 730 |
| Hirschhorn | Dvorah | Ludomir | 748 | Horowitz | Moshe | Belzeč | 726 |
| Hirschhorn | Eliezer | Belzeč | 749 | Horowitz | Rivka | Belzeč | 727 |
| Hirschhorn | Joshua | Ludomir | 753 | Horowitz | Sarah | Belzeč | 719 |
| Hirschhorn | Leib | Ludomir | 747 | Horowitz | Shayndl | Belzeč | 718 |
| Hirschhorn | Reizl | Belzeč | 750 | Horowitz | Shmuel | Belzeč | 714 |
| Hirschhorn | Shmuel-Hirsch | Belzeč | 751 | Horowitz | Shmuel | Belzeč | 732 |
| Hirschhorn | Yudel | Belzeč | 752 | Horowitz | Yekhezkiel | Belzeč | 728 |
| Hoffman | Moshe | Belzeč | 776 | Horowitz | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 722 |
| Hollander | Leah | ? | 792 | Horowitz | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 731 |
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| Hosh | Rachel | ? | 785 |
| Hosh | Taibeh | ? | 783 |
| Hosh | Yitzhak | ? | 782 |
| Huberman | Leah | Belzeč | 773 |
| Huvel | Bina | Ludomir | 771 |
| Huvel | Chaya'leh | Ludomir | 770 |
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| Jakubowicz | Elke | Siberia | 1113 |
| Jakubowicz | Joseph | Siberia | 1111 |
| Jakubowicz | Rivka | Siberia | 1114 |
| Jakubowicz | Yaakov | Siberia | 1112 |
| Jerusalimsky | Chana | ? | 1116 |
| Jerusalimsky | Tzluva | ? | 1117 |
| Jonasgartel | Melech | Siberia | 1110 |
| Jonasgartel | Reizl | Belzeč | 1109 |

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| Kalechstein | Feiga | Belzeč | 2042 |
| Kalechstein | Herschel | Ludomir | 2040 |
| Kalechstein | Joseph | Belzeč | 2041 |
| Kamen | Freida-Rachel | Berdichev | 2093 |
| Kamen | Reizl | Sarny | 2092 |
| Kamen | Yaakov | Sarny | 2091 |
| Karb | David | Lemberg | 2081 |
| Karb | Feiga | Lemberg | 2082 |
| Karfer | Breindl | Koval | 2166 |
| Karfer | Lejzor-Hirsch | Koval | 2164 |
| Karfer | Mina | Koval | 2167 |
| Karfer | Rosa | Koval | 2165 |
| Karp | Abish | Krasnystaw | 2087 |
| Karp | Chaim | Krasnystaw | 2089 |
| Karp | Hen'cheh | Krasnystaw | 2088 |
| Karp | Hudis | ? | 2084 |
| Karp | Lejzor | ? | 2086 |
| Karp | Mordechai | ? | 2085 |
| Karp | Sima'leh | Krasnystaw | 2090 |
| Karp | Yeshaya | ? | 2083 |
| Kassner | Adam | Warsaw | 2068 |
| Kassner | Chava | Belzeč | 2071 |
| Kassner | Esther | Belzeč | 2065 |
| Kassner | Falek | Warsaw | 2064 |
| Kassner | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2070 |
| Kassner | Matilda | Majdanek | 2066 |
| Kassner | Mina | Belzeč | 2067 |
| Kassner | Reitzeh | Warsaw | 2073 |
| Kassner | Sarah | Belzeč | 2072 |
| Kassner | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 2074 |
| Kassner | Sarah-Rosa | Lemberg | 2069 |
| Katz | Abraham | Belzeč | 2052 |
| Katz | Anshel | Belzeč | 2057 |
| Katz | Herschel | Krzemieniec | 2062 |
| Katz | Jonathan | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2055 |
| Katz | Leah | Belzeč | 2060 |
| Katz | Lyuba | Belzeč | 2053 |
| Katz | Min'cheh | Belzeč | 2056 |
| Katz | Sarah | Krzemieniec | 2063 |
| Katz | Sheva | Belzeč | 2058 |
| Katz | Yaakov | Belzeč | 2061 |
| Katz | Yudel | Belzeč | 2059 |
| Katz | Zev | Warsaw | 2054 |
| Kellner | Chana | Belzeč | 2097 |
| Kellner | Genya | Belzeč | 2102 |
| Kellner | Itteh | Belzeč | 2098 |
| Kellner | Joseph | Belzeč | 2099 |
| Kellner | Manya | Belzeč | 2103 |
| Kellner | Moshe | Belzeč | 2096 |
| Kellner | Rachel | Belzeč | 2104 |
| Kellner | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 2101 |
| Kellner | Sima | Belzeč | 2100 |
| Kelmanowicz | Bolek | Lemberg | 2163 |
| Kelmanowicz | Gershon | Lemberg | 2161 |
| Kelmanowicz | Min'cheh | Lemberg | 2162 |
| Kessel | Abraham | Belzeč | 2110 |
| Kessel | David | Belzeč | 2111 |
| Kessel | Dina | Belzeč | 2113 |
| Kessel | Esther | Belzeč | 2115 |
| Kessel | Gittl | Belzeč | 2108 |
| Kessel | Hudis | Belzeč | 2114 |
| Kessel | Joseph | Belzeč | 2112 |
| Kessel | Mordechai-Leibusz | Belzeč | 2109 |
| Kessel | Shlomo | Belzeč | 2117 |
| Kessel | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2116 |
| Kessler | Feiga | Suchowola | 2106 |
| Kessler | Meir | Suchowola | 2105 |
| Kessler | Zelig-Hirsch | Suchowola | 2107 |
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| Kestenberg | Itteh | Soviet Union | 2095 |
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| Khmielazh | Chana | ? | 1122 |
| Khmielazh | Franya | ? | 1119 |
| Khmielazh | Freida | ? | 1124 |
| Khmielazh | Henya | ? | 1118 |
| Khmielazh | Mordechai | ? | 1121 |
| Khmielazh | Rachel | ? | 1120 |
| Khmielazh | Shayndl | ? | 1123 |
| Kienig | Frim'cheh | Belzeč | 2128 |
| Kienig | Leibl | Belzeč | 2129 |
| Kienig | Sarah | Belzeč | 2127 |
| Kienig | Yaakov | Belzeč | 2126 |
| Kienig | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2130 |

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| Kirsch | Ben-Zion | Belzeč | 2206 |
| Kirsch | Sarah | Belzeč | 2207 |
| Klein | Sarah | ? | 2176 |
| Klein | 2 Children | ? | 2177 |
| Klein | Chaim | Belzeč | 2168 |
| Klein | Chaya-Leah | ? | 2174 |
| Klein | Elyeh | Belzeč | 2171 |
| Klein | Genya | Belzeč | 2169 |
| Klein | Moshe | ? | 2173 |
| Klein | Rekhl | Belzeč | 2172 |
| Klein | Ser'keh | Belzeč | 2170 |
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| Klein | Shia | ? | 2175 |
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| Kleiner | Shimon | Soviet Union | 2180 |
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| Kleinman | Chana | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2179 |
| Klingel | Abraham | Belzeč | 2158 |
| Klingel | Binem | Belzeč | 2154 |
| Klingel | Gershon | Belzeč | 2160 |
| Klingel | Golda-Malka | Belzeč | 2153 |
| Klingel | Hinde | Belzeč | 2152 |
| Klingel | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2156 |
| Klingel | Leah'leh | Belzeč | 2148 |
| Klingel | Leib | Belzeč | 2149 |
| Klingel | Malka'leh | Belzeč | 2155 |
| Klingel | Manya | Belzeč | 2159 |
| Klingel | Moshe-Bezalel | Belzeč | 2151 |
| Klingel | Reizl | Belzeč | 2147 |
| Klingel | Shaya | Belzeč | 2146 |
| Klingel | Shayndl'leh | Belzeč | 2157 |
| Klingel | Zelda | Belzeč | 2150 |
| Klinger | Salkeh | Belzeč | 2145 |
| Kluger | Abraham | Belzeč | 2140 |
| Kluger | Dvorah | Belzeč | 2138 |
| Kluger | Golda | Belzeč | 2131 |
| Kluger | Golda | Belzeč | 2134 |
| Kluger | Maleh | Bialystok | 2144 |
| Kluger | Malka | Belzeč | 2132 |
| Kluger | Mina | Belzeč | 2136 |
| Kluger | Niania | Belzeč | 2135 |
| Kluger | Rekh'cheh | Ludomir | 2142 |
| Kluger | Resha | Belzeč | 2139 |
| Kluger | Resha | Bialystok | 2143 |
| Kluger | Sarah | Belzeč | 2133 |
| Kluger | Shimon | Ludomir | 2141 |
| Kluger | Wolf | Belzeč | 2137 |
| Koenig | Bluma | Belzeč | 2121 |
| Koenig | Esther-Baylah | Belzeč | 2122 |
| Koenig | Leib | Belzeč | 2118 |
| Koenig | Mendel | Belzeč | 2120 |
| Koenig | Rosa | Belzeč | 2119 |
| Koeniger | Baylah | Belzeč | 2124 |
| Koeniger | Chaim | Ludomir | 2125 |
| Koeniger | Moshe | Izbica | 2123 |
| Koppel | Liebeh | Tyszowce | 2214 |
| Koppel | Reuven | Tyszowce | 2213 |
| Koppel | Their Children | Tyszowce | 2215 |
| Koppel | Chana | Tyszowce | 2217 |
| Koppel | Lejzor | Tyszowce | 2216 |
| Koppelman | Chana | Belzeč | 2039 |
| Koppelman | Lanya | Ludomir | 2038 |
| Koppelman | Yaakov | Ludomir | 2037 |
| Korb | Chana | Belzeč | 2077 |
| Korb | Feiga | Warsaw | 2078 |
| Korb | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2075 |
| Korb | Moshe | Belzeč | 2079 |
| Korb | Rivka | Belzeč | 2076 |
| Korb | Taibeh-Leah | Belzeč | 2080 |
| Korn | David | Belzeč | 2185 |
| Korn | Moshe | Belzeč | 2184 |
| Korn | Zippora | Belzeč | 2183 |
| Kornblitt | Shmuel-Yitzhak | Turkestan | 2205 |
| Kornfeld | Mordechai-Joseph | Died in Lemberg | 2045 |
| Kornfeld | Sarah | Belzeč | 2047 |
| Kornfeld | Zvi | Belzeč | 2046 |
| Korngold | Nahum | Krzemieniec | 2043 |
| Korngold | Rachel | Krzemieniec | 2044 |
| Kornmass | Zalman | Belzeč | 2208 |
| Kornmass | Wife | Belzeč | 2209 |
| Kornmass | Ber'cheh | Lemberg | 2210 |
| Kornmass | Chana-Sarah | Lemberg | 2211 |
| Kornmass | Shayndl-Yudis | Lemberg | 2212 |
| Kotzker | Bluma | Belzeč | 2049 |
| Kotzker | Chaim | Belzeč | 2048 |
| Kotzker | Pesha | Belzeč | 2050 |
| Kotzker | Tzippa | Belzeč | 2051 |
| Kozlowsky | Chaim | ? | 2202 |
| Kruk | Chava | Ludomir | 2201 |
| Kruk | Gittl | Ludomir | 2199 |
| Kruk | Israel | Ludomir | 2198 |
| Kruk | Mendel | Ludomir | 2200 |
| Kupfer | Abraham | Belzeč | 2191 |
| Kupfer | Anshel | Belzeč | 2186 |
| Kupfer | Berel | Belzeč | 2195 |
| Kupfer | Freida | Belzeč | 2193 |
| Kupfer | Henya | Belzeč | 2192 |
| Kupfer | Hudis | Belzeč | 2189 |
| Kupfer | Itcheh | Belzeč | 2187 |
| Kupfer | Leah | Belzeč | 2194 |
| Kupfer | Reizl | Belzeč | 2188 |
| Kupfer | Shayndl | Belzeč | 2190 |

## L

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lagerbaum | Aharon | Belzeč | 1169 |
| Lagerbaum | Chaya | Belzeč | 1168 |
| Lagerbaum | Pess'l | Belzeč | 1167 |
| Lagerbaum | Pinia | Belzeč | 1170 |
| Lagerbaum | Shmuel | Belzeč | 1166 |
| Lak | Mendel | Belzeč | 1190 |
| Laneil | Chaya | ? | 1238 |
| Laneil | Feiga | ? | 1237 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Laneil | Galli | ? | 1236 |
| Laneil | Rachel | ? | 1234 |
| Laneil | Shimon | ? | 1235 |
| Langbaum | Berel | 'Rotunda' | 1172 |
| Langbaum | Israel | 'Rotunda' | 1171 |
| Lederman | Michael | Lemberg | 1179 |
| Lederman | Rivka | Belzeč | 1178 |
| Lemberger | Dorota | Izbica | 1191 |
| Lemberger | Feiga | Izbica | 1193 |
| Lemberger | Herschel | Skarzysko | 1192 |
| Lemberger | Shayndl | Majdanek | 1194 |
| Lempel | Binem | Belzeč | 1223 |
| Lempel | Chana | Belzeč | 1226 |
| Lempel | Leib | Belzeč | 1228 |
| Lempel | Mottel | Belzeč | 1224 |
| Lempel | Sheva | Belzeč | 1225 |
| Lempel | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1227 |
| Lerner | Abraham | 'Rotunda' | 1150 |
| Lerner | Beirach | Lemberg | 1152 |
| Lerner | Berel | Lemberg | 1154 |
| Lerner | Bluma | Ludomir | 1146 |
| Lerner | Chaya | Belzeč | 1144 |
| Lerner | Chaya | ? | 1156 |
| Lerner | Esther | Belzeč | 1145 |
| Lerner | Faleh | ? | 1158 |
| Lerner | Fishl | ? | 1157 |
| Lerner | Henoch | ? | 1155 |
| Lerner | Israel | Ludomir | 1148 |
| Lerner | Maleh | Belzeč | 1151 |
| Lerner | Sarah | Lemberg | 1153 |
| Lerner | Shmuel | Ludomir | 1147 |
| Lerner | Shykeh | ? | 1159 |
| Lerner | Yaakov | Ludomir | 1149 |
| Levant | Chaim-Reuven | ? | 1199 |
| Levant | Elyeh-David | ? | 1195 |
| Levant | Feiga | ? | 1196 |
| Levant | Jocheved | ? | 1198 |
| Levant | Yekkl | Village of Biala-Wola | 1197 |
| Levin | Aryeh | Belzeč | 1180 |
| Levin | Chana | Belzeč | 1182 |
| Levin | Esther | Belzeč | 1181 |
| Levin | Moshe | Belzeč | 1183 |
| Levin | Shlomo-Hirsch | Belzeč | 1186 |
| Levin | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1185 |
| Levin | Yenta | Belzeč | 1184 |
| Levinson | Abraham | Warsaw | 1175 |
| Levinson | Asher | Warsaw | 1173 |
| Levinson | Bina | Belzeč | 1177 |
| Levinson | David | Treblinka | 1176 |
| Levinson | Sarah | Warsaw | 1174 |
| Lewkowicz | Kayla | Belzeč | 1188 |
| Lewkowicz | Mindl | Belzeč | 1187 |
| Lewkowicz | Rekhl | Belzeč | 1189 |
| Lichtenberg | Yossel | Ludomir | 1203 |
| Lichterman | Doba | Village of Sitaniec | 1230 |
| Lichterman | Joseph | Village of Sitaniec | 1232 |
| Lichterman | Joshua | Village of Sitaniec | 1231 |
| Lichterman | Lifsha | Village of Sitaniec | 1233 |
| Lichterman | Yitzhak | Village of Sitaniec | 1229 |
| Lichtman | Avrom'cheh | Belzeč | 1251 |
| Lichtman | Baylah | Belzeč | 1241 |
| Lichtman | Eliezer | Belzeč | 1245 |
| Lichtman | Esther | Belzeč | 1244 |
| Lichtman | Herschel | Belzeč | 1248 |
| Lichtman | Joseph-David | Belzeč | 1239 |
| Lichtman | Leibl | Belzeč | 1242 |
| Lichtman | Leibl | Belzeč | 1252 |
| Lichtman | Reizl'leh | Belzeč | 1250 |
| Lichtman | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1246 |
| Lichtman | Sheva | Belzeč | 1240 |
| Lichtman | Shosha | Belzeč | 1249 |
| Lichtman | Tzirel | Belzeč | 1243 |
| Lichtman | Yekhiel-Meir | Belzeč | 1247 |
| Lieber | Aharon | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1211 |
| Lieber | Benjamin | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1217 |
| Lieber | Bertha | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1213 |
| Lieber | Leib | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1216 |
| Lieber | Mendel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1212 |
| Lieber | Moshe | ? | 1219 |
| Lieber | Rosa | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1215 |
| Lieber | Sarah-Leah | ? | 1218 |
| Lieber | Wolf-Yehuda | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1214 |
| Liebl | Bluma | Ludomir | 1205 |
| Liebl | Chaim | Ludomir | 1208 |
| Liebl | Chana | Ludomir | 1207 |
| Liebl | Freida | Ludomir | 1210 |
| Liebl | Moshe | Ludomir | 1206 |
| Liebl | Shayndl | Ludomir | 1209 |
| Liebl | Shimon | Ludomir | 1204 |
| Listhaus | Aharon | Hrubieszow | 1202 |
| Listhaus | Feiga | Hrubieszow | 1201 |
| Listhaus | Moshe | Near the Border | 1200 |
| Lubliner | Alesz | Belzeč | 1130 |
| Lubliner | Ben-Zion | Belzeč | 1126 |
| Lubliner | Bracha | Belzeč | 1127 |
| Lubliner | Feleh | Belzeč | 1128 |
| Lubliner | Julek | Belzeč | 1129 |
| Luft | Abraham | Military | 1222 |
| Luft | Breineh | Lemberg | 1221 |
| Luft | Reuven | Lemberg | 1220 |
| Lustigson | Baylah | ? | 1164 |
| Lustigson | Gittl | ? | 1161 |
| Lustigson | Moshe | ? | 1162 |
| Lustigson | Rivka | ? | 1163 |
| Lustigson | Sarah | ? | 1160 |
| Lustigson | Sima | ? | 1165 |
| Luxemburg | Ami | Belzeč | 1137 |
| Luxemburg | Berish | Belzeč | 1131 |
| Luxemburg | Chana | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1135 |
| Luxemburg | Feleh | Warsaw | 1141 |
| Luxemburg | Isaac | Warsaw | 1140 |
| Luxemburg | Rita | Belzeč | 1138 |
| Luxemburg | Rosa | Soviet Union | 1139 |
| Luxemburg | Ruzha | Belzeč | 1132 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Luxemburg | Sarah | Lemberg | 1133 |
| Luxemburg | Shlomo | Shot at a Transport | 1134 |
| Luxemburg | Tevek | Warsaw | 1142 |
| Luxemburg | Wlodosz | Warsaw | 1143 |
| Luxemburg | Yodzha | Belzeč | 1136 |

## M

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Magril | Chaim | Majdanek | 1435 |
| Magril | Chaya | ? | 1434 |
| Malier | Anshel | Belzeč | 1318 |
| Malier | Leah | Belzeč | 1321 |
| Malier | Regina | Belzeč | 1316 |
| Malier | Ruth | Belzeč | 1317 |
| Malier | Shaul | Belzeč | 1315 |
| Malier | Shimon | 'Rotunda' | 1320 |
| Malier | Shprinza | Belzeč | 1319 |
| Mandel | Henoch | Belzeč | 1455 |
| Mandelbaum | Etkeh | Lemberg | 1309 |
| Mandelbaum | Gedalia | Belzeč | 1306 |
| Mandelbaum | Levi | Belzeč | 1310 |
| Mandelbaum | Rikl | Belzeč | 1307 |
| Mandelbaum | Yaakov | Lemberg | 1308 |
| Mandelsberg | Chana | Belzeč | 1372 |
| Mandelsberg | Gittl | Belzeč | 1371 |
| Mandelsberg | Leibusz | Belzeč | 1369 |
| Mandelsberg | Rachel | Belzeč | 1370 |
| Mandelsberg | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 1373 |
| Mangel | Esther-Feiga | Lemberg | 1417 |
| Mangel | Leibl'leh | Lodz | 1416 |
| Mangel | Lyneh'leh | Lemberg | 1418 |
| Mangel | Mendel | Lodz | 1415 |
| Manzim | Chava | Lemberg | 1421 |
| Manzim | Ethel | Lemberg | 1430 |
| Manzim | Gittl'leh | ? | 1427 |
| Manzim | Isser | Belzeč | 1420 |
| Manzim | Itcheh | Belzeč | 1419 |
| Manzim | Itzik | Lemberg | 1431 |
| Manzim | Leib | Belzeč | 1428 |
| Manzim | Leibl | Lemberg | 1423 |
| Manzim | Mindl | Belzeč | 1424 |
| Manzim | Nehemia | Lemberg | 1422 |
| Manzim | Shprinza | Belzeč | 1426 |
| Manzim | Yaakov-Moshe | Belzeč | 1425 |
| Manzim | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 1429 |
| Margolis | Mordechai | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1311 |
| Margolis | Naphtali | ? | 1312 |
| Markfeld | Chaya | Ludomir | 1314 |
| Markfeld | Moshe | Ludomir | 1313 |
| Meckler | Abraham | Belzeč | 1364 |
| Meckler | Berish | Belzeč | 1350 |
| Meckler | Bracha | Belzeč | 1363 |
| Meckler | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1362 |
| Meckler | Feiga | Belzeč | 1355 |
| Meckler | Fishl | Belzeč | 1356 |
| Meckler | Frum'cheh | Belzeč | 1365 |
| Meckler | Hella | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1359 |
| Meckler | Henneh | Belzeč | 1349 |
| Meckler | Hirsch | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1360 |
| Meckler | Maleh | Belzeč | 1353 |
| Meckler | Malka | Belzeč | 1351 |
| Meckler | Mordechai | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1348 |
| Meckler | Moshe | Belzeč | 1354 |
| Meckler | Moshe-Mendel | Belzeč | 1361 |
| Meckler | Rachel | Belzeč | 1352 |
| Meckler | Shayndl | Died in Italy | 1357 |
| Meckler | Sonia | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1358 |
| Meckler | Yitzhak | Skarzysko | 1366 |
| Meil | Hannan | 'Rotunda' | 1411 |
| Meil | Leah | Belzeč | 1410 |
| Meil | Rachel | Belzeč | 1413 |
| Meil | Reizl | Belzeč | 1412 |
| Meil | Tzirel | Belzeč | 1414 |
| Meisels | Abraham | Belzeč | 1404 |
| Meisels | Elkana | Belzeč | 1407 |
| Meisels | Gittl | Belzeč | 1406 |
| Meisels | Itcheh | Ludomir | 1408 |
| Meisels | Pesach | ? | 1409 |
| Meisels | Rachel | Belzeč | 1405 |
| Meller | Gulia | Ludomir | 1456 |
| Melman | Rivka | Krzemieniec | 1454 |
| Meltzman | Israel | Krzemieniec | 1453 |
| Mendelson | Feivel | Belzeč | 1271 |
| Mendelson | Wife | Belzeč | 1272 |
| Mendelson | Abraham | Lemberg | 1261 |
| Mendelson | Abraham | Warsaw | 1285 |
| Mendelson | Agusha | Belzeč | 1276 |
| Mendelson | Chaim | Izbica | 1283 |
| Mendelson | Chana | 'Rotunda' | 1268 |
| Mendelson | Chana'leh | Ludomir | 1296 |
| Mendelson | Chaya | Lemberg | 1273 |
| Mendelson | David | 'Rotunda' | 1267 |
| Mendelson | Eizel | Poltava | 1286 |
| Mendelson | Esther | Lemberg | 1279 |
| Mendelson | Ethel | Belzeč | 1294 |
| Mendelson | Feiga'leh | Belzeč | 1297 |
| Mendelson | Gittl | Izbica | 1284 |
| Mendelson | Henneh | Ludomir | 1281 |
| Mendelson | Henoch | Ludomir | 1263 |
| Mendelson | Hinde | Belzeč | 1260 |
| Mendelson | Hinde | Belzeč | 1289 |
| Mendelson | Itzik | Belzeč | 1295 |
| Mendelson | Joseph | Belzeč | 1291 |
| Mendelson | Mordechai | Lemberg | 1280 |
| Mendelson | Moshe | Ludomir | 1270 |
| Mendelson | Moshe | Lemberg | 1277 |
| Mendelson | Nina | Lemberg | 1282 |
| Mendelson | Niusha | Lemberg | 1262 |
| Mendelson | Pinchas | Crimea | 1287 |
| Mendelson | Rachel | Warsaw | 1266 |
| Mendelson | Rivka | Belzeč | 1290 |
| Mendelson | Rivka | Belzeč | 1293 |
| Mendelson | Sarah | Belzeč | 1275 |
| Mendelson | Shmelkeh | Belzeč | 1288 |
| Mendelson | Sima | Lemberg | 1278 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Mendelson | Yaakov | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1259 |
| Mendelson | Yenta | Ludomir | 1264 |
| Mendelson | Yiddl | Ludomir | 1269 |
| Mendelson | Yosheh | Majdanek | 1274 |
| Mendelson | Zelda | Belzeč | 1292 |
| Mendelson | Zissl | Warsaw | 1265 |
| Mermelstein | Esther | Ludomir | 1391 |
| Mermelstein | Joshua | Belzeč | 1393 |
| Mermelstein | Lenin | Ludomir | 1392 |
| Mermelstein | Mordechai | Ludomir | 1390 |
| Merzel | Feivel | Belzeč | 1346 |
| Merzel | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1347 |
| Messer | Chana | Belzeč | 1301 |
| Messer | Chaya | ? | 1304 |
| Messer | Gershon | ? | 1303 |
| Messer | Hirsch | 'Rotunda' | 1298 |
| Messer | Joshua | Belzeč | 1300 |
| Messer | Masha | ? | 1305 |
| Messer | Moshe | Belzeč | 1302 |
| Messer | Reizl | Belzeč | 1299 |
| Michaelson | Abraham | Belzeč | 1403 |
| Michaelson | Feiga-Zelda | Belzeč | 1402 |
| Mildner | Shayndl | From a Bomb | 1458 |
| Mildner | Yiddl | From a Bomb | 1457 |
| Mildworm | Zisha | ? | 1389 |
| Millstein | Abraham | Krzemieniec | 1255 |
| Millstein | Gittl | Krzemieniec | 1254 |
| Millstein | Hannan | Krzemieniec | 1253 |
| Millstein | Shayndl | Ludomir | 1257 |
| Millstein | Shmuel | Ludomir | 1256 |
| Millstein | Yankl | Ludomir | 1258 |
| Miltz | (E)Lazar | Hamburg | 1440 |
| Miltz | Berish | Belzeč | 1438 |
| Miltz | Chaim | Belzeč | 1439 |
| Miltz | Chaim | 'Rotunda' | 1452 |
| Miltz | Chaim-Leib | Leapt from a Death Column | 1445 |
| Miltz | Chaya-Rachel | ? | 1446 |
| Miltz | Gittl | Rovno | 1442 |
| Miltz | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1436 |
| Miltz | Hirsch | Rovno | 1444 |
| Miltz | Hirsch | ? | 1449 |
| Miltz | Israel | Rovno | 1443 |
| Miltz | Israel | From a Bomb | 1447 |
| Miltz | Menashe | ? | 1451 |
| Miltz | Rokh'cheh | ? | 1450 |
| Miltz | Sarah | ? | 1448 |
| Miltz | Yekkl | Rovno | 1441 |
| Miltz | Yiddl | Belzeč | 1437 |
| Mintz | Breineh | Belzeč | 1433 |
| Mintz | Shakhna | Belzeč | 1432 |
| Miondovnik | Chaya | Belzeč | 1388 |
| Mittelman | Abraham | ? | 1400 |
| Mittelman | Aharon | Belzeč | 1394 |
| Mittelman | Gittl | Ludomir | 1399 |
| Mittelman | Hirsch | Ludomir | 1397 |
| Mittelman | Leah | Ludomir | 1398 |
| Mittelman | Rachel | Belzeč | 1395 |
| Mittelman | Shprinza | Belzeč | 1396 |
| Mittelman | Yitzhak | Warsaw | 1401 |
| Mittelpunkt | Moshe | Lemberg | 1367 |
| Mittelpunkt | Rachel | Lemberg | 1368 |
| Montag | Chay | Belzeč | 1343 |
| Montag | Fradel'leh | Belzeč | 1344 |
| Montag | Hirsch-Ber | Belzeč | 1341 |
| Montag | Itteh | Belzeč | 1345 |
| Montag | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 1342 |
| Morgenstern | Benya | Belzeč | 1335 |
| Morgenstern | Chaim | Belzeč | 1333 |
| Morgenstern | Chaim-Shlomo | Ludomir | 1338 |
| Morgenstern | Chaya'leh | Bialystok | 1326 |
| Morgenstern | Dvorah | ? | 1328 |
| Morgenstern | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1337 |
| Morgenstern | Gedalia | Belzeč | 1323 |
| Morgenstern | Hinde | Belzeč | 1334 |
| Morgenstern | Jocheved | Belzeč | 1322 |
| Morgenstern | Lieber | Ludomir | 1339 |
| Morgenstern | Perel'leh | Warsaw | 1331 |
| Morgenstern | Rachel'leh | Bialystok | 1325 |
| Morgenstern | Rivka | Ludomir | 1340 |
| Morgenstern | Sarah | Belzeč | 1336 |
| Morgenstern | Sarah'leh | Warsaw | 1330 |
| Morgenstern | Shayndl | Bialystok | 1327 |
| Morgenstern | Tzipa | Belzeč | 1324 |
| Morgenstern | Yoam | Warsaw | 1332 |
| Morgenstern | Yohanan | Warsaw | 1329 |
| Moskal | Aharon | Belzeč | 1378 |
| Moskal | Basha | Lemberg | 1384 |
| Moskal | Ben-Zion | Lemberg | 1385 |
| Moskal | Esther | Belzeč | 1376 |
| Moskal | Jocheved | Belzeč | 1375 |
| Moskal | Leib | Belzeč | 1380 |
| Moskal | Min'cheh-Rachel | Lemberg | 1386 |
| Moskal | Miriam | Lemberg | 1382 |
| Moskal | Mordechai | Lemberg | 1381 |
| Moskal | Moshe | Stalingrad Front | 1379 |
| Moskal | Pess'l | Belzeč | 1377 |
| Moskal | Shabtai | Soviet Union | 1387 |
| Moskal | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1374 |
| Moskal | Zalman | Lemberg | 1383 |

## N

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Neimark | Aharon-Shmuel | Belzeč | 1459 |
| Neimark | Reizl | Belzeč | 1460 |
| Nettel | Chana | Belzeč | 1471 |
| Nettel | Gittl | 'Rotunda' | 1473 |
| Nettel | Hannan | Skarzysko | 1474 |
| Nettel | Moshe | Died in Zamość | 1470 |
| Nettel | Yom-Tov | Lemberg | 1472 |
| Netzman | Arish | Soviet Union | 1481 |
| Nickelsberg | Todres | Belzeč | 1488 |
| Niemiec | Batia | Lemberg | 1477 |
| Niemiec | Esther | ? | 1479 |
| Niemiec | Ethel | Lemberg | 1476 |
| Niemiec | Feivel | ? | 1478 |

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|---|---|---|---|
| Niemiec | Freida | ? | 1480 |
| Niemiec | Kalman | Lemberg | 1475 |
| Nir | Joseph | Belzeč | 1468 |
| Nir | Mottel | Belzeč | 1467 |
| Nir | Nekha | Belzeč | 1469 |
| Nir | Sarah | Belzeč | 1466 |
| Nir | Sheva | Belzeč | 1465 |
| Nir | Shimon | Belzeč | 1464 |
| Nirenberg | David | Belzeč | 1463 |
| Nirenberg | Feiga | Belzeč | 1462 |
| Nirenberg | Rivka | Belzeč | 1461 |
| Nirenstein | (E)Lazar | Warsaw | 1487 |
| Nudel | Bina | Soviet Union | 1486 |
| Nudel | Chana | Soviet Union | 1484 |
| Nudel | Chaya | Soviet Union | 1485 |
| Nudel | Gittl | Soviet Union | 1483 |
| Nudel | Moshe | Soviet Union | 1482 |

## O

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Oberferst | Abraham | Belzeč | 11 |
| Oberferst | Berel | Lodz | 10 |
| Oberferst | Boruch | Belzeč | 7 |
| Oberferst | David | Lodz | 8 |
| Oberferst | Hannah | Belzeč | 5 |
| Oberferst | Moshe | Belzeč | 4 |
| Oberferst | Rachel | Belzeč | 12 |
| Oberferst | Sarah-Leah | Belzeč | 6 |
| Oberferst | Shlomo | Lodz | 9 |
| Oksman | Abraham | Ludomir | 104 |
| Orbuch | Berish | 'Aktion' Zamość | 49 |
| Orbuch | Gershon | Soviet Union | 53 |
| Orbuch | Hannah | 'Aktion' Zamość | 50 |
| Orbuch | Hena | Belzeč | 46 |
| Orbuch | Manya | Koval | 52 |
| Orbuch | Miriam | Belzeč | 47 |
| Orbuch | Naphtali | Belzeč | 43 |
| Orbuch | Rivka | Belzeč | 45 |
| Orbuch | Shmuel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 51 |
| Orbuch | Tema | Belzeč | 44 |
| Orbuch | Yaakov | Belzeč | 48 |
| Ornstein | Aharon | 'March' Izbica | 63 |
| Ornstein | Butcheh | 'March' Izbica | 60 |
| Ornstein | Itcheh | 'March' Izbica | 62 |
| Ornstein | Leib | Belzeč | 58 |
| Ornstein | Reizeleh | 'March' Izbica | 61 |
| Ornstein | Serkeh | Belzeč | 59 |
| Ornstein | Tzirel | Belzeč | 57 |
| Oytser | Hirsch | Caucasus | 109 |
| Oytser | Sarah | Caucasus | 110 |
| Oytser | Child | Caucasus | 111 |
| Oytser | Hirsch | Ludomir | 106 |
| Oytser | Rivka | Ludomir | 107 |
| Oytser | Shlomo | Ludomir | 108 |

## P

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Papier | Frimcheh | Soviet Union | 1610 |
| Papier | Gittl | Soviet Union | 1612 |
| Papier | Leah | Soviet Union | 1613 |
| Papier | Malka | Soviet Union | 1611 |
| Papier | Nathan | Soviet Union | 1609 |
| Papier | Shmuel | Soviet Union | 1614 |
| Pearl | (E)Lazar | Lemberg | 1654 |
| Pearl | Feiga | Belzeč | 1645 |
| Pearl | Israel | Belzeč | 1648 |
| Pearl | Israel | Belzeč | 1651 |
| Pearl | Leib | Belzeč | 1646 |
| Pearl | Miriam | Belzeč | 1647 |
| Pearl | Moshe-Chaim | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1644 |
| Pearl | Pinchas | Belzeč | 1649 |
| Pearl | Sarah | Lemberg | 1652 |
| Pearl | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1650 |
| Pearl | Shlomo | Lemberg | 1653 |
| Peckler | Chana-Rachel | Belzeč | 1663 |
| Peckler | Elyeh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1665 |
| Peckler | Maleh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1664 |
| Peckler | Shmuel | Belzeč | 1662 |
| Peckler | Yaakov | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1666 |
| Pelz | Chana | Izbica | 1623 |
| Pelz | Fradel | Izbica | 1625 |
| Pelz | Hirsch | Izbica | 1627 |
| Pelz | Leah | Izbica | 1624 |
| Pelz | Shmuel | Izbica | 1622 |
| Pelz | Wolf | Izbica | 1626 |
| Perczuk | Marisz | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1620 |
| Perczuk | Saleh | Belzeč | 1619 |
| Peretz | Julek-Yehuda | Ludomir | 1628 |
| Perlmutter | Ludwika | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1658 |
| Perlmutter | Rachel | Lemberg | 1661 |
| Perlmutter | Rosalia | Belzeč | 1657 |
| Perlmutter | Shifra | Belzeč | 1656 |
| Perlmutter | Stella | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1659 |
| Perlmutter | Tuvia | Bialystok | 1655 |
| Perlmutter | Yekhezkiel | Lemberg | 1660 |
| Pfeffer | Aharon | Belzeč | 1920 |
| Pfeffer | Boruch | Died in Zamość | 1921 |
| Pfeffer | Leibl | Ludomir | 1922 |
| Pfeffer | Shayndl | Belzeč | 1918 |
| Pfeffer | Shimon | Belzeč | 1919 |
| Pfeiffer | Dora | Belzeč | 1790 |
| Pfeiffer | Joseph | Belzeč | 1788 |
| Pfeiffer | Malka | Belzeč | 1787 |
| Pfeiffer | Moshe | Belzeč | 1789 |
| Pfeiffer | Tzivia | Belzeč | 1786 |
| Pflug | Abraham | Belzeč | 1711 |
| Pflug | Abraham | Belzeč | 1723 |
| Pflug | Chaya | Izbica | 1734 |
| Pflug | Dobbeh | Izbica | 1737 |
| Pflug | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1740 |
| Pflug | Feiga | Belzeč | 1712 |
| Pflug | Feiga | Belzeč | 1731 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pflug | Getzl | Belzeč | 1725 |
| Pflug | Hinde | Belzeč | 1726 |
| Pflug | Itteh | Belzeč | 1716 |
| Pflug | Joseph | Belzeč | 1721 |
| Pflug | Joseph | Izbica | 1738 |
| Pflug | Joshua | Belzeč | 1729 |
| Pflug | Leah | Izbica | 1739 |
| Pflug | Leib | Belzeč | 1727 |
| Pflug | Mira | Belzeč | 1720 |
| Pflug | Mordechai | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1724 |
| Pflug | Mottel | Belzeč | 1732 |
| Pflug | Niusha | Belzeč | 1719 |
| Pflug | Rachel | Belzeč | 1713 |
| Pflug | Rania | Belzeč | 1730 |
| Pflug | Rivka | Izbica | 1735 |
| Pflug | Sarah | Belzeč | 1714 |
| Pflug | Sarah | Belzeč | 1715 |
| Pflug | Sarah | Belzeč | 1728 |
| Pflug | Shifra | Belzeč | 1722 |
| Pflug | Shlomo | Buchenwald | 1717 |
| Pflug | Taibeh | Belzeč | 1741 |
| Pflug | Tzesha | Belzeč | 1718 |
| Pflug | Velvel | Izbica | 1736 |
| Pflug | Yossel | Izbica | 1733 |
| Pikarczyk | Abraham (Shlomo?) | 'Rotunda' | 1667 |
| Pinczuk | Leah | ? | 1621 |
| Pokh | Abraham | Belzeč | 1618 |
| Pokh | Hirsch | Belzeč | 1615 |
| Pokh | Sholom | Belzeč | 1617 |
| Pokh | Tzirel | Belzeč | 1616 |
| Pomfet | Fishl | Belzeč | 1606 |
| Pomfet | Gittl | Belzeč | 1607 |
| Pomfet | Rushka | Belzeč | 1608 |
| Putter | Berel | Belzeč | 1632 |
| Putter | Berish | Belzeč | 1640 |
| Putter | Chaim | Belzeč | 1636 |
| Putter | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1633 |
| Putter | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1638 |
| Putter | Esther | Belzeč | 1637 |
| Putter | Feiga | Belzeč | 1639 |
| Putter | Freida | Belzeč | 1630 |
| Putter | Gittl | Belzeč | 1631 |
| Putter | Joel | Belzeč | 1641 |
| Putter | Leibusz | ? | 1643 |
| Putter | Miriam | Belzeč | 1634 |
| Putter | Rivka | Belzeč | 1642 |
| Putter | Shlomo | Belzeč | 1635 |
| Putter | Sini | Belzeč | 1629 |

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| Rafel | Moshe | Skarzysko | 2356 |
| Rafel | Rachel | Ludomir | 2357 |
| Rand | Sarah | ? | 2359 |
| Rapaport | Joshua | Belzeč | 2323 |
| Rapaport | Moshe | The Last Jew' | 2322 |
| Rash | Abraham | Belzeč | 2221 |
| Rash | Chaim | Belzeč | 2223 |
| Rash | Ethel | Belzeč | 2222 |
| Rash | Shmuel | Belzeč | 2224 |
| Rash | Simcha | Chelm | 2226 |
| Rash | Yossel | ? | 2225 |
| Ratt | Aydel'leh | Belzeč | 2219 |
| Ratt | Israel | Belzeč | 2218 |
| Ratt | Shimek | Belzeč | 2220 |
| Reichman | Chaim | Belzeč | 2277 |
| Reichman | David | Belzeč | 2274 |
| Reichman | Rosa | Belzeč | 2278 |
| Reichman | Sarah | Belzeč | 2275 |
| Reichman | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2276 |
| Reif | Benezia | ? | 2341 |
| Reif | Maness | At the Border | 2343 |
| Reif | Shayndl | Olik-Volhynia | 2342 |
| Reif | Shimshon | Majdanek | 2344 |
| Reiner | Benjamin | Ludomir | 2327 |
| Reiner | Hillel | Ludomir | 2328 |
| Reiner | Lutek | Partisans | 2329 |
| Reinman | Chava | Belzeč | 2271 |
| Reinman | Ethel | Belzeč | 2270 |
| Reinman | Gittl | Belzeč | 2272 |
| Reinman | Sholom | Belzeč | 2273 |
| Reinman | Yaakov-Koppel | Belzeč | 2269 |
| Reisenfeld | Moshe | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2279 |
| Reisenfeld | Shmuel | Ludomir | 2280 |
| Reisner | Ethel | Ludomir | 2334 |
| Reisner | Simcha | Ludomir | 2333 |
| Renner | Joshua | Belzeč | 2335 |
| Rentner | Itcheh-Meir | Belzeč | 2324 |
| Rentner | Miriam | Belzeč | 2325 |
| Rentner | Shmuel | Majdanek | 2326 |
| Resnick | Moshe | Krzemieniec | 2300 |
| Richtman | Abraham | Lemberg | 2314 |
| Richtman | Ida | Belzeč | 2316 |
| Richtman | Mindl | Belzeč | 2319 |
| Richtman | Reizl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2315 |
| Richtman | Rivka | Belzeč | 2317 |
| Richtman | Volvish | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2318 |
| Rieback | Feiga | Ludomir | 2331 |
| Rieback | Sholom | Ludomir | 2330 |
| Ringler | Basha | Belzeč | 2252 |
| Ringler | Boruch | Belzeč | 2250 |
| Ringler | Boruch | Belzeč | 2254 |
| Ringler | Chana'leh | Belzeč | 2255 |
| Ringler | David | Belzeč | 2246 |
| Ringler | Dvorah | Belzeč | 2245 |
| Ringler | Gershon | Belzeč | 2244 |
| Ringler | Henya | Belzeč | 2249 |
| Ringler | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2248 |
| Ringler | Leib | Belzeč | 2251 |
| Ringler | Lyuba | Belzeč | 2247 |
| Ringler | Moshe | Belzeč | 2253 |
| Rochman | Leibusz | Belzeč | 2235 |
| Rochman | Mordechai | Belzeč | 2238 |
| Rochman | Pearl | Belzeč | 2236 |
| Rochman | Sarah | Belzeč | 2239 |

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| Rochman | Sholom | Belzeč | 2237 |
| Rochtman | Fradel | Ludomir | 2321 |
| Rochtman | Israel | Ludomir | 2320 |
| Rock | Esther'l | Ludomir | 2293 |
| Rock | Yitzhak-Lejzor | Ludomir | r2292 |
| Rock | Children | Ludomir | 2294 |
| Rock | Chaim | Izbica | 2297 |
| Rock | Leah'leh Izbica | | 2298 |
| Rock | Mordechai | Died in Zamość | 2295 |
| Rock | Sarah | Died in Zamość | 2296 |
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| Rolnik | Abraham | Ludomir | 2227 |
| Rolnik | Beracha | Ludomir | 2228 |
| Rolnik | Leah | Ludomir | 2232 |
| Rolnik | Lipa | Ludomir | 2230 |
| Rolnik | Melech | Ludomir | 2229 |
| Rolnik | Mottel'leh | Ludomir | 2231 |
| Rolnik | Rivka'leh | Ludomir | 2233 |
| Rose | Henya | Belzeč | 2291 |
| Roseman | Abraham | Belzeč | 2240 |
| Roseman | Malka | Belzeč | 2241 |
| Roseman | Shmuel | Belzeč | 2243 |
| Roseman | Tzivia | Belzeč | 2242 |
| Rosen | Abraham | ? | 2267 |
| Rosen | Aryeh | Belzeč | 2261 |
| Rosen | Benjamin | ? | 2265 |
| Rosen | Beracha | ? | 2268 |
| Rosen | Chana | ? | 2264 |
| Rosen | Chan'cheh | Belzeč | 2260 |
| Rosen | Feiga | ? | 2263 |
| Rosen | Irmusz | ? | 2266 |
| Rosen | Israel | ? | 2262 |
| Rosen | Julek | Warsaw | 2258 |
| Rosen | Leah | Belzeč | 2257 |
| Rosen | Leib | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2256 |
| Rosen | Pearl | Majdanek | 2259 |
| Rosenberg | Alta | Belzeč | 2306 |
| Rosenberg | Dvorah | Kovno | 2303 |
| Rosenberg | Feiga | ? | 2313 |
| Rosenberg | Gershon | ? | 2312 |
| Rosenberg | Hirsch | Lemberg | 2309 |
| Rosenberg | Israel-Elyeh | Belzeč | 2304 |
| Rosenberg | Joseph | Lemberg | 2311 |
| Rosenberg | Leah | Belzeč | 2305 |
| Rosenberg | Luba | Kovno | 2301 |
| Rosenberg | Malka | Lemberg | 2310 |
| Rosenberg | Nehemia | Belzeč | 2308 |
| Rosenberg | Rachel | Kovno | 2302 |
| Rosenberg | Yaakov | Belzeč | 2307 |
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| Rosenfeld | Benjamin | Ludomir | 2290 |
| Rosenfeld | Ben-Zion | ? | 2285 |
| Rosenfeld | Chana'leh | ? | 2284 |
| Rosenfeld | Heschel | ? | 2289 |
| Rosenfeld | Israel | Belzeč | 2281 |
| Rosenfeld | Itteh'leh | Belzeč | 2282 |
| Rosenfeld | Malka | ? | 2286 |
| Rosenfeld | Mottel | ? | 2288 |
| Rosenfeld | Rachel | ? | 2287 |
| Rosenfeld | Sarah'leh | Belzeč | 2283 |
| Rosenholz | Malka | Izbica | 2360 |
| Rosenzweig | Baylah | ? | 2347 |
| Rosenzweig | Israel | ? | 2351 |
| Rosenzweig | Jocheved | ? | 2352 |
| Rosenzweig | Joseph | ? | 2348 |
| Rosenzweig | Leah | ? | 2349 |
| Rosenzweig | Shy'keh | ? | 2350 |
| Rosenzweig | Yitzhak | ? | 2353 |
| Rosett | Israel | Krzemieniec | 2234 |
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| Rosner | Zippora | ? | 2346 |
| Rothfeld | Moshe | Izbica | 2355 |
| Rothfeld | Taibeh | Izbica | 2354 |
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| Rubinstein | Moshe | Belzeč | 2338 |
| Rubinstein | Child | Belzeč | 2340 |
| Rubinstein | Leib | Belzeč | 2336 |
| Rubinstein | Sarah | Belzeč | 2337 |
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| Sachs | Itcheh | Belzeč | 1532 |
| Sachs | Miriam | Belzeč | 1529 |
| Sachs | Pinia | Belzeč | 1531 |
| Sachs | Rivka | Belzeč | 1530 |
| Sachs | Ziskind | Belzeč | 1528 |
| Safian | David | After the Liberation | 1500 |
| Safian | Emanuel | Belzeč | 1498 |
| Safian | Feleh | Belzeč | 1497 |
| Safian | Ruth | Belzeč | 1499 |
| Safian | Yaakov | Skarzysko | 1496 |
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| Scharf | Baylah | Belzeč | 2372 |
| Scharf | Baylah | Belzeč | 2375 |
| Scharf | Baylah | Belzeč | 2381 |
| Scharf | Chaim | Belzeč | 2374 |
| Scharf | Chaim | Belzeč | 2378 |
| Scharf | Chana | Belzeč | 2384 |
| Scharf | Dvorah | Belzeč | 2364 |
| Scharf | Eliezer | Belzeč | 2365 |
| Scharf | Feiga | Belzeč | 2369 |
| Scharf | Jocheved | Belzeč | 2377 |
| Scharf | Joseph | Belzeč | 2363 |
| Scharf | Joseph | Belzeč | 2366 |
| Scharf | Joshua | Belzeč | 2380 |
| Scharf | Leib-Ber | Belzeč | 2361 |
| Scharf | Malka | Belzeč | 2368 |
| Scharf | Miriam | Belzeč | 2367 |
| Scharf | Moshe | Belzeč | 2371 |
| Scharf | Moshe'leh | Belzeč | 2382 |
| Scharf | Sarah | Belzeč | 2362 |
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| Scharf | Velvel | Belzeč | 2370 | Schlitt | Chaim | ? | 2676 |
| Scharf | Yudel | Belzeč | 2373 | Schlitt | Itcheh | ? | 2677 |
| Schatzkammer | Eliezer | Belzeč | 2389 | Schlitt | Tevye | ? | 2679 |
| Schatzkammer | Gittl | Belzeč | 2388 | Schlitt | Zalman | ? | 2678 |
| Schatzkammer | Leah | Lublin | 2387 | Schmutz | Shmuel | Ludomir | 2521 |
| Schatzkammer | Mindl | Pinsk Ghetto | 2392 | Schmutz | Daughter | Ludomir | 2522 |
| Schatzkammer | Moshe | Lublin | 2385 | Schmutz | Berel | Belzeč | 2518 |
| Schatzkammer | Rachel | Belzeč | 2390 | Schmutz | Mikhleh | Belzeč | 2514 |
| Schatzkammer | Rivka | Lublin | 2386 | Schmutz | Moshe | Belzeč | 2517 |
| Schatzkammer | Sarah-Rivka | Pinsk Ghetto | 2391 | Schmutz | Rachel | Belzeč | 2520 |
| Schatzkammer | Yaakov | Pinsk Ghetto | 2393 | Schmutz | Sarah | Belzeč | 2516 |
| Schechtman | Feiga | Belzeč | 2585 | Schmutz | Shlomo | Belzeč | 2515 |
| Schechtman | Joseph | Belzeč | 2586 | Schmutz | Simcha | Belzeč | 2519 |
| Schechtman | Leib | Lemberg | 2584 | Schneider | Aharon | Lodz | 2523 |
| Scheck | Chaim-Tevel | Belzeč | 2581 | Schneider | Mendel | Lodz | 2525 |
| Scheck | Feiga | Belzeč | 2576 | Schneider | Sarah | Lodz | 2524 |
| Scheck | Hirsch | Lodz | 2582 | Schneider | Shlomo-Akiva | Lodz | 2526 |
| Scheck | Israel | Belzeč | 2574 | Schneiderman | Malka | Ludomir | 2538 |
| Scheck | Leah | Lodz | 2583 | Schneiderman | Child | Ludomir | 2539 |
| Scheck | Miriam | Belzeč | 2575 | Schneiderman | Chana | Belzeč | 2536 |
| Scheck | Rivka | Belzeč | 2578 | Schneiderman | Itcheh | Ludomir | 2537 |
| Scheck | Sal'cheh | Belzeč | 2580 | Schneiderman | Kreindl | Belzeč | 2534 |
| Scheck | Shlomo | Belzeč | 2579 | Schneiderman | Pinchas | Belzeč | 2535 |
| Scheck | Yaakov | Belzeč | 2577 | Schneiderscher | Feiga | Belzeč | 2530 |
| Scheid | Chaya | Belzeč | 2664 | Schneiderscher | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2527 |
| Scheid | Dora | Belzeč | 2665 | Schneiderscher | Leib | Belzeč | 2531 |
| Scheid | Feiga | Belzeč | 2666 | Schneiderscher | Leib | Belzeč | 2533 |
| Scheid | Shmuel-Joseph | Belzeč | 2663 | Schneiderscher | Rosa | Belzeč | 2532 |
| Scherer | Abraham | Ludomir | 2643 | Schneiderscher | Shayndl | Belzeč | 2529 |
| Scherer | Aharon | Belzeč | 2638 | Schneiderscher | Shmuel-David | Belzeč | 2528 |
| Scherer | Basha | Ludomir | 2641 | Schporrer | Feiga | Belzeč | 2599 |
| Scherer | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2640 | Schporrer | Frim'cheh | Belzeč | 2601 |
| Scherer | Kayla | Ludomir | 2644 | Schporrer | Hinde | Belzeč | 2598 |
| Scherer | Matityahu | Ludomir | 2646 | Schporrer | Sarah | Belzeč | 2600 |
| Scherer | Miriam | Ludomir | 2645 | Schporrer | Tashka | Belzeč | 2597 |
| Scherer | Shayndl | Ludomir | 2642 | Schwartz | Chana | Krzemieniec | 2628 |
| Scherer | Yehudit | Belzeč | 2639 | Schwartz | Chana | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2686 |
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| Schlack | Sarah-Rivka | Ludomir | 2512 | Schwartz | Chava | Krzemieniec | 2627 |
| Schlack | Her Husband & Children | Ludomir | 2513 | Schwartz | Chava | Olik-Volhynia | 2701 |
| Schlack | Wife | Ludomir | 2506 | Schwartz | Chay'keh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2688 |
| Schlack | Children | Ludomir | 2507 | Schwartz | Ethel | Olik-Volhynia | 2698 |
| Schlack | Avrem'eleh | Szczebrzeszyn | 2511 | Schwartz | Gittl | Vilna | 2694 |
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| Schlack | Gedalia | Ludomir | 2508 | Schwartz | Jekuthiel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2696 |
| Schlack | Gittl | Ludomir | 2503 | Schwartz | Joseph | Krzemieniec | 2625 |
| Schlack | Itcheh | Belzeč | 2501 | Schwartz | Joseph | Soviet Union | 2684 |
| Schlack | Joshua | Belzeč | 2498 | Schwartz | Juta | Belzeč | 2697 |
| Schlack | Moshe'leh | Szczebrzeszyn | 2510 | Schwartz | Maleh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2687 |
| Schlack | Moshe-Yaakov | Polish Army | 2504 | Schwartz | Mendel | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2685 |
| Schlack | Rivka | Belzeč | 2499 | Schwartz | Shayndl | Krzemieniec | 2626 |
| Schlack | Taibeh | Szczebrzeszyn | 2509 | Schwartz | Shayndl | Olik-Volhynia | 2700 |
| Schlam | David-Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2491 | Schwartz | Shlomo | Vilna | 2693 |
| Schlam | Fanya | Belzeč | 2490 | Schwartz | Yiddl | Vilna | 2692 |
| Schlam | Fradel'leh | Belzeč | 2492 | Schwartz | Yiddl'leh | Vilna | 2695 |

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| Schwartzberg | Itteh | Izbica | 2399 |
| Schwartzberg | Her 2 Children | Izbica | 2400 |
| Schwartzberg | Abraham | Belzeč | 2415 |
| Schwartzberg | Benjamin | Szczebrzeszyn | 2397 |
| Schwartzberg | Chana | Belzeč | 2410 |
| Schwartzberg | Chaya | Belzeč | 2408 |
| Schwartzberg | Daniel | Szczebrzeszyn | 2394 |
| Schwartzberg | Dvorah | Belzeč | 2411 |
| Schwartzberg | Elimelech | Belzeč | 2419 |
| Schwartzberg | Frimet | Lutsk | 2401 |
| Schwartzberg | Frimet | Belzeč | 2420 |
| Schwartzberg | Gittl | Szczebrzeszyn | 2396 |
| Schwartzberg | Henya | Belzeč | 2413 |
| Schwartzberg | Israel | Belzeč | 2416 |
| Schwartzberg | Leah | Szczebrzeszyn | 2395 |
| Schwartzberg | Liza | Belzeč | 2418 |
| Schwartzberg | Mikhl | Belzeč | 2421 |
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| Schwartzberg | Mottel | Belzeč | 2405 |
| Schwartzberg | Rachel'leh | Belzeč | 2412 |
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| Schwartzberg | Sarah | Belzeč | 2414 |
| Schwartzberg | Sarah-Itteh | Soviet Union | 2423 |
| Schwartzberg | Shabtai | Belzeč | 2409 |
| Schwartzberg | Tanhum | Belzeč | 2403 |
| Schwartzberg | Yankl | Belzeč | 2407 |
| Schwartzberg | Yekhiel-Mikhl | Belzeč | 2422 |
| Schwartzberg | Yenta | Belzeč | 2404 |
| Schwartzberg | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2406 |
| Schwartzbier | Berel | Belzeč | 2428 |
| Schwartzbier | Chaya | Ludomir | 2431 |
| Schwartzbier | Chaya'leh | Soviet Union | 2429 |
| Schwartzbier | Dora | 'Rotunda' | 2434 |
| Schwartzbier | Feiga | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2427 |
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| Schwartzbier | Rosa | Belzeč | 2426 |
| Schwartzbier | Shlomo | Ludomir | 2430 |
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| Shapiro | Feiga'leh | Izbica | 2603 |
| Shapiro | Leah | Lemberg | 2609 |
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| Shapiro | Mendel | Lemberg | 2605 |
| Shapiro | Moshe | Izbica | 2602 |
| Shapiro | Shlomo | Lemberg | 2604 |
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| Sheps | Bluma | Belzeč | 2593 |
| Sheps | David | Belzeč | 2591 |
| Sheps | Jonah | Soviet Union | 2589 |
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| Sheps | Pearl | Soviet Union | 2588 |
| Sheps | Pesha | Belzeč | 2590 |
| Sheps | Yudel | Soviet Union | 2587 |
| Shlafrok | Aharon | Belzeč | 2496 |
| Shlafrok | Eigeh | Belzeč | 2497 |
| Shlafrok | Moshe | Belzeč | 2494 |
| Shlafrok | Mottel | Belzeč | 2493 |
| Shlafrok | Shmuel | Belzeč | 2495 |
| Shpizeisen | Abish | Bialystok | 2610 |
| Shpizeisen | Chana | Belzeč | 2619 |
| Shpizeisen | Chava | Belzeč | 2614 |
| Shpizeisen | Felleh | Belzeč | 2617 |
| Shpizeisen | Joshua | Belzeč | 2616 |
| Shpizeisen | Malka | Belzeč | 2618 |
| Shpizeisen | Rachel | Bialystok | 2612 |
| Shpizeisen | Rachel | Belzeč | 2615 |
| Shpizeisen | Yaakov | Bialystok | 2611 |
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| Shukh | Ethel | Belzeč | 2629 |
| Shukh | Leah | Warsaw | 2633 |
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| Shulman | Benjamin | Belzeč | 2634 |
| Sidel | Ethel | Rywiec | 1533 |
| Sidel | Henneh | Rywiec | 1536 |
| Sidel | Pearl | Rywiec | 1534 |
| Sidel | Rivka | Rywiec | 1535 |
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| Smaragd | Israel | Belzeč | 2650 |
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| Smaragd | Shmuel | Ludomir | 2648 |
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| Sobol | David-Zelig | Died in Zamośc | 1491 |
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| Sobol | Kalman | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1489 |
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| Sobol | Reizl | Belzeč | 1490 |
| Sobol | Tamar'l | Belzeč | 1494 |
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| Speisman | Chana-Hinde | Belzeč | 2621 |
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| Spielsinger | Manish | Belzeč | 2622 |
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| Spodek | Baylah | Belzeč | 1524 | Stern | Pinchas | Belzeč | 2444 |
| Spodek | Chana | Belzeč | 1527 | Stern | Shmeryl | Laszczow | 2461 |
| Spodek | Chan'tcheh | Belzeč | 1519 | Stern | Sonia | Ludomir | 2449 |
| Spodek | Chava | Belzeč | 1510 | Stern | Yankl | Ludomir | 2450 |
| Spodek | David | Belzeč | 1520 | Stern | Zlata | Belzeč | 2460 |
| Spodek | Golda | Belzeč | 1525 | Sternblitz | Raphael | Lutsk | 2655 |
| Spodek | Isaac | Belzeč | 1514 | Sternblitz | Malia | Lutsk | 2654 |
| Spodek | Joseph | Belzeč | 1513 | Sternblitz | Shlomo | Lutsk | 2656 |
| Spodek | Joshua | Belzeč | 1526 | Sternblitz | Sholom | Lutsk | 2653 |
| Spodek | Leah | Belzeč | 1507 | Sternfinkel | Meir | Bialystok | 2464 |
| Spodek | Leibusz | Belzeč | 1509 | Sternfinkel | Shayeh | Ludomir | 2465 |
| Spodek | Lyuba | Belzeč | 1506 | Stikh | Chaim | Krzemieniec | 2475 |
| Spodek | Malka | Belzeč | 1505 | Stikh | Elhanan | Belzeč | 2477 |
| Spodek | Malka | Belzeč | 1518 | Stikh | Malka | Belzeč | 2478 |
| Spodek | Miriam | Belzeč | 1516 | Stikh | Pesha | Krzemieniec | 2476 |
| Spodek | Pess'l | Belzeč | 1503 | Stockhammer | Aharon | Ludomir | 2479 |
| Spodek | Sarah-Rivka | Belzeč | 1504 | Stockhammer | Esther | Ludomir | 2480 |
| Spodek | Shlomo | Shot in Zamość | 1508 | Stockhammer | Feiga | Ludomir | 2482 |
| Spodek | Volvish | Belzeč | 1511 | Stockhammer | Rivka | Ludomir | 2483 |
| Spodek | Wolf | Soviet Union | 1523 | Stockhammer | Sima | Ludomir | 2481 |
| Spodek | Yehudit | Belzeč | 1502 | Strassberg | Chaim | Ludomir | 2487 |
| Spodek | Yehudit | Belzeč | 1522 | Strassberg | Gittl | Ludomir | 2488 |
| Spodek | Yiddl | Belzeč | 1517 | Stroch | Mekhl | Belzeč | 2468 |
| Spodek | Yiddl | Belzeč | 1521 | Stroch | Yehudit | Belzeč | 2469 |
| Spodek | Zlata | Belzeč | 1512 | Studen | Benjamin | Belzeč | 2437 |
| Spooner | Shifra | Belzeč | 2667 | Studen | Ethel | Belzeč | 2441 |
| Starker | Joseph-Hirsch | Belzeč | 2484 | Studen | Feiga | Belzeč | 2440 |
| Starker | Malka'leh | Belzeč | 2485 | Studen | Gedalia | Belzeč | 2443 |
| Starker | Reizl'leh | Belzeč | 2486 | Studen | Mottel | Belzeč | 2442 |
| Steiner | S-in-L Raphael | ? | 2661 | Studen | Nechama | Belzeč | 2438 |
| Steiner | Chaya | Belzeč | 2658 | Studen | Tzivia | Belzeč | 2439 |
| Steiner | Fradel | ? | 2660 | Sznur | Itteh | Krzemieniec | 2541 |
| Steiner | Nechama | ? | 2659 | Sznur | Meir | Krzemieniec | 2543 |
| Steiner | Wolf | Belzeč | 2657 | Sznur | Mendel | Died in Haifa, Israel | 2540 |
| Steinkaller | Leibl'leh | ? | 2674 | Sznur | Rachel | Soviet Union | 2542 |
| Steinkaller | Nekha | ? | 2673 | Sznur | Shayndl | Krzemieniec | 2544 |
| Steinkaller | Shayndl'leh | ? | 2675 | Sznycer | Abraham | Belzeč | 2557 |
| Steinmerder | Chana | Died in Zamość | 2470 | Sznycer | Aharon | Belzeč | 2560 |
| Steinmerder | Malka | Belzeč | 2473 | Sznycer | Aydl | Belzeč | 2559 |
| Steinmerder | Pesha | Belzeč | 2472 | Sznycer | Beracha | Hrubieszow | 2572 |
| Steinmerder | Sima | Ludomir | 2471 | Sznycer | Chana | Chelm | 2564 |
| Steinmerder | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2474 | Sznycer | Eliezer | Belzeč | 2545 |
| Stengel | Chana | Belzeč | 2467 | Sznycer | Esther-Malka | Belzeč | 2555 |
| Stengel | Shlomo | Belzeč | 2466 | Sznycer | Fishl | Hrubieszow | 2571 |
| Stern | Akiva | Koval | 2455 | Sznycer | Hirsch | Belzeč | 2561 |
| Stern | Chana | Belzeč | 2453 | Sznycer | Itcheh | Belzeč | 2573 |
| Stern | David | Belzeč | 2458 | Sznycer | Leah | Belzeč | 2568 |
| Stern | Dina | Belzeč | 2454 | Sznycer | Leibusz | Belzeč | 2565 |
| Stern | Esther | Belzeč | 2452 | Sznycer | Lejzor | Ukraine | 2551 |
| Stern | Hadassah | ? | 2457 | Sznycer | Mordechai | Baranowicze | 2547 |
| Stern | Hen'cheh | Ludomir | 2447 | Sznycer | Mordechai | Belzeč | 2570 |
| Stern | Itcheh | Ludomir | 2448 | Sznycer | Mottel'leh | Belzeč | 2556 |
| Stern | Itcheh'leh | Belzeč | 2445 | Sznycer | Rachel | Baranowicze | 2550 |
| Stern | Mendel | Belzeč | 2459 | Sznycer | Rachel | Belzeč | 2566 |
| Stern | Moshe-Yankl | Belzeč | 2451 | Sznycer | Rania | Ukraine | 2552 |
| Stern | Nahum | Ludomir | 2446 | Sznycer | Rivka | Baranowicze | 2549 |
| Stern | Pess'l | Koval | 2456 | Sznycer | Rivka | Belzeč | 2562 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sznycer | Temmeh | Baranowicze | 2548 |
| Sznycer | Tzivia | Belzeč | 2558 |
| Sznycer | Velvel | Ukraine | 2554 |
| Sznycer | Yaakov | Belzeč | 2569 |
| Sznycer | Yehudit | Belzeč | 2546 |
| Sznycer | Yitzhak | Chelm | 2563 |
| Sznycer | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 2567 |
| Sznycer | Zalman | Ukraine | 2553 |
| Szper | Chava | Belzeč | 2594 |
| Szper | Sender | Partisans | 2595 |
| Szper | Sonia | Bialystok | 2596 |
| Szyfer | Liebeh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 2668 |
| Szyfer | Simcha | Belzeč | 2669 |
| Szyfer | Chaim | Belzeč | 2671 |
| Szyfer | Rivka | Belzeč | 2672 |
| Szyfer | Zlata | Belzeč | 2670 |

## T

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tischberg | Abraham | Belzeč | 1102 |
| Tischberg | Frimet | Belzeč | 1099 |
| Tischberg | Reizl | Belzeč | 1100 |
| Tischberg | Sarah | Belzeč | 1101 |
| Tischberg | Sholom | Belzeč | 1098 |
| Topf | Chaya'leh | Belzeč | 1076 |
| Topf | Hen'tcheh | ? | 1082 |
| Topf | Joshua | 'Rotunda' | 1078 |
| Topf | Malka | ? | 1083 |
| Topf | Pesha | 'Rotunda' | 1079 |
| Topf | Rachel | Belzeč | 1074 |
| Topf | Rivka | ? | 1081 |
| Topf | Sholom | Belzeč | 1073 |
| Topf | Yaakov-Meir | Ludomir | 1077 |
| Topf | Yekhezkiel | Belzeč | 1075 |
| Topf | Yekhezkiel | 'Rotunda' | 1080 |
| Totengraber | Abraham | Belzeč | 1069 |
| Totengraber | Aharon | Warsaw | 1067 |
| Totengraber | Bluma'tcheh | Belzeč | 1070 |
| Totengraber | Breineh | Belzeč | 1072 |
| Totengraber | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1071 |
| Totengraber | Itcheh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1066 |
| Totengraber | Kuba | Warsaw | 1068 |
| Totengraber | Shmuel | Belzeč | 1065 |
| Totengraber | Vova | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1064 |
| Traub | Bluma | Lutsk | 1094 |
| Traub | Jocheved | Lutsk | 1096 |
| Traub | Moshe | Lutsk | 1095 |
| Traub | Sarah'leh | Lutsk | 1097 |
| Traub | Yohanan | Lutsk | 1093 |
| Treger | Lyuba | Belzeč | 1091 |
| Treger | Mireh'leh | Belzeč | 1092 |
| Treger | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1090 |
| Trook | Malka | Belzeč | 1085 |
| Trook | Nachman | Belzeč | 1084 |
| Trook | Sarah | Belzeč | 1086 |
| Tukhschneider | Chaya | Volhynia | 1088 |
| Tukhschneider | Feiga'leh | Volhynia | 1089 |
| Tukhschneider | Shepsel | Ludomir | 1087 |
| Tzippel | Basha | Belzeč | 1974 |
| Tzippel | Itteh-Leah | Belzeč | 1973 |
| Tzitzman | Abraham-Moshe | Died in Zamość | 1951 |
| Tzitzman | Boruch | Belzeč | 1953 |
| Tzitzman | Chaim | Ludomir | 1957 |
| Tzitzman | Chava | Belzeč | 1956 |
| Tzitzman | Chava | Belzeč | 1960 |
| Tzitzman | David | ? | 1961 |
| Tzitzman | Frimet | Ludomir | 1958 |
| Tzitzman | Pearl | Belzeč | 1955 |
| Tzitzman | Pessl | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1952 |
| Tzitzman | Reizl | Belzeč | 1954 |
| Tzitzman | Yaakov | Majdanek | 1959 |

## U

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Untracht | Fishl | Lodz | 76 |
| Untracht | Pearl | Lodz | 74 |
| Untracht | Rivka | Belzeč | 72 |
| Untracht | Shlomo | Belzeč | 71 |
| Untracht | Yekhzkiel | Lodz | 73 |
| Untracht | Zalman | Lodz | 75 |

## W

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Wachs | Esther | Belzeč | 924 |
| Wachs | Meir | Ludomir | 919 |
| Wachs | Mindl | Belzeč | 917 |
| Wachs | Mordechai | Belzeč | 916 |
| Wachs | Moshe | Belzeč | 923 |
| Wachs | Rachel | Ludomir | 922 |
| Wachs | Taibeh | Belzeč | 918 |
| Wachs | Taibeh | Ludomir | 920 |
| Wachs | Taibeh | Belzeč | 925 |
| Wachs | Yohanan | Ludomir | 921 |
| Wagner | Eliezer | Belzeč | 901 |
| Wagner | Ethel'leh | Belzeč | 902 |
| Wagner | Hinde | Belzeč | 903 |
| Wagner | Iba | Belzeč | 904 |
| Wagner | Menachem-Mendl | Belzeč | 905 |
| Wagner | Yenta | Died in Zamość | 906 |
| Waller | Baylah | Belzeč | 932 |
| Waller | Israel | Belzeč | 933 |
| Waller | Shmuel | Belzeč | 931 |
| Wamser | Gershon | Belzeč | 812 |
| Wamser | Pesha | Belzeč | 811 |
| Wamser | Shlomo | Belzeč | 810 |
| Wassertreger | Feiga-Roveh | Warsaw | 928 |
| Wassertreger | Frimet | Warsaw | 927 |
| Wassertreger | Hirsch | Warsaw | 929 |
| Wassertreger | Shaynd'leh | Warsaw | 930 |
| Wassertreger | Zlata | Warsaw | 926 |
| Waxman | Fishl | Red Army | 935 |
| Waxman | Joseph | Red Army | 934 |
| Waxman | Moshe'leh | Red Army | 936 |
| Waxman | Shlomo | Red Army | 937 |
| Wechsler | Abraham | Belzeč | 817 |
| Wechsler | Bina | Belzeč | 815 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wechsler | Dvorah | Belzeč | 816 | Weintraub | Sholom-Ber | Bialystok | 835 |
| Wechsler | Feiga | Lemberg | 818 | Weintraub | Taibeh | Belzeč | 838 |
| Wechsler | Pearl | Belzeč | 814 | Weintraub | Yaakov | Piledef | 827 |
| Wechsler | Shay'eleh | Died in Zamość | 813 | Weisstuch | Feigl | Warsaw | 861 |
| Wechter | Esther | Belzeč | 867 | Weisstuch | Mordechai | Warsaw | 862 |
| Wechter | Falia | Belzeč | 869 | Weisstuch | Tze'sheh | Warsaw | 863 |
| Wechter | Heniek | Majdanek | 874 | Weisstuch | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 860 |
| Wechter | Henoch | Soviet Union | 870 | Weisstuch | Yossel | Warsaw | 864 |
| Wechter | Itcheh'leh | 'March' Izbica | 866 | Wermuth | Benya | 'Aktion' Zamość | 885 |
| Wechter | Manys | Soviet Union | 871 | Wermuth | Joseph | Belzeč | 883 |
| Wechter | Moniek | Soviet Union | 872 | Wermuth | Pearl | Belzeč | 884 |
| Wechter | Noah | Red Army | 878 | Wermuth | Shmuel | Belzeč | 886 |
| Wechter | Shimon | Died in Zamość | 868 | Werner | Berel | Skarzysko | 938 |
| Wechter | Shmuel | Soviet Union | 873 | Wert | Dasheh'leh | Belzeč | 882 |
| Wechter | Tasheh | Rovno | 877 | Wert | Leib | 'Aktion' Zamość | 879 |
| Wechter | Zippora | Belzeč | 875 | Wert | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 881 |
| Wechter | Zygmund | Rovno | 876 | Wert | Zosheh | Belzeč | 880 |
| Weinberg | Gittl | Belzeč | 845 | Wertman | Abraham | Belzeč | 895 |
| Weinberg | Israel | Belzeč | 844 | Wertman | Baylah | ? | 891 |
| Weinblatt | Abush | Soviet Union | 852 | Wertman | Baylah | Belzeč | 898 |
| Weinblatt | Chaya | Belzeč | 856 | Wertman | Berish | Belzeč | 897 |
| Weinblatt | David | Belzeč | 846 | Wertman | Freideh | ? | 890 |
| Weinblatt | Esther | Belzeč | 854 | Wertman | Gittl | ? | 887 |
| Weinblatt | Feiga | Belzeč | 848 | Wertman | Hirsch | ? | 889 |
| Weinblatt | Hanina | Belzeč | 850 | Wertman | Malka | ? | 892 |
| Weinblatt | Hirsch | Belzeč | 853 | Wertman | Malka | Belzeč | 900 |
| Weinblatt | Issac | Belzeč | 849 | Wertman | Mindl | Belzeč | 899 |
| Weinblatt | Moshe-Yaakov | Soviet Union | 851 | Wertman | Moshe | ? | 888 |
| Weinblatt | Pearl | Belzeč | 847 | Wertman | Pesha | Belzeč | 896 |
| Weinblatt | Shlomo | Belzeč | 855 | Wertman | Shayneh | ? | 893 |
| Weinblatt | Taibeh-Rachel | By a Bomb | 857 | Wertman | Wolf | ? | 894 |
| Weinblatt | Zalman | Belzeč | 858 | Wilder | David | Died in Zamość | 865 |
| Weinmakher | Berel'leh | 'Aktion' Zamość | 939 | Winawer | Dora | Belzeč | 804 |
| Weinmakher | Daughter Esther'l | 'Aktion' Zamość | 940 | Winawer | Reizl'leh | Belzeč | 803 |
| Weinrib | Elyeh | ? | 859 | Winawer | Tze'sheh | Belzeč | 805 |
| Weintraub | Abraham | Lemberg | 822 | Winawer | Yaakov | Belzeč | 802 |
| Weintraub | Benjamin | Ruzhany | 842 | Wogshall | Chaim | Sobibor | 914 |
| Weintraub | Benya | Piledef | 829 | Wogshall | Leah | Sobibor | 913 |
| Weintraub | Boruch | Belzeč | 839 | Wogshall | Mottel | Sobibor | 912 |
| Weintraub | Chaim | Lemberg | 823 | Wogshall | Yossel'leh | Sobibor | 915 |
| Weintraub | Chana | Belzeč | 833 | Wohl | Boruch | Lemberg | 798 |
| Weintraub | Elyeh | Majdanek | 832 | Wohl | David | Majdanek | 796 |
| Weintraub | Ephraim | Lemberg | 824 | Wohl | Eva | Lublin | 797 |
| Weintraub | Feiga | Belzeč | 836 | Wohl | Feiga | Lemberg | 795 |
| Weintraub | Freida | Lemberg | 820 | Wohl | Shlomo | Lemberg | 794 |
| Weintraub | Freideh'leh | Belzeč | 840 | Wolfenfeld | Rosa | Belzeč | 808 |
| Weintraub | Henneh | Lemberg | 821 | Wolfenfeld | Shlomo | Belzeč | 807 |
| Weintraub | Isaac | Lemberg | 819 | Wolfenfeld | Taibeh | Belzeč | 809 |
| Weintraub | Kayla | Piledef | 830 | Wolfenfeld | Yankl | Belzeč | 806 |
| Weintraub | Lejzor | Soviet Union | 825 | Wolkin | Pearl | Volkovysk | 800 |
| Weintraub | Liebeh | Ludomir | 841 | Wolkin | Sarah | Volkovysk | 801 |
| Weintraub | Moshe | Piledef | 828 | Wolkin | Shmuel | Volkovysk | 799 |
| Weintraub | Perel'leh | Belzeč | 837 | Wort | Israel | Belzeč | 907 |
| Weintraub | Rachel | Belzeč | 831 | Wort | Sima | Belzeč | 908 |
| Weintraub | Rivka | Piledef | 826 | Wort | Yaakov | Belzeč | 911 |
| Weintraub | Shayna-Shayndl | Izbica | 843 | Wort | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 910 |
| Weintraub | Shayndl | Novoe-Velikiye | 834 | Wort | Zvi | Belzeč | 909 |

## Y

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Youngman | Gershon-Henoch | Majdanek | 1106 |
| Youngman | Miriam | Rywiec | 1105 |
| Youngman | Moshe | Lublin | 1108 |
| Youngman | Natteh | Belzeč | 1103 |
| Youngman | Reizl'leh | Rywiec | 1104 |
| Youngman | Yudel | Jozefów | 1107 |

## Z

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Zahler | Aryeh | Lemberg | 1982 |
| Zahler | Manny | Lemberg | 1981 |
| Zahler | Moniek | Lemberg | 1980 |
| Zaltsman | David | Warsaw | 1062 |
| Zechser | Ada | Lodz | 1011 |
| Zechser | Aharon-David | Lodz | 1013 |
| Zechser | Yenta'leh | Lodz | 1012 |
| Zederbaum | Berish | Belzeč | 1947 |
| Zederbaum | Esther | Belzeč | 1948 |
| Zederbaum | Golda | Belzeč | 1946 |
| Zederbaum | Mottel | Belzeč | 1949 |
| Zederbaum | Pearl | Belzeč | 1945 |
| Zederbaum | Rania'leh | Belzeč | 1950 |
| Zegen | David | Belzeč | 1056 |
| Zegen | Esther | Belzeč | 1055 |
| Zegen | Kalman | Belzeč | 1054 |
| Zegen | Moshe | Siberia | 1057 |
| Zehler | Baylah | Belzeč | 1985 |
| Zehler | David | Belzeč | 1983 |
| Zehler | Meir | Belzeč | 1984 |
| Zeidel | Abraham | Komarow | 1050 |
| Zeidel | Chana | Belzeč | 1053 |
| Zeidel | Miriam | Komarow | 1051 |
| Zeidel | Shprintza | 'Aktion' Zamość | 1052 |
| Zeidfodim | Dvorah | Belzeč | 1048 |
| Zeidfodim | Golda | Belzeč | 1045 |
| Zeidfodim | Leah | Belzeč | 1047 |
| Zeidfodim | Rekhl | Belzeč | 1049 |
| Zeidfodim | Sarah-Maleh | Belzeč | 1046 |
| Zeidfodim | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 1044 |
| Zeidner | Baylah | Majdanek | 957 |
| Zeidner | Benezia | Belzeč | 958 |
| Zeidner | Benjamin | Belzeč | 964 |
| Zeidner | Chana | Belzeč | 962 |
| Zeidner | Chaya | Majdanek | 955 |
| Zeidner | Gittl | Belzeč | 959 |
| Zeidner | Pinchas | Majdanek | 956 |
| Zeidner | Pinchas | Belzeč | 960 |
| Zeidner | Sarah | Belzeč | 965 |
| Zeidner | Shlomo Yehuda | Belzeč | 963 |
| Zeidner | Yekhezkiel | Belzeč | 961 |
| Zeidweber | Abraham | Belzeč | 1043 |
| Zeidweber | Boruch | Belzeč | 1041 |
| Zeidweber | Israel | Belzeč | 1040 |
| Zeidweber | Leibusz | Belzeč | 1037 |
| Zeidweber | Mireh | Belzeč | 1042 |
| Zeidweber | Mirel | Belzeč | 1038 |
| Zeidweber | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 1039 |
| Zetz | Abraham | Majdanek | 949 |
| Zetz | Baylah | Majdanek | 953 |
| Zetz | Chaya | Majdanek | 951 |
| Zetz | Elke | Belzeč | 946 |
| Zetz | Ethel | Majdanek | 952 |
| Zetz | Hanina | Belzeč | 943 |
| Zetz | Leah | Belzeč | 942 |
| Zetz | Leibusz | Siberia | 941 |
| Zetz | Malka | From a Bomb | 954 |
| Zetz | Moshe | Belzeč | 945 |
| Zetz | Rachel | Belzeč | 948 |
| Zetz | Shlomo | Sarny | 947 |
| Zetz | Shmuel | Majdanek | 950 |
| Zetz | Yaakov | Belzeč | 944 |
| Ziftser | From the Factory 'Rotunda' | | 1063 |
| Zilber | Abraham | Belzeč | 1000 |
| Zilber | Benjamin | Belzeč | 995 |
| Zilber | Hinde | Belzeč | 1002 |
| Zilber | Hirsch | Belzeč | 996 |
| Zilber | Leib | Belzeč | 1003 |
| Zilber | Reizl | Belzeč | 998 |
| Zilber | Shlomo | Belzeč | 997 |
| Zilber | Shmuel | Belzeč | 999 |
| Zilber | Tzluva | Belzeč | 1004 |
| Zilber | Yaakov | Belzeč | 1001 |
| Zilberberg | Leibl | Izbica | 966 |
| Zilberberg | Mottel | Izbica | 968 |
| Zilberberg | Sarah | Izbica | 967 |
| Zilberman | Emanuel | ? | 969 |
| Zilberman | Nekha | ? | 970 |
| Zilberman | Ozer | ? | 972 |
| Zilberman | Sarah | ? | 971 |
| Zilberman | Yiddl | ? | 973 |
| Zimmerman | Brein'cheh | Belzeč | 978 |
| Zimmerman | Chana | Belzeč | 979 |
| Zimmerman | Leibusz | Belzeč | 974 |
| Zimmerman | Rivka | Belzeč | 975 |
| Zimmerman | Sheftel | Belzeč | 976 |
| Zimmerman | Yekhezkiel | Belzeč | 977 |
| Zimmerung | Aharon | Majdanek | 1977 |
| Zimmerung | Henya | Belzeč | 1976 |
| Zimmerung | Moshe | ? | 1978 |
| Zimmerung | Rachel | Belzeč | 1979 |
| Zimmerung | Yaakov | Skarzysko | 1975 |
| Zinger | Shlomo | Lemberg | 1061 |
| Zingerman | Wife | Radom | 1026 |
| Zingerman | Yitzhak | Radom | 1025 |
| Zingerman | Child | Radom | 1027 |
| Zingerman | (Harness Maker) | Skarzysko | 1036 |
| Zingerman | Abraham | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1034 |
| Zingerman | Basha | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1029 |
| Zingerman | Baylah | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1033 |
| Zingerman | Gittl | Belzeč | 1024 |
| Zingerman | Itteh | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1035 |
| Zingerman | Jonathan | Belzeč | 1021 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Zingerman | Joshua | Belzeč | 1023 |
| Zingerman | Joshua | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1028 |
| Zingerman | Leah | Belzeč | 1022 |
| Zingerman | Moshe | Belzeč | 1019 |
| Zingerman | Pesha | Ludomir | 1031 |
| Zingerman | Pinchas | Ludomir | 1030 |
| Zingerman | Sholom | Kodiszcze by Rovno | 1032 |
| Zingerman | Zlata-Esther | Belzeč | 1020 |
| Zismilch | Abraham-Isser | Skarzysko | 1016 |
| Zismilch | Jocheved | ? | 1017 |
| Zismilch | Children | ? | 1018 |
| Zismilch | Feiga | Belzeč | 1010 |
| Zismilch | Joshua | Belzeč | 1009 |
| Zismilch | Leibusz | Belzeč | 1014 |
| Zismilch | Mordechai | Belzeč | 1015 |
| Ziss | Chana | Belzeč | 1059 |
| Ziss | Ephraim | Belzeč | 1060 |
| Ziss | Feivel | Belzeč | 1058 |
| Zitser | Abraham | Majdanek | 1008 |
| Zitser | Chana | Belzeč | 1007 |
| Zitser | Nachman | Belzeč | 1005 |
| Zitser | Taibeh'leh | Belzeč | 1006 |
| Zoberman | Abraham | Belzeč | 986 |
| Zoberman | Chaim | Belzeč | 983 |
| Zoberman | Chaya-Gittl | Belzeč | 994 |
| Zoberman | Dina | Belzeč | 989 |
| Zoberman | Emanuel | Polish Army | 987 |
| Zoberman | Esther | Belzeč | 991 |
| Zoberman | Gittl'leh | Belzeč | 981 |
| Zoberman | Gittl'leh | Belzeč | 992 |
| Zoberman | Moshe | Belzeč | 990 |
| Zoberman | Paulina | Belzeč | 982 |
| Zoberman | Pinia | Majdanek | 985 |
| Zoberman | Yaakov | 'Aktion' Zamość | 980 |
| Zoberman | Yaakov | Shot in Zamość | 984 |
| Zoberman | Yankl'leh | Belzeč | 988 |
| Zoberman | Yekhiel | Belzeč | 993 |
| Zucker | Aharon | Ludomir | 2000 |
| Zucker | Ethel | Belzeč | 1995 |
| Zucker | Israel | Shot in Zamość | 2001 |
| Zucker | Leah | Ludomir | 1997 |
| Zucker | Mikhl | Ludomir | 1996 |
| Zucker | Wolf | Shot in Zamość | 2002 |
| Zucker | Yaakov | Ludomir | 1999 |
| Zucker | Yehudit | Ludomir | 1998 |
| Zucker | Yitzhak | Belzeč | 1994 |
| Zuckerman | Akiva | Belzeč | 1990 |
| Zuckerman | Azriel | Belzeč | 1993 |
| Zuckerman | Chaim | Belzeč | 1991 |
| Zuckerman | Joseph | Belzeč | 1992 |
| Zwerin | Chaim | At the Border | 1988 |
| Zwerin | Frimet | Ludomir | 1987 |
| Zwerin | Shmuel | Ludomir | 1986 |
| Zwerin | Taibeh | Ludomir | 1989 |
| Zwillich | Bluma | Belzeč | 1942 |
| Zwillich | Chaim | Warsaw | 1940 |
| Zwillich | Eliyahu | 'Rotunda' | 1938 |
| Zwillich | Esther | Died in Zamość | 1941 |
| Zwillich | Henya | Belzeč | 1944 |
| Zwillich | Mordechai | Izbica | 1943 |
| Zwillich | Reizl | Belzeč | 1939 |
| Zygelman | Wife | Lemberg | 2004 |
| Zygelman | Henryk | Lemberg | 2003 |

The statistics for this Necrology are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Belzeč | 1322 |
| Ludomir | 246 |
| Lemberg | 127 |
| '*Aktion*' Zamość | 87 |
| Warsaw | 73 |
| Soviet Union | 59 |
| Izbica | 41 |
| Majdanek | 34 |
| '*Rotunda*' | 32 |
| Krzemieniec | 27 |
| Lodz | 25 |
| Rovno | 25 |
| Died in Zamość | 20 |
| Koval | 21 |
| Lutsk | 17 |
| Auschwitz | 14 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Komarow | 14 |
| Szczebrzeszyn | 13 |
| Bialystok | 12 |
| Hrubieszow | 11 |
| 'March' Izbica | 11 |
| | |
| Unknown | 224 |
| All other | 247 |
| Total | 2702 |

## Our List of Martyrs

In this place, we have brought the list of our Zamość martyrs, of those who were killed in the most plain sense, *Al Kiddush HaShem!*

The list consists of approximately 3,000 names. It is certain that this is not the full count of those killed by the Nazi murderers and their servants, the SS bands of Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and local collaborating Poles.

The list was compiled by those individuals who remained alive; by those who were found in the Soviet Union; by those who emerged from the forests; by those who stayed alive using 'Aryan Papers,' or those who miraculously were saved from the Nazi slave-labor camps or death factories. These were isolated individuals who survived, out of entire families. They knew whom it was that needed to be remembered. However, even larger is the number of those families from whom **not a single witness** remained, who would be able to properly recollect.

Also, from that surviving remnant, not all understood the great importance of leaving a memorial of the martyrs by giving their names an eternal place in our *Pinkas*.

We also offer a reckoning, that it is possible that among the list of martyrs there may be found such who actually may still be alive; whom their nearest to this day do not know where that person is, and assumed that they were killed. With the list already in hand, and ready to print, we actually had the experience of needing to take out a number of names. In this respect, no one is to be held in the wrong – this is a result of the cataclysm, which swept through our generation, where families were torn apart, and were scattered across all the seven seas.

So, therefore, here, where we recall those among the martyrs, whose names we do know , we will also utter our Yizkor sentiment for the thousands who were killed, for the thousands for whom no member of their family survived, so that their memory will be guarded as well.

In this list, we bring only the names of those who were tortured, and how they were murdered. Here too, there is the possibility of error. Also here, it is possible that an individual who is counted as someone who was killed at Belzeč, was actually tortured somewhere else entirely. The details were provided by very close kin, and the error is not ours. However, regardless of **where**, **how** and **when** they were killed, they all belong for eternity to the ranks of our sacred martyrs, who died in innocence.

In the lists, which the landsleit were obliged to fill out, there were an array of categories, among others also about the occupation and age of the individual murdered. Regrettably, it proved to be impossible to obtain the exact same data about everyone, and therefore, we have omitted these details.

If one looks at the places where our relatives were tortured, we see that every possible corner is sprayed with our Jewish Zamość blood, where the Nazis slaughtered, burned, gassed and tortured the six million of our brothers and sisters.

Our martyrs, firstly, occupy the largest and primary place in neighboring **Belzeč**, in the death-apparatus, which was used to kill millions.

Our Zamość fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, wives and children were tortured in: **Majdanek, Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz** – in those 5 death factories we paid our debt in blood.

We have our martyrs in the slave-labor camps: **Trawniki, Skarzysko** and **Buchenwald**.

The majority of our martyrs were, indeed, murdered in the death camps (foremost Belzeč) however, there was a large number that ere shot during the '*aktion*' incidents, when the bestial 'evacuations' took place, the grabbing of people, and sending them on transports to Belzeč.

A large toll was taken at the 'Rotunda,' the former arsenal of the fortress at Zamość. Several tens of our dearest were killed here by execution at the hands of the Gestapo.

The '**March to Izbica**' was a bloody one – when the Zamość community was driven on foot to Izbica, from where they were then further led in an inhuman fashion to Belzeč.

We also paid our debt of blood in the **Partisan Movement** – in a variety of locations. Throughout the fields and forests, the bodies of our heroic partisans lie sown and spread about, those killed in the war or murdered by misdirected bullets.

In 35 other places, near and far, where fate decreed that the refugees from our city would find themselves, their graves lie sown and spread about, for the most part, unmarked. Let us here enumerate the places where the remains of our tortured ones lie. Let us recollect these places (In Hebrew Alphabetical Order): **Austilug, Baranowicze, Bialystok, Biala Wola, Dubno, Hrubieszow, Hamburg, Warsaw, Volkovysk, Zdolbunow, Tyszowce, Kharkov (Babi-Yar), Chelm, Khodorov, Lodz, Ludomir, Lemberg, Lutsk, Laszczow, Maniewiec, Novoe Velikiye, Sarny, Suchowola, Poltava, Crimea, Kodiszczo, Near Rovno, Koval-Volhynia, Krzemieniec, Komarow, Klevan, Rovno, Radom, Rejowiec, Szczebrzeszyn, Sitaniec.**

They were killed in these places by the Nazi murderers in a bestial fashion, and their tortured bodies came to their 'eternal rest' in mass graves, which were often prepared by the victims themselves.

Afterwards, the murderers attempted to erase the traces of their crimes in a perfidious manner, and these places were plowed under.

Let this list serve as the community memorial to be placed over their unknown graves.

In the list, we also find the names of those who went to their eternal rest while wandering, as refugees hurled into the distant reaches of the Soviet Union. These individuals are, if not direct, then certainly indirect victims of Nazi crimes. It was the Hitlerist attack on Poland that drove these individuals from their homes. They too, deserve to be included in the list of our innocents and martyrs. Their graves too, will remain unvisited at the time of their *yahrzeits* and no one will recall them. May our Yizkor also encompass these very wanderers, whose exhausted bodies did not survive to see the downfall of Nazism.

These names that are found in our list of martyrs, and the many thousands who are missing from it, will be guarded forever in our memories. They will recall the pain inflicted on our people by the *Amalek* of our generation, Hitler, and all those who served him; the memory of them, also, will demand of the world that such a crime will never again be repeated; that such a bloodbath will never again happen.

If this is attained, it possibly could be some small recompense for the great sacrifice in blood that we offered.

**Remember forever, recall forever, and demand forever – that is what the final call of our innocents and martyrs demand of us.**

# Our Day of Sorrow - 24 Nissan

At the first gathering of the Zamość survivors in Germany, on December 14, 1946, among other things, it was decided to establish a **Day of Sorrow** commemorating the destruction of Zamość.

This meeting selected Nissan 24. This was the Sabbath of April 11, 1942, which entered the bloody pages of our destruction as **The Black Sabbath**.

Inquiring among various of our *landsleit* groups, they agreed that for all of us from Zamość, everywhere, this Day of Sorrow shall remain forever.

Not everywhere, and not always is it possible to exactly observe this day with the proper, solemn gathering. We recommend however:

1. On that day, we recommend that all homes of people from Zamość should light 6 Yizkor lights to recall the sacred memory of our martyrs, and the 6 million Jews exterminated by the Nazis and those who assisted them;

2. In the week after Passover, on an annual basis, to hold a solemn assembly, where, among other things, our **Yizkor** should be read.

# Documents and Materials

**After we had brought the memoirs and the eye-witness accounts of those who went through the dark Nazi hell; after the research work about the Hitlerist bestiality, we found it to be both proper and important to include an array of D o c u m e n t s, which complement even further, and more starkly this dark time.**

**In this section, 8 documents are presented.**

**Document Number 1 – the declaration of the leader of the Zamość '*Judenrat*,' Memek Garfinkel – was sent to our attention from the archive of the Yiddish Scientific Institute – YIVO, in New York. We write about this document further in our introduction to it.**

**Documents 2 through 8 were sent to us by the Yiddish Scientific Institute in Warsaw.**

**We have brought these documents here without commentary, explanation and remarks.**

**These documents are, indeed, the best illustration to the submitted recollections of the destruction and research into that destruction in our previous section.**

## Document Number 1

# The Leader of the '*Judenrat* Tells...

*Page 1118: Facsimile of the first page of the Garfinkel Document*

The following detailed account was written by M i e c z y s l a w G a r f i n k e l. He completed it, as we see at the end of this work, in December 1947.

This wide-ranging account, consisting of 46 typewritten pages in Polish, with a supplement of 6 pages about the 'Jewish Help Committee,' was sent to us from the archive of the Yiddish Scientific Institute – YIVO, in New York.

There exists an entire range of writing about the character of the former '*Judenrat* Leader' M. Garfinkel, by former residents in the Zamość ghetto, and after living through a variety of experiences in camps and other places of torture, he remained alive. Our assessment is, that as a former head of a '*Judenrat*,' that M. Garfinkel has whitewashed his testimony a great deal, especially concerning those details which have a direct bearing on the activity of the 'Judenrat' in general, and to his role in particular.

The testimony has, however, data and facts that are important beyond measure, about the time of the Nazi hegemony in Zamość; about the general condition of the Jewish community there, and the circumstances of their lives. We have before us, an especially stark portrait of the Zamość community up to the time it was cut down. We provide the testimony verbatim, as it was written, without abbreviation.

That which Memek Garfinkel chooses to remain silent about in his testimony, is dealt with in the testimony of those who survived in this, or another manner. Their writings are found elsewhere in this *Pinkas*.

———— : : ————

**Garfinkel Mieczyslaw**

**Born 11 May 1898 in Zamość .**

Lawyer.

In the time of the (German) Occupation, Leader of the Jewish Help Committee in the Zamość Powiat, from December 13, 1939. Also Leader of the 'Judenrat in Zamość from February 1940.

A widower – his wife was killed in Oswiecim on 24 January 1944.

———— : : ————

On September 1, 1939, Zamość counted approximately 12,000 Jews [in its midst]. The composition of the Jewish population, more or less, was like that in the usual Polish district city. In Zamość , several tens of Jewish intellectuals could be found: physicians, lawyers, teachers (there was a Jewish Gymnasium in the city), and there were a few large-scale merchants and industrialists, a significantly visible number of Jewish manual tradespeople; – the majority, however, were of a small business element, so called '*luftmenschen*,' there was also a not-so-large number of proletarians.

Zamość was taken by the Germans on Wednesday, September 13, 1939. Before the Germans entered the city, there were two air attacks, during which somewhat less than 30 demolition bombs were dropped, but a rather large number of incendiary bombs were dropped. The bombs fell in the neighborhood which was inhabited by the poorer Jewish element. There was, at that time, up to about 500 victims among the Jewish populace.

The Germans then remained in Zamość until September 26, 1939. On that day, on the strength of the understanding with the Soviet Union, they drew back to the rear of Lublin. Zamość went over to the Russians. This time (the first Nazi occupation) went by without any specific anti-Semitic actions. The Germans made an effort to take a large number of hostages, Poles as well as Jews, approximately 1500 men. The hostages were tortured and beaten, but all remained alive. With the entry of the Russians, the Jews breathed more freely. However, by the end of September, it became known that the Russians were withdrawing to the other side of the Bug, and Zamość, once again, would go over to the Germans.

This specific news elicited a greatly panicked reaction among the Jewish populace. Anticipating the later misfortunes, the Jews, *en masse*, began to prepare themselves to leave the city, together with the Russians. This is especially so, in light of the fact that the Soviet military authorities were willing to offer assistance those who wanted to leave Zamość, providing their transport resources. Approximately seven to eight thousand Jews then left Zamość along with the Russians. Regrettably, the majority of them stopped in the territory of the so-called Western Ukraine, and later, when the war (between Germany and the Soviet Union) broke out later in the year 1941, and these territories were taken in by Germany, they shared in the same fate as the local Jewish populace. A small fraction of these 7000-8000 Jews saved themselves, and only those who either voluntarily, or by being forced, found themselves in distant areas of the Soviet Union.

The Germans entered Zamość for the second time in October 7, 1939. Approximately one third of the Jewish population remained in the city. These Jewish live through awesome terror, anticipating excesses from the underworld, who intended, and had the means to perpetrate during the transition time from one authority to the other. It was related from a variety of circles, that 'something' was being prepared for the Jews; that an accounting would be made because of the fact that they fled with the 'Soviets.' The situation was very bad, also because of the fact that the municipal government categorically rejected the proposal of a variety of Jewish circles, that a mixed Jewish-Polish militia should be established for the interregnum period. The municipal government's motivation (for rejection) was motivated by the fact that the Germans, who were slated to take over the city, would not react positively to such an initiative. Fortunately, the fear turned out to be groundless, and the transition of the city from Soviet hands to the Germans took place peacefully. Despite this, from the first moment on, the Jews began to feel what it means to be under German occupation.

Immediately after the city was taken, the seizure of Jews for labor began. This seizure had a mass character to it, and was done in an unorganized fashion, such that the Jews did not show themselves in the streets, and hid themselves in their houses. At the same time, pogroms began against Jewish businesses. German soldiers did this – Polish youth indicated which of the businesses were Jewish, who then utilized this opportunity for their purposes of plunder. Seeing no Jews in the streets, the German soldiers began to break into the Jewish houses, and would drag the Jews out for a variety of labor , or to serve them. The circumstances that were created elicited the thought among a portion of the prominent members of the Jewish community, that the (German) military commander of the city should be approached, with the proposal about normalizing the current relationships. What emerged was, that the Jewish community took on the obligation to provide the necessary number of workers – this entailed several tens of workers – under the condition that seizure by soldiers would cease. An order going out, that prohibited the robbing of Jewish businesses, was also achieved.

After a set period of time, approximately in the beginning of November 1930,[400] The German civilian authority and the Gestapo arrived in Zamość. Shortly thereafter, 8 Jews, myself among them, as one of the remaining intellectuals in the city, were summoned to the Burgomaster of the city, who declared to us that in accordance with the order from the Gestapo, we will be the Council of Elders for the Jews of Zamość.

This Council of Elders must represent the Jewish interests to the German authorities, and first and foremost, must pay attention to assure that the Jews fulfil all the demands and orders that the German authorities will issue. All my pleas and attempts to get myself out of this [obligation] were of no avail.

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400 In keeping with the constraints of the Editors, obvious typographical errors are also reproduced. Very likely this was intended to be 1940.

It was in this fashion, more or less, that we began our positions in the house of the Jewish community, apart from the day-to-day obligation of providing Jewish workers (for the Germans), the number of which continuously grew, reaching the level of between 500-600 workers daily, and began to demand of us continuously newer and newer taxes.

First came the official letter from the military commandant, Major **Harm**, with the demand to pay to his hand ten thousand zlotys as a partial cover for the losses incurred by the war, which was provoked by the Jews. Regrettably, this specific letter, which was under guard among other documents in the community house, was lost. This sum was collected by the Council of Elders from among themselves, with the help of a number of other Jews with means, not throwing this burden on the rest of the Jewish population.

In a few days later, we were summoned to the German City Elder, a certain **Weichenmeyer**, born in Stuttgart. This character, after berating us in the foulest language, and yelling at us, finally demanded that we pay the treasury of the Zamość city administration the sum of 75 thousand zlotys. As I later learned, this idea had been submitted (to the Germans) by the onetime Burgomaster of the city, **Mikhl Wasowski**. This sum was supposed to go towards the assistance of Polish repatriates, who coursed through Zamość *en masse*. These repatriated individuals went over to the Germans from the Soviet zone. We were compelled to raise this sum from among the widest circles of the Jewish populace. Almost this entire sum (73 thousand zlotys), I personally paid into the treasury of the Magistrate of Zamość, from which I obtained a receipt.

Apart from this, we were continuously pressed fro a variety of demands, also other locations, which were designated by the German employees, for German officers. We also had to provision these locations with beds, bed appurtenances, linens, furniture, etc.

In 2-3 days after the payment was made to the Magistrate in the previously mentioned amount, we were called to the Gestapo for the first time.

The Chief of the Gestapo was then the *Sturmbannfuhrer* **Block**, from Vienna. After his transfer from Zamość, he became Chief of the Gestapo in **Borislav**.

The previously mentioned Block in the presence of an interpreter, a certain **Bernardt** (who came from Silesia), red to us a complete listing of Jewish sins and crimes – the greatest accusation was, that we were the ones who caused the war. Afterwards, he gave us a prepared protocol to endorse, where the 'good relationship' of the controlling German powers towards the Jews of Zamość is specifically established, and where it is specifically established that the Jews of Zamość have not yet paid any contributions at all to this date.

Ending this so-called official part of the audience, and after extracting signatures from us by force, he declared:

'Listen with care to what I will say at the end, and this is even more important (that the signed protocol). You Jews must carry out everything that we demand of you; provide us with everything that we will request, and you will live as long as we do and as long as it is good for us.'

In this time, the population of the city increased, because the Jews from the surrounding towns and villages began to arrive in Zamość *en masse*. Conditions there were even worse. Already, in the time before centralized ghettoes were being organized, the larger Jewish centers, drew to themselves like a magnet, that Jewish populace, which was scattered and spread out among the smaller settlements. In concert with this, the problem of employing and providing for a large number of the impoverished Jews surfaced. These people obtained employment at the German works, and thereby, from the first minute, it was established that it was the Jewish community that paid for this work. The financial means to do so were obtained in the following manner. We implemented compulsory labor for the entire Jewish population from 14-60 years of age, without regard to gender – 2 days a week. The better-situated Jews, the traders or those who were occupied in their crafts, could pay to the community treasury a sum equivalent to the daily tariff for a worker. With these (buyout) funds we could pay those Jewish workers who, having no other means of making a living, would willingly present themselves to work for the Germans.

The Germans paid nothing for the work. In time, specific work places crystallized themselves, where the Jews worked willingly, especially for the 'Wehrmacht' (The military troops). Relatively speaking, there was a more human treatment there, and also there, from time-to-time, one could get small gifts of food.

The one who followed up for the previously mentioned commandant Harm, was Captain **Paul Wagner**, and older man, a manufacturer from Chemnitz, a quiet man and by comparison, steady. It was arranged with him, that every day, the German military workplaces who needed workers, were to provide him with the requisite lists. He would then send those lists to the community. His two subordinate officers engaged in escorting the work groups, as well as the member of the 'Senior Council' **Azriel Sheps**, a tailor by trade, a community activist in the pre-war years. This (escorting to work) would take place each day at 6 o'clock in the morning, in front of the building of the '**Oberkomendatur**,' From that time on, the Jews could peaceably show themselves in the city, and occupy themselves with their means of livelihood, because the seizures ceased.

This situation persisted until May 1940, when the matter of the provisioning of workers and allocation of Jewish workers was taken over by the local division of the SS with its leader, the *Sturmbannfuhrer* Major **Fritz** in command:

At the end of November, or the beginning of December 1939, the Gestapo in Zamość ordered that the entire Jewish population from 12 years of age and up, should put on a band of yellow color on their right arms, with a *Magen David* of blue color. The armbands were required to be 10 centimeters wide.

In several weeks later, this order was modified – the armbands were required to be white ones.

With the donning of the armbands, a new sort of trouble began: the Germans would detain the Jews in the streets, and beat them on the pretense that they did not show them proper respect, or having doffed their hats too late. Along with the compulsion to wear armbands, an order was also issued that the Jews needed to take off their hats for each German. Thanks to the strenuous efforts of the 'Eldest Council' the order requiring that hats be taken off, was removed by the military commandant **Wagner**, after consultations that were held with the *Landart* – the German Senior in the Gestapo, who was against annulling the order from the outset.

At the beginning of December 1939. I was called to the German City Elder, who declared to me, that a transport of Jews had to arrive in Zamość who are being evacuated from Warthegau.[401] In connection with this, he demanded of me that I form a Help Committee, which should undertake the settlement of these people. He send to me, the local chief of the NSV – (*National-Socialistische Volkswohlvert*) – a specific party-designate **Schultz.** This individual declared to me that the Help Committee which will be created will have to be subordinate to him; that he will have to provide monthly accountings of its activities. At my request and demand, he promised me help in connection with this issue. And, in fact, initially he provided us with a field kitchen. I thought that the first mission would have to be to provide a means to feed all those who would be arriving.

On December 18, 1939, at night. I received a representation from the German City Elder, that tomorrow, a transport of Jews was arriving from **Wloclawek**. Together with the organized Help Committee, we were at the train station already before dawn, where indeed, the transport of Jews arrived in sealed freight cars. These were, indeed, Jews from Wloclawek in the amount of 500 persons, who had been traveling for approximately a week's time, without sustenance, and we had to immediately step up to arrange for these people coming off the train wagons, giving them first of all, some sustenance, and first of all water to drink, which they did not have for the entire journey.

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401 Editor's Footnote: A neighborhood around Lodz, beside the Warta River

Translator's Footnote: As the result of the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, Hitler incorporated the Voievodship of Poznan into the Third Reich and renamed it *Warthegau* (Warta River Region).

The German official authority overseeing the station did not permit us to help the arrivals, at the outset, they didn't even want us to approach the wagons.

As it later became evident, the City Elder did not want to receive this transport of Jews at all, in (his) city. And had the idea of sending them to the Russian border, in order to forcibly drive the Jews to the opposite side.

After strenuous efforts, it became possible for us to 'receive' the womenfolk, children and the elderly. From among the able-bodied men – approximately 150 – the first Jewish camp of Zamość was organized. These men were billeted in the Synagogue, where they were under guard by the SS.

After locating all of the women and children in vacant houses, which remained empty after Jews [had left], we took to organizing help for this first camp. The men remained in the sealed Synagogue for approximately 4 weeks. After extensive attempts, again it was made possible for us to get them released, but under the condition that they not remain in Zamość , but rather take up residence in the neighboring town of **Szczebrzeszyn**, 20 kilometers from Zamość .

I personally escorted these people on January 15, 1940 to that place. I asked them, that for at least a few days, not to show themselves in Zamość , because according to the announcement of the Germans, they could be threatened wit being shot for that. I offered that at the very least, in this location they had the freedom to move about, to possibly reach Warsaw, or other cities. All my efforts to show the Germans the absurdity of the order to divide up families, the women and children [separated] from their husbands and fathers, had no effect whatsoever. Their prohibition against their taking up residence in Zamość was a categorical one.

Ignoring this, despite the fact that it was visible, immediately on the following morning, after being escorted to Szczebrzeszyn, (where I also organized a local Help Committee), they began to sneak back into Zamość .
The road from Szczebrzeszyn to Zamość went right by the barracks, where divisions of the SS were billeted, who were under the command of the **Fritz** that we had previously mentioned. It is necessary to remark that this 'lovely man' after a certain period of time, became the commandant of **Oswiecim**.

Taking note of the stealthy means that the Jews employed along the road, the SS troops seized 17 of them, and after several days of bestial torture, killed them all. As it later became possible for me to discover, these people were stripped naked, in a 30 degree frost; they were drenched in cold water, making frozen ice statues out of them. This was the manner in which they were frozen to death. Among those who were tortured in this way were the following Jews from **Wloclawek**, to the extent that I can recall: **Ber Charney**, a mill owner; **Blass**, **Proshkier**, a merchant; **Stupai,** a young man, a student, son of a Gymnasium teacher.

Ignoring the previous chicaneries and the instances of the disappearance of a number of Jews, without leaving a trace, this was the first tragic upset that the Jews of Zamość suffered.

## The Jewish Region and its Administration

As I have already mentioned, the Germans set up a so-called 'Eldest Council' of 8 people, immediately after they took over the city. Apart from myself, the following were appointed to this Council:

**Azriel Sheps**, a tailor, an old community activist, a member of the community leadership;

**Eliyahu** Epstein, a merchant;

**Viktor Inlander**, a merchant;

**Stanislaw Hernhaut**, owner of a printing shop;

**Sholom Tischberg**, an old community activist, a merchant;

**Shmuel Cahan**, an industrialist.

During this time, I was especially busy with the organization of the Help Committee, and directing its activities, which specifically focused on settling and helping the continuously arriving evacuation transports, Jews from **Kolo**, **Konin**, **Wloclawek**, as well as Jews from Warsaw and Lodz, who were looking for a placid location. In Zamość, one did not yet feel a shortage of housing, and the provisioning situation had not changed a great deal from the pre-war situation.

Approximately in January 1940, the so called '*Judenrat*' was called into existence at the order of the German authorities, which appeared in the orders of the Governor **Frank**. This order had just then arrived in Zamość.

Utilizing the lack of clarity in the details of this order, where it is stated, that the cities that have **'more than ten thousand residents**,' but it does not say if these means only Jews of the general population, the '*Judenrat*' must consist of 24 people, the Zamość '*Judenrat*' organized the setup comprised of 24 people.

I was at that time to be found in Warsaw, in connection with an intervention with the 'Joint,' about a subsidy for the Help Committee. When I returned, I was told that I was selected by consent of the '*Judenrat*' to be its Leader. All the efforts that I made to rid myself of this obligation did not yield any positive results. All the members of the '*Judenrat*' demanded of me that I should accept the appointment as Leader. I was also summoned by the Burgomaster, and that individual, at the order of the City Elder, demanded of me that I take on the leadership position of the '*Judenrat.*'

Without disrupting the ongoing work, we began to organized the internal organizations of the newly projected institution. In advance, the following divisions were organized:

3. Census;
4. Civil Office
5. Finance Division;
6. Labor Division;
7. Housing Division.

Later, as our mission evolved, the following divisions were created as well:

8. A Division to Look After Camps;
9. Post Office
10. Tax Division.

In connection with the meaningful growth of the Jewish population, as a result of the previously mentioned facts of influx from faraway places, we carried out a census and a card identification system was put in place. The census showed that in August 1940, there were about 8,000 Jews to be found in Zamość.

Seeing that the order that forbade the Jews from living in the same community with Aryans came out quickly, and that it was forbidden for Jews to occupy any sort of position, German or Polish, we began to manage our own books concerning civil affairs. We managed the recording of deaths and births; issuing marriage licenses, as well as personal documents needed at specific times. The population office was headed by the lawyer **Julian Goldstein**, the son of **I. L. Peretz's** sister.

Apart from this, we were compelled to dispose of all Jewish issues using our won employees in the general offices, especially in matters of taxes and licenses.

The ideal regarding dwellings did not last very long with us. The Germans implemented an identification card system for the entire population rather quickly, and because of this, the Jewish population was allocated the smallest norm for living space. The matter of provisioning was arranged for the Jews in such a manner, that the 'Judenrat' obtained the

entire sum of foodstuffs for the Jewish population, and it had to divide up this produce based on a card system of its own.

The allocation Division, at whose head stood **Sholom Tischberg** and **Adam Gallis**, members of the Council, had increasingly more and more work to do, as time went by, thanks to specific circumstances , which will appropriately come out later and be recalled, and played an important role up to the end of the existence of the Jewish settlement in Zamość.

By May 1, 1941, the Jews occupied all of their former dwellings in the city, not counting the sporadic instances of throwing Jews out of specific homes, specifically the better ones, which the Germans would appropriate, or the Poles, as a replacement for their own homes, that the Germans had taken away.

At the beginning of April 1941, the '*Judenrat*' received a demand that all of the Jews without any differentiation, had to leave their homes in the *Altstad*t, and were to move into the ***Neustadt.***

The last day of the expulsion was set for May 1, 1941.

Several days after the issuance of this order, the Germans offered that I, along with other members of the '*Judenrat*' that I would designate, would be allowed to remain living in the *Altstadt* in two special houses designated for this purpose, on Zamenhof Gasse. Those skilled Jews, who worked exclusively for the German civil and military offices, especially for the Gestapo, were also supposed to live in that house. A group of young Jewish boys and girls were also supposed to live there, who were employed in a variety of servant positions for the Gestapo, security police, and the local commander.

I declared that neither I, nor any members of the Council will remain in the city, because our obligation is to be together with the entire Jewish population. At the same time, as the Leader of the Council, I issued the appropriate orders in connection with the relocation to the *Neustadt.*

We transferred ourselves even before the first of May to the *Neustadt.*

The portion, of the above mentioned skilled workers and servants, remained in the city.

At the end of April, when a part of the Jewish population was still in the *Altstadt*, the '*Judenrat*' was suddenly told that the order to relocate the Jews had been drawn back, and those Jews who up till now had not relocated, may remain undisturbed and secure in the *Altstadt.* Having a premonition that this is certainly a trick, I made sure to transfer the remaining Jews from the city to the *Neustadt.*

And in truth – on the 1st of May, at 5 in the morning, I was awakened. The entire '*Judenrat*' was ordered to appear in the city.

The **Neustadt**, to which the Jews had relocated, is a suburb that lies along the Lemberg Gasse, approximately two kilometers from the city, which consisted mainly of small, wooden houses, a part of which had small gardens. In the time of the relocation, the better houses were taken over by the Poles. For us, the Jews, all that was left were wrecked structures, and ramshackle dwellings, left behind when the Jews (several thousand) in their time, had left Zamość with the Soviet Army. Taking into account the fact that these houses were left behind by Jewish poor people, who up until 1939 had lived in the worst living and sanitary-hygienic conditions, it will become understandable as to how large the problem was of locating Jews from the *Altstadt* there.

The Housing Division, which was created for this reason, in order to organize this 'evacuation,' did everything as far as possible to safeguard an equitable distribution of the housing stock. It became necessary to house Jews in places of business as well, and in former factory halls. There were no water or sanitation facilities there. Water was taken from open streams.

Later, when a portion of the Polish population moved over from the *Neustadt* into the *Altstadt*, utilizing the Jewish residences that had been made vacant, it became a little easier. The need of domicile became strongly worse with the arrival of the first transports from out of the country.

Regrettably the forced liquidations, the so called 'evacuations out' which began in April 1942, 'lightened' the situation for those temporarily who remained; there housing situation improved.

Despite the fact that the obligation of prohibiting Jewish relationships with Aryans, and it was forbidden to live together as well as conducting trade, it was not possible to enforce this because of the fact that we lived together in the same quarter. This prohibition had to remain not more than a plain piece of paper.

The relationship of the local Polish people, who had lived with Jews for a long time, was in general a satisfactory one, despite the fact that there were numerous instances of predation from this or that side. Regrettably, it is not possible to conceal that the fact of hostile attitude towards the Jews, as well as explicit cooperation with the Germans in following the *aktionen* against the Jews, were more numerous than the instances of disinterested or willing help for the Jews. In excuse for the refusal to help the unfortunate Jews, a ritual reply was offered – fear of repression from the Germans. It appeared to the eye, that the Polish populace had licked up the German propaganda, that they, the Aryans, will come to enjoy the abandoned Jewish property, Jewish assets, and it is necessary to remark, that those who were especially attracted by this propaganda, and waited for this 'fat bite,' were the Poles, who had been relocated from the so-called **Warthegau**.[402]

When, on the eve of the expulsion, I paused regarding the fate of the synagogues and other visibly Jewish buildings, which were located in the area of the *Altstadt,* which immediately after our departure would have certainly been wrecked and destroyed, I came to a specific thought. I got in touch with a certain **Zygmunt Zyfcer**, a local industrialist (as I also later became aware, he helped Poles and Jews during the time of the occupation, without anyone knowing) he deployed furniture manufacturing carpenters in the synagogues and other obviously Jewish buildings: thanks to him, these buildings were saved from being burned and destroyed. Which was their fate in other cities of Poland, among others, in Warsaw and Lublin. It was in this fashion, that buildings of rather large material value, and other also, of special cultural continuity and historical significance, such as the Old Synagogue in the city, which reaches in age back to the genesis of Zamość, remained whole to this day.

Apart from the Great Synagogue, the Mikva, the Old Age Home and the Gymnasium were spared, as well as others.

In passing, we have to recall that in this company, whose management was found in the former Jewish Community Building, employed an array of Jews, who thanks to this, lived on for a longer time, already after the Jewish community of Zamość had been cut down.

I return to May 1, 1941 at 5 o'clock in the morning.

It became apparent, that in the *Altstadt*, the entire city leadership and fire-fighters were mobilized, as well as a certain number of the so-called German and Polish '*Granatower*' Police. As it was explained to me, all the Jews who had not relocated themselves to the Neustadt by this date, will be driven to **Komarow**, a town 20 kilometers from Zamość.

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402 It is important to note that the Nazi madness extended to the creation of the so-called *lebensraum,* in which the policy was to make room for an ingathering and expansion of space for people of German origin. Warthegau is the name given by the Nazis to the western province of Silesia in Poland, long coveted by Germany. What the Nazis did, was uproot thousands of Poles, sending them eastward, to make room for ethnic Germans. Part of the inducement to the Poles. was to offer them the booty of abandoned Jewish property in those eastern areas, which would become available because of The Final Solution.

The officials that had come together, the police, were divided up into groups of 3-4 people, and they were ordered to search through the entire city, and to chase out those Jews they found to the '**Rynek**,' from where they, indeed, were driven onwards further.

This *aktion*, and the entire deception, was carried out by the representative of the City Elder, **Karol Foss**, born in Nana Osnabrück.

Thanks to our forethought and energetic action in transferring the Jews to the Neustadt, this provocation in its sum total, was not successful. In total, 250 Jews were discovered in the city, and not thousands, as the Germans had expected. Because of this failure, **Foss** was extremely agitated, and made embittered remarks to me.

Several days later, this same **Foss** , in the company of several Gestapo staff and police, gathered together several hundred Jews in the *Neustadt*, and drove them to the neighboring town of **Krasnobrod.** In the process, he shot several immediately with his own hand.

From May 1941 until November 1942 the Jews in the Neustadt lived together with Aryans, who had remained there. From the outset, there were no sort of delimiters in relating to the Jews from the *Altstadt*. Later on, however, the order for such a prohibition was issued. This prohibition, in fact, only had a symbolic character, because a truly significant number of Jews worked in the *Altstadt* area, as well as in various important operations outside of the city. All of these people had the right, on the basis of an understanding with the Germans, to move freely throughout Zamość, with an authorization that had been issued from the '*Judenrat*.'

It was only first on November 1, 1942, that the Jewish population, severely diminished by liquidations and 'evacuations out,' was required to relocate into a part of the *Neustadt*, in which the Aryans had previously been sidelined. In this fashion, more or less, a typical Jewish Quarter was created, not yet locked up and closed off.

Then, in order to carry out an orderly liquidation of our settlement, as was done with neighboring towns, we exerted ourselves in trying to reconstruct our settlement in the form of a '*Juden-Lager*.' These efforts were carried out with the understanding of the organs of the local German authority. The total of all the remaining Jews at that point barely reached 4,000.

The plan consisted of having the local organs of authority notify the higher levels, that the Jewish community of Zamość had ceased to exist, and all that remained was a work camp. To this purpose, we even prepared a sign on which was written '**Juden-Arbeits-Lager Numer 1, Zamość**.'

Regrettably, this plan was not realized, because on the dat of October 16, 1942 the final expulsion of the Jews from Zamość to Izbica took place, and their liquidation there.

## The Jewish Police

In the transition from the year 1941 to 1942, the local Gestapo demanded from the '*Judenrat*,' that it create a Jewish '*Ordnungsdienst*,' which became popularly known as the **Jewish Police**.

We opposed the implementation of this mission for a long time; we saw no utility in such an institution. However, at the demand of the Gestapo, we were compelled to create such an '*Ordnungsdienst*.' At the beginning, it consisted of 10 people. Jews were summoned there especially – former soldiers from the Polish Army, who had returned from German capture, intelligent people, students, eventual graduates of the Gymnasium. Part of them came from eastern lands, which at that time were occupied by the Soviet Army, and had no possibility at that time to get back to their homes.

In order to protect ourselves from any sort of malfeasance on the part of these functionaries, they received higher pensions and living allocations, which assured them of a suitable existence. A strict regime was instituted and a very

tight accounting from the police to the '*Judenrat*,' which provided a very substantive oversight, who saw to it that no direct contact would take place between the Jewish Police and the Gestapo and the Polish 'Granatower' Police.

A demand was made of us several times to enlarge the cadre of the '*Ordnungsdienst*.' However, under the explanation that we lacked explicitly qualified forces, we managed to get out of this [requirement].

It was only with the arrival of the first transports arrived at the end of April and beginning of May 1942, with Jews who were 'evacuated out' from Germany and Czechoslovakia, that we enlarge the membership of the '*Ordnungsdienst*' to 16 men, adding to the previous [members], a number of Jews from Czechoslovakia and Germany. The maximum amount of members reached a total of 20 people. This number was arrived at on the categorical order of the Lublin Gestapo in August 1942. Then, the continuous expulsions of the Jews by the Gestapo began, from the Neustadt to the gas chambers at **Belzeč**. At that time, the Gestapo was greatly upset because of the results of the implementation of this *aktion*. It was only able to 'seize' 300 Jews. The blame for this unsuccessful hunt was attributed by it, to the fact that the Jewish Police in Zamość did not participate in it.

**Alvin Lipman** was designated to be the commandant of the '*Ordnungsdienst*' in May 1942 by the Council, a German Jew from Dortmund, a former *Oberleutenant* in the German Army from before the year 1918. He was a flier in Richthofen's Escadrille; he was personally acquainted with Goering and General **Liett** (?), a man who had practically all the highest German military decorations and personally written letters of gratitude from Hindenburg and Mackensen.[403]

He was the commandant of the Jewish transport, which was 'evacuated out' of Dortmund. This person looked to be able to maintain our '*Ordnungsdienst*' at the appropriate level in every standpoint. With his help, we were able to immediately interdict the attempt by the Gestapo to infiltrate their agents into the ranks of the police. Only at the very end, was it first that a single *agent provocateur* could be found in our police. During the entire time of the existence of the police, there was no complaint carried out against them by the populace.

The assistant to Lipman was a Czech Jew, also an officer, whose name I do not recall at this time.

## The Financial Problems of the '*Judenrat*'

From the beginning of its existence, the '*Judenrat*' had to contend with seriously difficult financial problems. The principle adopted at the outset, to pay for the work done for the Germans, precipitated substantial expenses, especially when the number of employees continuously grew. Even after the Council had implemented the general work burden, the salary for the work done for the Germans was the single source of sustenance for hundreds of Jews – especially among the foreigners. Social assistance found its expression in the same fashion.

Also the levies swallowed up huge sums. After the first two levies, in excess of ten thousand and 75 thousand zlotys, a third was demanded for the local division of the SS in the amount of 150 thousand zlotys.

This demand was set forth in the year 1940 (immediately after the bestial murder of 17 Wloclawek Jews, which we have previously mentioned) by a certain **Herman Goldhammer**, who was not know to anyone in Zamość. This character presented himself as a so-called liaison-man for the local SS, and especially of its leader, the Major **Fritz**. As it later became apparent, he was a Jew from Bialystok, a butcher, a personality with a dark disposition, and among other

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[403] *Paul von Beneckendorff und von Hindenburg* (1847-1934) first saw military action at the Battle of Koniggratz in 1866 and in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Hindenburg retired from the army 1911. The outbreak of the First World War led to his inevitable recall on 22 August 1914, being sent to the Eastern Front as Commander of East Prussia. Hindenburg was consequently promoted to Field Marshal, finally becoming Army Chief of Staff on 29 August 1916.
*August von Mackensen* (1849-1945), who was born on 6 December 1849, is considered one of the best field commanders of the German army during the First World War.

things, a missionary. He mastered German so quickly (for a period of time he was in Germany, as an itinerant leather merchant), that despite the fact that he was illiterate, he passed for a period of time as a [native] German. In the SS Division, he presented himself as an emissary of the '*Judenrat*' in Zamość.

Desiring to please the SS and to obtain their sympathy, he continuously thought up new demands, with which he came to us.

Goldhammer also legitimized himself with some sort of an appointment from a German general, which set out that he had helped the Germans during their siege of Warsaw. This lout, groused around Zamość for a long time, cause the Jews great harm.

His story came to an end through the fact that he was turned over by the head of the SS to the Gestapo, who liquidated him.

This happened a short time after the 'Judenrat,' being unable to respond to the continuous new demands, placed itself in direct contact with the previously mentioned Fritz, and thereby brought the whole story about Goldhammer to light. The Council, however, was compelled to pay the sum of 160,000 zlotys. This sum was gathered from among the Jewish populace.

A very weighty burden for the Council, were the expenses that it had in connection with the compulsory burden of providing domicile for the Germans.

The largest financial plague for the Council was the pressure to find cover for the continuously mounting expenditures connected with bribery, gifts, and other outlays for the various officials; for the higher and lower Gestapo officials; German police; gendarmes or employees.

As it rapidly became evident, this was the sole basis on which one could set up mutual relationships; the one way to buy one's self some comparative peace.

To the general misfortune, these sums continued to grow, to the point that the position for this type of expense in the monthly budget of the 'Judenrat' reached the sum of between 150,000 and 200,000 zlotys. It was impossible to collect a sum of this nature from the Jewish populace. The normal income from monthly payments brought in approximately eight to ten thousand zlotys; barely enough to cover the compensation for the Council personnel and the outlays of the chancellery.

A need developed to begin looking around for income that was out of the ordinary.

In general, the Council had yet other expenses. It constantly had to cover the deficits of the Help Committee, which ran a field kitchen; maintained a Jewish hospital; other forms of support – this required approximately 30,000 zlotys monthly. The source fro this was found by the 'Judenrat' in the sizeable earnings of Jewish merchants and bakers, who fed the Jewish populace (illegally), for whom the allocated norms of foodstuffs from the Germans was insufficient. Very quickly, the entire income from the five bakeries, one slaughterhouse, and several distribution stores, fell into the treasury of the Council.

In that time, it became possible for us to tie up with a close contact with the economic resort of the German City Elder, which, incidentally, was not easy, because the majority of the employees of the City Elder were recruited from the residents of Poznan who had been 'evacuated out, who deliberately did not permit our leaders to reach the right reference point with regard to provisions. By themselves, they drew no small use of this [connection] for their own interests. We were able to achieve this, true, for a steady payoff, or better said, for bribery; to eliminate the influence of the employees as well as the (Polish) municipal leadership, and as a result, we began to receive meaningfully larger allocations than before.

It happened in the following manner: Every month we would submit an order with the census of the Jewish population. We would increase the count fictitiously by 2-3 time the amount that it really was. Apart from this, we also received allocations for those Jews who in the camps around Zamość. These lists were also false. We did this with the understanding (in partnership) with the leaders of the camps. Because of this they were supplied rather finely. The provisioning official of the City Elder, the so-called '*Kreisrefererant für Ernehrung*' also received rather generous 'gifts.' He categorically prohibited the city council, and others he controlled, to mix into issues pertaining to provisioning for the Jewish populace – this was his own personal issue.

As a result of this, as it previously fell into the private hands of merchants, significant sums of money began to come into the treasury of the '*Judenrat*,' which made it possible for the '*Judenrat*' to hold out financially until the liquidation of the Jewish settlement. The Council was able to cover all extraordinary outlays without resorting to placing a burden on the Jewish populace. The Council also had specific reserves of money for unexpected and sudden outlays.

I must provide a characteristic detail here which is very instructive about our psyche. In these extraordinarily difficult times of the worst occupation and inhuman anti-Semitic terror, we were concerned with, and looked after Jewish issues in the future. During that time, we were seen to pay off a lien due to a loan that existed from before the war, which was owed by the Gymnasium. This Gymnasium was indebted to the Society for Social Security ('*Ubezpieczenie*') for several tens of thousands of zlotys, which were paid in, and the debt was erased. Regrettably, we were unable to retire a second lien due to a debt. This demonstrates the optimism with which we lived then, our people's community, in the most difficult of times.

In concluding this chapter, it is necessary to add that the most that cost us was the building that we constructed for the SS with the hands of Jewish workers, by the assistance of building materials given as a 'donation' from the Jewish merchants and industrialists. It was a residential complex, for the previously mentioned SS Division, at whose head stood **Fritz**. The construction of this building swallowed up approximately about a half million zlotys.

The full name of this Division was: '**First Squadron of the First SS *Totenkpffreiter* Regiment**.'

After building the formidable horse stables, with a roof-covered riding field and a veterinary hospital, the name of this division was changed to: '**Höherei SS Reit-und Fahrschule**.'

The German City Elder, the top man in the district, **Weichenmeyer**, who came from Stuttgart, cost us about 300,000 zlotys. Enormous sums, which I can no longer recall accurately, were swallowed up in the pockets of the Gestapo in the course of three year. The extracted whatever they could from us.

The fact that the Jewish Quarter, up to the last minute was not a closed one, can be explained by: first, the '*Judenrat*' paid very dearly for this, with valuable 'gifts' and secondly, that a rather large number of Jews from this Quarter worked in the larger area of the city, and needed to go in an out on a continuous basis.

This last fact was one of our countering arguments regarding the repeating demands from a variety of sources, which demanded that our Jewish Quarter should be cordoned off and locked up.

I am reminded of such an instance, when it became very difficult to oppose the pressure of cordoning off and locking up our Quarter. It was at the end of September 1941. Among the Jews, and epidemic of the spotted typhus broke out. At the meeting that was called together, in consultation with the German organs of authority, where I also, as the leader of the 'Judenrat' was called, (with my deputy Sheps), we had to fight very strenuously for maintaining the character of our Quarter as it was to date, against the position of the district physician, who advocated that our residential area be cordoned off and locked up.

We first assured ourselves of a tract (through recognized means) and support from the representative in charge of sanitation, and the military commandant, and it was given to us at that time to effectively defend against having us locked in, and creating a ghetto.

The issue was disposed of by having placards posted on high signs, put up at the expense of the 'Judenrat,' on all roads leading into and out of the area where the Jews lived, on which a skull and crossbones were painted, and a sign: **'Spotted Typhus Fever, Entrance is Forbidden; Only Through Traffic Permitted Without Stopping.'**

These placards actually brought us unanticipated great utility, because these placards put an end to the variety of 'visits' with the objective of plunder, on the part of many Germans, gendarmes, and other members of the SS.

I cannot proceed without mentioning the role played by the provisioning officer, **Hans Revko**, in rescuing the financial situation of the Council. Despite the fact that he did not do this free of his interest, he nevertheless always went along with us. Even though he was officially a Hitlerist, he had a positive attitude towards the Jews. Thanks to him, we had the possibility to help our brethren in the work camps; they received a measurably larger allocation of produce than was officially set for them.

On October 16, 1942, when the previously partial liquidations were still going on, and the expulsion to Izbica, and with it, the full liquidation of the Jewish settlement in Zamość, several hundred meters of whitened flour, and a larger number of crude flour, several thousand meters of potatoes (despite the fact that the distribution *aktion* was not yet complete), and other food reserves, such as a specific amount of buckwheat groats, and other valuable produce, remained in the camps of the '*Judenrat*,' which the German Jews had brought with them on their transport. We managed with these valuable products in a very spare manner – they were only given out for children, the sick and convalescents.

In the treasury of the Council, there were several tens of thousands of zlotys at that time, which was confiscated by the Gestapo.

In the final moment of the liquidation of the Jewish settlement in Zamość, we were prepared and organized to take on the impending winter of 1942-1943, which, according to our forecasts, was supposed to be the last winter of the enslavement of the Jews who would remain alive.

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In March 1942, we found out that a transport of Czech Jews had arrived in the neighboring town of **Izbica**, and that pretty soon, we had to expect that they would be arriving in Zamość. We were prepared to accept them. On the night of April 30, we received news that the transport was getting close to the city. Almost the entire Council and its employees were at the station.

In the middle of the night, the train arrived with thousands of **Czech** and **Slovakian** Jews, from the camp in **Theresienstadt.**

After unloading them from the wagons, we led everyone to our Quarter, which was at a distance of several kilometers from the station. We carried the old and the sick on small carts. The people were terrifying exhausted from the long journey.

On the second night, another transport arrived, also with Jews from Theresienstadt, in the amount of 1000 persons. For two more nights, the third and the last transport of foreign Jews arrived, also 1000 people. From **Dortmund** and **Westphalia.**

Since this was after the first liquidation *aktion* of April 11, when more than 3000 Jews were taken to **Belzeč** into the ovens, we were able to settle these Jews from the transports among us.

These foreign Jews took no account of the situations that then prevailed in Poland. Their baggage was extensive, and that bore witness to their means. Apart from this, it became evident that each of their transports had in addition, 2-3 wagons with the largest part of their baggage and foodstuffs. Those wagons, however, remained in Lublin, where that dark and somber **Globocznik**, who was known to us, was located with his central staff. Those wagons had been separated from the transport, and never came to Zamość. Only from one German transport, from Dortmund, which was

led by **Lippman**, who is already familiar to us, and thanks to his personal energy and his resistance in Lublin, the wagon with the foodstuffs arrived in Zamość.

The extent to which these people took no account of the situation, is manifested in the fact that, the greatest pretensions and complaints that they had to the Council was, why we were not in a position to reclaim their lost luggage from Globocznik and the Gestapo.

Each of them pushed themselves forward with their baggage claim receipt in hand, and categorically demanded to be immediately provided with their baggage.

The naiveté of some went so far, as to threaten us with material responsibility because of this.

Regrettably, they rather quickly came afterwards, to realize the significance of where and for what purpose they had been brought [to this place].

It was the Jews from Germany, from Dortmund, that had the best thoughts and were full of optimism. Hey were convinced that they were traveling to pioneer for work in the east. Most of them had brought along their work equipment, a part also musical instruments.

In this, they overcame the evacuation conditions in Dortmund. The Dortmund city council had distributed a quota of resources for sustenance, similar as that for German citizens, for a longer period of time than initially thought, not excluding white flour, buckwheat groats, sugar, condensed milk for children, and other products.

With the transport from the Czech Jews, among others, the Professor of Surgery, **Joseph Weininger** came from Vienna, a nephew of the renown **Otto Weininger** [404]; the Docent of Prague University, **Zygmunt Shoenhof** with his wife and son; The Docent **Benno Epstein**, a laryngologist from Prague; **Dr. Mauriczy Mittelman**, a member of the Editorial staff of the well-known democratic periodical in Prague, and 30 other members of the intelligentsia, merchants and industrialists.

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404 Otto Weininger (April 3, 1880 - October 4, 1903) was an Austrian philosopher. In 1903, he published the book *Geschlecht und Charakter* (*Sex and Character*); it gained popularity after Weininger's theatrical suicide at the age of 23. Today, the book is commonly dismissed as sexist and anti-Semitic, but held up as a great work of lasting genius and spiritual wisdom by some.

Born in Vienna, he was a gifted student and enrolled at the philosophical faculty of the University of Vienna in 1898, receiving his doctorate in 1902.

In his book *Sex and Character*, Weininger argues that all people are composed of a mixture of the male and the female substance, and attempts to support his vew scientifically.

In a separate chapter, Weininger, himself a homosexual Jew who had converted to Christianity in 1902, analyzes the archetypical Jew as feminine, and thus profoundly irreligious, without true individuality (soul), and without a sense of good and evil. Christianity is described as "the highest expression of the highest faith", while Judaism is called "the extreme of cowardliness." Weininger decries the decay of modern times, and attributes much of it to Jewish influences.

Weininger shot himself in the house in Vienna where Beethoven had died, the man he considered one of the greatest geniuses of all. This made him a *cause célèbre*, inspired several imitation suicides, and turned his book into a success. The book received glowing reviews by August Strindberg, who wrote that it had "probably solved the hardest of all problems", the "woman problem".

Weininger's writings were used by Nazi propaganda; Adolf Hitler is reported to have said something to the effect of "There was only one decent Jew, and he killed himself."

This intelligentsia was immediately drawn into community work. The doctors were immediately drawn to work in the Jewish hospitals, to which they dedicated themselves with intensity.

The foreign Jews shared in the fate of their Zamość brethren. Not being prepared for these new conditions, almost all of them perished.

As it is now known, Dr. M. Mittelman saved himself, and from whom I received a letter not long ago from Prague. The plan and circumstances surrounding his escape from Zamość, before the final liquidation of the Jewish settlement, was thought out together with me, and without a doubt, I feel and extraordinary joy that our plan succeeded.

In order to help the foreign Jews, and to protect them against any exploitation, partly also at the hands of their own brethren, who purchased valuable items from them at derisory prices, often paying them with banknotes snatched out of the air, the '*Judenrat*' organized a special office, making purchases of valuables or other pretty trinkets, at market prices – artwork. These items were always needed by the Council for acts involving 'gift-giving' (bribery).

Until the time that these Jews got themselves settled with employment, the sale of these items was their single source of income. Together with the two hot meals a day that was given out by the Committee Kitchen, this was the basis for their existence.

It is necessary to note that the majority of these Jews found employment rather quickly. Their knowledge of foreign languages helped them, and the exemplary discipline that they possessed. Were it not for the mass 'liquidations,' where they represented a proportionately larger number of the victims than the other Jews, they would have undoubtedly made it through this stormy time.

## Jewish Labor in the Camps

As we have already recalled, from the first moment that the Germans occupied the city, an unorganized seizure of Jews began in the streets, to do work and provide personal service for the Germans. Every German division, every German office, and also every German for himself, held it as an obligation to exploit the Jews for all manner of work and services: shining boots, washing cars, chopping wood, unloading wagons, cleaning the premises and offices; carrying out a variety of field work, construction work, metalworking, – the Jews were forced to do all of this. These seizures ceased thanks to the efforts of the '*Judenrat*,' when they were replaced by an organized daily consultation with designated salaried workers. The number of such workers grew continuously.

One Saturday in June 1940, an order was issued that the entire Jewish populace, men from age 14 to 60 is required to present themselves at the location of the SS barracks, two kilometers from the city, in the former school of agriculture in **Janowica**. A medical inspection took place there, under the supervision of our two physicians, **Freihoffer** and **Rosenman**, of which the latter was a member of the 'Judenrat,' and the former – the doctor of the Help Committee.

By that time, we were already in direct contact with the leader (of the SS) **Fritz**, thanks to which this medical examination was conducted under the oversight of SS doctors, and took place in complete tranquility. At that time, 500 young men were designated for labor, who were arrayed in tow straight groups. One group was led off to **Wysokie Bartoticza**, about 20 kilometers distant from the city, to which afterwards, several hundred Jews were brought from the neighboring towns of the district: **Izbica, Krasnobrod, Komarow, Tomaszow**. There, a work camp was created, which carried out maintenance work on the surrounding areas and meadows. This camp was directly organized under the so-called '*Wasserwirtschaftsamt*' in Zamość , at the head of which stood the German engineer, **Starke.**

The camp was located in two shires in the middle of a field, heavily cordoned off with wire, and additionally was guarded by 'Black' (*Volksdeutsche* – local, and brought in from out of the country – who would wear black uniforms). The regimen in the camp from the outset was very sharp. The work exceeded the strength; food packages, that were sent by families, were not permitted to be delivered; the suspected or actual attempts to escape ended with shooting; beating the workers was a day-in and day-out occurrence.

Immediately following the organization of this camp, the '*Judenrat*' set up within itself a commission of assistance for the camps. In an understanding with the 'Judenrat' councils of the other surrounding towns, from which Jews had been driven together into this camp, we began to seek contacts with Herr Starke and his assistants, as well as with the guards of the camp, the *Volksdeutsche*. In a rather short time, making use of the old and time-tested Jewish methods, which had lightened the fate of the abandoned Jews not once in Jewish history, we obtained an 'understanding' from Herr Starke and his assistants. The regimen in the camp, from that time forward, was meaningfully eased. The provision of foodstuffs was permitted, and also medicinal help. We were able to cause the too high workloads to be lowered, and the beatings and shootings stopped.

The conditions held in the camp until the end of 1940. In connection with ending the work on this area, and transferring the work to other areas, which lay quite close to Zamość, the camp was dissolved, and the Jews were released.

At the same time along with this, thanks to strenuous efforts, we were able to organize the filling of the work requirements for the Germans on the basis of voluntary appearance for work, and organized by the labor office (of the '*Judenrat*'). The principle of a paid salary for this work was implemented, and that these workers would be under the oversight of civilian guards, eventually, under Jewish foremen. As a result of the positive support from Herr Starke (whose palms were always 'well greased') , we were able to obtain continuous allocations of sustenance for those engaged in the camp.

These endeavors led to the result that the work in the maintenance [camps] was thought to be the best, and thereby several hundred Jewish women and girls were employed there, and only a small number of men. This type of work lasted up to the last liquidation of the Zamość Jews in October 1942, and in that connection, there were no notations of any excesses that took place there.

The first period of the time when the camp was locked up was very difficult, and was particularly dangerous the moment when several cases of the spotted typhus appeared there. The so-called 'Blacks' reacted in such a fashion, that they shot anyone who looked to them to be infected, that exhibited symptoms of the disease.

The Jews in the camp protected themselves, in that they would take the sick along with them to work, dragging them along with themselves, even when those who were ill has a temperature of 40°C (104°F). In a number of instances, we were able to secure the help of guards who had been bought off, and sneak out the gravely ill from the camp, and to accommodate them up (in the Jewish Hospital). We took them out in the wagons, covered with food. **Dr. Friedhoffen** showed us a great deal of help in this connection, and his two sanitary workers, who worked unstintingly for the welfare of the Jews.

The second part of those Jews who were driven together for the inspection, to which several hundred Jews from nearby **Komarow, Tyszowce, Szczebrzeszyn** were appended, were later sent to the well-known abysmal extermination camp at Belzeč.

Belzeč, at that time, was on the Russian-German border, 44 kilometers distance from Zamość. Here, the Germans began to build, along the length of the border, a long, deep trench to protect against tanks.

The Jewish camp in Belzeč was put together on a stretch of land of a couple of ten kilometers, in a number of points, with a central office in Belzeč. It totaled about 15 thousand Jews. Most of them were Jews from **Lublin**, approximately 2000 from **Warsaw**, a few from **Radom**, and the rest from the various places in the Lublin district.

There were approximately 500 Jews from Zamość and its surrounding locations.

The commandant and leader of the camp was the familiar *Sturmbannfuhrer* of the Lublin District, **Dolps**. To call him a beast in human form, would be a gross insult to beasts.

Conditions in the camp were hard, literally terrifying. Work beyond [human] capacity; bad sustenance; beatings and sadistic torture at every step. The 'Blacks' also guarded this camp as well. Their continuous activity was to shoot at the Jews that were led to and from work.

Our Assistance Division for the camps, headed at that time by **Baruch Wilder**, **Abish Friedling** also **Rapaport**, placing their own lives in danger, because this was against Dolps' strict prohibition, would drive wagons with food to Belzeč, and there, by various means, exert themselves to throw it over to the hapless people.

Jews also brought food there from other towns as well.

From time-to-time, Dolps would organize reconnoitering in the area around Belzeč, in order to ferret out this 'smuggling.' The Jews he captured were either thrown into the camp, or beaten to death.

It was only first, after some time, thanks to our efforts with higher authorities in Lublin, that Dolps permitted the organization of a sort of Jewish camp council, whose mission had to be: providing food for the people in the camp, and help for them. A number of people were appointed to this council, who were released for this duty – especially from Lublin, because they were the majority of the camp inmates.

Being in Lublin during the formation of this camp council, I was able to get a certain **Yaakov Glatt** out of the camp, a young man from **Lodz**, who prior to this, had not long ago fled from the Lodz ghetto, to Zamość , and here, ended up in the camp. Glatt exhibited extraordinary talent for organization, and in a really short time, he organized and superbly managed the provisioning of the very many camps in the Belzeč territory.

Later, when it became possible to obtain the release of a group of about 500 Jews from Belzeč (by means that will come out later in the narrative), who were from Zamość and other surrounding towns, Glatt applied himself intensely to the provisioning the later organized camps in Zamość .

When the news of the terrifying conditions of those sent to Belzeč had just come back, to Zamość and their families, we began efforts to get them out of there. We initiated these efforts with the assistance of Major Fritz, who by that time was sufficiently dressed and enriched with Jewish valuables. After several weeks of effort, thanks to a 'gift' of 40,000 zlotys, intermediated by Fritz, which was taken by the then well-known SS General **Globocznik** of Lublin, it became possible for us to gain the release of our people.

Technically, it was carried out in the following manner: Fritz brought the list of names of Jews from Lublin, signed by Globocznik. The list had over 200 names of Jews from Zamość . He rode to Belzeč in his auto, accompanied by three members of the council, to get these Jews. Do understand, that in place of 200 Jews, more than 400 people were brought to Zamość, taking along all those whose origin was from neighboring towns: **Izbica, Krasnystaw, Zulkowo, Komarow**, and others. It already was June 1940.

The camp at Belzeč held on for the entire winter, and until the beginning of 1941, and caused the death of many victims.

The well-known Belzeč Death Camp for Jews was constructed in 1942, on the place where the digging of the tank traps had begun.

For the first time, on Polish territory, gas chambers were to be found there, and the tank traps served as the mass graves for the victims. At the beginning, bodies were not yet being cremated.

From the spring of 1940, the previously-mentioned Fritz employed about 150 Jews on the grounds of his barracks to do various kinds of work.

After the medical inspection that was previously described, in the month of June on the grounds of the SS barracks, and the dispatch of the Jews to Belzeč and Wysockie Bartoticza, Fritz increased the number of Jews that were employed by him.

These Jews lived in their homes (in the *Neustadt*) and each morning, as an organized group, together with their senior at their head, would present themselves for work.

We organized a kitchen for them on that location, and produce was obtained from the provisioning division (from the municipal council?), on the strength of a request from Fritz. Seeing that he submitted a number for the workers that was strongly overstated (2-3 times more than in reality), we were able to organize an appropriate sustenance for the workers, and we also had the possibility to respond to the various demands frm Fritz and his attendants.

Wanting to protect himself and his division from going to the front, Major Fritz came upon the idea of building in *Janowica,* a complex of buildings for a riding academy. He received permission to do this from the higher authorities, after he had presented exact plans – representing that he would build this exclusively on the account of Jewish labor and Jewish capital.

He did this, naturally, with the understanding of the 'Judenrat,' whom he promised that when his plan will come to reality, no Jew from Zamość will be sent out to any camp; that there will be no place for anti-Jewish excesses; that the German soldiers in Zamość will behave in an orderly fashion towards the Jews.

When you take into account that these words were spoken by a leader of an SS Division, it is understandable what kind of significance it had for the local Jews. Even more: this came about in the Belzeč epoch. Wanting to avoid any further deportations of Jews to the various camps, the '*Judenrat*' agreed to these plans.

And it was in this fashion, that the building complex was started in Janowica. It consisted of huge horse stables, a veterinary hospital, a covered riding arena and barracks. The buildings had to be equipped with the most modern appointments; In the veterinary hospital, the walls had to be covered in tile. At the troughs there had to be mirrors for the horses. The entire area around had to be plastered.

Several hundred Jews presented themselves to do this work – assistants and craftsmen: carpenters, furniture makers, metalworkers, piping workers (everything had to be piped). Apart from Poles who worked on the walls, who also were paid by the council, all the other workers were Jews.

The burden of providing the building materials was placed by the '*Judenrat*' on several prosperous Jewish industrialists. Also, the bricks in the amount of more than a half million, had to be provided by the Jews – the owners of the local brick making kilns. They also provided the tile. The tin and iron was provided by the Jewish ironmongers. Other Jews provided the cement, and so forth. The '*Judenrat*' paid for other goods, which was purchased by the SS.

The Jews upon whom the task was place to provide the materials, discharged their obligations in a timely and positive fashion, feeling the obligation of solidarity. Others did it with the knowledge that no matter what, a moment will come very quickly when the businesses will be 'Aryanized,' especially as the Aryan competitors had already instituted efforts to accelerate the 'Aryanization' of Jewish businesses.

The Jews took an assessment that it is better hat their net worth, which had been amassed by the expenditure of energy over generations, should be given over to the 'Judenrat' rather than have it fall into the hands of these human hyenas.

And in truth – one didn't have to wait long until the Jewish businesses and undertakings were taken over by the *Volksdeutsche,* and other Aryans.

The work in building this complex lasted until the end of the existence of the Jewish settlement in Zamość. The construction of these modern Zamość pyramids was not completed. This was despite the fact that Fritz took out several hundred Jews, after the Zamość Jews were driven to Izbica, and brought them back to Janowica.

This structure stands in Zamość to this day. And it is my interpretation, that no one can deny the right of the Jews to it, because it is with Jewish labor, Jewish money, and their materials, that it was constructed.

Once again I emphasize, that the Jewish workers, those occupied in the construction, were paid by the '*Judenrat*' for the entire period of their employment, in agreement with the accepted system, which was scrupulously observed, to pay for all the work carried out on behalf of the Germans.

Also the sporadic work, which was carried out by the Jews, which circumstantially were retained on the street, were paid by the Council, in accordance with the calculations provided by those Jews.

The story about Janowica was in its place, factually a Jewish work camp, which was formally recognized in the spring of 1942. It came as a result of the fact that the work there grew, and Fritz demanded more and more workers continuously. When, on one occasion, he demanded that he be provided with an additional several hundred workers, it was not possible to fill the quota. There were no more workers left among the Zamość Jews, also the financial resources did not suffice to cover the outlays that were connected with [the increase].

At that time, the first transports arrived in Izbica of Czech Jews, and Fritz brought 200 of them to work in Janowica. They remained there, locked up in the barracks, and thereby, understand, the '*Judenrat*' took over the care for their sanitation, and provisioning requirements.

When the *aktion* process of liquidations began in the Zamość area,, the Zamość Jews that worked in Janowica continued to remain living there, in a manner of speaking, to protect themselves from being seized.

The leader of the Czech group was **Jezy Basch**, from Prague, a nephew of **Viktor Basch** from Prague. Among the Czech Jews, there were lawyers, physicians, and a large group of intelligentsia.

The so-called *Platzmeister*, and later Commandant of the camp, was the SS man, **Hans Pienkowski**, a leather worker from Oberhausen in Westphalia. He was a sadist, a drunk and a thief. Even these epithets do not completely characterize this lout. Only the precise orders of his superior, Fritz (who firstly had his own interest in mind) as well as the 'gifts' and bribes frm the '*Judenrat*' reined in this beast from unloading its feral instincts against the unprotected Jews.

At the end of the year 1942, warmed up by the anti-Jewish *aktionen*, which continuously repeated themselves, he carried out an act of murder against several tens of Jews. I will tell about this in the chapter where the liquidation of the Zamość Jews will be discussed.

However, here, I would like to recollect the crime that was carried out regarding the Soviet prisoners of war.

Before the Czech Jews from Izbica were taken in, which has previously been related, in order to enlarge the number of enslaved workers, Fritz demanded several hundred Soviet prisoners at the end of the year 1941. These were brought on a daily basis from the large camp of several tens of thousands of Soviet prisoners, who were to be found in Zamość. The same Pienkowski, demonstrated that with his own had, in the course of one week, that he shot about 250 prisoners. He made a whole game out of it. For some sort of a remark, he would shoot a prisoner right in front of the eyes of the workers. Afterwards, he called over two other workers to dig a grave for the one who was shot. Then he would shoot the two, and again call for 4 to dig graves for the two and conceal them. The four were then shot by him, and so forth. In this manner, he shot about 250 captures Soviet soldiers in the course of one week. When I learned about this, I went to the commandant of the prison camp in Zamość (I knew him, because he once approached the '*Judenrat*' with certain

specific demands), and told him about it. The result of this was that prisoners were no longer sent to do labor, and Pienkowski was put on trial by the SS and he received seven days of arrest in the barracks.

On the eve of the spring of 1941, in relation to the preparations that the Germans were making for their attack on Russia, they began to build storage facilities, underground shelters for benzine and several large airfields in the Zamość area and nearby surroundings.

It was at that time that the military command and a division of the air force took up quarters in Zamość, which directed this work.

These works were carried out in an industrial manner by the Czech Jews in particular, construction companies (for example Rudolf Pisek) and a few Poles. At that time, the '*Luftwaffe*' demanded from the '*Judenrat*' as large a number of workers as possible, through the intermediation of the (German) 'Labor Office,' which had created a special division. This so-called '**Judeneisatzstelle**,' was at that time already salaried. It was in this fashion that the '*Luftwaffe*' camp was established, in which several hundred Jews were to be found, which were allocated there by the 'Labor Office' from an array of surrounding towns, as well as from Zamość Jews, who presented themselves voluntarily.

This was a camp of the type that was **open** – the workers got a salary, sustenance was provided for by the '*Judenrat*' through its division for providing assistance to the camps.

All issues pertaining to this camp were actually handled by the previously mentioned **Glatt** and **Baruch Wilder**. From the effort of these people, a bureau was created, which calculated the payment to the workers that was due to them. This bureau also directed their reporting.

This camp continued to exist also after the liquidation of the Jewish community in Zamość. The '*Luftwaffe*' extracted permission, even after the expulsion of all the Zamość Jews to Izbica, to bring back its workers to Zamość.

The SS camp did the same.

It is to be seen from this, that when military factors went in their interest, they were always capable of saving larger or smaller groups of Jews, in opposition to the higher demands and orders of those factions who demanded a complete liquidation of the Jews. Regrettably, such instances were very rare.

We are therefore of the opinion, that, in any case, the higher command, who were the influential spokesmen for the *Wehrmacht* (the offices and leaders of single military command), were just as responsible for the murdering of the Jews in their areas of control, just like those directly involved in carrying out those murders, such as the Gestapo staff, and the so-called extermination commandos.

The German leader on the side of the '*Luftwaffe*' at this camp, was a certain **Walter Raufert**, born in Oppeln, Silesia. From the outset, as a result of the steady 'gifts' and other income, he maintained a relative cordiality, not counting various minor chicaneries and the beating of workers. With the extent to which the liquidation of the Jews in Zamość grew stronger, he began to actively participate in the murder of Jews.

With his own hands, in a short period of time, he shot several tens of people from among his workers. That is to say, that they were supposedly sick with typhus, or they were in general exhausted.

Apart from this (the referenced camps) many Jews – men and women – worked at various German workplaces, military and civilian. They were allocated to those positions by the 'Labor Office.'

The activity connected with employing the Jews was carried out in the name of the '*Judenrat*' by two appointees: **Fishl Grossbaum**, a member of the Bund, and **Aharon Shlafrok**, a Zionist. For the entire time, they worked with

extraordinary self-abnegation, and in an extremely visible manner, they were able to cause this problem to become normalized.

The Jews, who initially were not particularly keen on presenting themselves for work, afterwards began to present themselves en masse for work, in order, indeed, to earn a living, and also legalize (judicially) their existence in the eyes of the Germans. This phenomenon became even stronger during the time when the liquidations of the Jews increased, which in the early times encompassed the non-productive elements (in principle) as well as the elderly and the children.

At the end of the existence of the Jewish community in Zamość, 70 percent of the Jewish population was employed in a variety of workplaces. We also gave false credentials to children, younger than 14 years of age, indicating that they were older, in order to get them employed somewhere or another, through the auspices of the 'Labor Office,' and at the very least, spare them from liquidation for some measure of time.

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As was the case everywhere, it was also true in Zamość, that immediately from the outset, as soon as the city was captured, the assault against the Jews began. Beatings, torture, seizures and work. Robbing of businesses and homes, demands that Jews remove their hats before each and every German – this was a day-in and day-out occurrence from the moment when the Gestapo appeared in Zamość, where it had its central office for a number of districts.

Already from the outset of their presence, Jews who happened to be walking in the streets were peremptorily taken to the Gestapo building, where they were beaten and tortured in an inhuman manner, and also for no apparent reason. There were instances, where people who were taken away for a while no longer returned. As it later became evident, these people simply could not withstand the agony, and died in the middle of the torture.

One time, when it was still in the winter of 1939, the men of the Gestapo came upon a group of children, who were learning in a *Bet HaMedrash*. All the pupils were taken away, and none of them ever came back.

The first of the cruel manifestations was the one that we have previously mentioned, the bestial murder of the 17 Wloclawek Jews, which took place in January 1940 in Janowica, the seat of the SS.

It is necessary to note, that all my efforts to avoid these incidents brought no result. The civil German vehicles of authority, even the gendarmerie and officers we knew, to whom I brought this matter for appeal, refused to make any sort of intervention. They would wave with their hands, trying to convey that against the almighty Gestapo and SS, no one can do anything.

After the connections between the '*Judenrat*' and the Germans were established, and after implementing the system of giving more and more *lapuvka* (bribery), these sporadic harassments and the occurrences of people vanishing stopped for a short span of time.

Towards the end of the year 1941, the terror intensified, at the time the United States entered the war.

In December 1941, the '*Judenrat*' received an order from the Gestapo, that all Jews, in the course of several days, by latest, January 1, 1942, must turn in all their overcoats, without exception. This was the time, when at the outskirts of Moscow, German reversals were starting. With the help of Jewish overcoats, the Germans wanted to rescue their army, which was being killed on the endless Russian steppes.

After the completion of this *aktion*, during which time the best of the men's and women's fur coats were taken away by the Gestapo staff, officers of the German command, and German civilian employees for their own personal use, as well as for the use of their families (ignoring the fact that this was a personal order from Hitler which carried the threat of a death penalty for taking fur coats for one's own personal use), various members of the Gestapo carried out special audits on the streets and in Jewish homes, and if somewhere or another, they found a garment with some semblance of

fur on it, they killed people right on the spot. In this *aktion*, for this sort of 'crime,' a number of people were killed, among others a certain **Burstein** from Warsaw.

In the middle of March 1942, we received alarming news from **Lublin**, that they had begun mass 'evacuations out' of Jews who were already located in the ghetto there. This news was terrifying, especially because it was accompanied by a description of how this 'evacuation out' was taking place. It was related [to us] that people were lost in freight cars and that they were sent off to Zamość. From there, we were, indeed, questioned about the fate of those who were transported, whether these transports from Lublin had in fact arrived in Zamość. Regrettably, we could not provide any calming answers to this questioning, because no such transport had ever arrived in Zamość.

As a result of this news, we began to investigate and attempt to find out what had happened. In a few days time, we were able to establish with certainty that these transports passed through the station of Zaworo (8 kilometers from Zamość) and were taken off to **Belzeč**.

With the help of the Jews in the nearby towns of **Tomaszow, Krasnobrod** and others, we were able to quickly establish that at the Belzeč station, in that place where in the year 1940 there existed the previously described Jewish camp, and where they had begun to build the tank trap trenches near the border, there was constructed, in a small wooded area, a row of wooden barracks; a branch track of a rail spur was laid down to reach that place, and everything was cordoned off with a heavy wire fencing.

We also were able to establish that the Jews who had been brought there from Lublin, were taken off, and the empty cars are turning back immediately to Lublin, in order to bring fresh victims.

These were the first authentic reports about Belzeč, the first confirmation of the existence of the death camp there, which had been specially constructed for Jews.

I will not pause here to elaborate on what took place in Lublin. We knew, however, that approximately forty thousand Jews were evacuated out of Lublin. Those who remained behind, were packed into the smaller ghetto in **the Majdan Tatarski** neighborhood, which was located opposite the (somber)-notorious **Majdanek**.

What was done in Belzeč, and how (the Jews were being murdered) we only first learned at the end of March. It is not difficult to conceive of the fear that seized upon us in Zamość, we had anticipated this, and we were waiting for our turn. We initiated strenuous efforts with the local authorities, at that time, we had still talked ourselves into believing that something can be done to help us, that we will avoid the fate of the Jews of Lublin.

Regrettably, that was not the case.

On April 11, 1942, Saturday at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, our Jewish residential quarter was surrounded by a heavy cordon of police and German gendarmerie. I was then in the city, outside of this area. As soon as I learned of this, I immediately hurried to the spot. I was permitted to enter without any difficulty; I took note however, that no one was being permitted to leave the quarter.

Very shortly afterwards, in the location of the '*Judenrat*' office, the entire Zamość Gestapo arrived, with the *Hauptsturmbannfuhrer* who was in charge at that time, Captain **Schubert**, at the head, as well as the representative for Jewish affairs from the office of the City Elder, **Oskar Reichwein**, who came from Berlin.

The '*Judenrat,*' in its full quorum, was forced to hear that 2500 Jews must be 'evacuated out' to the east. They are permitted to take their entire money and valuables, and apart from that, every person is allowed to take along 15 kilograms of baggage.

These people, in the course of one hour, must present themselves on the [market] place where, according to the declaration of the Chief of the Gestapo, a selection will take place. We understood already what this implied.

Immediately after reading this order, the police and gendarmerie that had surrounded the Jewish Quarter, began to squeeze down the circle they made, and drive the Jews to the marketplace.

The Gestapo staff meanwhile went through the houses, from which in a short time, the reverberations of shooting could be heard.

In barely an hour, the [market] place was overflowing with the Jewish populace, with no difference as to gender or age. Groups were drawn in from all directions, driven by the Germans, dragging their 'net worth' with them in packages, especially bedding. We had yet talked ourselves into believing that were are going to be transferred to another city.

When I saw that the [market] place was over-filled, I began to plead with the Chief of the Gestapo that he should stop the driving of the Jews, because the required number of 2500 men has certainly been achieved already.

At an opportune moment, using his good humor from such a successful *aktion*, I slipped a diamond ring into his hand that I had already prepared previously.

He then issued an order to cease the *aktion*. Together with the members of the '*Judenrat*' who were found with me at that time, I then ran through the entire Jewish neighborhood, repeating the order of the Gestapo Chief, for the separate Gestapo staff and policemen, who did not have any great desire to permit the hounded victims to turn and go back to their homes.

The elation of those who were permitted to remain in their homes was a great as the confusion of those who stood on the [market] place, ringed with that tight cordon of Germans.

These people, were detained on the [market] place until 8 o'clock at night, not allowing a morsel of bread or a bit of water through to them.

As it became evident, the (somber) notorious train to transport them out, was turned down for the evening, and had been stopped not far from our (Jewish) residential Quarter.

During these several hours, I made the effort , using all means, to extract how many more people that I could out of this mass, who had been designated for death. I was able to get out approximately 400-500 men, on the basis of a variety of excuses, that these were needed craftsmen, etc.

No sort of selection, no sort of medical examination took place; neither were any documents examined. In the evening, everyone was stood out four to a row, and they were driven to the train.

Anticipating the possibility of escape, utilizing the dark, the guard was rather heavy on both sides of the train, and shot into the crowd the entire time. The people, in general, went quietly – without shouting or crying.

At night, after being taken to the train, where they were packed in at the rate of 150 people to a car, the Germans issued an order to us that we should gather up those who were killed, and others that were lying on the road, and take them – the living along with the dead – and load them on the train cars. Along a strip of one kilometer – from the Jewish Quarter to the train ramp – we gathered up to 150 that were killed.

Apart from this, we were compelled, in accordance with an order from the Gestapo, spend the entire night washing off the blood stains from the road, and to spread sand on it, so that on the following day, there should not be any traces.

In the houses, on the second day, we found 89 people who were killed, who were buried in two common graves in the Jewish cemetery.

Among those who were killed on that day, was **Hessia Goldstein**, the sister of **I. L. Peretz**, a 70 year-old elderly woman, who, as was related by eye witnesses, when the Gestapo officer came into her house, and ordered her to go with him to the [market] place, declared to him, not getting up from her seat, that she asks that he shoot her right here on the spot, because she has no intention of moving from the spot to go anywhere.

Almost in the same way, and exactly 4 months later, on August 11, 1942, her son, the lawyer, **Julian Goldstein** was killed with his wife and child.

This particular *aktion* did not affect anyone from the '*Judenrat*,' and its employees. However, the German police, from a division that distinguished itself especially for its cruelty, not satisfied with the fact that they suspected me of having quiesced the *aktion* too early, decided to get me off the scene by their own hand. At night, during the time when the road was being washed (to remove blood stains), one of them rode up to me on a motorcycle, and demanded that I go with him to the '*Judenrat*,' in order to resolve some sort of an issue. A peculiar premonition gave me an impetus to flee, which was facilitated by the darkness of the night, and I hid myself until morning.

On the following morning, the Jewish workers told me that they overheard a conversation among the Germans about this, and how it did not become possible for them to dispose of me because I had fled, and they promised to do this at the earliest opportunity.

After compiling a new census of the population, it was verified that the *aktion* cost 3000 people. The majority of the victims were women; there were 700 children aged 14 years [sic: and under]. The remainder were men. This is explained by the fact that most of the men, at the time, were at work.

During the course of this *aktion*, I heard, at a specific moment, how the Chief of the Gestapo approached the dignitaries that stood around him, who had come to observe this scene, and remarked that this *aktion* will enable a small German city to be provisioned. One can infer from this, that the Germans attempted to explain to part of their own audience that killing out the Jews, they are exterminating unnecessary consumers – 'eaters' – and in this way, they attempted in the eyes of their own, to justify these *aktionen* on the basis of the scarcity of food.

Our confusion, and that of the remaining families of those who were taken away, had no bounds, but we had no course of action open to us. Those who remained alive, the men, brothers and families, consoled themselves with the hope that the unfortunate ones were taken somewhere to the east, and would constantly come with pleas that we should try to discover their new addresses, in order to send them parcels of food and clothing.

Among the victims of those who were sent to Belzeč, was the wife of **Wohlstein**, who had been 'evacuated out' of Wloclawek, who was a member of the Help Committee and who, during the *aktion*, was at work at the train. Along with his wife, his 18 year-old son and 13 year-old daughter were taken away from him.

Early Monday, on April 13, this young boy came running to the '*Judenrat*,' and told the following:

The terrifyingly over packed wagons were taken to Belzeč for the entire night, a distance of 44 kilometers from Zamość. On Sunday morning, they were taken to the place itself.

After they had been off-loaded, they were stood out in rows of four – men separately and women separately, Some sort of an officer spoke to them, saying that they are being transferred to the east, and therefore they have to go through a bath and disinfection. It was demanded that the clothing be laid out precisely, and turn over valuables, after which they were driven into a barracks. At that time, he had the opportunity to hide himself in the public bathrooms. Where he remained until nightfall in the discharge hole. Afterwards, he fled the camp and hid himself out with the Gypsies that lived in the area, who helped him, and showed him the way to Zamość.

He related, that after the people had gone into the barracks, he saw no one afterwards. However, after several tens of minutes, he noted that in other barracks they opened the doors, which lead to the train ramp, and that SS staff and several tens of young Jews, apparently selected for this task, began to take out naked bodies onto small carts.

This was the first news from an eye witness of the horror of what took place at Belzeč. This young boy, together with his father, remained for a short while longer in Zamość, and were killed during one of the subsequent '*aktionen.*'

The last spark of hope, which flickered among a part of the hapless, was then fully extinguished. There were then no illusions about what Belzeč was.

The homes of the these first hapless victims were then occupied by those foreign Jews that were allocated to us, who came to us, as we have previously related, at the end of April and the beginning of May.

On April 28, 1942, the *aktion* to exterminate the communists took place in Zamość, as it did, identically, in other areas of the so-called General-Government Province. On that day, two members of the Gestapo, along with the Chief of the Jewish Division, **Robert Kolb** at the head, addressed the '*Judenrat,*' and asked to be shown the addresses of approximately 30 Jews, whose names they had prepared on a list. As it became evident, this list consisted of Jews, who had been noted as being active in the communist movement before the war. The names had been provided by the current 'Granatower' Police. It was clear, that practically none of them was in Zamość at that moment, and those that were appeared to have hidden themselves, as the police had made note of their addresses. In connection with these doings, the Gestapo seized an array of people with identical family names; in a couple of instances, fathers were taken to be their sons (among others they took **Leib Rosen**, the member of the ' Jewish *Judenrat*' whose son in his time took part in the political activity, and at that time was far away from the borders of Poland).

Wanting to have a complement of 30 people, and missing 10, they simply seized convenient passers-by off the street, not even asking them for their family names. In this fashion, more or less, a complement of 30 people was put together, and they were taken off to the 'Rotunda,' killed them on the same day, and buried them.

The 'Rotunda' was an old fort in the Zamość fortress from the old days, before the Polish partition. This fort was utilized by the Germans as a large prison for special purposes. It is a formidable structure, approximately a little under a half of a kilometer distant from the city, with thick walls, a moat surrounding it, with tiny windows and firing positions. The majority of the murders of Poles from the secret trials of the Gestapo, and others, were carried out in the area of the 'Rotunda' and the victims were buried there.

Only now, after the liberation of the city, were mass graves discovered there, and a great deal of ash from cremated bodies.

The 'Rotunda' was not utilized as a place for large-scale Jewish extermination, with the exception of the aktion of April 28, 1942 and the liquidation of the Jews who worked at the Gestapo; they were still employed by the Gestapo until October 16, 1942.

The following 'evacuation out' took place at the end of May. At that time, three transports went off, especially the foreign Jews, from Germany and Czechoslovakia, because the Zamość Jews had previously already learned the trick of hiding themselves very well. Hideaways were created everywhere. Also, having relationships with the employees of the railroad, they already informed us when a train was being assembled, and thereby the Jews had the time and the opportunity to wriggle out of the *aktion*. Not permitting themselves to be ensnared, they would stay at their work places, or hide out in their already-prepared hiding places, or in the field in the [standing] grain. Therefore, in later times, it never became possible for the Germans to seize more than 300-400 people [sic: at a time]. This brought them to a state of angry frustration. The demanded that the Zamość '*Judenrat*' take part in the *aktion*, as was the case in other cities, with the help of its employees and *Ordnungsdienst*. However, we never went along with this, giving as an excuse, the virtual non-existence of our *Ordnungsdienst* (the maximum membership of our so-called 'Jewish Police' was 15-20 people).

On one occasion, the Gestapo brought the Jewish Police of Izbica to help with carrying out an *aktion*, where it was organized with a larger number of Czech and German Jews (over 100 people). However, even then, the *aktion* was not successful, because we were also warned about this in advance.

The following *aktion*, in accordance with the sequence, took place on August 11, 1942. Gestapo staff from Lublin came to help to the Gestapo staff in Zamość. This *aktion* was led by the Gestapo man **Goetz**, of extraordinary height, who held the rank of *Obersturmfuhrer*. The angered Gestapo staff, desiring to fill up the transport of the wagons that had been provided, went into all of the work camps, and not skipping the military work places in Zamość, selected several tens of people from each and every camp. For the first time, they then also took from among the members of the '*Judenrat*' (5-6 members) and a specific number of employees, together with their families, who during each of the *aktionen*, would hide themselves in the '*Judenrat*' building.

The Gestapo man Goetz was wild because of the failure of this *aktion*, and he accusations to me that Jews are avoiding the 'evacuation out,' and are not presenting themselves voluntarily, in his aroused state, he made the accusation that this is because rumors are circulating among the Jews about 'so-called' murders of their numbers. When I told him that we have been superbly informed about this, as to what was taking place in Belzeč, and therefore one should not count on our cooperation, he declared to me that at the earliest possibility I will have the opportunity to be there and to personally see that this is all only 'lurid propaganda.'

I had the opportunity to improve his disposition by turning over 30 thousand zlotys to him, a kilo of coffee, a kilo of tea, and a leather wallet, all of which was packed away elegantly.

He then stopped the *aktion*, satisfying himself with about 500-600 victims. In parting, he once again said to me that he will personally will assure that the next time I will take the trip to Belzeč, and see for myself what is going on there.

This *aktion* also brought with it, approximately 70 victims that were shot on the spot by the Gestapo staff. On the following day, these victims were buried by us in a mass grave in the Jewish cemetery.

At that time, the lawyer **Goldstein** with is wife and daughter were killed. When standing in the crowd, he refused to go out and be loaded onto the train. He was then killed by the SS man, Hans Pienkowski, the previously recalled head of the camp. The lawyer and his child were killed on the spot. By contrast, his wife, **Regina Goldstein**, was severely wounded in the head. She lost her sight, and struggled on for nearly a week in our hospital.

At that time, the children of the Jewish journalist from Czechoslovakia, **Jagsch** were killed together with their grandmother, the daughter of the former Rabbi of Berdichev (I do not remember the family name). The mother of the children was then at work, and when she came home she found the bodies of her mother and two little sons. The Gestapo man **Schmidt** shot them in their home.

At the beginning of September 1942, yet another *aktion* was carried out, with more-or-less the same result – that is to say, about 400 people were apprehended and sent to Belzeč.

Up to that time, assessing that the one means by which one could save one's self from a terrible death in Belzeč, was to work at any location that was German, the entire Jewish population was drawn into work.

We then made the effort to persuade the Gestapo, that the Jews that remained alive were working, and the project was then instituted to transform our settlement into a large work camp.

The local Gestapo, as well as the central leadership and other German organizations, who were strongly interested in the existence of the local Jews, because they were very generously being paid by the '*Judenrat*,' so-to-speak, accepted this plan. We then approached the implementation of t6he action to distribute the so-called life cards, the **J** cards, to those Jews who remained. This action lasted from the middle of September and was tied up with a review of all the Jews that remained alive. The review took place in the Jewish Division of the German Labor Office, in the presence

of the members of the '*Judenrat*,' a doctor, and members of the Labor Office. The review was directed, and certification for the receipt of a **J** card was carried out, by the Gestapo man **Langenkompfer**, the representative of the Chief of the Jewish Division at the Gestapo in Zamość.

At the same time, posts and barbed were brought in, with the objective of cordoning off the future camp. A sign was also prepared that had the writing: '***Judenarbeitslager* Zamość Numer 1**.' The German civil authorities had to assure that the Jewish settlement in Zamość was already liquidated.

This *aktion* was not carried out to its conclusion, because this time, quite suddenly, on October 16, 1942, at 5:00AM, our residential quarter, which had become very much shrunken, but still not cordoned off, and already was occupied only by Jews, was suddenly surrounded by a heavy cordon of German Police, Gendarmerie and Gestapo, and the battalion of motorized Gendarmerie, which had been brought from Warsaw.

Without exception, all the residents of the residential quarter were driven out onto the [market] place. They were not even given a couple of minutes of time, and the possibility to take something of their belongings with them. They were stood out in rows of 5 men, and with a quick march, were driven to **Izbica**, which lies about 21 kilometers from Zamość.

I deduce, that because the prior few '*aktionen*' at this location, did not produce the desired result, that it was decided to drive all of the Jews to **Izbica,** where on unfamiliar turf, without hideouts and without the possibility of finding refuge in workplaces, it will be easier to liquidate them.

The Jewish population of Zamość at that time consisted of about 4000 people. Before the march, the Gestapo selected several tens of young Jews from the mass, – men and women – who worked for them as servants, to help load a freight truck and then drove them to the notorious '**Rotunda**' and shot them there.

Apart from this, several members of the 'Judenrat' were also taken out of the mass, a doctor and a couple of craftsmen who had always worked for them at the account of the Council. I, together with the family, was in the number of those detained, under a guard.

All the rest were driven, as I have previously remarked, to **Izbica**. Along the way, they did not stint on shooting into the mass, a result of which was that several tens of killed people were left along the way. They were buried by the surrounding peasants in the gullies along the way, and in the fields, where no trace of them remained.

The remainder of the Jewish communities from the surrounding towns were also driven to Izbica, such as **Krasnystaw**, **Turobin**, **Zulikiewa**, **Szczebrzeszyn**, and others.

These people were bunched together in Izbica under the open sky, under a rain. Only a small portion could find a roof over their heads with the local Jews. This is how they were held until Monday, when approximately half of all the Jews who were found in Izbica, together with the locals, were loaded onto wagons and sent off – part to **Belzeč,** and a part to **Sobibor**.

This took place on Monday, October 19, 1942.

This *aktion* was lead by the Gestapo man, **Engels**, one of the worst sadists, with the assistance of several hundred Ukrainians; for the entire time, he personally shot into the mass [of people] with hand-held machine gun weaponry, and caused the death of approximately 400 Jews on the spot.

The remainder, two weeks later, also on a Monday, November 2, 1942, almost all, without distinction, were taken to **Sobibor**, **Belzeč** and **Majdanek**.

A great number were killed on the spot. Only several hundred people hid themselves in the fields, and in the surrounding woods. This took place at the same time, when in Warsaw, and in all of the larger cities of the so-called '**General-Government**' Province, huge signs were hung by the German regime, that several ghettoes were being created in the area of the General-Government Province, where all of the Jews need to be brought together, and where there will be guaranteed security.

The call was directed at all the Jews, who were hiding themselves, that they should come to these ghettoes voluntarily, as well as to Poles, with the threat of death for giving protection to Jews that were hidden.

One of these places, where the Jews were supposed to assemble, and where they were, so-to-speak, to have security, was **Izbica.**

When I was then already in Warsaw, Where I had concealed myself on so-called Aryan papers, I personally read such a representation.

On the strength of this, apparently, several hundred Jews who were spread out in the Izbica vicinity, not being able to find any other advice, presented themselves in Izbica. There, the previously mentioned **Engels**, apparently sufficiently sated with Jewish blood, organized a small ghetto for them. Those couple of hundred Jews existed there in comparative tranquility, and held out until the spring of 1943. On one day, they were all murdered there.

Apart from the members of the Gestapo and Ukrainians, Polish volunteer firefighters from Izbica and the surrounding villages also took part in the *aktion* of November 2, 1942. Without a doubt, they did this at the order , and under the compulsion, of the Germans. However, one must not cover up the fact, that, regrettably, a large part of the fire fighters were too zealous in discharging their duty to use their fire-fighting equipment in searching out all the Jewish hiding places and cellars. All corners and tiny rooms, where the hapless could conceal themselves, they searched them, dragged them out of there, and drove them under the German and Ukrainian bullets.

In waiting for wagons, the Jews were assembled, and kept for three days in the hall of the city cinema **and** at the firehouse.

As was later told to me the very few that were saved from death, the instances were not rare, when for a small bottle of water, the local *obvalitas*[405] (citizenry) demanded 500 zlotys from the thirsty people who were fainting and near death.

In this transport, which left Izbica for Belzeč, among others, were the still-alive members of the '*Judenrat*,' their families, with the Vice-President of the '*Judenrat*,' Azriel Sheps at their head.

It was in this fashion, that the several centuries old, populous, and culturally, traditionally and historically rich, Jewish community of Zamość came to an end.

At this moment, (December 1947), Zamość counts 5 (five) Jewish residents – 4 men and one woman.

## The Help-Committee

The Help-Committee was created in the first half of the month of December 1939, under the name, '**Jewish Help-Committee**' and its first objective was to create help for the previously mentioned transport of those Jews that were 'evacuated out' from **Wloclawek**, which had arrived on December 18, 1939.

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405 The parenthetic translation is softer than the Slavic root in the epithet, which implies a 'shake-down artist.'

After a variety of changes, together with a change in its name, the Help-Committee became a part of the general assistance organization of the Jews, which was active in the 'General-Government' Province under the name, '**Jewish Social Self-Help**.' Previously, the organization belonged to the authority of the Office of the Governor-General in the hierarchy, and with the time, it was divided off as a separate Jewish organizational entity.
The first activity of the committee was the organization of a community kitchen, which was active from its founding, on December 18, 1939, until October 16, 1942. This kitchen distributed two meals a day, warm food, especially at no charge, or for a truly small amount of money, at the level of between 10 and 15 groschen. The means to keep the kitchen operating was largely covered for the entire time of its existence by the '*Judenrat.*'

In the initial period, the committee was financially supported by the '**Joint**,' and later from the central office of the 'Jewish Social Self-Help,' which was located in **Krakow.** However, both of these institutions showed only a very small amount of help.

At the initiation of its activity, the Help-Committee also arranged an clinic, at the head of which stood the doctor, **Gedalia Friedhofers**, a refugee from **Pulow.**

The committee was lead by me, my representative, **Moshe Levin**, and later, we co-opted a certain **Wohlstein**, from Wloclawek.

Apart from the fact that the help from the central Jewish aid organizations in Warsaw and Krakow was non-existent, we had to fight for each groschen, personally traveling after it to Warsaw, losing time while waiting, and having to disburse funds for expenses.

As I was able to observe at that time, the entire province was being handled by the central institutions in the fashion of a stepmother, whether in the question of the allocation of money, as well as the distribution of food and clothing, which in the initial period were actually available in large amounts, coming from out of the country, for the Jews of Poland.

We very quickly oriented ourselves, that we could not count on help from the outside, and we will have to support ourselves financially through our own independent help institution, built on local vehicles. Thanks to the fact that the Help-Committee was headed by the same individuals as the '*Judenrat,*' we were able to carry out the work of the Help-Committee without disruption, and also to broaden its activities.

With the passage of time, in connection with the outbreak of the typhus epidemic in our residential quarter, we organized a hospital for epidemics consisting of 60-70 beds. After overcoming the typhus epidemic, this hospital was re-configured into a general one with a variety of divisions, because in this period the municipal hospital no longer took Jewish patients. The number of Jewish ill, as well as those who suffered from a variety of injuries from the work places, was large; it was no always possible to have sufficient help in the clinic. All the Jewish doctors of Zamość worked in the hospital, as well as an array of rather prominent Jewish physicians from among the 'evacuated over' from Czechoslovakia and from Germany. Among others, the famous bacteriologist, and docent of dermatology, **Dr. Zygmunt Shoenhof** from **Prague**, as well as the surgeon, **Dr. Joseph Weininger** from **Vienna**, worked there.

The committee also organized a Prebel school[406] for the children, which was led by **Ernestina Cahan**, and **Eva Zimmerung**, a teacher of art, and others. This Prebel school was also connected to providing food for the children, and was a very important institution. Regrettably, it functioned only up to April 11, 1942 (the date of the first 'evacuation out' to Belzeč). We then had to liquidate the Prebel school, and hide the children, because, as is known, the children and the elderly were the first victims of that '*aktion.*'

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406 Based on the teachings of an educator, named Prebel

From the start, we made an effort to open any number of schools for Jewish youth, supporting ourselves on the existing and the orders of the 'General Province' which made so-called Jewish schools permissible. But in response to the request that we made to the appropriate office, we never got any sort of answer. Other known 'efforts' led to no result.

Seeing that no Jew could conceive of the worst possibilities that awaited us, we attempted to use this time for the young people, which without schooling would be ruined, and could stray from a decent path. We organized a course for tailoring and sewing for girls. The courses were directed by **Bertha Mandeltort** of Zamość, with the skilled help of local craftsmen and also refugees from Krakow. From the outset, the courses developed very successfully, up to the first '*aktion*;' Afterwards, they continued to exist, so long as there was a hope, that something might survive of the settlement in Zamość.

After the arrival of the first transport of the Czech Jews, at the end of 1942, they began to create various forms of art products in these courses. Among the Czech women, there were several graduates of the *Hochschule* of Artistic Industry.

In connection with this, I want to make a remark about the degree to how solid the good faith of the Czech and German Jews was, in preparing themselves for their 'evacuation over' to the east, and to begin a new life there. Most of them, especially the young people, underwent a variety of preparation courses, in their various locations, before they were transferred to Poland, and almost every one of them had some sort of trade; learned some kind of skill, which he had mastered to a greater or lesser degree, and which assured him of a means by which to earn a living from his own work, not needing to come for help from the local Jewish populace.

One of the most important achievements of the Help-Committee, was organizing the area of the *Neustadt*, where the Jews were transferred from May 1, 1941. This area became a necessity to existence. The 8-10 thousand head of Jewish population was crammed into a small area, under the worst of conditions, without the most primitive of hygienic requirements. In the entire area, there was not a single house with indoor plumbing, no bathroom. In a half-wrecked building, with almost nothing, only through the sacrificial work of our manual trades (**Fass**, **Magaril** and others). It also became possible for us, literally at the last minute, before the Jews were transferred over to the *Neustadt*, to decorate, and 'pilfer' from the *mikva*, which was located in the Altstadt, a few pipes, several bathtubs, and related amenities. All of this enabled us to arrange a bathing facility, where there was hot and cold running water, and several bathtubs. We also arranged for a delousing division at the baths, which had a disinfection chamber. Without this, we would not have been in any position to fight against the red-typhus epidemic. The obligation of guarding sanitation was a very serious one. No Jew was able to get his food card from the '*Judenrat*,' without providing evidence of having, once a week, taken a bath and had his clothing disinfected.

The budget of the Help-committee in all of its divisions came out approximately to between 60-70 thousand zlotys a month, which by those currency values and prices (a kilogram of bread in 1940 cost 40 groschen, and in 1942 – 1 zloty 15 groschen) was very high. The support from the 'Joint' and from the 'Jewish Social Self-help' on average made out 3-5 thousand zlotys a month. Only in one singular instance, in February 1940, did we receive the sum of 16 thousand zlotys from the 'Joint' in Warsaw. This happened thanks to the one-time inspectors from the 'Joint,' **Dr. Shalman** and **Goldfarb**, who visited Zamość, and acquainted themselves with the condition of the masses, as well as the entire scope of the work implemented by the Help-Committee in Zamość. These gentlemen, later at every opportunity, supported us warmly, however, they could not break the entrenched unwillingness of the higher authority to support the province.

At Passover of 1940, we received a larger number of matzos in freight cars, with the objective of distributing this among the Jewish populace of the three municipalities: **Zamość, Krasnystaw**, and **Tomaszow**.

Later, form time to time, we would receive small sums with clothing from the central Jewish institutions, food stuffs and medicaments.

The bookkeeping of the Help-Committee was conducted very rigorously, and we had an accurate book of inventory with displayed positions of all received products, etc. We also had copies of the donations that were distributed through us

for assistance. We were therefore very dismayed on a certain day, when towards the end of the year 1941, or the beginning of 1942, we were sent formulas with positions for products and clothing, from the central office of the 'Central Help-Organization,' that we supposedly had received. These sums were significantly larger than what we had truly received during the entire period. Also, there were listed items and produce which were never given to us at all. Under the excuse that the original bills had been lost, which were sent out from America, they requested that we endorse the copies. Seeing that these bills did not agree at all with ours, I refused to sign the formulations that were sent to us. Instead, I demanded a clarification about this blatant discrepancy and demanded that they should demonstrate who really received these items of clothing, foodstuffs, and medicaments, which are listed on our account. received no answer. This starkly characterizes the relationship of the central Jewish institutions to the Help-committees of the province, and to the Jewish populace which found themselves under their protection.

Every month, balances, and accounting of the activity of the Help-Committee, were presented to the Division for the national minorities at the German City Elder and the central Jewish institutions.

Produce for the public kitchen we received in set amounts, more or less, a half of what we needed, from the provisioning division of the German City Elder. With the representative of this division, we entered into 'negotiating' relationships, in which for the systematic extraordinary 'sweetening,' which he received, he would
get things into our hand.

I must emphasize that our activity was impartially administered by the provisioning representatives of the municipal leadership.

Thanks to this sort of 'interplay' among all of the various factors, our public kitchen functioned without interruption until the final expulsion of the Jews of Zamość to Izbica, distributing the last meal even on the evening of October 15, that means simply, the evening of the expulsion itself.

The significance of the public kitchen was very great, at the beginning of its existence, and later, at the beginning of the liquidation *aktionen*, grew even more. Continuously, men were left alone, from whom families had been taken away, wives, who at that time already, without exception, all worked at German workplaces, and were sentenced to derive their sustenance from the public kitchen. For this reason, the number of meals distributed every time also rose. At the beginning, this number was 500 – at the end, it reached the level of between 2500-3000 meals.

The entire activity of the Help-Committee in Zamość mentioned above, was suddenly halted on October 16, 1942, along with the expulsion of the Zamość Jews to **Izbica**.

All acts, documents, as well as books of the Committee, shared in the same fate as all of the material that had any bearing on the activity of all Jewish institutions in Zamość. The Germans confiscated it, and it appears, they destroyed it.

## Document Number 2

# The 'Judenrat' Creates a 'Labor-Company'

*Page 1159: Facsimile of the 'Bekanntmachung'*

It is a notice distributed in Zamość, [printed] in German and Polish, on April 26, 1940, signed by the Leader of the 'Judenrat' in Zamość, M. Garfinkel, and the Leader of the Labor-Company, A. Szeps. This '*Bekanntmachung*' was certified by the District Head in R o n d o r f .

In the '*Bekanntmachung*,' it says the following:

'With this, the Jewish population of Zamość is notified that in accordance with the orders of the **organs of German authority**, a **Labor-Company** has been created by the 'Judenrat' of Zamość.

All persons desiring to receive a call to work, are required to present themselves promptly at the designated hour, at the gathering place (at the location of the local commander), and exactly fill out all the orders of the authority and the leaders of the various separate labor groups.

**The list of those people who will not present themselves for work, or who want to undergo an involuntary subordination, will be presented each day to the organs of authority with the objective of [meting out] severe punishment.**

## Document Number 3

# Compulsory-Inspection in the SS

*Page 1161: Facsimile of Document*

This notice was distributed on August 13, 1940. This notice, in Polish and German, is from the Zamość '*Judenrat*.' The content of the document is translated word for word:

### "Bekanntmachung

Wednesday, August 14, 1940, all Jews of the city of Zamość from the age of 16 to 55 years of age must, **without any exception**, and independent of where they work, present themselves for an inspection at Janowica, the seat of the **SS**, at 6 o'clock in the morning. The '*Judenrat*' once again emphasizes that without exception, everyone must be present, and it demands that this be done.

Those who will not follow the order of the Chief of the SS, will be drawn to severe punishment or employment does not release anyone from presenting himself for this inspection.

Personal documents are to be taken along, and concurrence from medical doctors.

Zamość, August 13, 1940."

## Document Number 4

# The 'Judenrat' Demands Taxes

*Page 1163: Facsimile of Tax Document*

Notice in German and Polish distributed in August 1940 from the *Judenrat* in Zamość. The document bears the stamp of the *Judenrat* of Zamość. The introduction to the document in Yiddish translation:

## "Bekanntmachung

The following people who are delinquent in the payment of their taxes, are requested to pay those taxes immediately, the latest, by August 30, 1940 at 12 o'clock at the *Judenrat*.

After the expiry of this term, the list of the people with delinquent taxes will be turned over to the German authorities.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Edelsberg, Yankel | 200 | Zlotys | Sztab, Mendel | 120 | Zlotys |
| Fishman, Hirsch | 70 | " | Szarf, Josef-Chaim | 190 | " |
| Freid, Shlomo | 95 | " | Topf, Sholom | 150 | " |
| Finkstein, Mordechai | 80 | " | Witlin, Solomon | 85 | " |
| Fink and Son | 130 | " | Wilder, Baruch | 75 | " |
| Pfefferkichen, Sarah | 120 | " | Rubinsonova | 3475 | " |
| Goldman, Yankel | 245 | " | Peltz, Shmuel | 340 | " |
| Goldman, Gedalia | 250 | " | Pomper, Fishl | 440 | " |
| Goldgraberova, Ch. | 100 | " | Nemtzman, Shlomo | 150 | " |
| Goldstein, Judka | 180 | " | Scherer, Chaya | 150 | " |
| Greenbaum, Hirsch | 130 | " | Frieling, Chana | 230 | " |
| Griener, Feiga | 50 | " | Katz, David-Leib | 150 | " |
| Harfin, Mottel | 200 | " | Cooperstein, Itzik | 255 | " |
| Hertz, Yankel | 140 | " | Koppelman, Chana | 155 | " |
| Inlander, V. | 150 | " | Schwartz, Ethel | 700 | " |
| Kliger, Wolf | 190 | " | Fartkin, Chaya | 130 | " |
| Lak, Mendel | 220 | " | Zoberman, Mashkeh | 100 | " |
| Messer, Hirsch | 70 | " | Zimlich, Shia | 150 | " |
| Neimark, Shia | 110 | " | Bokser, Esther | 75 | " |
| Scheck, Sarah | 100 | " | Fuchs, Tobias | 300 | " |

Round Stamp of the *Judenrat* in German and in Polish"

## Document Number 5

# Warning to Observe the Police Hours

*Page 1165: Facsimile of Document Number 5*

A notice in the Polish language only, distributed in Zamość by the *Judenrat* on November 27, 1940. On the document, is the circular stamp of the Zamość *Judenrat*. The content in Yiddish translation:

## "Notice

In connection with the fact that incidents recur where Jews are detained, men and women, without the (Jewish) armbands, and also this occurs after the police hours, that is 19 o'clock, the Judenrat wants to make public to the **Jewish Populace** the severe penalties which potentially threaten those who violate the orders previously mentioned, which go up to 2 years of imprisonment.

The Judenrat especially notifies that the following listed people:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Hirschberg, Galla | 6. | Goldberg, David |
| 2. | Hirschberg, Regina | 7. | Cohn, Yenta |
| 3. | Milchman, Rosa | 8. | Nachbar, Meir |
| 4. | Lifschitz, Sh. | 9. | Helbern, Kaya (Chaya-) |
| 5. | Bladi, Ida | 10. | Rothman, Frieda |

were yesterday, November 23,of this year, arrested for being on the street after the police hours and only now, after the intervention of the Judenrat, and the payment of a fine of 200 zlotys, they were released at 21:30 hours. In the possibility of a recurrence of the previously mentioned, the Judenrat declares that it will no longer intervene in such instances, and those people who will willfully disobey the previously mentioned orders (that means, wearing the bands, and not being on the streets after police hours) will be left to their own fate.

Simultaneously, the *Judenrat* forbids, on the basis of an indication from the authorities, any gathering without a purpose at the location of the municipal building, and also loitering in the streets (especially by young people of both genders).

In relation to the foregoing, the most severe penalties will be assessed, including the immediate transfer to work camps, because the *Judenrat* is operating on the assumption that at the same time, all Jews will be employed, and therefore those individuals who loiter in the streets belong to that group which is attempting to shirk the general **work duty** for Jews. They will find a better venue for themselves in the compulsory work camps.

Zamość, November 27, 1940.

Round Stamp of the *Judenrat* in Berman and in Polish."

## Document Number 6

# Krasnobrod Asks for Help

*PP. 1166-1167:* *Facsimile of Letter*

A letter from the Krasnobrod *Judenrat* and Help-Committee – to the Jewish Social Self-Help in Krakow. The letter is dated May 5, 1941, two sides, written in Polish. This letter was received by the Self-Help Organization in Krakow, as can be seen from the stamp, on May 10, 1941, under Number 3733. Despite the fact that the letter is from neighboring Krasnobrod, we enter it here, because it contains issues that relate to Zamość. The Yiddish translation says:

Krasnobrod, May 4, 1941

To the Jewish Social Self-Help in Krakow.

Enclosed we provide two assessments for the months of March and April and four exhibits. As is shown by these exhibits, the condition of life in our town is at the present moment, very tragic.

In general, our population counts 977 Jews, of which 720 are previous residents, and the rest, meaning 255 people, are evacuees from Zamość, and this mostly the poor, of which only 30 are employed at German workplaces – the rest are women and children.

In general, salaried workers among the men between the ages of 16 and 60 years of age come to 125 people. The rest either have no skills for work, or work on a fee basis without a set salary (!!!) in the *Judenrat,* or with the Help-Committee.

Our situation is extraordinarily tragic. The particularly painful point of the present moment is the question of domicile. Because of a lack of housing, we have until now been unable to liquidate the dwellings of the refugees. A large portion of the refugees have been forced to live still at the municipal bath house and in the mikva, under extraordinarily difficult un-hygienic, simply inhuman conditions. This bath house is a danger to the entire populace, because at ever minute there is the threat of an outbreak of an epidemic, and under no circumstances are we in a position to be able to put an end to this situation.

The project to rebuild the edifice (of the fire-fighters command?), into residences, could not be realized for lack of funds.

The second painful problem that we feel intensely is that of clothing. Almost ha the population has no shoes, underwear or clothing. This also causes their inability to go out to work, and they are a burden to the Help-Committee, which does not have the power to help.

The problem of provisioning in general and in particular for the children as well as medical assistance does not make our concerns any less, as is the case with the prior issues, [in] our town, and there is no possible outlook for changes to take place for the better. The entire assistance that has been given to us by the Jewish Social Self-Hep to date is far from adequate. The scarcity of milk is felt particularly keenly, as kasha and even bread for the children.

There is no Jewish doctor at all in our town, and for each visit of a city doctor, we must pay even though we have nowhere to take the money from.

We believe that all this will give an accurate picture of our life an our pain-laden problems. Taking the above mentioned into consideration, we believe that you, honored sirs, will make every effort, with all possibilities, to help us. Otherwise, our populace is placed in a hopeless position, without any possibility of sustaining itself.

The validity of the previously presented facts can be certified by the municipal Help-Committee of Zamość, which is well acquainted with our hopeless situation.

With respect,

(Signatures and Stamps of the *Judenrat*
and Help-Committee in Krasnobrod).

At this opportunity, we request that you send us the forms for the monthly reports of the activity of the Help-Committee."

## Document Number 7

# "Evacuated" German Jews in Zamość

*Page 1169: Facsimile of Document*

Letter in Polish from the Jewish Social Self-Help and Jewish Help Committee for the Zamość region. Dated May 7, 1942 (Letter Number 76/42), addressed to the Jewish Social Self-Help in Krakow. The letter came into Krakow on May 11, under Number 8368. The contents of the document in Yiddish translation:

"Jewish Social Self-Help
Jewish Help-Committee for the Region of **Zamość**

No. 76/42

Zamość, May 7, 1942

To the Jewish Social Self-Help – Presidium – in Krakow.

With this we are notifying you that on the day of April 11, 1942, 3,000 Jews were evacuated from Zamość. However, on April 30 of this year, the first transport of evacuated Jews from the protectorate arrived, in the amount of approximately 1,000 people; the following days – he 2nd and 3rd of May of this year, two additional transports arrived – of them, one was of 1,000 people from the protectorate, and the second, with 800 people, frm Westphalia (Dortmund) and vicinity.

From the general total of 2,800 people, 2,100 remained in Zamość, and approximately 700 people were taken to Komarow from our region. The evacuees from Zamość were mostly settled collectively in barracks.

We immediately placed a second kitchen into operation, and from the first moment of the arrival of the transport, the evacuated people find themselves under our oversight. The burden of the obligation for covering all of the expenses for maintaining and settling all these people falls upon us, as also upon the *Judenrat*.

Taking into account that after the evacuation of the day of April 11, 1942, about 40 percent of our population remained in Zamość, approximately 4,000 of the prior population, which consists exclusively of workers (because the only ones remaining in the city were those who in fact were at work at the time), the above mentioned tasks exceed our powers and our means. **We request assistance from every standpoint**, namely: **money, clothing**, (most of the evacuated Jews arrived without luggage) and sanitary help in the form of medicaments (we have enough physicians from those among the arrivals).

Respectfully –

Leader (Signature not legible)"

## Document Number 8

# "Evacuees" from Theresienstadt Demand Their Luggage

*Page 1172: Facsimile of Document*

Letter (in German) sent from Komarow on May 9, 1942, to the central head (German?) In the name of the 'Protectorate-Jews' evacuated to Komarow. It is certain that the letter was written by a German Jew, or by an actual [sic: gentile] German. On the letter there is the stamp of the included letter of the 'Social Self-Help' of Krakow, Number 8826, included on May 15, 1942. The Zamość *'Hauptman'* or another instance, had apparently sent this letter from the Komarow evacuees to Krakow. The letter says:

"To the Circle Head Man – in **Zamość**.

The people living in Komarow, who, on the first of May, arrived from Zamość with the *Judentransport,* permit themselves to approach you with the following request:

The transport was split in Zamość, so that a small part of it remained in Zamość and because of this were lost to work at the time that 729 Jews were forced to take up residence in Komarow. This *Judentransport* came from the ghetto of Theresienstadt, and conveyed its entire baggage in three wagons, with the permission and under the oversight of the Theresienstadt commander, was taken along with the transport. This baggage contains the only possessions of those ghetto residents on the transport, and consists of the necessary bedroom effects and items of clothing, as well as food, which, incidentally, during the process of being incarcerated in the ghetto, underwent quite a sufficient examination. These effects are the only things that the evacuees have to their names. Especially the children, which only were wearing undergarments and clothing, which they were wearing at the time of the evacuation.

We request therefore, to release an order to the railway management, that the luggage that is found at the Zamość train station is to be transferred to the local *Judenrat* there.

Komarow, May 9, 1942.

For the Evacuated Protectorate Jews in Komarow.
Signature not Legible."

# Zamość Survivors

*Page 1174:* *The Memorial that the Survivors placed at the Jewish cemetery by the grave of the exhumed Jewish martyrs. The Memorial is from pieces of desecrated, broken grave markers. More about this in the following chapters of this section.*

**In prior chapters, we have stressed not only once, that Zamość is one of those 'fortunate' communities of Poland which has a larger cohort of survivors.**

**After the Nazi military defeat, the remnants of the wrecked ship begin to return, individuals, who managed to save themselves from the fiery flood of the Nazis.**

**Those came, who left Zamość in 1939 together with the Red Army, when the city, in accordance with the German-Russian Pact went over to the Germans. From the deep and faraway Soviet areas, they came to Zamość with the hope that perhaps they will find someone from those who were their near ones.**

**Those came, who hid in the forests, and bunkers; those who carried on a Marrano-like life under 'Aryan Papers.' They too thought, maybe, perhaps someone, just like them, somewhere, saved themselves during these dark years.**

**Those came, who survived the years of torture in the Nazi slave camps; came to cast a glance at their home, to see what and who might have remained from among their own; to learn of their fate.**

**This section – dedicated to the Survivors – in fact the last part of our Pinkas – is indeed the end of the sentence, the last resonance of our beloved home city.**

**Here too, we have the word of those who after the years of wandering, of fear and pain, came to their 'home' and found there what they found – pain and desolation....**

**They, the remnants of the people who were not slaughtered, have the word here. Also, their tales, their portraits are given here without modification, without commentary and interpretation.**

**Here also, we made use of the entire material that we had at our disposal. Everyone who had something to tell obtained the opportunity to do so.**

# The Committees of the Zamość Survivors In Poland, in the Years 1945-1950

## (From the reports of Chaim Shpizeisen, ע"ה)

*Page 1176:* *Fifteen delegates from the assembly of Zamość landsleit groups, which took place 9-10 November, 1947 in Vratislava. Moshe Zeydl (Szczecin); Aharon-Mordechai Hirschberg (Lodz); Chaim Shpizeisen (Szczecin); H. Sukhaczewsky (Lublin); Moshe Kezman (Wroclaw); Leibl Werter (Niemcie); Josef Szyfer (Szczecin); Elyeh Rechtman (Wroclaw); Chaim Untrecht, Shlomo Fang, Aharon Miller (All 3 Legnica); Mottel Katz (Zhary); Eilbirt from Browar, and Simcha Gringler (Swidnice).*[407]

*Page 1177:* *The exhumation of the Zamość martyrs. Among those participating: Anshel Zimmerung, the Grandson of Meir Maler, of the city (Lublin); Shimon Bajczman, Josef Szyfer (Szczecin), Shlomo Bukh, Pinhas, Khaskel Shamash's son (Wroclaw); Levi Gringler, Butcher.*

As soon as Zamość was liberated from the Hitlerist occupation, an inquiry about the condition of Zamość and its Jews arrived from *landsleit* in New York, signed by Israel Zilber, at the address of Eliyahu Epstein, who had survived the period of the occupation in a hideout.

The letter laid without being answered. It was only when the *landsman*, Jekuthiel Zwillich returned from the German camps, who made a connection with the Zamość Help Committee in New York, was contact first established. Contact also was initiated with those residents of Zamość who had been saved, who surfaced, and came from a variety of places.

A short time after the first connection, the Zamość committee received from New York the first assistance of $150 dollars.

The Committee rented a location, which was supposed to be an lodging point for the people of Zamość who were thrown together, and they were also given a small amount of support.

The Committee consisted of: Elyeh Epstein, Shimon Bajczman, Jekuthiel Zwillich, Shlomo Bukh and others.

This was in the end of 1945 and beginning of 1946.

In the spring of 1946, when the war refugees began to arrive with the repatriation echelons, and those who were sent off to the Soviet Union, residents of Zamość began to return *en masse*. It happened that fate was such, that the proportion of those who came back that were from Zamość, was a significant one. Many from Zamość, in their time, in the year 1939, when Zamość 'voluntarily' went over to the Germans, were able to evacuate themselves with the Red Army, and a part of them went off deep into Russia, and applied themselves to work in many factories and undertakings.

The echelons of the repatriated went to Lower Silesia, the so-called newly constituted Polish areas, which had belonged to Germany. In many cities and towns, of these tracts, people from Zamość began to meet one another. They came in almost every echelon. Rather significant groups of people from Zamość began to develop in the cities of Upper and Lower Silesia, in Lodz and Szczecin, the former German port cities.

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407 The names Vratislava and Wroclaw are variants of the name for the same city, called Breslau by the Germans. See further, below.

Each individual wanted to know details about their own relatives; who had saved themselves; where they are to be found. From this a need was created for an information center, which could dispense information, which would enable families to get in contact and indeed, should be able to provide some of the initial advice and assistance.

Committees were organized all over, of the former residents of Zamość. In Szczecin, the committee constituted itself in May 1946, and it consisted of the following *landsleit*: Mendel Sznur, ע"ה (died after making *aliyah* to Israel, in Haifa), Chaim Shpizeisen (Died in Tel-Aviv), Josef Szyfer, Moshe Schliam, and others. At that time, in Szczecin, about 1,000 people from Zamość registered themselves. A list of those registered was immediately then sent to New York. The list was printed in a newspaper. Thanks to this presentation, many friends and relatives responded and made inquiries.

The American Help-Committee sent assistance frequently to the committee of the Zamość people in Szczecin, Lodz, Wroclaw (formerly Breslau), which was divided up among the *landsleit*.

On November 1947, an assembly of all the Zamość committees in Poland was organized through the central committee in Warsaw in the capitol city of Lower Silesia – in Wroclaw. Up to 30 delegated traveled to come together from a variety of cities.

After the reporting and a discussion about the future activities, it was agreed that:

The future activities need to be dedicated to carry out a wide-ranging exhumation – to bring to proper burial those dispersed and scattered remains of the martyrs in the area, who had been interred in a variety of places, in and around the city. To gather together all of the grave stones from both Zamość cemeteries, which had been uprooted from them, and with which an array of streets in Zamość had been paved. From these desecrated grave stones, a monument is to be erected. To put the cemetery back in order.

A central Zamość committee of survivors was selected, of those who were to be found in Poland. It was decided that the leadership office would be located in Szczecin, where the Chair, Chaim Shpizeisen was located, the Treasurer Moshe Zaydl, and the Help Secretary Josef Szyfer.

At our call, the Zamość people in New York responded very warmly, with the *landsleit* Israel Zilber and Izzy Herman at the head, and from Buenos Aires the *landsleit*, with the assistance of Wolf Kornmass, Kossoy and Tzitzman at their head.

Thanks to this received assistance, the exhumation was carried out in January 1949. 96 martyrs were given a proper Jewish burial. There is no doubt that the number of martyrs was larger. However, we exhumed those, where we knew the location where the murderers had killed them.

The difficult technical work was carried out under the direction of the delegate and member of the Zamość central committee, Josef Szyfer.

In the summer of 1950, the grave stones were gathered together at the cemetery, and a monument was erected, and a common grave was bounded with the grave stones that had been gathered in this fashion.

The technical work was supervised by delegate from the Zamość committee, the *landsman*, Shia Stein.

It needs to be said, that the far-flung people from Zamość in their respective 'new' locations, found it difficult to participate in the work of bringing order to the grave stones, and the erection of the memorial. Szczecin, where larger numbers of landsleit were located, is on the other side of Poland. The travel was not easy at all. The Zamość people who were closer (whether in Zamość itself, or from Lublin) were less involved.

On September 10, 1950, an unveiling of the monument took place, which was indeed put together from the desecrated stones. It is found on the cemetery, not far from the common grave of the exhumed Jewish martyrs, brought from the surrounding villages, fields and woods.

To the unveiling, came Jews from Zamość, survivors, who then lived in Warsaw, Lublin, Szczecin, Dzerzhonow, Wroclaw, and other points.

The monument was unveiled in the presence of an array of central and local institutions. The Zamość land committee was not then represented. The political situation in Poland no longer permitted the existence of such societies and organizations.

At the unveiling, the Chairman of the Lublin Jewish District Committee spoke, M. Adler; from the Zamość District committee, from the United Polish Workers Party – Zhalinsky; from the central committee of the Jews in Poland, and from the Yiddish Historical Institute – V. H. Ivan. Floral wreaths were laid by a variety of organizations and societies.

The monument was designed by the architect-engineer Adam Klimek, with the close help and oversight of Joshua Stein, who in his time, was delegated by the Zamość committee about this matter.

The Zamość Survivors Organization, had, in the matter of a scant five years, discharged its important and positive work. While it is true that the number of our *landsleit* was equivalent to that from much larger cities, much help was required. Also, the committee played an important role in unifying the sundered families that were separated in various places. There were instances, that members of families were found, who were thought to have been killed. The Zamość committee were clearinghouses of addresses for all the far-flung *landsleit* who were driven away during the Holocaust.

Not only for those from Zamość, but also survivors from the surrounding towns depended on the people from Zamość. Very often, indeed, there were those people, who had family and relative connections with Zamość.

From 1950 onwards, the existence of the Zamość society was not possible and not necessary.

# Zamość After The Holocaust

**By Jekuthiel Zwillich**

*Page 1183:* *The exhumation of the Zamość martyrs on January 16, 1949. Mong the participants: Shlomo Bukh (Wroclaw); Anshel Zimmerung (Lublin); Josef Szyfer (Szczecin); Levi Gringler (Szczecin); Shimon Bajczman (Zamość).*

Together, with a large group of Polish, Hungarian, Czech and German Jews, we were liberated from Theresienstadt on May 10, 1945, when the Russian troops took control of the area of this large ghetto-center.

A few days after our liberation, news circulated within Theresienstadt , that the Poles are treating the Jews who survived very badly – that they have shown themselves to kill many of the Jews, who remained alive after the Nazi slaughters, and that in the evening hours, Jews are not permitted to show themselves in the streets.

Two weeks after our liberation, two men arrived in Theresienstadt from Poland, who presented themselves as being sent by the new temporary Polish people's government. The gave speeches, and declared that the Theresienstadt camp was being liquidated, and we are leaving the city. They called upon the Jews to come back to Poland and to rebuild the new Poland of the people. They told us that from time to time, indeed there were attacks by the 'A.K' (*Armia Krajova*) against the Jews, but this sis severely resisted by the Polish People's Regime.

They advised us, that the Jews should travel to formerly German territories, which had been robbed from Poland. There, houses and businesses of Germans wait for us, who have been chased out of Poland. The Jews are permitted to take up residence there.

We, the group from Zamość, decided to travel to Zamość, despite the fact that we already knew that we no longer had anyone left in Zamość. Each of us privately thought, who knew, maybe?.... maybe, despite everything, we will find someone from the family in Zamość.

On a certain day, a transport of Jews left Theresienstadt for Poland. The transport went to Krakow, and when the transport with the Jews arrived in Poland, we, the group from Zamość, debarked from the train and with a second train, we traveled to Lodz.

In Lodz, we rode over to the Jewish Committee. In the yard, where the Jewish Committee was located, there already were a large number of Jews from a variety of forced labor camps, and on the walls, the names of many Jews were listed, who were looking for their relatives. We made our way to the Jewish Committee for initial assistance. Everyone received 75 zlotys.

On the second day, we took the train to Zamość. We arrived in Zamość at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We saw the first sign of the war in the fact that the train station had been wrecked – all that remained was the foundation. By contrast, the city, the houses, didn't suffer at all – everything remained intact.

The city looked like it was a Saturday afternoon of years gone bay. The streets, empty. We did not know where we could enter. So we remained standing in the corner where the porters used to stand. We stood like this for more than an hour, until someone from the Poles told the Jews, that were already in Zamość, that additional Jews had arrived. Several Jews then came out to us. All the Jews were very happy to see us, and each took one of us to them. Joseph (Yossel'eh) Shpeizman took me to him. We were told immediately that it is better that we should not go out into the streets at night...

Almost all of the businesses were open. Among them, many restaurants, beer gardens. The merchants of the businesses were all Poles, apart from two businesses, which belonged to Jews – Elyeh Epstein's pharmacy, and Fink's ironmongery.

The only way to trade was in the marketplace, where the wagons would stand before the war. The market was set out with stalls and carts with a variety of goods – you could buy anything from a bit of parsley to the finest German suit. The largest number of the merchants who manned these stalls and carts consisted of railroad employees, watchmen, and former prostitutes. These 'vendors' would always travel to former German cities, which Poland had taken back, and from there, bring packages with a variety of merchandise and sell it in the market.

Poles live in all of the Jewish houses – a large part of them are from the eastern provinces. All are already settled in, and all the houses into which I came, one could see many pillows...

The first question from every Pole that we knew, was:

*Pan zyje?* You're still alive?

And told me at the same time, that he rescued a Jew.

All the Poles were haughtier and gleeful. Every one of them told me, let the Russian leave Poland, and we will build a new, beautiful Poland... (In that time, the Poles believed and hoped that the Russians will leave Poland rather quickly).

The City Elder and his appointees were located in the home of Avigdor Inlander. At the house of the Olejarz[408] was the Polish Old Age Home (*Dom starców*). The Magistrate had made a museum out of Sznur's house; I was in the synagogue. The synagogue looks like it was after a pogrom. No benches and no candelabras; boards of wood and iron are strewn about; in the middle of the synagogue, where the *Bimah* stood, there was a deep pit, seemingly, they sought Jewish treasure there....

The Great *Bet HaMedrash* was closed. From the street, it is possible to see that the windows and the transoms are knocked out.

Poles live in the *shtibl* where the *Shammes* of the *Bet HaMedrash* lived (Daleh's), and also in the little *Bet HaMedrash,* where the Holy Ark stood, with Torah scrolls, a crucifix hangs with 'religious icons...'

On the Schulhof, where Shmuel Dicker used to live, there is a restaurant today. Every night, one hears drunken shouting coming from there.

On the second day, I went to the cemetery. First I went to the old cemetery. When one arrives there, it makes the impression as if someone had the hair shorn off their head. An empty place, without head stones. There was not a single trace left of the cemetery that had been there. Also, the wall that served as a border with the 'Nalew[409]' was taken away.

Later, I went to the new cemetery. Thanks to the fact that I recognized the *Tahara* cottage, I apprehended the fact that this was the location of the cemetery. The Polish gravedigger lives in the *Tahara* cottage. Here as well, there were no traces of the cemetery. No fence, no head stones (mounds, with signs written in Yiddish). These were fresh victims, those whom our Polish 'good friends' had manifested themselves to kill after the war...

Several days later, I had the occasion to be on the new streets – Krasniczynskowa, near Garfinkel's house – and I saw that the entire sidewalk there was paved with the head stones from our cemetery. With the letters facing upwards. I stood for a long while, reading the names on the head stones.

I later spoke with the Jewish Committee, which was found in Zamość. I made them aware of this abuse, that the headstones were subject to this desecration.

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408 An Oil Man in Polish.

409 Polish for a discharge point for water. Possibly a sewer runoff.

Several days later, the committee set up a platform with 2 Polish workers and I. We assembled several platforms with the head stones, and took them off to the old cemetery. On the second day, Elyeh Epstein approached us, and advised that he did not have any money for this purpose, and the work was stopped.

A couple of years later, thanks to the fact that our *landsmanschaft* in America had send in money, we assembled all of the head stones, from wherever it was possible in the streets, and from them, set up a handsome memorial on the new cemetery.

I had several occasions to be in the *Neustadt*. The *Neustadt* suffered a great deal from the war and the Holocaust. Many houses were missing from the marketplace (*Rynek*). On the Hrubieszow Gasse – on both sides – only one or two houses remained. As a memorial, that Jews had lived here in the Neustadt, there is the foundation of the synagogue... in the streets and in the marketplace, one does not see a single person. At the place opposite Janacek's, several Polish storekeepers sit on boxes, and they sell vegetables and fruit.

Because of this, large fairs take place here every Thursday. Many peasants come together from the villages. It gets so crowded, that it is difficult to pass through the marketplace. At these fairs, it is possible to buy everything.

In Zamość, I then ran into several tens of Jews. Part of them came from the forests; part had lives on 'Aryan Papers;' part had been liberated from the Czestochowa camp 'Hassag[410]' and also those who had come with the Red Army from Russia and afterwards already remained in Zamość.

All these Jews lived in the *Altstadt*. They live on 'one foot.' Not one of them thought to remain in Zamość. Every one had come for a long as they could seel their house, or inheritance, and immediately depart.

I also met Jews from the surrounding towns, among the Jews that I encountered in Zamość, because they were afraid to travel into, and remain, in those towns. When a Pole wanted to purchase a hose from a Jew in such a town, the Pole would come to Zamość. The transaction was consummated in Zamość.

A Jew from Szczebrzeszyn told me:

He traveled to Szczebrzeszyn. Young gentile children ran after him, and shouted '*Zyd*' at him, and threw stones. He was lucky that an auto was parked on the marketplace with two Russian soldiers in it. He pleaded with them, and they took him to Zamość.

At that time, the transports with the repatriated Polish Jews began to arrive from Russia. Among them were also many Jews from Zamość. They came very impoverished. Every time a second Jew came to Zamość, sells his inheritance, and again, travels on. The Poles used this circumstance, in which the Jews found themselves and bought the Jewish houses practically for nothing.

The first letters arrived in Zamość from our *landsleit* in America. They inquired about the fate of the Zamość Jews, and at the same time send us $150 dollars. The committee divided this money among all the Zamość people.

Letters and packages with clothing also arrived from our Zamość [*landsleit*] in the Land of Israel.

The Jews grouped themselves near the synagogue in Zamość, where Lieber Emmer at one time had his restaurant. When the Poles wanted to buy something from Jews, they knew to come to the synagogue.

From time to time, Polish coachmen would attack the Jews, insult them, and beat them. The Jews had no option, and they went away from the synagogue, and grouped themselves opposite the Magistrate Building, near Rann's business.

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410 "Hassag" was in Kielce, Poland. Hassag was a munitions factory; Jews were put to work there, and lived in the camp adjacent to the plant. This location is about 50 miles east of Czestochowa.

However, here too, two Polish wagon drivers would come all the time and attack. They rode on a platform, and when they rode by where the Jews were standing, they would stop their platform at the side, and would accost the Jews with a whip, abusing and beating them. The Jews, when they would see these hooligans coming from a distance, would run away.

One time, I was standing with a group of Jews, and we were telling each other about what we had lived through during the war. These hooligans came riding up. The Jews fled, and only I remained standing. The two hooligans accosted me, abused and beat me with the whip, until they broke the whip. I immediately went to the police, and described this, and I took off my shirt and showed the marks that the hooligans made on my back. The police immediately arrested the hooligans, held them for two days, and then set them free.

At the same time, the pogrom in Kielce took place. I believe that because of this, a Polish captain came down to Zamość, and he called several Jews to the Magistrate, and asked them a variety of questions about the beating.

Several days later, the police again arrested the two hooligans, and also several Polish merchants. It appeared that all these attacks had been organized by the Polish merchants.

A day before I left Zamość, I was called before the investigative judge about the issue, and I was asked about a variety of details of the attack.

They told me, that the hooligans would be sentenced shortly.

I have no idea of what conclusion the court came to, because I left Zamość, and I was no longer in Zamość.

# Zamość Without Jews

**By Moshe Schliam**

Three weeks after my return from Russia, where I had spent the war years – to Poland. The echelon of repatriated persons brought us to Szczecin, a port city on the Baltic Sea, was co-opted into Polish sovereignty. I felt a need to visit the city of my birth, Zamość, which I had left at the time of the Hitlerist invasion, in October 1939.

The bloody tragedy of the entirety of Polish Jewry, and among them, of our city of Zamość, was already known to me while I was still in Russia, but despite this, preparing to leave Poland, I felt an obligation to visit our city; to see with my own eyes, the destroyed Jewish community, and perhaps I will find some sort of a trace of my dear relatives?...

We arrived in the city on May 10, 1946 (I and Joseph Dickler). It was a Friday's day, and our hearts immediately experienced a flutter. The streets were empty, as if they had died, around the 'little orchards' – empty. What happened to the life of this part of the city? Circles of people would gather constantly in this place, the older ones would conduct business, and the younger ones would be having fiery discussions about a variety of problems.

We walk by the businesses, of which 90 percent were at one time in Jewish hands, and now – all are owned by Christians. We go through the alleys, the streets. It is intact, the streets and the houses, as they were, however, the Jews are not there.

We walk like mourners, our faces dark, we search for a Jew, where we might can put out first foot down, and, here, we see from faraway, two women, and we think they are Jewish. We draw closer, and we see Freydeleh Fink who was saved by a miracle from the hands of the Hitlerists, and her daughter, who has not long ago returned from Russia.

We learn from them that an assembly of the Jews in Zamość is taking place at the Basilianska Gasse 61 (Foont's House), in the house of Yakkel Schatzkammer of the *Neustadt* (who also survived by a miracle).

With beating hearts we go to the gathering. – Whom will we meet there? What sort of issues will be addressed?

We meed about 30 Jews assembled there – remnants of families cut down, shadows of people, there is nobody among them who has settled, or has come to settle in the city. All have come in a hurry to liquidate their inheritance holdings – and to flee from here.

Only three Jews continue to run their businesses: Elyeh Epstein – his pharmacy store, with which he does not wish to part; Freydeleh Fink – the ironmongery, and Shmuel Rosen – His Beer Garden.

How long they will be able to continue to survive is unknown, the place repels Jews from here, they cannot live here. The blood and the tragic murders of martyrs screams from the earth.

As if in an hallucination, we go, unable even to weep; our eyes have been dried of tears for a long time already.

At the assembly, it is recalled that a year ago there were still 300 Jews, among which about 30 had survived by a miracle from the brutal death, and the rest, who returned from Russia. However, none of them can remain here for any length of time. True, it is now quiet in the city, one does not hear about attacks against Jews here, however, Jews who were born and raised here cannot make a fresh start here, just like one cannot remain fro a longer time in a cemetery.

A committee of the Jews is selected at the meeting, who are now found in Zamość. In the agenda of the committee:

1. Help for those who are returning, even if they return to Zamość for only a short time.

2. Creating a location for those returning, where they can have their first stop, arriving in the city. It is remarked that now Jews will come to Zamość, understandably, temporarily, to liquidate assets of their murdered relatives, and without doubt, they will have no corner where to lodge for a night during their sojourn in the city. The location has to be renovated, furnished, beds have to be put in, etc.

Yes, a very modest agenda for the Jewish Committee, which has to represent a community, which once was a metropolis and a mother in Jewry!...

As one who had only recently arrived, and had no notion of what had transpired – I ask:

– Is it not part of the activity of the committee to safeguard to assets of the destroyed community, with all of its material and spiritual treasures?

Has the *Pinkas* of the Jewish community survived?

And where are the books, the valuables, with their historical value, which had been located in the former *Bet HaMedrash*?

Where are the documents. The minutes, lists of the Jewish libraries, schools, parties, organizations, cultural and philanthropic institutions?

To this, I receive the answer that there was no possibility to protect them – because no trace of any of them remained. The buildings of the Jewish community – part of them destroyed, and the rest taken over by Polish institutions, banks and schools – the specifics and general [possessions] of the Jews in the city, have been robbed by strangers.

On the following morning, we could review the factual nature of the picture of the we received at the meeting, with our own eyes.

Night falls in the meantime, and we go out into the streets , and look into the lit windows – no trace, no remnant of that renown Jewish Sabbath – no Sabbath candles are to be seen, that were blessed by Jewish mothers in the Jewish homes, the Sabbath and Festival-loving Jews are no more, so beautifully portrayed by I. L .Peretz. We walk sadly past the wreckage of a Jewish life, which was so deeply rooted here and which angry winds and evil beasts in the form of humans tore out by those roots....

We run through the streets as if being pursued, and into our own residence. Mr. Elyeh Epstein, who lives in Bajczman's house, together with Bajczman's oldest son, Shimon, have invited us their for a night's lodging.

We talked with Elyeh Epstein at length – who told us about his personal experiences in living through the time of the bloody German invasion. We hear a portrait of blood and tears, until deep into the night. It is clear that after such bitter impressions during the course of the day, our sleep was impaired in that first night of being in Zamość, after an absence of more than a full 7 sorrowful years. Before our eyes, we beheld those dark images of vandalism and barbarity that overtook our near and dear ones, carried out in the twentieth century in the so-called 'progressive' epoch, by the 'cultured' German nation – is there even a form of vengeance for something like this?

In the morning we go to the 'Hayfl,' to the house where I was born, and where I had left my near ones behind, when I set out on my road to wandering.

I talk to the shoemaker, the gentile, who lives in the house, perhaps some trace has remained in the house, a sign of our nearest and dearest, perhaps a picture, a handwritten document, and address?

There is nothing. He is not the first person to live in the house. The tenants were changes many times, and he has found not a thing.

And so we go through a number of homes in the 'Hayfl' and we find not a trace. In the large yard, children are playing – What has happened to the Jewish children, whose joyous laughter, and lively play always filled this yard?....

We enter the Zamość synagogue. It is one big wreckage. The windows are broken in, and boarded up, the doors are nailed shut – this is the appearance of the Zamość synagogue, with its famous architecture, we cannot even go in here...

We go to the old Jewish cemetery – the only thing that remains is the hedged fence, the head stones are not there, the field is p-lowed and cattle graze on the grass....

The new cemetery looks like this also.

Later on, we found part of the head stones, they had been used to pave the sidewalks of the new streets, near Garfinkel's house, as near the castle keep, near the Justice Buildings, they were covered in cement – and when the cement is washed off, the Hebrew letters re-appear on the memorial stones...

The barbarians! They didn't even have any decency towards the dead, and permit them rest!

How the Jews were exterminated, the various brutal ways in which the extermination was accomplished, the 'evacuations' and the extermination camps, about them there is the eye witness accounts of those who lived through it – who with their own eyes saw the bloody train of the Hitlerists in Zamość – I will not write about them. It suffices for me that not one person from my entire family did not survive!

These few days, that we were in 'Zamość Without Jews' were a reliving anew of the darkness of the bloody years.

We left with the decision that the faster we could leave the bloody Polish soil, where that populace that had been born there, lived together with Jews for hundreds of years, had for the most part, with a tranquil foreknowledge, assisted the implementation of the mass-murder and bloody extermination of the Jewish population.

Remember what Amalek did to you! These barbarous actions will never be forgotten!

# Yitzhak Leib Peretz on the Streets of Zamość

**Sholom Stern**
(Montreal)

A.

**On a winter's eve, between houses with windows,**
**That pale, Yitzhak Leib Peretz walks**
**The streets of Zamość.**

**In the marketplace swarm that has been silenced**
**A lantern flickers, and twinkled to the heavens**
**That are strewn with silver stars.**

**On the lofty tower clock, the hands are shadowed,**
**And his resonant voice waked those in the market vale**
**In the cool, cellar-like stores**
**Along with the low-walled houses.**

**Shadows race through the darkened yards.**
**Jews, saddened, sunk in thought, rush**
**By the destroyed wall of the fortress,**
**Which awes with moss-covered crumbling protuberances.**

**One who is late, drives, applies**
**His whip, and hurries**
**To the iron gate.**

**In the *Bet HaMedrash*, in *Shtiblach*,**
**Where the solace is deep and open,**
**The Jews have summarily fled there**
**From the market vale, from shouting and cursing,**
**From the heavy yoke of making a living, from the colds of the wind.**

**The candles of fat quarrel and sputter.**
**The old one, sigh in their piety**
**Stories of olden days,**
**They keep on mixing in**
**Around the long rectangular tables.**
**And eyes are clear, and deep**
**In their belief: that God**
**Looks after every Jew, and He will**
**Raise them from the dark Diaspora.**

**The market is done, the swarming is done.**
**For a moment, they are flowing in light worlds**
**And the heavens are –**
**Their blue shelters.**

**The bridge and the gate are locked.**
**Peasant and fear have swum away.**
**Sideways are darkened and silent,**
**And over open *Gemaras*,**
**Jews with wind-blown beards**
**Sing-song and intone**
**Saddened, and sunken in thought.**

**Faces are blinded.**
**Shadows, like whips**
**Weave themselves across the walls.**
**Jews intone and search**
**For clear explanations in books of wisdom.**

**And until late in the night**
**The accursèd effort**
**Of every Jew is seen through**
**Deed and parable, through reason and theory,**
**Through a portion of the Torah with *Rashi*,**
**A chapter of *Mishnah*, a page of *Gemara*.**

**And the tall shadow of Yohanan Wassertreger sunk in thought**
**Stretches across the wall**
**In his wide, long, fringe-cornered garment.**

**Softly and with heart, he intones a song,**
**And the cold wader sloshes**
**From his deep, wooden pail.**

**And the pullers of cobbler's thread, and the needle sewers,**
**The harness makers, and village messengers**
**Sit by the oven, around tables**
**With feet scraping and bent**
**And speak to God through the melodies of the Psalms,**
**Gnawingly and piously.**

---

**B.**

**Reverberating clock bells**
**Keep telling**
**The hours of the blundering of Yitzhak Leib Peretz**
**Among twisted paths, as through**
**Darkened, well-worn byways.**

**Seemingly, his walk is thought out.**
**A poor and crowded *shtibl*,**
**Which brings that longing refrain**
**From generations past.**

**But here, on a slippery threshold**
**A woman cries out and curses.**
**Peretz remains standing, and**
**He is drawn to the plaintive cry**
**Of a small scrawny little boy,**
**Who shivers in the cold**
**And whimpers out, that this**
**Is his stern stepmother driving him**
**From his father's house.**

**The little boy wails:**
**The house walkers beat me,**
**When I crawl under the oven,**
**On the low, warmed steps.**
**In the summer, I sleep here, by the fence**
**And my father, himself hungry**
**In the morning, throws out to me from the window**
**A piece of rye bread.**

**Peretz's face is lined with sorrow,**
**And he wipes the tears from the boy's**
**Hungry eyes.**

**Peretz takes him by the hand,**
**And the little boy, in the wide**
**Torn shoes walks**
**Happily, on the white**
**Snow-covered surface.**

**In the fore-kitchen, the little boy**
**Becomes sated and dreamy**
**In his shoes, and his torn overcoat.**

**It is quiet in the house**
**The little boy sees in a dream**
**Silver dew dripping**
**From a cup-shaped rose.**

**The bridge is raised, locked.**
**The window panes are splashed in starlight.**
**The little boy smiles, and sweet**
**Is the dream the**
**Cool dew from the cup-shaped rose**
**Until the night extinguishes itself and**
**The morning sun shines on**
**The prison-like house – – –**

C.

**In the summer suns**
**The icy gate is open**
**The chickens chase**
**The Jews to the wall of the fortress.**

**The Nazi-Murderer**
**With the sharp points**
**Of spear and flame**
**Annihilates the**
**Source to the root.**

**There is nobody anymore.**
**At the cemetery**
**Jews bones burn.**
**Night.**
**In streets that are stone-silent**
**The Tower Clock sounds.**
**In the empty city,**
**Tangled in fence wire**
**Yitzhak Leib Peretz walks**
**To the bloody wall.**

**Silent places of business, darkened streets,**
**Deep, twisted yards,**
**Only one no longer sees**
**Any Jews running.**
**Night.**
**Winds howl, throwing fences and**
**Peeling off the dried shingles from**
**The blackened skins.**

**On bloody byways,**
**That stretch themselves for**
**Far, barren miles to Komarow,**
**Tyszowce, Laszczow, Szczebrzeszyn**
**To the lime kilns in Lublin.**

**And on the municipal thoroughfare**
**Of grave stone and brick, the night clatters and**
**The wintry shadow**
**Flickers playfully and cavorts, and reveals**
**A child's carriage stuck**
**On rusted wire.**

**And hands protrude**
**From the graves of the Jews in fields,**
**Behind trees, under bridges**
**And forest walls.**

**And between ash and smoke,**
**Yitzhak Leib Peretz walks**
**All alone in the land of destruction**
**And wails his cry**
**Over the unspeakable calamity.**

**Peretz blunders between destruction and thorns**
**And in his heart there burns**
**The anger of vengeance:**
**German Sir, dried out in**
**Your heart is the human emotion.**
**So shall your land**
**Become dry, barren and sere.**
**And for the burning of Jewish skeletons,**
**May your house turn to stone.**

**Nazi slaughterers,**
**May you no longer hear the happy**
**Burbling of children in their cradles.**
**And may your origins be eviscerated**
**For your poisoning,**
**And for your gaiety, when in**
**The gas flames, there screamed**
**Fathers, Mothers, Sons and Daughters.**

**Yitzhak Leib Peretz wails**
**And walks to the bloodied wall.**
**The empty, stony city**
**Dark, frightened and dumb.**
**The Tower-clock**
**Long and sorrowfully**
**Tolls and sounds.**

# Zamość 1945

**By Helena Schaffner**

When, in the fall of 1945, I traveled to my Zamość, I knew that I will not encounter any relatives, friends and acquaintances. I felt a profound need to see my home city once again. I thought: perhaps... remnants, I wanted again to breathe in the Zamość air, feel something close to me, my own.

The train from Warsaw to Lublin was packed. Unlit, cold. Full of sacks and with new Polish post-war traders, who sat sullenly, glowering at one another.

At Lublin, the train emptied out. In the car, apart from me, only a young man remained. We did not exchange a single word. I did not want to speak about my Zamość with a strange Pole, knowing at the outset, that not only will he not understand me, he will not want to understand me. The train dragged itself along lazily, stopping at bare, dead stations. With a beating heart, I waited for the Trawniki station. This was the place where the workers from Schultz's factory in the Warsaw ghetto were brought and killed, the people that fate had tied me to for a while – from July 1942 to February 1943 – when I worked together with them.

Trawniki...

I descended from the train, and asked the overseer of the station, where Schultz's factory 'work camp' was located here (the death camp). He cast a heavy glance at me, and apparently, taking me for a Pole, called out in wonder:

– But, there were only Jews there!

At that moment, someone touched me on the hand. I turned around, and saw the young man from the train near me. He asked me to return to the train, because I could remain alone on the station and have to wait overnight for the next train through. When we were again sitting in the train car, the young man called out to me:

– It is dangerous to stay here. The populace is hostile to Jews.

What Jews? – Those who aren't here? I thought for a moment – and why is this young man moved to warn me in such an intense fashion?

I immediately became aware that he is Jewish himself, and that he and his family had lived in Zamość until the outbreak of the war. He knew who I was. Also, a little later, I recalled that I had seen him one time, as a student, he was a colleague of the young Peretzes. He saved himself, fled to Warsaw, and there married a daughter of Polish people, who hid him in their house. When he took sanctuary in the church, he felt fortunate – he saved his life. Is he happy now? – I didn't want to ask him, but from his silence, and his sadness I sensed that he is now thinking about Zamość, to which the train was now taking him, about his destroyed Jewish home, and about the peculiar ways of fate...

Silently, we sat in the wagon, when the train stopped in Zamość. It was a foggy early morning. The station lay enveloped by a deep silence. No carriage could be seen. We both went into the city on foot. And again, we are greeted by a silence, a deep one, an 'unnatural' one; a silence which one can, it would seem, touch with one's hand. The houses, the streets, the city square with the municipal building in the middle – everything stands as it was before, but it is ossified. Zamość did not suffer externally from the operations of the war, and not during the *aktionen*. But the deathly silence that I encountered, was so disassembling, so suffocating, that one thought that the air had been expelled from here.

As we approached the municipal building, the young man took his leave of me. He had come to Zamość with something of an official mission, and had to travel back to Warsaw on that same day. He did not tell me his name now, as a Pole,

he did not want to meet anyone. It was very clear that he had no desire to return to that which once was. He had severed his ties to the past. He **had** to sever his ties. I, by contrast, wanted to immerse myself in it.

For a bit of time, I wandered about the streets and byways; looked into the gates of the houses, that were so familiar to me; went back and forth through the '*potchinehs*,' – an unease peered out at me from all about. I came in contact with strange people, who looked like shadows – I felt that I was the single living person in a cemetery.

Nobody stopped me, and I also did not detain any of them. After a bit of time, I began to think that I myself am no more than a shadow.

I went off in the direction of the marketplace. There, an elderly Pole who was leading a cow, drew close to me.

– You, madam, are the daughter of the elderly Ashkenazi?

Whether he was happy that he had espied a familiar Jewish daughter, or whether he wondered how such a thing could have occurred? – I could in no way read the answer to this from his face.

I went on further.

On the same day, I learned that there were perhaps a *minyan* of Jews in Zamość. Several, who had hidden themselves on the Aryan side, individuals who had returned from Russia and a couple of Jews from surrounding towns. This shred of Jews, sundered, cordoned off from equitable treatment, waited for some sort of miracle: something has to happen, it is necessary to wait. They have to be somewhere, the Jews of Zamość, all the kin, that lived, worked, traded, were happy, sorrowed!.... They will return, they must return!...

And perhaps they died? – I went off to the cemetery. The wall was torn down. I did not encounter a single headstone. The field was full of pits. I could not even recognize the grave sites of my relatives. All I saw was that, to one side, there were several fresh mounds. A young Jewish man, who was saved himself by a miracle, who escorted me to the cemetery, told me that under these mounds, Hessia Goldstein lies buried (the sister of I. L. Peretz), whom the Germans shot in bed, where she lay ill; her son, who during the *selektion*, had resisted the Germans; his wife, and his child. The burial was carried out by the couple of Zamość Jews who had remained after the '*aktion*.' These mounds, which were still fresh, were the single surviving sign of [the remains of] the Zamość community from the Nazi times.

I left the old cemetery, which was located between Zamość and the *Neustadt*. In place of the cemetery, I saw before me a large square paved with cement, and smooth as a mirror. I was aware, that the Germans had transformed the old Jewish cemetery into a parking lot for their freight trucks.

I went back to the city, and I saw new streets, built between the city and the engineering-garden, which had been paved with the grave stones of both cemeteries.

Again, I ricocheted around the city. I passed through the Peretz Gasse in the direction of the synagogue, which had been desecrated by the Germans – the windows smashed out, the doors – nailed shut. (The efforts of the Jews living in the *Hayfl* to put the synagogue back in order, encountered difficulties from the municipal administration).

Despite all this, I did not want to give up mt hopes to find some further traces of the Zamość of yesteryear. At a moment, it seemed to me that I am about to find them. That occurred when I passed by the cinema theater, which was in the building of the former Franciscan church. There, it was always full of Jewish youth, or so I thought. I bought a ticket, not even looking at the program, as to what was playing, and I went inside. It was cold. I looked around. Almost all of the seats were empty. There were barely twenty people on this enormous hall. Around and about – an emptiness, a barren cold, a terrifying darkness. Frightened, I made my way outside.

Night fell. I went to spend the night with one of the surviving Jews. There were three of us there. We knew each other from times gone by. It seemed as if we had a lot to tell one another. However the city, that was struck dumb, the silence, which hung everywhere, locked up our mouths. We sat and were still, each sunken in the past. What was the purpose of speaking? The fact is, the single and ineluctable one – there are no more Jews in Zamość.

* * *

I decided that immediately on the morrow, in the morning. Zamość. I was advised to travel to Lublin by Freight truck, and not by train. This way would be quicker and safer. Two Jews escorted me to a side street near the municipal building and there, they took their leave of me. Nobody needed to know who I was, and what tied me to Zamość... I left Zamość at nine o'clock in the morning. It was a cold, dry morning. The city looked like it was shrouded in sorrow. When the freight truck turned in the direction of the Lublin Road, I threw a last glance at the '*potchinehs*,' at the beautiful building of the church, at the bell tower, at the municipal government building. We went out onto the highway – the hospital went by the eyes, the Lublin outskirts, the prison, the barracks. Afterwards, flat land came, and silent hills sunken in thought.

I was still in Zamość with my thoughts, when the driver called out: **Izbica!** I did not see a city, only wreckage. The eviscerated, bullet-scarred walls looked like congealed pieces of horror. It was in this place, that a portion of the Zamość Jewish populace was shot and burned together with the Jews of Izbica.

This was the last image, that has eternally remained in my memory from the post-war visit to my home city of Zamość.

# The Zamość 'Rotunda'

**By Akiva Eierweiss**

'.... and he, what did he mean?
He, the one who chose you.
Was this his punishment?
Was he lacking in wonders?

Why does he not say stop!'....

*Page 1198: The 'Rotunda' – the location of the murderous executions.*

Lo, these very words, from the **Jester** in '*At Night on the Old Marketplace*' by I. L. Peretz, wormed their way into my mind when, in the month of March 1946, a year after the liberation already, I stood inside, in the 'heart' of the Zamość 'Rotunda.'

Before me, I saw a massive mound of half-burned human bodies – fused bones, heads, feet torn of, still in their boots, hand bones in sleeves... look, they are still fresh, the victims of the beastly killings.

One could still smell the essence of the smoke. Here, in a corner, there lie additional rows of wood, half-burned. Plies on piles, and pieces of skin between them, that had not been burned...

It appears that the murderers were abruptly stopped in the middle of their cannibal feast...

We, from Zamość, know the 'Rotunda' very well. The old building that traces its origin to the complex of the former fortress, which served as a powder magazine, it was also called '*prokhovnia*.' Stout, red brick walls, without a roof.

Here, in the 'Rotunda', diagonally opposite the train station, was a good defense point. In olden times, when the citadel was a part of the fortification around Zamość, there were deep trenches still here, which could be filled with water, in order to make even more difficult, the passage of an enemy that wanted to attack.

It was this place that the Nazis elected, in order to carry out their sporadic and systematic acts of murder. They dug out a pit in the middle, and there, they installed a primitive crematorium. They shot the victim, and immediately cremated him on the spot.

Whoever went into that place, no longer ever came out. In this manner, hundreds, and thousands, took along with them, the secret of their last journey...

The criminals could not break apart the primitive crematorium, which they installed, could not make it seem like they had wiped off its traces. It appears that these 'heroes' who displayed such 'heroism' against those who were tortured and starved Jewish mass that had been spat upon, had to draw back rather quickly, and leave behind evidence of their bestiality.

The 'Rotunda' was not the only extermination point of our 14 thousand residents of Zamość, and the many thousands of Jews who were brought to Zamość from all parts of the world. The majority of our community was annihilated in the various extermination camps – firstly in the death factory **Belzeč**, in Majdanek, in the marches to Izbica, and other places.

In the crematorium of the 'Rotunda', the blood and the bones of non-Jews were intermingled, annihilated by the Nazis.

The essential point: The 'Rotunda' remained **in Zamość**, here it is like a witness of the horror; it is a permanent indicator of the bestial murders committed by the brown hordes.

During my visit, the area around the 'Rotunda' was filled with graves, many out of necessity, symbolic, on small crosses, the names of those who were tortured were either written or scratched.

On the red 'Rotunda bricks' I also found, written in Yiddish, and in Polish, many names of the Jewish victims....

It is spring, a golden Polish spring, March 1946. The promise of rebirth is carried in from the fields and woods; birds are building nests in the gouges of the pock-marked walls of the 'Rotunda.'...

And we, the tortured remnants of a community that once was, stand and inhale the stench of burned flesh, smoking bones, and it is not the song of birds that reaches our ears – we hear the plaintive cry of the ones who were tortured.

Let the 'Rotunda' not be wiped away – let it remain for all eternity as a memorial that should remind us, and also demand of us.

# Zamość, the City of I. L. Peretz [411]

**By M. Tzanin**

...Before the deluge that cascaded over Polish Jewry, sixteen thousand Jews lived here, craftsmen, and merchants, workers and storekeepers, and a large Jewish intelligentsia. In the fortress city, there were yet two fortresses which had a much greater influence on the Jews than the mortared walls and forts that hemmed Zamość in: Hasidism and the Enlightenment.

There was a rich Jewish life here. Thereby, as was the case in all cities, the Jews of Zamość also dreamed about better worlds, about redemption, and the youth sacrificed its life for that better world, which never arrived for it.

Zamość had within it a large socialist movement: the battles between the *Bund*, *Poalei Tzion* and the communists were so fiery here, so angered, it was as if fate had decreed that they alone had to build the 'new' world, as if they were the very foundation of socialism.... Were they, perhaps, that foundation? Were they, perhaps, right?

Beautiful Zamość now gives the impression of a theater, where the stage has been set with props for a medieval city, with the old marketplace and artistic buildings, but the audience has not come, and the actors have no one to whom they can show themselves to...

Zamość is half empty. In the *Neustadt*, which the Jews built up before the war, a kilometer further away from the center, two Jewish families live today, without children, just two people. That is all that remains of the rich Jewish community.

When I stood next to the synagogue on Peretz *Gasse* (the name remained even through the times of the German occupation), a Pole, in military dress, came over to me, and inquired of me in the following manner:

– *Herr* Professor, what are you looking for here?

– I am looking at this building and I do not know what it is – I answer him.

– Ah, the *Herr* Professor certainly must be involved in the research of old structures? – He asks with curiosity, and I decide not to lead him off erroneously.

– Yes – I say – I am researching medieval items, and I am curious to know what sort of building this is.

– This is – he says – the old synagogue. Here is where the Jews hid all their silver artifacts and vessels from all the synagogues in Zamość. Come in right here – he indicates the entranceway – you will see something.

And I see a deep pit with the surrounding construction of a tunnel. Underneath the tunnel is spacious, and in the darkness, one cannot see its end. My informant clarifies for me, that this tunnel was built back in the times when the Zamoyskis ruled, and it stretched for a distance of many kilometers, to the city of Krasnystaw. The Jews took advantage of the fact that the synagogue was built over the tunnel, and they dug down to it, and hid their Torah scrolls and the silverware of the synagogue there. The Germans turned the synagogue into a granary, but the people of Zamość knew about the fact that treasure was hidden there. Now, when the Germans left the city, and the Russian Army had not yet taken over the city, the people let themselves at the synagogue, and with picks and shovels, dug their way down to the crates. They dug from the prior night until early the next morning. The legend of the entombed treasure which for a long time gave no peace to the inhabitants of Zamość, now became true.

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411 Editor's Footnote: This reportage was also published by M. Tzanin in his book in Poland, in the year 1948. From his series 'About Destroyed Jewish Communities in Poland,' were take excerpts from the chapter that has a bearing on our city, which was cut down.

And my informant tells me something else: The synagogue itself in Zamość was entirely plundered in one day, when the Jews were driven into the ghetto – in the *Neustadt* outside of the fortress walls, in that location, where before the war, the Jews had built up an entire residential quarter. The synagogue was so thoroughly plundered, that a single nail didn't remain in the wall.

The skeleton of a huge chandelier still remains in the old synagogue, which the vandals could not carry out. In the attic of the synagogue, are mountains of books, from which the vandals had ripped off the leather bindings... they didn't need the contents of the books, because in such dark days, one cannot make any money from them. Not more, than when the homemakers of the surrounding houses needed a bit of paper for bodily needs, they would send a child up to the attic for a book...

Now, no one will ask, how was it that the Jews of Zamość stood alone during this great misfortune? How was it, that no one in Zamość extended a hand to bestow a word of comfort?

The two Jewish people, who are now in Zamość, are not found in the city proper, but in the new residential quarter outside the walls of the citadel. Zamość is essentially *Judenrein*. But you will still find a sign, that a seething Jewish life played itself out here, on the external walls of the synagogue. You will find a large painted announcement with Yiddish lettering:

'Hand workers, merchants and craftsmen! Vote for ballot list number 18!' –

This was the last rally and the last election for the generations-long Jewish life.

The Jews of Zamość began being slaughtered on the eleventh of April 1942, when the SS murderer Kolb demanded that Garfinkel, the President of the *Judenrat,* give him three thousand Jews. He provided them. From that time on, each month, 'evacuations out' took place, and on October 16, 1942, the Zamość [Jewish] community ceased to exist.

However, by 1947, the Jewish tragedy in Zamość had not yet ended.

In the year 1947, I read over the grave stones on a Zamość street, that were being used as sidewalks: citizens of Zamość step on the headstones of Sarah Torbiner, of Mozhivitzky, Luxembourg, and tens of others, whose names are now difficult to read. The headstones are located on the sidewalk where the house of the previously mentioned Garfinkel stands. The street in front of the circuit court building is also paved with headstones. There, where the measure of justice is taken, The roadbed on the 'Panienska' *Gasse* is paved for two kilometers with Jewish headstones.

On the old Jewish cemetery, the bones from many hundreds of graves have been gathered together, and they were publicly burned. Jewish grandfathers did not avoid the fate of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who were cremated in Belzeč, and in Majdanek – also their bones were burned on a wooden pyre.

The fate of the new cemetery was no better. Most of the graves have been disinterred, and one does not know any longer if these are graves or just plain holes in the ground. More than a quarter of the parcel of the new cemetery had been plowed, and planted with potatoes. Just as I was going by, it happened that peasant women had begun to pick the first potatoes from the graves of the Jewish community in Zamość.

The Peretz Library now serves as an office location, and the *Bet HaMedrash*, where Peretz studied – is a simple residence for a peasant, who has decided to become a cultural statesman.

# Pages from a Tour of Poland

**By Sholom Stern**
(Montreal)

– 1 –

The sandy road stretches on to Majdanek. All around is a world of green fields and meadows. Four of us are walking along this road, in the heat of Tammuz. Tow comrades from my home town, Moshe Krempel, Abraham Eisen, and the teacher, Feivel Freed (who at one time was the editor of the '*Chelmer Stimme*' and one of my first editors), an intelligent, progressive, Jewish man. He is an educated man, who knows several languages, a great Hasid, and a loyal reader of the Yiddish literature. I remember Feivel Freed from Chelm from before the war: 'Feivel the Dandy,' he would be called. The picture of his beautiful wife stands before my eyes. Now, he drags himself along this sandy road. He has aged, gray and knotted up from suffering. He breathes with difficulty. But he does not stop talking. It is his **sorrow** that is speaking. His wife and daughter were cremated in Majdanek. His wife was led to the gas oven, and his daughter chose to die with her mother, rather than remain alive. So Feivel shuffles along with us, hunches himself, at least it is warm outside, that beats down as if with hot fanned out strands.

Feivel Freed keeps on talking, and emits a continuing stream of imprecations. Whom does Feivel Freed not curse? Everything and everybody. An blasphemy, as if one were hailing bricks down on one's head. After several angry and distant outbreaks, he ends with: 'I am used to coming here already, to the 'everyone.' It doesn't bother me at all, it doesn't bother me, do you hear, my friend Stern!' His moist eyes glisten at the same time.

The way continues in its sandiness. This is the path of suffering for our people. Day and night, hungry, dumb, wounded, our brothers and sisters were driven to the furnaces. Around electrified fencing, there are watchtowers on all sides. It appears that a fly could not sneak itself out of this place. Along the way – a vigorous scrape with the foot, and the bone of a hand protrudes, a wreckage full of holes, rotting pieces of human clothing. In pits, the bones of Jews, that had been shot, when the Red Army drew near, they shot remnants of Jews in their hurry, and threw them into the pits. Over the pit there stands a hanging scaffold, of the evil beast, the Nazi murderer, the oldest in Majdanek, that the Polish regime seized and hanged. 'So May They All Be Destroyed!' The lips murmur in vengeance – but what sort of comfort can there be in vengeance for such an indescribable misfortune!

Not far from the crematoria (one, apparently, the Nazi bandits tried to destroy), workers are sweeping the ash together, which is the residue of two million martyrs, and are erecting a memorial, a mountain of ash from human bones. A horror?! It cannot even be imagined. One's heart falls from pain and shuddering. One wants to run and scream. Yes, howling like some wounded lion in the forest. A mountain of shoes, who had not hear a telling about this mountain of shoes? But when one stands in front of the accumulated mountain of more than eight hundred thousand shoes and tiny shoes from Jews and Jewish children, from a variety of lands, at that time, the earth trembles under one's feet. Many of the little shoes are moldering already. They are being sorted, they are being put out into the sun. When you take a child's shoe in hand, tears rain down on the mold, and it seems as if the warmth of a child's foot can still be felt in its tread. Shoes, shoes, men's, women's, all manner of leather and styles. And the same with clothing, with the numbered camp uniforms, numbered and lettered, everything according to the murderous order, when Nazi German went out to murder and pillage.

Small brushes, small knives, glasses, toothbrushes of all makes. Implements, that Jews took with them from the furthest places, only to be slaughtered in Majdanek. On the walls of one such room, pictures of Jewish children, of fathers, and mothers, from one who was a Rabbi, white, and heavily bearded, with two burning and clear eyes, that cut through the heart. Through the pictures one can experience the tortures of our sisters and brothers, until they were summarily tossed into the gas chambers. Children look like fledglings. They had become so drawn and scrawny from hunger. A girl in her twenties looks like a child. Young people like the old. That is how the wild beasts of fascism tortured our people.

The heat is not tolerable. The sun, by itself, is like a baking oven. However, one stands frozen, one trembles, like a frost has pierced the skin. Rooms open up. The divisions where effects were sorted. The bathing rooms, as the brutes called

them. From the bathing rooms, a number of steps and the feet go down. One feeling circulates inside, to sink down, to remain lying that way in a gas chamber, and to wail without stopping. But the wellspring of weeping is dried out. Everything is so full of horror. A brutality that in no way can bee grasped with ordinary simple human understanding. You haven't the power to take in this small area of the gas chamber, which can hold a hundred people, and was crammed with 400! From the ceiling, boiling water was poured in, and a hail of a sort of spherical gas [pellet] was rained down like a hail, like little pebbles or peas.

Woe is unto us! Those who died this way, on whom these gas pellets were thrown, died an earlier death. However, they also poisoned with ordinary gas pellets.

The evildoers wanted this to move on expeditiously, but they also wanted to see how Jews writhe in terrible agony. The longer the dying process, the more the Nazi brute derived pleasure. A chimney, holes around the walls, for the gas to escape. The residue of the gas from the pellets remained for more than an hour's time. People became knotted up in each other while standing up, out of pain, they bit their own flesh. From the other side, at a small window, an SS officer sat, observing, how people writhed, and become squeezed against each other, pressed against each other, like a single mass, a single mass of human flesh, which later had to be separated bu pouring on water.

Certainly we have read and heard stories about this from the very few, who by a miracle, were saved. However, standing alone in the gas chamber, and the walls begin to glow, even though the chimney is open and cold. All the anxieties about dying emerge, and at the same time, one is seized with such a burning hate for the Nazi and Nazism, that in pain, in the shudder, one swears to fulfill the sacred mission to fight against fascism everywhere, ceaselessly.

All the divisions of this Hell illustrated this human fantasy, however one cannot go through the terror images of Majdanek. The gas chambers, the crematoria, where human bodies were transported and then roasted. In addition, the limestone table with a running spray of water. Like a sacrificial altar, is what this table looks like. Here, people were dissected, if there was even only a suspicion that they had swallowed anything made of gold.

Who can forget the pump, with the water trough around it, in which a Jewish *Kapo* (I think a murderer from Lemberg), would on each night, grab a Jew by the beard, and turn him with his face down, and hold him in the water, until the Jew would expire. The longer the Jew flailed with his feet, the higher the Nazi murderers would carry on and laugh.

In order to deride the plasterers, they were ordered to engage in sculpture. So people created figurines, like small children, and they were put under a sort of glass. In this 'art' there can be found quite a derision, but such evil, that only the mind of a Nazi who gorges himself on human beings can conceive of, in his dark mind.

Majdanek is the fire-Hell of our tragedy. Where, then is the end? Where did this evil beast halt? Nowhere! But the sum total of Majdanek, Oswiecim, Treblinka, can be seen when one visits the cities and towns of Poland, without Jews, without a Jewish soul. Picture this terrifying picture for yourselves, to travel to Lublin and on to Zamość with the bus, and not a single Jew goes by.

– 2 –

It is a quiet, cool early morning. The windows of the tiny peasant huts are still up, and bluish. A peasant woman carries a can of milk, barefoot, with a shawl over her back, she is familiar with loam path. Where is she carrying this milk? To seel it to the Jews? The bus flies along the road. Familiar, Jewish, homey towns swim by: Piusk, Izbica, Krasnystaw, and more and more. In Izbica, walls stare out from the wrecked synagogue. The sun cuts its throat on the shattered window glass. The sun bloodies the morning glow. Former ghetto locations, and camp complexes, and marketplaces. Trading is going on, horses are examined, one sells, one claps ones palms, but not a single Jew.

The towns are so alien and empty. During the day, the sun burned the clouds, and continuously bloodies these sky mountains, until a rain began to flow. The mind burns, as if small spears were lodged there. All the blood vessels are full to the point of bursting. My comrades cover their faces with their hands, so that Poles who are traveling with us,

will not see their tears. I feel a lack of air. I open the windows, and stick my head out. A rainy wind whips at my line of sight. I feel like a fever is attacking me, I fever from the barren appearance al around, but I do not feel the windy beating impact of the rain on my head. Where are the Jews? Is this a wasteland of a dream? 'My friends – I want to shout out, – don't cry. It is only an illusion. The Jews have not been done away with, they do not travel to fairs in such heavy rain.'...

It is in this frame of mind that we arrived at Zamość. We went around the small gardens in the four-sided marketplace. The city is intact. The war did not swallow the houses in flame. On all four sides are the usual '*potchinehs*,' under the stone arches, it is shady. Where my relatives used to live, a crucified Jesus hangs, stained in blood, with a crown of thorns on his head.

At one time, under these shady arches, in the four-sided marketplace with its gardens, it was noisy with Jewish merchants, Jewish wagon drivers from Tyszowce, Komarow, Szczebrzeszyn would come here with stuff to be sold. An intelligent, aggressive Jewish labor youth owned Zamość. Here is the renown Zamość library, and across from it the Municipal Building with its tower clock. Now there is no echo around here. The local residents have appropriated the Jewish houses and stores. The peasants from the area have become the buyers, and simultaneously the sellers to the locals. I continuously think that silhouettes keep flitting by, but no people. How is it possible to take a Zamość like this, and eviscerate it of its Jews? My dreamy young years were surrounded by these very quiet, shady streets and alleys. It is such a suffocating pain, that it isn't even possible to emit a wailing scream. And even if it were possible, for whom to wail? For these local residents, who bathed themselves in Jewish blood, and became rich from our misfortune? But the vengeance will be taken, an accounting is being directed by the new Polish regime against those who carried out pogroms, with those that walk about with a satisfied, cunning little smile and utter: '*u nac zydków niema*' (We have no Jews').

We don't go, no, we speed, we would have looked and hoped to find a native Jew from Zamość. But suddenly, I begin to think, that I. L. Peretz steps out of an alley, bent over, greyed, his eyes flooded with tears, the pointed edges of his cape flutter, like shadowy vanes on a windmill. He strides alone, and his lips are trembling. The tower clock chimes. The ring fragments itself, just like someone would have flung a brass pan into the number face of the clock. The entire marketplace turns around with me. To where have I been flung? See, I stretch forth my hand, as if I would want to grab the fleeting silhouette going by. See, I mumble, in fright to my friends: Peretz is walking toward the clock tower! Here, he grabbed the iron hands. He hammers on them, and cried plaintively: Where are my Jews? Where is Yohanan Wasser-Treger? Where are the Kabbalists from Laszczow?

My friends pause. They cover their faces with their hands, and weep. And God, once again, brought the sun out from its furry vault... and permitted it to shine down on our heads.

It is market fair day in Zamość. Trade is being conducted behind the wall of the former fortress. We look in on the fair location, and we turn back through the fortress corridor to the *Neustadt*. It is from here, that the Jews were led off to Belzeč to be incinerated. We obtain a photo picture, found on a dead Nazi dog catcher, which shows the Zamość Jews at that place, from which they were driven onto the road to death. Big and small, lined up, a venerable looking old man with a spread out beard, with his bag containing his prayer shawl and phylacteries under his arm, at the head of the community. The picture is so small that we are unable to recognize anyone.

Between the old and the new part of the city, it is as it was. All houses intact, and even slightly more built up and more walls. A new brick road is being laid out along the way. Only one thing – the trip takes too long. We should have been at the cemetery by now, but we are standing at a rather nice park, with stone benches, water is being sprayed on the grass. Children are playing around us. A white-colored cottage stands open, with the sun streaming through it. Where is the sacred place? However, at the horse market, we learn everything already. Faces up, inset head stones lay with the phrase 'Here is Interred' with the usual head stone language, which tell of the virtues of those who lie in the ground: a good and honest man....a chaste woman, the daughter of....

The Nazis plowed under the cemetery, and paved over the muddy spots with the head stones, and lo, a park for play was created. In this manner, even the memory of the sacred congregation of Zamość was caused to disappear. A woman sells flowers, a girl sells ice cream.

We rushed back to the Altstadt, and we learned that there is one Jew in Zamość – the Jewish pharmacist, Epstein. We went into his pharmacy. He finished taking care of a couple of customers, turned over his reading material to a second Jewish man, an assistant of his, who works with him for quite a number of years. The old pharmacist Epstein, was known to be an assimilated Jews, strong-minded. This means, we were dealing with one of the 'top people' (read this to mean: 'real villains of the people'). I there fore understood that he had been a **member of the *Judenrat***. And he immediately confirmed this. To my question: How did you save yourself? He concocted an awesome tale, of how he was in the Judenrat in the beginning, and afterwards, when they demanded that Jews be presented to be taken to their death, he became a 'righteous convert'...

– 3 –

The bus marks the sand on the roadbed between Zamość and my home town of Tyszowce. I am sunk in my own heavy re-living of the days of I. L .Peretz – the great Jew and poet no longer lies in peace in Warsaw. How could he rest in peace on his bier, among his best friends, Dinensohn and Anski, at the time that they had butchered his brother Jews? I. L. Peretz was tortured with each Jew, individually, on the way to Belzeč. He accompanied each contingent of Jews on the way...

It is the evening before *Tisha B'Av*. The bus whizzes through the outskirts, already over the long bridge, already past the yard, already jostled its way over the second bridge at the beginning of the town, but where is the town? Forthwith, we stop at the second side of town, at the police station. Where did the town disappear to? To where have we traveled? A choking begins in the throat. Thirst burns me, as if I were blundering somewhere in a desert. There is no town.

It had been burned down by the retreating Poles in September 1939. There was a camp in Tyszowce. There is no trace of any house. I cannot find the place where our family house [sic: a legacy] stood. There is no hint of a city, no walls, chimneys, no foundations, only holes and pits covered in thorns, from which black angry ravens caw out at us. Who desolated the town in this way? The Poles, our neighbors for hundreds of years, they sought to pocket the Jewish pittance and plunder it. They, the ones who shot at the retreating soldiers of the Red Army, they who wish to undermine the new Polish regime with vandalism, with the inciting cry in Lublin: '*Diece nac bogo*, give us God!' It is exactly these, who helped to murder Jews. They were the ones who searched for and sniffed out gold and money from the walls, and in the foundations. They were the ones who ran off with everything, dug up everything, and left behind blind pits, overgrown with prickly wild grass.

The sky is on fire. The sun is a bloody circle that revolves, and from the brick steps, the blood spills out onto the barrenness. The crows rise with frightened cackling; They fly in the burning rays of the sun.

What kind of day is today? *Tisha B'Av*? But I hear the Friday evening singing of The Song of Songs. But look, here, is where I thing the *Husatiner shtibl* stood, the *Bet HaMedrash*, the synagogue with the pictures of the trumpets, the tribes and their standards, the [picture of] the Tabernacle, the wandering Jews in the desert, the Leviathan, that holds his tail in his mouth, because once he takes it out, the world is upended, and returned back to the void. The roof of the heavens at sunset spreads over out heads, and here, it sinks, and the flames ring us about. We walk in a world that screams in flames, and is not consumed. A wasteland! A hot dust whirls about. Black ravens caw, jumping over the pits. An old gentile woman who speaks Yiddish wrings her hands: 'I don't recognize you, but I knew your parents. Oh, mother! God in Heaven! My husband, my Benedict, do you remember him? The robbers killed him too.'

The Polish town lawyer Jeremczuk and his wife (who as a young girl had lived in Detroit), take us around. He, personally, was in Oswiecim for five years. She tells me about specific details of the slaughter in English. Many Jews lie in the meadows, in the fields. We come to the little river, which led to the pasture. At one time, there was a bathing spot here, and the inn for transients. A wide, running stream meandered between the gardens and the tree stands. Now

this water is dried out. There is a green swampy blanket on the drain channels. We jump over it. You can see from the drain channels, the blood of the shot and butchered Jews must have flowed quite well. There were two times that the major liquidation slaughters took place: the first, *Shavuot* 1942 and the second in the last 2 weeks after the High Holy Days. Right here, behind the garden of cabbage and beets, lie the majority of the butchered Jews of Tyszowce, together with Czechoslovakian Jews. Right here, in this toilet hole, they were slaughtered, and after being bayoneted, they were thrown in and covered up with boards.

I tear up a board: shaved bodies, broken forms. I fall on the prickly thorns. Only my lips burn from thirst. The sun makes the Lipowicz Forest look bloody. I think it is the shattered stone from the burned mill. The wheel is on fire. Blood rushes and splatters on the vanes that are slicing. I do not cry, only the pain, like someone was holding a red-hot iron against my darkened eyes. I am blinded.

The wife tells and weeps: 'I myself was sick. A Jewish girl was being kept with me. She was beautiful and good, like an angel. She came, and pleaded with me to be hidden. But where in this burned out town was there a place to hide anyone? And the local people, the Poles and the Ukrainians were helping the Nazis. That was the greatest horror. Polish neighbors were leading their Jewish neighbors to death. I took my leave of the girl, and as soon as she went out of my house, they began to drag her by her golden locks, and at the haystack, she was stabbed along with her parents, little sisters and brothers. Do you see this little room? Here is where they would cram in the guilty.'

I went out to the meadow. The moon came out ans cast its silver light among the ruins. Rows of ravens screeched among the poplars. I thought I would go crazy. I hear all of this, and I remain silent.

I want to cry, but the wellspring of tears has become dry. I want to scream, but the scream cannot come out. It is quiet, it is night time on the meadow. From behind the haystack, on the meadow, a young shepherd boy appears, and he plays a sorrowful tune on his flute. The wooden Orthodox Church is old and sunken. The scent of freshly mown hay pervades the meadow. We stride quickly back, it is beginning to grow dark. We go to the orchard in the yard, towards the old cemetery. But we step on grave stones that have been pushed together. Lettering that has been effaced. But here there is a residual line, here and there: 'The Tale of Two Brethren' 'The Deceased Asked that No Words of Praise Be Written About Him,' 'Here Lies the Modest and Scholarly.'
The cemetery has been plowed under. There is a garden of all manner of vegetables. A gymnasium has been built there, where the gate was. My grandfather's grave, the grave stone of my parents and my brother was leaned up against an uprooted tree – not a trace remained of that large, sacred location, where according to legend, *Moshiach ben Joseph*[412] lay interred. For several rows around his grave, Jews would walk in stockinged feet and through notes to the poor tailor, who was a Hidden One. The Nazis plowed up this field. Diluting the living with the dead.

The darkness sinks in around us. In deep pain, I recall, that today is the evening of *Tisha B'Av*. I cannot, ain any way, recall the sorrowful melody of '*Eykha*,' even though I can picture the Jews in their stockinged feet, on the upturned benches. I am not walking among ruins. Everything has been eradicated. Why do I not scream? We are like the lame. It becomes dark. A heavy darkness covers the wasteland.

The thirst burns. I make my way to the creek. But as I stand ready to pull up the wooden pail, a broad-backed peasant grows up behind me. He grabs the dole, and pours the water back. 'Before one drinks the water, it is necessary to boil it first. The water is not potable. Once, when there were Jews, there was a pump. Today, there are no Jews, no town, no pump. Death is around. My name is Kalmuk, the police station on the second side belongs to me. You are the son of the *zhezhenik* (the *shokhet's* son)?' Yes, I answer. – 'Do you know when and how my relatives were killed?' Well, he scratches and then groans, – Where, you know already yourself. But as to how, that I cannot tell you already. Perhaps it is best that you do not know. See, there, behind the stables, there are also Jews who lie there. With great force, the heads of those who tried to flee into the Lipowicz Forest were split open. Who did this? And if you knew, would it become easier for you?

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412 Ancient Jewish teachings theorize the coming of two Messiahs. The second is the better known, as '*Moshiach ben David*.'

I cannot fall asleep... I think that the darkness is swirling about and pours itself over me, like a wave of water. I am drenched in a cold-hot sweat, and tears are pouring from my eyes. The pain is tearing me up, the wellspring of tears has broken open. I bury my head in the straw sack, and I whimper. My companions dream and moan. They whimper n the same way in their dreams. Suddenly, I think it is the Sabbath. Sabbath candle lights twinkle in the town. But the candles don't burn for very long. They extinguish themselves. I try, with my eyes to re-light them in the dark. Let them shine and flicker again through the windows. But I am no longer able to see this image of a Friday night, with lit twinkling Sabbath candles. They have been extinguished. Also the Jews, like burning Sabbath candles, have been extinguished in the midst of life.

On the following morning, with the traveling bus, the barrenness of my home town vanishes. On the thorn-covered mass grave, the silver dew trembles. Once again, the tears force themselves out of my eyes. We know that this is the way they will lie, in the middle of a pasture field, without grave stones. No Jew will ever come back here to mourn them. We are, perhaps, the last, who have the walked their graves in sorrow and pain. We also know, that this which happened to my home town, Tyszowce, Komarow, and Zamość, also happened to all, all of the Jewish cities and towns in Poland.

My entire skeleton is suffused with calamity. I sorrow in anger, I bunch my fists: 'Remember what the Nazi Amalek did to you!' Stand up, take revenge in those who annihilated our people, in the evil fascist beasts everywhere!

# Zamość Survivors in Germany

*Page 1211:* *Facsimile of a placard in Yiddish, with Latin letters from the Zamość committee in the American Zone about the memorial meeting in the year 1948 in Weclar.*

Again, we bring an array of material here from the life and activities of the Zamość survivors in the German D.P. camps. Even after the Holocaust, the years of agony, want and wandering, the sense of community and the readiness to offer help by our Zamość people did not vanish. The simple accounts speak for themselves.

### Zamość Jews Organize Themselves

(Account in the periodical '*Aufgang*,' that appeared in Munich – Yiddish in the Latin alphabet)

On Saturday, December 14, 1946, the first meeting of the Zamość *landsleit* that had come together, took place in **Waldstadt**, near Pocking, in the American Zone (of Germany).

In this assembly, 180 landsleit participated.

The assembly was opened by Mr. Naphtali Halpern, who invited 10 landsleit into the Presidium, and greeted the gathering, stressing the need for altruistic assistance.

The floor is given to Mr. Jekuthiel Zwillich, who in short words relays the history of the tragic destruction of Zamość Jewry. The Cantor, Appelweiss intones a memorial for the martyrs of Zamość. The memorial is accompanied by weeping from all the attendees.

After the memorial, the floor is given to Mr. Moshe Garfinkel, the member of the organizing committee, and vice-president of the camp leadership, who also intones about the necessity of organizing all of the landsleit in the American Zone; about continuous contact with the brothers in North America, the Land of Israel and other countries.

A committee of the following is elected:

Chairman: Moshe Garfinkel – Waldstadt;
Vice-Chairman: Israel Grossman – Bad Saltzschlirf;
Secretary: Israel Garfinkel – Waldstadt;

Members: Jekuthiel Zwillich – Munich; Leib Kornmass – Weclar; Zalman Rosenberg – Schluffing.

The following people were elected to the by-laws committee:

Chairman: Joseph Dickler – Fernwald; Berel Eisenkopf – Bad-Reichenthal; Yaakov Eil – Waldstadt.

In Audit, the following were elected: Chairman: David Richtman – Weclar; Moshe Garfinkel – Bamberg; Hirsch Guss – Bad-Saltzschlirf.

The following resolutions were adopted at this assembly:

1. The *landsmanschaft* joins the Federation of Polish Jews, Munich, Irsmaningerstrasse 54;

2. It is decided to create an historical commission, which will collect all the documents about the annihilation of Zamość Jewry;

3. The assembly agrees to designate the 24th day of Nissan as a *Yahrzeit*, for the exterminated Jews of Zamość;

4. The assembly agrees to create a one-time fund in the form of voluntary contributions for organizational and assistance purposes;

5. The assembly, after hearing out the account of those Zamość landsleit who survived, the Messrs. Zwillich and Zuckerman, about the shameful role of the Zamość '*Judenrat*,' and the servants of its creators, stamps in the sharpest manner, the disgusting betrayers of Zamość Jewry:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Memek Garfinkel; | 4. Sholom Gertler (*Tzibeleh*) | 7. Sholom Topf; |
| 2. Azriel Sheps; | 5. Todres Nickelsberg; | 8. Lejzor Schultz. |
| 3. Sholom Tischberg; | 6. Simcha Feldstein; | |

It was established that the first evacuation out, of the Jews from Zamość, took place after Passover 1942, and the last evacuation out took place on October 15, 1942.

The assembly was concluded with the singing of '*HaTikvah*.'

## Account of the Assembly of the Zamość *Landsmanschaft* at the Federation of Polish Jews (In the American Zone) In the Camp at Waldstadt-Pocking

*Page 1212:* *Presidium of the Memorial Service in the D.P. Camp Weclar (Germany) That Took Place in 1948.*

*Page 1213:* *A group of people from Zamość in the Weclar D.P. Camp (Germany) in the year 1948.*

On April 14 (the 24th day of Nissan) at 9 o'clock in the evening, a **Memorial Service** took place in the Waldstadt Camp near Pocking, in memory of the Zamość martyrs, in which 400 Zamość *landsleit* participated.

The Secretary, Naphtali Halpern opened the assembly in the name of the Zamość *landsmanschaft*, and after inviting the Presidium chairpersons from the various camps, the Zamość martyrs are honored with a minute of silence.

The introductory remarks are given by the Chairman of the Zamość Committee, Moshe Garfinkel, and in short, appropriate words, he provides an overview of the life and accomplishments of Zamość Jewry.

The Cantor Zelig Kniotek then intones a **memorial,** which makes a profound impression on all those present.

On the second day, at 9 o'clock in the morning, comes the continuation of the assembly.

1. An audit committee of 7 friends is elected to research and deal with questions about the Judenrat and the Gestapo Police;

2. After this, the Secretary, Naphtali Halpern gives a report on the activities of the Zamość *landsmanschaft*;

3. The treasurer, Israel Garfinkel gives a treasurer's report;

4. During the time of the debates, in a separate room, an audit committee hears 15 witnesses that lived in the Zamość ghetto, about the activities of the Zamość Judenrat, Baruch Wilder, and the Gestapo Policeman Stakh Fleischmann, who were accused that they were in collusion.

5. At six o'clock in the afternoon, the research is completed, and after a consultation by the audit committee, a ruling is issued which is presented for approval;

6. After this, we turn to the election of a second committee, a by-laws committee, and audit committee, However after expressing the consent of the assembly, all 3 incumbents remain in the same position.

Closing remarks are given by the Vice-Chairman Israel Grossman, who expresses a thank you to the friends from the Waldstadt-Pocking camp, who organized the memorial service so well.

The assembly is concluded with the singing of '*HaTikvah.*'

## Minutes

*Page 1214:* *Memorial Service of Zamość people in the Steier Camp near Linz (Austria), Last Day of Passover, 1947.*

*Page 1215:* *The stamp of the Zamość survivors in the Waldstadt-Pocking camp.*

From the meeting of the research commission of the Zamość committee, with the participation of the audit committee of Messrs. Hirsch Guss, Moshe Garfinkel, David Roitman, and the two elected comrades 1. Shlomo Eisenberg, 2. Yiddl Sobol, 3. Yehuda Rak, 4. Asher Hechtkopf, which took place in the Waldstadt-Pocking camp on April 15, 1947.

Mr. David Richtman was elected as the Chairman of the Research commission, and Messrs. Asher Hechtkopf and Shlomo Eisenberg were elected as Secretaries.

It is set, that all those who remained alive while under German occupation, will be called as witnesses, and to ask them on whom even just suspicion falls for not having treated the Jews of Zamość in a decent manner.

Fifteen witnesses are heard, each of whose (declarations) is taken down in writing, and also confrontations with the accused:

The personal declarations of Baruch Wilder and Stakh Fleischmann were noted. After hearing out the witnesses, the commission came to the following decision , and to present it to the general assembly for approval:

Regarding Baruch Wilder, it was agreed that the questions were answered which had been posed by the commission:

1. Is it possible to compare Baruch Wilder to the rest of the '*Judenrat,*' for example, to Memek Garfinkel, Tischberg, Sheps, Sholom *Tzibeleh*? – The answer: N o !
2. Is Baruch Wilder guilty to be excluded from the Jewish society? (Answer) – N o !

3. Even though Baruch Wilder was a member of the '*Judenrat*;' knowing about the terrible activity of the *Judenrat*, and not resigning his post, he cannot be allowed to carry out any responsible society work.

Regarding Fleischmann Stakh (Laufer), who worked for the police during the occupation, it was decided that he carried out the work, along with the other police, which needs to be adjudicated.

Taking into account his young age at that time, which could have caused him to be influenced by older people, he cannot be held responsible for his acts.

Apart from the previously mentioned people, no further accusations were put forth.

For the certification of the original, Secretary – Halpern.
Waldstadt, April 15, 1947.

* * *

The last two documents (report and minutes) were sent to the Zamość Committee in **New York**. They were accompanied with the further short letter:

**Committee of Zamość Landsmanschaft**
**In the U.S. Zone in Waldstadt-Pocking**

To the Zamość Committee in New York:

In receiving the judgement of our assembly, a well as the ruling of the audit committee and photographs of the **memorial**, we request that as far as possible, that you reply to us quickly.

We wonder why you have not written a letter to us yet. As soon as possible, we will be sending you accurate lists of all Zamość *landsleit* that survived that are in the American Zone, who are registered with us, over a thousand.

With respect, we, the undersigned await your speedy reply:

Chairman – Garfinkel.
Secretary – Halpern.

Waldstadt, April 22, 1947.

* * *

All documents are in Yiddish, using the Latin alphabet.

# Chaim Shpizeisen

*Page 1216:* *Photograph*

A rather large number of works can be found in our *Pinkas* from Chaim Shpizeisen. Part of them, especially those that have to do with his memories about the social movement in Zamość is practically his autobiography.

Born in the year 1885, approximately, he was socially active from his youth onwards, especially in the Jewish Socialist movement – first in the 'S. S.' and afterwards in the *Bund*, to which he belonged without interruption for over 40 years.

His core activity in the last years before the Second World War, was dedicated to educational and cultural work. He was one of the most active in the local division of the Jewish School Organization and a leader of the I. L. Peretz School. He is among those who stood, for the entire time, by the I. L. Peretz Library.

During the Second World War, he found himself in the Soviet Union – first in cold places, and later in the Szikorsky Amnesty, he lived in Leninbad, Tadjikistan.

When Poland is liberated from the Nazi occupiers, he returns with those who were repatriated. He lives in Szczecin, and commits himself to organizing the Zamość survivors. He is the soul of this work. Through his hands pass all the connections and assistance.

Paying no heed to the fact that the survivors came from a variety of social directions, he, the *Bundist*, benefitted from everyone's loyalty and was revered

He travels from Poland to Israel. There he is at the head of the Zamość survivors, and is among the initiators to produce a *Pinkas Zamość*. He is the liaison with the American landsleit who helped to publish the Zamość Yizkor Book that appeared in Israel, '*Zamość in it s Glory and Denouement*.'

He is among the catalysts for the publication of our *Pinkas*. His works, his materials, were indeed utilized in our *Pinkas*.

It was not given to him to live to see the fruit of his effort – the setting of a *Yizkor* monument for our beloved home city – Zamość.

In him, the people of Zamość lost one of their most committed activists. And our *Pinkas*, was one of those, to which he was committed with his flesh and life to the preparation of this book.

Even though he was not under the Nazi paw, despite the fact that he was far from the Hitlerist murders, he is nevertheless a victim of the cataclysm of our generation.

Honor his memory!

# The People of Zamość Around the World

**We have reached the last chapter of our *Pinkas.***

**We have taken a rather long tour in our Memorial Book**

**We have accompanied our great-great-grandparents; those, who centuries ago laid down the genesis of the scared congregation and also lived at the final hour of the death throes of the martyrs of Zamość.**

**We have gone through a l l p e r i o d s and in a l l p l a c e s. Through all streets and yards; on all roads and ways; in all schools and clubs; in all the places of Torah and wisdom; in all the places of exertion and labor.**

**We lived through the joy and suffering of these centuries. Danced along at the joyous occasions of the *Altstadt, Neustadt*, and *Browar*; we also took part in the funeral processions – to the new and the old cemetery.**

**We have also escorted our unforgettable ones during their l a s t journey...**

**This long journey of the generations was taken by all from Zamość, all over, wherever the fate of the times or wandering of years brought them to.**

**The sons and daughters of Zamość are scattered and spread out in all parts of the world. Through a variety of ways and circumstances, they were cast out there. They built new homes there; brought new generations up; but they have not forgotten their home city.**

**This section is indeed dedicated to these children of Zamość, those spread all over all of the continents. Let them not be omitted from our '*Pinkas Zamość*.'**

**They cannot really be omitted – it is they who have brought this endeavor into its reality.**

# The *Landsleit* of Zamość

**By Israel Zilber**
(New York)

## (Their Life and Work in the United States)

*Page 1219:* *The activists in their day, members of Branch 375 of the Workman's Circle. – From Right to Left, sitting in the first row: Elyeh Rachman, M. Aberfersht, Yossel Hecker, Israel Zilber, A. Abersfeld, Y. Bin, Shimon Teich. Second Row, Standing: Izzy Herman, A. Scharf, Y. Pflug, Brandwein, M. Spindle, Third Row: Sh. Silver, Badwitz, Peretz Hackman, J. Fox, Ch. Reiner*

The outward migration of Zamość Jews to America began much later than for other Polish and Russian cities. This fact has to do with the specific mentality of the Jew from Zamość. First of all, the Jew from Zamość did not, in general, pursue and distant golden fortunes in foreign places. The city, as is known, was a genteel one, cultural, and also its external beauty – which was redolent with European enchantment – held the Jew to his home.

Jewish Zamość took pride in its historical past. Each individual had his own 'golden chain' and it did not seem worthwhile to set off for so distant a place in the world, where whatever 'pedigree you had, was in the cemetery,' and nobody knew who was who.... Apart from this, each Zamość Jew had a little bit of sense of the world, also because of the geographic position of the city – and therefore, many Jews had their savvy-skeptical view of the great boons, about which so much had been told. Their own city, with its memories held him magnetically, at a time when the mystic America was so far away...

When did the first Jews leave Zamość for the journey to America?

I do not intend to try and pin this down exactly, in a scientific way, with complete precision. According to my assessment, that must have been at the beginning of the [eighteen] nineties, of the past century. Mostly, those who left to, as they say, 'wander across seas,' were people of middle age. Seeing that in Europe, one heard the name 'New York,' these first people from Zamość went to New York, and as the situation was, they took up residence in the Jewish area of the East Side. The reasons for this are well known from Jewish immigration in general: if one had already left home – at least one should be among fellow Jews in the distant America....

It was only with the increased immigration, that our *landsleit* began to spread out over the entire length and breadth of their new home. One began to hear of Zamość landsleit who had become flung out to a variety of cities in America – also quite deep into the country. But, the largest majority, nevertheless, remained in New York.

The process of naturalization among our *landsleit* did not look any different from the Jewish immigration in general: The chapter of the sweatshop worker, and the hard exploitation did not pass our immigrants by. Despite this, there was a longing for something higher that a seemingly naked struggle for existence. As soon as there were signs of getting somewhat established, part of the people from Zamość began to think about an organized life in the form of a *landsmanschaft*. Keeping themselves together had to substitute in a certain measure for home, for which they yearned so intensely. It simply became a spiritual necessity. Meeting with people from home, and living in the same circle, could alleviate the loneliness among the *landsleit*, who gradually became spread out over all of New York.

The first attempt to organize their own society took place in 1906. The Zamość organization that was established at that time, obtained the long name of 'Independent Zamość Organized Society for the Support of the Sick.' Later, the society re-organized itself into the present 'Zamość *Bikkur Kholim*.'

The later wave of immigration already consisted of a different element. Young people started to come, with a set view of the world, and with set ambitions to fulfil. By and large, they belonged to the *Bund*, which was a that time very popular in our city, and made a very strong impression on the young people. This fresh element could not fit into the confined limits of the previously mentioned Society. They could not satisfy their spiritual needs.

At the end of 1906, therefore, the foundation for a new society was laid down, with the name, 'Zamośćher Young Men's Progressive Support Society.' With its establishment, a new level of activity among our *landsleit*.

Let the names of those first activists and founders be mentioned here, such as: Peretz Hackman, H. Schwartzberg, Ozer Schatzkammer, Ch. Utracht, J. Kruck, Ab. Scharf, A. Arbesfeld, Fishl Weinstein, S. Bassian, and many others.

These pioneers created an institution in the societal life of our *landsleit*, which is alive and has an impact to this day, under another name.

That young society, in that day, carried on a multi-branched activity of mutual help for its members. It also did a great deal in supporting the institutions in the ancestral home. Its influence increased from day to day, and it had a great influence on newly arrived *landsleit*. With eating, comes an appetite – and together with the growth of the activities the more progressive members sensed that something was still missing. They perceived that the Society, as a separate institution, cannot do the appropriate work towards which they were striving. Many of the active members carried the thought of how could they lead the Society into the larger multi-branched labor movement.

At an opportune moment, the active (to this day) member, Yossel Hecker, proposed that the Society should join the 'Workmen's Circle,' and become a part of the larger and organized family of Labor. Our landsman, Aharon Deitch immediately supported him, and additionally an array of active members. A discussion immediately developed pro and con. As it appears, our landsman Fishl Geliebter had to play a role here as well, who at that time was the assistant secretary of the Workman's Circle.

After a series of debates, the Society, in the end, in the year 1919, joined the large, multi-branched order of the 'Workman's Circle.' With this merger, the Society was transformed into a branch with the name **'Young Men's Zamośćher Progressive Branch Number 375.'** The credit for carrying out this merger must also be given to the previously mentioned Peretz Hackman, Schatzkammer, A, Abersfeld, and many more other activists.

After joining the 'Workman's Circle' – which had branches in almost every American city and town, as well as in Canada – the branch obtained the opportunity to get in contact with our *landsleit*, outside of New York. This enabled us to perform our support work for our ancestral home in conjunction with one another, during the First World War, and for those of our *landsleit* who survived after the second global conflagration....

It is necessary to underscore here, that our branch supported not only those who suffered from the war. With a generous hand, it supported the children's school named after I. L. Peretz, the Library, the Loan Bank, and other institutions of our ancestral home.

A special chapter is the great support work of the branch in the area of the united help committee, which did wondrous work after the last national tragedy. Let us recall here just some of the tireless workers: the Chairman, H. Schwartz, Secretary Yitzhak Leib Herman, Shlomo Lubliner, J. Herman, and many others.

Our picture would not be complete, if we didn't at least provide a small part of the activities of 'Branch 375 of the Workman's Circle,' during the last decades:

The branch conducts a wide-ranging set of cultural activities, arranges lectures about literary and timely questions from prominent lecturers; it helps distribute books and journals; it supports cultural institutions and help-institutions – especially those of the Workman's Circle, and the like.

To this day, the branch brings together about three hundred families. About 95 percent of the membership are native born in Zamość. In the leadership of the branch, to this day, stand the well known friends: Y. Hecker, Sh. Teich, J. Fox, M. Oberfersht, Finkler, J. Spodek, Sol Silver, Aharon Kruck, and others, committed activists.

We have no exact statistics as to how many of our *landsleit* have settled in the United States. We are of the opinion that there are approximately three thousand Zamość families. More than half are in New York, and the remainder are spread all over the country. Larger Zamość colonies can be found in such cities as Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, etc. A number of *landsleit* can also be found in Montreal, Canada. In those cities, our landsleit are organized in small, but effective *landsmanschaften.*

For the longest time, Branch 375 brought together the largest number of our *landsleit*, who are located in the New York area and its vicinity. After the rise of the communist movement the labor movement in America became split. This also had an impact on our branch. A number of our members split themselves off, and went off to join the communist 'International Worker's Order,' where they organized themselves under the name, 'I. L. Peretz Branch Number 75 I.W.O.' Inn recent times, the 'International Order' needed to dissolve itself in America. Part of these former landsleit who went there, are now seeking a means to come back to our branch. Some have already returned from their long journey to their old, time-tested and warm home. The others will also, certainly come back, so long as they have the desire to live out their years in a homey environment.

Our ancient Jewish city Zamość has vanished already from the Jewish map, but those *landsleit* who remain, in America, exert themselves to the extent possible, to maintain memories of Zamość in their memory, Zamość's past, and its great contribution to the general Jewish culture, which we will not permit to be abandoned.

The tradition of Zamość will be guarded, as far as it is possible to do so, in the large world of The United States.

# The Establishment and Development of Zamośćher Progressive Branch 375 Workman's Circle

**By Jack Fox**

In those years, immigrant life was not yet organized into Societies or *landsmanschaften.*

The loneliness and dispiritedness of the new immigrant depressed the energy, and it was therefore understandable, that among the newly-arrived, the desire to organize one's self into 'societies' and '*landsmanschaften*' grew, with the objective of providing some care if he got sick, unemployed, or was needy.

There were a variety of ways and means by which this could be achieve. Those who were religiously oriented built synagogues where they worshiped on the Sabbath and festivals; the Jews with some means established 'Societies,' where they carried on their social affairs, the radical immigrants sought their place where they could advance their ideals, which they had brought from the old country.

At the beginning of the [sic: twentieth] century, the life of the Zamość *landsleit* began to get organized. In the month of September on the night after Rosh Hashana, in the year 1906, the Zamość 'Society' was founded under the name, '**Zamośćher Progressive Young Men's Benevolent Association**.'The founding took place at the home of Chaim Schwartzberg, 290 Delancey Street, New York.

The following from Zamość founded the society: Chaim Schwartzberg, Meir Schwartzberg, Peretz Hackman, Izzy Schatzkammer, Sam Schwartz, Izzy Schwartz, Abraham Rosen, Fishl Weinstein, Sam Hoffenwasser, Max Rofeld, Abraham Scharf, Yossel Mayer and Shmuel-Yossel Basior.

The officers were: Abraham Scharf (President) Meir Brown (Vice-President), Max Rofeld (Secretary), Doctor for the Society – M. Bernfehl.

The Society grew in the number of its members. The stream of immigration continuously brought more and more people from Zamość. Among the more modern immigrants, especially among the younger people, a movement arose to merge with the ranks of the Workman's Circle. The idealism and activities in the ranks of the workman's Circle appealed to them. The result was, that a large number of Zamość *landsleit* in the city of New York, collectively decided to merge with the Workman's Circle, under the name, **'Zamośćher Progressive Branch 375 Workman's Circle.'**

The branch was sworn in on July 11, 1919. Its first officers were: Peretz Hackman (Finance-Secretary), Aharon Deitch (Recording-Secretary); Abraham Abersfeld (Treasurer), Izzy Schatzkammer (Hospitaler).

An intensive movement with momentum began in the branch. The membership grew ever larger in numbers, the undertakings and the various activities had a new life infused in them with the fire of youth, new thoughts, new views.

Officially, the branch was established on July 11, 1919, as a part of the Workman's Circle, it is understood that it incorporated into its activity, all of the work that the Workman's Circle had designated for the branches and gave the members all the privileges to which they were entitled.

Our branch was not satisfied with only those things that Workman's Circle provided, we had our own local events:

**Support, Political Activity and help for Zamość.** – The branch generously supports all community, philanthropic and cultural institutions in America, and up to the Second World War – also institutions in our ancestral home.

The entire life of the Jewish collective, here in this country, is reflected in the meetings of the branch, from the different parts of our Jewish life in America, they come to us without invitation, and the most important get our fullest support.

During the years of war, hunger and want in Europe, we always extended a fraternal hand to all who asked for help from us.

When fascism and Nazism began to spread their dark wings over the world, and the contest began with the forces of fascism and Nazism, we, as a part of the Workman's Circle, supported the underground movements who, putting their lives on the line, fought against the reactionary forces.

**Activity During the Wars**. – With the entry of America into the First World War, we placed ourselves totally at the service of our county. A number of our members entered military service in order to defend our country. After the outbreak of the Second World War, it was already the children of our members who went into the American Army to defend us against Hitler, may his name be erased.

We stood in contact with them, we sent them packages, and made them feel that we remember them, and we long for them. We carried out a campaign to buy war bonds. Our branch bout several thousands of dollars of war bonds.

After we won the war, and fascism and Nazism were defeated, the awesome destruction of our people became revealed to us, with its six million martyrs.... just like all the other *landsmanschaften*, we also, those from Zamość, threw ourselves into the work of helping the escaped survivors.

It is worthwhile to recall at this opportunity the sending of packages of food and clothing for those who remained alive, as an instance of how committed out membership was with genuine idealism, under the leadership of friend Jack Herman, working tirelessly to gather clothing and sending food packages to the concentration camps, when and wherever a Zamość landsman asked for help, it was immediately provided.

Thereby, it is worth mentioning, that the Zamość Help Committee was active from the year 1918, when it was founded, until after the destruction of Zamość.

The important leaders of the Help Committee were: from the branch: Joe Hecker, Izzy Herman, Y. Silver, Jack Herman, Yudel Spodek, Shlomo Lubliner, Aharon Deitch, Aharon Krag, and many others. From the Zamość 'Society:' Izzy Schwartz, Yossel Spodek, and many others.

**The Establishment of the State of Israel**. – Our branch also did important work in this area as well. We carried out special evenings for Israel. The members of our branch bought about ten thousand dollars of Israel bonds; the branch joined the division of the Workman's Circle that works for the benefit of the State of Israel.

**A Home for the Elderly Members of the Workman's Circle**. – Our branch also joined the new institution of the Workman's Circle. The is the home for the elderly members, with our permanent branch representative, friend Sol Silver. Under the oversight of the branch, he, and friend Shimon Teich, with several other branch members, carried out an intensive and very successful campaign to generate funds for this humanitarian institution.

Our Cultural Activity. – Everyone certainly must be aware of the maxim: 'Man Lives Not By Bread Alone.' All these activities would not be sufficient, if we had not joined all of our assistance work to cultural enlightenment activities.

Various problems arise from time-to-time. Our branch takes a position regarding all of these problems. We feel that our members have to be thoroughly acquainted and have a clear grasp about everything that transpires in the world. We would, from time-to-time, arrange lectures mass meetings, and other undertakings, at which we would develop this enlightenment work. The work progresses. In this fashion, our members have the possibility to be

acquainted with the general and local questions and can react to them in a knowledgeable fashion. From time-to-time, we hold festive gatherings at which the members can spend a pleasant evening.

**The Leaders of the Branch.** – It would be a shortcoming on our part if we would not mention the officers and active doers of the branch. These, after all, are the people who for all these years, carried the burden of building, sustaining, and developing the branch, and leading it to the level where it stands today.

The current doers at the branch. – The officers are: Gershon Zisman (Finance-Secretary), Yudel Spodek (Recording-Secretary), Moshe Aberschaft (Treasurer), Yaakov Weinstein (Bronx and Manhattan Hospitaler), Abraham Gettler (Brooklyn and Queens Hospitaler).

The current executive committee: J. Fox (Chairman), Y. Hecker, Y. Brandwein, S. Silver, L. Lubliner, M. Finkelr, Sh. Teich, Y. Edelman, A. Krug.

It would, however, not be proper for us, not to mention all the active doers from the branch, who did the work along with us for all these years, and such of these were the friends:

Joe Hecker, Aharon Krug, Izzy Brandwein, Yudel Spodek, Moshe Schiff (Former Finance-Secretary), Shlomo Lubliner, Shimon Teich, Jack Herman, Abraham Abersfeld, Former Finance-Secretary, Israel Silber, Jack Fox, Abe Gettler, Harry Spindel, Former Recording-Secretary, Jack Weinstein, Shlomo Schiff, the Shoffel brothers, Joe Binn,Former Hospitaler, and many others.

Also, we many not forget all those activists and founders who are no longer with us today, but their names will never be forgotten. Their memory will remain forever. They are: Peretz Hackman, Abraham Scharf, Y. Finkenberg, Max Safian, S. Nakhimov, Gershon Hurdowitz, and many others, may they rest in peace.

The branch must also take note of the good work in organizing a '**Young Circle League Branch.**' These are the children of our members.

**Our Ladies.** – We mention our Ladies Club here with great pride. In advance of their existence, they demonstrated a capacity to do good works whether in the ranks of the branch, or outside of its purview. Their undertakings are always constructive, purposeful, and carried out with commitment. It is always festive at their events. It has already become a tradition among the extensive membership to participate in their annual Purim celebrations, Hanukkah festivities, lectures, literary evenings, and concerts. The Ladies Club generously supports those institutions that the general Workman's Circle supports. They also support a war orphan in Paris. The current officers of the Ladies Club are: Sally Krug, Rachel Spodek, Golda Leifer, Jennie Oberfersht, Bessie Brandwein, Paulie Nakhimov, and Gussie Heerman.

**Campaign for New Members.** – We administer an ongoing active campaign for new members for our branch. When full privileges were extended in general to those saved from the world calamity, who are now found in the United States, that they should join the Workman's Circle, our Zamość Branch 375 also was increased with the addition of a number of young men and women.

Our Idealism. – We conclude with the following, if you want to understand what fraternal support means; if you want to know what deep inner friendship means; if you want to obtain a grasp of how hundreds of people can become united in one, intimate, friendly family, we can tell you with great pride: that this means the Workman's Circle.

The non-members of the Workman's Circle can wonder and ponder: what is the moving force of the Workman's Circle and of the Zamość Branch? – To this, we can reply: The moving force of the Workman's Circle and of the Zamość Branch is – the idealism of its membership.

# The Union of Friends from Zamość, Philadelphia

We offer our greetings to all *landsleit* in all places that they may be, in general, and to those from Argentina, in particular, for the monumental undertaking to produce the '*Yizkor Book*' for our city, which produced so many great people in all fields of endeavor, and we wish you great success.

May the '*Yizkor Book*' remain as an eternal memorial for all the martyrs, who fell as victims through the murderous hands of the Nazi executioners, may their name be erased for all generations to come!

We join with all those others who recite the Kaddish prayer, and [those who say] – May Their Souls Be Bound Up In The Bond Of Life, and May They Rest In Peace On Their Biers.

**The Committee**: Fannie Eidelsberg, Louis Mann, Louis Gross.

**Officers**: William Markovich, Chairman; Aharon Starkman, Vice-Chairman;

**Contributors**: Fannie Eidelsberg, Joe Baum, Marshalls Barlam, Louis Gross, Joe Hamburg, Abe Weingarten, William Markovich, Louis Mann, Sam Silverman, Anshel Koenig, Peretz Koenig, Aharon Stakman, Yaakov Starkman, Nathan Schneider.

# The Founding of the Zamość *Landsmanschaft* in Montreal (Canada)

**By A. Schwartzberg & B. Eisenkopf**

*Page 1228:* *The First Memorial Assembly in Montreal on the occasion of the 12th Anniversary Yahrzeit on the Last Day of Passover 5714 (1955). At the top is the Presidium, and below is the Assembly.*

*Page 1229:* *A Group of Zamość people at a Purim celebration in Montreal, 5715 (1956).*

After the war, the escaped survivors of the Zamość settlement forsook Europe and went over the sea. Most of these made aliyah to the Land of Israel, and there, they organized a larger *landsmanschaft* with two centers: Tel-Aviv and Haifa.

The second part of them took up residence in the United States (mostly in New York) and a smaller stream went further north in the American continent – to Canada.

More than forty families of Zamość origin concentrated themselves here in the city of Montreal, mostly having come frm Germany.

Seeing that, there in the camps, memorial services and other gatherings would take place year in and year out, therefore, many of the landsleit also here, in the new country, thought about organizing such get-togethers, and perhaps a permanent organizational entity.

This thought, however, remained 'under wraps' until a small group took the initiative in hand.

On Sunday, October 4, 1953, the following friends came together in the home of Mrs. Bluma Stuhl (a former resident of the *Neustadt*):

1. Bluma Stuhl (A long-time resident of Canada)
2. Mottel Steiner (A carpenter who had come from Germany)
3. Hannan Krantz (A worker, who came from the camps)
4. Anshel Eisenkopf (A tailor who came from the Ludomir ghetto)
5. Berel Eisenkopf (A tailor who came from the Ludomir ghetto)
6. Abraham Schwartzberg (A teacher who came from Paris)
7. Mottel Reis-Dresher (A worker who came from Germany)
8. Kuba Grie (A bookkeeper who came from Poland)
9. David Scharf (A merchant, who came from Poland)
10. Mendel Pearl (A barber, who came from Germany)

After a short explanation of purpose, a consensus was formed that a permanent organization should be established under the name of '*Landsmanschaft* of People from Zamość in Montreal.' the objectives of the organization are formulated in the following way:

1 The *landsmanschaft* will draw close, befriend and bind together the remnants of our settlement.

2 The *landsmanschaft* will bring comfort and encouragement to those who survived the horrifying tragedy that befell all of us, in the result of the last Holocaust.

3 The *landsmanschaft* will carry out annual memorial assemblies, which will serve as prayers for the souls of the martyrs and as a reminder for those remaining alive to continue to Jewish life that had been uprooted and torn out of Poland.

4 With time, the *landsmanschaft* should also become an institution for social support for the benefit of other landsleit at this location, and especially in the State of Israel.

5 The *landsmanschaft* should also conduct a cultural activity, that is: parties at holiday time, debates, celebrations, and also gathering of material for a bulletin, or even perhaps a *Yizkor Book*. (At that time we were not yet aware of the Argentinian *Pinkas*).

*Page 1230: Presidium of the second memorial assembly in Montreal in the year 5715 – 1956.*

I was decided to bring the program to an open assembly of all the *landsleit,* which will also be designated as the official founding of the *landsmanschaft.*

The first general open assembly of our *landsleit* took place in the hall of the local Workman's Circle, Sunday, November 29, 1953. Forty people attended.

The chair was occupied by Mrs. Sh. Steiner and all 10 members of the founding committee sat at the presiding table. Also, Dr. Zinberg, our most important citizen, was present at this historic gathering, and he participated by sharing recollections from his one-time activity in the Zamość 'TOZ.' His anecdotes had in them the character of a sort of respect for the Zamość intelligentsia in general, and of the Jewish doctors in particular.

Mrs. M. Steiner stressed the greatness of our home city on the map of Jewish Poland, and called 'Once again to continue the chain of the shining settlement of Zamość.'

Mrs. Eisenkopf brought evidence from other Zamość *landsmanschaften* in the wider worlds, and appealed to create contacts with these, already existing organizations.

All the attendees greeting the initiative of founding a *landsmanschaft* very warmly, and they elected a committee, in which included almost all of the initiators of the plan.

Chairman – Mottel Steiner;
Honorary Chairman – Dr. Zinberg;
Vice-Chairman – Berel Eisenkopf;
Secretary – Abraham Schwartzberg;
Treasurer – David Scharf.

The Executive consisted of the friends: Mottel Reis-Dresher, Hannan Krantz (today in New York), Yitzhak Zingerman and his wife Gri.

It was in this manner that the foundation for the Zamość *landsmanschaft* was laid in Montreal, Canada.

## General Report of Our Activity

*Page 1231: The memorial assembly on the occasion of the 14th Yahrzeit after the Zamość slaughter. The assembly took place in the Montreal Jewish People's Library. In the background is a display of Jewish Holocaust literature.*

*Page 1232: A group of ladies, Zamość landsleit, at a festival gathering in Montreal.*

Being true to the decisions of the founding assembly, every year, a memorial assembly takes place in memory of our martyrs. All the *landsleit* and their families come to pay their respects to our fallen brothers and sisters.

At appropriate opportunities, a variety of *landsleit* get-togethers take place, for example: tea evenings, festival celebrations, balls, etc.

The income from these affairs are dedicated to worthwhile purposes, for example: social help for *landsleit*, gifts for members and financial subsidies for cultural-community goals.

The committee comes together, from time-to-time, to work out plans of activity and to coordinate the work.

Finally, we make an effort to attract to us the landsleit from the smaller towns around Zamość. The people from Szczebrzeszyn work with us in certain undertakings, and the people from Tomaszow have already joined up with us. We hope that the other towns, such as Tyszowce, Bilgoraj, etc. will also integrate themselves into our *landsmanschaft.*

At the initiative of Mrs. Rosa Reif, a Ladies Section was founded at the *landsmanschaft*. During the winter months, the ladies meet almost every week and take up a variety of community activities, in order to lighten the burden of the *landsmanschaft* itself.

Because of the growth of our landsmanschaft, we have broadened and re-organized the committee as follows:

The Chairman is Y. Zingerman; Vice-Chairman – Eisenkopf; Secretary – A. Schwartzberg; Treasurer – D. Scharf; New Members absorbed: H. Klenner (Tomaszow), Barlenfeld (Zamość), M. Reif (Zamość).

# The Zamość Society in Israel

**By Yaakov Ne'eman (Neimark)**

## Foreword

It is worth recollecting, that up to the First World War, only individuals made a visit in order to effect *aliyah* to the Land of Israel.

The first was **R' Hirsch Chaim Geliebter**, the well-known Zionist community activist. This was in the year 1908. As a young pioneer, he attempted to settle himself in The Land, and only because of the condition of his health, was he then compelled to return to Poland. He studied for a short time at the well-known '*Herzliya*' Gymnasium. He returned to The Land in 1933. (His older son, Moshe, works for the stabilization of the country in important posts in the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Most recently, this was in the Israeli Embassy in Paris. His younger son, Elkana, is a capable journalist and is a representative of the labor news daily, '*Davar*' in France.)

**Gershon Hanoch** (Rothfeld), as son of the *Shokhet* of the *Neustadt*, came to the Land of Israel in the year 1913. As a worker on the land, he lived through the most difficult conditions during the first years, together with other hundreds of Jewish workers of the Second heroic *Aliyah*. Later on, Gershon Hanoch became known as a journalist and a force in the theater. He edited a variety of periodical publications in the Hebrew language, and in the last years he was a co-editor in the important '*Knesset*' (a publication of *Sokhnut*). He passed away on January 15, 1956 and was interred in Jerusalem.

Immediately after the First World War, the first group of *Halutzim* was organized in Zamość by the *'Tze'irei Tzion'* and '*HaShomer Ha'Tza'ir*.' More than ten young people and youths went off for training as an organized group, which was called '*Haviv*,' after Hirsch Chaim Geliebter, who at that time was very popular with the first *Halutzim*. After many difficulties, the first two – **Hirsch Gebett** and **Yitzhak Beitel** – made *aliyah* to the Land of Israel. This was in the summer of 1920. After this, the other *Halutzim* of the group made *aliyah*, **Shlomo Reichenstein**, **Millstein**, **Abraham Hartz, ז"ל** (killed during an incident in transit under tragic circumstances in 1953). Shlomo Reichenstein, or as we used to call him in Zamość, Shlomo '*Deitsch*,' lived for his entire life in Ein-Harod, always effusively ful of stories about the new life in the agricultural commune. Despite the fact that he grew into and was ingested by the new economy of the Land of Israel, he never forgot Zamość, where he grew up, and dreamed about a more beautiful life in the Land of Israel. In the year 1944, after a serious operation, he passed away in the Emek Hospital, being in the best years of leadership, full of literary plans, which, regrettably, he never brought to realization.

In the year 1922, Matityahu Weiner (today Shalom) came together with additional *Halutzim* from '*HaShomer Ha'Tza'ir*.' Matityahu made himself known in the country and abroad as a poet of pastoral compositions and also as a composer of many original melodies and chorales with old-new motifs. Being a shepherd for a longer time in kibbutz Bet Alpha (today kibbutz Ramat Yohanan) he created the most beautiful motifs, which endeared themselves to Israeli youth.

In the 1924 years, people of middle means also arrived by making aliyah. A stronger group of Zamość Jews then takes part as founders of the city of Afula in the Jezreel Valley in 1925. Among them are families that were known to us, **Stang, Fein, Eisenberg, Eisenfeld.**

Many tens of *Halutzim* and *Shomrim* from Zamość were already in The Land at that time, and are taking part in all lines of endeavor, building roads, houses, working in factories, and were connected to the entire development of The Land. Later on, in the year 1926, during the great crisis and unemployment, a part left The Land, and return to Poland, disappointed and broken, because they had nothing to turn to.

In 1929, the *aliyah* renews itself. Tens of Halutzim make aliyah after the great bloody events that occurred there. They take part in the establishment of new settlements. In 1932, tens come as tourists, in order to remain in the

country, and also by a variety of other illegal means, also on the famous ship, 'Vellos' that for three months, continuously sailed around the shores of The Land, and was not let out of sight, there were a number of landsleit and they reached their goal. Close to the Second World War many came by illegal ships and under the most difficult circumstances. Since 1945, Israel took in many hundreds of fleeing survivors: from the ghettoes, from the forests with the partisan groups, from the tragic extermination camps in Germany, children who hid themselves with gentile neighbors, and in churches, orphaned, without parents or homes, from the deportation camps in Siberia, and other distant locations in Soviet Russia.

Our landsleit, who were emissaries in the camps, or volunteers in the Jewish Brigade in the World War, did everything to discover the remaining individuals and brought them to the Land of Israel, where many of them found a renewed home and built their lives anew.

## The Founding of the Society

Only a few days after the Second World War ended, on May 6, 1945, about five hundred *landsleit* gathered in Tel-Aviv and founded the Society.

As primary objectives we set forth for ourselves:

1 Give material help to all landsleit that will come to The Land;
2 Help getting them settled with work and existence, housing, etc.;
3 Sending emergency help to our survivors in all countries in the larger world especially in Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia, China, Cyprus, and others).
4 Help to develop connections among those who remained alive, by letters, bulletins;
5 Produce a *Yizkor Book* about the Zamość community that had been butchered.

As committee members, the following were selected: Meir Zagel – Chairman, Tuvia Burger, Chana Stern, Yaakov Feigenbaum, Shoshana Hahn, and Yaakov Ne'eman – Secretary.

At the end of the year. A committee was elected apart from the previously mentioned, also, Hirsch Gebett, Joseph Dorn, Abba Spodek-Aharoni, and Aharon Dalkher.

Almost the majority of the committee members were active, and took part in all undertakings and also in organizing *landsleit* in other places outside of Tel-Aviv, such as Haifa, Jerusalem, Rishon LeZion, Rehovoth, Hadera and Afula. Apart from Haifa, the work in all the other places quickly faded, because there was a lack of persistent people, who could carry on with the work. Tel-Aviv, in the passage of time, of all the years, carried out the core of the work and served as a model for Haifa.

## Our Activity

### 1. Packages

More than one hundred packages of clothing, underwear, medicines and food were sent by us to Soviet Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, Austria. We also sent about 60 packages of newspapers, illustrated weekly letters and children's periodicals.

### 2. On the Island of Cyprus in the years 1946-1947

In the internment camps where the English authority placed the illegal immigrants, there were something under a hundred of our *landsleit* among many thousands of Jews from the wider world. It turned out that they had to stay there of long months, for periods in excess of a year, under inhuman conditions. Our landsleit organized themselves, and selected a committee, which placed itself in contact with the Israel committee. Friend Joseph (*Yosheh*) Sobol was the Chairman and Joseph Dickler, Secretary.

Friend Yitzhak Foont and his wife Chaya visited our landsleit on the island, and gave greetings from us and transmitted to us an actionable report about their situation. We organized special help for them, and sent over

foodstuffs, clothing, blankets, underwear, textbooks, and periodicals. It was in this fashion that we helped in a measurable fashion, to them get through this difficult period.

### 3. Our Connection with Zamość

As soon as Zamość was liberated, hundreds of those who remained alive, ran to visit the city. Perhaps someone was left, perhaps it will be possible to save something. About 400 people stopped off in the city. They organized a help committee, they arranged a place to provide lodging, and information. Shortly afterwards, as soon as they learned the bitter truth, they fled to the four corners of the world. In the city itself, only 4-5 Jews remained, among them Eliyahu Epstein, Bajczman, and others.

### 4. Our Connection With Survivors

In 1946-1947, we were in contact with individual groups and their committees. They were headed by familiar activists with youthful strength, who have grown up in the last years. In Lodz, at the time, there were about 80 landsleit, the center of our Polish groups was in Bielowa. By contrast, in Waldstadt (a large camp of refugees in the American Zone), there was for a certain period of time, several hundred *landsleit*. This was the most organized location with a strong committee, which even took upon itself to try the members of the '*Judenrat*' that wanted to rehabilitate themselves.

Our young men fro Israel, who were in the Jewish Brigade, and afterwards involved themselves in organizing the so-called *aliyah-bet* (the illegal *aliyah*) assisted in putting the contacts in place.

### 5. Our connection to the American Branch

Our connection with America began from the time that Friend Izzy Herman was the Secretary of the Branch. Later on, when the leadership of the branch went over into the hands of Israel Zilber, the bond was not weakened, rather the opposite, Friend Zilber applied himself energetically, and at the beginning of June 1950, came on a visit to Israel. During the course of his three-week stay, he showed himself in order to take part in gatherings of our groups and also participated in the sessions of committees in Tel-Aviv. In fact, he was the only one of our activists in America, who visited us. It is possible that many misunderstandings between ourselves and America , and in a specific case a lack of trust, were all put to the side thanks to the unceasing contact. Friend Zilber was won over, by seeing our multi-faceted work on behalf of the hundreds of newly arrived landsleit, and the serious preparations for the publication of our book.

During the time, we were visited by many landsleit from America, and not specifically from the most active, who took an interest in our work, and afterwards did not stint on their help. In this manner, we must highlight the visit of Feivel Hornfeld from New Jersey, of Joseph Boxenbaum (today, already a citizen of Israel), in the year 1947 and 1948. In the year 1951, we were visited by Friend Ovadiah Boxenbaum, at the time he took part in the Zionist Congress in Jerusalem.

Also, Friend Yitzhak Foont helped to strengthen the bonds during his longer visit in America. Also Friend Zagel and his wife, Esther Zagel, cemented connections with *landsleit* in other cities in America.

We received nearly a thousand dollars in the form of contributions from America for our multi-faceted work, already counting the expenditures of our friends in America, at the time that they visited Israel. Apart from this, we received printing stock in the value of $650 dollars, counting the outlays required to send it to us by ship.

We must separately highlight here the time when Friend Fox stood in contact with us when he was the Chairman of the united branch in New York. For us, these few years were the hardest. Especially, during the time when we published our *Yizkor Book*. Friend Fox fully understood our purposes.

### 6. Contact with Our Argentina *Landsleit*

We are in contact with our committee in Buenos Aires for nine years already. The sole question which interested our Argentine friends was the publication of a collected book dedicated to Jewish Zamość, in Yiddish. In this undertaking, they received the maximum level of help from us.

## 7. Connection with Individuals

We will not be exaggerating if we say that hundreds were informed through us, regarding the fate of their relatives, comrades and friends, received addresses and this is so to this day. Even in the last days, we receive letters from the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, which request addresses of relatives in The Land, who are being sought through nearby and other countries. In the course of barely two years, six bulletins have appeared, (4 by stencil, and 2 printed), in which we have published letters, addresses, information about people who had been killed, etc.

## 8. Loans for New *Olim*

Many tens of *olim* received loans frm our treasury to get themselves settled just as soon as they arrived in the country.

Regrettably only very few saw the necessity to repay, and because of this, large sums came out of reserves. Most of those who arrived got themselves settled with employment thanks to the help of our active members.

## 9. In-country Assemblies

The first Sabbath after Passover was designated by our society in the country as the *Yahrzeit* to be observed for the Zamość martyrs. On that day, the Nazis carried out the first *aktion* against the Zamość Jews.

In 1942, the German murderers began to murder the Jewish population in Zamość. Every year, on the day cited, all the landsleit come together in Tel-Aviv, for a memorial assembly. For the past 5 years, such a memorial assembly also takes place in Haifa for the northern part of the country.

## 10. The *Yizkor Book*, 'Zamość in its Glory and Destruction'

Our book, 'Zamość in its Glory and Destruction' appeared in October 1952, nearly 400 printed pages, 80 pictures, and 89 works, longer and shorter, and among others, works from recognized scholars. The run consisted of 1200 copies in Hebrew.

We chose to distribute close to 900 copies, and not only among our *landsleit*. It cost us 4100 Israeli *Lirot* to produce this book, and we worked a great deal until we covered all the expenses that we had.

The Israeli Press, and also in individual periodicals in America, dedicated much attention and praise to the book.

The Friends, Abba Aharoni (Spodek), Zvi Gebett, Tova Bruger, A. Stang and Meir Zagel in Israel, and Ovadiah Boxenbaum, Chaim Benditowitz, Israel Zilber and J. Fox (The United States) helped, each in their own way, to enable the book to appear.

Our branch in New York bought the paper for the purpose of printing this book.

The book was edited by the writer, Moshe Tamri.

## Closing Remarks

This report concerns itself factually with the activities of the committee in Tel-Aviv for a period of 10 years, approximately to 1955. In that year, the undersigned pulled back from active participation in the committee after such a difficult period of maximal activity. A number of new doers were selected to be on the committee. The *Yizkor* assemblies take place as they had in prior years. Also, a fund exists for constructive loans for new *olim*.

In the very last weeks, the aliyah from Poland has risen again, and tens of the survivors are now coming to us in The Land.

# Report of the Activity of the Zamość *Landsleit* in Haifa and Vicinity

*Page 1239:* *The second national assembly of Zamość landsleit in the State of Israel, Passover 1947*

*Page 1240:* *Assembly of People from Zamość in Israel. Ch. Zwillich gives the report regarding the annihilation of the Zamość Jews.*

Haifa is the largest port city in Israel, the first city where the new immigrant takes his first steps on the soil of Israel. Among them are many from Zamość.

According to our numbers, there are more than 300 Zamość families found in Haifa and its vicinity, which number about 1,000 souls, may they increase.

The people from Zamość live in Haifa and in the periphery, such as *Kiryat-Chaim, Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Bialik, Kiryat-Shmuel. Gav-Yam*, etc., and also in the cities near Haifa, Afula and Acre.

People from Zamość can be found in the *kibbutzim* around Haifa, such as in *Ein-Harod, Tel-Joseph, Ein-Carmel*, Ofek, the occupations of these people from Zamość is variegated, such as agricultural workers, factory workers, 'laborers,' workers, craftsmen, office workers, and a minimal number of merchants – mostly in small trade.

The new *olim* from Zamość, that come to the country, are received warmly, by the previous Zamość olim, who are already settled, with advice, with help in finding a place to live, work, and also with a loan (you understand, that is when there is money in the treasury).

From the minutes that we have found, we know of a Zamość committee, that was elected in the year 1947, consisting of these following people from Zamość: Israel Dolikhes, Chairman; Zvi Cooperstein, Secretary; Menachem Zingerman, Treasurer; Committee members: Lieber Wachs, Joseph Baretzky, Zalman Scharf, Hinde Brokh, Glassberg, Yaakov Bokser, and Yehuda Horowitz.

After the great *aliyah*, that came to the Jewish Land immediately after the establishment of the Jewish State, from the fleeing survivors in Germany and also in Poland, at the memorial assembly of 1951 a new Zamość committee was elected with Chaim Shpizeisen, ע"ה as the Chairman.

When Chaim Shpizeisen passed away, Moshe Schlam was elected as the Chairman of the Zamość committee; Secretary Jekuthiel Zwillich; Treasurer Menachem Zingerman; Committee members: Joseph Luxembourg, Joseph Sobol, Shimon Feldstein, Shlomo Lemberger, Mina Schieder (Rolnick), Gittl Ackerman (Grusser) Joseph Dickler, Leib Kalakh, and Zalman Rosenberg.

The work of the committee consists of arranging a memorial assembly every year, 4 days after Passover, for our Zamość martyrs, where almost al of the people from Zamość in the Haifa area and vicinity come together. From time-to-time, the committee arranges a party evening, where an artist is invited in, and one has a good time until midnight, recalling Zamość.

The Zamość people in Haifa and its vicinity have also contributed 400 pounds towards *Pinkas Zamość*, which was published in Tel-Aviv, these 400 pounds were turned over to the collections committee in Tel-Aviv at the time.

With the strengthened stream of the new *aliyah* from Poland, the Haifa committee set itself an objective of creating a *Gemilut Hasadim* Fund, weaving in the tradition of the old Zamość community. The *Gemilut Hasadim* Fund is called: 'The *Gemilut Hasadim* Fund in Memory of the Zamość Martyrs, in Haifa.'

The committee collected 780 pounds from the Zamość people in Haifa and its vicinity for the *Gemilut Hasadim* Fund. We also received $100 dollars from the Zamość *landsleit* in Detroit.

As of this day, the committee has extended 12 loans. Each loan consists fo 100 pounds, to be paid at 5 pounds a month.

In the name of the Zamość committee of Haifa:

Chairman – **Moshe Schlam**; Secretary – **Jekuthiel Zwillich**.

# Zamość People in Argentina

**By Wolf Kornmass**

*Page 1244: The Proclamation Assembly of the Zamość Landsleit Society in Buenos Aires – July 14, 1946.*

When the great wave of immigration from Eastern Europe began, at the end of the prior century, and the beginning of the current century [sic: twentieth], emigration out of Zamość also began. The principal stream went to North America, to the United States. Hundreds of people from Zamość emigrated at that time, some for economic reasons, others because of political persecution after the failed first Russian revolution.

It was first, about ten years later, that South America, first of all Argentina, began to attract a significant number of immigrants, among them also our *landsleit* from Zamość. Their number was insignificant, and there is practically no trace left of those immigrants. The individuals who came were lost, having not built any sort of *landsleit* society.

The number of immigrants became meaningful after the establishment of the Polish regime, after the First World War. Between the years 1920-1930 a visible immigration of Polish Jews began to Argentina, and among them people from Zamość.

Need, the difficult economic conditions and the political situation in the country, were the driving factors in the emigration out of the new Poland. The travel to Argentina was a no-choice way out. There was no other place to which to travel, and here, it was easier to get in.

Many who had the idea of going to North America, did this by way of Argentina. The one-time circumstances that made it difficult to enter North America, however, looked like a person who spent two years in Argentina, had a possibility to come into North America. So people traveled 'for two years' to the United States, in order to then get one's self into the United States. The Zamość colony in Argentina indeed had its beginning from these 'temporary' arrivals.

One of the first that came here from Zamość 'to spend two years' was **Jonah Introb** (Jonah Shmeryl Baker's). He came here to go to the United States 'after two years.' However, it was not possible for him to just sit here idly, and temporarily founded a bakery, and then remained until he died. Added to this, he brought his parents here, and his four sisters, the oldest of which married one of the active social activists, the co-founder of the Polish-Jewish Society and the first Secretary **Leibusz Weissblatt**. The youngest sister married Mordechai Mayerovich (from Czestnochow), who attached himself to our *landsleit* society, was one of the founders of the society, and is today an editorial member of *Pinkas Zamość*.

Later on, **Yehuda-Leib Messer** came to Argentina (also with the intent of then moving on to North America), and then later after this, his brothers, **Volvish** and **Nathan**. Yehuda-Leib indeed got the opportunity to travel to New York, the brothers Volvish and Nathan stayed here already.

Later arrivals from Zamość, without anticipating it, with their work and initiative in receiving the new arrivals, laid the cornerstone for the later Zamość *landsleit* organization.

We will recall two names:

In the first place is **Finia Schlein** and her husband (even though he was not from Zamość). Their home was the first address, where a new immigrant from Zamość presented himself. Coming into the country, without the language, mostly without a trade, in alien surroundings, he found a true home at the Schleins. Part of them began to make a living in their new hoome this way, because they were hired by Leibl Schlein to be painters. Leibl worked in repairing and painting houses. He always had a certain number of workers. He would constantly engage the people from Zamość in this work. He gave them their first opportunity to earn something.

Later on, **Herschel Wilder** came. I recall that when people from Zamość were getting ready to travel to Argentina, among the other important things that they did, was not to forget to take Herschel Wilder's address along, among the other important documents required, which was put to good use when he arrived in the country. Despite the fact that Wilder lived far from the center, these newcomers would always find him and one would always run into the newly-arrived 'greenies' in his home.

Here, they received their first direction and information about the new life – it was here that they took the first steps, were given their first assistance, advice and guidance.

After this, **Yossel Karp** came, and even later, **Moshe Freilich**. They lived in the center already.

Until the year 1928, there was no sort of organizational tie that bound the *landsleit* together; one would get together, talk, obtain messages from new arrivals about relatives back home. Whoever needed help received it. This however was circumstantial, un-organized, and an unplanned set of activities.

Then, in the year 1928, the first attempt to create a *landsleit* society was made. The society thus created was called: '**Zamość-Tomaszow-Hrubieszower *Landsleit* Society, and Vicinity**.' We need to mention those from Zamość who helped found the society: **Herschel Wilder, Moshe Wilder, Moshe Freilich, Nekha Rock** (today Schwartz), **Lejzor Finkman, Shmeryl Korb, Yossel Eilen, Hirsch Elbaum, Jonah Introb**, and others.

In the year 1929, a Loan Bank was created in the Society, which would provide loans of 150 pesos (which at that time was a considerable sum of money). Not only one member, thanks to these modest loans, was given the opportunity to bring over their families. The society and its loan bank did not exist for very long. After the integration of our society, in the year 1929, into the Polish-Jewish Society, arguments start, dissension, and both – the society and the loan bank, go under.

Also in the following years – from 1930 to 1946 – help was given to *landsleit* who needed it. His however occurred sporadically, and in an unorganized fashion. At every given situation, action was taken, literally going house to house and generating the needed assistance accordingly.

It was only first in the year 1946, that the new organization begins, and the Society is established.

* * *

*Page 1246: The First Youth-Commission of the Zamość Landsleit Society*

The bloody Second World War came to an end, and news began to arrive about our homes. One piece of news was more terrifying than the other. Everyone wants to know about the relatives they left behind back home. All of the landsleit organizations are called back into life, which now have a substantive mission – to be the ones who receive news from those who remained alive. The 'address table,' which began to fined and connect the families; the possibility is opened up for offering help to the fleeing survivors. A great deal of activity begins, both in the central landsleit organizations, and in the separate societies of the Polish cities and towns.

There was not a day when there was not some sort of a call in the Jewish daily papers to specific *landsleit* that they should appear in the interest of their near ones. It was in this way that a call went out to people from Komarow, Szczebrzeszyn, Tyszowce, and Hrubieszow. Zamość was still not seen yet. It was only on one Saturday, that a call appeared that the Zamość people should come to the local office of the Federation of the *Landsleit* Societies.

On that Saturday, June 29, 1946 at 1165 Velasco, the first gathering did indeed take place for the people of Zamość. It appears that those who called the people from Zamość were **Moshe Wilder** and **Ozer Mittelpunkt.** A representative of the Federation opens the conference, clarifies the importance of organizing the Society, the pressing goals and after the introductory remarks leaves it to us to arrange the work.

A Chairman is then selected, the Prof. **Wolf Kornmass**. The selected Chairman then asks Moshe Wilder to be Secretary, and we approached the task of working out a program for future activities. At this meeting, the primary program is discussed roundly – **Help** for the remaining survivors after the Nazi slaughters.

Immediately on the spot, a gathering is put through for an assistance campaign.

Seeing that those who were supposed to belong to the newly created Society, were not too distant, it was decided to elect a provisionary directorate, which will call together an assembly of all the people from Zamość. The following were elected to the provisional leadership:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman);
Max Mayerovich (Vice-Chairman);
Moshe Wilder (Secretary);
Yitzhak Baum (Pro-Secretary)
Mekhl Rasch (Treasurer);
Ozer Mittelpunkt (Ozer, Shmuel Hershelikhes – Pro-Treasurer).

As speakers: Aharon Erbesfeld, Abraham Scheid, Zechariah Kossoy (himself local, husband of Feiga Weintraub), Herschel Wilder, Israel'keh Nir, Cooperstein, Leibl Schlein.

Audit Committee: Yaakov Schatzkammer, Shia Eisenberg.

The first work, which we divided up into pairs, who had to visit all of the *landsleit* and invite them to a tea, which we had decided to arrange, at which the proclamation of our Society would occur. It was also decided that the Society will be called: '**Zamość Landsleit-Society and Vicinity, in Argentina**.'

On July 14, 1946, the founding of our Society was observed. The tea was attended by a large number of people from Zamość . Here, the first large assembly took place, for the Assistance Campaign. The sum generated enabled us to think about sending out a significant amount of help to our Zamość people, who remained alive after the sorrowful era.

The same night, a group of young people undertook a discussion, children of our Zamość people, and decided to assist the older folks with this sacred work of help for their grandfathers, grandmothers, aunts and uncles, who remained alive. In a second room in the Federation, a consultation took place of the youth, where it was decided to create a Youth Commission within the Zamość *Landsleit* Society.

It was decided to call a general assembly of the young people, where this question could be dealt with. In August 1946, the youth assembly did indeed take place. The Chairman of the Society, Wolf Kornmass, clarified the nature of the life of the youth in Poland to the young people, up to the Second World War, about the terrifying Hitler Holocaust, how the Nazis annihilated the millions of Jews, among whom thousands of people from Zamość are to be counted, their near ones and relatives.

The young people decide to join the Assistance work of the Society. A leadership of the youth is elected that consists of the following children of the people from Zamość :

Yaakov Mayerovich (Chairman); Ida Mittelpunkt (Vice-Chairman); Leibl Weissman (Secretary); Feiga Karp (Acts-Secretary); Rosa Harfen (Treasurer). Speakers: Shimon Mittelpunkt, Sholom Freilich, Leon Rubin, Feiga Meiseles; Audit Committee: Frieda Eisenberg and Feder.

The Youth Commission worked for a longer time with the Society leadership, and was indeed of help, through a variety of undertakings, in order to strengthen the *landsleit* organization.

However, this Youth Commission did not exist for very long. Internal discussions began about socio-political questions. Many parties and groups wanted to influence the youth circle, and this led to the fact that it ceased to exist.

* * *

*Page 1247: The Ladies Commission at the Zamość Landsleit Society in Buenos Aires*

The first general assembly took place on October 13, 1946. At that time, the first legal leadership was elected, in the following order:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Ozer Mittelpunkt (Vice-Chairman); Moshe Wilder (Secretary); Yitzhak Sobol (Pro-Secretary); Zechariah Kossoy (Acts- Secretary); David Fingergut (Treasurer – he personally was from Rewic, husband of Golda Oberfersht); Itcheh Schwartz (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Alexander Tzitzman, Mekhl Rasch, Max Mayerovich, Aharon Erbesfeld, Aharon-Shimon Zeidweber.
Audit Committee: Brandwein, Lejzor Finkman and Shmeryl Korb.

At the same meeting, it is also decided to join with the '**Central Assistance Commission**' and that our help should be sent through this organization. Then we sent off several containers with clothing. After that, we receive profuse thanks from our Zamość survivors, who remained alive. The reports that came back also indicated that the material was divided in a proper manner. For this period, we also sent a series of individual packages and help in the form of foodstuffs.

* * *

*Page 1248 The Leadership of the Zamość Landsleit Society in Buenos Aires in the Year 1948.*

The second leadership was elected at the general assembly on May 7, 1947. At that time the following were elected to the leadership: Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Shaya Eisenberg (Vice-Chairman); Yitzhak Sobol (Secretary); Aharon Erbesfeld (Pro-Secretary); David Fingergut (Treasurer); Alexandra Tzitzman (Pro-Treasurer); Zechariah Kossoy (Acts-Secretary).

Speakers: Aharon-Shimon Zeidweber, Mekhl Rasch, Itcheh Schwartz, Yitzhak Baum.

Audit Committee: Moshe Freilich, Shmeryl Korb.

At that same meeting, a Ladies Commission was elected, which will help in the work, especially to create the material funds in order to anticipate the demands of our *landsleit*. At that time, there was also a request by the remaining survivors from Zamość, that we should help them bring together the scattered victims on the roads, in the fields around Zamość, in order to give them a proper Jewish burial.

# Our Deceased Leadership Members

*Page 1252: Top (from Left to Right):*

**Chaim Hirsch Wilder**
Deceased
September 10, 1950

**Yerucham David Fingerut**
Deceased
July 18, 1948

**Leibusz Schlein**
Deceased
June 28, 1947

**Abish Schildergemein**
Deceased
November 25, 1956

**Chaim Nathan Levkovich**
Deceased
February 19, 1956

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# The Central Committee of Pinkas Zamość

**Editorial, Technical Commission and Finance Commission in Buenos Aires**

*Page 1253 (From the Top, Left to Right):*

Aharon Erbesfeld — Alexander Tzitzman — Wolf Kornmass — Mordechai V. Bernstein

Yitzhak Baum — Kuba Tzitzman — Zechariah Kossoy — Meir Lieber

Shia Eisenberg — Shlomo Goldzweig — Max Mayerovich

Mikhl Rasch — Yekhezkiel Szlak — Yitzhak Schwartz

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# Sub-Committee United States – New York

*Page 1254 (From the Top, Left to Right):*

Berish Mandelbaum — Yaakov Fox — Yitzhak-Leib Herman — Israel Zilber

Shlomo Lubliner — Joseph Hecker — Hella Ashkenazi-Schaffner

Moshe Aberfersht — Abe Gertler — Max Finkler

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# United States: Other Cities

*Page 1255 (Top, Left to Right):*

Yitzhak Finkelstein (Detroit) — Sender Rothstein (Chicago) — Louis Gross (Philadelphia)

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# Sub-Committee Canada: Montreal

*Page 1255 (Middle and Bottom, Left to Right):*

Yitzhak Zingerman  Mottel Reis-Dresher  Abraham Schwartzberg

Berel Eisenkopf  David Scharf

## Sub-Commission Brazil

*Page 1255 (Top, Left to Right):*

| Orish Schmutz | Reuven Drong | Feiga Orenbaum-Shklau |
|---|---|---|
| (Saõ Paulo) | (Saõ Paulo) | (Rio de Janeiro) |

*Page 1255 (Second Row, Left to Right):*

## Australia

Yudel Lichtman
(Melbourne)

## Sub-Commission Bolivia

Pinia Weintraub
(La Paz)

Menashe Applezweig
(La Paz)

*Page 1256, Bottom:*

The Committee of the Zamość *Landsleit* in Haifa. – From Right to Left, seated: Shimon Feldstein, Menachem Zingerman, Moshe Schlam, Jekuthiel Zwillich, Zalman Rosenberg, Joseph Luxembourg; Standing: Shlomo Lemberger, Leib Kalakh, Gittl Grosser-Ackerman, Joseph Dickler.

*Page 1257:*

**The Leadership of the Zamość-Tomaszow-Hrubieszower *Landsleit* Society of the Year 1930, Integrated with the Jewish-Polish Society in Argentina**

From Right to Left, seated: Moshe Freilich, Mordechai Weissman, Nekha Rack-Schwartz, Hirsch Elbaum, Yaakov Engelsberg, Joseph Wagner, Zeinvill Kriegsher; Standing: Moshe Feder and Berish Puter

The following were elected in the Ladies Commission:

Finia Schlein, Leah'cheh Baum, Sophia Tzitzman, Braneh Elbirt, Nikha Schwartz, Sarah Eisenberg, Golda Fingerut, Kayla Feldstein, Henneh Mayerovich, Sarah Rasch, and Gittl Eilen.

Indeed, the Ladies Commission helped to generate the required funds in a great measure. An array of very suitable undertakings, among them cinema presentations, brought in a quite meaningful sum, which was sent off to Zamość and was indeed dedicated to the exhumation of our martyrs.

In June 1947, it is agreed to memorialize our [city of] Zamość with an artistic picture, which will serve as a memorial symbol. This decision is resolved. The picture was created by the artist, **Moshe Feigenblum**. His designated picture became the permanent emblem of our society.

* * *

The third leadership is elected at the assembly of May 9, 1948. The following are elected:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Shia Eisenberg (Vice-Chairman); Kuba Tzitzman (Secretary); Leah'cheh Baum (Pro-

Secretary); Zechariah Kossoy (Acts-Secretary); David Fingerut (Treasurer); Alexander Tzitzman (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Joseph Eilen, Abraham Scheid, Mekhl Rasch, Aharon-Shimon Zeidweber, Yitzhak Baum).

Audit Commission: Moshe Wilder, Herschel Wilder, David Eilbirt.

* * *

The fourth leadership is elected on April 23, 1949, with the following list:

Alexander Tzitzman (Cahirman); Wolf Kornmass (Vice-Chairman); Zechariah Kossoy (Secretary); Mrs. Sophia Tzitzman (Acts-Secretary); Shia Eisenberg (Treasurer); Aharon Erbesfeld (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Mayerovich, Mosh Luxenburg, Aharon-Moshe Zeidweber, Chaim Horn, Davis Eilbirt. The following ladies are also co-opted: Nekha Schwartz, Sarah Eisenberg, Braneh Eilbirt.

Audit Commission: Abish Schildergemein, Moshe Freilich.

The fifth leadership is elected at the general assembly of April 29, 1950. For this leadership, the following are selected:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Max Mayerovich (Vice-Chairman); Zechariah Kossoy (Secretary); Aharon Erbesfeld (Pro-Secretary); Shia Eisenberg (Treasurer); Alexander Tzitzman (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Abraham Scheid, Shlomo Goldzeig, Herschel Wilder, Leibl Rind, Jonah Feldstein. Audit Commission: Shmeryl Korb, Yossel Karp.

The sixth Leadership was elected at the general assembly of October 6, 1951. It consisted of the following members:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Max Mayerovich (Vice Chairman); Zechariah Kossoy (Secretary); Yitzhak Sobol (Pro-Secretary); Shia Eisenberg (Treasurer); Alexander Tzitzman (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Aharon Erbesfeld, Kuba Tzitzman, Shlomo Goldzweig, Aharon-Shimon Zeidweber. Audit Commission: Sophia Tzitzman, Leah'cheh Baum.

In the month of August of that year, we decided to approach the task of publishing ***Pinkas Zamość***. Reports about this issue are presented in a variety of other places in our *Pinkas*.

In the same year, the Ladies Commission was newly reconstituted. The following ladies are elected at that time:

Sarah Eisenberg, Henneh Mayerovich, Nekha Schwartz, Gittl Eilen, Sophia Tzitzman, Braneh Eilbirt, Golda Fingerut, Chana Scheid, Leah'cheh Baum, Liba Weissblatt, Gittl Goldzweig, and Kayla Feldstein.

The seventh leadership is elected at the general assembly of August 8, 1953. The following are elected:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Alexander Tzitzman (Vice-Chairman); Zechariah Kossoy (Secretary); Aharon Erbesfeld (Pro-Secretary); Shlomo Goldzweig (Treasurer); Itcheh Schwartz (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Shia Eisenberg; Max Mayerovich, Chaim Horn, Israel Nir, Leibl Rind. Audit Commission: Yitzhak Baum, Nathan Lefkovich.

The ninth general assembly of August 1, 1954 elected the following leadership:

Wolf Kornmass (Chairman); Shia Eisenberg (Vice-Chairman); Zechariah Kossoy (Secretary); Itcheh Schwartz

(Treasurer); Yitzhak Baum (Pro-Treasurer).

Speakers: Max Mayerovich, Aharon Erbesfeld, Alexander Tzitzman, Yekhezkiel Szlak. Audit Commission: Shlomo Goldzweig, Mekhl Rasch.

On August 20, 1955, a general assembly took place, which decided to express its confidence in the incumbent leadership and not elect any others until after the *Pinkas* was published.

To the previously mentioned leadership, the following were co-opted: Kuba Tzitzman as Pro-Secretary, and Meir Lieber as a Speaker.

This leadership is serving to this day.

*Page 1250: The Leadership of the Landsleit Society of the Zamość People of Buenos Aires in the year 1949.*

During this entire time, the Society dedicated itself very much to the altruistic support for those *landsleit* who were in need. Help during periods of illness, or other incidents of misfortune; help in getting settled; this was given in the form of assistance not to be repaid, and also in the form of loans. There was no request, whose character was such, that the Society did not respond to and help with those resources that it had.

During all these years, the Society observed the Yizkor Day in memory of our martyrs. Year in and year out, an assembly of mourning was held, where eulogies were given, and there also was a religious component, performed by a Cantor.

In memory of our city, which was cut down, The Society also unveiled a plaque on the monument to the 6 million martyrs, at the Tabalada Cemetery. (November 27, 1949).

*Page 1251: The Actual Leadership, together with the Ladies Commission of the Zamość Landsleit Society in Buenos Aires.*

The Society also participates, with material assistance, for cultural and philanthropic institutions such as: The Jewish Hospital, 'Ikuf,' Yiddish Folk Theater, 'Ift' School and Educational Institutions, The Yiddish Scientific Institute – YIVO, and others.

Apart from various undertakings, cultural acts, holiday get-togethers, in the last few years, the Society conducts celebrations of the anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel.

In the last years, the primary concern of the Society was the realization of publishing ***Pinkas Zamość***. Despite the fact that there was a special commission that had this as a goal to do, the entire Society was drawn into this work. There was no get-together – community evenings, or private celebrations – where collections were not taken up for the *Pinkas* fund.

At a second opportunity, previously, this part of our work has already been talked about extensively.

# Shlomo-Leib Schwartzberg ז"ל

**Born in Zamość in the year 1891 (5661)**
**Died in Magdial (Israel) October 1, 1957 ( 6 Elul 5718)**

When the Pinkas was already printed, the sorrowful news of the death of Sh. L. Schwartzberg arrived, one of our active co-workers on the Pinkas. Here, we provide the biographical details sent to us by his son, Abraham Schwartzberg

* *
*

Sh. L. Schwartzberg, known in Zamość by the name **Shlomo the Teacher**, was a scion of Zamość for countless generations. Several people knew his grandfather, Mendel Miller, and even his great-grandfather, Shlomo Khakran, who drew plans for the unification of the *Neustadt* with the *Altstadt*, in one single whole.

Shlomo's father – **White Mekhl** – was well-known to the younger generation. He was a scholarly Jew, and thoroughly grounded in the *Kabbalah*, as well as modern astronomy, he (as did his son Shlomo later), educated an array of generations, that came to study higher level subjects with him, imparted in this very spirit.

Shlomo followed in his father's footsteps, but a little more focused. He exchanged the *Kabbalah* for the *Tanakh*, and modern Hebrew literature, and the speculations of astronomy – with mathematics, geography and grammar.

In this spirit, he educated many generations of children, from the after-Hebrew period to *Gemara* class.

It was in this very spirit that he was called '*Teacher*' and not '*Rebbe*,' because he made his classroom a half-modern school, a sort of *Heder Metukan*.

He was strict with the children, but as a good pedagogue he imparted this with affection. There almost never was a case when a pupil would later, after growing up a bit, not recall him with respect, and affection. Many of these would, many years later, come to him for a visit, to ask his advice, help out with something, or just plain have a discussion about Torah and wisdom. Many of the students were of the second generation to study with '*Shlomo Lehrer*.'

Shlomo Schwartzberg also committed himself to the education of adults. He was one of the founders of the Neustadt Library (himself donating many books) and a continuously active member there. Being himself an employee of an array of publications (The Warsaw '*Express*,' '*Moment*,' *Inzikh*,' etc.) he wanted to raise Zamość to the creative arena, and to that effect, he organized a group of 'creative evenings' at his home. About ten or so young people used to come together on certain Saturday nights and read their creations in writing, and discuss them thereby. Also, they used to read out loud from the classics and sing folk songs.

Close before the war, Shlomo Schwartzberg entertained the public at the 'Dacha' (Krasnobrod) and also in the smaller settlements (Szczebrzeszyn, Zuverziniec) with recitations from the classics and his own creations.

He spent the war years with his family in the Soviet Union, being an invalid after the First World War, he could not work in the camps, and therefore suffered a great deal.

In 1943, he lost his wife, Sarah-Itteh, and in 1946 – returned to Poland with his ailing son, Nehemiah.

Broken by wandering, and over-exertion, he cannot manage a school any longer. He satisfies himself with giving a lesson for elderly worshipers in a synagogue. He continues the work, even later, when he makes *aliyah* to the Land of Israel (1949).

As soon as he learns about preparations for a *Pinkas* in memory of Zamość, he immediately takes to the work actively, and sends a mass of articles, portraits, character portraits, etc. First he writes them in Hebrew (for the first Yizkor Book), and after that in Yiddish – for the Argentine *Pinkas*.

At the same time, he is in contact with YIVO in New York, and he concerns himself with local idioms of Zamość and its vicinity, which well go into the Great Yiddish Dictionary.

Even though this work is difficult for him, he does not shirk it, and sends correspondence to practically every Yiddish periodical in Israel, and from time-to-time, he writes a Hasidic tale.

In the final years of his life, he systematically worked on memoirs, hoping to live long enough to publish a book, '**Memories,**' which also, in part, would have been a sort of *Pinkas* for Zamość and a cultural history work for the Yiddish literature.

This work however, was interrupted by his merciless passing...

He passed away on Tuesday, 6 Elul, 5718 in Magdial Hospital after severe suffering.

Let us not forget him!

A. Sh.

# *Pinkas Zamość*

**By Mordechai V. Bernstein**

The remaining lines are being written when most of this *Yizkor Book* is already finished, and is being printed. Before the eye lay more than 1200 pages of this, already printed, memorial stone, which the scattered and spread out surviving people of Zamość have erected for their home city that was cut down.

Regarding this, I have the same feeling as that of a mountain climber, who reached the designated peak stretching out upward towards the sky. From the peak, he looks down, and sees all of the difficulties that he has overcome, in order to 'conquer' this mountain peak.

I dedicated myself to undertake this work with true trepidations and concern, and great misgivings – to edit '***P i n k a s  Z a m o ś ć .***'

It is not, God forbid, because this work did not appeal to me, on the contrary, the proposition attracted me strongly. The constraining considerations were:

It is a work with such immense responsibility, imagine (no small thing) Z a m o ś ć !

-- Who knows if it will be possible to assemble all the relevant material, which will be the substantive memorial for this famous city and Mother in Israel.

I do not want to speak about Zamość in these lines – that can be found in the *Pinkas*. I knew, however, that lo, this o l d  J e w i s h city, contains important facts without limit; each period, and each area of Jewish life in Zamość, reflected itself with a special grace.

Each generation with its problems; every period with its ideas – all of this came to Zamość, and from there they shined outward.

Jewish religious life; Jewish national striving; *Haskala*; Jewish Socialist and Revolutionary Movement – all colors of the Jewish rainbow shimmered in Zamość.

Will it be possible to reflect, in the *Yizkor Book*, these rich images, which were cut down?

The book was prepared far from the 'territory' which is dealt with inside it. Far from the existing pertinent archives. And there is no one there who could provide service, with advice and counsel...

Scattered and spread out, in hundreds of places, there are bits and pieces of the Jewish 'what was' in Zamość. Will it be possible to gather together these important building blocks, in order to use them to construct the edifice of '***Pinkas Zamość.***'

Before my eyes, I also had the shortcomings of a rather large number of *Yizkor Books*. And one wanted that this should not be the case with '*Pinkas* Zamość.'

In part of these *Pinkasim*, the H o l o c a u s t was dominant – it was only a threnody of *Lamentations*. The picture of the past was missing, of that distant and near yesterday.

Part were only 'Memories' of *Der Alter Haym*; very fine outpourings of nostalgia. But even the well-known details of the local history were not utilized.

A certain number of these books, entirely did not fulfill the good intentions of the producers, not even in the slightest fashion – they became apologetic products for this or that movement; only 'their own' were given any visibility...

Therefore, the mark of a truly weighty question hung over us:

- Will it be possible to avoid all these pitfalls in '*Pinkas Zamość*?'

If, despite all of the warning signs, I have decided to get involved with editing '*Pinkas Zamość*,' an array of factors are 'responsible.'

First, I was overwhelmed by the stubbornness and the ardor of the native people of Zamość, their fire, and spiritedness (not pausing at the greatest difficulties) in order to have a *Pinkas* Memorial for generations to come, and not simply a *Yizkor Book*.

At the first contacts with the material, I recognized the booty of documents, of ideas, of dates and facts, that lay 'frozen' under the heavy burden of archive and of time, and I thought: if not now, if the present generation does not do this, then nobody will do it. I was drawn into the intoxication of the Zamość of the Past.

In the end – I had a 'weakness' for the Zamość of the good old times.

During the years when I was a traveling, as an emissary to communities all over Poland, Zamość was one of my places to lodge in connection with surrounding cities and towns. For Tomaszow, Komarow, Krasnobrod, Jozefów, Bilgoraj, Tyszowce, Krasnystaw, Izbica, Turobin, Laszczow, Jewnow, and even others.

Zamość always provided me with a 'roof over the head.'

One time, even the police between Komarow and Zamość 'detained' me. They were not pleased by my 'komyuvoyazhorsker' traveling trunk, where they found 'illicit' materials – propaganda material for the '*Volkszeitung*.'

* *

'Pinkas Zamość' lies before the reader. I do not need to introduce it, not defend it, or recommend it – the book speaks for itself.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to make a short summation.

It appears to me, that no period of Jewish life, creation or building is missing from this book. All ascent of mountains and decent into valleys, of the heroic road of Polish Jewry, are reflected in it.

All the centuries; all the impact; all the conflicts; all the demand and striving, come out in printed form in this Memorial Book.

It is necessary to understand, that here or there, it is still possible to indicate, that not everything is utilized, despite the fact that it is over 1200 pages long, in which has been gathered a trove of unheard of historical treasures.

Such an observation would be correct. However, it was not possible to obtain the materials from every place. Once again, we are dealing with a case of the proverbial matters that have no bounds.

It was possible for us to assemble this material only thanks to the wondrous cooperation from the *landsleit* organizations. From all over, wherever Zamość people could be found, who had left their homes years ago, or were among the fleeing survivors of the most recent Holocaust, we received the needed inputs.

All over, individual enthusiasts arose, who lightened the burden of the editorial leadership. I do not cite any names, in order not to have to withstand the test of an inadvertent omission. Such loyal, dedicated activity was manifested first of all in the ranks of Buenos Aires. They are also present in the United States, in Israel, in Canada, in Australia, in Brasil, and Bolivia.

If we do not mention individuals, it is however our obligation to express our thanks to the institutions who demonstrated an understanding for our Pinkas. First the Yiddish Scientific Institute – YIVO in New York, which sent us an array of documents, photographs, reproductions, and the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, sent us a serial of important documents (in microfilm).

* *

We, the entire editorial commission, can properly examine the way we have come from the high mountain peak.

It was a difficult journey; a way with no end of pitfalls. A slight bit of inattentiveness and there was the danger that we will lose our way....

What happened with 'Pinkas Zamość' was nearly the same as what happens to mountain-climbers. Here, they begin the journey of ascent and it seems to them, that the peak is actually quite near, literally to be touched by the hand...but the higher one goes, the goal seems more and more distant. It is not only one mountain climber that does not succeed in passing the test.

Such was the case with '*Pinkas Zamość.*' There were moments when we were at the point of 'losing patience.' It took a long time from the conception of the project until it finally came into being. We began with a plan for a 400-page book, and it came out triple the size!

In another situation, we would have utilized the sobriquet of 'they who sow with tears, shall reap with joy...'

In our case, the 'cutting down' takes us far afield from celebrating with song...

From the first page to the last, '*Pinkas Zamość*' is after all one immense cry of pain. Every line drips with blood; every chapter is a new act of rending one's garment in mourning. It is, after all, the book of memories of centuries that were cruelly 'cut down.'

Undoubtedly, sorrow was the *leitmotiv* in the creation of the *Pinkas;* it is certain that the will to memorialize our martyrs drove us to undertake the great strains which are tied up with the production of the *Pinkas.*

But not forgetting our sorrow and gloom for one second; not letting our thoughts and feelings of torture and pain out of our minds, another feeling accompanies us:

We have in a certain sense fulfilled the behest of our holy and pure ones. Perhaps, with the publication of this *Pinkas*, we are providing a form of restitution for Jewish centuries that were cut down by the Hitlerist brutality.

If the *Amalekites* erased the memory of our near and dear; if their accomplices attempted to uproot every trace of their lives, creations and struggles – it will however, always remain forever alive in the form of our '*P i n k a s Z a m o ś ć*.'

It is not only for the exterminated community of Zamość that this *Pinkas* will be the R e m i n d e r and the D e m a n d e r .

All of Polish Jewry is reflected in Zamość – the barely 400 years of Jewish life in Zamość is an important link in the great and distinguished chain of Polish Jewry.

In the certainty that the producers would have wanted to, tried to, and exerted themselves to carry out these intentions during their lives, the editorial leadership conveys this Memorial Book into the hands of the loyal sons of the Zamość community, who will know how to hold dearly, and to guard for all eternity, the sacred memory of their heroic past, which will always live in the memory of the nation.

# Glossary

Orthographical choices in transliterating Hebrew-spelled names into the Roman alphabet abound, thereby adding a potential measure of confusion in tracing members of a family. In the case of a Polish city, like Zamość, there is the additional variation of Polish spelling to contend with.

The purpose of this Glossary is to provide a simple key for Polish-English equivalents, to ease the burden of search, in the event that the translator's arbitrary choice of orthography may obscure an identity. The key is not comprehensive, because even within English, there will be variations that can be attributed to a German spelling as distinct from an American spelling.

Thus, *Szper* in Polish can be transcribed as either *Shper* or *Schper*, depending on preference, or country of origin, There is also the matter of using orthography to preserve specific pronunciations. Thus, *Sztajnbojm* could come out as *Steinbaum*, or *Shtaynboim*.

No attempt is made to be exhaustive. The reader is asked to take into account that such variations do exist, and to keep an open mind in looking for similarities in appellation. Where no cross-entry is given, the assumption made is that the spelling is the same in Polish and English.

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME |
|---|---|
| ADER | Aeder |
| ADLER | |
| ADLERFLIGIEL | |
| AFTEL | |
| AJL | Eil |
| AJLBAUM | Eilbaum |
| AJLBOM | Albaum |
| AJLER | Eiler |
| AJNWOJNER | Einwohner |
| AJNWONER | Ahnwohner |
| AJZEN | Eisen |
| AJZENBERG | Eisenberg |
| AJZENSZTAL | Eisenstahl |
| AJZENSZTAT | Eisenstat |
| AKER | Acker |
| AKIERMAN | Ackerman |
| ALBAUM | Albaum |
| ALTBERG | |
| APELBAUM | Applebaum |
| APELCWAJG | Applezweig |
| ARCT | Artzt |
| ARONOWICZ | Aronowitz |
| ASZKANAZA | Ashkenazi |
| ASZKINAZE | Ashkenazi |
| AUFZER | |
| BABAT | |
| BADEN | |
| BADLER | |
| BAJGEL | Beigel |
| BAJGMAN | Baigman |
| BAJTEL | Beitel |
| BAL | |
| BART | |
| BASIOR | |
| BASSOWICZ | Bassowich |
| BAUR | Bauer |
| BECHER | |
| BECKER | Becker |
| BEKER | Becker |
| BEKERMAN | Beckermen |
| BENDYKT | Benedict |
| BER | |
| BERGER | |
| BERGERBAUM | |
| BERGSZTAJN | Bergstein |
| BERMAN | |
| BERNAD | |
| BERNFELD | |

| G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME |
|---|---|
| Acker | AKER |
| Ackerman | AKIERMAN |
| Aeder | ADER |
| Ahnwohner | AJNWONER |
| Albaum | AJLBOM |
| Albaum | ALBAUM |
| Applebaum | APELBAUM |
| Applezweig | APELCWAJG |
| Arbesfeld | ERBESFELD |
| Aronowitz | ARONOWICZ |
| Artzt | ARCT |
| Ashkenazi | ASZKANAZA |
| Ashkenazi | ASZKINAZE |
| Baigman | BAJGMAN |
| Bassowich | BASSOWICZ |
| Bauer | BAUR |
| Baum | BOJM |
| Becker | BECKER |
| Becker | BEKER |
| Beckermen | BEKERMAN |
| Beigel | BAJGEL |
| Beitel | BAJTEL |
| Benedict | BENDYKT |
| Bergstein | BERGSZTAJN |
| Bershtling | BERSZTLING |
| Blacharntz | BLACHARNC |
| Bleicher | BLAJCHER |
| Blimeltz | BLIMELC |
| Bluestein | BLUSZTEJN |
| Blumenzweig | BLUMENCWAJG |
| Blumstein | BLUMSZTAJN |
| Borenstein | BORENSZTAJN |
| Borenstein | BORENSZTEJN |
| Boxer | BOKSER |
| Brandwein | BRANDWAJN |
| Braverman | BRAWERMAN |
| Bronstein | BRONSZTAJN |
| Bronstein | BRONSZTEJN |
| Bukovich | BUKOWICH |
| Bukovich | BUKOWICZ |
| Chait | CHAJT |
| Cherst | CHERCT |
| Cooper | KUPFER |
| Cooperstein | KUPERSZTAJN |
| Cooperstein | KUPFERSZTAJN |
| Cooperstein | KUPFERSZTEJN |
| Cooperwasser | KUPERWASSER |
| Dailwand | DAJLEWAND |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME |
|---|---|
| BERSZTLING | Bershtling |
| BIDERMAN | |
| BIN | |
| BIRKAN | |
| BIRMAN | |
| BIRN | |
| BLACHARNC | Blacharntz |
| BLACHARSKI | |
| BLAJCHER | Bleicher |
| BLANK | |
| BLAT | |
| BLAZER | |
| BLECH | |
| BLECHMAN | |
| BLIMELC | Blimeltz |
| BLIOMEL | |
| BLOCH | |
| BLON | |
| BLUM | |
| BLUMENCWAJG | Blumenzweig |
| BLUMSZTAJN | Blumstein |
| BLUSZTEJN | Bluestein |
| BODNER | |
| BOJM | Baum |
| BOKSER | Boxer |
| BON | |
| BORAK | |
| BORENSZTAJN | Borenstein |
| BORENSZTEJN | Borenstein |
| BORG | |
| BRAND | |
| BRANDWAJN | Brandwein |
| BRAWERMAN | Braverman |
| BRENER | |
| BRINKER | |
| BROND | |
| BRONFENBRENER | |
| BRONGURG | |
| BRONSZTAJN | Bronstein |
| BRONSZTEJN | Bronstein |
| BRUKER | |
| BUBES | |
| BUCH | |
| BUG | |
| BUKOWICH | Bukovich |
| BUKOWICZ | Bukovich |
| BYK | |
| CEDERBAUM | Zederbaum |

| G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNA |
|---|---|
| Deutsch | DAJCZ |
| Deutschgewand | DAJTSZGEWANI |
| Deutschkewand | DAJCZKEWAND |
| Dichter | DYCHTER |
| Dicker | DYKER |
| Diesenman | DYZENMAN |
| Drescher | DRESZER |
| Ebikeit | EWIGKAJT |
| Eckhaus | EKHAUZ |
| Edelstein | EDELSZTAJN |
| Edelstein | EDELSZTEJN |
| Eil | AJL |
| Eilbaum | AJLBAUM |
| Eiler | AJLER |
| Eines | EJNES |
| Einwohner | AJNWOJNER |
| Eisen | AJZEN |
| Eisenberg | AJZENBERG |
| Eisenberg | EJZENBERG |
| Eisenkopfer | EJZENKOPER |
| Eisenman | EJZENMAN |
| Eisenstahl | AJZENSZTAL |
| Eisenstahl | EYZENSTAL |
| Eisenstat | AJZENSZTAT |
| Eltzter | ELCTER |
| Endweiss | ENDWAJS |
| Epstein | EPSZTAJN |
| Etkamarowitz | ETKAMAROWICZ |
| Ettinger (?) | ETUNGER |
| Feigenbaum | FAJGENBOJM |
| Feiler | FAJLER |
| Feiner | FAJNER |
| Feingold | FAJNGOLD |
| Feinholtz | FAJNHOLTZ |
| Feldstein | FELDSZTAJN |
| Ferst | FERSZT |
| Finkelstein | FINKELSZTAJN |
| Finkstein | FINKSZTAJN |
| Finkstein | FINKSZTEJN |
| Fishel | FISZEL |
| Fishelson | FISZELSON |
| Flantzman | FLANCMAN |
| Flax | FLAKS |
| Flerstein | FLERSZTAJN |
| Fleschler | FLESZLER |
| Freid | FRAJD |
| Friedland | FRYDLAND |
| Friedling | FRYDLING |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CELNIK | Zelnick | Friedman | FRYDMAN | ENGELBERG | | Klutz | KLUCZ |
| CHAJT | Chait | Frim | FRYM | ENGIELSBERG | | Knaidel | KNAJDEL |
| CHERCT | Cherst | Frimmer | FRYMER | EPSZTAJN | Epstein | Koenig | KIENIG |
| CHMILARPS ? | | Frisch | FRISZ | ERBESFELD | Arbesfeld | Koeniger | KIENIGIER |
| CHOWET | | Fuchs | FUKS | ERLICH | | Kornmass | KORNMAC |
| CIMERMAN | Zimmerman | Glaiman | GLAJMAN | ETKAMAROWICZ | Etkamarowitz | Kraid | KRAJD |
| CING | | Glantz | GLANC | ETUNGER | Ettinger (?) | Krain | KROJN |
| CIPEL | | Goetz | GEC | EWIGKAJT | Ebikeit | Krantz | KRANC |
| CITRIN | | Goldschmid | GOLDSZMID | EYZENSTAL | Eisenstahl | Krieger | KRYGIER |
| COBOL | | Goldschmidt | GOLDSZMIDT | FABRIKANT | | Krockstengel | KROKSZTENGIEL |
| CUKER | Zucker | Goldstein | GOLDSZTAJN | FAJGENBOJM | Feigenbaum | Kropowitz | KROPOWICZ |
| CUKERMAN | Zuckerman | Goldvag | GOLDWAG | FAJLER | Feiler | Krotstinger | KROTSZTYNGER |
| CWARN | Zwarin | Gradstein | GRADSZTAJN | FAJNER | Feiner | Lainwald | LAJNWALD |
| CWERN | Zworyn | Greenbaum | GRYNBAUM | FAJNGOLD | Feingold | Lazarowitz | LEJZOROWICZ |
| CWILICH | Zwillich | Greenbaum | GRYNBOJM | FAJNHOLTZ | Feinholtz | Leichter | LAJCHTER |
| CYMERMAN | Zimmerman | Greenberg | GRYNBERG | FALEK | | Leiter | LAJTER |
| CYNGEL | Zyngel | Greenwald | GRYNWALD | FAREM | | Leiwand | LEJWAND |
| DAJCZ | Deutsch | Grindler | GRYNDLER | FAS | | Lewinstein | LEWINSZTAJN |
| DAJCZKEWAND | Deutschkewand | Griner | GRYNER | FECHER | | Liebel | LIBEL |
| DAJLEWAND | Dailwand | Gutheit | GUTHAJT | FEDER | | Lieberman | LIBERMAN |
| DAJTSZGEWAND | Deutschgewand | Haus | HAUZ | FEFER | | Lifschitz | LIPSZIC |
| DAKYL | | Heit | HAJT | FELDMAN | | Lustigson | LUSTYGZON |
| DEGEN | | Henochowitz | HENOCHOWICZ | FELDSZTAJN | Feldstein | Luxemberg | LUKSEMBERG |
| DIMENT | | Hershenson | HERSZENZON | FELER | | Luxemberg | LUKSENBERG |
| DORFSGAER | | Hershman | HERSZMAN | FELHENDLER | | Mail | MAJL |
| DRESZER | Drescher | Hirsch | HIRSZ | FELLER | | Mail | MEJL |
| DRONG | | Hirsch | HIRSZ | FERSZT | Ferst | Maiman | MAJMAN |
| DYCHTER | Dichter | Hirschson | HERSZSON | FIDLER | | Maisels | MAJZELS |
| DYKER | Dicker | Hirshhorn | HERSZON | FINK | | Mandelbaum | MANDELBOJM |
| DYZENMAN | Diesenman | Hirshhorn | HERSZON | FINKELSZTAJN | Finkelstein | Manzies | MANZYS |
| EDELMAN | | Hirshtengropen | HERSZTENGROPEN | FINKENBERG | | Melding | MELDYING |
| EDELSBERG | | Hirstenraupen | HERSZTENRAUPEN | FINKMAN | | Mendelson | MENDELZON |
| EDELSZTAJN | Edelstein | Horenstein/Gorenstein | HORENSZTAJN | FINKMAN | | Mermelstein | MERMELSZTAJN |
| EDELSZTEJN | Edelstein | Horowitz | HOROWICZ | FINKSZTAJN | Finkstein | Metzler | MECZLER |
| EICHENBLAT | | Kait | KAJT | FINKSZTEJN | Finkstein | Meyer | MEJER |
| EJNES | Eines | Kasch | KASZ | FISZEL | Fishel | Mildiner | MILDYNER |
| EJZENBERG | Eisenberg | Kasche | KASZE | FISZELSON | Fishelson | Miltz | MILC |
| EJZENKOPER | Eisenkopfer | Kasha | KASZA | FLAKCER | | Mintz | MINC |
| EJZENMAN | Eisenman | Katz | KAC | FLAKS | Flax | Mordobitz | MORDOBICZ |
| EKHAUZ | Eckhaus | Kava | KAWA | FLAKSER | | Morgenstern | MORGENSZTERN |
| ELBAUM | | Kay | KAJ | FLANCMAN | Flantzman | Nai | NAJ |
| ELCTER | Eltzter | Kelmanowitz | KELMANOWICZ | FLERSZTAJN | Flerstein | Naierman | NAJERMAN |
| ELGARMEN | | Kinderfreund | KINDERFREJND | FLESZLER | Fleschler | Nirenstein | NIRENSZTAJN |
| ELIASBERG | | Kirschenholtz | KIERSZONHOLTZ | FLUG | | Oberferst | OBERFERSZT |
| ELMAN | | Kleid | KLAJD | FOGIEL | | Oredowitz | OREDOWICZ |
| ELSTER | | Klein | KLAJN | FOLK | | Orenstein | ORENSZTAJN |
| EMER | | Kleiner | KLAJNER | FOREM | | Peretz | PEREC |
| ENDWAJS | Endweiss | Kleit | KLAJT | FRACHTMAN | | Perlyug | PERLJUG |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FRAJD | Freid | Plotz | PLOC | GOLFELD | | Schmayer | SZMAJER |
| FRANK | | Presaien | PRESAJZEN | GORGiEL | | Schmeisser | SZMAJSER |
| FRENKIEL | | Rash | RASZ | GORING | | Schmidt | SZMIT |
| FRIDBERG | | Rash | RASZ | GORTLER | | Schneider | SZNAJDER |
| FRIGLER | | Reiber | RAJBER | GRAD | | Schneider | SZNEJDER |
| FRINDLING | | Reif | RAJF | GRADSZTAJN | Gradstein | Schnitzer | SZNICER |
| FRISZ | Frisch | Reifer | RAJFER | GRAF | | Schnitzer | SZNYCER |
| FROCHTMAN | | Rein | RAJN | GRAUPEN | | Schnur | SZNUR |
| FRUCHTGARTEN | | Reinerman | RAJNER | GROPEN | | Schoeffel | SZOFEL |
| FRUCHTGOFTEN | | Reinerman | RAJNERMAN | GROSBAUM | | Schok | SZOK |
| FRYDLAND | Friedland | Reis | RAJZ | GROSER | | Schuldiner | SZULDYNER |
| FRYDLING | Friedling | Reisfeld | RAJS | GROSMAN | | Schwartz | SZWARC |
| FRYDMAN | Friedman | Reisfeld | RAJSFELD | GROSS | | Schwartzberg | SZWARCBERG |
| FRYM | Frim | Reisman | RAJZMAN | GRUBMAN | | Schwartzbier | SZWARCBIR |
| FRYMER | Frimmer | Reiter | RAJTER | GRUER | | Shaffir | SZAFIR |
| FUDEM | | Ringler | RYNGLER | GRYL | | Shchupak | SZCZUPAK |
| FUKS | Fuchs | Roesch | RYSZ | GRYNBAUM | Greenbaum | Shechtmesser | SZECHTMESSEF |
| FUKSMAN | | Rosen | ROZEN | GRYNBERG | Greenberg | Sheps | SZEPS |
| FUNT | | Rosen | ROZEN | GRYNBOJM | Greenbaum | Shiffer | SZYFER |
| GARDYN | | Rosenbaum | ROZENBAUM | GRYNDLER | Grindler | Shifferman | SZYFERMAN |
| GARFINKEL | | Rosenbaum | ROZENBOJM | GRYNER | Griner | Shifflinger | SZYFLINGIER |
| GASER | | Rosenberg | ROZENBERG | GRYNWALD | Greenwald | Shiffman | SZYFMAN |
| GASSE | | Rosenkrantz | ROZENKRANC | GUBEL | | Shiffris | SZYFRYS |
| GEC | Goetz | Rosenman | ROZENMAN | GUS | | Shilowitz | SZYLEWICZ |
| GELBER | | Rosenstein | ROTENSZTAJN | GUTHAJT | Gutheit | Shmutz | SZMUC |
| GELERNTER | | Rosensweig | ROZENCWAJG | GUTHARTZ | | Shmutz | SZMUTC |
| GELIBTER | | Rosenthal | ROZENTAL | HAJT | Heit | Shore | SZOR |
| GELIBTER | | Rothfeld | ROTFELD | HALPERIN | | Shper | SZPER |
| GERECHT | | Rubinstein | RUBINSZTAJN | HALTMAN | | Shperick | SZPERYK |
| GIBEL | | Rubinstein | RUBINSZTEJN | HANDELMAN | | Shpizeisen | SZPIZAJZEN |
| GILDYNER | | Schaefer | SZAFER | HANDELSMAN | | Shporer | SZPORER |
| GLAJMAN | Glaiman | Scharf | SZARF | HARFEN | | Shrout | SZROJT |
| GLANC | Glantz | Scharr | SZAR | HARTZ | | Shtick | SZTRYK |
| GLIK | | Schatzkammer | SZATZKAMER | HAUZ | Haus | Shtrigler | SZTRYGLER |
| GLIKMAN | | Scheck | SZEK | HECHT | | Shuch | SZUCH |
| GLOMB | | Scheer | SZEER | HECHTKOPF | | Shulman | SZULMAN |
| GOL | | Scheer | SZYR | HELFMAN | | Shyewitz | SZAJUWICZ |
| GOLD | | Scheinbaum | SZAJNBAUM | HELLER | | Siegel | ZIGIEL |
| GOLDBAUM | | Scher | SZER | HENOCHOWICZ | Henochowitz | Siegel | ZYGIEL |
| GOLDBERG | | Scherer | SZERER | HERBSMAN | | Silverblatt | ZYLBERBLAT |
| GOLDFELD | | Schieber | SZYBER | HERNHUT | | Silversweig | ZYLBERCWAJG |
| GOLDHAR | | Schlak | SZLAK | HERSZENZON | Hershenson | Singer | ZYNGIER |
| GOLDMAN | | Schlam | SZLAM | HERSZMAN | Hershman | Singerman | ZYNGIERMAN |
| GOLDRAT | | Schleifel | SZLAJFEL | HERSZON | Hirshhorn | Slomowitz | SZLEMOWICZ |
| GOLDSZMID | Goldschmid | Schlitt | SZLIT | HERSZON | Hirshhorn | Sobolschwartz | SOBOLSZWARC |
| GOLDSZMIDT | Goldschmidt | Schlitt | SZLIT | HERSZSON | Hirschson | Spieler | SZPILER |
| GOLDSZTAJN | Goldstein | Schmaltz | SZMALC | HERSZTENGROPEN | Hirshtengropen | Spindel | SZPINDEL |
| GOLDWAG | Goldvag | Schmarak | SZMARAK | HERSZTENRAUPEN | Hirstenraupen | Spiro | SZPIRO |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME |
|---|---|
| HERTZ | |
| HERTZBERG | |
| HERTZMAN | |
| HERYNG | |
| HILF | |
| HIRSZ | Hirsch |
| HIRSZ | Hirsch |
| HOCHMAN | |
| HOLTZ | |
| HOLTZHENDLER | |
| HONIKMAN | |
| HOPENWASER | |
| HOPENWASSER | |
| HORENSZTAJN | Horenstein/Gorenstein |
| HORNFELD | |
| HOROWICZ | Horowitz |
| HUBERMAN | |
| HÜÜTH | |
| INLENDER | |
| INTRAUB | |
| JOCHWED | Yochwed |
| JUCHT | Yucht |
| JUNGMAN | Youngman |
| KAC | Katz |
| KAHAN | |
| KAJ | Kay |
| KAJT | Kait |
| KANER | |
| KANIGOR | |
| KAPE | |
| KARETA | |
| KARP | |
| KARPER | |
| KASTEL | |
| KASZ | Kasch |
| KASZA | Kasha |
| KASZE | Kasche |
| KAWA | Kava |
| KELICH | |
| KELMANOWICZ | Kelmanowitz |
| KELNER | |
| KELNOR | |
| KESTNER | |
| KIENIG | Koenig |
| KIENIGIER | Koeniger |
| KIERBIS | |
| KIERBYS | |
| KIERSZONHOLTZ | Kirschenholtz |

| G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME |
|---|---|
| Springer | SZPRYNGIER |
| Stab | SZTAB |
| Stahlheim | SZTALHAJM |
| Stancer | SZTANCER |
| Stang | SZTANG |
| Starker | SZTARKIER |
| Starkman | SZTARKMAN |
| Steinberg | SZTAJNBERG |
| Steinfeld | SZTAJNFELD |
| Steinmarder | SZTEJNMARDER |
| Steinsaltz | SZTAJNZALC |
| Steinsberg | SZTAJNSBERG |
| Steren | SZTEREN |
| Sterenberg | SZTERENBERG |
| Stern | SZTERN |
| Sternberg | SZTERNBERG |
| Sternblitz | SZTERNBLIC |
| Stetler | SZTETLER |
| Stich | SZTYCH |
| Stop | SZTOP |
| Story | SZTROJ |
| Strach | SZTRACH |
| Strasberg | SZTRAZBERG |
| Strazh | SZTRAJ |
| Studen | SZTUDEN |
| Tafstein | TAFSZTAJN |
| Tempeldiener | TEMPELDYNER |
| Treyman | TREJMAN |
| Uradowitz | URADOWICZ |
| Waremstein | WAREMSZTAJN |
| Weinberg | WAJNBERG |
| Weinblatt | WAJNBLAT |
| Weintraub | WAJNTRAUB |
| Weiss | WAJS |
| Weissman | WAJSMAN |
| Weitz | WAJC |
| Weitzman | WAJCMAN |
| Welcher | WELCZER |
| Wetstein | WETSZTAJN |
| Yochwed | JOCHWED |
| Youngman | JUNGMAN |
| Yucht | JUCHT |
| Zaidel | ZAJDEL |
| Zaltstein | ZALCSZTAJN |
| Zaltzman | ZALCMAN |
| Zederbaum | CEDERBAUM |
| Zeiden | ZAJDEN |
| Zeidenschnur | ZAJDENSZNUR |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME |
|---|---|
| KIESEL | |
| KINDERFREJND | Kinderfreund |
| KISTENBERG | |
| KLAJD | Kleid |
| KLAJN | Klein |
| KLAJNER | Kleiner |
| KLAJT | Kleit |
| KLARMAN | |
| KLIGIER | |
| KLINGIEL | |
| KLUCZ | Klutz |
| KLUG | |
| KLUPFER | |
| KNAJDEL | Knaidel |
| KOCH | |
| KOEL | |
| KOLB | |
| KOPELMAN | |
| KORB | |
| KORMAS | |
| KORN | |
| KORNBLIT | |
| KORNMAC | Kornmass |
| KOS | |
| KOTLER | |
| KOZA | |
| KOZES | |
| KRAJD | Kraid |
| KRAKOWSKI | |
| KRANC | Krantz |
| KRELMAN | |
| KROJN | Krain |
| KROKSZTENGIEL | Krockstengel |
| KRONFELD | |
| KROPOWICZ | Kropowitz |
| KROTSZTYNGER | Krotstinger |
| KRUG | |
| KRUK | |
| KRYGIER | Krieger |
| KUPER | |
| KUPERSZTAJN | Cooperstein |
| KUPERWASSER | Cooperwasser |
| KUPFER | Cooper |
| KUPFERSZTAJN | Cooperstein |
| KUPFERSZTEJN | Cooperstein |
| LAJCHTER | Leichter |
| LAJNWALD | Lainwald |
| LAJTER | Leiter |

| G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME |
|---|---|
| Zeidler | ZAJDLER |
| Zeidner | ZAJDNER |
| Zeidweber | ZAJDWEBER |
| Zeiten | ZAJTEN |
| Zelnick | CELNIK |
| Zetz | ZEC |
| Zetz | ZETC |
| Zetz | ZETZ |
| Zimmerman | CIMERMAN |
| Zimmerman | CYMERMAN |
| Zimmerman | ZYMERMAN |
| Zisbrenner | ZYSBRENER |
| Ziss | ZYS |
| Zisser | ZYSER |
| Zisserman | ZYSERMAN |
| Zitman | ZYTMAN |
| Zitz | ZYC |
| Zitzer | ZYCER |
| Zitzer | ZYTCER |
| Zucker | CUKER |
| Zuckerman | CUKERMAN |
| Zwarin | CWARN |
| Zwillich | CWILICH |
| Zworyn | CWERN |
| Zyngel | CYNGEL |
| | ADLER |
| | ADLERFLIGIEL |
| | AFTEL |
| | ALTBERG |
| | AUFZER |
| | BABAT |
| | BADEN |
| | BADLER |
| | BAL |
| | BART |
| | BASIOR |
| | BECHER |
| | BER |
| | BERGER |
| | BERGERBAUM |
| | BERMAN |
| | BERNAD |
| | BERNFELD |
| | BIDERMAN |
| | BIN |
| | BIRKAN |
| | BIRMAN |
| | BIRN |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LAK | | | BLACHARSKI | MALLER | | | FABRIKANT |
| LANCIL | | | BLANK | MAN | | | FALEK |
| LANDAU | | | BLAT | MANCHAJM | | | FAREM |
| LANDER | | | BLAZER | MANDEL | | | FAS |
| LANEL | | | BLECH | MANDELBAUM | | | FECHER |
| LAST | | | BLECHMAN | MANDELBERG | | | FEDER |
| LAUF | | | BLIOMEL | MANDELBOJM | Mandelbaum | | FEFER |
| LAZER | | | BLOCH | MANDELSBERG | | | FELDMAN |
| LEDER | | | BLON | MANDELTORT | | | FELER |
| LEJWAND | Leiwand | | BLUM | MANZYS | Manzies | | FELHENDLER |
| LEJZOROWICZ | Lazarowitz | | BODNER | MARDER | | | FELLER |
| LEMER | | | BON | MARGULES | | | FIDLER |
| LERBUCH | | | BORAK | MARGULIES | | | FINK |
| LERER | | | BORG | MECZLER | Metzler | | FINKENBERG |
| LERNER | | | BRAND | MED | | | FINKMAN |
| LEW | | | BRENER | MEJER | Meyer | | FINKMAN |
| LEWIN | | | BRINKER | MEJL | Mail | | FLAKCER |
| LEWINBAUM | | | BROND | MEKLER | | | FLAKSER |
| LEWINER | | | BRONFENBRENER | MEL | | | FLUG |
| LEWINKOPER | | | BRONGURG | MELDYING | Melding | | FOGIEL |
| LEWINSON | | | BRUKER | MENDELSON | | | FOLK |
| LEWINSON | | | BUBES | MENDELZON | Mendelson | | FOREM |
| LEWINSZTAJN | Lewinstein | | BUCH | MER | | | FRACHTMAN |
| LEWINT | | | BUG | MERMELSZTAJN | Mermelstein | | FRANK |
| LEWITA | | | BYK | MERZER | | | FRENKIEL |
| LIBEL | Liebel | | CHMILARPS ? | MESER | | | FRIDBERG |
| LIBERMAN | Lieberman | | CHOWET | MESSER | | | FRIGLER |
| LICHT | | | CING | MET | | | FRINDLING |
| LICHTFELD | | | CIPEL | MILC | Miltz | | FROCHTMAN |
| LICHTMAN | | | CITRIN | MILDYNER | Mildiner | | FRUCHTGARTEI |
| LICHTZON | | | COBOL | MILECH | | | FRUCHTGOFTEI |
| LILIENFELD | | | DAKYL | MILER | | | FUDEM |
| LINK | | | DEGEN | MILICH | | | FUKSMAN |
| LION | | | DIMENT | MINC | Mintz | | FUNT |
| LIPSZIC | Lifschitz | | DORFSGAER | MITAG | | | GARDYN |
| LUBLINER | | | DRONG | MITAK | | | GARFINKEL |
| LUFT | | | EDELMAN | MITELPUNKT | | | GASER |
| LUKSEMBERG | Luxemberg | | EDELSBERG | MITWOL | | | GASSE |
| LUKSENBERG | Luxemberg | | EICHENBLAT | MONTAG | | | GELBER |
| LURIE | | | ELBAUM | MORDAU | | | GELERNTER |
| LUSTYGZON | Lustigson | | ELGARMEN | MORDOBICZ | Mordobitz | | GELIBTER |
| MAGIEL | | | ELIASBERG | MORGENSZTERN | Morgenstern | | GELIBTER |
| MAGIEN | | | ELMAN | MOSKAL | | | GERECHT |
| MAILER | | | ELSTER | MOZMAN | | | GIBEL |
| MAJL | Mail | | EMER | MYDLARZ | | | GILDYNER |
| MAJMAN | Maiman | | ENGELBERG | NABEL | | | GLIK |
| MAJZELS | Maisels | | ENGIELSBERG | NACHTMAN | | | GLIKMAN |
| MALER | | | ERLICH | NADLER | | | GLOMB |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NAJ | Nai | | GOL | RASZ | Rash | | HOPENWASSER |
| NAJERMAN | Naierman | | GOLD | RAT | | | HORNFELD |
| NATURMAN | | | GOLDBAUM | RENDLER | | | HUBERMAN |
| NEMLICH | | | GOLDBERG | RENER | | | HÜÜTH |
| NETEL | | | GOLDFELD | RINGLER | | | INLENDER |
| NIR | | | GOLDHAR | ROCHFELD | | | INTRAUB |
| NIR | | | GOLDMAN | ROCHMAN | | | KAHAN |
| NIRENSZTAJN | Nirenstein | | GOLDRAT | ROFELD | | | KANER |
| NUDEL | | | GOLFELD | ROK | | | KANIGOR |
| OBERFERSZT | Oberferst | | GORGiEL | ROSENFELD | | | KAPE |
| OBERROTMAN | | | GORING | ROSS | | | KARETA |
| ORBUCH | | | GORTLER | ROTBLAT | | | KARP |
| ORBUCH | | | GRAD | ROTENSZTAJN | Rosenstein | | KARPER |
| OREDOWICZ | Oredowitz | | GRAF | ROTFELD | Rothfeld | | KASTEL |
| ORENSZTAJN | Orenstein | | GRAUPEN | ROTHOLTZ | | | KELICH |
| OSIPOW | | | GROPEN | ROZEN | Rosen | | KELNER |
| PAPIR | | | GROSBAUM | ROZEN | Rosen | | KELNOR |
| PARGAMENT | | | GROSER | ROZENBAUM | Rosenbaum | | KESTNER |
| PAROL | | | GROSMAN | ROZENBERG | Rosenberg | | KIERBIS |
| PASKOGURSKI | | | GROSS | ROZENBOJM | Rosenbaum | | KIERBYS |
| PEKLER | | | GRUBMAN | ROZENCWAJG | Rosensweig | | KIESEL |
| PENTELNIK | | | GRUER | ROZENFELD | | | KISTENBERG |
| PEREC | Peretz | | GRYL | ROZENKRANC | Rosenkrantz | | KLARMAN |
| PEREL | | | GUBEL | ROZENMAN | Rosenman | | KLIGIER |
| PERLJUG | Perlyug | | GUS | ROZENTAL | Rosenthal | | KLINGIEL |
| PEST | | | GUTHARTZ | RUB | | | KLUG |
| PIDLER | | | HALPERIN | RUBIN | | | KLUPFER |
| PIK | | | HALTMAN | RUBINSZTAJN | Rubinstein | | KOCH |
| PLOC | Plotz | | HANDELMAN | RUBINSZTEJN | Rubinstein | | KOEL |
| PRESAJZEN | Presaien | | HANDELSMAN | RUF | | | KOLB |
| PRIMER | | | HARFEN | RYBAK | | | KOPELMAN |
| PUTER | | | HARTZ | RYNGLER | Ringler | | KORB |
| PUTERMAN | | | HECHT | RYSZ | Roesch | | KORMAS |
| RACHMAN | | | HECHTKOPF | SAFIANLEDER | | | KORN |
| RACHWELD | | | HELFMAN | SEGEN | | | KORNBLIT |
| RAJBER | Reiber | | HELLER | SOBEL | | | KOS |
| RAJF | Reif | | HERBSMAN | SOBOL | | | KOTLER |
| RAJFER | Reifer | | HERNHUT | SOBOLSZWARC | Sobolschwartz | | KOZA |
| RAJN | Rein | | HERTZ | SOROKA | | | KOZES |
| RAJNER | Reinerman | | HERTZBERG | SOROKO | | | KRAKOWSKI |
| RAJNERMAN | Reinerman | | HERTZMAN | SPODEK | | | KRELMAN |
| RAJS | Reisfeld | | HERYNG | SROKA | | | KRONFELD |
| RAJSFELD | Reisfeld | | HILF | SUCHTMESSER | | | KRUG |
| RAJTER | Reiter | | HOCHMAN | SZAFER | Schaefer | | KRUK |
| RAJZ | Reis | | HOLTZ | SZAFIR | Shaffir | | KUPER |
| RAJZMAN | Reisman | | HOLTZHENDLER | SZAJNBAUM | Scheinbaum | | LAK |
| RAPAPORT | | | HONIKMAN | SZAJUWICZ | Shyewitz | | LANCIL |
| RASZ | Rash | | HOPENWASER | SZAR | Scharr | | LANDAU |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SZARF | Scharf | | LANDER | SZTARKMAN | Starkman | | MER |
| SZATZKAMER | Schatzkammer | | LANEL | SZTEJNMARDER | Steinmarder | | MERZER |
| SZCZUPAK | Shchupak | | LAST | SZTEREN | Steren | | MESER |
| SZECHTMESSER | Shechtmesser | | LAUF | SZTERENBERG | Sterenberg | | MESSER |
| SZEER | Scheer | | LAZER | SZTERN | Stern | | MET |
| SZEK | Scheck | | LEDER | SZTERNBERG | Sternberg | | MILECH |
| SZEPS | Sheps | | LEMER | SZTERNBLIC | Sternblitz | | MILER |
| SZER | Scher | | LERBUCH | SZTETLER | Stetler | | MILICH |
| SZERER | Scherer | | LERER | SZTOP | Stop | | MITAG |
| SZLAJFEL | Schleifel | | LERNER | SZTRACH | Strach | | MITAK |
| SZLAK | Schlak | | LEW | SZTRAJ | Strazh | | MITELPUNKT |
| SZLAM | Schlam | | LEWIN | SZTRAZBERG | Strasberg | | MITWOL |
| SZLEMOWICZ | Slomowitz | | LEWINBAUM | SZTROJ | Story | | MONTAG |
| SZLIT | Schlitt | | LEWINER | SZTRYGLER | Shtrigler | | MORDAU |
| SZLIT | Schlitt | | LEWINKOPER | SZTRYK | Shtick | | MOSKAL |
| SZMAJER | Schmayer | | LEWINSON | SZTUDEN | Studen | | MOZMAN |
| SZMAJSER | Schmeisser | | LEWINSON | SZTYCH | Stich | | MYDLARZ |
| SZMALC | Schmaltz | | LEWINT | SZUCH | Shuch | | NABEL |
| SZMARAK | Schmarak | | LEWITA | SZULDYNER | Schuldiner | | NACHTMAN |
| SZMIT | Schmidt | | LICHT | SZULMAN | Shulman | | NADLER |
| SZMUC | Shmutz | | LICHTFELD | SZWARC | Schwartz | | NATURMAN |
| SZMUTC | Shmutz | | LICHTMAN | SZWARCBERG | Schwartzberg | | NEMLICH |
| SZNAJDER | Schneider | | LICHTZON | SZWARCBIR | Schwartzbier | | NETEL |
| SZNEJDER | Schneider | | LILIENFELD | SZYBER | Schieber | | NIR |
| SZNICER | Schnitzer | | LINK | SZYFER | Shiffer | | NIR |
| SZNUR | Schnur | | LION | SZYFERMAN | Shifferman | | NUDEL |
| SZNYCER | Schnitzer | | LUBLINER | SZYFLINGIER | Shifflinger | | OBERROTMAN |
| SZOFEL | Schoeffel | | LUFT | SZYFMAN | Shiffman | | ORBUCH |
| SZOK | Schok | | LURIE | SZYFRYS | Shiffris | | ORBUCH |
| SZOR | Shore | | MAGIEL | SZYLEWICZ | Shilowitz | | OSIPOW |
| SZPER | Shper | | MAGIEN | SZYR | Scheer | | PAPIR |
| SZPERYK | Shperick | | MAILER | TAFSZTAJN | Tafstein | | PARGAMENT |
| SZPILER | Spieler | | MALER | TARG | | | PAROL |
| SZPINDEL | Spindel | | MALLER | TAU | | | PASKOGURSKI |
| SZPIRO | Spiro | | MAN | TAUBENBLAT | | | PEKLER |
| SZPIZAJZEN | Shpizeisen | | MANCHAJM | TEMPELDYNER | Tempeldiener | | PENTELNIK |
| SZPORER | Shporer | | MANDEL | TENENBAUM | | | PEREL |
| SZPRYNGIER | Springer | | MANDELBAUM | TEPER | | | PEST |
| SZROJT | Shrout | | MANDELBERG | TETELBAUM | | | PIDLER |
| SZTAB | Stab | | MANDELSBERG | TOBERMAN | | | PIK |
| SZTAJNBERG | Steinberg | | MANDELTORT | TOP | | | PRIMER |
| SZTAJNFELD | Steinfeld | | MARDER | TOPERMAN | | | PUTER |
| SZTAJNSBERG | Steinsberg | | MARGULES | TOPF | | | PUTERMAN |
| SZTAJNZALC | Steinsaltz | | MARGULIES | TOPOR | | | RACHMAN |
| SZTALHAJM | Stahlheim | | MED | TOREM | | | RACHWELD |
| SZTANCER | Stancer | | MEKLER | TOREM | | | RAPAPORT |
| SZTANG | Stang | | MEL | TOTENGREBER | | | RAT |
| SZTARKIER | Starker | | MENDELSON | TREJMAN | Treyman | | RENDLER |

| POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | POLISH SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | G-E SURNAME | POLISH SURNA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TULKOPER | | | RENER | ZALCMAN | Zaltzman | | UZDANSKI |
| TULKOPF | | | RINGLER | ZALCSZTAJN | Zaltstein | | WACHLER |
| ULRICH | | | ROCHFELD | ZALICHCER | | | WACHS |
| UNCYG | | | ROCHMAN | ZALLER | | | WACHTER |
| UNGIER | | | ROFELD | ZEC | Zetz | | WAGNER |
| UNTERNEMER | | | ROK | ZEGAN | | | WAHL |
| UNTERRECHT | | | ROSENFELD | ZEKSER | | | WAHLER |
| URADOWICZ | Uradowitz | | ROSS | ZETC | Zetz | | WALTMAN |
| URBACH | | | ROTBLAT | ZETZ | Zetz | | WASERTREGER |
| URFIRER | | | ROTHOLTZ | ZIGIEL | Siegel | | WECHER |
| URFIRER | | | ROZENFELD | ZOBERMAN | | | WECHTER |
| UZDANSKI | | | RUB | ZOMBERG | | | WEKSLER |
| WACHLER | | | RUBIN | ZUMERMAN | | | WERNER |
| WACHS | | | RUF | ZYC | Zitz | | WERTMAN |
| WACHTER | | | RYBAK | ZYCER | Zitzer | | WILDER |
| WAGNER | | | SAFIANLEDER | ZYGIEL | Siegel | | WOLF |
| WAHL | | | SEGEN | ZYLBERBLAT | Silverblatt | | WOLFENFELD |
| WAHLER | | | SOBEL | ZYLBERCWAJG | Silversweig | | WOLFNER |
| WAJC | Weitz | | SOBOL | ZYMERMAN | Zimmerman | | ZAGAN |
| WAJCMAN | Weitzman | | SOROKA | ZYNGIER | Singer | | ZAKSER |
| WAJNBERG | Weinberg | | SOROKO | ZYNGIERMAN | Singerman | | ZALICHCER |
| WAJNBLAT | Weinblatt | | SPODEK | ZYS | Ziss | | ZALLER |
| WAJNTRAUB | Weintraub | | SROKA | ZYSBRENER | Zisbrenner | | ZEGAN |
| WAJS | Weiss | | SUCHTMESSER | ZYSER | Zisser | | ZEKSER |
| WAJSMAN | Weissman | | TARG | ZYSERMAN | Zisserman | | ZOBERMAN |
| WALTMAN | | | TAU | ZYTCER | Zitzer | | ZOMBERG |
| WAREMSZTAJN | Waremstein | | TAUBENBLAT | ZYTMAN | Zitman | | ZUMERMAN |
| WASERTREGER | | | TENENBAUM | | | | |
| WECHER | | | TEPER | | | | |
| WECHTER | | | TETELBAUM | | | | |
| WEKSLER | | | TOBERMAN | | | | |
| WELCZER | Welcher | | TOP | | | | |
| WERNER | | | TOPERMAN | | | | |
| WERTMAN | | | TOPF | | | | |
| WETSZTAJN | Wetstein | | TOPOR | | | | |
| WILDER | | | TOREM | | | | |
| WOLF | | | TOREM | | | | |
| WOLFENFELD | | | TOTENGREBER | | | | |
| WOLFNER | | | TULKOPER | | | | |
| ZAGAN | | | TULKOPF | | | | |
| ZAJDEL | Zaidel | | ULRICH | | | | |
| ZAJDEN | Zeiden | | UNCYG | | | | |
| ZAJDENSZNUR | Zeidenschnur | | UNGIER | | | | |
| ZAJDLER | Zeidler | | UNTERNEMER | | | | |
| ZAJDNER | Zeidner | | UNTERRECHT | | | | |
| ZAJDWEBER | Zeidweber | | URBACH | | | | |
| ZAJTEN | Zeiten | | URFIRER | | | | |
| ZAKSER | | | URFIRER | | | | |