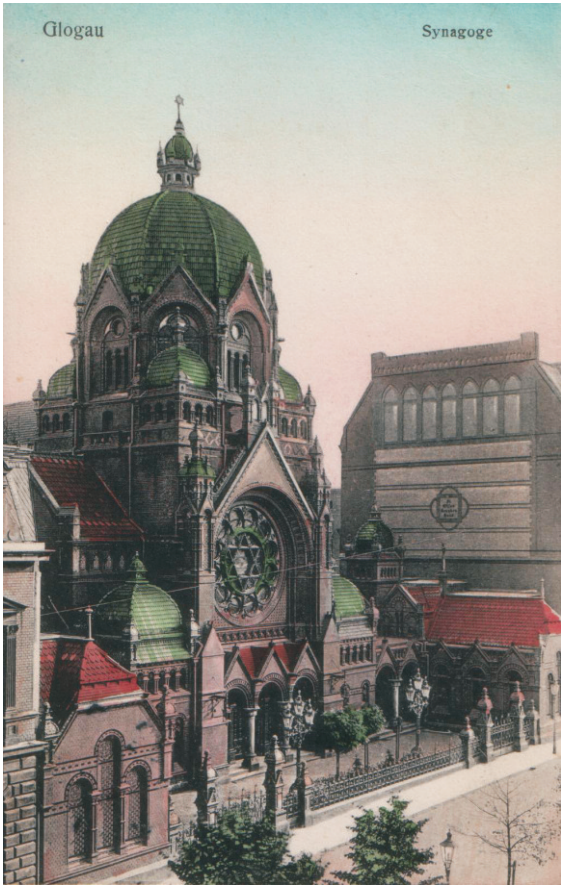

Tamara Włodarczyk

FROM THE HISTORY OF JEWS

in the Legnica region

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From the history of Jews in the Legnica region

Translated by Sylwia Wesołowska-Betkier

Second book in a series entitled "Bits of the History of Jews in Silesia"

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Dear Readers,

We are offering you a highly interesting book by Tamara Włodarczyk, "From the History of Jews in the Legnica Region." The book is the second one in the series about the history of Jews in Silesia published by the Rojt Foundation. The Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ) is the project's partner.

The author has collaborated with the TSKŻ for many years and her articles have been regularly published by the "Słowo Żydowskie" monthly. This is why it gives us even more pleasure to see another publication of hers devoted to a fragment of the history of German and Polish Jews in Lower Silesia. As I come from the city of Wałbrzych in Lower Silesia myself, I appreciate the author's insightful work. Lower Silesia is a region with rich history, not only Jewish one. It is certainly worth looking at Legnica and the towns in its vicinity from the perspective of Jews' fate. An excellent example of the need to hold a discussion on this topic was the World Congress of Jews from Legnica in 2012.

The family histories of Lower Silesian Jews tell us a lot about the history of the Jewish people in a broader context. The best example are these families' descendants, who live across the world and still feel the need to return, at least for a while, to their roots. In the following pages of her book, Tamara Włodarczyk will explain why this is the case.

Have a pleasant read.

Artur Hofman
President of the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ)

From the Author

The book "From the History of Jews in the Legnica Region" is an outcome of my work over more than 10 years for Jewish organizations, a work involving documenting the history of Jews in Lower Silesia* and protecting their heritage there. With time, this activity has turned into a more serious research passion.

When I started to work in 1999 for the Jewish Community in Wrocław little was known about the heritage of German Jews in Lower Silesia, apart from a few exceptions. We were only discovering these stories in the process of painstaking search in archives, libraries and during our field trips when we tried to find the remains of the destroyed synagogues and removed cemeteries. A lot has changed in Poland since that time – many Jewish sites have been excellently restored, old cemeteries have been tidied up, and many publications about the cultural, religious, economic and socio-political traditions of German Jews have come out. The most valuable thing for me personally is that residents of Lower Silesia have themselves become involved in various activities aimed at protecting Jewish material heritage as they consider it to be part of their own cultural legacy. While working on this book I met many such people – members of non-governmental organizations and cultural institutions from Chojnów, Głogów, Lubin, Ścinawa and Złotoryja – for whom the history of Jews and the local Jewish heritage mean a lot today. Among them are the people who protect with great care the last material traces of German Jews – pieces of matzevahs from the now non-existent Jewish cemeteries. Others discover unknown local aspects of Jewish history and take care of cemeteries. I would like to dedicate this book to all of them and thank them for their assistance in preparing the book. I would also like to thank my Jewish mentors who not only helped me discover the world of Polish Jews, but also taught me to understand Jewish religion and culture. I was very lucky to learn Jewish history not only from books, but also through contacts with Lower Silesian Jews – people who confided to me about their life and shared with me the stories that I could never have found in the pages of any publication.

To conclude, I should write about Lower Silesia, my little homeland, which was once a haven for thousands of German and Polish Jews, a Lower Silesia which is shaping its contemporary identity on the basis of a multicultural spiritual heritage in which the Jewish component plays an important role.

Tamara Włodarczyk

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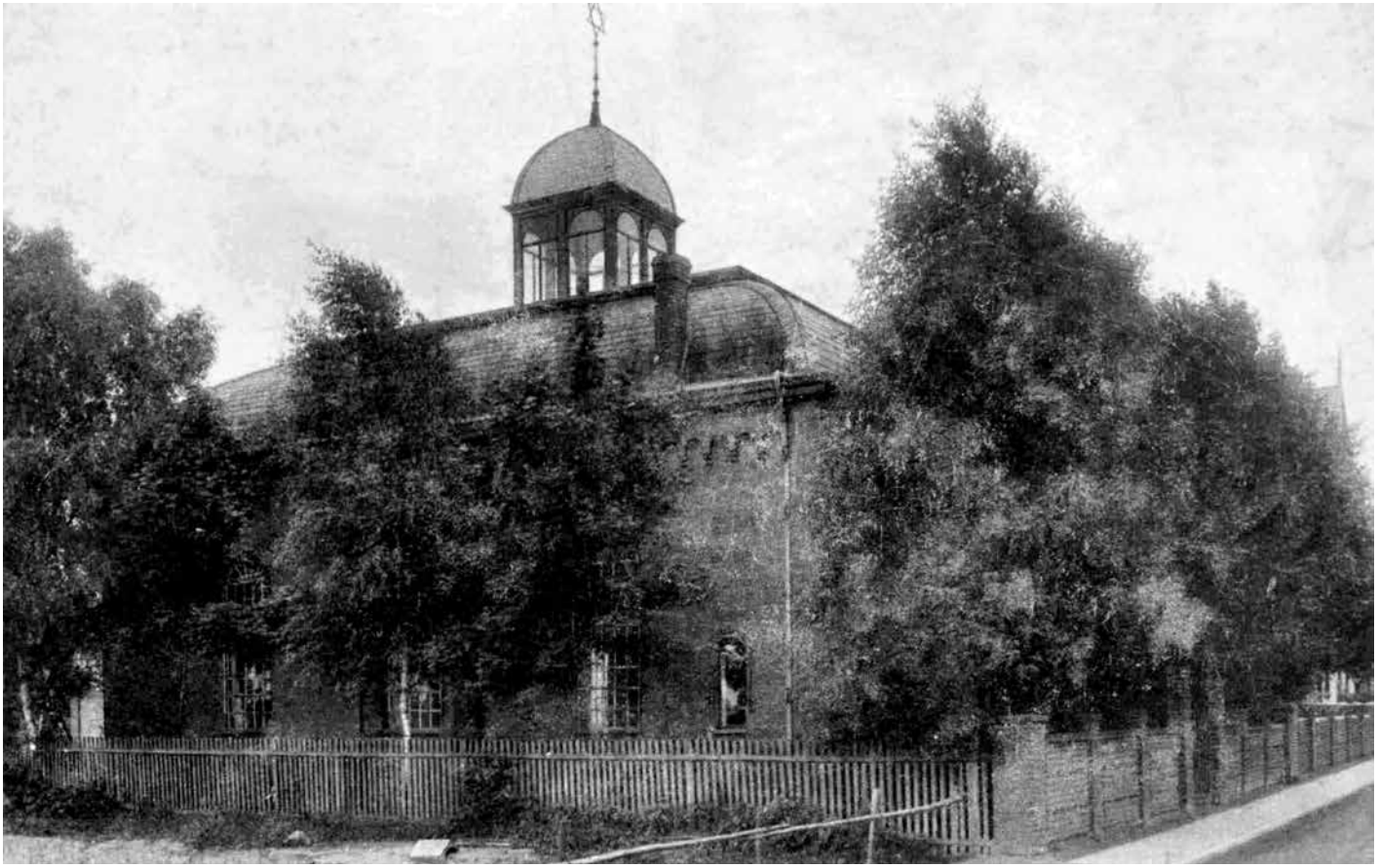
* Before World War II Lower Silesia had been part of Germany, but after the war it was incorporated into Poland. In this connection, German place-names are used in this book when referring to the period before 1945 and Polish names when referring to the period after 1945.

CHOJNÓW / HAYNAU

JEWS IN HAYNAU / CHOJNÓW

Chojnów (German name: Haynau) is one of the Lower Silesian towns where records document the presence of Jews as early as the Middle Ages. According to historical sources, Jews appeared in the town not later than in the 1320s. However, there is no mention proving that the Jewish population was of any significant size at that time.

What is special about Chojnów – as well as many other Lower Silesian towns – is that until World War II



The synagogue in Haynau at the beginning of the 20th century.

it had been inhabited by German Jews, who had their independent Jewish Community, while after the war the town was settled by Polish Jews, most of them relocated from the Soviet Union. The two communities never met – the German Jews had left the town, then called Haynau and part of Germany, in the late 1930s or in the early 1940s while the Polish Jews started to arrive in Chojnów, which became a Polish town, after 1945. There were many aspects which set them apart: nationality, language, culture, attitude to Jewish tradition and the level of affluence. They shared a religion, although the two communities saw its role in their life quite differently.

A symbolic place, playing a major role in the life of the German and Polish Jews in the town, was the synagogue, one of the few which survived the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) pogrom in Lower Silesia. The synagogue was vandalized in the pogrom, but the building survived. The Nazis took it away from the Jewish Community and turned it into a gym for students of a nearby vocational school.

German Jews lived in Haynau without break for around 150 years – from the end of the 18th century until World War II. The town became their little homeland. Several generations of Jews spent their life in the town over this period. They were born here, died here and were buried at one of the two Jewish cemeteries. Polish Jews, who arrived in the town in the mid-1940s as repatriates from the Soviet Union – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan – perceived Chojnów in a completely different way. Firstly, it was not their decision to come to the territories incorporated into Poland after World War II. Secondly, many of them were not going to stay here for long. And even those who, as it initially seemed, wanted to build their new life in Chojnów eventually left the place after several years.

The population of German Jews was never numerous in the town. The biggest number of them – 107 persons – lived here in 1895. Half a century later, just before the Kielce pogrom of July 4, 1946 – in which Polish residents of the city of Kielce killed 42 Jews – there were 1,767 Jewish people living in Chojnów. However, more than 1,000 of them left the town and emigrated within the three months to the end of September 1946 as a result of the panic caused by the pogrom.

Before the war, there was no separate Jewish neighbourhood in Haynau and many of the Jews lived in prestigious parts of the town – in the Market Square (Ring), in Wilhelmsplatz (now Konstytucji 3 Maja Square) and on Parkstrasse (now Mikołaja Reja Street). After the war, the Jewish arrivals to Chojnów were methodically settled on Repatriantów Street (later called Karola Marksa Street and now Wincentego Witosa Street), Tadeusza Kościuszki Street, Kolejowa Street and Edwarda Osóbki-Morawskiego Street (now Wolności Street).

The German Jews did not set up many institutions or organizations in the town. This would have been unjustified, considering that the community was so small. But first of all, there was no need for them to set up Jewish organizations because, as German nationals practicing the Mosaic faith, they used to join German organization. This is why the only Jewish institution in Haynau was the Jewish Community (Synagogen-Gemeinde). It operated since the 1850s and dealt with organizing religious life. The religious life of the German Jews in Haynau was centred around the synagogue built on Schützenstrasse (now Stanisława Małachowskiego Street) by master builder Otto Weikert in the years 1892-1893. Earlier, religious services had been held for 30 years in rented premises – a prayer room on the second floor of a building owned by Mrs. London in the Market Square (Ring 37). The newly constructed synagogue could seat 500 people.

Meanwhile, the institutional life of the Polish Jews looked quite differently. After World War II they set

The TOZ clinic in Chojnów, the second half of the 1940s. Among those pictured is Dr Halina Socharska.

up in Chojnów more than 10 Jewish organizations and institutions – from religious, cultural and educational to social, economic and even political ones. The most important of them was the Jewish Committee. It was established in May 1946 by: Marek Zalcman (chairman), Szalom Ejges (secretary), Leon Lichtenstein and M. Baum.

After 1945 Jewish religious life in Poland was centred in religious associations and then Jewish Religious Congregations. In Chojnów, a congregation started its activity as early as January 1946, before the establishment of a secular committee, which means that religious Jews already lived in the town at that time. The institution had its premises at 4 Stanisława Hozjusza Street (now Tadeusza Rejtana Street) and this is where the first religious services were probably held. Initially, the head of the congregation was Samuel Bezen. He was succeeded by Szymon Lebenbaum. Access to kosher meat was secured for religious Jews, just as before the war. A shochet from Legnica (Liegnitz), J. Hofman, was hired by the congregation to deal with kosher slaughter.

In 1946, the congregation had 150 members, but religious Jews were among the first to emigrate from Poland. Efforts to take over the synagogue were probably made since the very beginning, but it was only in 1947 that the local authorities transferred it to the Jewish Religious Congregation in Chojnów.

Among the Jewish institutions in Chojnów were also educational establishments. The Szalom Alejchem Jewish Primary School was established in the town in June 1946. Its first principal was Wiktor Szenkelbach and the teachers were Golda Bun and Dawid Feller. A major problem was that the children spoke different languages – Russian, Uzbek, some of them Yiddish, but few spoke Polish. A day-care centre for schoolchildren and a Jewish kindergarten managed by Jakub Bronstein, with Rachela Rotblit, Fryda Lederman, Tauba Rajman and Stanisława Szperling as carers, were soon established. The centres provided the children with specialist care and meals. All the establishments for children were located in the building of the Jewish Committee at 4 Stanisława Hozjusza Street (now Tadeusza Rejtana Street).

An advertisement for the P. Jakobi store with men's clothes.

The Society for Health Protection of the Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ) was in charge of medical care. It ran its own clinic, first aid-room and crèche in the building of the Jewish Committee. The crèche was opened in August 1946.

The local branch of the Jewish Association for Culture and Art, which had 65 members in 1946, was involved in cultural activity. There was a theatre group and a choir operating at the branch. The organization also opened a library and a culture centre managed by Zofia Polna. Polish and English language courses for adults were one of the forms of its activity. A Jewish Sports Club (ŻKS Chojnów), with a table tennis, chess and other sections, was set up in the town in February 1947. It was one of the more than 30 such clubs operating in Lower Silesia.

Economic activity was another sphere in which the German Jews and Polish Jews living in the town differed from each other. Among the first were owners of factories and exclusive stores – people belonging to the town's business elite, like for example Siegfried Ohnstein and Leopold Lachmann, who had a plant making mustard and wine vinegar on Parkstrasse (now Mikołaja Reja Street), Eduard Krämer who ran his own wine cellar at number 20 in the Market Square (Ring 20), where one could buy caviar and the famous Rhine wine from the Steinberg vineyard, and David Guttentag, the owner of the store with haberdashery, bedclothes and sewing items at number 24 in the Market Square (Ring 24). The owners of the Ohnstein & Lachmann plant and the merchants Krämer and Guttentag sat on the Board of the Jewish Community in Haynau where there was a property qualification.

Most of the Polish Jews who came to Chojnów had traditional Jewish occupations, which did not give them a chance to find employment. Consequently, it was

An advertisement for the Ohnstein & Lachmann plant in Haynau.

An advertisement for the tailor's shop of Johann Fleischer in Haynau.

necessary for them to acquire new qualifications. One of the Jewish organizations, Society for Handicraft and Agricultural Work among the Jews (ORT), organized such retraining courses. With time, Jewish residents of the town started to find employment in state-run industrial plants and set up their own workshops. However, it was worker cooperatives that played a special role in stimulating the economic activity of Jews. Several of them were set up in Chojnów, including the 19 Kwietnia shoemaker's cooperative, Młot mechanical and metalwork cooperative and Odra soap cooperative at 18 Repatriantów Street (now Wincentego Witosa Street). The most important of them – the Młot cooperative – dealt with installing and repairing agricultural equipment.

The German and Polish Jews also differed greatly in terms of their involvement in politics. Little is known about the political activity of the pre-war Jewish residents of the town. Historical sources contain information that

in the 20th century Siegfried Ohnstein was a town councillor. Meanwhile, after the war at least six Jewish parties and political organizations operated in Chojnów, most of them with a Zionist background: the Jewish Social Democratic Labour Party Poalej Syjon Lewica with the office at 20 Kościuszki Street, Ichud, Hashomer Hatzair, Hitachduth and Hechalutz-Pioneer with an office at 59 Legnicka Street. Among the non-Zionist organizations whose presence was recorded in the town was the Jewish faction of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR). With time, its members started to play an increasingly important role in the Jewish Committee. This busy activity of the Jewish organizations and institutions ended in late 1949 and early 1950 when the Central Committee of Polish Jews (CKŻP), its local committees, and Zionist parties and organizations were dissolved. Since the end of October 1950 the only Jewish secular organization operating in Poland was the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ). No local branch of the association was set up in Chojnów, which means that few Jews remained in the town by that time.

Both communities – the German Jews and Polish Jews – ultimately sought to emigrate from the town. The first group tried to escape the Nazi regime by leaving for Western European countries, the United States and Palestine. The Polish Jews were leaving Poland for numerous reasons – because they did not want to live in a country where the Holocaust had taken place, because of post-war anti-Semitism, a symbol of which was the Kielce pogrom of July 4, 1946, for economic reasons and finally because the State of Israel was established in 1948. For many of them, the stay in Chojnów was only a short stopover on the road to Eretz Israel.

Few Jews remained in Chojnów after 1950. The last ones certainly left with successive waves of emigration – in the second half of the 1950s or after March 1968. There was no longer a single Jewish organization in the town – the nearest ones were located in Legnica (Liegnitz), which was one of the centres of Jewish life in Lower Silesia.

In 1952, the administration of the State Agricultural Schools Complex in Chojnów applied for the right to use the synagogue for the schools' needs – as a gym. The TSKŻ was asked to express its opinion on the issue. In June 1953, the Presidium of the TSKŻ Main Board gave their consent to designating the building for educational purposes. In December, the right to manage and use the synagogue at 3a Komsomolska Street (now Stanisława Małachowskiego Street) in Chojnów was transferred to the principal of the School Complex.

Jewish heritage in Chojnów

Today, there are several places to look for the material remnants of Jewish presence in the town. The synagogue building still stands on the street now called Stanisława Małachowskiego, though its original function is less and less evident from its appearance. In 2014, the right to the property was transferred to the Jewish Community in Legnica. At present, its owner is the Union of Jewish Communities in Poland – Wrocław Branch. The building is still used as a gym.

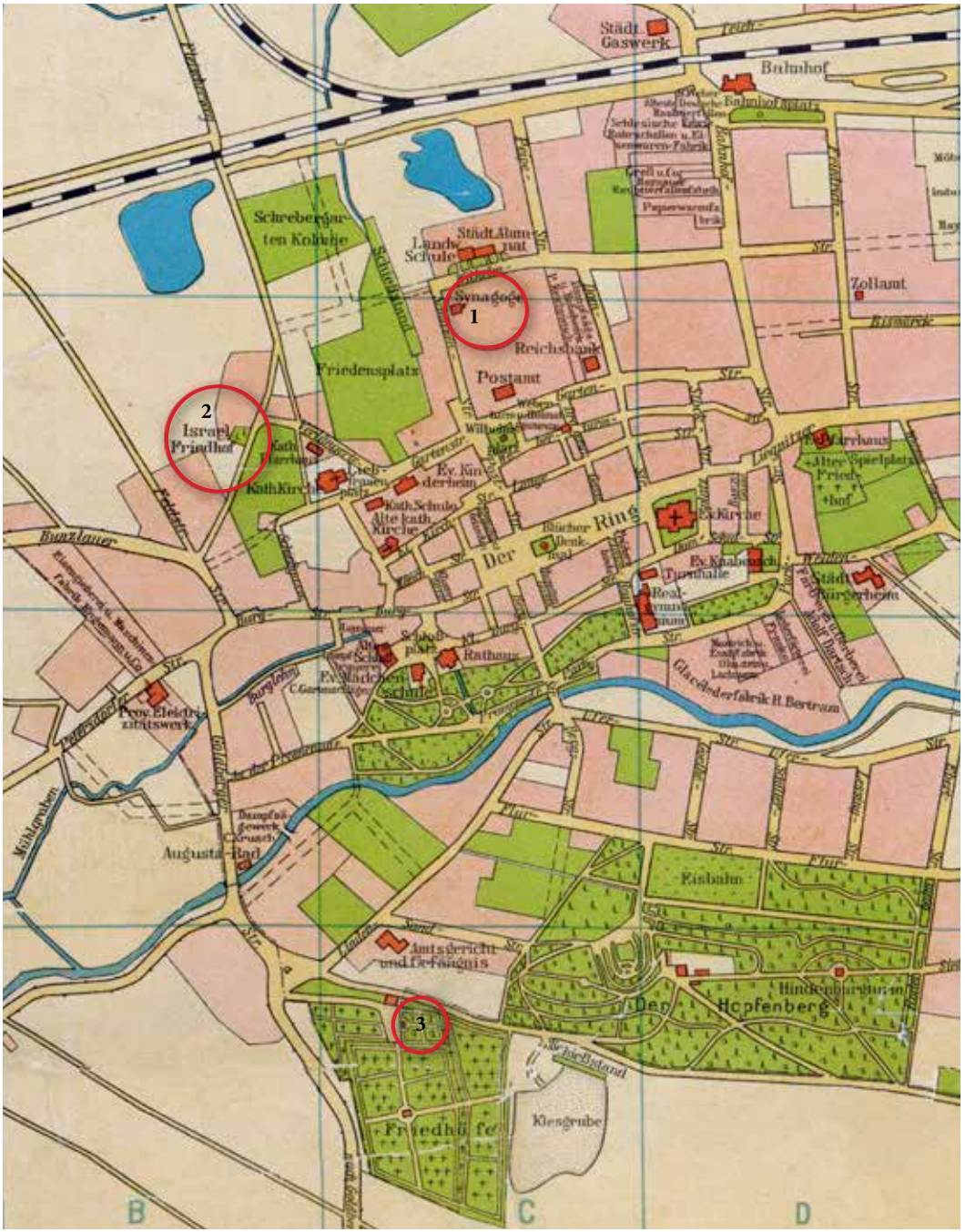
There are also two Jewish cemeteries in the town, however with no tombstones (matzevahs) surviving. Their former location can be determined on the basis of pre-war maps. The first cemetery, situated at the westernmost end of Gartenstrasse (now Jarosława Dąbrowskiego Street) on Bielauer Weg (now Bielawska Street), was established around the year 1840. However, in the 1880s the need arose to buy a new place of burial – it was consecrated on February 3, 1888 by Rabbi Dr Peritz from

Liegnitz. The new Jewish cemetery, with a funeral chapel built on the site, was situated between Konradsdorfer Weg (now Parkowa Street) and Kunststrasse (now Złotoryjska Street) near two Christian graveyards – a small Catholic cemetery and an Evangelical cemetery.

Another place where one can look for Jewish traces is the Regional Museum in Chojnów, which houses several matzevahs from the local Jewish cemetery. The names of the deceased – Salomon, son of Jacob, and Pinkus Moritz – have survived on two of the tombstones. One of the matzevahs displayed at the museum was used for utilitarian purposes – as a sharpening stone (whetstone).

The name of a street – Bohaterów Getta Warszawskiego (Heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto) – is also a legacy of Polish Jews in Chojnów. As in other towns and cities of Lower Silesia, the Jewish residents saw to it as early as the 1940s that this biggest Jewish uprising, the memory of which they cherished since the first post-war years, was commemorated at least in this symbolic manner.

Matzevahs from a Jewish cemetery in Haynau, Regional Museum in Chojnów.



A fragment of a 1929 map of Haynau with Jewish sites marked by the red circles.

1 – synagogue
2 – old Jewish cemetery
3 – new Jewish cemetery

THE STORY OF MUSZKA FROM NADWÓRNA

Mucha (diminutive form: Musia / Muszka) Gerstenhaber was born in June 1938 in the Polish town of Nadwórna (Yiddish: Nadvorna / now Nadvirna in Ukraine) in the then Stanisławów province. At the same time, more than 800 kilometres to the north-west from Nadwórna, 57 Jewish residents of the German town of Haynau (now Chojnów in Poland), with a population of around 11,000, watched with anxiety Nazi repressions become increasingly violent and thought more and more seriously about emigrating. Half a year later, in November 1938, their synagogue on Schützenstrasse was set on fire and vandalized. It was later converted into a gym.

In Nadwórna, in Poland's eastern borderland, there were probably few people who thought about war at that time. Jews had lived there since the 16th century and in 1921 accounted for over one third of the town's more than 6,000 residents. Nadwórna became part of Jewish history thanks to the Hassidic dynasty of the Leifers. The most famous of them were Rabbi Mordechai Leifer (1824-1894), the author of a book entitled "Mamar Mordechai," and Rabbi Aron Leib Leifer (1819-1897), the author of a book entitled "Yad Aron."

The Gerstenhabers, however, were not a typical Jewish family from a small town in eastern Poland. They were certainly much better off than other families. According to one version, until the outbreak of the war Muszka's father Ajzyk, born in 1906, was director of a company exporting timber. According to another version, he was a forest quality controller. Her mother Golda (maiden name Katz), born in 1910, was a housewife in accordance with Jewish tradition. They were no strangers to assimilation tendencies. However, as residents of *Nadwórna* where Hassidic traditions were strong, the Gerstenhabers must have been strongly influenced by them. This is perhaps the reason why the parents gave their firstborn the name of the daughter of the famous Lubavitcher tzadik – Chaya Mushka. In 1928 in Warsaw the said Chaya Mushka Schneerson had married Menachem Mendel Schneerson, who was better known later as Lubavitcher Rebbe, a spiritual leader of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement. Thousands of Hassidim arrived

A group of members of the Freiheit youth movement from Nadwórna working at a local sawmill, 1931.

Members of the Gordonia youth movement in a sawmill in Nadwórna, 1930.

for her wedding from Poland, Russia and Lithuania. Perhaps the parents of Muszka Gerstenhaber also dreamed that one day their daughter would marry an eminent rabbi and would become a respectable rebbetzin?

When World War II broke out the Gerstenhabers still lived in Nadwórna. The family soon expanded as Muszka's younger brother came into the world. Pogroms against Jewish people in Nadwórna had been organized by Ukrainian hit squads even before Germans entered the town in 1941. Over 1,000 people, mainly Jews, were executed by firing squads soon after the town was taken over by the Wehrmacht. In the spring of 1942, a ghetto was set up in Nadwórna and Jews were resettled there from local towns and villages. The Gerstenhaber family with the two young kids also found themselves in the ghetto.

We do not know how they got out of the ghetto with their children. What is known is that in1942 the whole family found itself in Lwów (now Lviv in Ukraine). Maybe they were helped by a family member, or one of the clients of Muszka's father? In Lwów, Ajzyk and Golda took probably the most difficult decision in their life – to give their children into the care of another family. I wonder how you made such choices at that time. By what criteria were the parents guided when entrusting their most precious treasure – their own children – to strangers? Why did they choose this particular family? Where they, perhaps, the only people who wanted to take on this task?

We do not know the circumstances in which the children were given over and under what conditions the new carers decided to take them. We may assume that the Gerstenhabers could afford to provide their living expenses. Little is known about the carers except that they were Polish Catholics from Lwów. And we will never know by what they were guided when they agreed to take the two little Jewish children to their home. Was it heart, compassion, or maybe ordinary human solidarity?

Whatever it was, when taking the decision the new carers were aware of the consequences. In 1942, when Muszka and her brother were taken by the Polish family, Hans Frank's order requiring the death penalty for people knowingly helping Jews was already in force in the General-Gouvernement, that is the German-occupied

Members of the Freiheit youth movement from Nadwórna, 1933.

area of Poland which had not been directly incorporated into the Third Reich.

Little is known about what later happened to Musia's parents. They found themselves in the Lwów ghetto and then shared the fate of thousands of other Jews imprisoned there. Both died in 1942, perhaps soon after they handed their children over to the Polish family. Ajzyk was 36 years old and his wife Golda was 32. It must have been a great consolation for them in the final moments of their life to know that at least their children were safe...

But the fate of Muszka Gerstenhaber and her brother was to be different from what their parents had expected. At the time when she was taken by the new carers, the girl was four years old. Her brother was even younger and he was certainly circumcised. It was apparently too much of a burden for the new carers to keep both children so they decided to give over the boy to someone else, probably to the woman's sister. Then, there is no trace left of him. This is all we can learn from a laconic note made after the war…

Years later, I try to understand the reason behind their decision. Did they simply act out of fear? Was it because of the greater risk involved in keeping the Jewish boy, who must have been circumcised? Or perhaps after the death of the Gerstenhabers the Polish carers did not feel obliged to keep the promise they had given the Jewish parents and gave the boy over to another family?

Members of the Freiheit youth movement from Nadwórna, 1930.

One thing is certain – nothing is known about what happened later to Musia Gerstenhaber's little brother and there are slim chances that he survived the war.

In 1942, probably after the parents' death, the new carers left with Musia for Kraków. Perhaps it was already at that time, when leaving Lwów and changing their environment, that they decided to bring the girl up as their own daughter…

In Kraków, Muszka Gerstenhaber survived until the end of the German occupation. These three years she spent in a Polish family were an important stage in her life. A strong bond developed between Musia and her carers. The girl was being brought up to be Polish and Catholic, and she probably forgot about her Jewish identity.

We do not know what Musia Gerstenhaber's life would have been like if her mother's sister, Cecylia Katz, had not turned up after the war. Cecylia Katz had first hidden on the Aryan side and then was sent to a concentration camp in Germany. She learned by chance that a Jewish girl from the Gerstenhaber family lived in Kraków with a Polish family. The girl turned out to be her niece. As the only living relative of Musia, she decided to take the niece away from the people who had looked after her for three years and to whom the girl owed her life. But at that point it was not that easy. The Polish family had no intention to give the girl to her aunt, saying they had brought her up for themselves. Muszka, who was seven at that time, did not want to leave her carers, whom she regarded as her family, either. Moreover, the girl stated categorically "that she was no longer Jewish, that she was Polish." In this situation, there was only one

Chojnów's Market Square after World War II.

thing that Cecylia Katz could do: take the case to court. It was definitely a traumatic experience for both Musia and her carers. Before the end of 1945, the District Court in Kraków granted the custody rights to the child's only living relative – aunt Cecylia Katz. It seems the good of the child was of least concern. For the second time in her life, Musia Gerstenhaber lost her nearest and dearest – people who had come to love her like their own daughter and who fought before court for the right to bring her up.

The girl was passed into the care of her aunt who was a complete stranger to her. For unknown reasons Cecylia Katz was unable to look after the girl. Neither is it known what was going on with Musia until 1946. There is information in one of the archival records that in 1945-1946 the girl lived in the Upper Silesian city of Chorzów.

A view of Chojnów's old buildings, after World War II.

A Jewish orphanage operated then in the city. It was home to many orphans, including those "recovered" from Polish families. Maybe this is where Muszka was sent when her aunt was unable to take care of her?

June 1946 saw another turn in the girl's life. Musia was given into the care of a Jewish married couple living in Chojnów – Szalom (Szlomo) Ejges and his wife. It is not known who the Ejgeses were to her – whether they were related to her in some way, or were just an ordinary childless Jewish family who wanted to take care of an orphaned child. Her new carer, Szalom Ejges, came from Wilno (now Vilnius in Lithuania) and was an active member of the Jewish Community in Chojnów. He arrived in the town at the beginning of May 1946 with a group of people repatriated from Chimkent in Kazakhstan. He was the leader of the group and then became one of the founders of the local Jewish Committee, head and organizer of the Society for Health Protection of the

Chojnów after World War II.

Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ) – before the war he had been active in this organization – and even a school principal. He was a supporter of Zionism – in the Committee he represented the Hashomer Hatzair organization.

According to archival records, Musia Gerstenhaber arrived in Chojnów from Katowice on June 22, 1946. Her new family occupied an apartment at 12 Repatriantów Street (now Wincentego Witosa Street) where several Jewish organizations had their premises. But it was not easy for Muszka. The more so as she still considered herself to be Polish and Catholic. In the initial period in her new home she performed Christian rituals, as one of the archival records says. I try to imagine an eight-year-old girl in a Jewish home who kneels down every evening, crosses herself and says her evening prayers – just as she had done with her carer for the past several years – and on Sunday insists on going to a local church to attend a mass.

Her acclimatization in the Jewish environment was not easy, but her new family did anything they could for Musia to become Jewish again. They sent her to the Szalom Alejchem Jewish Primary School in Chojnów where Szalom Ejges later became principal. She spent afternoons in an after-school care centre, always surrounded by Jewish peers. But she could have felt different from them for many reasons. She was the only child who had survived the war in Poland (the other children survived the war in the Soviet Union, or were even born there), the only child saved by a Christian family and the only orphan with no living parent while most of her peers had both parents. She slowly started to learn Yiddish again, although Polish was the language she normally used to communicate. At first, she did not want to speak Yiddish at all, but she could understand this language from the start and quickly learned to use it in writing. Several of the surviving archival records feature the girl's personal signature as she was learning for the first time to write hew Jewish name. After all, for the previous several years her name had been quite different – the one which featured on the baptismal certificate acquired for her by her Polish carers. Interestingly, at around that time

Muszka Gerstenhaber changed her identity once again in her short life. Since 1947 the name Musia Ejges officially appeared in documents, which may mean that her carers adopted her and gave her their own surname. She appeared under her "old" surname only in the files of the TOZ, through which, as an orphan with no surviving parent, she was receiving aid from OSE, an international Jewish organization providing assistance to children.

The new carers claimed that Muszka was very attached to them. There was reportedly a special tie between Muszka and Szalom Ejges's wife. She said the girl thought she was her mother who had miraculously survived the German occupation. Who knows, maybe the Ejgeses invented this story, convinced that this would be better for a child who had lost two families in such a short time and was then abandoned for unknown reasons by an aunt?

What later happened to Musia and her adoptive parents? Until October 1947 they probably lived in Chojnów. Then, the family moved to another Lower Silesian town – Ząbkowice Śląskie – where they lived at 14 Marii Konopnickiej Street. They stayed in this town until at least the end of 1948.

Efforts to reconstruct what happened later to Muszka Gerstenhaber-Ejges have been unsuccessful. The Ejgeses, like thousands of other Polish Jews, probably decided to emigrate. Considering that Szalom Ejges was a Zionist, they certainly left for Israel where they again tried to rebuild their life. The only trace has been found in Yad Vashem – World Centre for Holocaust Research, Education and Commemoration where in 1956 someone called Mala Eiges, introducing herself as a cousin of the Gerstenhabers, offered testimony about Lea Gerstenhaber who had died in a camp in Nadwórna. Perhaps Mala was Musia's adoptive mother?

Efforts to find a trace of the Polish family who saved Muszka Gerstenhaber have also failed. Their name is not among those on the Righteous Among the Nations list, which means that their former charge did not decide to honour the Polish family who had saved her. Maybe Muszka, as an adult woman, did not want to return to the past? Maybe after years she assessed differently their actions, especially towards her younger brother?

If Muszka Gerstenhaber-Ejges is still alive she is almost 80. Her name is for sure quite different today. It is interesting what happened to her after she left Poland, what she did throughout her life, how large her family was and, first of all, whether she remembered the time she had spent in Poland? In the new country in which she found herself one could not only become a completely new person by adopting a Hebrew name, but – which is the most important – one could start a new life. This would be nothing strange for Musia Gerstenhaber – she had changed her identity a few times in her life. Looking back, it seems especially important what she experienced in the small Lower Silesian town where – surrounded by displaced Jewish people who had gone through traumatic experiences – she learned anew how to be Jewish.

GŁOGÓW / GLOGAU

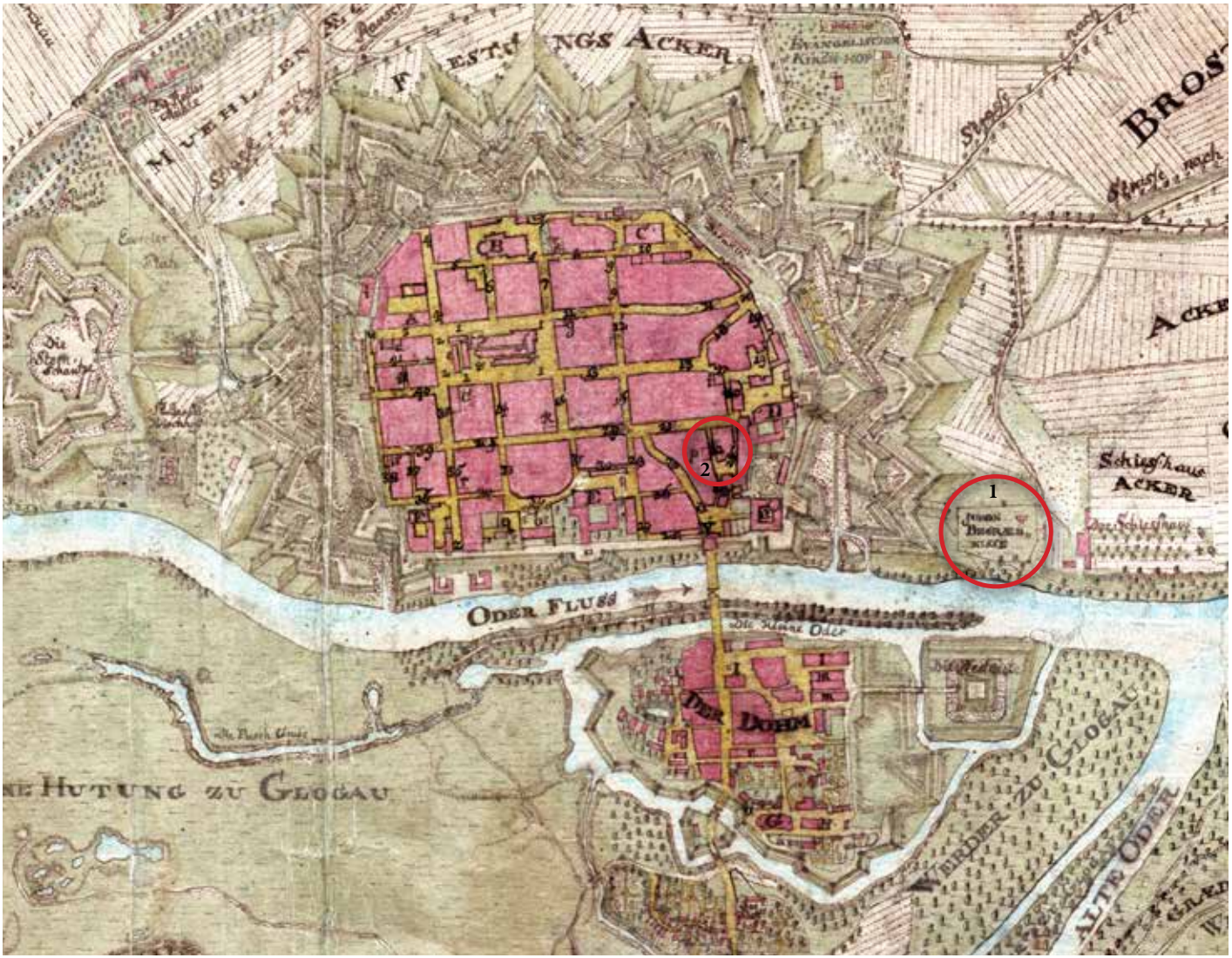
SYNAGOGUES AND JEWISH CEMETERIES OF GLOGAU

Synagogues and Houses of Prayer

Głogów (German name: Glogau) is the only town in Silesia where Jews lived continuously for more than 700 years. Over this period, the town produced many outstanding rabbis, writers and scholars, and the local Jewish Community was considered to be one of the wealthiest and most eminent Jewish Communities in Europe.

Jews settled here probably as early as the second half of the 12th century, but the first mention of their presence

The synagogue in Glogau on Wingenstrasse (now Hugona Kołłątaja Street), adjoined by the St. Elisabeth Catholic Hospital.



A fragment of a site plan of the town and fortress of Glogau with Jewish sites marked by the red circles, 1700-1800.

1 – Jewish cemetery by the road to Beichau, **2** – synagogue on Bailstrasse

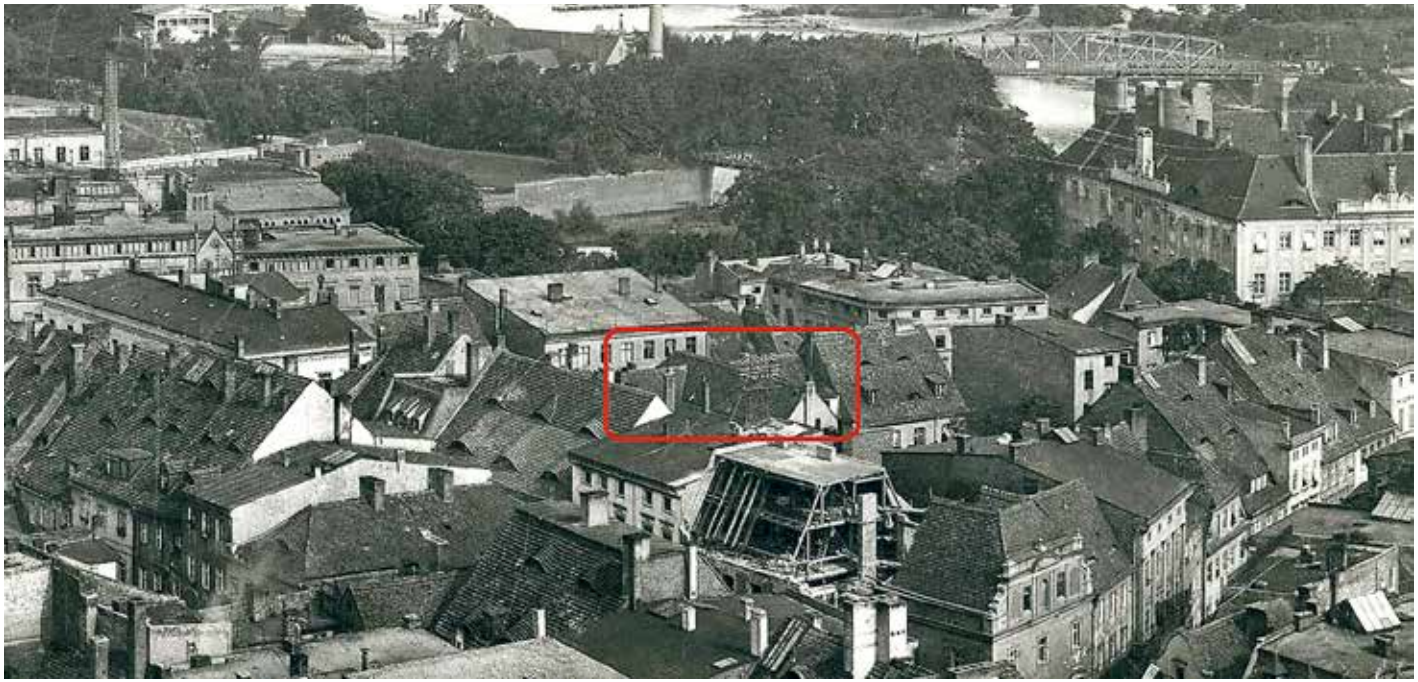
in the town comes from 1280. It is also hard to determine when the first synagogue was built in the town, although it was mentioned in 1299 in the protection letter that the Jews received from Prince of Głogów Henryk III. The 34 paragraphs of this document specify the rights and duties of the Jewish population. The document also contains a provision concerning the protection of the synagogue: "A Christian who attacks the Jewish synagogue is subject to a fine of two talents." The first synagogue and Jewish houses were probably located close to the castle in an area under the jurisdiction of the prince, in the vicinity of Brzostowska Gate (Brostauer Tor).

In the modern area, as early as in 1620, the heads of the Jewish Community sought permission from Emperor Ferdinand II for the construction of a synagogue in an area under the jurisdiction of the castle. The Glogau town council had refused them the permission, citing canon law forbidding the construction of synagogues, except for the situations when this was to serve Jewish conversion. The permission was obtained two years later, but the construction of the synagogue was delayed by the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). Ultimately, the synagogue was built in 1636 on Bailstrasse. The street no longer exists. The investment project was financed by the family of Israel Benedict. The building survived until 1678 when it was burned down in a fire of the Jewish district.

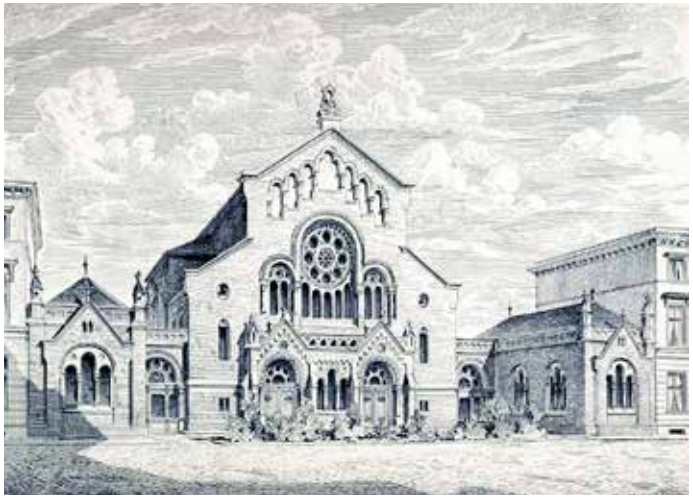
The synagogue on Bailstrasse was not rebuilt until 1714. We also know that it underwent expansion a few times at the end of the 18th century and in the 19th century. In 1877, a western annexe was added to the building. At that time, the interior of the building was 13 metres high. And this is probably when an organ was installed in the synagogue. The instrument was made by the Walter Brothers from Guhrau (Góra) who dealt with organ construction and repair. This showed that it was a progressive synagogue. It is worth being aware that

The synagogue in Glogau on Wingenstrasse (now Hugona Kołłątaja Street).

Germany's first synagogue service during which organ music was played was held as late as 1810 and that organs had been rare in synagogues before the 19th century. There was a good justification for this. Firstly, playing this instrument was in contradiction with the ban on



A panorama of Glogau with the old synagogue on Bailstrasse marked by the red rectangular, ca. 1912.



The design for the synagogue in Glogau made by Wilhelm Cremer and Richard Wolffenstein. Sources incorrectly state that the design was for the city of Breslau.

making music, which was regarded as a sign of mourning since the time of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. Secondly, it violated the ban on working on Shabbat. And thirdly, it imitated non-Jewish forms of prayer, which was banned in Judaism.

In the 19th century, there were also private houses of prayer in the town. However, almost all of them were closed in 1838 because they were competition to the synagogue, which served the whole community. A special prayer room was arranged for French Jews, a large number of whom stayed in the town in 1870-1871 as prisoners of the Franco-Prussian war.

In the late 1880s, the Jewish Community in Glogau took the decision to build a new synagogue. In 1889, the board announced an architectural contest for its design. One could read in advertisements published in the

columns of the specialist press, including Swiss journals, that a prize of 1,500 marks and 1,000 marks would be awarded for the best two designs. The designs were to be assessed by a contest committee composed of three architects. A total of 18 designs were submitted for the contest and prizes were awarded for two of them – both made by Berlin architects: Bruno Schmitz and the Cremer & Wolffenstein architectural practice, who later designed a synagogue in Posen (Poznań). Interestingly, the Glogau synagogue was ultimately built according to a design made by another pair of architects: Hans Abesser and Jürgen Kröger, also from Berlin. The official foundation stone for the new synagogue was laid in April 1891 in a very solemn ceremony.

Since the new synagogue was to emphasize first of all the importance of the Jewish Community in Glogau,

The design for the synagogue in Glogau made by Hans Abesser and Jürgen Kröger.

The interior of the synagogue in Glogau.

special significance was attached to making it look stately. The very location of the building was highly prestigious. The synagogue was constructed in the centre of the town's new district, Wilhelmstadt, on the street later called Wingenstrasse (now Hugona Kołłątaja Street). The construction cost exceeded 1 million marks and must have been a serious burden for Glogau's Jewish Community, which then numbered 850 members. But the final effect satisfied everyone. The synagogue's tower,

The Glogau synagogue in postcards from the late 19th and early 20th century.

which was 32 metres high and was crowned with a dome, constituted the core part of the building. Two wings with separate entrances were added to the tower on each side. Sexton of the synagogue (shammes) Pohl lived in the right wing while the left wing housed a small prayer hall. The facade was covered with glazed stone and the huge rose window over the main portal resembled the window of the Strasbourg Cathedral.

This is how the specialist press assessed the work of the architects: "First of all, they managed to give this building a one-of-a-kind appearance, thanks to which even a layman would easily recognize a synagogue in it. The external appearance is its strong point. The beautifully designed decorative dome above the gallery looks exceptionally good with the side building. The coloured glazed brick roofs alone give the synagogue its special character. The abundance of small domes and dome-like finials adds to this special feel. The Glogau synagogue, alongside the synagogues in Cologne and Karlsruhe, is one of the exceptional new synagogues when it comes to external appearance." Other synagogues, in particular the one in Munich designed by Albert Schmidt and completed in 1887, were also mentioned as an inspiration for the Glogau synagogue as were Christian churches, including Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche) built in Berlin in 1890 according to Franz Schwechten's design, and even the cathedral in Strasbourg.

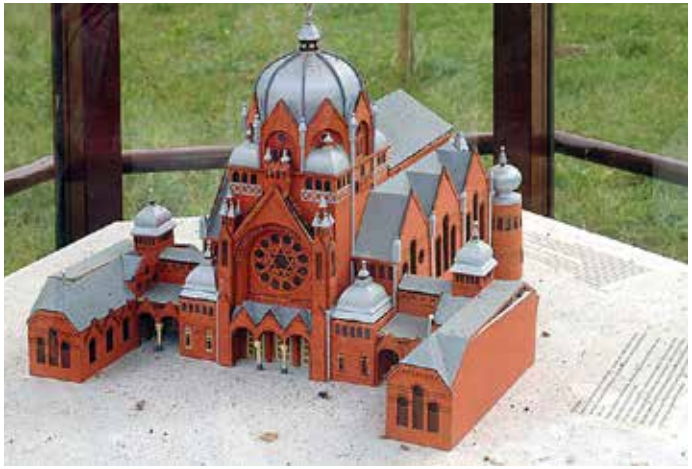
The synagogue was consecrated on September 15, 1892. The ceremony was attended by many outstanding members of the Jewish Community, municipal officials, military people, members of the Christian clergy and ordinary residents of the town. The ceremony ended with a prayer for the Emperor and the Reich, and Ludwig van Beethoven's hymn "The Heavens Extol the Glory of God" (Die Himmel rühmen des Ewigen Ehre).

The interior of the Glogau synagogue was impressive. The main nave was 17 metres long, 15 metres wide and its height was 15 metres. The building could accommodate 300 men and 250 women. An organ made by the Silberstein company, famous in the world for its resonant sound, was installed in the interior.

At the same time, a house of prayer intended for a small Jewish Orthodox Community was built on Mohrenstrasse (now Garncarska Street). Among those who prayed there were traditional Jews coming from Polish lands.

It was only in 1894 that the building of the old synagogue was sold to Methodists for 23,000 marks. This suggests that the Jews from Glogau did not need the money to finance the construction of the new synagogue. The Methodist Community converted the old synagogue into a chapel – the choir and the men's space were elevated, and the upper part was designated for apartments. The former synagogue was given the name Zionskirche (Zion Church) and survived until World War II.

The new synagogue existed for a mere 46 years. In 1938, during the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass)



The scale model of the Glogau synagogue, Głogów, Hugona Kołłątaja Street.

pogrom the building was vandalizeded and then set on fire. The fire brigade received the order to protect against the fire the adjacent buildings, especially the St. Elisabeth Hospital and the apartment of the sexton of the synagogue. There were plans to blow up the remains of the synagogue, as was the case with the New Synagogue (Neue Synagoge) in Breslau (now Wrocław). The plans were abandoned because of the risk of damage to the surrounding buildings. This is why the synagogue ruins were pulled down to the foundations with the use of pickaxes in the process of demolition. Interestingly, during World War II, in 1944 when Glogau was proclaimed a fortress, the synagogue's basement was prepared to become an air-raid shelter for the needs of a military hospital set up at the St. Elizabeth Hospital, which had once adjoined the synagogue.

After World War II Glogau (now called Głogów) did not become a place of settlement for Polish Jews, who came to Lower Silesia in great numbers. But German Jews did not forget about their hometown. On the initiative of Franz D. Lucas, a son of Glogau's last rabbi, a monument to the Jews of Glogau was unveiled in the town in 1993, on the 55th anniversary of the burning of the synagogue. It is worth stressing that it was the first instance of commemorating a synagogue destroyed during the Kristallnacht pogrom in Lower Silesia. Present at the ceremony were municipal officials and members of the Catholic clergy, Dr Franz D. Lucas, Prof. Nathan Peter Levinson, a rabbi from London and a former resident of Glogau, the head of the Union of Glogau Residents in Germany, representatives of German towns twinned with Głogów and many residents of the town. The monument – a place of remembrance – had been designed on the plan of the former synagogue by architect Dariusz Wojtowicz. It is composed of an outline of its walls reconstructed on the original foundations and an obelisk with inscriptions in Polish and Hebrew: "This monument, erected by residents of Głogów in recognition of the memorable services of the Jewish Community and its last spiritual leader, Rabbi Dr Leopold Lucas, to the social and cultural development of the town, stands on the site of a synagogue desecrated in 1938 by the Nazis and commemorates the tragedy of the Jews who had lived in this area for over 700 years until they were displaced in 1942. The City Council in Głogów." A scale model of the synagogue was placed nearby in a glass showcase.

In 2002, under the law of February 20, 1997 on the attitude of the state towards Jewish Communities in the Republic of Poland, the site once occupied by the synagogue became a property of the Jewish Community in Legnica (Liegnitz).

Jewish Cemeteries in Głogów (Glogau)

Over the 700 years of its existence, the Jewish Community of Glogau had four places of burial. The oldest one probably dated from the 13th century. A mention of its inviolability is included in the above-cited privilege granted to the community in 1299 by Prince of Głogów Henryk III: "Christians who desecrate the Jewish cemetery, or destroy it, should be punished severely, apart from having their property confiscated, in accordance with domestic laws." So far, however, no matzevahs from this cemetery or archival records confirming beyond doubt its existence and location have been found. Some researchers suggest that the cemetery could have been situated close to the road to Brostau (Brzostów) or in the present channel of the Odra (Oder) river where stones with Hebrew inscriptions were found in 1935.

The second cemetery, in chronological terms, was established in the 17th century on the initiative of

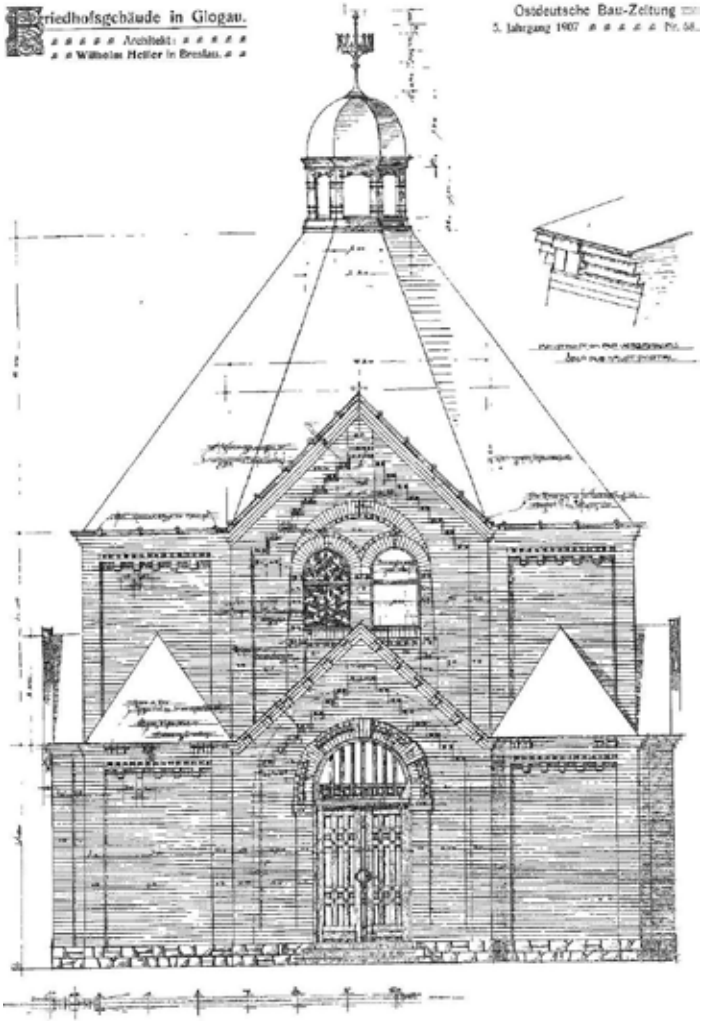
Israel Benedict and Michael Sachs. In 1622, the two heads of the community asked Emperor Ferdinand II of the House of Habsburg, who had recently become Silesia's new ruler, for permission to establish a burial ground in the area under the castle's jurisdiction. The cemetery was located by the road to Beichau (Biechów) and survived until 1666. Part of it had been destroyed even earlier due to the expansion of fortifications.

The third Jewish cemetery in Glogau was established in 1666 when a plot situated close to the moat, a shooting range and the Oder river was purchased from Mrs. von Reischewitz. The cemetery was enlarged a few times by the addition of new plots – in the years 1685, 1716 and 1721. Under the emperor's resolution, the burial of Jews not residing in Glogau was banned since 1724. During the First Silesian War the cemetery was destroyed to prepare for the siege of the Glogau fortress and in 1740 the site was flattened.

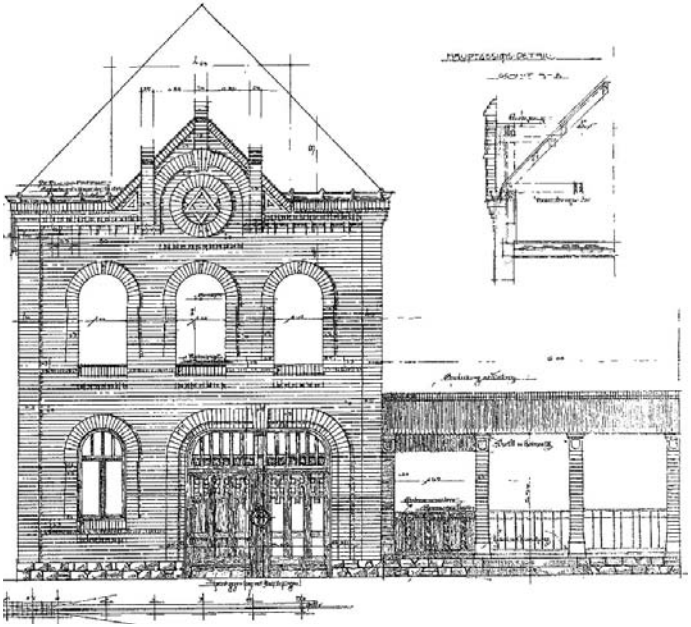
The cemetery was reopened in 1743 after Silesia was ceded to Prussia and Jews received the right to have their own burial ground in the town. Unfortunately, during the next war in Silesia the cemetery suffered further damage. In the years 1813-1814, during the siege of Glogau by Prussian and Russian forces, tombstones from Jewish and Evangelical cemeteries were used in the construction of a fortress.

A portrait of Salomon Maimon.

The most famous person buried at this cemetery was outstanding philosopher Salomon Maimon (1754-1800), although the place of his burial and the circumstances of the funeral were for many years shrouded in legend. Maimon spent the final years of his life in Lower Silesia in an estate of his adherent Count Heinrich W.A. von Kalckreuth in Nieder Siegersdorf (now Podbrzezie Dolne) near Freystadt in Schlesien



The funeral chapel, designed by Wilhelm Heller, at the Jewish cemetery in Glogau on the present Henryka Sienkiewicza Street.

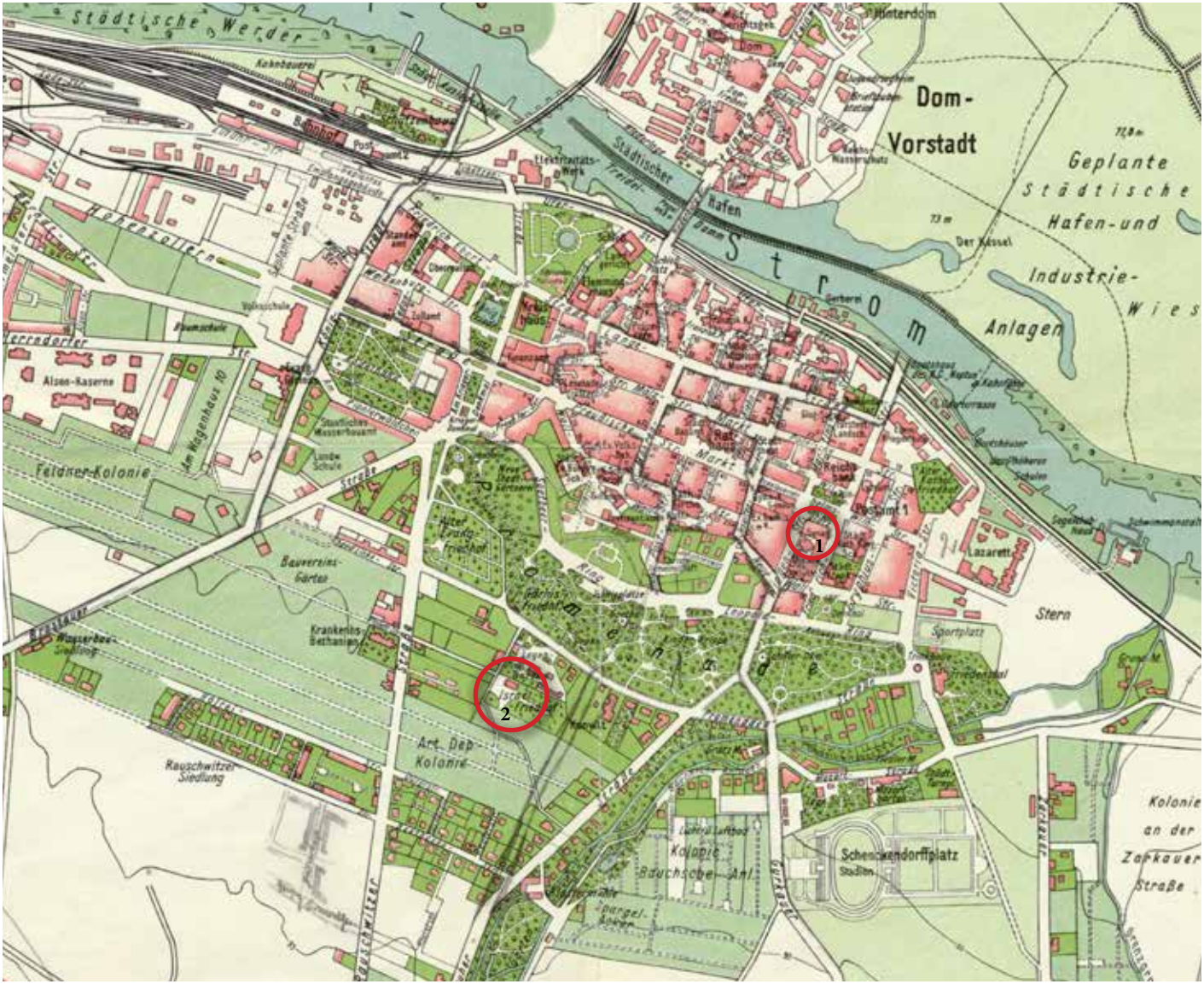


Wilhelm Heller's design for the administration building at the Jewish cemetery in Glogau on the present Henryka Sienkiewicza Street.

(Kożuchów). Despite coming from an Orthodox Jewish family, Maimon broke with Judaism and became a secular philosopher. His rational views aroused great controversy in Orthodox Jewish circles. Maimon's wish was to be buried in the estate of his patron, but this wish was not respected. After his death in 1800 Salomon Maimon was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Glogau. However, he did not have a religious funeral and, according to one version, as a heretic, atheist and freethinker, was buried by the cemetery wall. The Jewish cemetery survived until 1857 when it was removed in connection with the construction of a railway line from Glogau to Lissa (Leszno). The decision was then taken to exhume 300 bodies and relocate them to a new cemetery. With time, as further parts of the old cemetery were expropriated, the remains of another 106 persons were exhumed. The cemetery ceased to exist altogether at the beginning of the 20th century. It is worth adding that Jewish religious law forbids exhumations, with the exception of a few cases: if the remains of the dead person are to be transferred for reburial in the Holy Land, if they are to be moved from a place of temporary burial (or a non-Jewish cemetery) to a Jewish cemetery and if there is the risk that the place of burial will be desecrated or destroyed.

The fourth and last Jewish cemetery in Glogau was located close to what was called the Masonic Garden (now Henryka Sienkiewicza Street). It covered 1.1 hectares (11,000 square metres, or ca. 2.7 acres). The last burials at the cemetery took place in 1937. Six years later, the cemetery was occupied by the Gestapo who turned the funeral chapel into a warehouse for the storage of stolen Jewish property. Then, auxiliary buildings for the military headquarters were erected on the site of the cemetery and the tombstones were sold to local stonemasons. The cemetery also suffered damage during the siege of the town in 1945, but there were still a few tombstones surviving in 1946.

The cemetery was removed 20 years later. The province authorities – at that time, the town was part of the Polish province of Zielona Góra (German name: Grünberg in Schlesien) – justified the decision with "the need to locate [there] an investment project in connection with the construction of housing for workers of the Głogów-Legnica Copper Basin." They meant specifically the new housing estate Głogów II. The cemetery was located in the centre of the planned estate. However, considering that the 40 years since the last burial (in 1937) had not yet passed as required by law, the decision was taken to exhume the remains of the people buried in the years 1928-1937. The exhumations of 19 persons, whose given names and surnames are known, were conducted in 1968. As there was no longer any Jewish cemetery in



A fragment of a map of Glogau with Jewish sites marked by the red circles, ca. 1930.

1 – synagogue on Wingenstrasse, **2** – Jewish cemetery near the Masonic Garden

Fragments of matzevahs found outside Głogów and protected by members of the Głogów Movement of Discoverers of Mysteries (GROT).

Głogów, the human remains were interred in a common grave at the municipal cemetery on Legnicka Street. At present, the place is marked in a symbolic way. The cemetery area was levelled and turned into building land. The building of the Primary School no. 7 and a tarmac sports field were constructed on the site. Now, what remains of the cemetery is only a few matzevahs kept in the town hall and by private individuals.

Today, there are few material traces of the 700-year-long Jewish presence in the "town of sages and scribes" – just the outline of the synagogue and several matzevahs. But Głogów's residents take special care to recover the memory of the glorious days of the former German town of Glogau. And the memory of Jews occupies an important place here.

Paul Lernau's tombstone at the Jewish cemetery in Glogau, after 1932.

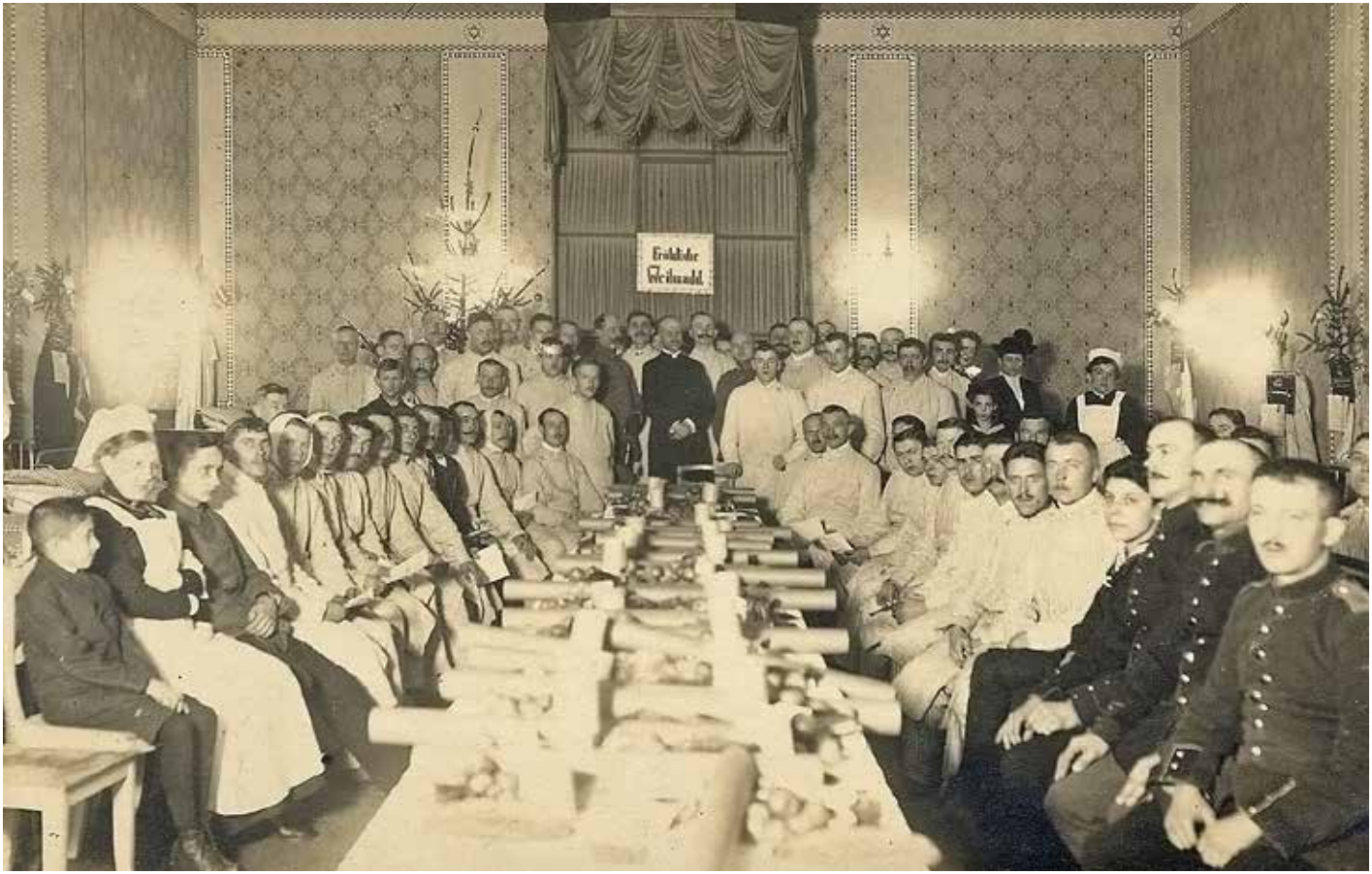
A STORY OF ONE PHOTOGRAPH. THE LERNAU FAMILY FROM GLOGAU

Everything started with a photograph presented on the portal of the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland. The picture seemed quite ordinary – it shows a group of a few dozen soldiers, patients of a World War I field hospital, sitting down to a Christmas meal (maybe a Christmas Eve supper?). Among them is a Catholic priest or pastor and next to him a bearded man in a uniform – the head of the field hospital. The only surprising thing was the venue, which – according to the Lernau family's description – was the synagogue in Glogau.

I got familiar with the family history of the man from the picture, Dr Paul Lernau, an ENT specialist from Glogau, in 2010 thanks to the Głogów History Forum, on which exciting discussions were held about this single picture and its hero. Actually, I discovered this story step by step together with other Internet users, relying initially on scant information gradually disclosed to us by a descendant of the family. I had never expected this to become such an interesting experience, a bit like detective work, an experience which not only enabled me to learn more about the history of this Jewish-German family connected with the town, but first of all made me realize what fundamental choices German Jews had faced in the late 19th and early 20th century.

According to the information conveyed to us by Dr Paul Lernau's grandson, his grandfather settled in Glogau around 1900. But, surprisingly, efforts to find any traces of this man's presence in the town in the numerous archival records from before World War I failed. After some time, the address of the Lernau family in Glogau was disclosed to us. It turned out that in the address books an ENT specialist did indeed feature at the address given to us, but the name was … Paul Levy. It became clear to me very quickly that Dr Paul Levy and Dr Paul Lernau was the same person. This Glogau physician had simply changed his name from Levy, the traditional Jewish surname signifying that its bearer is a descendant of the Levites, the tribe serving in the Temple of Jerusalem, to the more German-sounding Lernau. This was not at all a rare occurrence among assimilated Jews, who wanted to blend into German society. I only wondered whether Dr Levy/Lernau had taken another step and changed religion…

We learned about the details of Paul Lernau's biography thanks to his grandson – Omri Lernau from Israel. The history of this family includes every kind of experience that the German Jews shared in the late 19th and early 20th century – social advancement, emancipation, assimilation, a gradual departure from tradition and religion, manifestation of loyalty to the German



Christmas Supper for the patients of the field hospital arranged in a hall of the synagogue in Glogau during World War I. Pictured: Dr Paul Lernau (standing in the centre), his wife (standing, second from right), daughter (standing, third from right) and son (at the table, in the first row, fourth from right).

homeland, the Holocaust and even fascination with Zionism and emigration to Palestine.

Paul Levy was born in Leobschütz (now Głubczyce) in Upper Silesia. His father, Jakob, opened a printing house in the town where he published a local newspaper, books and lithographs. He ran it until 1869 and then the family moved to Ohlau (now Oława) where Paul and his three siblings – brothers Wilhelm and Albert and sister Emma – grew up. The family moved home several times – they lived in Breslau (Wrocław) and then returned to Leobschütz where Paul's mother, Selma, died of tuberculosis.

Paul decided to study medicine, which was possible thanks to the wealth accumulated by the family, and he

chose to become an ENT specialist.

In 1899, Paul Levy married Gertrud Emilie Barschall from Fürstenwalde in Brandenburg and moved to Glogau. They settled in the town's new district. They were a modern married couple – open to the world, assimilated and attaching great importance to education. They must have remembered about their roots, but religion played an increasingly small role in their life. First of all, they did not want to stand out from other Germans.

Dr Paul Lernau with his wife Gertrud, Breslau, the beginning of the 20th century.

After the arrival to Glogau Paul Levy started to think about his career. He knew that, despite his education and excellent qualifications, his Jewish background would be an obstacle. In 1902, he applied for his name to be changed to Lernau – his brother Wilhelm did the same – but the application was rejected at that time. Of the three Levy brothers only Albert decided to keep his Jewish name and stick to the Jewish religion. The second brother, Wilhelm, converted and married a non-Jew, although – as it turned out after years – neither the change of name nor religion protected his children from the Holocaust.

Paul and Gertrud's son, Hans Ludwig, was born in 1902 and their daughter Charlotte followed three years later. Paul Levy did not abandon the idea to change his name, but his request was approved only in the time of the Weimar Republic, perhaps in recognition of his

Hans Ludwig (later Hanan) Lernau, Glogau, ca. 1904.

Hans Ludwig (later Hanan) Lernau, Glogau, ca. 1906.

services during World War I when he had been head of a field hospital in Glogau. This is how Paul Levy became Paul Lernau. Religion was the only thing connecting him with his former Jewish life. We know that at that time he already functioned outside Jewish society. He was not active in Glogau's Jewish Community or any other Jewish organization, which means that his ties with the Jewry were very weak. We also know that he tried to emphasize his secularism. There was only one more step to take – convert…

According to his grandson, Dr Paul Lernau did not change religion, though this decision would have certainly helped his career. He had a private medical practice in Glogau, first at 2 Wilhelmsplatz (now Władysława Umińskiego Square) and then at 17 Neue Wallstrasse (now Stanisława Staszica Street). With time, he advanced and became an exemplary citizen of the Weimar Republic.

But Dr Lernau's son, Hans Ludwig, chose a completely different path. As a teenager, he joined the Blau Weiss youth movement and became a staunch Zionist. He learned Hebrew and studied the Old Testament against his parents' will. And just like his father, who – rejecting his Jewish identity – had once changed his surname from Levy to Lernau, the son returned to the roots by changing his German given names to the Hebrew name Hanan. Hanan studied at universities in Jena, Breslau and Berlin. In 1931, he started medical studies in Rostock, but quickly gave them up. In 1935, two years after Adolf Hitler came to power, he settled in Palestine where he married Elisheva (Elsbeth) Kahn, a German Jewish woman. In this way, the Jewish story came full circle. The son of Paul Lernau – an assimilated Jew who had done everything to become part of German society and sever all ties with his Jewish identity – returned to the roots and emigrated from Germany to Palestine. Defying the will of his parents, he not only became a Zionist, but left Germany to build a Jewish state. Interestingly, Hanan Lernau retained in Palestine his German surname, of which he had been ashamed as a young Zionist activist in Germany. His son, wondering after many years why the name had been kept, cited an old Jewish joke: "A Jew living in London converted to Christianity and then changed his name from Cohen to Smith. After some time he changed the name again – this time from Smith to Jones. Asked why he did so, he explained: 'When they ask me now about my previous name I will no longer say Cohen, I will say Smith'."

Paul Lernau died in Glogau in 1932 at the age of 75. He did not live long enough to see his son settle in Eretz Israel. He was buried at Glogau's Jewish cemetery and his tombstone was recorded in a photograph. He had died a year before Adolf Hitler came to power, at a time

Dr Paul Lernau during World War I.

when all German Jews could still delude themselves that they were an integral part of German society and that assimilation had been the right choice.

Today, there is no trace left of Paul Lernau's grave. However, it was not destroyed by the Nazis, but many years after the war when the town was Polish and the decision was taken to close down the Jewish cemetery and build a school complex on its site.

After Paul Lernau's death his wife Gertrud left Glogau and settled in Berlin. In 1942, she was deported with the last transport of German Jews from Berlin to the Theresienstadt Ghetto where she survived until the end of the war. She never returned to Germany. After her stay in Austria and Mexico, where she published memoirs from her time in Theresienstadt, she finally settled in Israel. She died there in 1959 at the age of 86. She never learned Hebrew…

A native resident of Glogau, Hanan Lernau, the son of Paul and Gertrud, died in Jerusalem in 1989. His sister Charlotte (later called Sonia Preux), also survived the Holocaust. She was an artist and a member of the Breslau group of Die Brücke (The Bridge) – German expressionists who looked for new forms of artistic expression. She married a German artist and after the Nazis came to power left Berlin for France with her husband and son. When the Germans seized Paris she managed to escape with her son to the south of the country and after many twists and turns managed to get asylum in Mexico. She lived there until the end of her life. Hanan's son, Omri, a physician specialized in paediatric surgery who lives in Israel, after retirement described the history of his family and its time in Glogau.

And returning to the picture with which everything began – the photograph was taken during World War I when many of Glogau's public buildings were converted for medical purposes. One of such buildings could be the Glogau synagogue where a field hospital was established – more specifically an ENT ward with Dr Paul Lernau as its head. The hall acquired for the needs of the wounded soldiers had definitely been used earlier for religious purposes because the picture features Aron Kodesh, an altar cabinet for Torah scrolls. It is also worth noting the characteristic wall decorations with the motif of Magen David, popularly known as the Star of David. Of course, it was not the main hall of the Glogau synagogue – the image of this hall is known from archival photographs – but probably a smaller prayer room situated next to the main hall of this monumental building.

Paul Lernau's wife, Gertrud, with one of her children, Berlin, the beginning of the 20th century.

Dr Paul Lernau surrounded by the medical personnel of a field hospital in Glogau during World War I.

Holding Christmas celebrations in the synagogue also raised doubts. However, if we take into consideration the special circumstances – a war – and that the synagogue had been used then as a field hospital it does not seem strange that the hospital staff decided to organize a Christmas supper there. The picture features Dr Lernau's patients – wounded soldiers – and hospital staff. This modest supper must have been an unusual occasion for all the participants, enabling them to forget, at least for a while, about the horrors of war. And it certainly did not matter to anyone that the prayers which resounded in the synagogue were Christian. A Christmas tree was placed in the room, the walls were decorated with spruce twigs, a table was covered with a white tablecloth, a priest or pastor was invited and the inscription "Fröhliche Weihnacht" (Merry Christmas) was placed on the Aron Kodesh.

In the picture (p. 40) we can also see Paul's wife, Gertrud Lernau (the woman in a dark dress and hat) and her son Hans Lernau (at the table, fourth from the right)

Patients and the staff of a field hospital in Glogau during World War I.
Dr Paul Lernau stands in the first row, fourth from right.

who soon became a Zionist and emigrated to Palestine where he found his place and homeland. And here we have to end the tale about Dr Paul Levy/ Lernau from Glogau who tried to find his own way of being both an exemplary German and a modern Jew.

Compiled on the basis of family reminiscences
by Omri Lernau from Israel

LEGNICA / LIEGNITZ

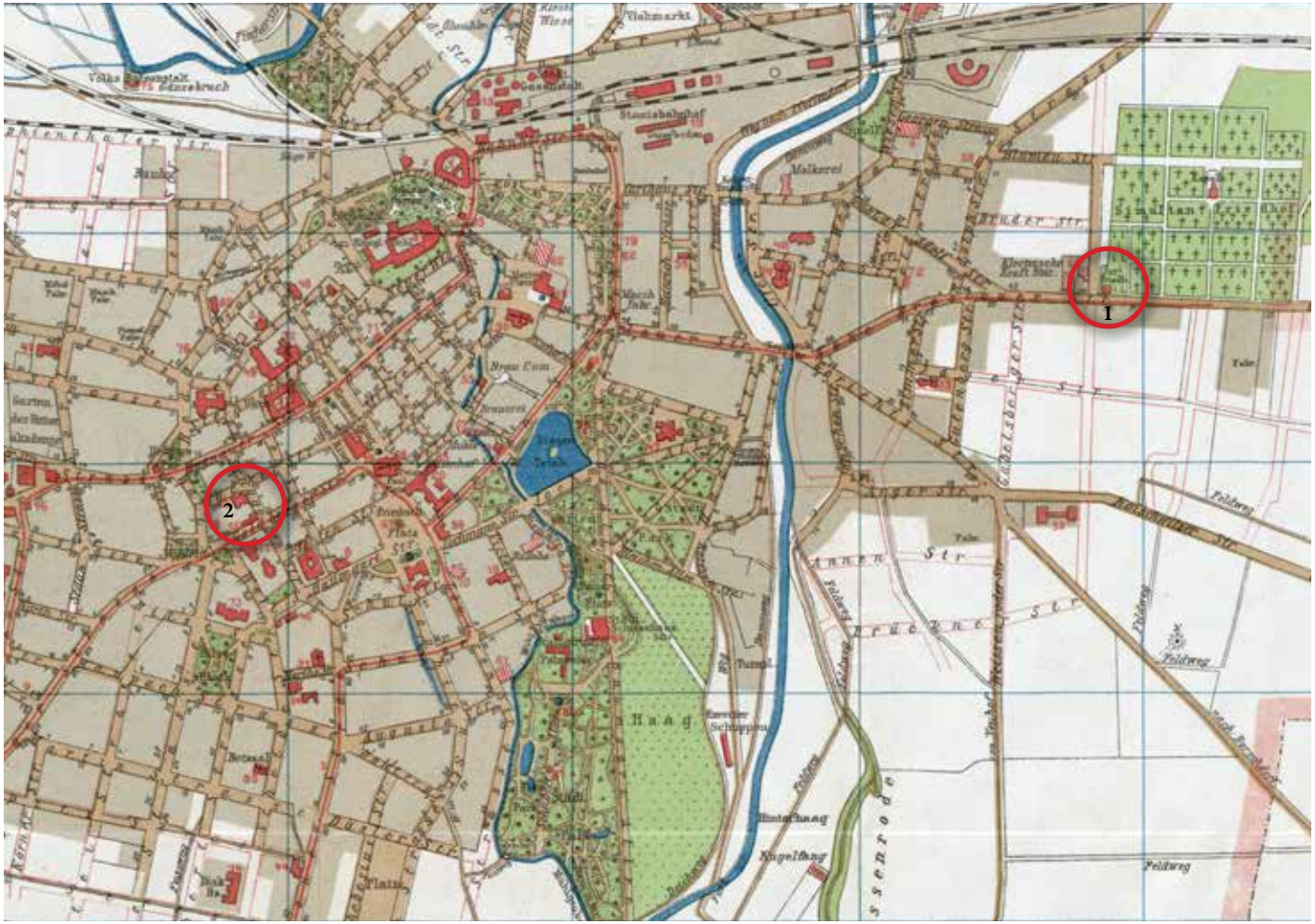
THE ECONOMIC LIFE OF JEWS IN LIEGNITZ / LEGNICA

Legnica (Liegnitz before World War II) is now one of the two Lower Silesian towns which are home to both Jewish religious and Jewish secular organizations. The town's Jewish Community, which meets religious needs of its members, and the local branch of the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ) are remnants of the large Jewish population who settled in Legnica after World War II and then emigrated to Israel, the United States, Western Europe, Denmark and Sweden. But what makes Legnica special is the contribution of its Jews, both German and Polish ones, to the economic life of the town. Here, this contribution was especially significant.

Jews were the town's economic elite since the second half of the 19th century when, after the emancipation edict had been issued, they could settle in the town and received citizenship rights. The first Jew who became a citizen of Liegnitz – Meier Neumann Prausnitz – opened a liquor store in the Market Square. In 1836, Gottlob Jochmann, the then mayor of Liegnitz, noted that of the 48 Jewish families in the town as many as 41 were involved in trade. In 1881, there were 136 merchants and tradesmen, two factory owners, five physicians, veterinarians and pharmacists, two lawyers and six crafstmen among the Jews. At that time, the number of German Jews living in the town reached 946 and was the highest ever. With time the number of Jewish merchants and tradesmen was diminishing while there were more and more factory owners and professionals. Real estate owners were a special category. Within the space of nearly 100 years – from 1821 to 1920 – as many as 42 buildings in the Market Square (Ring) were owned by Jews.

One of the important figures in the economic life of Liegnitz was Raphael Gabriel Prausnitzer (1762-1846), originally from Glogau (Głogów), a municipal councillor and the owner of the oldest bank in the town. But he is remembered by history not thanks to his

The synagogue on Bäckerstrasse (now Piekarska Street) in Liegnitz.



A fragment of a map of Liegnitz with Jewish sites marked by the red circles, 1911.

1 – Jewish cemetery, **2** – synagogue on Bäckerstrasse

financial success, but thanks to his services to Jewish society. The Jews of Liegnitz owed him the construction of a synagogue and the establishment of a new Jewish graveyard. In 1837, he bought a piece of land owned by a municipal cemetery and donated it to the Jewish Community. The graveyard was located in the south-western corner of the multi-faith cemetery between Breslauer Strasse and Insterburger Strasse (now Wrocławska and Cmentarna Streets). The Jewish cemetery was officially opened in 1838. A Neo-Romanesque funeral chapel was later built there.

In 1845, Raphael Gabriel Prausnitzer bought a piece of land for a synagogue and donated 4,000 thalers for its construction. The site was located within the town's former defensive area, at the corner of Bäckerstrasse (now Piekarska Street) and Synagogen Strasse (now Gwarna Street). Unfortunately, the founder did not live to see the opening of the synagogue on June 16, 1847. The synagogue in Liegnitz – just like many other buildings of this kind in Germany – was burnt down in 1938 during the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) pogrom.

As was mentioned above, the sector in which Jews played an important role in the town was trade. But writing about the Liegnitz of the 19th century, it is worth noting that its Jewish residents very quickly turned from small shop owners into wealthy merchants involved in large-scale retail and wholesale trade. Many of them had big department stores. One of such traders was Joseph Cohn who opened a store in the Market Square in 1836. In the 1880s, the store was taken over by Georg, Siegfried and Franz Pinoff. They converted the building and in 1898 opened there the most modern department store in Liegnitz. Called Concordia, it was the town's first building fully used for retail purposes. It was a shopping arcade with four storeys connected by a staircase and a passenger lift, the first one in Liegnitz.

The department store of Ludwig Haurwitz in Liegnitz.

A modern and exclusive department store, run by another Jew, Ludwig Haurwitz, was situated at 9/11 Frauen Strasse (now Najświętszej Marii Panny Street). Retail activity started there in 1900 and continued until Nazi times. It is worth noting that Ludwig Haurwitz also had a department store in Glogau (Głogów). Built at the corner of 6 Preussische Strasse (now Grodzka Street) and Mohrenstrasse (now Garncarska Street), it was called Kaufhaus Ludwig Haurwitz. In 1913, its owners were Paul Haurwitz and Sally Licht.

Haurwitz's store in Liegnitz was advertised as the first and biggest department store where one could buy

women's, men's and children's clothes. The building was in the art deco style, had three storeys and 19 huge windows. It offered a wide product range: clothing, footwear, wedding attire, textiles, furs, carpets and household products. At the end of the 1930s, the Jewish owners of the company were forced to sell it. Ludwig Haurwitz shared the fate of the thousands of German Jews who did not manage to escape from Nazi Germany. Although he left with his family for Berlin, he was deported from the city in 1942 to the ghetto in Riga and was killed there. At present, the building of the former luxury department store of Ludwig Haurwitz houses a Tesco chain store.

In the second half of the 19th century and in the 20th century the town was a centre of the textile industry. Many Jewish-owned stores specialized in selling locally produced textiles. The northern frontage of the Market Square (Ring) housed, among others, the textile stores of Eduard Doctor, Moritz Guttfeld and David Buchholtz. The first had his store in the now non-existent building at no. 22 at the corner of the Market Square (Ring 22) and Johannesstrasse (now Św. Jana Street). The Eduard Doctor company, operating since 1877, specialized in the sales of woollen and linen products and haberdashery. With time, it became well known not only in

The department store of Wolff Krimmer in Liegnitz (first from right).

The Jewish cemetery in Legnica, the tombstone of the Ludwig Haurwitz's family.

Liegnitz, but also beyond Silesia. After Eduard Doctor's death in 1923, the company was taken over by his sons, Max and Alex, who ran it until the 1930s. Moritz Guttfeld had his department store in the adjacent building at number 20/21. The store was in operation since 1879 and had another outlet on Burgstrasse (now Grodzka Street). At the end of the northern frontage, at number 16, there was the store of David Buchholtz. It operated since 1846, offering fashionable women's accessories. After the death of the owner in 1902 the firm was run by his wife, Sophie, and then – until the 1930s – by Max Cohn.

The Elkush & Bick company was also involved in the textile business, running a store with hosiery and woollen and tricot products. Additionally, the owners, Jacob Elkush and Meyer Bick, had a warehouse and a mechanized knitting plant on Petristrasse (now Św. Piotra Street).

The food industry was another industrial sector which developed in Liegnitz in the late 19th and early 20th century. Numerous fruit wine-making businesses appeared in the town. One of them was Adolf Doctor's company established in 1874 at 20 Breslauer Strasse (now Wrocławska Street). It had the biggest wine cellars in the country, situated on Anger Strasse, Breslauer Strasse, Carthaus Strasse and Grünstrasse (now Fabryczna, Wrocławska, Kartuska and Zielona Streets). The company specialized in the production of liqueurs, rum, cognac and fruit wines. In the 1920s, after the retirement of Adolf Doctor, his partner Richard Liebrecht became the sole owner of the company. Salomon Kaufmann operated in the same business. He had a wholesale store on Wrocławska Street selling wines and alcoholic beverages.

Polish Jews also made a contribution to the development of the economic life of Liegnitz before the war. One of them was Isak Silbermann from the town of Jarosław in south-eastern Poland. In Liegnitz, he married Felicia, a daughter of Samuel Landsberger, the owner of a shoe store. At the beginning of the 20th century, he took over the family business and created the biggest shoe company in the region. It was located at number 30 in the Market Square (Ring 30) and had an outlet at 1 Frauen Strasse (now Najświętszej Marii Panny Street). After Isak's death in 1928, the firm was run by his wife and the oldest son, Sami. The family was forced to sell the business after the Nazis came to power. Four children of Isak Silbermann managed to emigrate from Germany to Palestine and the United States. Their mother, who stayed in Liegnitz, was deported to the Theresienstadt Ghetto where she died in 1942.

However, the best known product made by a firm belonging to a Liegnitz Jew was not at all a textile product of excellent quality nor exquisite liqueur but… a toy. This toy was the famous teddy bear made in Moritz Pappe's toy and doll factory set up in 1869. It was situated at 9 Kaiserstrasse (now Kardynała Bolesława Kominka Street). However, the teddy bear was not an original German idea – it originated in the United States as a cartoon character and was named after US President

Teddy bears from the Moritz Pappe factory: "Blue Beate" (right) and a teddy bear with a musical box (left), both made in 1920.

Theodore Roosevelt. The first teddy bears were reportedly made in the United States, but only the textile toys manufactured in Germany by Margarete Steiff and discovered by American business people at a Leipzig fair in 1903 conquered the toy market. Soon, this teddy bear with a German and American origin was all the rage in the United States and every American child dreamt of it. But German children came to know and love the teddy bear also thanks to the factory of a Jewish entrepreneur from Liegnitz. When the production of teddy bears started there in 1910 the company was already run by Moritz's sons, Arthur and Carl Pappe. The factory manufactured its own version of the toy, known as "Moritz Pappe Teddy Bears." Made of mohair, the teddies had amber-coloured glass eyes. The company became famous thanks to its teddy bears with a musical box and thanks to the clown teddy bears launched in the 1930s. It is worth noting that in its heyday the company had offices across Europe. Today Moritz Pappe teddy bears are collector's items and command very high prices at auctions, including those held at Christie's, a prestigious auction house in London.

A completely new period began in the history of the town after World War II and this was due not only to the change of borders and the fact that Liegnitz (now called Legnica) became part of Poland. For almost half a century Legnica was to be the headquarters of the Northern Group of Forces of the Soviet Army. Its presence in Legnica had a significant influence on the town's life. In the initial period, apart from Soviet soldiers, there were still Germans living in Legnica, but with time they were expelled. Soon came the Lemkos and Ukrainians, who were forcefully resettled here in the Operation Vistula, and Greeks who arrived as refugees after a civil war in their country. Polish Jews, resettled from Poland's eastern borderland and from small towns of the Lublin and Kielce regions, played an important role in this international melting pot. Most of them had survived the war in forced labour camps of the Soviet Union. They travelled to Lower Silesia by train for several weeks – from Tashkent, Samarkand, Alma-Ata and other places – to start a new life. Since the first months of their stay in the town, which initially was called Lignica in Polish, they contributed to organizing its economic life.

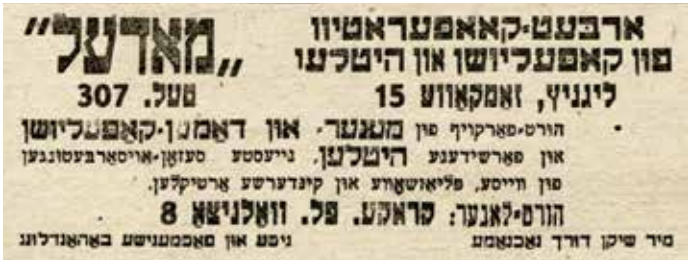
At the beginning of July 1946, there were already around 4,450 Jews in Legnica and it was the highest number of Jewish people in the town. The main problem with their employment was that the town was not an industrial centre and many of the workshops that did exist had been looted. The local Jewish Committee tried to secure employment for Jews in state-run factories, including a Soviet tank repair plant, but this did not help much. This is why one of the main tasks of this organization was stimulating employment among "Jewish masses" by organizing vocational courses and schools, initiating

and supporting worker cooperatives and sending young people to industrial plants.

One of the forms of this stimulation in the post-war period was the activity of Jewish worker cooperatives. They employed specialists who had previously received training at the local branch of the Society for Handicraft and Agricultural Work among the Jews (ORT). In the 1940s, there were eight Jewish cooperatives in Legnica: four tailoring cooperatives – Jedność (Unity), Igła (Needle), Model and Wytwórnia Kapeluszy (Hat Workshop); two shoemaking cooperatives – Dobrobyt (Prosperity) and Przyszłość (Future); a carpentry and construction cooperative – Odbudowa (Reconstruction); and food cooperative – Chemol. With time, the Jedność and Igła cooperatives merged into a single one called Jedność while the Dobrobyt and Przyszłość cooperatives merged into one called Dobrobyt. The Hat Workshop changed name to the Rosenberg Hatmaking Cooperative. The cooperatives had their own outlets throughout the town. Dobrobyt, for example, had 30 workshops and 10 points where shoes were collected for repair.

Workers of the Model cooperative in Legnica in the 1940s.

In his reminiscences published in the columns of the "Słowo Żydowskie" monthly, Simon Fish, a former resident of Legnica, mentioned one more cooperative, which had operated in Legnica on Rewolucji Październikowej Street (now Senatorska Street). It was established



An advertisement for the Model cooperative from the "Dos Naje Lebn" weekly.

An advertisement for the Jedność cooperative from the "Dos Naje Lebn" weekly.

in the 1950s after the last wave of repatriation of Polish citizens from the Soviet Union when further Jews arrived in Legnica. The cooperative was called Transport Konny (Horse-Drawn Transport) and dealt with coal distribution. All the coachmen were Jewish. The Postęp (Progress) general cooperative, which specialized in the production of sweets and matzah, was also active in that period.

The problem of employment for Jews in Legnica could not be solved through the activity of worker cooperatives alone. This is why many Jews, also helped by the Jewish Committee, opened their private workshops. The Association of Jewish Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Legnica was set up at the Jewish Committee as early as September 1946. The main goal was to protect the interests of these occupational groups. Moreover, the craftsmen and tradesmen had a chance to receive legal assistance and financial support from the organization. There were many private tailor's, shoe repair, butcher's and hairdresser's businesses run in the town by Jews. They opened their stores and workshops mainly in the Old Town, especially on Grodzka Street and Panieńska Street (now Najświętszej Marii Panny Street), but also on Środkowa, Chojnowska and Złotoryjska Streets. A quotation from Simon Fish's reminiscences excellently renders the character of this Jewish world in Legnica in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s: "As children, we went to Jewish doctors, a Jewish hairdresser, tailor and cobbler, and to a Jewish bakery."

The last shoe repair shop run in Legnica by a Jewish craftsman closed in the 21st century. Its owner was Mojsze Sznejser.

What has survived of this rich economic life of the German and Polish Jews in Legnica? The legacy of the German Jews includes the converted department store of Ludwig Haurwitz, teddy bears made by the Moritz Pappe company, now a great attraction for collectors across the world, and above all the monumental tombstones of the wealthiest merchants and bankers at the Jewish cemetery on Wrocławska Street. A few decades later other people involved in business activity were laid to rest next to them at the same cemetery. The German Jews had once tended to look down on Jews from the East, calling them with some contempt "Ostjuden". Even though these Polish Jews – tradesmen and shopkeepers, shoemakers and tailors, bakers and hairdressers – did not make a fortune in post-war Poland, they successfully supported their families, doing international business in Legnica. The last Jewish cobbler from Kartuska Street and anecdotes about illegal trade with Soviet soldiers in Poland's only town of its kind, called for years "Little Moscow," is also something that will definitely be remembered about the Polish Jews in Legnica.

A list of private Jewish small businesses in Legnica in 1955

Given name and surname	Address	Date of registration
SHOEMAKERS		
Abram Ajzensztros	2a Środkowa Street	Oct. 26, 1946
Gerszon Appel	1 Muzealna Street	Sept. 18, 1946
Fiszer Bekier	16 Grodzka Street	Dec. 10, 1946
Mojżesz Cukierman	30 Zamkowa Street	Sept. 9, 1946
Szlam Drapacz	50 Złotoryjska Street	Oct. 2, 1952
Abram Glus	6 Chojnowska Street	March 1, 1946
Majer Gutrajman	32 Chojnowska Street	March 2, 1948
Mojżesz Hamerman	21 Chojnowska Street	June 26, 1948
Abram Klajn	67 Grodzka Street	Aug. 12, 1948
Hejn Klejman	6 Róży Luksemburg Street	Oct. 14, 1948
Eljasz Kryształ	41 Grodzka Street	May 7, 1948
Icek Lemel	15 Środkowa Street	March 3, 1952
Juda Lubraniecki	8 Dziennikarska Street	Oct. 17, 1946
Lejbko Mandelbaum	21 Chojnowska Street	Sept. 1, 1948
Mojżesz Nimowa	21 Chojnowska Street	Aug. 3, 1949
Mendel Przytycki	23 Jaworzyńska Street	Feb. 6, 1948
Ozjasz Rozenrauch	36 Złotoryjska Street	Oct. 14, 1947
Moszek Skórnik	25 Złotoryjska Street	May 15, 1950
Hein Sobol	34 Chojnowska Street	June 19, 1948
Berek Szak	41 Chojnowska Street	Oct. 5, 1952
Chein Szrenkiel	21 Chojnowska Street	June 26, 1948
Szyja Śliwowicz	45 Chojnowska Street	Oct. 5, 1946
Majer Zylbersztajn	21 Nowy Świat Street	June 26, 1947
Hersz Zysk	26 Róży Luksemburg Street	June 23, 1948
TAILORS/DRESSMAKERS		
Abram Blumsztajn	28 Panieńska Street	Oct. 8, 1948
Ben Ciechanowicz	42 Panieńska Street	Oct. 13, 1947
Michał Fuks	2 Wazów Street	March 14, 1952
Szyja Fuks	5 Grodzka Street	Feb. 23, 1948
Szaja Goldsztajn	38 Środkowa Street	Aug. 3, 1948
Abram Gurman	39 Piastowska Street	Sept. 21, 1948
Chein Mandler	26 Armii Czerwonej Street	Sept. 23, 1948
Izak Obywalt	52 Złotoryjska Street	July 21, 1949
Szloma Paliwoda	2a Hanki Sawickiej Street	May 15, 1951
Natan Rubinsztajn	31, 1 Maja Street	May 20, 1951
Ben Stejklaper	14 Róży Luksemburg Street	March 10, 1950
Mordko Sztajnbuch	38 Środkowa Street	Aug. 3, 1948
Abram Wolf	38 Piastowska Street	July 8, 1947
Gejnoch Zalcman	16 Grodzka Street	Dec. 9, 1947
SEAMSTRESSES		
Elka Zylbersztajn	38 Chojnowska Street	Dec. 8, 1947
FURRIERS		
Wolf Laner	32 Chojnowska Street	June 18, 1946
BRUSHMAKERS		
Salomon Berkowicz	25 Panieńska Street	Sept. 20, 1951
Lejb Okon	42 Grodzka Street	Sept. 19, 1952
Samuel Pilersdorf	23 Złotoryjska Street	Dec. 30, 1946
BARBERS/HAIRDRESSERS		
Majer Frenkiel	23 Ułańska Street	April 15, 1948
Moszek Herszkowicz	63 Chojnowska Street	June 7, 1946
Jakub Morgenstern	32 Grodzka Street	Jan. 12, 1952
LOCKSMITHS		
Perec Percowicz	14 Piastowska Street	Oct. 23, 1946
Szymon Sznajer	12 Panieńska Street	July 14, 1948
Hersz Włodowski	36 Panieńska Street	Jan. 25, 1951

Source: Cz. Kowalak, Z. Maksymowicz, "Rzemiosło Legnickie 1949-1989" in: *Szkice Legnickie*, vol. 35, p.175-178.

THE LAST SUCH JEWS IN LEGNICA. SAMUEL HALICZER AND MOJSZE SZNEJSER

An unusual book by Małgorzata Niezabitowska and Tomasz Tomaszewski – "Remnants. The Last Jews of Poland" – came out in Poland in 1993. It had been earlier published in the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, Austria and Switzerland, and everywhere provoked a very emotional response. The book, which predicted the end of the Jewish world in Poland, was to immortalize the last generation of Jews living in the country. It turned out, however, that the authors of the book had been wrong – their heroes were not the last because Jewish life saw a revival after 1989 in diverse forms.

I always wondered why the authors, in their search for Jews, had never come to Lower Silesia. Perhaps it would turn out that then, in the mid-1980s, there were still quite a lot of these "last Jews" living there. Even many years later in numerous Lower Silesian cities and towns – Dzierżoniów, Bielawa, Legnica, Wałbrzych, Kłodzko and Wrocław (German names: Reichenbach, Langenbielau,

Samuel Haliczer at the premises of the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews (TSKŻ) in Legnica, seated third from left.

Liegnitz, Waldenburg, Glatz and Breslau) – there were Jews who for many reasons deserved to be called the "last" – the last who had been born before World War II and remembered the Jewish world before the Holocaust, the last who could speak Yiddish well, although they had less and less opportunity to talk to someone, and the last who were always Jewish – from birth to death.

Probably the last Jewish bookseller in Poland was Samuel Haliczer from Legnica. I met him in the Jewish Community in Wrocław in 1999. I remember him calling me "shikse" during one of our first meetings and it was not at all meant as a sign of friendliness… I also remember that as a religious Jew he did not touch money on Saturdays – this is forbidden during the Shabbat – and people put the money due to him into his jacket's pocket. And I remember him later as an inconspicuous old man who came every Friday from Legnica to Wrocław, a few hours before the beginning of the Shabbat, to complete a minyan. At that time I knew little about his past. It was only later that I learnt that he was one of the Lower Silesian Jews with the most extensive knowledge of Judaism. And after his death I realized that he had been an almost legendary figure in Legnica… He is remembered as a teacher, lover of books and antiquarian bookseller who could talk about books for hours on end and even quarrel about them. He also had many friends among Legnica's writers. But before he appeared in Legnica fate had not spared him…

Samuel Haliczer was born on May 22, 1914 in Załoźce (now Zaliztsi in Ukraine), a small town located on the Seret river in the then Tarnopol (Ternopil) province, to the family of Łazarz and Antonina, née Hochfeld. Of the town's 7,315 residents in 1900 almost 2,400 were Jewish, most of them tradesmen and craftsmen. Poles and Ruthenians constituted the rest of the population. Several persons named Haliczer can be found in the town's address books. One of them (M. Haliczer) ran a photographer's shop in the years 1926-1930, another one (M. Haliczer) was a painter in the same period, two others (Ch. Haliczer and I. Haliczer) dealt in 1928-1930 with trade in various products while the last one (A. Haliczer) traded in iron.

Samuel Haliczer

Samuel Haliczer told his acquaintances in Legnica that his father had managed a local mill. Although he was not an educated person, he attached great importance to his son's education and spared no expense for this purpose. This is why Samuel completed secondary school in Tarnopol and then left to study in Warsaw. He was a student of history and German studies at the University of Warsaw and simultaneously studied at the Institute for Judaic Studies, a Jewish educational and research institution established in 1928. For eight years the school had no premises of its own. In 1936, it moved to the new building of the Central Judaic Library (now the building of the Emanuel Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute) next to the Great Synagogue on Tłomackie Street. The Institute for Judaic Studies was to educate progressive rabbis and secondary school teachers of Judaic subjects. The Institute was composed of two faculties: of rabbinic studies and of historical and social studies. The lecturers were the most outstanding scholars and experts in Judaic studies, including Mojżesz Schorr, Majer Bałaban and Ignacy Schiper. Only around 100 students graduated from the Institute. It is not known whether Samuel Haliczer was one of them, but in Lower Silesia he was regarded as the only living graduate of the legendary Institute… Thanks to these studies he became a Torah

reader – he could read the Torah in a synagogue, and lead prayers and funerals.

He completed his studies at the University of Warsaw in 1939, submitted his master's thesis in the summer and was to defend it after the summer holidays. The outbreak of World War II on September 1, 1939 made this impossible. Samuel Haliczer returned to the land of his birth, which went under Soviet occupation, and worked in Tarnopol until 1941 as an office worker in a measurement or provisions office. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union he escaped from Tarnopol and lived in the country estate of his father's friends. He hid there until the Red Army entered the area.

For unknown reasons he did not decide to arrive in Poland in the 1940s as part of the resettlement of Polish citizens from the Soviet Union. He returned to the country in 1957 as a "late repatriate" together with his wife Ida and two-year-old son Leon. He reportedly brought with him three large chests – as every repatriate did. But in Samuel Haliczer's case, two chests were filled with books… The family settled in Legnica on Jaworzyńska Street. In 1965, his wife and son emigrated to Israel, but he did not want to even think of leaving. Samuel Haliczer worked for a short time for a bookbinding cooperative, a public library in Legnica and then as a distributor for the Dom Książki book distribution enterprise. However, his most important occupation was buying and selling books. In the 1960s and 1970s, he became a one-man bookselling institution, delivering books to the homes of his private clients. He dealt with this at a time when books were very sought after and in short supply, in Poland. They were bought under the counter and using informal connections. You could order everything from Samuel Haliczer: encyclopaedias, lexicons, dictionaries and the latest novels – the books which were then almost impossible to get.

At that time, he also got involved in the life of Legnica's Jews, especially the Jewish Religious Congregation (later Jewish Community). At the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ), he taught a Yiddish language course.

He died in 2002. A short article, "The End of an Era," was published after his death in Legnica's "Konkrety" weekly. The article was devoted to a bookseller who had been a fixture in the town for decades, having become in the 1960s and 1970s one of its most distinctive figures. The author cited the words of Anatol Kaszen, one of the leaders of the Wrocław Jewish Community: "It was a figure taken straight out of Thomas Mann's novels. He always reminded me of Bruno Schultz. Short, energetic, very lively, for years he walked the town's streets with two briefcases full of books. It was him who supplied books to most of the private libraries of Legnica's educated class in the times when it was very difficult to buy a good book."

And what was Samuel Haliczer like in private? He reportedly had a big heart and loved women at any age, which must have caused him troubles on many occasions… He also had his little sins. Anatol Kaszen, who knew him very well, once said: "Otherwise, we know that from time to time Samuel ate loin of pork, pork knuckle and many other dishes which should stick in the throat of a devout Jew. But he always found an explanation. And although he knew that you cannot deceive God he did it in such a way that everyone forgave him."

His acquaintances in Legnica remember yet another very important trait of Samuel Haliczer's personality – in connection with his numerous contacts with Poles, both professional and private, he was often asked about various things concerning Jewish religion and culture. He was eager to explain everything to those who asked, displaying a great teaching talent and even inviting them to Jewish ceremonies.

Mojsze Sznejser (first from right) with his brother Abram in a shoe repair shop, Łuków, 1930s.

Mojsze Sznejser (first from right) with his brother and uncles, Radzyń Podlaski or Łuków, the middle of the 1930s.

Among those who paid tribute to him at the Jewish cemetery on Wrocławska Street in Legnica where he was buried, apart from the local Jews and neighbours, were also local booksellers. Someone said over his grave that quite a few families in Legnica owed him their libraries…

Mojsze Sznejser, the last Jewish cobbler in Legnica and perhaps even in Poland, is another legendary figure.

Mojsze Sznejser was born in Łuków, a town in the Lublin region, on March 5, 1920. His father, Dawid Josel, was also a cobbler while his mother, Szajndla, née Sosnowiec, was a housewife. Mojsze was the oldest of four children. He had two brothers, Abram and Icek, who died as a child, and a sister named Chana. The family lived on Józefa Piłsudskiego Street where the father had a shoe repair shop. They spoke Yiddish at home, but Mojsze could also speak Polish because he attended a Jewish primary school in Łuków and the school had Polish teachers. At the same time, he also attended religious schools, a Talmud Torah school and Cheder, where he learned Hebrew. The lessons were paid for by his father. Mojsze's reminiscences render the atmosphere of Jewish life in a small town before World War II: "On Saturday, nobody worked. You were not allowed to do anything, not even boil some water. If the candles burnt out they were not lit again. If you had electric light someone else came to switch it on. There was an oil lamp at our home and when it burnt out no one lit it again. Everything for the Shabbat, for Saturday, was prepared on Friday. Mother prepared cholent and took it to the baker's because their oven was warm all Friday. They put all the pots in, then on Saturday opened the oven and everything was warm. They brought the cholent home and everybody ate it."

In 1932, when Mojsze was 12, his father died. This is when childhood ended for him and his siblings. As the oldest child he had to leave school and help provide for the family. His further education was only at evening courses. Initially, he worked with his brother

Mojsze Sznejser (seated first from left) with his comrades, Łuków, ca. 1946.

Mojsze Sznejser with his wife Chaja, Legnica, the end of the 1940s.

for a master craftsman as an apprentice. Around 1936 he left for Warsaw, where his uncle lived, and started to work as a cobbler. He returned to Łuków shortly before the outbreak of the war. In September or October 1939, he fled with his brother Abram to a forest where they hid for some time. They decided to escape to the East. In the city of Brześć (now Brest in Belarus), they crossed the border between the parts of Poland occupied by Germany and the Soviet Union. They were caught and taken to Belarus to the city of Gomel. Mojsze Sznejser worked there in a machine factory. Probably in 1941, after the outbreak of the Soviet-German war, he escaped by train to the east of the Soviet Union to the city of Kurgan where he found a job as a cobbler. He was then called up to the Red Army. However, as a Polish citizen, he was not sent to the front, but to an aluminium factory in Chelyabinsk in the Urals region. After some time, accused of attempting to desert from the armed forces, he was brought to court and sentenced to death. The penalty was then exchanged into 10 years of hard labour. He was sent to a labour camp in Nizhny Tagil in the Urals region. After some time, thanks to the intervention of a Jew who was a functionary in the camp, he was sent to another work camp – this time in Moscow. He worked there, with tens of other cobblers, repairing soldiers' boots, which were later sent to the front. What saved him then was that he worked very quickly and was able to do 400-450% more work than was required. He stayed in the Moscow camp until 1946. Mojsze Sznejser remembered that there was an amnesty for prisoners in the Soviet Union in that year and Soviet citizens were released from camps. And this is when, by chance, he managed to regain freedom – only because someone read in the documents that he came from Łuków and mistook it for Velikiye Luki near Moscow…

Almost all of the Sznejser family perished in the Holocaust. Mojsze did not know either whether the brother with whom he had escaped to the East managed to survive. After the war Mojsze returned to his hometown and then – with his wife Chaja – moved to Lower Silesia

where many Jews had settled. First, he settled in Dzierżoniów (Reichenbach) where his eldest child, Dawid Berek, was born in 1947. Although he had a job there as a cobbler in a Jewish cooperative, the family soon moved to Legnica because his uncle, the youngest brother of his mother, lived in the town. Soon, his brother Abram – who had found himself in Romania – also turned up in Legnica. He arrived with his Romanian Jewish wife. But the newly regained family did not stay with Mojsze for long. After two years Abram and his wife left for Israel.

In Legnica, Mojsze started to work as a cobbler – at first in his uncle's shop and then at the Dobrobyt shoemaking cooperative, which operated until 1960. After it was closed down he decided to open his own shop on Kartuska Street. He worked there for over 45 years.

Legnica became a second home for Mojsze Sznejser. This is where his further children were born – son Szama in 1950 and daughter Syma in 1952. And this is where he could find a semblance of Jewish life from before the war because many Polish Jews lived in the town and set up there their organizations, schools, worker cooperatives and even parties. One may capture the atmosphere of this post-war "Jewish" Legnica in Mojsze Sznejser's reminiscences: "There were many people at that time. There was a prayer house and a TSKŻ club. I attended both places. I always went to the TSKŻ in the evening – we came, we played domino, there was a buffet. Life was different, intense. We used to go to the club, a park and frequently to the cinema. The club was on Nowy Świat Street. You could go there every day. Artists arrived and played, there was a Jewish theatre. The theatre was also on Nowy Świat Street. They came from Warsaw, Wrocław, the plays were in Yiddish. Poles also sang here in Yiddish."

After the anti-Semitic campaign of March 1968 two of Mojsze Sznejser's children emigrated from Poland – a son to Israel and the daughter to Denmark. But he never wanted to leave because his home was here. The eldest son stayed in Poland with his father.

Chaja Sznejser with her children: sons Dawid Berek and Szama and daughter Syma, Legnica, 1950s.

As the years went by, Mojsze first survived the death of his son in Israel, then the death of his wife, the daughter in Denmark and the eldest son in Legnica. In these hard times, work was his escape: "And I continued to work. And I work to this day because I want to live normally. I miss Łuków, my town. Life was nice there. (…) What is the point in sitting and waiting for death? You have to move around." He still ran his shoe repair shop in 2005, when he was 85…

I met Mojsze Sznejser in Legnica in 2012 at a ceremony marking the 74th anniversary of the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) pogrom. The ceremony was organized by the Main Board of the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ). During the official part, held on the site of the destroyed synagogue, after the speeches given by the Legnica Mayor and chairman of the TSKŻ, Mojsze Sznejser suddenly spoke. He said a poem in Hebrew first and then recited in Polish:

Mojsze Sznejser in front of his shoe repair shop, Legnica, 1997.

"What is Poland? Come to know it!
It is a great, beautiful country.
It is a homeland, your mother,
Who loves you till the end.
And these fields behind the mountains,
And these mountains behind the woods
And these rivers flowing by,
And these songs that will never die,
And these people that you know.
This is Poland, our country.

Listening to this poem – recited with great excitement by a 92-year-old Polish Jew who had never wanted to leave Poland because he regarded it as his country – you could feel a lump in your throat.

Samuel Haliczer and Mojsze Sznejser were not the last Jews in Legnica. Still today, in many Lower Silesian cities and small towns you can meet Jews whose stories of life could be readily used as film screenplays. But few want to listen to their tales today…

LUBIN / LÜBEN

JEWS IN LÜBEN

Lubin (German: Lüben) never had a large German-Jewish population. It was not located on important transport routes nor had a tradition of Jewish settlement. Likewise, the Polish Jews who came to Lower Silesia in great numbers after World War II did not settle in Lubin. The history of Jews in the town is forgotten, the more so as no material trace of their presence has survived. The synagogue was probably destroyed during war operations and there is no trace left of the cemetery…

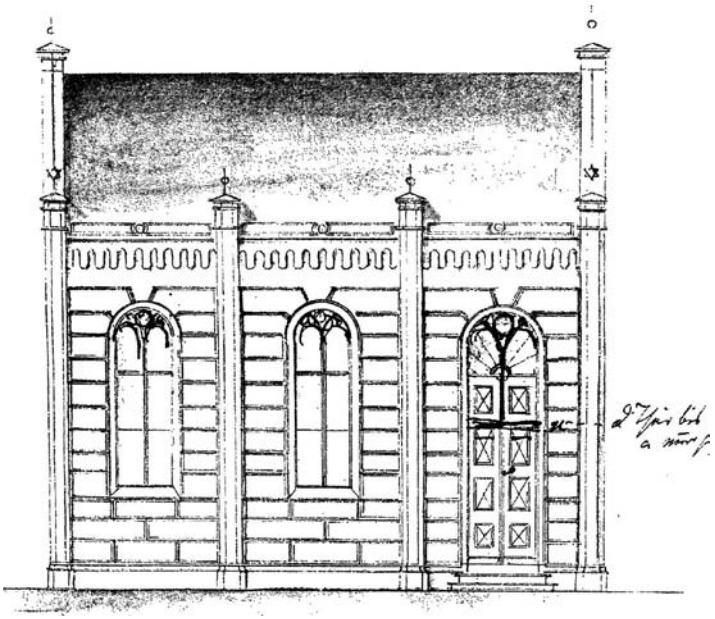
The first mention of Jews in Lüben comes from the Middle Ages. There are records surviving from the early 14th century about Jewish presence in Lüben (Lubin), Steinau an der Oder (Ścinawa), Guhrau (Góra) and Fraustadt (Wschowa). But at that time, Jews definitely did not form a large group in the town. Organized Jewish settlement began in Lüben only after the 1812 emancipation edict, but the town never became the seat of an independent Jewish Community.

The family of Mendel Hirsch Berliner from Glogau (Głogów) was the first to settle in the town. He came to Lüben in 1814. Another Jewish family – merchant Herz Brieger from Breslau (Wrocław) and his wife – settled here six years later. In the following decades the number of Jews was rising in the wake of successive waves of settlement to reach in 1871 the maximum of 111 in the town and 130 in the whole county. The Jews were coming mainly from the region of Wielkopolska (Greater Poland), but also from the towns of Glogau and Breslau and other places located nearby in Lower Silesia. Jews from Wielkopolska made up the core of the Jewish population in the town and determined the shape of the local Jewish Community.

There were big variations in the number of Jews in Lüben. At the end of the 19th century, more and more of them were leaving for larger urban centres in Silesia and for Germany's western provinces. A few emigrated to North America, Britain and Holland.

The main task of Lüben's Jewish Community was to meet the religious needs of its members, which included organizing religious services and funerals and involved the need to have their own synagogue and cemetery. Initially, since around 1837, religious services were held in rented premises. But as more and more Jewish families settled in the town and its vicinity, in the early 1860s the premises turned out to be too small, the more so as soldiers of Jewish descent from the local garrison also took part in the services. In the second half of the 1860s, the Jewish residents of Lüben decided to build their own synagogue. It was constructed in the years 1867-1868 in a prominent place – close to the Market Square (Ring) at Schulpromenade 12 (now Mikołaja Kopernika Street). The investment project was carried out thanks to the generosity of the local Jews, support from the municipal authorities and a subsidy from the Haymann Foundation from Copenhagen. The synagogue was officially opened on September 14, 1868.

The date when the Jewish cemetery in Lüben was established is not known – this probably took place in the 1830s or 1840s. Its opening should be connected with the orders of the Prussian authorities requiring Jews to set up cemeteries in larger Jewish population centres.



A design for the Jewish synagogue in Lüben.

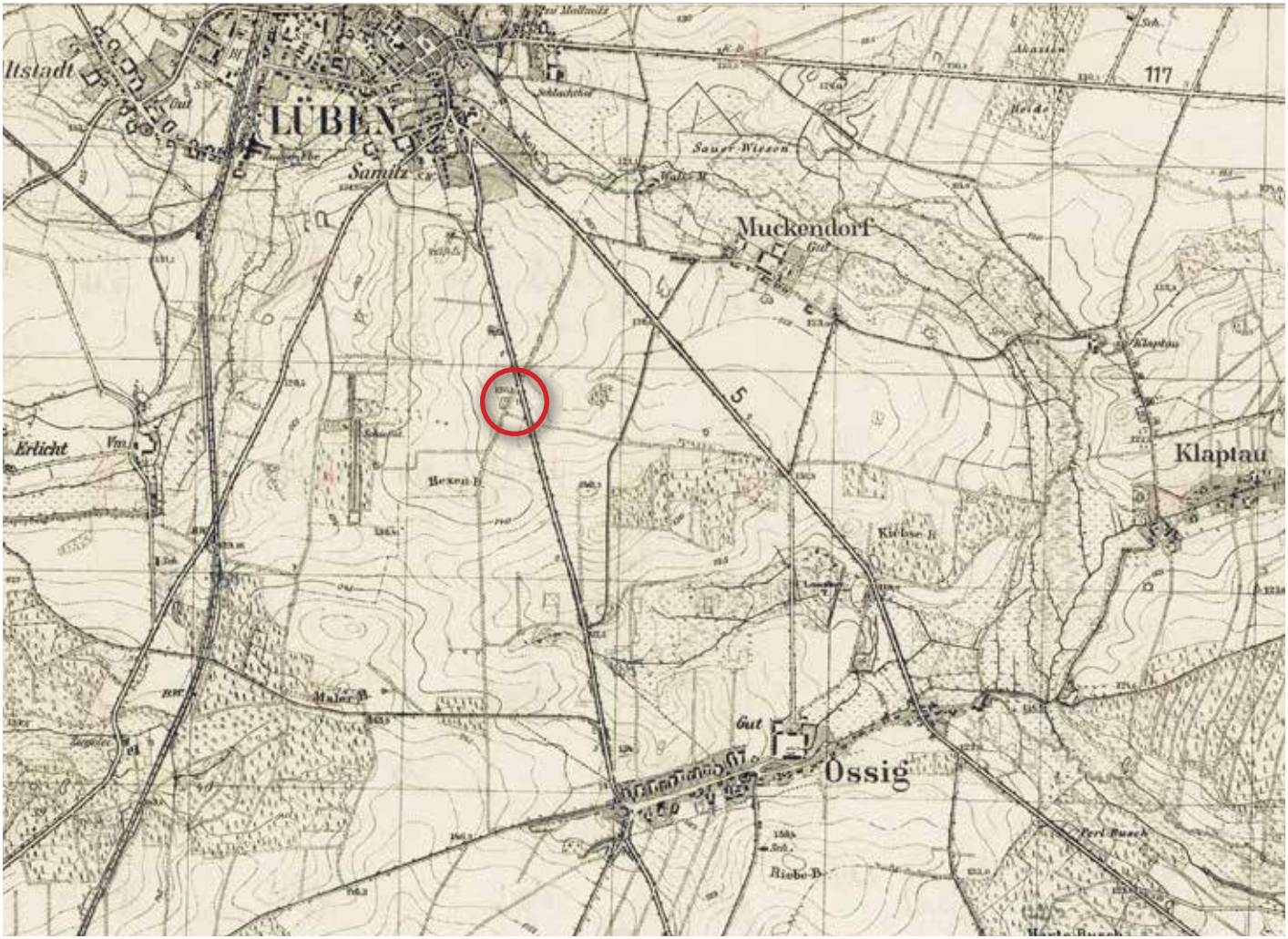
The synagogue in Lüben on Schulpromenade (now Mikołaja Kopernika Street), the beginning of the 20th century.

A small cemetery, covering 700 sq m, was opened outside the town on the road from Lüben to the village of Ossig (Osiek). Burials must have continued at the cemetery in the period between the world wars. We know that in 1943 there were still gravestones there, though they were already overturned and partly smashed, and the fence was almost totally destroyed.

Until the 1930s, there was yet another trace of the Jewish heritage in Lüben – Judengasse (Jewish Alley). Its existence should probably be associated with the location of Jewish houses in the Middle Ages. In the 1930s, after the Nazis came to power, Judengasse was renamed Schlosstrasse. The street no longer exists – it was situated between the present Mieszka I Street and 19-22 Market Square (Rynek).

In the 19th century, the Jews of Lüben were mainly involved in trade in horses, leather, wool and other products. Among the Jews were also craftsmen, working in traditional occupations (tailors, furriers and tanners) and more modern ones (distillers and cigar maker), and professionals: physicians, booksellers, lawyers and those serving the Jewish Community (shochets and cantors).

An interesting example is the history of the family of Louis Philippsberg, a furrier who settled in Lüben in the 1860s and over several decades developed a thriving business, which was later taken over by his daughter,



A fragment of a topographic map of Lüben of 1933 with the Jewish cemetery marked by the red circle.

The premises of Max Hirsch's firm in the Market Square (Ring) in Lüben (building second from right), after World War I.

The premises of Emanuel Nitschke's publishing house (building second from right), after World War I.

the first woman in Germany with the title of master furrier.

The Jewish Community was active in Lüben only until the end of the 1890s. It was dissolved in 1897 because of the outflow of the Jewish population from the town. Its legal successor was the Jewish Community in Liegnitz (now Legnica), which certainly also became the owner of the Lüben synagogue. We do not know whether religious services were held there in the period between the world wars.

In the 20th century, the Philippsberg, Nitschke and Hirsch families belonged to the town's business elite. Emanuel Nitschke owned a stationery store, printing house and publishing house on 12 Breite Strasse (now Tysiąclecia Street). Max Hirsch was the owner of a distillery and liqueur plant in the Market Square (Ring 25). In the second half of the 1930s, the two firms, as "non-Aryan property," were taken over by German owners.

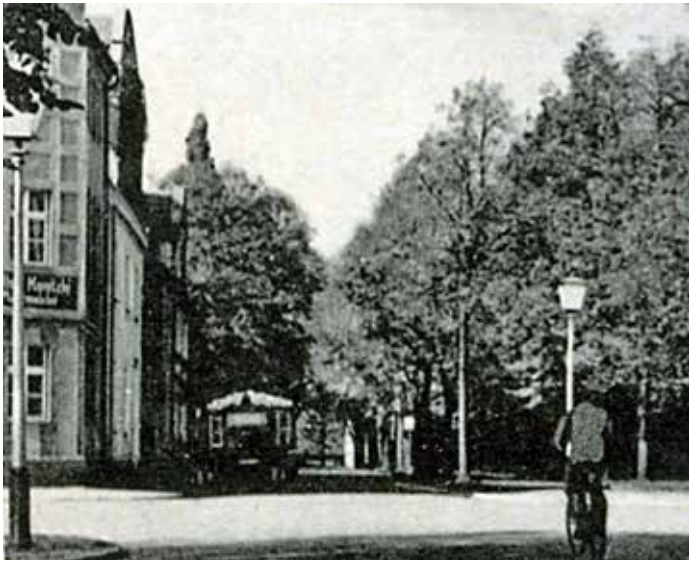
In 1932, just before Adolf Hitler came to power, there were 19 Jews living in Lüben. They were members of the Jewish Community in Liegnitz. Soon, they fell victim to repression caused by the entry into force of the Nuremberg Laws.

The developments of the Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) pogrom marked the beginning of the Holocaust in Germany. The Jews of Lüben were also affected – on November 9, 1938, the local Nazis damaged and plundered the synagogue. It was then sold and the new owner converted it into a residential building. However, the synagogue did not survive until our times – it was destroyed during war operations or soon after the war.

According to a census of the Jewish population in Silesia conducted in 1939, the Lüben county was inhabited by 27 Jews – 18 women and nine men. Fifteen Jews still lived in the town itself. Among them were Bianca Philippsberg and Meta Joseph, two women who had

An advertisement for Emanuel Nitschke's firm in Lüben.

run their family businesses until 1938. The first woman, was in charge of the Louis Philippsberg family firm since 1912. It was a retail business selling clothing, fur coats and fur products. Meta Joseph was a textile retailer. None of them managed to leave Lüben in time. The names of the two women are on the lists of Holocaust victims.



The synagogue in Lüben converted into a residential building, after 1938.

The last time Lüben was a significantly large centre of Jewish population was during World War II when a group of 100 Polish Jews, prisoners of a forced labour camp, worked in a local sugar factory.

The last physical trace of the nearly 130-year-long Jewish presence in the town was the cemetery. It was officially closed down only at the end of the 1970s during the construction of the Przylesie housing estate. There were still some gravestones surviving at that time and these were removed. It is not known what happened to them. As late as in 2005, the former Jewish cemetery on Krucza Street in Lubin was a square overgrown with violets in spring. But six years later, a modern playground for children was built on the site.

THE SAGA OF THE PHILIPPSBERG FAMILY FROM LÜBEN

I read for the first time about the history of the Philippsberg family several years ago on a German portal devoted to Lüben. I could have treated it as one of many histories of German Jewish families from Silesia if it had not been for the photographs. I saw real people – women in elegant attire and men in well-cut suits. They looked like ordinary successful Germans satisfied with their lives. One of the pictures shows them in Marienbad, a popular spa town (now Marianske Lazne in the Czech Republic). In another one, they are at the foot of the Eiger in the Bernese Alps in Switzerland. Looking at the photographs, I could not stop thinking that their wonderful world had been about to fall apart and that the Philippsbergs themselves, the proud German Reich citizens of the Mosaic faith, had been first relegated to the margins of society and then condemned to death.

Hermann Philippsberg with his wife Gertrud at the foot of the Eiger in the Bernese Alps in Switzerland.

I saw the Philippsbergs' fate as a typical Jewish family history from this area. I found in it all the possible twists of German Jews' fate in the late 19th and early 20th century: assimilation, emancipation (including women's emancipation), social advancement and business success, emigration and finally the Holocaust. And all that had begun in a provincial Lower Silesian town – Lüben.

The patriarch of the Lüben branch of the family was Louis, a furrier. Born in 1832, he came from Lissa (Leszno) in the region of Wielkopolska (Greater Poland). He married there Ulrike Schlesinger and their two sons were soon born. Around 1863 the family moved to Lüben and their further children, seven in total, started to come into the world. Ulrike and Louis had five sons – Siegfried, Hermann, Simon, Isidore and Salomon (Salo) – and two daughters – Amalie (Mally) and Bianca. We know little about their life in that period, but we may assume that, like most Jews living then in Prussia, they had abandoned traditional Judaism. They were certainly open to the ideas promoted by the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskalah). This is proven, among others, by the names they gave to their children, some very distant from Jewish tradition. The Philippsbergs, as most German Jews,

The last family holidays in Marienbad, the second half of the 1930s.

regarded assimilation as a chance to become full citizens of their country and were going to exploit this chance.

In Lüben, Louis Philippsberg developed his fur business, which expanded to become quite a large company easily providing a livelihood for a large family. The company's premises were at 6 Ober Glogauer Strasse (the street no longer exists) where the Philippsbergs lived until the 1930s.

We do not know many details of their life. We do not know which schools in Lüben their children graduated from, how often the family went to the synagogue on Schulpromenade or whether some of them took part in World War I. One thing is certain – their life in this little town must have been quite good, considering that the patriarch of the family stayed there until his death in 1912. The case was different with his sons, for whom Lüben was too small. They left for bigger cities – Waldenburg (now Wałbrzych), Breslau (now Wrocław) and Leipzig, one even decided to settle in Belgium – and developed their businesses there.

Louis Philippsberg died in 1912 and was probably buried at the Jewish cemetery in his hometown. The family business was taken over after his death by one of his children. Surprisingly, it was not one of the five sons, but the youngest daughter, Bianca.

What was the further history of the family? The eldest son, Siegfried (b. in 1859), settled with his family in Breslau at 135 Augustastrasse (now Szczęśliwa, Pabianicka and Wesoła Streets). He was a merchant trading in metal products and his firm was located at 64 Höfchenstrasse (now Tadeusza Zielińskiego Street). He had four children with his wife Regina, née Tischler – three daughters and a son. Siegfried died before World War II and was certainly buried at Breslau's Jewish cemetery (Jüdischer Friedhof in Cosel) on a street later called Flughafenstrasse (now Lotnicza Street in the Kozanów neighbourhood). Unfortunately, his wife Regina and the eldest daughter, Henriette Hertha, shared the fate of the Lower Silesian Jews who had not emigrated from Nazi Germany in time. Both were deported from Breslau to

Bianca, Hermann and Gertrud Philippsberg, 1932.

the Theresienstadt Ghetto where they died. Siegfried's other children managed to escape from Germany. One of the daughters found herself in Britain, but her daughter became a victim of the Holocaust. The son and the third daughter emigrated to the United States.

The Philippsbergs' second son was Hermann (b. in 1861). He inherited his father's occupation – he traded in furs and was the most successful family member. He left his provincial town and moved to Leipzig where he set up his business and married Gertrud Bacher from Magdeburg. Four children were born from this union: one son and three daughters. The family has retained the memory that he travelled to Russia once a year – to Sankt Petersburg, Moscow and Nizhny Novgorod on the Volga river to buy furs, which were then sent to Leipzig. The city was a European centre of the fur trade at that time. At Hermann Philippsberg's store you could buy karakuls and ermine, sable, and American and Australian opossum furs. As Hermann Philippsberg ran his business skilfully, his family became very wealthy. We know more about him thanks to the family memoirs compiled by his granddaughter, Dorothy Obstfeld. He liked sports and physical activity. In one of the photographs we can see him in the Bernese Alps, at the foot of the Eiger. He could speak four languages – German, English, French and Russian – which certainly helped him do international business. He encouraged his children to learn foreign languages. Unfortunately, he was not fated to live out his days peacefully in Germany. At the age of 81 he found himself in the Theresienstadt Ghetto where he died in November 1942. His eldest daughter Elsa had moved with her husband to Paris and died there before the outbreak of the war. The emigration from Nazi Germany to France did not save her family from the Holocaust. Her husband and son were deported from the transit camp in Drancy to Auschwitz where they were killed in 1942. The remaining daughters – Margot and Lucie – managed to leave for Britain in 1939. In 1940, Margot boarded a ship to Cape Town in the Republic of South Africa to marry a German Jew who had stayed in Africa since 1933 and whom she knew only from correspondence… They lived together for more than half a century. And Lucie, after 10 years in Britain, moved to the United States.

An advertisement for Hermann Philippsberg's firm in Leipzig, 1933.

An advertisement for Hermann Philippsberg's firm in Leipzig, 1939.

Hermann's only son continued the family tradition and became a furrier. Soon before the outbreak of the war he managed to leave Germany with his family. First, he found himself in Cuba and after several years settled in the United States where he operated in the jewellery business.

The third son of Louis and Ulrike Philippsberg, Simon (b. in 1865), married Margarethe Meyer. The family settled in another Lower Silesian town – Waldenburg (now Wałbrzych). Simon had a liqueur plant and

a licenced restaurant in the Market Square (Ring). Simon and Margarethe had two sons – Ludwig and Walter. Ludwig worked with his father, but managed to emigrate to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Simon's second son also managed to escape the Holocaust, but he found himself on a different continent – in Melbourne, Australia. Their parents were not that lucky. Simon and Margarethe were transported from Breslau to the Theresienstadt Ghetto and then deported to Treblinka where they perished.

The Philippsbergs' fourth son, Isidore, married and emigrated to Belgium where he ran a firm with electrical equipment. He was married twice, but had no children.

Louis and Ulrike's youngest son, Salomon (Salo, Salusch) was born in Lüben in 1869. He settled with his wife Margarethe (maiden name Rosenthal) in Neumarkt in Schlesien (now Środa Śląska). They traded in coal. They had two children: a daughter, Lotte, and a son, Hans. Their daughter emigrated to Denmark, married there and had four daughters. Their son lived in Lüben with his aunts. He went to school there and then trained to become a furrier. He managed to escape the Holocaust by emigrating to Bolivia. He married there and had three sons and a daughter. Salo and his wife were deported to the Theresienstadt Ghetto and then to Treblinka where they died.

The Philippsberg family, from left: Simon with his wife Margarethe, Bianca, Gertrud and Hermann, 1932.

Louis and Ulrike's older daughter, Amalie (Mally), was a native resident of Lüben, born in 1863. She was married for a short time, but soon divorced and lived in Lüben with her sister. She certainly helped her run the family business, which included a store with furs and clothing.

Bianca Philippsberg was 10 years younger than her sister. She was also the youngest child in the family. She accompanied her father at work and learned the tricks of the fur trade. After her father's death it was her who took over the family business and this certainly was not by accident. She never married and focused on her business activity. In 1914, she became the first woman in Germany to pass the examination for the master's certificate in the fur trade. It is worth devoting a little more attention to this woman who more than 100 years ago decided to choose a completely different path than that of a typical Ashkenazi Jewish woman from Central Europe living at the turn of the 20th century. I have a liking for her, the more so as I am aware of how much perseverance this woman from a little provincial town needed to have to achieve the position of a Jewish businesswoman in the Weimar Republic. The memory of her inexhaustible energy has survived in the family's tradition. And I think she must have had a very strong personality. She was also very determined to take the vocational qualification exam in a trade dominated by men. It was not easy for her. Not only because she was Jewish and female, but also because she was 41 at that time.

The Philippsberg family on an excursion to the monastery in Grüssau(now Krzeszów), from left: Bianca, Simon, Grete, and Gertrud (Hermann's wife), 1933.

Bianca Philippsberg passed the examination for the master's certificate on the eve of World War I. During the war thousands of German women went to arms factories and other places where they worked hard because they had to replace their husbands and fathers fighting on the front. This changed a lot in their later economic activity. This is perhaps why being a female business owner after World War I in the Weimar Republic no longer stirred up such great emotions.

The Philippsbergs' family business managed by Bianca survived not only the war – who thought of buying a fur at that time? – but also the crisis of the 1930s. In 1938, Louis Philippsberg's company was one of the three Jewish businesses still operating in the town. No doubt it was soon confiscated as "non-Aryan property."

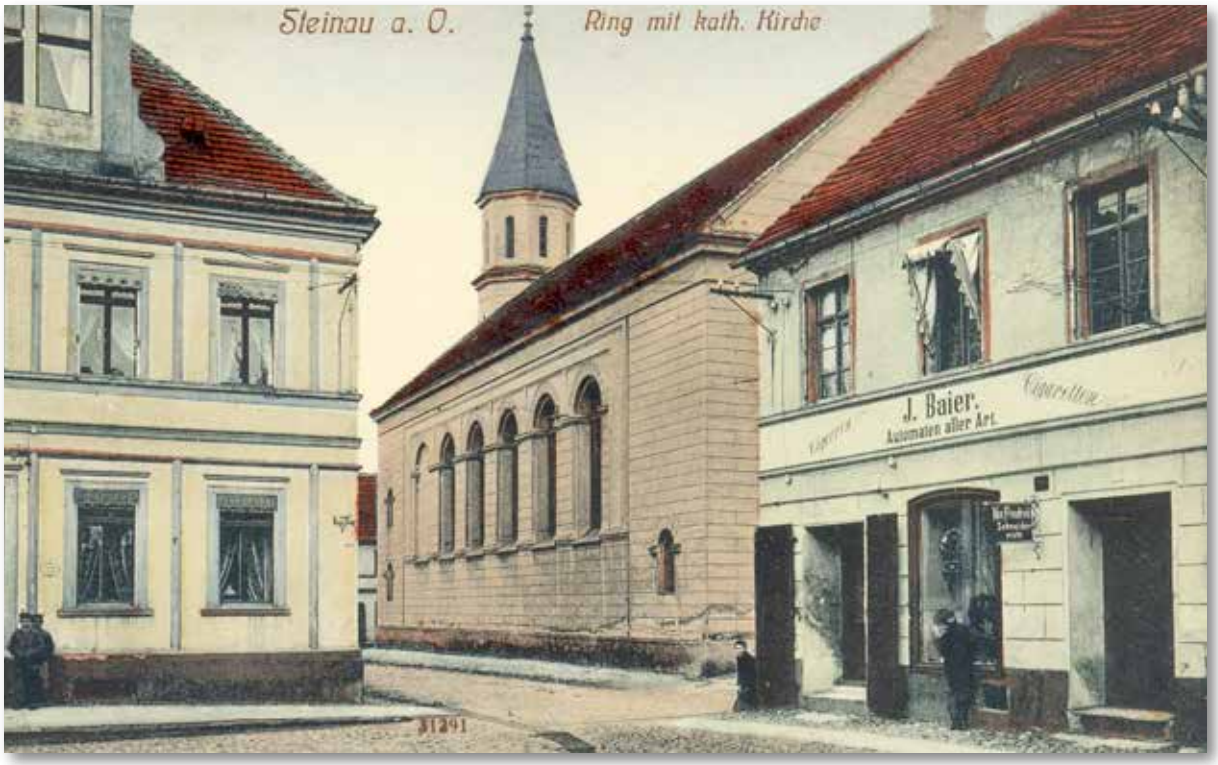
Deportation to the Theresienstadt Ghetto is the last known episode in the life of Bianca Philippsberg. The only consolation may be the fact that in these last moments she was accompanied by her sister. It follows from the surviving documents that in 1942 the two women were transported from Liegnitz (Legnica) to the Theresienstadt Ghetto and then to the Treblinka extermination camp.

The Philippsbergs were not a German-Jewish family whose members achieved a staggering success already in the second generation. There were no outstanding scientists among them, artists or politicians of European stature. They were an ordinary Jewish family who managed to benefit from emancipation and achieved success. Although the Holocaust cast a shadow on their fate, they came out of it victorious and survived. Today the descendants of the Philippsbergs live on five continents: Europe (Britain, Belgium, Denmark and France), North America (the United States), South America (Brazil, Bolivia and Cuba), Australia and Africa (Republic of South Africa). Perhaps they are not even aware that the history of their family began in the small Lower Silesian town of Lüben more than 150 years ago.

Bianca, Simon and Margarethe Philippsberg on the balcony of their family house, Lüben, 1934.

Compiled on the basis of family reminiscences by Dorothy Obstfeld from London, published on the portal www.lueben-damals.de

ŚCINAWA / STEINAU AN DER ODER



JEWS IN STEINAU AN DER ODER

There are no records of Jews settling in Steinau an der Oder in the Middle Ages. The first mention of their presence in the town comes from the 17th century – Polish Jews who escaped to Silesia stayed then temporarily in Steinau an der Oder (Ścinawa), Lüben (Lubin) and Raudten (Rudna).

The first Jew settled in the town only under the reign of King Frederick II the Great. In 1722, tobacco factory owner Borchard Löser received a general privilege, which gave him the right to settle in all Silesian towns and cities. He chose Steinau an der Oder and built there a tobacco factory. In 1787, his family was made up of 10 persons.

The Jewish Community was set up in Steinau an der Oder only after 1812 when the emancipation edict came into force. In that year, there was one Jew with citizenship rights in the town: Michel Hirschel (Cohn) Cohnstadt. Samuel Wohlauer lived there in the years 1814-1820 and Moritz Altmann since 1821. Eight years later the community was made up of 12 Jewish people and in 1832 of 19 people. In that year, three Jewish families living in Steinau an der Oder (Cohnstadt, Gerber and Altmann) set up the Steinau an der Oder branch of the Jewish Community of Glogau (Głogów).

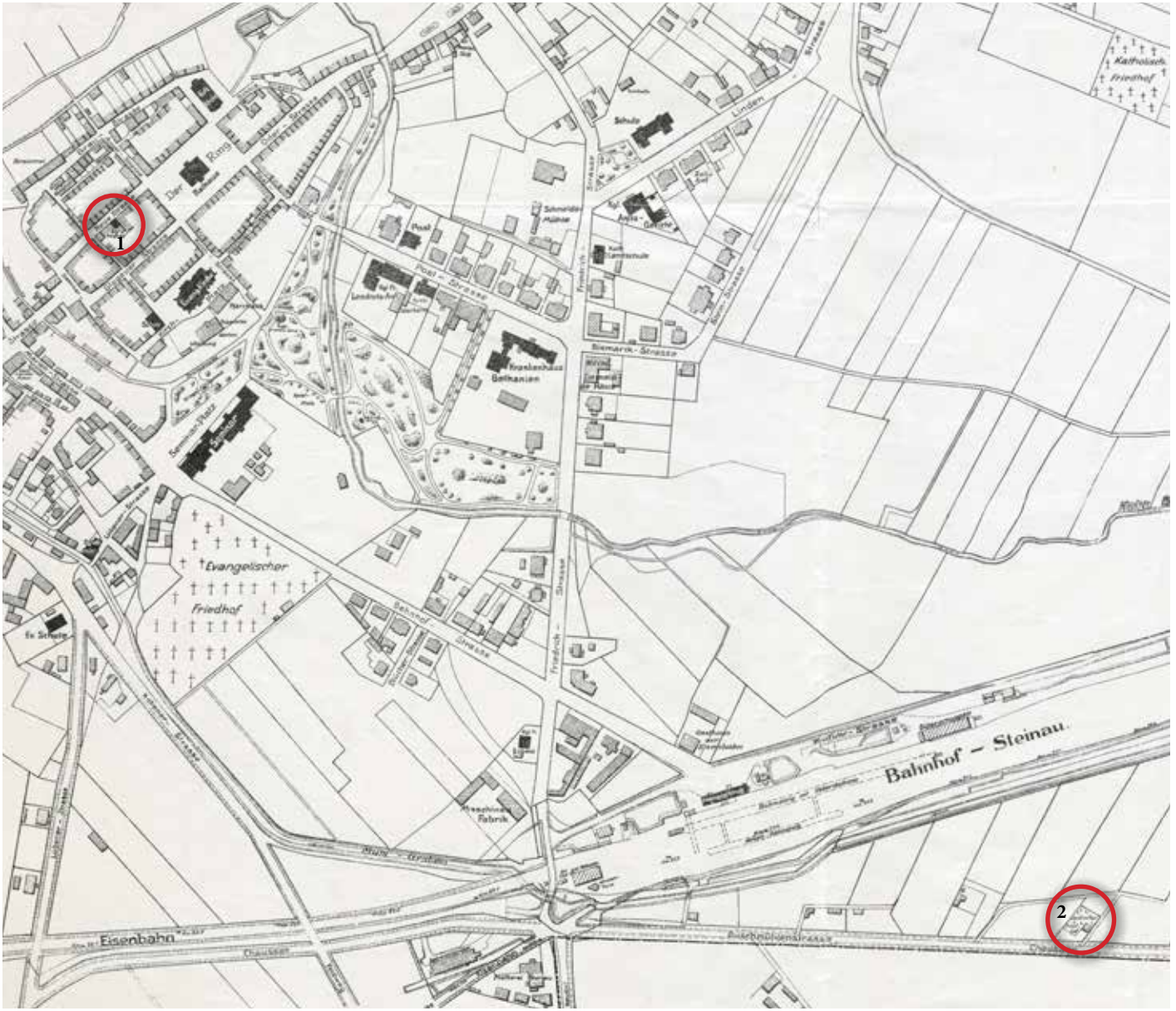
In 1842, the Jews of Steinau an der Oder bought a piece of land by the road to Kreischau (Krzyżowa) for a cemetery. The first burial took place there in 1845. Earlier, the local Jews had used cemeteries in Glogau, Dyhernfurth (Brzeg Dolny) and Prausnitz (Prusice).

Initially, the community did not have their own synagogue, but a house of prayer existed in Steinau an der Oder since at least 1829. Markus Salz from Kobylin – mentioned in 1829 – was the community's first official. The construction of a synagogue able to accommodate all members of the Jewish Community in the town and its surroundings became necessary owing to a rise in the number of Jewish residents. A building located close to the Market Square (6 Neuestrasse, now Robotnicza Street) was purchased in 1862 and converted into a synagogue. It probably housed a large prayer hall and apartments for the community's officials. The consecration ceremony was held on September 18, 1862.

The town's Jewish population was never large. The biggest number of Jews – 129 persons – lived there in 1871. In 1887, the town's Jewish Community gained independence and its jurisdiction covered the whole of Steinau an der Oder county. Since the end of the 19th century the number of Jewish residents started to diminish.

The number of Jews dropped further in the 20th century. In 1907, there were still 41 Jews living there. The number decreased to 33 in 1913 and only 22 in 1937. Among the town's Jewish residents was the owner of the company operating since 1859 under the name Hirsch Bucki and Sons. It was involved in the wholesale and retail trade in industrial products and clothing. The company also maintained trade contacts with Lemberg (Lwów, now Lviv in Ukraine) – in the columns of the local "Gazeta Lwowska" daily of November 1902 one can read their announcement about the purchase of a considerable quantity of chestnuts, which were to be delivered by rail to Dziedzice.

In 1932, the board of the Jewish Community in Steinau an der Oder was composed of two persons:



A fragment of a map of Steinau an der Oder with Jewish sites marked by the red circles, 1915.

1 – synagogue, **2** – Jewish cemetery

Georg Müller and Karl Blumenthal. Among the community's members were four Jews from Raudten (Rudna). Three Jewish children attended religious classes in the local folk school. A year later, in December 1933, there remained only one Jewish child in the town – 13-year-old Marion Freundlich who wanted to establish correspondence with a peer living in Palestine through "Jüdische Rundschau," a newspaper of the Zionist Federation in Germany. Marion herself was preparing for emigration – she learned Hebrew diligently and wanted to know as much as possible about her new homeland.

An advertisement for Hirsch Bucki's firm.

A signboard of the Benno and Julius Bucki firm operating in Steinau an der Oder.

Unfortunately, not all of the Steinau an der Oder Jews managed to emigrate from Germany. Many shared the fate of their coreligionists from Lower Silesia. At least two Jewish women from Steinau an der Oder were sent to transit camps for Lower Silesian Jews: Gertrud Goldberg to Tormersdorf (Prędocice) and Nanny Aron to Grüssau (Krzeszów). Both women, just like a few other Jews from Steinau an der Oder were then deported to the Theresienstadt Ghetto. The other Jews were Emma Eckstein and Natalie Eckstein – who, like Nanny Aron, perished in the Treblinka extermination camp – and Wilhelm Wiener who died in the Theresienstadt Ghetto. Klara Margarete Silbermann was sent to the ghetto in Riga and Arthur Rothgiesser to the ghetto in Minsk. Margarete von Heise was deported to the Ravensbrück concentration camp and then to Bernburg an der Saale where she was killed. The places of Caecilie Bremer's and Robert Hendelsohn's deportation are not known.

The Jewish history of the town ended with the deportation of the last German Jews. Polish Jews were not settled in the town after World War II.

Jewish heritage in Ścinawa (Steinau an der Oder)

Ścinawa is one of the few Lower Silesian towns where both the synagogue and the Jewish cemetery have survived until the present day. We do not know what happened to the synagogue during the Kristallnacht pogrom. In official SS reports on anti-Jewish incidents in Lower Silesia Steinau an der Oder did not appear as a place where a synagogue was burnt. One can presume that after 1938 the vandalized building was converted to serve residential purposes and survived in this form until the present

The Jewish cemetery in Ścinawa (general view).

time. Today, it does not resemble in any respect the former synagogue.

The small Jewish cemetery in Ścinawa is one of Lower Silesia's better preserved cemeteries which are no longer in use. Credit for this goes definitely to the municipal authorities who have taken care of the cemetery for many years, but also to its location on the outskirts of the town (Wincentego Witosa Street). Although the cemetery was officially closed down in 1962, the decision to remove it has never been taken. In 1987, the site was added to the national register of historic monuments. It is now under strict protection as a conservation area.

Around 60 matzevahs have survived until the present time. They are arranged in seven rows, each with more or less nine tombstones. The matzevahs, most of them made of sandstone and a few of granite, bear

Tombstones at the Jewish cemetery in Ścinawa.

The gravestone of Sall Saliczak, a soldier killed in World War I.

inscriptions in Hebrew or German, or bilingual inscription in Hebrew and German. The oldest surviving gravestone comes from 1863, the youngest from 1931. Among them is the grave of Sall Saliczak, one of the 12,000 Jewish soldiers who fell in World War I fighting for their German homeland. The other two Jewish soldiers from Steinau an der Oder – Julius Neustadt (killed in 1918) and Albert Strumpf (killed in 1914) – were probably laid to rest on a battlefield.

The Jewish cemetery is now one of the more interesting elements of the town's cultural heritage. For a long time the Little Homeland Socio-Cultural Association of the Ścinawa District and the Tourist Club at the Primary School No. 3 in Ścinawa have taken care of the cemetery.

IN THE SKIES OVER PALESTINE

The first time I heard about Walter Hauck, a Jewish pilot from Steinau an der Oder, was from regionalist Andrzej Sitarski. The source of the story was in Israel. He came to know it from Dr Norbert Schwake, a German physician who had lived in Nazareth for over 40 years. Dr Schwake was the author of a book about the graves of German soldiers in Israel and took care of a local German military cemetery. The story of the brave World War I pilot, who had also been a cavalryman, aviation pioneer, anti-Nazi activist, British agent and businessman, deserved in every respect to be shared with readers. However, in the course of the research the issue started to become increasingly complicated and the history of Walter Hauck appeared in a light completely different from what one could initially expect.

Walter Hauck after a hunting trip, Merhavia, 1917-1918.

At the beginning, Walter Hauck was for me first of all a brave Jewish pilot from Germany who, seriously wounded during one of his flights over Palestine, had miraculously managed to land the aircraft, was taken prisoner by the British and then escaped. The first mention I read about him was from Felix A. Theilhaber's book devoted to Jewish World War I pilots published in 1924 by an organization of Jewish war veterans. With time I also started to learn more about the history of the Hauck family who had been strongly involved in the religious life of the small Jewish Community in Steinau an der Oder. Their tombstones can still be found at the Jewish cemetery in the town. I also found the names of the family members from Lower Silesia among Holocaust victims. And it was only at the end that I learnt about Walter Hauck's personal choice – to change faith and be baptized in a Protestant church. Respecting this decision, I am far from attributing Jewish identity to him. I believe, however, that being born to a Jewish family in Prussia at the end of the 19th century had a significant influence on his later life – both in the times of the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. Even conversion could not change that.

Walter Hauck was born in Steinau an der Oder in Lower Silesia on June 5, 1888. His parents – Auguste

Marcus Hauck's tombstone at the Jewish cemetery in Ścinawa.

and Georg (1859-1917) – were members of the town's Jewish Community, which had around 165 members at the time. The Hauck family belonged to the local Jewish elite. Among Walter's ancestors was Marcus Hauck (1817-1898), a long-time member of the board and head of the Jewish Community committed in the 1860s to the construction of the synagogue in Steinau an der Oder.

Walter's father, Georg Hauck, owned a veneer factory in Kunzendorf an der Oder (now Małowice) near Steinau an der Oder. The family house of the Haucks was also located in this village. Additionally, the family owned, at least until the mid-1920s, a building in the Market Square in Steinau an der Oder (Ring 18).

Walter Hauck graduated from a primary school in Steinau an der Oder and then left for Breslau (now Wrocław) to continue his education. He became there a student of a very special school – Johannesgymnasium. It had a reputation among Breslau's Jews as a "monument to tolerance." It was unique in that its teachers and students had equal status, irrespective of their religion. The school provided education to all – Jews, Protestants and Catholics. It was an elite school, attended by children whose parents belonged to the upper social strata, and its curriculum was focused, among others, on teaching modern languages. Thanks to accepting students of all the religions and its criticism of anti-Semitism, the school became an inherent part of the city's history.

After passing his school-leaving exams Walter Hauck entered higher education – he studied law, economics and engineering at the universities in Breslau, Berlin and Munich. Although his father wanted him to prepare for managing the family business, Walter's life took a completely different path. In 1913, Walter Hauck defended his doctoral thesis in political sciences and left for Istanbul (then called Constantinople) where he was a banking intern in the Viennese Bank Union. He gained qualifications in international loans and goods trade and learned Turkish, which turned out especially useful in his later life.

After the outbreak of World War I, in August 1914, Walter Hauck joined the 7th Bavarian Chevauleger (Light Cavalry) Regiment in Straubing where he received his basic cavalry training. Then, he was sent with his unit to the Western Front in France. But soon, in November

Members of Fritz Klein's expedition. Walter Hauck stands in the middle row (fifth from left), 1915.

1914, he was transferred to the Turkish Military Mission in Constantinople due to his knowledge of Turkish, English and French. Ottoman Turkey entered into alliance with the German Empire as early as August 1914, which meant an obligation to join the war on Germany's side. Ultimately, Turkey joined the war in November 1914. In Turkey, Hauck was assigned to what was called the Persian Expedition, which set off in January 1915 from Baghdad for Abadan (in present-day Iran). The Anglo-Persian Oil Company had refineries in the area and the local oil fields supplied most of the oil needed by British warships. The expedition was headed by Captain Fritz Klein, a major in the Ottoman Army. He is known as the German Lawrence of Arabia. His main goal was to destroy the British refineries. Although the expedition was accompanied by two Turkish infantry regiments, the combined German-Turkish forces achieved only partial success, blowing up several oil pipelines. However, many photographs documenting this unusual expedition have survived until the present time. Its participants had adventures resembling those described by Karl May in his novels set in the Middle East. Among the places they reached during their expedition was Karbala where they were received as the first Europeans by the local Shiite clerics. The 100-year-old pictures include the group photograph in which Walter Hauck, a moustached young man in Turkish dress, stands in the centre next to Captain Fritz Klein.

After his return to Mesopotamia, Hauck was assigned to another allied army – this time the Iraqi one.

During World War I Iraq, as a Turkish province, was occupied by British forces. There, Walter Hauck took part in the attack on Basra and on April 14, 1915 in the battle for the port of Shuaiba. He became famous in these battles for sinking a British gunboat, for which he received a Turkish military decoration – the Silver Medal of Merit (Liakat Medal). He was soon promoted to the rank of reserve second lieutenant (Leutnant der Reserve).

In June 1915, Hauck became adjutant to Georg Graf von Kanitz, the military attaché at the German Embassy in Tehran. He was responsible for organizing and conducting partisan operations against Russian and British troops in Persia and Iraq. He also took part in another important expedition – this time to Afghanistan led by German diplomat Baron Otto von Hentig and second lieutenant Oskar Niedermayer. The goal was to incite the indigenous inhabitants of the Indo-Afghan borderland to rebel against British rule. The expedition set off from Isfahan in Persia for Kabul and abounded in many dangerous adventures. Walter Hauck was sent as an emissary to the local Arab population to win their support for the German-Turkish-Persian coalition. He was later assigned to the staff of Field Marshal Wilhelm Leopold Colmar von der Goltz, known as Goltz Pasha, who became commander of the 6th Turkish Army responsible for military operations in Iraq and Persia. However, Hauck's brilliant military career was halted in April 1916 by health issues – he probably fell ill with malaria. He was forced to return to Germany because at the Institute of Tropical Diseases in Hamburg he had more chance to recover. Having recovered, Hauck returned to his first military unit – the 7th Bavarian Chevauleger Regiment in Straubing and was then transferred to the 6th Chevauleger Regiment in Bayreuth. In 1917, his father, Georg Hauck, died when Walter was in the family home in Kunzendorf an der Oder on a month-long leave. Georg Hauck was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Steinau an der Oder, the same where his parents and Walter's grandparents – Emilie and Marcus Hauck – had already been laid to rest.

In 1917, Walter Hauck was assigned to the 2nd Bavarian Aviation Replacement Unit (Bayerische Flieger-Ersatz-Abteilung 2) at Fürth and then to the 304th Bavarian Aviation Unit (Bayerische Fliegerabteilung 304) established in Oberschleissheim. Soon he set off with the other 276 German soldiers in this unit for the Middle East to support the armed forces of the Ottoman Empire in Palestine. Special trains carrying more than 300 tonnes of military hardware, including aircraft, left Germany for Palestine on August 25, 1917. The journey via Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia and Constantinople took 42 days.

Walter Hauck's aviation unit was stationed near Gaza and then in the vicinity of the Merhavia kibbutz near the city of Afula. Although he spent there only several months, he took part in several reconnaissance missions as an observer. Several pictures of Walter Hauck have

Georg Hauck's tombstone (right), Jewish cemetery in Ścinawa.

survived from this period. They come from an unusual collection of 3,000 photographs documenting the stay of German pilots in Palestine in the years 1917-1918. Two of the photographs riveted my attention. They show German pilots on a sightseeing tour of Jerusalem. In the first picture they stand at the Wailing Wall where a Jew prays and in the second they are on the Temple Mount. I do not know if Walter Hauck was among them, but I would very much like to know whether being present at Judaism's holy places aroused any emotions in him...

At the time when Walter Hauck stayed in Palestine British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur James Balfour sent the famous letter to Baron Walter Rothschild being a declaration of the British government's support for establishing in Palestine a national home for the Jewish people, in accordance with the expectations of members of the Zionist movement. Could this document be of any importance to an assimilated German Jew who regarded Germany as his homeland and who, additionally, was just about to take the decision to convert?

German pilots from Walter Hauck's unit, Temple Mount in Jerusalem, 1917-1918.

German pilots during the Christmas holidays of 1917. Walter Hauck pictured standing (fourth from right).

Walter Hauck had his last reconnaissance flight on January 29, 1918. He flew with pilot Ludwig Haugg towards Ashkelon. On their way back, they were attacked by a British reconnaissance aircraft piloted by Canadian pilot second lieutenant Austin Lloyd Fleming from the 111st Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps, one of the British flying aces during World War I (eight victories). Ludwig Haugg was fatally wounded in the fierce fight – he was shot in the head, chest and heart. Walter Hauck, though seriously wounded, managed to land the aircraft in enemy territory. He was transported to a field hospital where British surgeons operated on him and certainly saved his life.

On the second day after his aircraft was shot down Walter Hauck wrote a dramatic letter to his commander, Captain Franz Walz, describing the circumstances of the

Pilots sitting on the roof of a house, with Walter Hauck pictured second from right, Merhavia, 1917-1918.

incident and his state. During the fight he was wounded in the stomach and chest, several of his ribs were shot through and his collarbone and nose were broken. Although he had undergone a surgery on the previous day, he felt very unwell and feared he might not survive. He asked the commander to inform his mother about it. He also thanked all his colleagues from the squadron for their friendship. The letter was dropped over the German airfield. In another letter to the German pilots the British command informed them that the funeral of second lieutenant Ludwig Haugg had been held on January 29 and that he was buried with full military honours. The British also offered condolences to Haugg's nearest and dearest and informed the Germans that second

lieutenant Walter Hauck, who had shown great bravery, was in hospital and was well cared for. Although nearly a century has passed since the end of World War I, the gravestone of German pilot Ludwig Haugg can still be found at the British war cemetery near the town of Ramla (then Ramleh). It is one of the 30 German graves among the several thousand allied graves from the two world wars.

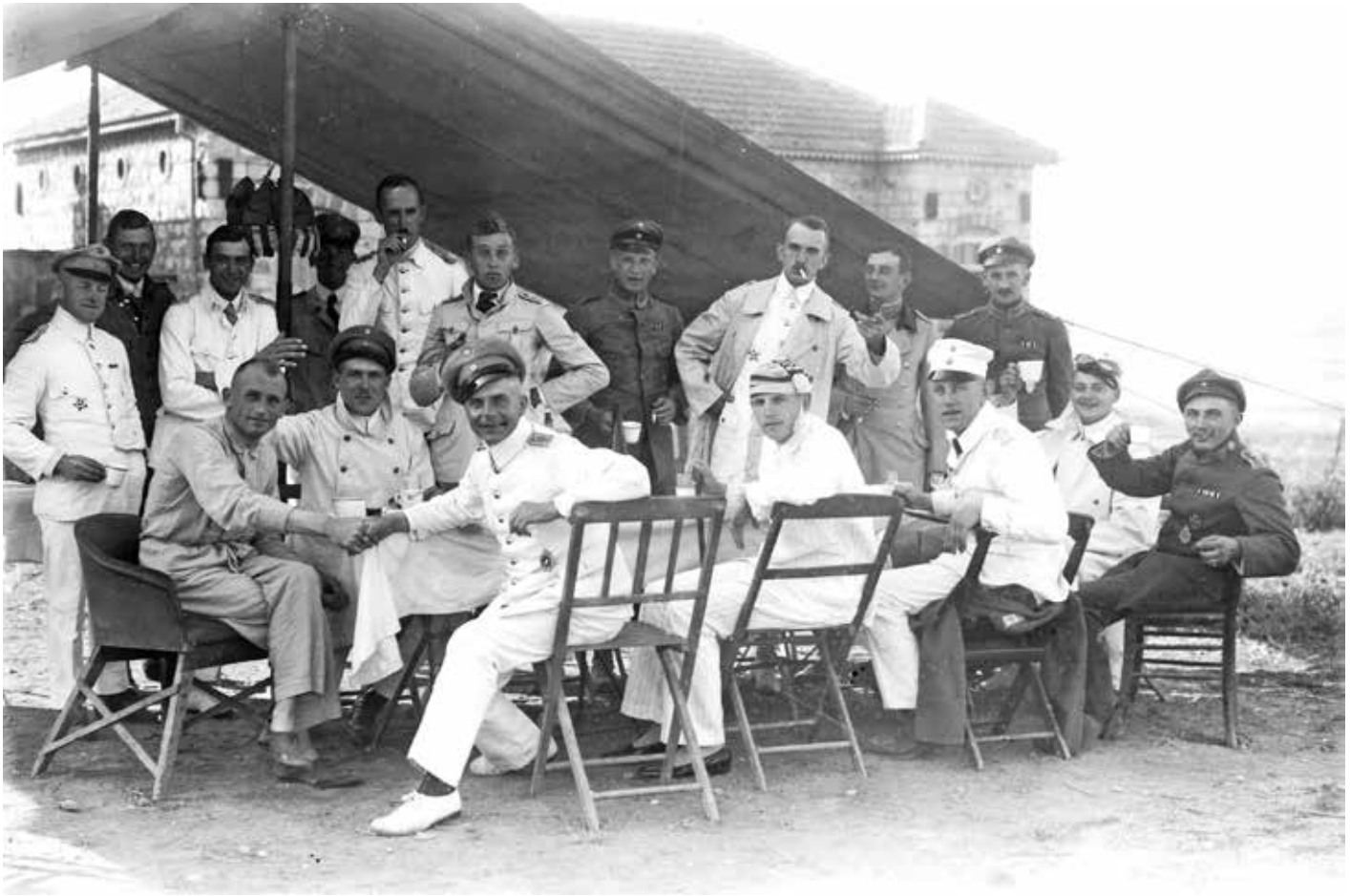
After his recovery Walter Hauck was transferred to the prisoner of war camp in Sidi Bishr near Alexandria in Egypt. He did not stay there for long because at the end of August 1918 he escaped with another Bavarian pilot, second lieutenant Schürer. In Alexandria they managed to join the crew of a Swedish ship as illegal stokers and reached the port of Piraeus in Greece. Eventually, Walter Hauck returned to Germany via Algeria, Portugal and Holland only in mid-November 1919.

He received many military decorations for his service during World War I, the most important of which were the Iron Cross 2nd class in 1915 and the Iron Cross 1st class in 1920.

In 1924, Felix Theilhaber published a book on Jewish pilots fighting in World War I ("Jüdische Flieger im Weltkrieg"). A pilot from Steinau an der Oder, Walter Hauck, is one of those mentioned in the book. He was one of the over 165 Jewish pilots fighting on various fronts in the German air force. Thirty of them were killed. The book was a response to the accusation that German Jews had refused to take part in World War I, an accusation being an element of the post-war anti-Semitic propaganda. The truth was different. Around 100,000 German Jews took part in the war operations and 12,000 of them died for their German homeland. One of them was a flying ace of the German Empire's air force – Wilhelm Frankl, a fighter aircraft pilot who had 20 victories to his credit and was honoured with Prussia's highest military distinction – the Pour le Mérite order. One should add that a year before his death Frankl decided to convert. German Jews regarded themselves as fully German and thought that military service was not only their duty but first of all a reason for pride.

Walter Hauck's life after the war was equally interesting. After returning to Germany he settled in Breslau and initially focused on developing his professional career. He worked as an agent for such companies as Brüder Mannesmann, Junkers and in the automotive sector for Mathis, Bugatti and Fiat. Due to his Middle Eastern experience and knowledge of foreign languages, he helped Junkers in 1923 to expand onto the Persian market. In

Walter Hauck after a hunting trip, Merhavia, 1917-1918.



German pilots. Walter Hauck pictured standing (first from right), Merhavia, 1917-1918.

the mid-1920, Walter Hauck travelled a lot on business, including to England and Turkey where he renewed the acquaintances he had made during World War I. In the later period, his contacts with the members of the former Royal Flying Corps (now called RAF) who had shot him down over Palestine in 1918 played a special role. The acquaintances he made at that time ultimately led to his service for Britain's War Office during World War II.

In 1926, Walter Hauck married Hedwig Hagenbucher from Heilbronn in Württemberg. The newlyweds travelled by car to Istanbul for their honeymoon. It is worth to mention that cars and car rallies, in which he had taken part since 1910, were one of Walter's passions. His second passion was hunting and it was reflected in the name he gave his only son. The child, born in 1928, was named Hubert after the patron saint of hunters and riders.

In mid-1928 Walter Hauck returned to his home village of Kunzendorf an der Oder near Steinau an der Oder to try to save the family firm, which was falling into decline. His efforts resulted three years later in its merger with the Leipzig-based Eduard Keffel AG company, one of the largest producers of synthetic leather and linoleum. Probably in 1929 Hauck returned to Breslau – this is when his name appeared in the Breslau address book as a trader responsible for goods warehousing and storage. Walter Hauck lived then at 7/1 Pirolweg (now Karola Libelta Street) in the district of Zimpel (now Sępolno). His name featured at this address for another six years until 1935.

The second half of the 1930s was an especially difficult period for Walter Hauck's family. Although he had converted and was a World War I veteran honoured with two Iron Crosses for his services, under the Nuremberg Laws, he was still a Jew for the Nazis. His son, born in a mixed family and having two Jewish grandparents had the status of a first-degree Mischling (person of mixed blood). If the family had not emigrated from Germany they would have shared the fate of thousands of German Jews – persecuted, gradually removed from public life and then condemned to extermination.

According to the son, in 1933, after the Nazis came to power, Walter Hauck moved with his family to Prague in Czechoslovakia and started to work for Škoda and the industrial corporation CKD (Českomoravskà Kolben Daněk). He was never to return to his German homeland, which he had served loyally during World War I. In the middle of 1934, Hauck moved with the family to Tehran. In Persia, he represented the interests of the Czech companies, relying on his vast experience in the Middle East.

Politics became another important sphere of Walter Hauck's activity. In the past, during his business trips to Britain, he had already struck up acquaintances with politicians and diplomats, including such important persons as Sir Duff Cooper, Sir Harold Nicolson and Sir Horace Rumbold. At the beginning of 1938, they made a proposal for him to start anti-Nazi activity in Britain. Consequently, in autumn 1938, he moved with his family to London.

After the outbreak of World War II Hauck joined a committee waging anti-Nazi psychological warfare. The committee, headed by Sir Horace Rumbold, included Sir Harold Nicolson, Sir Duff Cooper and Marjorie Maxse. With time, the committee became the germ of the Department of Psychological Warfare led by Lord Vansittart. On their request, Hauck left in 1940 for the United States to lobby for Britain which was in war against Nazi Germany. During his stay in the United States Hauck met many influential people and made friends with many of them, including lawyer and banker John J. McCloy, and New York Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. At the same time he managed to secure permanent residency in the United States for his wife and son who stayed then in Nassau, the capital of the Bahamas, which was a British colony.

Hauck's mission ended in December 1941 after the United States joined the war. He then resided in the Bahamas as a British agent and focused on work as a political commentator writing for the American press to present and explain the British point of view. In August 1943, he returned to Britain to work in the Department for Psychological Warfare and then in the War Office as an intelligence specialist dealing with the psychology of Germany's chief military command. At the end of the war, in recognition of his services, Walter Hauck and his family were granted British citizenship.

A musical ensemble composed of pilots. Walter Hauck pictured standing (first from right), Merhavia, 1917-1918.

It is worth to mention what happened to Walter Hauck's relatives. The name of Margarete von Heise, née Hauck, from Steinau an der Oder can be found in the lists of Holocaust victims. She was sent to the Ravensbrück camp and then to Bernburg an der Saale where she was killed in 1942. Other Jews with the name Hauck came from Breslau (Wrocław) – Georg Hauck was killed in 1940 while Irma Hauck and Margarete Hauck were deported in 1941 with other Lower Silesian Jews to the city of Kowno (now Kaunas in Lithuania) and killed. Ottilie Clara Hauck from Kuttlau (now Kotla) near the town of Glogau (now Głogów), a resident of Berlin, committed suicide in 1941. Walter Hauck did not share their fate only because he had decided to emigrate from Germany.

After the war Hauck stayed in Britain and, exploiting his knowledge of economics and trade experience,

became a specialist and expert in multilateral international trade and then successfully developed his professional career in the corporation he set up – Compensation Trading Limited (CTL). In that period, much changed in his personal life as well. His marriage had broken up during the war and in 1947 he met the last love of his life – Valerie Moon. Valerie was a skater and actress, but first of all a celebrity. In 1942, she played in Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's war film "One of Our Aircraft Is Missing." And after the war she was a star of the show entitled "Cinderella on Ice" in London. When she met Walter Hauck she was around 25 years old while he was almost 60. They soon started to live together in his apartment in Hampstead and the relationship, although it stirred up much controversy in the conservative England of the 1940s, survived until his death.

Walter Hauck died in a general hospital in Uetikon near Zurich on January 5, 1951. His premature death resulted from complications after a surgery. In accordance with his wish, he was cremated and the urn with his ashes was buried at a Zurich cemetery.

The fascinating life of Walter Hauck could serve as a basis for many adventure stories or a screenplay. He was a man who deserves to be admired and respected for many reasons. But for me he will always remain the brave Jewish pilot from Felix Theilhaber's book, the man who was a source of great pride for German Jews in the 1920s.

ZŁOTORYJA / GOLDBERG

JEWS IN ZŁOTORYJA

Złotoryja (German name: Goldberg) is one of the Lower Silesian towns where it is impossible to find any Jewish traces these days. There was never a synagogue in the town, no trace is left of the Jewish cemetery set up in the 19th century and the last Jews left the town in the 1980s. But despite that, the memory of the Jews who once lived here is still alive. Złotoryja residents remember those who came to the town after World War II and, just like the Poles, tried to build their new life in the land incorporated into Poland after World War II. The former Jewish residents also remember Złotoryja. From time to time they come from Israel or the United States to the town which, after the Holocaust, was to become a Promised Land for them and their parents.

Polish Jews in Złotoryja

After World War II Złotoryja was one of the Lower Silesian towns chosen as a place where Jews were settled. According to the Jewish Committee's data, 173 Jewish people settled in Złotoryja in May 1946. Two months later, there were already 1,073 Jews living in the town.

The Jewish arrivals, called repatriates at the time, came from places across the Soviet Union. Like Poles, they survived the war there in gulags and in exile. They were originally from all parts of the pre-war Republic of Poland – from large cities and small towns and villages in central Poland, the eastern borderland, Silesia and Dąbrowa Basin (Zagłębie Dąbrowskie). The group included Russian-Jewish and Russian women, the wives of Polish Jews subject to repatriation together with their husbands. The Jews who settled in Złotoryja were transported in organized groups from Kazakhstan (Chimkent, Kzyl-Orda), Uzbekistan (Tashkent) and from other places.

According to the town residents, the Jews gathered in an area composed of several streets: Wilcza (later Bohaterów Getta Warszawskiego), Marii Konopnickiej, Fryderyka Chopina, Marcelego Nowotki (now Józefa Piłsudskiego), Bolesława Krzywoustego, Basztowa and Staromiejska.

The Jews who came to Złotoryja had traditional Jewish occupations: there were 34 tailors and dressmakers, 18 carpenters, 17 cobblers, 13 barbers and hairdressers and nine craftsmen making shoe uppers among them. They found employment, among others, in five Jewish cooperatives: the Naprzód transport cooperative on Bolesława Krzywoustego Street, Nowa Moda cooperative of cobblers and shoe upper makers, Praca carpentry cooperative, Zgoda cooperative of tailors and shoe upper makers and Metalowiec mechanical and metalwork cooperative, on a farm run by the Jewish Committee, in Jewish institutions and the volunteer police force (ORMO). A few people were employed in the regular police force (MO) and – as accountants, storemen and drivers – in the Office of Public Security (UBP), which was a secret police service.

There were several Jewish stores and private businesses operating in the town: a bakery, and a cobbler's, tailor's and capmaker's shop.

Members of Bund and its children's organization in Złotoryja, the second half of the 1940.

The largest number of Jews stayed in Złotoryja in July 1946 – around 2,000 people. Although many of them were not going to settle in the town for good and treated their presence in Lower Silesia as a stopover in their journey to the West, Jewish institutions were set up in Złotoryja to secure a livelihood for those who decided to stay.

The most important organization serving this community was the Jewish Committee, which covered the entirety of Jewish life apart from religion – from welfare

to education, culture and sports. The Committee of Polish Jews in Złotoryja was registered on May 23, 1946. It had its office at 5 Zwycięzców Square (now Niepodległości Square). In this period, Chaskel Laufer was the chairman of the Committee, I. Cukierfajn was its secretary, Lewenkopf was head of the Employment Stimulation Department, Icchak Melman headed the Repatriation Department and Sucher Gluzman was head of the Social Welfare Department.

The Jewish Religious Congregation, established in Złotoryja on December 25, 1946, dealt with organizing religious life. It had its office at 19 Marii Konopnickiej Street. In 1948, its chairman was Icek Mantelmacher while Izak Liberman and Natan Chazanowicz were members of the Board. There was no rabbi in Złotoryja, but there were religious schools for children, a Talmud Torah and Cheder. There was also a kosher canteen, and once a week a shochet came from Legnica to perform ritual slaughter (shechita). Religious services were held in a house of prayer at 15/16 Basztowa Street.

Education played an important role in the life of the Jewish population. The Szalom Alejchem Jewish Primary School operated in the town since June 1946, but only Yiddish, Polish and singing were taught for the first several months because of the absence of qualified teachers, materials and a curriculum. Initially, there were 30 children in the school and only one teacher. With time, the building was renovated and a local Jewish cooperative made 15 school desks and other equipment necessary to start education. In 1947, Cyla Ajchenbaum was the principal while Adela Feldman and Eugenia Szpigel taught in the school. Polish was the language of instruction, but Yiddish, Hebrew and the history of Jews were compulsory subjects.

Most of the pupils had a poor knowledge of Polish and interspersed their speech with Russian expressions.

The children's organization of Bund in Złotoryja, the second half of the 1940.

This was hardly surprising considering that most of them had spent the first years of their life in the Soviet Union. A major problem for the teachers was that the children spoke neither Yiddish nor Polish properly. This is why – as they admitted in a 1946 report – one of the main tasks was to accustom them to the Polish language.

At the end of April 1948, the Jewish children from the Szalom Alejchem school in Złotoryja learned about the Polish-Lithuanian Union at a Polish history lesson, read about the destruction of Warsaw at a Polish lesson and about "Lenin's Truth" at an Yiddish lesson to mark the Lenin Days, and made a cardboard windmill at an arts and crafts lesson.

Since 1946 the number of children in the school was steadily diminishing as Jews were leaving Złotoryja. In February 1948, only 16 Jewish pupils remained in the school. As a result, in the next school year of 1948/1949 the school was closed.

Another establishment for children was organized in Złotoryja in June 1946 – a day-care centre for

schoolchildren with a kindergarten class opened at the local Jewish Committee. The centre was intended for children and teenagers aged from 3 to 16 who received there three meals a day. The largest number of children, 103 persons, attended the centre in September 1946. In 1947, the head of the centre was Zelman Rozenberg while Genia Bronsztejn, Chaja Muzykant, Wiera Kuczer and Ida Kac were the carers. The establishment operated until 1948. It was closed because its charges had left the town. The school and the day-care centre were located at 15/16 Basztowa Street.

The local branch of the Jewish Association for Culture and Art was responsible for the cultural life of the Jewish residents of Złotoryja while the Jewish Sports Club Jedność (ŻKS Złotoryja), which operated at the Jewish Committee since 1946, promoted sporting activity. It had football, swimming and table tennis sections.

Another important Jewish organization operated in Złotoryja since June 25, 1946 – the Society for Health Protection of the Jewish Population in Poland (TOZ). It had its premises at 19 Basztowa Street. Sucher Gluzman, Dr Markus Reich and Jakob Sender were members of its first board. The Society had its own clinic where a physician and dentist saw patients every day. A crèche opened at TOZ in December 1946. It was located in a renovated five-room apartment. TOZ also provided aid in the form of food products to children and pregnant and breastfeeding women. The organization was responsible for providing medical care for other Jewish institutions: the day-care centre, school and kibbutzim.

Apart from Dr Markus Reich, originally from the town of Tarnobrzeg and a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine at the Prague University, TOZ employed female doctors – Russian Jewish women and Russian women who had come to Poland with their husbands: Liza Gerszman-Falewicz, Raisa Hoffman and Czerna Szereszewska, who was a paramedic and a midwife. At that time, the crèche was managed by Zisla Laufer.

Several Jewish parties were set up in Złotoryja as in other towns. Among them was the socialist Bund

The Złotoryja chapter of Bund, the second half of the 1940.

The Złotoryja chapter of Bund, the second half of the 1940.

party and the Jewish Faction of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR), which supported the idea that Jews should stay in Poland. However, it were Zionist parties and organizations that were especially active in the town: Ichud, Hashomer Hatzair, Gordonia, Keren Hayesod and Keren Kayemet. At least two kibbutzim were based in Złotoryja. One, at 4 Zwycięzców Square (now Niepodległości Square), was run by the Ichud party. The other, at 8 Wolności Square (now Rynek) was run by a youth organization called Hanoar Hatzioni. Thirty three persons lived in the kibbutz in 1948. They were young people who had stayed there for over a year and waited for a convenient moment to leave for Israel.

The last Jewish organization established in Złotoryja in that period – at the beginning of 1947 – was the local branch of the Association of Jewish Combatants and Victims of the Second World War. It was an organization of Jewish war veterans. Its board was made up of Szloma Szczupak (chairman), Józef Samueli (secretary) and Sala Wilk (treasurer).

The number of Jewish residents of Złotoryja was steadily diminishing since as early as 1946. Some of them were leaving the town because they had decided to emigrate from Poland – after the Kielce pogrom of July 4, 1946 and then after the establishment of the State of Israel in May 1948. But many moved to towns and cities with larger Jewish populations, mainly to Legnica and Wrocław. According to data from the Wrocław Province Office, Złotoryja county was one of those left by the largest groups of Jews. In February 1948, Złotoryja was inhabited by only 502 Jewish people. One and a half years later, in the second half of 1949, the number of Jews still remaining in the town was 323 – 176 men and 147 women.

It is worth remembering that the activity of Jews in Złotoryja was not limited to their own community. Two of them were members of the local government – Rubin Rojzmann (Reuzmann) was a councillor in the years 1947-1948 and Jakub Cukierman in 1949-1950.

No Jewish organization was active in the town after 1950. The organizations that had existed before were dissolved in the process of getting rid of Jewish autonomy. And a branch of the newly established Jewish

organization– the Socio-Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ) – was not set up in Złotoryja. This was probably because the number of potential members became too small by that time.

One of the last Jews in Złotoryja, Icek Fajersztajn, who was born in Sosnowiec in 1909 and died in 1979, was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Legnica. There were still some Jews living in Złotoryja in the 1980s.

Jewish cemetery in Złotoryja

It was probably around 1820 that the Jewish cemetery was established in Goldberg, as Złotoryja was called at that time. Its establishment was connected with the Prussian authorities' order requiring Jews to set up cemeteries in places with significantly large Jewish populations. The cemetery was used until World War II by German Jews living in the town and its vicinity. After 1945, when Polish Jews settled in the town, one person – Natan Chojnacki – was buried at the cemetery. However, several years later his remains were probably exhumed and transferred to the cemetery in Legnica.

Fragments of matzevahs from the Jewish cemetery in Złotoryja incorporated into a wall on Miła Avenue, 2005.

The appearance of the cemetery, situated at the fork of Töpferberg (now Cmentarna Street) and Mittelstrasse (later Stefana Okrzei and now Stefana Wyszyńskiego Street) has been reconstructed on the basis of a site plan of 1967: "It was in the shape of an elongated rectangular surrounded by a wall of rough sandstone. The entrance was from the west through a little stone building described on the plan of 1967 as a morgue. The semi-circular entrance was probably decorated with the Star of David. The building had a slate or ceramic tile roof and a solid wooden door" (Roman Gorzkowski, "Echo Złotoryi," 2008 no. 7).

The cemetery covered around 1,500 square metres. At that time, the boundary wall was already damaged along its whole length. The entrance was through the chapel and there were still 35 tombstones with Hebrew inscriptions on the site, however, they were overturned and partly broken. Eventually, the cemetery was removed in 1973, although the resolution on "the closure and the early removal of the Jewish cemetery" had been taken by the local authorities as early as December 11, 1970.

Little is known about what happened to the matzevahs. It was presumed that they were taken to a dumping site or used as the foundation for the boundary wall surrounding a nearby cemetery. As it turned out many years later, part of the tombstones had indeed been used to build the retaining wall on Miła Avenue. They were incorporated into the base of the wall made of prefabricated elements. In 2006, members of the Złotoryja District Lovers' Society removed the fragments from the wall by hand and secured them in the Centre for Documenting and Studying the History of the Złotoryja District.

A fragment of a matzevah from the Jewish cemetery in Złotoryja incorporated into a wall on Miła Avenue, 2005.

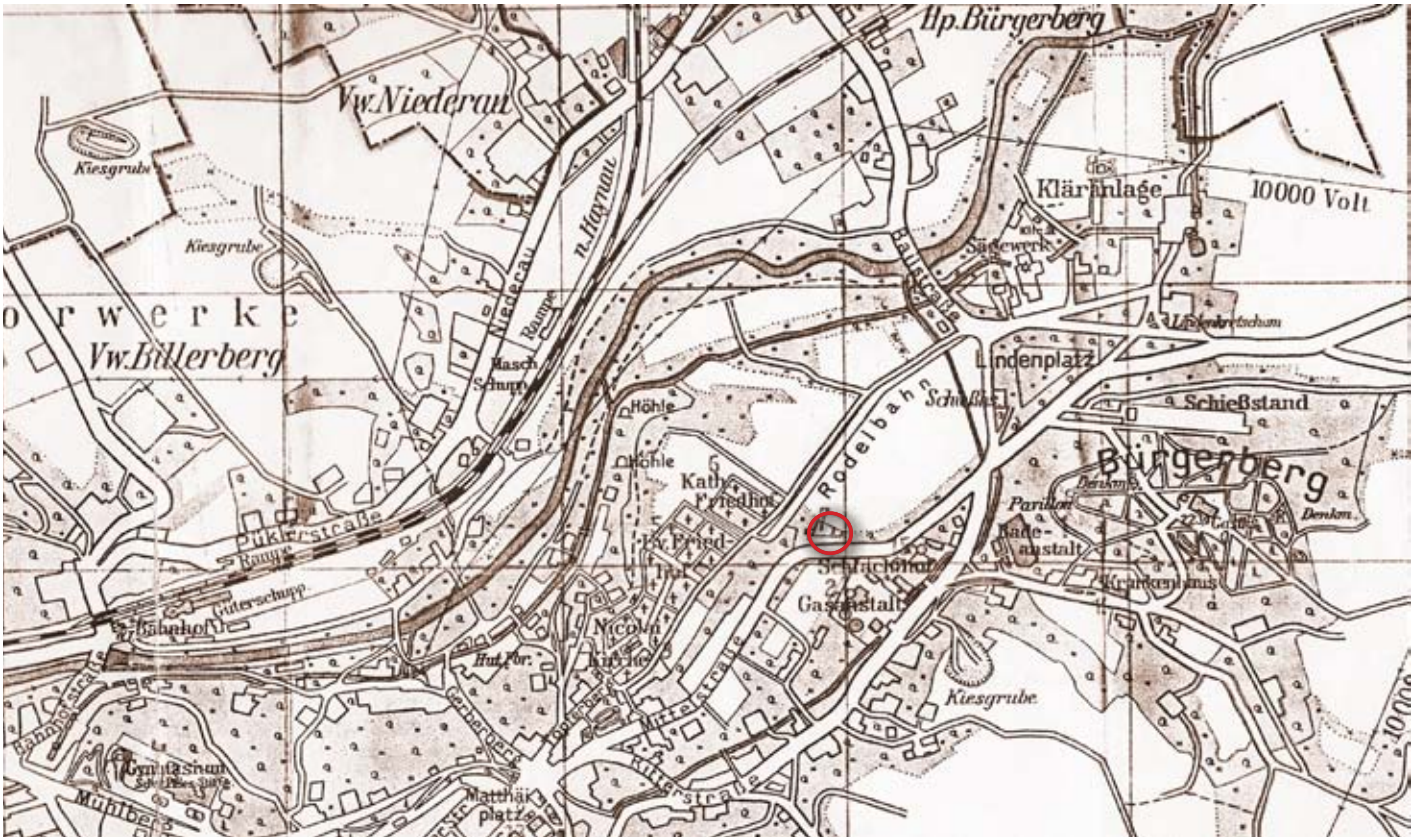
Fragments of the matzevahs removed from the wall on Miła Avenue, 2006.

Although there is not a single matzevah at the cemetery today, we known from the reminiscences of former pastor Johannes Grünewald, a resident of the town until 1945, that the tombstones dated from the period from 1820 to 1920. We know the names of two German Jewish women buried at the cemetery – Jettel Loewenthal, née Danziger, who was born in Grünberg (now Zielona Góra) in 1800 and died in 1827, and Ernestine Schlesinger, née Müller, who died in 1836.

The memory of Jews from Złotoryja

Today, the street commemorating the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto (Bohaterów Getta Warszawskiego Street) is one of the few traces left by the Jewish population who once lived in Złotoryja. In 1947, the local authorities, on the motion of the local Jewish Committee, changed the name of Wilcza Street to the one commemorating the heroes "in recognition of their contribution to the fight against the Nazi invader."

But the memory of the former Jewish residents of Złotoryja is still alive among the local people. This is reflected in articles published in "Echo Złotoryi," a local monthly, but above all in the activity of the local enthusiasts who protect with great care the matzevah pieces miraculously extracted from the wall at the town's promenade. These are the last traces of the town's German Jews, of whom no one would have otherwise remembered.



A map of Goldberg (now Złotoryja) with the Jewish cemetery marked by the red circle.

THE FATE OF THE DISPLACED. THE MELMAN FAMILY'S EPISODE IN ZŁOTORYJA

Sara Melman was one of the many Jewish children who arrived in Złotoryja after World War II as part of the process of repatriation. She had been born in the summer resort of Falenica, outside Warsaw, in 1937. At that time, the town had 8,000 permanent residents, of which more than 5,000 were Jewish. Falenica was a Jewish religious centre. The Hassidim from Góra Kalwaria, Aleksandrów, Grodzisk, Parysów and Kołbiel had their houses of prayer in the town. And Abraham Mosze Kalisz, the tzadik from Warka, located here his court, which was visited by numerous Hassidim. An old people's home, orphanage, sanatorium for tuberculosis patients and the Gordonia sports club operated in the town. In September 1939, there was a battle between Polish and German forces near Falenica. As a result, part of the town, including wooden houses of Jews, burned down. This is how Sara reminisced about these events: "When I was two years old Germans came and were setting houses on fire. My parents, uncles and aunts left everything and started to escape towards the Russian border with only the clothes they stood up in. My grandparents and part of the family stayed in Falenica and the Germans killed them."

Handlowa Street in Falenica in the 1920s.

The Melman family managed to get to the Soviet Union, from where they were later deported to Kazakhstan, like many other Polish and Jewish families. Although they faced there an uncertain future and extremely tough living conditions, being deported to the East was for them, and for thousands of Polish Jews, a chance to survive, a chance those who stayed in Poland did not have.

Icchak Melman (first from right) with his family, Złotoryja, the second half of the 1940s.

The girl remembered that her father worked very hard while in exile. In that period, the Melman family got bigger – Sara's younger sister was born in 1941. Unfortunately, their mother did not live to see the end of the war – she had died a few months earlier. Their father, Icchak, was widowed with two little daughters.

After the war the Melmans arrived in Lower Silesia together with thousands of other pre-war Jewish citizens of Poland. This probably happened in May 1946. They were not alone in Złotoryja. Icchak Melman's siblings with their children also settled in the town. Sara, her father and sister received an apartment in a small building at 5 Stefana Żeromskiego Street. The building was also occupied by several other Jewish families. This is how Sara remembered this period many years later: "We started to live again. There was a Jewish school and kindergarten in Złotoryja, people were looking for a job. My father was director of a department store and was highly respected in Złotoryja."

At first, Icchak Melman found employment in the Jewish Committee. He was one of its founders and for a short time head of the Repatriation Department where he was responsible for providing living quarters for the families of the Jewish repatriates in Złotoryja. Sara remembered that "they were quartered in the houses from which the Volksdeutsche were escaping to Germany." The truth was somewhat different. The Jews occupied the apartments from which German people – mainly women, children and the elderly – were forcefully removed and deported to Germany.

In that period, the most important thing for the workers of Jewish Committees was to ensure the basic conditions for normal existence for the hundreds of Jews who were coming to Lower Silesia with successive waves of repatriates: apartments and furnishings, food, financial aid and aid in kind (clothes and food), medical care, establishments for children and jobs – everything that was needed by the people who were coming from the Soviet Union virtually empty-handed, sick and traumatized, the more so as most of their nearest and dearest who had stayed in Poland were killed.

After some time, Icchak Melman assumed the post of manager of the local department store located on Marcelego Nowotki Street (now Józefa Piłsudskiego Street). He held the post until moving out from the town.

In 1946, Sara Melman became a pupil of the only Jewish school in the town – the Jewish Community Primary School. It was named after Szalom Alejchem (Sholem Aleichem), a Jewish writer and a classic of Yiddish literature. It took only a few minutes for the girl to get to school – she went from her home on Stefana Żeromskiego Street via Zwycięzców Square (now Niepodległości Square) where the Jewish Committee, an institution important for all Jews, had its office at number 5 to Basztowa Street where her school was located at number 15.

A photograph taken in front of the Jewish school in Złotoryja, second half of the 1940s. Sara Melman standing in the upper row, third from left.

In the first half of 1947, the girl was a third-form pupil and was the youngest in her class. In a report on the school's operation, she was described as being "frail and weak," which was certainly a legacy of her childhood years in Kazakhstan. The school's language of instruction was Polish and it is certain that Sara had already learned it, in contrast to the many pupils born in the Soviet Union. She could also speak Russian. At school she learned the rudiments of Hebrew. This turned out useful many years later when she emigrated to Israel. Apart from language lessons, the children had maths, geography, drawing, needlework and singing lessons. Older children were also taught the history of Poland and the history of Jews. The Jewish school in Złotoryja operated under the auspices of the Central Committee of Polish Jews, the institution which had established a network of secular schools where Yiddish was taught. At these schools there were no religious lessons and special emphasis was placed on teaching Yiddish, which

Sara Melman (first from right), Złotoryja, second half of the 1940s.

was to become the language of instruction. The opinion was that Yiddish should continue to be the language of Polish Jews as it had been before World War II. Zionists and religious Jews did not share this opinion, but they set up their own schools with different curricula.

Sara Melman spent afternoons at the Jewish day-care centre, which was in the same building as her school. Her younger sister – who then featured in official documents under the name Toba (diminutive form: Topcia) – attended a kindergarten class in the same centre. Pinek Melman, born in 1942 in the Soviet Union, a son of

Jakub and Roza, was also one of the charges of the day-care centre. He lived at 8 Henryka Sienkiewicza Street and his father worked as a bookkeeper in the Office of Public Security (UBP) in Złotoryja. Pinek was for sure a son of Icchak Melman's brother and the girls' cousin.

At the day-care centre the Melman sisters were not only cared for by the teachers but also received three meals a day. Medical care was also readily available because the Society for Health Protection of the Jewish Population (TOZ) had its clinic on the same street and a physician and nurses were always on duty there. This kind of help must have been invaluable for Icchak Melman, a single parent with two little daughters.

In July 1947, the daughters certainly took part in a summer camp for Jewish children from Lower Silesia. It was organized in Złotoryja by the Provincial Committee of Polish Jews based in Wrocław. Taking part in the summer camp, apart from the charges of the local Jewish Committee in Złotoryja, were also children from Wrocław, Bielawa, Ziębice and Chojnów – 85 persons in total.

The surviving archival documents show that Sara Melman attended the Jewish primary school in Złotoryja until the end of the 1947/1948 school year. It is without doubt that the family stayed in the town until that time. After the summer holidays the school did not resume its activity because the number of pupils was already too small. It was probably at that time that the Melmans left Złotoryja for the Upper Silesian city of Katowice. Later, they moved to Warsaw and in the early 1960s emigrated to Israel. Today the elder sister, Sara, lives in Israel and the younger one, Yona, in Florida in the United States.

A summer camp for Jewish children from Lower Silesia, Złotoryja, 1947.

In June 2014, the two Melman sisters arrived in Poland – Sara with her granddaughter from Israel and Yona from the United States. During their sentimental journey they visited Złotoryja where they looked for the places they remembered from their childhood. In Złotoryja they met an unusual guide -Tomasz Szymaniak, a history teacher from a local high school. His grandmother had once told him a story of her acquaintance with a Jew – the manager of a department store and a single parent with two little daughters…

Thanks to Tomasz Szymaniak, Sara and Yona had an opportunity to learn the story of a young Polish woman, Maria Juszczak, who had arrived in 1946 from Kraków to Złotoryja and met here a lone widower with two children, a man who took a great liking for her.

But fate decided otherwise. When leaving Złotoryja, Icchak Melman proposed that Maria go with him, but the woman did not agree. She was only in her 20s. Icchak was much older, had two daughters and had to take care of them. Maybe she was afraid of the responsibility? Or perhaps she worried about people's reaction to this Polish-Jewish relationship? Although there were quite a lot of mixed couples in Złotoryja at that time, especially Jewish-Russian ones, such a decision was not easy for anyone. Icchak Melman did not find a new wife and mother for his girls in Złotoryja – although he later married another woman – and he soon moved to Katowice. Maria stayed in Złotoryja, got married and had children. Her grandson never learned what had influenced her decision not to go with Icchak Melman. But until the end of her life Maria remembered Icchak, his daughters and her tying bows in their hair…

This story of an unfulfilled love and the Melman sisters' visit to Złotoryja has been described by Karolina Przystupa in the "Echo Złotoryi," a local monthly. Thanks to her, the fates of several people who, by a twist of fate, had found themselves together in the town almost 70 years ago, could meet again for a moment.

Sara (first from right) and Yona Melman, Złotoryja, Legnicka Street, second half of the 1940s.

The Melman sisters retained a vivid memory of the several years they had spent in Złotoryja. Maybe because it was the first place after the difficult experience of the war where the family could start a normal life. Although they did not find their place on the planet in Złotoryja or anywhere else in Poland, after many years they eventually reached their Promised Land. The Melman family came a long way – from Falenica outside Warsaw via Kazakhstan, Lower and Upper Silesia and Warsaw to Israel. I hope that Złotoryja was an important point in this journey.

Compiled on the basis of archival documents, Karolina Przystupa's article (Opowieści odnalezione, "Echo Złotoryi. Miesięcznik Towarzystwa Miłośników Ziemi Złotoryjskiej" 2015, no. 3) and conversations with Tomasz Szymaniak

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NAMES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHERS AND SOURCES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS/ILLUSTRATIONS

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The author and the publisher have made every effort to identify the names of all the photographers whose pictures are shown in the book. In many cases, however this turned out impossible. Whoever knows the names we failed to identify, please share this knowledge with us so that we may include the information in the next editions of the book.

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A postcard with a stamp featuring the Glogau synagogue.

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