

THE HOLOCAUST OF THE JEWS IN ZHOVKVA



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THE HOLOCAUST OF THE JEWS IN ZHOVKVA

The Jews, mostly from Lviv, received residence rights in 1600 and various other privileges throughout the 17th century. Despite a destructive fire in 1645 the community grew to 270 households by 1680. In the 18th century the Jews were engaged in the international trade and the town became an important center of Jewish printing. The «Catholic reaction» in the Polish Kingdom of the mid-18th century led to the imposition of certain restrictions on the Jews, adding a heavy financial toll in addition to increasing taxation. The period of Austrian rule (1772-1918) brought economic stagnation with a particularly heavy tax burden. Most of the Jewish houses were destroyed in fire in 1833. Neither the revolutionary spirit of 1848 nor the achievement of equal rights for the Jews of Galicia in 1867-1868 could revive the community whose population showed no growth from the late-19th century level of around 4,000 (approaching 50% of the total) right up to the eve of WWII. In the first half of the 19th century the community was a stronghold of the *Mitnaggedim*, but in the second half Belz Hasidism came to the fore. The town was also a leading center of Haskala. Nagman Krochmal, one of the founders of the Galician movement, resided in the town from 1798 to 1836. Together with Hasidim its proponents put up effective resistance to the budding Zionist movement. Most of the Jews fled from the town with the approach of the Russians in August 1914, returning only with the Austrians in May 1915. The postwar period, which saw an increase in Zionist influence, brought little alleviation of the economic plight of the Jews, 70% of whom were receiving aid from the Joint Distribution Committee.

On the eighth day of the war, on June 29, 1941 the Nazi occupied Zhovkva. They worked along with Sonderkommando «4 - a and 4 - b» which had to destroy the population «disloyal» to the new «owners». The day of 29 June was for Zhovkva Jews the beginning of the final stage of the Nazi policy of total physical destruction, regarded by the Germans as the «final solution of the Jewish question». After capturing the town the occupants began to establish a «new order».

Jews, who were suspected of cooperation with the Communists, were shot without trial, because the struggle against Bolshevism, according to the leaders of the Reich, demanded ruthless and energetic actions. So, in the first days of the occupation were arrested sisters Haberman, subsequently deported to Rava- Ruska and shot there. The Lebvol's were also killed because of two older daughters who managed to escape before the war and took active part in the activities of the local Communist party.

From the first days of the occupation the inhabitants of Zhovkva learned that their neighbors- the Jews are «non-Aryans». The German plan of extermination was held in two directions. The first was the systematic and organized execution of Jewish Communists and then murder of all other Jews; the second one was spontaneous destruction of local population. The reason for such interventions in the first days of occupation was executions of prisoners in the prison of the NKVD in the last days of June, when the red army retreated. The corpses of the victims were found in Zhovkva prison. Those who killed and tortured managed to escape, but most of the Jews who were mainly far from politics were charged with the murders, mass collaboration with the Communists. The Germans found in the local prison bodies of the local people (26 Ukrainians and 4 poles), tortured by the NKVD. However, the complete destruction was not held because the curfew was imposed for the inhabitants of the city at six in the evening.

In the first weeks of the occupation, when the authority belonged to the Wehrmacht (German army) the Germans held up Jews for free labor for cleaning the town, repairing roads and for their own need. To avoid victims, in early July 1941, the informal Jewish Committee was established, consisting of three persons: Shloser, Sobel and Shtrih. Its main task was to supply workers to the German authorities in the specified quantity. Members of the Committee understood that the refusal from employment can lead to the strengthening of terror. On July 22, 1941 the Jewish Council was established. The Judenrat was the executive body of the German administration among the Jews who had to obey the officials of German police and SS. The staff of the Judenrat included: Febus Rubenfeld – chairman, Abraham Shtrih, Philip Chachkes, Nathan Akffel, Sender Lifshitz, Osiam

Chachkes, Israel Shapiro... Before the occupation the members of the Judenrat were famous people, enjoyed great authority among their countrymen and took active part in public life of the Jewish community. However, from the very beginning they knew that they were kept as hostages and were not considered as members of the public, because the Judenrat had to execute criminal orders of the occupying authority.

Noteworthy is the fact that when the Judenrat was established Jewish police (Ornungsdienst) was still unknown phenomenon for the Jews. It was headed by the member of the Judenrat F. Chachkes. It consisted of 18 people that had to supply workers for the Wehrmacht and keep order in the Jewish block. The Jewish police was not given firearms. It was armed only with rubber sticks. According to the testimony of S. Lainer the police had special form: dark coats and caps (hats). Thanks to the ability of the Judenrat members to negotiate with the German authorities, the local police, the Gestapo from Lviv, Zhovkva Jews avoided mass repression in the first year of occupation. It can partially explain the fact that «action» of destruction (late 1942 – early 1943) was held in Zhovkva much later than in other cities of the future district.

On August 1, 1941 the Galicia district (Lviv, Drohobych, Stanislav and Ternopil' region) was included into the Polish General-Government (GG). Civil administration was established there. For the Jews it meant only a move from spontaneous murders to a consecutive extermination according to the guidelines issued by Himmler's office. According to the published order of the Governor-General, G. Frank, all anti-Jewish laws that had already functioned in GG, were extended to the newly formed district. The Jews were outlawed and deprived of all political and civil rights. Now the authorities could «legally» rob, force them to do any labor service, deport them to other places, humiliate and even kill them.

As a result of the introduced civil administration the «Landkommissar» Rockendorf arrived to Zhovkva on permanent appointment. The gendarmerie was headed by Katger and Pappen became the SS Sturmführer in the town. Along with the German police the Ukrainian police was also organized to provide the general

order and security in the district. It had to participate in the Nazi raids against the Jewish population as well.

The first order of the new leadership of the Jewish community was to make a contribution of 250 thousand karbovanets' into the local bank, 5 kg of gold and 110 kg of silver which was to be gathered during three days till August, 3 1941. To repay this amount the occupants arrested a large group of the Jewish intellectuals, including 70-year-old doctors A. Weiss and R. Patrontash, the lawyers U. Yost, M. Hary, L. Patrontash, N. Shlayen, S. Livshyts, A. Goldman, S. Turk, G. Nissenbaum, as well as the head of the Judenrat Dr. F. Rubinfeld - about 200 people and declared them hostages: if the contribution was not paid within the appointed period, the occupation authorities would organize a punitive action. The occupants released F. Rubinfeld to acquaint the rest of the community with those requirements. Panic and fear fell upon the Jews; everyone was in a hurry to bring in any amount of money, a valuable golden or silver thing to the Judenrat. The local population also helped somehow in such cases.

A Roman-Catholic priest sent a large sum of money to the Jewish Committee that collected contributions. That deed was met by the Jews with much gratitude; the authorities, unlike the similar events in Lviv, released the hostages after all. After collecting the contribution, public holy places were destroyed, especially the synagogue (the destruction of which was accompanied by the burning of thousands of ancient books, Torah scrolls, the old Jewish literature folios, priceless manuscripts, pincas etc.) and the cemetery. It was striking that the Jews (members of the Judenrat funeral bureau, the Jews from the working teams that existed in every district centre) had been forced to participate in it under threat of execution. Their activity was observed by members of the Jewish order police or several SS soldiers.

The Jews were not permitted to walk on pavements. They could only move along the roadway and had to wear a badge of shame. Every Jew aged 12 was obliged to wear on the right hand a white ribbon 8-10 cm wide with the David's star on it. Police hour for the Jews began at five o'clock in the afternoon. During definite hours (from 10 to 12) the Jews could buy food at the town market. The Jews suspected of the communist activity were arrested and executed without trial.

Since August 7, 1941 the Jews of the Galicia district were under the so-called compulsory obligation according to the decree of October 26, 1939. Every day all the Jews aged from 14 to 60 had to gather at the Judenrat, where they were supposed to get some work. In addition to daily given work the Jews were constantly employed at the railway station (loaded and unloaded wagons), involved in construction of roads and its repair, growing vegetables for reichsgermans in private factories and cooperatives which had belonged to them before the war. According to the active order, each adult resident of the town was obliged to carry along an identity card with the photograph, the so-called «Kennkarte» with the data about their place of residence, work, personal description with fingerprints. Nationality was indicated with large letters (for the Jews it was the letter «J» written on the yellow card).

For the solution of «employment problems» during June-August 1941 in the Galicia district 9 forced labor camps were created for the Jews. Economic considerations of the civil administration had become an obstacle to the widespread extermination of the local Jewish population of the Galician lands in the first half of 1941 (while on the rest of the territory of Ukraine about 450 thousand Jews were already killed). The Jews were the majority of craftsmen as well as a significant percentage of pharmacists of the region. Their replacement was not a matter of one day. The mechanism of the «final solution of the Jewish question» required the concentration of population on isolated territory which had to serve as a gathering place for the Jews convicted on death. According to the order of the police General Krieger in Krakow (November 1, 1942) that place should be a closed ghetto.

In the beginning of December in 1942 such ghetto was organized in Zhovkva. The newly created ghetto covered streets Sobieskyi (now – Zaporizka), Peres (now non-existing), Reich (now non-existing), Snytserskyi (now – V. Stus), the left side of the Dominican square (now – Konovalets' Square), and the left side of Turynets'ka (now – B. Khmel'nyts'kyi). Life in the ghetto is one of the most tragic pages in the history of Zhovkva Jews who were divided into many social strata and groups. The differentiation was carried out by the

working capacity criteria on «privileged» and just «not necessary». The first category included specialists in engineering, crafts and medicine. Individual privileges were given to workers of military and civilian companies that belonged to the Germans, workers of firms who worked for the army, officials of the Judenrat. The second category consisted of people of free professions but among them there were those that had «hard inquiries to work», which guaranteed them life at certain times. There were those that had no certificates or place of work, but could «get it on paper», having certain material means. The first victims of those deportations to labor camps were the Jews who had neither job nor money to buy a fake certificate. Soon after the closed ghetto creation the epidemic typhus spread among prisoners. That was caused by terrible insanitary conditions and excessive concentration of the Jews in the houses. The living conditions were extremely severe. In spite of the payment of mandatory tax, the Jews were forced to live in a number of 5-9 persons in one room. This situation was caused by the fact that all the Jews from nearby villages had been relocated to the Zhovkva ghetto. Due to epidemic typhus, 10 - 15 Jews died daily. The gravediggers had no time to bury corpses.

The next murderous aspect after Judenrats and ghettos were the so-called «actions». At first individual when only an «unproductive element» of the ghetto was deported (until March 1942). After a while there were mass removal to the death camp in Belzec (since the beginning of March till December 1, 1942), and finally the ghetto liquidation actions. The Belzec Station was located on the territory of Poland, in the south-east from Tomashuv-Lubelskyi. In autumn of 1941 special parts of the Sonderkommand «4-A» organized a camp for extermination of people in gas chambers. The camp operated from November 1941 to June 30, 1943. On the territory of 6 hectares there were premises where people were killed. The camp was surrounded by triple barbed electric wire and connected to the railway branch on which trains with people arrived. It was impossible to escape from the camp. During the existence of this death conveyor about 450 thousand Jews were murdered.

In early 1942 according to the requirements of the German authorities immediately before the deportations the labor departments

announced a new registration of the Jewish population (at that time according to register bureau of Zhovkva there were 4.686 Jews (44%) out of total 10.653 inhabitants). The Jews had to be examined by a medical commission that had to witness their capacity to work and divide them into three categories: 1) category «A» – «absolutely healthy» capable of heavy physical work; 2) category «B» – «healthy»; 3) category «C» – «unable for physical labor». As a result of this examination a card index was ordered. A lot of healthy Jews, hoping to avoid excessive physical labor by giving bribes to a district doctor, were included to the «C» category. They did not even know that they had themselves signed their own death sentence.

On March 15, 1942 the Gestapo summoned the Judenrat members to Zhovkva castle and arrested them, requiring the file and the lists of the persons belonging to the category «C». The Gestapo commandant assured the Judenrat members that the deported Jews would not be hurt and they were said to go to dry Pinski swamps. After that the schutz-policemen together with the Jewish police detained about 700 unemployed Jews. When the «seekers» did not find them in their houses, they took instead members of their families. As this action was carried just before Pesach many Jews took matzah, fearing that on a new location they would not be able to cook anything. As it became known later, matzah was of no use to them, because they were deported to Belzec as absolutely unnecessary to the Reich people. They were exterminated in the gas chambers.

On November 22, on Sunday, the second extensive action of mass extermination of Zhovkva Jews was in progress. The Gestapo, schutz-policemen and Ukrainian police surrounded the Jewish town block. They were dressed in the military form – helmets, automatic rifles with grenades, axes to crash shelters etc. Having no trust in the local Jewish police, the German authorities of the town invited Jewish guards from Lviv for «a probation». The campaign had lasted for two days and 2.5 thousand men, women and children were seized. All of them were kept in Zhovkva castle for two days without food and water. On November 23, Monday the prisoners were delivered to the railway station, loaded on house cars and transported to Belzec where

they were poisoned with gas. Hundreds of Jews were killed during the very action, hundreds of them – during loading into the wagons. At the station Zhovkva more than 800 Jews were killed, brought to the Jewish cemetery and buried there.

March and November actions (about 3.200 Jews were killed) showed that the Nazis deliberately pursued the Holocaust policy which had been officially agreed upon by the higher officials of Reich on January 20, 1942 in Wannsee near Berlin as «the final solution of the Jewish question». This decision included the isolation of Jews, deprivation of their civil and human rights, physical exploitation, looting, forced labor, deportation and ultimately mass extermination.

Raids, murders and deportations did not stop during the end of 1942 – the beginning of 1943. At that time some significant changes occurred in the management structure of the Jewish labor forces in the ghetto. The labor department was given to the SS and the Gestapo. They also controlled all workshops, utility industrial enterprises where Zhovkva Jews were employed. The German authorities, preparing a new campaign, spread the rumor that the local ghetto soon would turn «The Jewish camp» into a labor one where all the Jews would be employed, and therefore there would be no threat to their existence. In early March 1943 it was planned to make a new registration of all the ghetto inhabitants. Those who worked at military enterprises could get a new identity with a specified letter «W» (Wehrmacht-armed forces), and those that were involved in enterprises, serving the army offices – an identity with a letter «R» (Rüstungswerke). The Lviv Commission of the SS members that had arrived at the Castle on March 15, 1943 had to carry out an examination of the Jewish workers and give them new identity cards. For better supervision over the work organization and order the German authorities demanded from the Judenrat to increase temporarily a number of the Jewish police members from 18 to 50.

On March 15 at 10 a.m. the head of the German gendarmerie Katger reported the Judenrat on the arrival of the Lviv Commission and ordered all the Jews to gather at the «Sokil» stadium (now – the town stadium). The caught Jews were immediately surrounded by the German and Ukrainian police. At 11 o'clock the SS members arrived

at the stadium from Yanovsky camp, headed by the SS General Katzman – Vilhaus, Kolianko, Sillar, Henisch, Brombaner. The chief of Yanovsky camp Vilhaus ordered the Jews to leave the stadium territory and get into trucks. The process of loading of the Jews was accompanied by beating and disrespect. The Judenrat members, Jewish police and highly skilled craftsmen were not subjected to removal (deportation). However, Katger was convinced that a number of «the privileged» was too large. That's why he proposed Vilhaus to take away «a new staff» of 32 Jewish policemen whose task to keep order at the «Sokil» stadium was over. On the same day a vehicle with 618 Jews from Zhovkva arrived at the Yanovsky camp where they were registered and their property was «nationalized». By the words of the direct participant of these events Leiner, they took away his golden watch which he had received from his father the day before. His father hoped that this valuable thing would help his son to avoid deportation to the camp.

The deported Zhovkva Jews were included to different camp brigades. Some of them remained in Yanovsky camp, the rest were relocated to Yagellonskyi (a town where there was one of the branches of Yanovsky camp, headed by Kolianko). The others were taken to a forced labor camp in Velyki Mosty which existed until May 10, 1943. In spring in 1943 Population Census was carried out on request of the German authorities. According to its data the population included 11.325 people: the Ukrainians were 3.257, the Poles – 1.254, the Germans – 600, the Jews – 6.214. The Jewish population, though have been taken out in a number of two thousand people to Belzec, did not decrease in overall number because of the arrival of rich Jews from all over Galicia to Zhovkva. They thought that the Zhovkva Jews would be in one piece. The Polish historian T. Berenshtein calculated that since the formation of ghettos and until their liquidation 600 Jews from Kulykiv and 1270 from Velyki Mosty had arrived at the town.

After the deportation to Yanovsky camp Zhovkva ghetto people were overwhelmed with sheer panic. The Jews expected the next campaign every day. On March 15 almost all able-bodied men were taken away and only the women and children stayed in the ghetto. Life in the ghetto was completely demoralized. One of its residents Genia

describes it in a letter dated March 10, 1943 in the following way: «The situation is hopeless, we all (the Jews) are sentenced to death, but don't know when the sentence will be executed. We can expect it any minute and second. The chase is going on without interruption and in such a fast rate we are forcibly put to tombs (some alive). It's terrible to be conscious that every minute the same thing waits for me and my closest friends or relatives but we are yearning to live».

The expected catastrophe occurred on March 25, 1943. In the morning the ghetto was surrounded by the Gestapo, armed with automatic rifles and axes to break down barracks and shelters. In order not to waste bullets the Nazis murdered patients with axes and smashed babies' heads against walls. The witnesses from the local population told that after the campaign the ghetto houses walls were red with blood, corpses were scattered around the floor and were hanging on a wire around it. 3,500 arrested Jews were concentrated in the Dominican square. Then they were taken out in the woods outside the town, shot and buried in three pits that had been dug in the morning by the Jewish workers before the campaign. The execution in the forest was carried out in the following way: the nude Jews were lined above open graves, then they were ordered one by one to stand on single boards in front of the graves so that when killed people losing their balance immediately would find themselves in a ready-dug pit. There were the cases when injured or only very stunned Jews fell into the pit alive and died under dead bodies that fell on them .

Apart from the Jews that had been killed in the woods outside the town, about 100 men of working-age and young women, being trafficked to Yanovsky camp were seized. It should be noted that the Jewish women from Zhovkva were the first who had been placed in specially built barracks, starting the female camp. After the campaign around 70 highly skilled workers, the Judenrat members (several of them were hung for the «unfair» execution of orders of Dornfeld, Glaser, Sherman), remained in the ghetto, as well as the Jewish order service that was soon also liquidated. One night the Nazis gathered them to call the roll, put them on trucks, took them out of the town and shot them. After these events Zhovkva ghetto borders were limited to two streets – Peres and Sobieskyi. A small group of 50 «vehicle»

refugees that had returned to the ghetto after the 25th of March worked on the railway station, sorted Jewish property stored in the shops. The German authority provided these people with lodgings in one block in Sobieskyi Street that was eliminated on July, 10 1943. The town practically became «Judenfrei» (without the Jewish people).

A group of the Soviet criminalists dealing with the investigation of crimes committed by the Nazis in 1944 in Zhovkva on the basis of witnesses' interrogation determined:

1. 3.380 Jews were deported from Zhovkva to the camps.
2. More than 5,5 thousand Jews were murdered in various ways in the town.
3. The total number of victims included up to 9 thousand Jews
4. In the «Borky» forest outside Zhovkva 5 graves with up to 1 thousand corpses in each were found where 4 thousand people had been buried.
5. In the Jewish cemetery 3 graves with 600 corpses were found.
6. At the railway station 3 graves with 49 bodies were found.



Photo 2. Synagogue in Zhovkva. Photo before 1941.

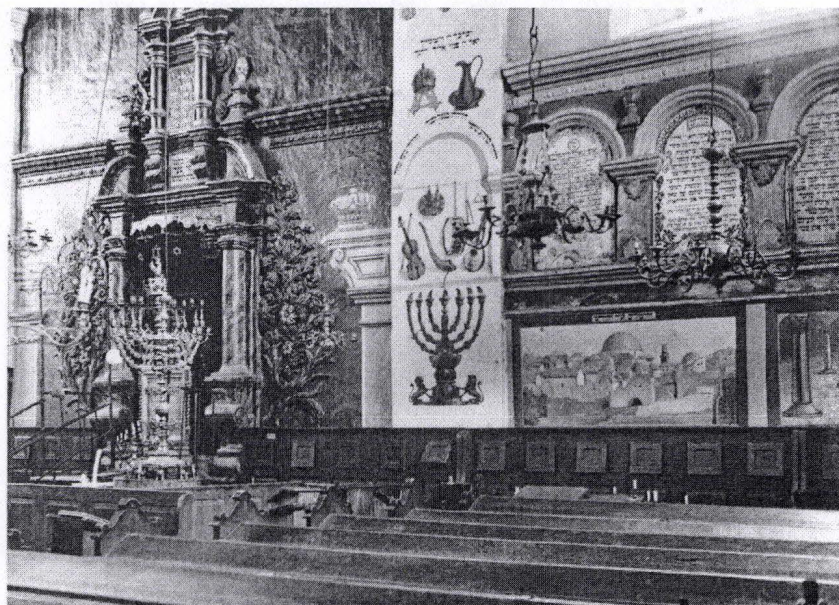


*Photo 3. Main east wall of Zhovkva synagogue.
Photo before the war. P. Vyhopen's collection .*

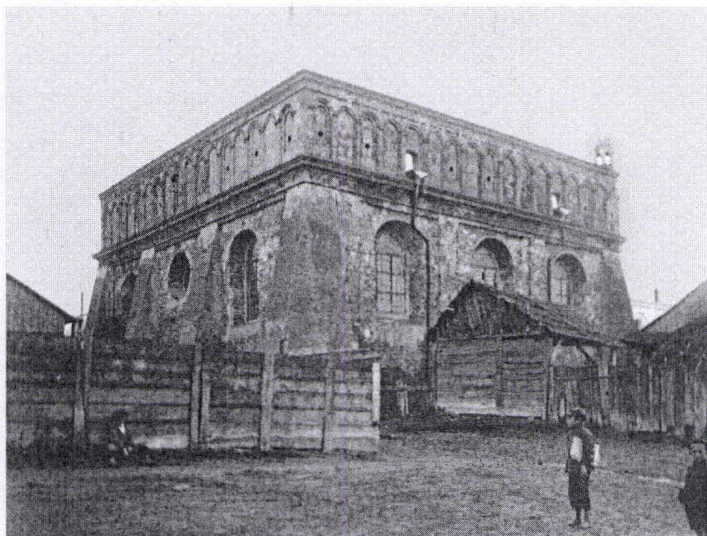


*Photo 4. The northeast aspect of the synagogue.
Photo the 20s of XX century. The National Museum in Lviv.*

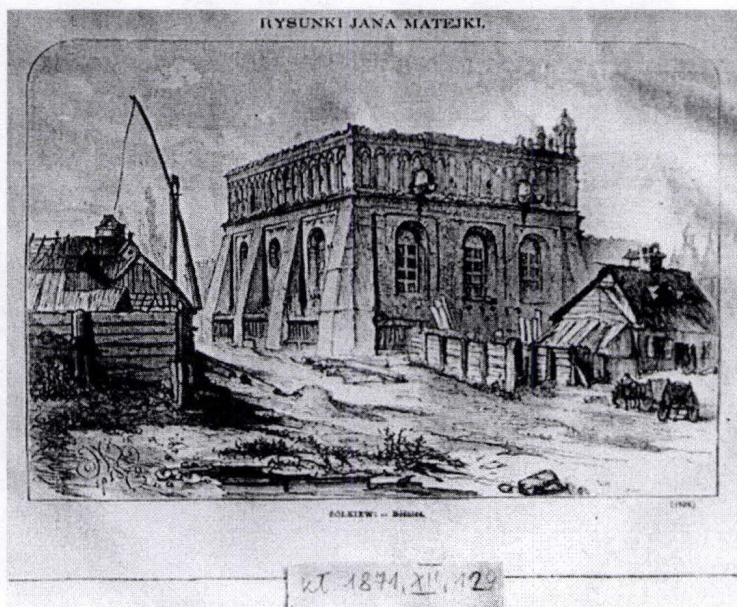


*Photo 5. Synagogue. Picture Yan Matejko, 1871.
Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute № 221E06.*

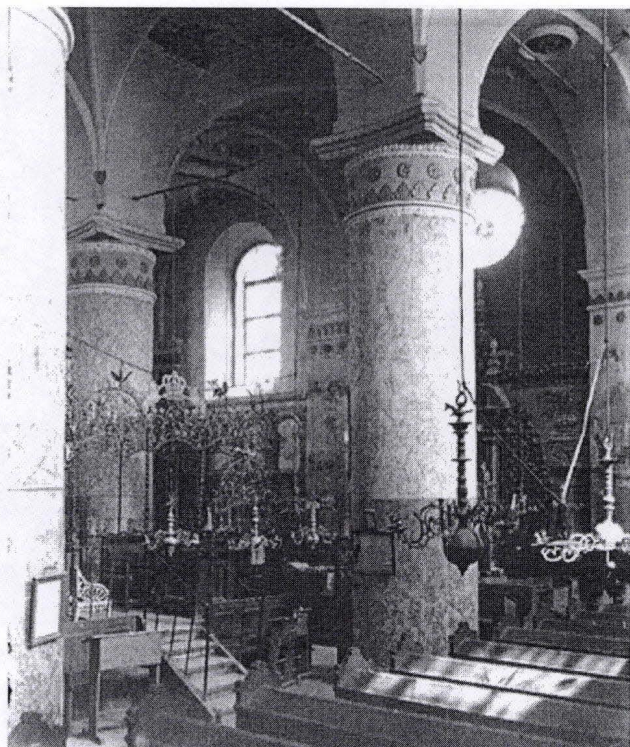


Photo 6. The interior of synagogue in Zhovkva during the period between the wars. Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute №212E05



Photo 7. The Menshes family who were lost in Lviv in 1942. Zhovkva ,1926 Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute №7577/34.



*Photo 8. Photo of the women
of Mensh family before the war.
Photo archives of Yad Vashem
Institute №7577/1*



*Photo 9. Photo of the Jewish girl
before the war. Photo archives of
Yad Vashem Institute №7577/24*



*Photo 10. Group photo of the Jews before 1941. Zhovkva.
Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute №7577/33.*



*Photo 11. Family photo. Zhovkva before 1941.
Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute №7577/23.*



*Photo 12. The territory of the old-time Jewish cemetery in Zhovkva.
Photo archives of Yad Vashem Institute №2919/4.*



*Photo 13. Burning of the Synagogue in Zhovkva by the Nazi in 1941.
(www.bagnowka.com)*



Photo 14. Synagogue in Zhovkva. The western side. Modern aspect.

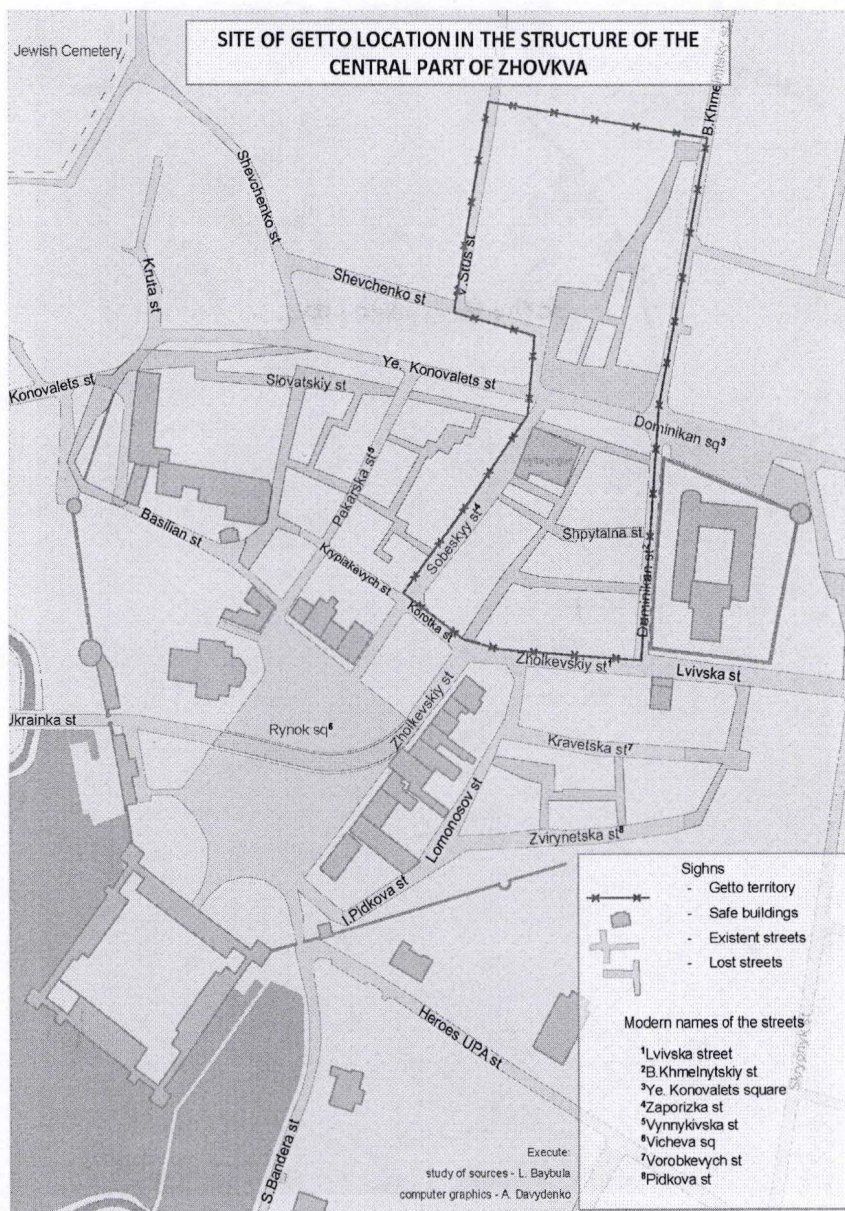


Photo 15. Site of the Getto location in Zhovkva.



*Photo 16. The monument on the modern local cemetery.
I. Kernytskyi: photo, 2013*

This is a detailed street map of downtown Los Angeles, California. The map shows a grid of streets with various landmarks and buildings. Numbered boxes are placed throughout the map:

- Box 1:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 2:** A large rectangular area in the bottom left corner, possibly representing a park or undeveloped land.
- Box 3:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Grand Ave.
- Box 4:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 5:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 6:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 7:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 8:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.
- Box 9:** Located near the intersection of Main St and Hill St.

The map also shows other streets such as Main St, Broadway St, Hill St, Grand Ave, and many others. There are several parks and green spaces indicated by green shading.

- [illegible]

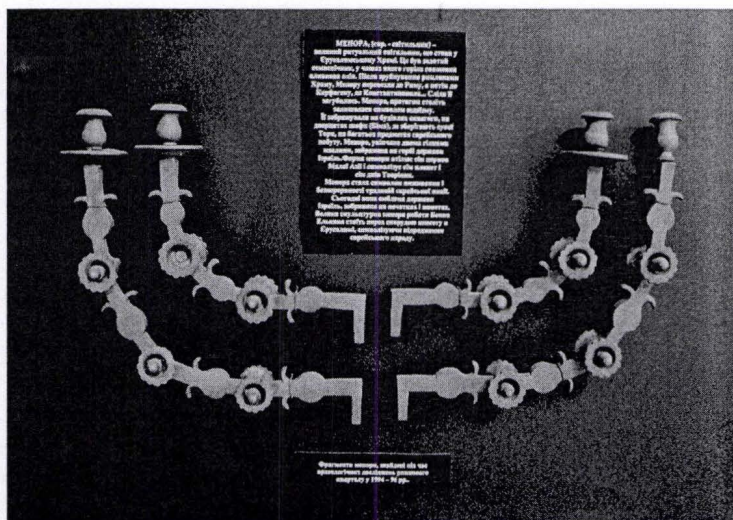


*Photo 18. The fragment of the Jewish candlestick.
1st half of the 20th century. Funds of the State Historical - Architectural
Reserve in Zhovkva. Published for the first time.*



*Photo 19. Tora crown.
Zhovkva, 18th century.
Funds of the Museum
of Ethnography and
Artistic Crafts in Lviv*

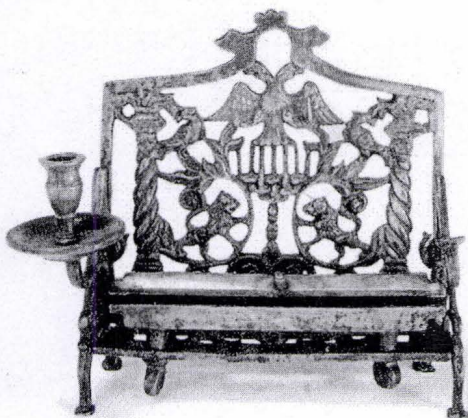


*Photo 20. Hanuka Lamp. Zhovkva, 1797.
Funds of the Museum of Ethnography and
Artistic Crafts in Lviv*



Photo 21. The fragment of the picture «Jew is winding tphilin». Funds of the State Historical Reserve in Zhovkva. Published for the first time.

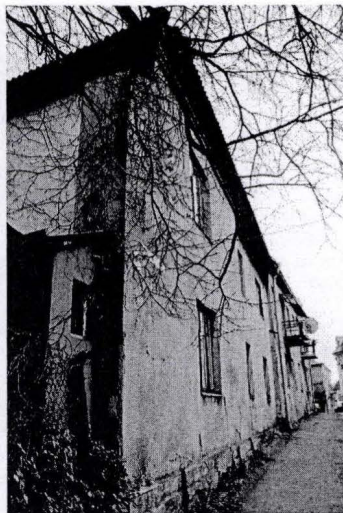


Photo 22. Hasids' Synagogue. Modern aspect. I. Kernytskyi: photo, 2013



Photo 23. Building of heder. Modern aspect. I. Kernytskyi: photo, 2013



Photo 24. Slaughter-house. Photo in 1981



*Photo 25. Slaughter-house. Modern aspect.
I. Kernytskyi: photo, 2013*

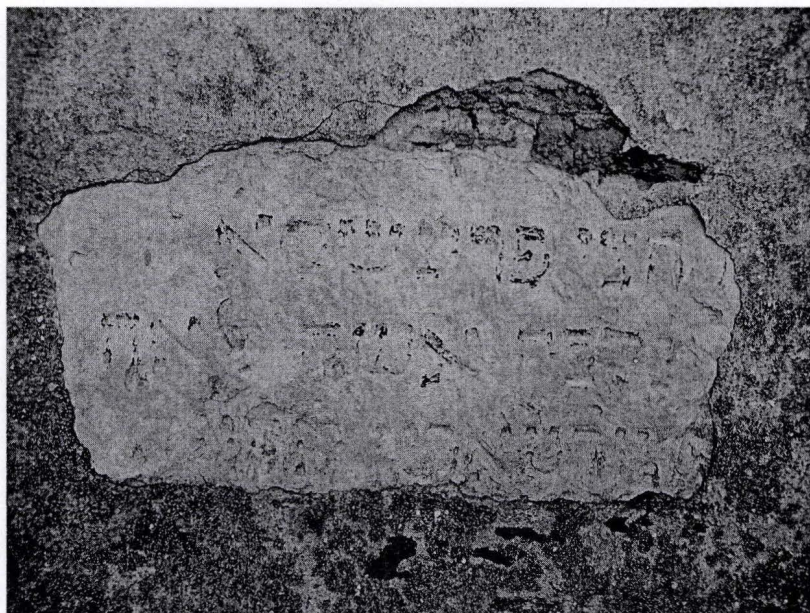


Photo26. The fragment of mazeva in the brick fence of the Jewish cemetery in Zhovkva. L. Baibula: photo, 2007



Photo 27. The brick fence of the Jewish cemetery with Sender Shorr's chapel. L. Baibula: photo, 2007



*Photo 28. Carved Birds House.
Modern aspect. I. Kernytskyi:
photo, 2013*



*Photo 29. Kahal building.
Modern aspect. I. Kernytskyi:
photo, 2013*



*Photo 30. The monument to the
victims of Zhovkva ghetto on the
shooting place.
Photo I. Kernytskyi, 2013*

«WHO SAVES ONE LIFE — SAVES THE WHOLE WORLD» THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS IN ZHOVKVA

The town of Zhovkva has renowned heroes who years saved Jews from inevitable death in the Holocaust. Among them are officially recognized «Righteous among the Nations» as well as unfairly forgotten names of those, whose actions were an expression of personal courage and heroism.

«Who saves one life – saves the whole world» – these words are stamped on the Medal and the Diploma of Honour for the «Righteous among the Nations». Their surnames are also on the Wall of Honour in the Alley of the Righteous of the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. These people were risking their own lives and the lives of their families to save Jews from death during the Nazi occupation.

According to the data of 1 January, 2013 Ukraine takes the honorable fourth place (2472 Righteous), after Poland, the Netherlands and France. In this list there are four people, whose lives are linked with Zhovkva. The first of them is Seneha Katherina (?-1953). In 2004 she saved 8-year-old child Diana Mandal. Before the occupation Katherina had worked as a nanny in Samuel Mandal's family; when the little girl managed to get out of the ghetto before it's liquidation in March 1943, she came to her former nanny. Katherina, understanding that in Zhovkva they are in danger, drove little Diana to her sister to the village near Peremyshl. Not to cause suspicion of her relatives, she said that it was her daughter from a Jewish father. Katja left her little girl in the village and went to work in Peremyshl in order to help the sister feed the family. After liberation Katherina with Diana came back to Zhovkva and lived here during a year. Then Diana left together with other surviving Zhovkva Jews and settled in Luxemburg.

Although the next heroes aren't native residents of Zhovkva, we have to be proud of them because here they spent part of their lives, and were buried here. One of them is Kryvenko Lidia Mylolaivna (1903-

1991) (photo 1). In 1995 she was given the title of the Righteous. During the occupation she lived with her 12-year-old son in Bohoduhiv, Kharkiv region. She hid a Jew Olha Naumovna Brahilovska, a relative of her countrymen, who had lived in Kharkiv before the war. Escaping from Kharkiv Olha came to Lidija in Bohoduhiv (she even didn't know the exact address; she was brought to the home of her saviour by the pupils of Kryvenko Lidija – who worked as a teacher of history in the local school). Here is a fragment of memories of Kryvenko Lidija written in February 1995, kindly provided by her family «...When in Kharkiv the Germans announced Olha's parents went but Olha wasn't let by her friend Alla from Scherhak's family (she was connected with partisans). At the factory nearly 30 thousand Jews were shot. It was decided that she had to go to Ohtyrka, where the relatives or families of Sherhak lived. Olha didn't have any documents. She had to say that she was robbed on the way and all documents – her passport and other things were stolen. She walked to Bohoduhiv, found me and lived here up to the end of 1944. But she needed an identification document. What to do? How to act? And one my acquaintances met me and asked «Who lives with you?» I replied that a relative. And he said: «You had not had her before». I was worried. I decided to go to the commandant. When Olha and I were going to leave, I told my 12-year-old son that if we did not come back he had to go to his grandma. Olia remained in the street and I went to commandant's office. A German teacher was sitting in the reception. I had worked with her for a while in the school. I told her what I needed. She explained the commandant my request, saying that documents were needed for my cousin who had been robbed. He said pointing at me: «Maybe she is a partisan?» But the secretary convinced him that I was a teacher of the local school where she had worked. The commandant allowed to issue an identification card. Maybe, we were lucky? But, obviously, it was our fate in the first hand. So, Olia became Olga Mykolaivna Goncharova and not Olga Naumivna Bragilovski anymore. Of course, if there were someone else, but not a German teacher, it could be worse... That's just the way it happened. What happened next? Olga decided to cross the front line and she succeeded. After the war she comes back to Kharkov where she lives nowadays.»

Two other women a mother and a daughter Mekelyto Zinaida (1900 – 1990) and Tsvirko Lubov (1923 – 2006) received the honorary title «Righteous among the Nations» in Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region. These brave women made a shelter under the floor and during 2,5 years selflessly, putting their own lives at risk, hid four Jews – Murawskyy Boris, Gdalevich Veniamin and two sisters Sichkar.

On Yad Vashem's lists of the Righteous there are five more residents of Zhovkva, they went to neighboring Poland after the war and were listed as representatives of that country.

The first three – the Beks' family: Valentyn, his wife Ulia and daughter Olexandra (photo 2), received the title in 1983 for saving 19 Jews, who were hiding nearly two years under the floor of their house (photo 3,4). We know the story owing to the memories of Clara Schwartz, one of those hiding in the house, who wrote down the story in the USA (now also translated to Polish). Thirteen-year-old Clara on the request of the mother began writing a diary which later becomes the documentary evidence of experienced events. Happy and carefree Clara's childhood ended at the beginning of World War 2. Born in 1927 in Zhovkva she and her younger sister Mania (photo 5) grew up in a rich family of Schwartz – the part-owner of an oil factory. Clara's mother held the house and was actively involved in charitable activities. She also took care of her parents living with her family in their own house opposite the oil factory.

Jewish life of prewar Zhovkva is described as life of a shtetl (in Yiddish it means a small town). «There were a lot of schools, synagogues, charity organisations, clubs and many others societies... Father always repeated, that there were 5,000 Jews with 10,000 views! They were always arguing about something, but despite this our city was something like an oasis of calm in antisemitic Eastern Europe... In Zhovkva there were many political and religious organizations: Zionist, Hasidic, orthodox, communist, Bundist, socialist, etc». All of them stopped their activity with the beginning of Soviet occupation, which lasted for a year. «Grey» regime absolutely changed the life of the town. «The bells of churches were not ringing, Jews were afraid of going to the Synagogue, nobody talked about serious things, and during Sabbath dinner mother closed the curtains on the windows».

The prison in the castle was filled with former officials, polish officers, teachers, politicians and craftsmen.

In April 1940 the deportation to Kazakhstan started. Rich families disappeared during the night one after another.

The Schwartz family was saved from eviction by their mother. She convinced the NKVD workers, who rushed into the house that they came to the wrong address by presenting her family papers were issued for family name Gottliebs. The fact is that religious Jews traditionally did not register their marriage at civil authorities, and so it was the mother's last name that was used in the official documents. Their close family members such as their grandmother and grandfather, aunt and uncle with their families did not avoid eviction. The rooms of the Schwartz family were immediately occupied by the family of Dupak, an NKVD officer. Since that time the former owners spoke only in whisper. Before the German occupation began all Russian newcomers and their families were hastily evacuated. Mandatory mobilization of the male population began. As the red commissars were fleeing to the east, the locals were immediately sent to the front. There were not enough cars so the entire horse transport was expropriated. The city panicked after the rumors had spread that all the political prisoners were brutally murdered by «the reds» before they fled. Therefore the citizens of Zhovkva welcomed the «new» liberators, together with the members of a local Jewish kahal. When Gestapo and SS came to the city, the situation changed dramatically. The Synagogue and the cemetery were ruined. The local Jewish representative body, created by the occupants, had to continually raise funds to pay for valuable presents for the new officials. At the end of 1942 all the Jewish population of Zhovkva was forced into a ghetto that was limited to several streets only and covered the area of a Jewish quarter in the seventeenth century. The so called «final solution of the Jewish question» began. The rescue cost was the cost of the whole estate and had a couple of options: false documents, an escape to Romania or Hungary, where there was no occupation, and, finally, finding a safe refuge. Survival in such circumstances without help from the local Christian population had no chance. This seemed to be a hopeless situation when every day the Nazis killed Jews in ghettos and in the

streets of Zhovkva. Mr. Pawlyuk who worked at the oil factory after the expiration of his imprisonment was the Ukrainian who offered help to the Schwartz family. Clara's father was not willing to endanger the lives of six children of the Pavlyuks family and therefore could not accept that noble offer.

Meyer Schwartz together with Melman and Patrontash decided to dig a hiding place under the floor in Melman's house located outside the ghetto in Lviv suburbs***. This temporary hiding area of 9 square meters and 1.5 m high would serve to three and later five Jewish families as a new apartment for the duration of 18 months. Schwartz managed to persuade Pole Beck to hide in Melman's house who, being a volksdeutsche, had no problems with the government. His wife Julia Beck convinced him to do so. They began their underground life where the living conditions were horrible with lack of oxygen, lack of food, with unbearable summer heat and a piercing cold winter. They had either to lie on straw mattresses or sit. Strong tension and fear shrouded «prisoners» after the room above them had been occupied by the temporary residents, the soldiers of the Wehrmacht and Gestapo. Days and nights they could not move. Everyone realized their chances for survival were tiny. The news «brought» by volksdeutsche Beck mentioned the removal of Jews from the city by trains, forced labor, the situation in the ghetto, cases of extradition of Jews by the locals, etc.

The long-awaited salvation came on June 28, 1944 when the city was liberated by the Red Army troops. Clara wrote in her diary: «There were only fifty left of the five thousands of Jews. No one but us had parents. Many families did not exist, only some remainders were left. All were extremely exhausted, without clothes or houses, without money for food. We could barely move, our feet soared. We weren't used to walking... But we are the fate-chosen.» (photo 6)

Next family – Emil and Mariya Lozynski – were awarded the title of «Righteous among the Nations» in 1999 for the rescue of the Rosenberg family, the couple of Joseph and Agatha (born in 1895) and their daughter Helena (Lütke). Helena's daughter Diana Vyshohrod (photo 7) recorded her mother's memories which were included as a separate chapter in the book «Second Generation Voices: Reflections

***This house with the underground hiding has been preserved to our days.

by the Children of Holocaust Survivors and Perpetrators», which was published in Syracuse in 2001.

Diana writes about the family of her grandmother and grandfather as the middle class representatives, one of the few assimilated Jewish families, who had lived in Zhovkva before the war. The rest had followed traditions. «Jews, she writes, could boast of many specialists, including doctors, lawyers, teachers, pharmacists, one of whom was my grandfather, Joseph Rosenberg». He was a friend of Emil Lozynskyj, who usually spent hours in Rosenberg pharmacy, discussing political news and other everyday things (photo 8). On the eve of another «action» Rosenberg appealed to Lozynskyj with request to help. Having consulted with his wife Mary, he decided to hide Rosenberg family in the basement of his house on the outskirts of the town. So, the Rosenbergs stayed in the basement during the day and at night crept upstairs to their little corner of the house. Then they even couldn't imagine that it would last over 16 months.

Maria Lozynska, who took care of the new cohabitants, was born in Berezhany, as well as Rosenberg couple, before they moved to Zhovkva. She knew little Helenas grandfather, who was a famous lawyer in Berezhany. Mary liked to tell Agatha and Helena about their native city, when they got out of the basement. She remembered a sad story from prewar time: in Berezhany, after the First World War, she had been saving money for a long time and wanted to buy a coat with shining buttons and with fur around the neck. When at last she had gathered necessary sum of money and went with her mother to the shop, she got to know that the coat had been already sold. Mary was very disappointed; especially, when she saw her long-awaited coat on another girl. She remembered her well – it was Agatha. «She recognizes the girl in the coat. She has seen her. Her father is a famous lawyer in the town. Jewess. She was dressed in a white coupling that looked like whipped cream, soft and plump and perfect unlike dark fabrics. She has always been dressed so well. And now she is dressed, too – in her coat». «Unbelievable, – writes Diana, – Mrs Lozynska wanted something, and instead my grandmother got it... she had to be so upset and disappointed and jealous... and then my grandmother appeared in her basement, on her kindness, in her power, after many years... and she rescued her!»

During the study we have found out the facts of rescuing the Jews by local Ukrainian population. Not all of them are officially recognized, but it doesn't minimize their heroic actions and doesn't prevent to call them righteous among the nations of the world. Among them – Anna Slyusar (1919-2005) (photo 9), who was hiding Izaak Shpritsers, who lives now in Brazil. Her daughter willingly gave postwar correspondence of Anna with his wife Manja (photo 10). In letters Shpritsers family calls her a sister, madam, savior. We have learnt that she had given documents of the first husband Stakh Vasyletskyj to Izaak, who had died in 1942. According to the documents Anna grew up with Izaak since childhood, they lived in the neighborhood in the same house. After learning about next «action», she decided to hide Izaak. «He was not alike with other Jews. He had the so-called» Aryan appearance». When the Germans visited her, she said that it was her brother Stakh (Anna dressed him in an embroidered shirt of her dead husband). «When the Germans began to drive the Jews into the ghetto, I sent him to Volyn in a safe place» (interview with Anna Slyusar). Anna was really worried because she understood that her behavior exposed the lives of her parents and a small daughter to danger. In 1944, after liberation of town, Izaak returned to Zhovkva with his young wife (originally from Ivanichi). He said that he wanted to go abroad. While leaving, he asked his saviour to give him her gold wedding ring as he hadn't any money for a long journey. In 1946 he sent a letter and informed that he lived in Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro, thanked her for the wedding ring and told that it had rescued them many times (when they had no money). Anna Slyusar's niece Sachenko Lyubov, who was born in 1936, supplements the story.» We received these statements only in 2008. The respondent said that when the Germans began to take Jews to the ghetto. Mendel Shpritsers asked Anna to give a passport of her dead husband for his only son Izaak. Anna at first was very afraid because she brought up a very little daughter, but after talking with her parents she did it. Everything happened very quickly. So, she didn't have time to think. The photo was stuck into the passport of Anna's husband. Soon his parents died. But Izaak's life was saved – he was hidden in the house of his aunt.

Dovhanyk Lyubov(born 1939) told the story of her mother (Rozaliia Pyrska 1911-1973). Rozaliia was arrested because of the fact that her husband hid Jews in the attic of his house. Mother's sister, whose husband was Polish, knew about that and he told their secret. We were lucky to find the confirmation of this case in the registers of special court which investigated criminal cases against local people. These cases concerned people who were convicted for hiding and helping Jews. The names of informers were absent. It appeared that Rozaliia was arrested on the 18th of June, 1944. She was accused of the fact that she and her husband hid Snaider's couple and their son from January to April 1943. The husband and Jews were not arrested, they were being searched for. The witnesses were Kufner's couple. The wife refuses to admit the guilt because the convicted didn't know that her husband hid Jews in the attic of his house. The things which were sold by Pyrska did not belong to Jews. She had to resell something in order to earn some money for children. Mr. Kufner could not say if Rozaliia was guilty because he did not know the fact if Rozaliia had sold things to feed Jews but he saw her working hard to feed her children. Rozaliia was acquitted because of the absence of evidence. But German authority didn't manage to catch Izaak. He didn't come home after war either. His daughter Lyubov knew nothing about him.

There is one more case recorded in 2008 – from Tkachenko Rehina Ivanivna(born 1937). It's a story about her mother Sobchyshyn (maiden's name Volska) Katerina Mykolaivna (1898-1984) born in the village of Mervychy of Zhovkva district. Her mother was bringing up 6 children. Their father died tragically in oil factory accident in Zhovkva. Head of Altman family, consisting of a young wife, who sold tickets at the cinema, and their little daughter, worked together with him. As Katerina lived not far from the ghetto she managed to keep secretly in touch with the Altmans. She found the hole which had been dug in advance under the wires surrounding the ghetto and drew out a child and then mother. The saviour had to go and draw out the father, but she didn't manage to do it. There was the hugest action the next day. Almost all remaining people were killed in Blyshyvodskii forest on the 25th of March 1943. Nearly 3.5 thousand of Jews were shot there. Katerina had been hiding the escapees – always in the cellar until her

neighbor Gelia informed the police. Fortunately, a mother's Polish acquaintance didn't pass the information to anybody and immediately informed Katerina about the danger. Mother immediately took the children to her brother to the village of Smerekiv (Zhovkva district). She gave her eldest daughter's metric Yanina - Altman's young wife, took her with a little girl by the train to Czestochow, where she left them in a bar at the railway station. In 1946 mother was summoned to the KGB, asking about the citizen of the town Sobchysyn Yanina, who is looking for her. Mother categorically refused, saying that they are not relatives but namesakes (though I knew that it was the Altman's wife). My mother was very afraid, because after the war our family wanted to move to Siberia, were accused of collaboration with the occupiers (my two older sisters worked in landcommissariat) and Jews. We were ready for the long journey, things were packed, but then the trouble passed us in 1946» (Interview with Tkachenko G. I., 2008).

The occupation regime strongly influenced people's behavior. Everyday fear of banning, killings, deportation to Reich turned local population into the potential victims, paralyzed psychologically, exhausted, generated dull indifference to fellow-countrymen. An inhabitant of Zhovkva, Kateryna Zelenyukh, told me how a Jewish woman, an acquaintance of hers, had asked to hide her in a one-room flat of two-storey house, the ground floor of which was occupied by «police office». Then Leiner asked Kateryna to take her to the vegetable garden where the tall maize grew. Kateryna agreed to explain where her vegetable garden was, but she was scared to accompany her neighbor: she was afraid what might happen to her 4-year-old child if she had not come back home (she would be punished for helping Jews).

Such a neutral position was peculiar to most Ukrainians whose main problem was daily survival. It is necessary to mention that this case was not a particular national merit of disgrace of Ukrainians but simply reflected the general manner of behavior of people on the German occupied territory.

At the same time quite a lot of people were able to overcome the banning and propaganda by the invaders. They blocked the way for pogromists and executors and really helped their victims. The

motivation for such help of the local population to the Jews was in different forms, from self-interest enrichment to noble deeds. Only in Galicia 100 people there were executed for helping Jews. It is necessary to acknowledge that the number of people who were hiding Jews and who were not exposed by the occupying authorities were considerably greater. According to witnesses, the information about those who were hiding or helping Jews was not mentioned even among acquaintances or relatives.

It was till recent that little was said about the people who risked their lives, the lives of their family, in the name of their fellowmen, a representative of different ethnoses, different culture, but still their countryman, a neighbor, an acquaintance. Many of these people perished or died. Their deeds were the example of personal bravery which was similar to heroism in the conditions of German occupation when the Ukrainians and the Polish were in danger of execution. That is why both their names and their deeds must be remembered today.

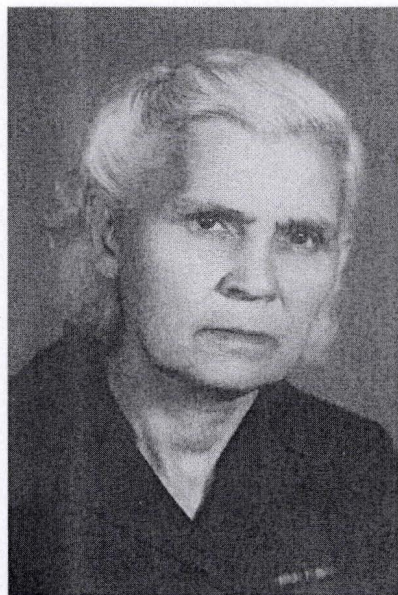


Photo 1. Kryvenchenko Lidiya Mykolayivna (1903 – 1997), in 1995 received the title of «Righteous Among the Nations».



Photo 2. Valentyn Bek.

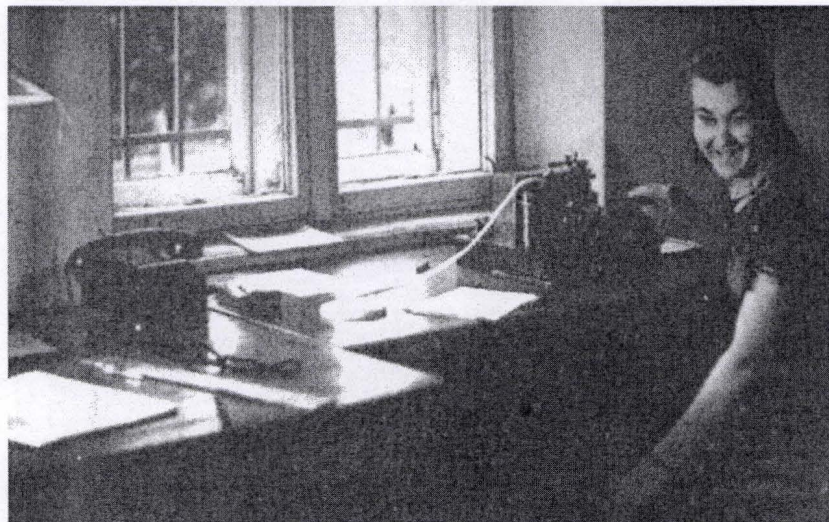


Photo 2. The Beks' family: daughter Oleksandra (Alla).

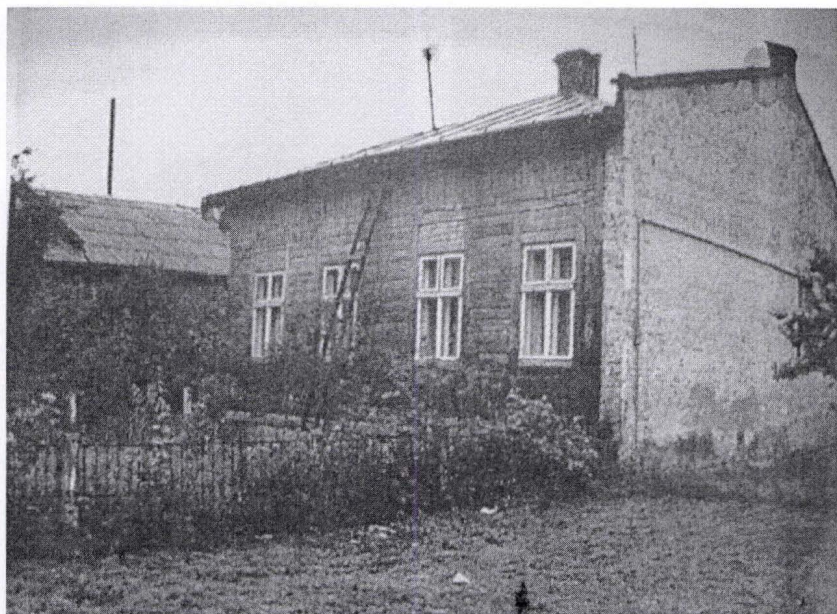


Photo 3. The Melmas' house in the cellar of which 19 Zhovkva Jews were hiding during the occupation. Prewar and modern aspect.

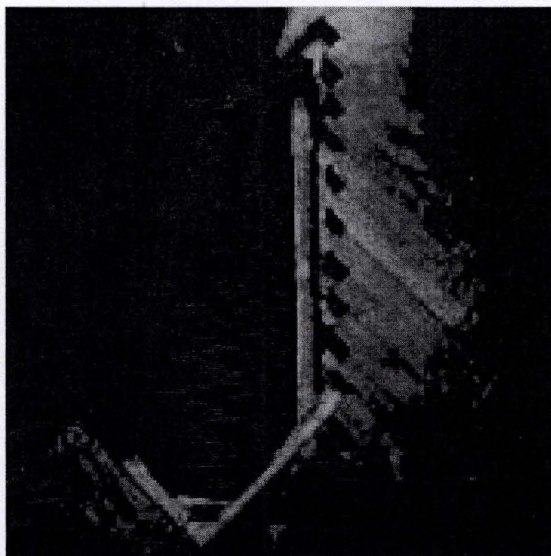
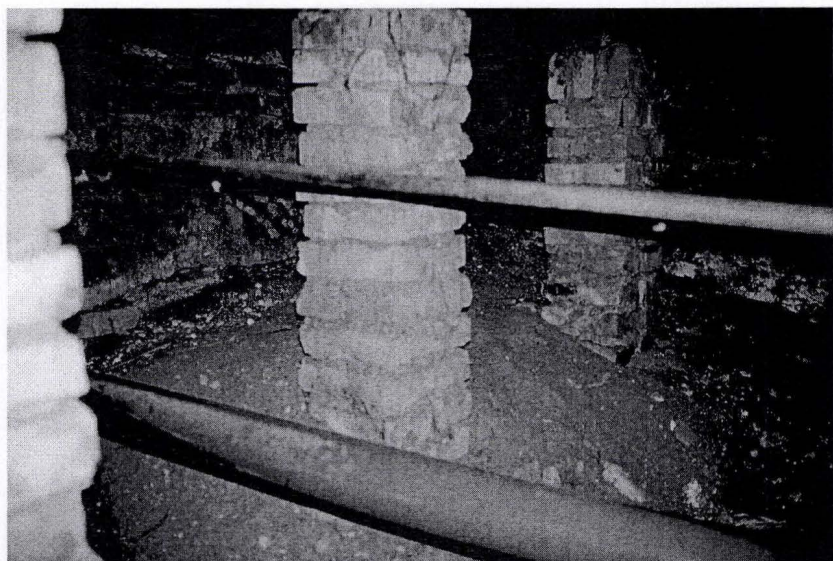


Photo 4. The house cellar (hiding place), height 1.5 m, area 9 sq. m., the entrance to the hiding place from the house room. Modern aspect.



Photo 5. Klara and her sister Mania (1933).



Photo 5. Klara and her sister Manya (1942).

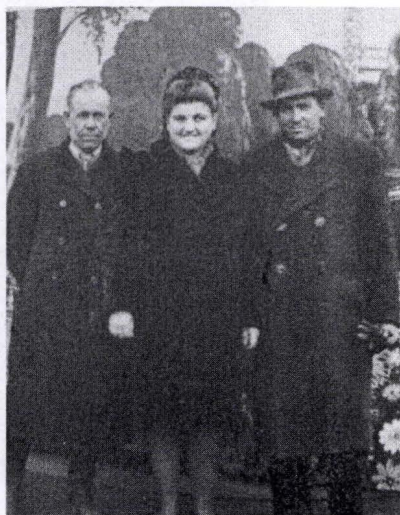


*Photo 6. From left to right:
Valentyn Beck, Klara Schwartz,
Patontash.*



Photo 7. Diane Vyshohrod near her former house. Zhovkva visit, 1995.



Photo 8. From left to right: an unknown policeman, Emil Lozynskyy, Mr Berger, Joseph Rozenberg. The Rozenbergs' pharmacy in Zhovkva. The photo of 1933.



Photo 9. Anna Slusar (1919 – 2005). Hid Isaak Schpritzer, by now not acknowledged as «Righteous».

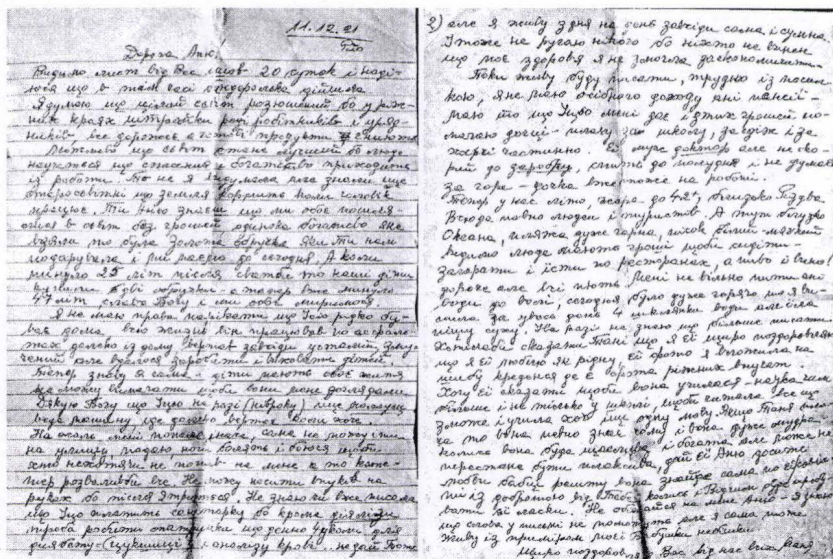


Photo 10. Letter fragment from Rio to Anna Slusar.

