

The Chronicle of the City of Łódź

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**75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE LIQUIDATION
OF THE LITZMANNSTADT
GETTO**



ŁÓDŹ 2019

The Chronicle of the City of Lodz

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From the Editor

The fourth issue of the Chronicle of the City of Łódź in 2019 has a special character and was entirely devoted to this year's celebrations of the 75th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. Furthermore, it has also been published in English and will be sent out to the participants of this year's celebrations as well as to the Survivors and their families in many corners of the world.



75th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

Litzmannstadt Ghetto (1940–1944)

75th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

According to estimates, Łódź in late Summer of 1939 was inhabited by about 233 thousand Jews. It was the second biggest (the first one was the capital city of Warsaw) concentration of Jews in the Second Polish Republic and the third biggest one (the first one was New York) in the world. The Jews of Łódź acknowledged the outbreak of War with concern. Gradually, together with the fugitives from western Poland, information about the fate of Jews in the territories occupied by the German army reached the city. The sight of retreating Polish troops deepened the pessimistic mood of the society. An ever-growing group of inhabitants decided to leave the city in fear of the approaching front. The evacuation of municipal offices conducted on 5 and 6 September was the impulse for mass flight. The President Jan Kwapiński and the Voivode of Łódź, Henryk Józewski, were among the people who fled the city at that time. Soon, also Jakub Lejb Minberg, the head of the Łódź Jewish Community, and many other representatives of the Jewish political and cultural elites left Łódź. Many of them went to Warsaw.

The Wehrmacht troops garrisoned the city in the evening of 8 September 1939. The next day, the Germans began establishing their occupational administrative apparatus. From the very first days of the German rule, the Jews of Łódź were subjected to severe repressions. They took diverse, sometimes extremely brutal forms: from forcing people to do hard and humiliating cleaning works, through plunder and battery, to murder. They were sanctioned by the occupational law introduced with the use of decrees and ordinances of the German civil and police authorities. The persecutions concerned almost every aspect of life: robbing property belonging to Jews was common and it took the form of lawless theft and mugging performed by



uniformed representatives of the occupant and the local supporters of Nazism, as well as more organised forms, like taking over shops, workshops or even whole industrial plants and establishing special trustees. Combined with the repressive legislation that prohibited the possession of bigger amounts of cash and made access to deposits and bank accounts impossible, prohibited trade in determined types of wares, and ordered the dismissal of Jewish employees, it led to a situation in which the majority of the Jews of Łódź found themselves deprived of any sources of income. Apart from the economic sphere, the severe restrictions included also cultural questions, and, above all, the religious life. The synagogues of Łódź were closed down and many of them were destroyed, including the Old Town Synagogue in Wolborska Street, the Liberal Synagogue in Spacerowa Street (currently Kościuszki Avenue) or the Volhynia Synagogue in Wólczańska Street. Celebration of holidays was prohibited, all Jewish social, political, professional and cultural organisations were dissolved. From a certain moment, the Jews of Łódź could not enter the main artery of the City, i.e. Piotrkowska Street (renamed Adolf Hitler Strasse) and the city parks. They could neither travel by trams or leave the city. The representatives of the intelligentsia and the leading members of the Jewish community that remained in Łódź went to hastily established detention centres, from which many were taken away and executed by firing squads in the forests surrounding the city, within the framework of the so-called Intelligenzaktion. The most well-known arrest action was the one conducted on 1 November 1939 in the popular Astoria café that was located on the corner of Piotrkowska and Cegielniana (currently Więckowskiego) Streets.

In mid-November 1939, all Jews were forced to wear a yellow armband over their right shoulder, which was later substituted with a yellow Star of David, the so-called patch, worn on the chest and the back. At this humiliation, the author of a poignant testimony of the fate of the Jews of Łódź, Dawid Sierakowiak noted in his diary: "We are returning to the Dark Ages. The yellow patch has once again become a part of the Jewish attire", and added the next day: "The thought of branding is difficult to get used to". In the following weeks, the Germans introduced also the call to brand all the flats and houses that belonged to Jews with the same symbol. People who did not comply with the regulation risked severe sanctions.

Their social isolation, deepened with the obligation to wear the yellow "patches", was the introduction to the physical isolation of Jews in a district that was intended specifically for them. The initially assumed plans of displacement of all the Jews residing in the city proved to be unenforceable. In late 1939, there appeared in the deliberations of the German authorities the idea of physical isolation of the Jews of Łódź in a special "living district" dedicated to that aim. The first news of the separation of the Jews of Łódź appeared in the circular letter of the district president, Friedrich Übelhör, of 10 December 1939, according to which the solution was of temporary character, in force until a complete "evacuation" of the Jews from the city

was possible. At the beginning of the next year, the project was approved by the Third Reich authorities, which resulted in the issuance of the decree of 8 February 1940 by the police chief, Johannes Schäfer. By virtue of the decree, all the Jews residing in Łódź were supposed to move to the territory of the closed district demarcated in the Old Town and Bałuty. The proclamation published in Łódź press (*Lodischer Zeitung*) was accompanied with a special map. Until late April 1940, all the Jews of Łódź that had lived outside the territory of the planned Ghetto moved inside its borders. The relocation took place in harsh weather conditions and atmosphere of terror. Initially, they were of planned character, but later took the form of frantic flight in fear of death, with simultaneous attempts at saving the remaining belongings. The culmination of the forced relocation was the event called “the bloody Thursday” at night of 6/7 March 1940, during which several dozens of people, the inhabitants of the tenement houses in Piotrkowska Street, were murdered.

The borders of the Ghetto were closed on 30 April 1940. From that moment on nobody could leave its territory. Along the fencing made of wooden planks and barbed wire, the Germans established stations of protection police (*Schupo*), whose task was to guard whether nobody leaves the limits of the closed district. The supervision over the Ghetto was exercised by the German City Management Board that reported to the High Mayor (German “*Oberbürgermeister*”) of Łódź (from 11 April 1940 called *Litzmannstadt*) through the agency of the specially established cell called the Department of Provisioning and Economy of the Ghetto (*Ernährungs – und Wirtschaftsstelle Getto*), which in 1940 was renamed as self-governing department of the City Management Board under the name of Ghetto Management Board (*Gettoverwaltung*). Hans Biebow, a merchant from Bremen, became its director. The competences of the Ghetto Management Board included issues connected with food supply, starting and expanding production, and using the potential of the Jewish workforce employed in a chain of factories and workhouses (the so-called work resorts). One of the essential branches of activity of this cell was the depredation of property of the Jews incarcerated in the Ghetto. The Ghetto Management Board competed in that respect with other German institutions, above all with the Gestapo and the criminal police (*Kripo*).

The whole Jewish administration of the Ghetto reported directly to the Ghetto Management Board. Its nucleus was established as early as in the first months of the occupation. It was an important moment when the occupation authorities of the City appointed a representative of the Jewish population – the Head of the Jewish Eldership. Chaim Mordechaj Rumkowski was assigned to that post on 13 October 1939. Before the outbreak of World War II, Rumkowski was a social activist, well-known in the Jewish community. He occupied posts in a number of organisations and associations. People remembered him especially as the director of the Jewish orphanage in Helenówek. From 1921, Rumkowski mandated as member of the Management Board of the Jewish religious Community in Łódź as a representative of the



Zionist Party. When the German Army garrisoned the city, Rumkowski stayed in Łódź as the only member of the pre-War Community Management Board. Probably it was this fact that made the occupational authorities appoint him the Head of the Jewish Eldership. Rumkowski was responsible for the implementation of all decrees of the German authorities, in connection with which he wielded superior authority over the Jewish population residing in the city. He managed the assets of the Community as well as the remnants of the Jewish organisations and associations that were still active in the Łódź. He was also entitled to create his own administrative structures necessary to implement the German decrees. Rumkowski was ordered to empanel an advisory organ in the form of the Council of Elders (Ältestenrat). Its actual role was marginal. The Head of the Jewish Eldership exercised his authority on his own, without consulting the advisory organ.

As early as in Autumn and Winter of 1939, Rumkowski established the first cell of the subordinate administrative apparatus: the Conscription Bureau, the Provisioning Department and the Social Services. The aforementioned offices proved essential for the implementation of orders of the German authorities, i.a. to conscript workers for forced labour or to provide assistance to people that were devoid of livelihood as a result of warfare. The administrative apparatus expanded and included more and more areas. In the first period of the creation of Ghetto, the greatest part was played by the Housing Department, which dealt with allocating accommodation to people relocated from other parts of the city to the territory of the future closed district. After its borders were closed, an intricate network of offices, agencies and bureaus was established, which employed almost 14 thousand officials at its peak. Thus, organisational framework was created for nearly all the areas of existence of the Jews incarcerated in the Ghetto.

The most important administrative cells of the Ghetto mentioned in Sierakowiak's note include the Law Enforcement Service that was responsible for maintaining order in the Ghetto, fighting against smuggling and illegal trade. The formation, led by Leon Rozenblat, was used by Rumkowski to combat his opponents, dissatisfied with his policies. The policemen were used to suppress strikes and demonstrations, confiscate property and – which indelibly shaped the negative image of this institution – as an auxiliary formation during displacement actions. The Central Prison, located inside the Ghetto in Czarnieckiego Street, came under the Law Enforcement Service. By the virtue of judgements passed by the Court that operated in the Ghetto, criminals, such as smugglers, thieves or people who were proven to accept bribes, were sent to the Central Prison. The prison also played an important part as a meeting point during displacement actions. The Special Unit of the Jewish police, the so-called Sonderabteilung, led by Dawid Gertler and Marek Kligier was in disrepute. In practice, the unit played the part of political police and its officers were often agents at the service of Gestapo or Kripo.



In the closed district, there operated an extremely well-developed administrative apparatus that dealt with registering and analysing the manifestations of the residents' activity. Within the framework of the Departments of Population Registration, there existed cells that dealt with keeping residence registration records, registering births, deaths and marriages, drawing up statistics for the internal purposes of the Ghetto as well as reports on the economic, health and demographic situation for the German authorities. The Bank established specifically to that aim was responsible for the introduction of the internal currency and purchase of valuables from the inhabitants of the Ghetto. The accounting settlements were conducted by the Financial Department. Also healthcare, social security, agricultural affairs and culture and education management systems were created.

Very quickly, thanks to the determination of many officials, the Ghetto was able to reconstruct the structures of the education system. At its peak, nearly 15 thousand students were signed up in all types of schools: primary, middle and religious. The Schooling Department organised for the students special camps in the "green district" of the Ghetto, in Marysin. The liquidation of the structures of that Department took place in Autumn of 1941, which was connected with the relocation of nearly 20 thousand Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate to the Ghetto.

Together with the increase in the number of work resorts the administrative cells responsible for production – primarily the Central Bureau of Work Resorts – grew in importance. All the craft workshops and work resorts answered to the above-mentioned institution. The bureau acted as an intermediary cell between the German Ghetto Management Board and the production plants, and from 1940 it coordinated the realisation of orders coming to the Ghetto. The ever-growing number of orders required the creation of more and more plants: tailor shops, shoe repair shops, joineries, metalworks, etc. In late 1943, there were 117 plants active in the Ghetto, which employed almost 74 thousand workers, i.e. 85% of the Ghetto's inhabitants. The vast majority of production was realised to order of German state institutions, primarily Wehrmacht. However, goods were also manufactured for private companies, such as AEG, Triumph or IG Farbenindustrie.

In connection with the development of the administrative apparatus, a group of higher officials, agency directors and close collaborators to Rumkowski was created, which very quickly formed the stratum of the "aristocracy" of the Ghetto, called the "jachsents" or "fat cats" (Pol. "szyszki"). The standard of living of that group was visibly different from the living conditions of the rest of the inhabitants of the closed district. The elite of the Ghetto was surrounded by ever-growing resentment and its members often met with hatred of its common inhabitants.

The people incarcerated in the Ghetto, tried to create semblance of normal life with remarkable determination, benefitting by the relative peace in which the German authorities left them. Regardless of the official current of actions



sanctioned by Rumkowski's administration, political organisations were reactivated. Religious and family life was revived, albeit in extremely harsh conditions. Making use of talents of the artists incarcerated in the Ghetto, the Community Centre subordinate to Rumkowski organised concerts and theatrical plays. In Marysin, a number of youth organisations with different ideological profiles and of self-educational character were created – from Zionist to socialist ones.

Gradually, the inhabitants of the Ghetto were forced to work harder and harder in favour of the German war economy. Needless to say, their work was accompanied by increasing hunger and exhaustion. Undernourishment was the cause of the high mortality rate present in the Ghetto. The emaciated organisms were more susceptible to various infectious diseases, such as dysentery, spotted typhus and tuberculosis. Those diseases decimated the population of the Ghetto. Until its liquidation, due to hunger, infections and murders committed by the occupants, more than 43.5 thousand of people lost their lives within its limits.

The outbreak of the German-Soviet war in 1941 also affected the "closed district" of Łódź. The decision taken by the authorities in Berlin to relocate the Jews from the Reich and the Protectorate to Warthegau influenced the lives of thousands of its inhabitants. Arthur Geiser, the governor of Warthegau, feared that relocating such a large group could diminish the production capacity of the Ghetto. Thus, he demanded from his superiors in Berlin permission to murder all the Jews deemed unfit to work. From September 1941, subsequent groups of displaced persons came to the Ghetto, both from the towns of the Warthegau province (i.a. Włocławek, Bełchatów, Wieluń, Sieradz, Łęczyca) and from the Reich and the Protectorate. In October and the very first days of November 1941, nearly 20 thousand people came to the Ghetto from Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Cologne, Emden, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg and Luxembourg.

In early December 1941, in Chełmno nad Nerem, the Germans opened the first extermination centre, and thereby proceeded to carrying out Greiser's plan to murder the Jews deemed unfit to work. In the first instance, they killed the Jewish inhabitants of the poviats located nearest to the camp. From January 1942, they proceeded to "dislocating" the inhabitants of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. Until July of that same year, they took away and murdered over 55 thousand of the residents of the Ghetto. Their place was taken by people who came from the gradually liquidated provincial ghettos in Warthegau. The biggest displacement action, the so-called General Curfew (Allgemeine Gehsperr) took place in early September 1942. In less than two weeks – between 1 and 12 September – at least 15.7 thousand people, primarily children, the elderly and the infirm, were taken away to meet their death.

After the action conducted in September, the Ghetto effectively became a labour camp. Almost all its inhabitants were employed in production that satisfied the needs of the German war economy. As a result, many manifestation of the



seeming autonomy of the Ghetto disappeared, Rumkowski's position was weakened, and the administrative apparatus – rebuilt. Among other things, the well-developed healthcare system, the education system and the institutionalised cultural life were abolished. The standing of the Head of the Jewish Eldership was weakened. He was no longer the only administrator of the food rations, there appeared competitors for the power in the persons of Dawid Gertler from Sonderabteilung or Aron Jakubowicz from the Central Bureau of Work Resorts, favoured by the German supervisors from the Ghetto Management and Gestapo.

Together with the subsequent defeats of the German army in the East and the approach of the Red Army to the Reich's borders, the existence of such a large concentration of Jewish people like the Ghetto of Łódź was no longer defensible for the Berlin authorities. The economic factors and the value of production no longer played the decisive part, because political and ideological questions proved to be critical. Initially, the Germans considered moving the Ghetto to a different place, yet on 15 June 1944, when there were still about 75 thousand people inside it, Heinrich Himmler ordered its liquidation. In its first stage, until mid-July 1944, over 7.1 thousand people were taken away and murdered in the reopened extermination centre in Chełmno nad Nerem. After that action, on 15 July, the displacement was stopped for a short period of time. A couple of weeks later, the deportation was resumed. This time, however, the transports were directed not to Chełmno, but to the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp. In the period between 5 and 28 August 1944, nearly all the remaining inhabitants of the Ghetto were taken away, including the Head of the Jewish Eldership. Over 60% of those people were murdered in gas chambers within the first few hours after their arrival at the camp.

After the liquidation of the Ghetto, the German authorities decided to leave in its territory a group of about 1.5 thousand people that acted as the so-called clearing commando (*Aufräumungskommando*). Its task was to set in order the premises of the Ghetto, to gut the abandoned houses in search of valuables and to prepare the machines, raw materials and valuable wares left in the Ghetto to be taken into the Reich. This group included also a part of the Ghetto elites: directors and high officials of the Jewish administration, who were taken away to the work camps in Dresden and Königs Wusterhause in a separate transport in October 1944. The people left in the territory of the liquidated Ghetto were supposed to be exterminated and buried in the previously prepared mass graves in the Jewish cemetery, whose relics are visible until today near the eastern wall of the cemetery in Bracka Street. The Germans, however, were unable to execute their plan before the Red Army marched into the city. According to estimates, from about the 200 thousand people who lived in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto in years 1940–1944 only between 5 and 7 thousand people survived the War.

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Radegast Station

– history and remembrance

Radegast Station, a division of the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź, was created in 2009 on the premises of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto Holocaust Memorial. Since 2005, the Museum has been providing substantive care to the facility. The history of the place is inextricably linked with the period of World War II and has special significance for the story of the Polish Jewish community.

The Ghetto created in Łódź (in April 1940 renamed Litzmannstadt) by the German occupant, was the second biggest (the first one was the Warsaw Ghetto) and the one that existed for the longest period of time on the territory of the occupied Poland. Nearly 200 thousand people lived inside it, but only 5 thousand survived. Despite the well-preserved city tissue, up to this very day there is no place in Łódź that could be dedicated to the history of this area. This role is filled by the Litzmannstadt Ghetto Holocaust Memorial, together with the Division of the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź, which functions on its premises. This place is visited every year by over 50 thousand people, groups, individual tourists and people from abroad. For the families of the people incarcerated in the Ghetto during World War II, this is often the place where they begin to study the fate of their relatives.

The part played by the Museum/Memorial is to commemorate and to educate. In the Łódź region, this is the only place that popularises knowledge about the Jewish community during World War II. Understanding its role and the activities carried out by the Museum requires getting to know the history of that place.

History of the train station (up to 1945)

The former train station, originally established as a siding within the framework of the construction of the railway section between the Łódź Widzew Station and Zgierz. It was supposed to form a part of the designed railway line from Łódź to Brodnica (as an additional cargo connection of the Dąbrowa Coal Basin with Pomerania). The construction works started in 1925 and as early as on 15 October 1926, a single line was put into provisional service. In 1928, the trail, thirteen kilometres long, was divided in half with a passing loop, constructed on the premises of the Marysin III grange, which was meant to be expanded to the rank of a railway station in the future.



Also in 1928, a loading ramp and a transloading dock were constructed and the foundations were laid for the warehouse that was built in 1933. In late 1930s, in the vicinity of the viaduct in Strykowska Street, a one-floor executive signal box was built. At the same time, the construction began of a two-floor brick station building with a room housing the dispatching signal box, living quarters and the station master's office in the region of Admiralska Street (unfinished until the outbreak of the War). Before the outbreak of the War, the Radogoszcz passing loop was not yet put to use as a railway transloading point.

In early 1941, the "transloading point" obtained the rank of the "Ghetto station". Originally, the place where food and raw materials were given over to the Ghetto and its products collected was the Bałucki Market, but it soon turned out that due to the amount of goods, this role had to be taken over by the railway station. It was then when the terrain was leased by the then city authorities (renamed in April 1940 as Litzmannstadt) from the German railways (Deutsche Reichsbahn), therefore formally it did not belong to the Ghetto area. The station was fenced off with a wooden fence (between the planks there was barbed wire) and, additionally, it was separated from the premises of the Ghetto by today's Inflancka Street (which back then was called Gaertnerstrasse). Upon the order of the city authorities, the Germans started to finish the station building, taken over as a building shell, and to adapt it as a station of the protection police (Schutzpolizei). In years 1940–1941, upon the pre-War foundations, a wooden warehousing building was erected and equipped with a brick loading ramp. The Ghetto administration paved the service road, prepared the transloading dock (which housed a timber yard and a coal yard) and laid the water mains. During the construction works, the dugout in which the past plain line was laid. The obtained dirt was taken away to the construction site of the embankment that ran from Chojny to the then constructed marshalling yard in Olechów. In German documents, the station was termed Verladebahnhof Radogosh, Getto-Bahnhof Radegast, and from October 1943 – Verladebahnhof Waldborn or Verladeanlage in Litzmannstadt-Waldborn. In the Ghetto, it was popularly called Bahnhof, Radegast Station, Station in Marysin or, simply, the siding.

Upon the order of the city authorities, the Germans started to finish the station building, taken over as a building shell, and to adapt it as a station of the prevention police (Schutzpolizei) that supervised the area. In years 1940–1941, upon the pre-War foundations, a wooden warehousing building was erected and equipped with a brick loading ramp. The Ghetto administration paved the service road, prepared the transloading dock (which housed a timber yard and a coal yard) and laid the water mains. During the construction works, the dugout in which the past plain line was laid. The obtained dirt was taken away to the construction site of the embankment that ran from Chojny to the then constructed marshalling yard in Olechów.

In September 1941, the Station acquired a new "function" of a place which received transports of people that were relocated to the Ghetto. At that time,

German authorities decided to deport all the Jews residing in the territory of the Third Reich and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. The Ghetto of Łódź was chosen as one of the places of their concentration, which was supposed to accommodate almost 20 thousand Jews from western Europe and 5 thousand Romani and Sinti people from the today's Austro-Hungarian borderland. Within several days, between 16 October and 4 November 1941, twenty transports of Jews came to the Ghetto from Berlin, Düsseldorf, Emden, Frankfurt am Main, Hamburg, Cologne, Luxembourg, Prague and Vienna. Simultaneously, Jews from the liquidated provincial ghettos in Warthegau were relocated to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. In September 1941, 2 thousand people came to the Ghetto from Włocławek. In May 1942, over 8 thousand people were directed to the Ghetto from the nearby Pabianice, Brzeziny and Ozorków, and in July 1942, a group of people from Kalisz, Koźminek, Turek, Dobra and Uniejów. The next month saw relocation of small groups from Bełchatów, Ozorków, Żelów, Wieluń, Stryków, Sieradz, Łask and Zduńska Wola. For the majority of the newcomers from that period, the Radegast Station was the place of their first contact with the Ghetto of Łódź.

In January 1942, the Germans started deporting people to the Kulmhof death camp in Chełmno nad Nerem. Until September 1942, during four mass deportation actions, each lasting several days, about 70 thousand people were displaced from the Ghetto. It was at that time when the Ghetto was transformed into a labour camp, in which almost all inhabitants were employed in production that satisfied the needs of the German war economy. The deportation was repeated in the Summer of 1944, when the Germans took the decision to liquidate the Ghetto. Back then, in June and July of 1944, over 7 thousand people were taken away from the Station to the Kulmhof camp and in August – the remaining 67 thousand inhabitants were transported to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and extermination camp.

In years 1942–1943, three barracks were erected, which acted as warehouses. Every year, 5–6 thousand truckloads of goods produced in the Ghetto were taken away to Germany, but the number decreased to 3 thousand truckloads per year in the final period of its existence.

History of the train station (1945–2004)

After the War, the Station returned to its original role as a passing loop and transloading dock. After 1945, the wooden barracks erected during the occupation were demolished, while the building with the ramp, the one closest to the tracks, and both signal boxes were left intact. The passing loop started to serve the purposes of cargo traffic. In years 1949–1951, two warehouses were built for the Voivodeship Enterprise of Food and Drink Wholesale Trade and for the Gardening Central (in the present Stalowa Street). In 1951, the executive signal box was closed down and the railway signals were abolished.

Between early 1950s and 1990s, the passing loop acted as a siding signal box for the service of the nearby wholesale warehouses. In early 1970s,



STACJA RADEGAST
POMNIK PAMIĘCI ZAGŁADY ŻYDÓW
Z LITZMANNSTADT GHETTO

MONUMENT PROJEKTU Czesława Bieleckiego znajduje się na terenie nieczynnej obecnie stacji, zwanej przez Niemców – Radegast.

Pomnik składa się z Halla Miłości i Kolumny Pamięci (w kształcie kolumny), rzeźby deportowanych, budynku Stacji Radegast oraz symbolicznych miejsc z nazwami obywateli zagłady do których trafili mieszkańcy Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

Przy rampie stołkokołomytwa i oryginalne wagony tncz-
nncz – takic, z jakich korzystalci Niemcy wywozili w nie-
ludzkich warunkach lndzi z getta. W Tuncelu Pamietci wy-
wieszono tablice z listami transportowymi i pamiatki po
pomordowanymch – kldczc, brzoeczki, nozyczki. W Hallu

Młost są natomiast wyryte nazwy miejsc, z których przyjeżdżały transporty do Litzmansstadt Ghetto.

Inicjatywa budowy pomnika poparta przez prezydenta Łodzi Jerzego Kropiwnickiego zrodziła się w Fundacji Monumentum i Ludzium Łódź. Pomoc w realizacji okazały m.in. władze Frankfurtu, Berlina, Wiednia, Hamburga i Luksemburga – miasto, z którego pochodzili zesłani do Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

Uroczyste oddanie pomnika nastąpiło 29 sierpnia 2004 roku – w 60. rocznicę ostatniego transportu ze Stacji Radegast do obozu zagłady Auschwitz-Birkenau.



Na macieciach poemnika wkładają nazwy obwodów niemieckich, do których trafiały maszynkarskie Litzmannstadt Ghetto: Scharnhof, Kutusof am Neiz, Rasenbrück, Salzhemmendorf, Orlämburg, Aueburg - Hohenau, Gera-Röben.

construction works were undertaken to build two new platforms and a waiting room located in the signal box. It was connected with the idea to create a passenger city line, which, however, ended up in a fiasco. In the second half of the 1970s, the whole station building with the dispatching signal box was transformed into a dwelling house for the railway workers. After 1981, the dilapidated executive signal box (in Strykowska Street) was demolished and in the 1990s, a part of tracks and turnouts was taken down, while the plain line and the cut-off side tracks were left intact. Within their course, there survived a rail with the signature: "Krupp 1939" (which now serves as an element of the exposition in the Tunnel of the Deported).

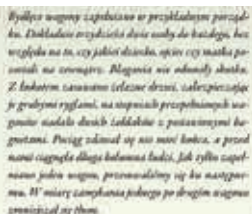
The wooden building with the ramp stood unused for a long time, but in late 1990s it was leased to accommodate a private joinery.

The train station as a memorial of the Ghetto

The initiative to establish an education centre around the station building was born as early as in 2002 in the Iudaicum Lodzense Monument Foundation. However, the decisive moment for its establishment was the meeting between the newly elected President of Łódź, Jerzy Kropiwnicki, with Władysław Bartoszewski at the end of that same year. The works on sourcing funds and realisation of the memorial were taken up immediately and the construction design was entrusted to the architect Czesław Bielecki. Its opening inaugurated the celebration of the 60th and the 61st Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

The preserved warehouse building was reconstructed together with its ramp and intended as an exhibition room. The original arrangement of rooms on the ground floor and the external body of the building were restored in accordance with the German plans from 1941. On the northern side of the building, a preserved railway track was left, on which three box wagons were positioned. On the southern side, the whole building was surrounded by a wall, on which commemorative plaques were placed. On the eastern side, the complex is closed by symbolic matzevot with names of the concentration and extermination camps to which Jews were deported from the Radegast Station.

The most monumental part is, however, the so-called Tunnel of the Deported, finished in 2005. It was erected following the line of the Ghetto railway track and made of concrete slabs of total length of 160 m. On the outside there are engraved years of World War II, and on the inside the numbers are complemented with the most important facts from the life of Łódź/Litzmannstadt under German occupation. Inside, placed on walls and arranged in chronological order, there are copies of transport lists of the people relocated to or from the Ghetto. They contain about 34 thousand names and the empty sheets symbolise the lists that were not preserved until our times. The Tunnel constitutes an extension of a dead-end track, which was moved to the ceiling in the form of steel bars that resemble railway tracks. The whole



Sara Zook and Shadrone Imita

The Column of Remembrance is a characteristic element of the memorial. The construction that surmounts the Tunnel of the Deported is 25 m high and its shape refers to a broken Doric column – a symbol drawn from funerary art (employed in Jewish tradition as well), which signifies life that came to an abrupt halt. Above its entrance, there is the fifth commandment of the Decalogue in Polish, Hebrew and English: Thou shalt not kill. The idea of the architect C. Bielecki was to evoke fear in the visitors and make them identify with the victims' situation: *From whichever side we enter that gruesome train – the tunnel of history – we still reach the symbols of martyrs' death: the chimney or the matzevot with the names of the target extermination stations.* According to the author, the materials used: concrete, demolition bricks, cobblestones or corroded elements of railings are supposed to (...) *show the scale and the craft of extermination. To remind us how little is needed to kill tens of thousands of people.*

The discussed monumental complex was created on the initiative of the President of the City and its construction was aided financially by private persons, authorities of different cities and companies, i.a. the Prime Minister Marek Belka and the Government of the Republic of Poland, Josef Buchmann, a Survivor, the authorities of Vienna, Frankfurt am Main, Tel Aviv and Luxembourg, the Enterprise of General Construction in Łódź, Siemens LLC, Skanska JSC, self-governmental authorities of Łódź.

The memorial as Museum

Since March 2009, the station building together with the Litzmannstadt Ghetto Holocaust Memorial has been a Division of the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź (city institution). Since 2005, the Museum has been providing substantive care to the facility. In the station building there are presented facsimiles of all the preserved transport lists of the people relocated to labour camps in Greater Poland, deported to the Ghetto from Warthegau and the Third Reich, and the ones taken away to the Kulmhof death camp in Chełmno nad Nerem.

The trunk that belonged to the Schwarz family (from the collection of the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź) – a married couple relocated to the Ghetto from Vienna in 1941 and deported in May 1942 to the Kulmhof death camp in Chełmno nad Nerem to face their death – was placed here.

The above-mentioned permanent exhibition has been accompanied by temporary exhibitions, changed since 2009, connected with the theme of the extermination of Jews, either created by the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź or borrowed from other institutions. In 2014, the first permanent exhibition arranged in the interiors of the warehouse building was opened. It is entitled “Litzmannstadt Ghetto 1940–1944” (curator of the exhibition: Izabela Terela). Its contents and photographic materials are of informative and educational character and constitute a basis for educators and individual visitors alike, which encourages people to explore the topic further on their own.

The memorial is a place where numerous events that commemorate the Ghetto and its victims are organised. Due to their open character, the proceedings are conducted by different individual entities and institutions. The biggest events include the yearly celebrations of the liquidation of the Ghetto of Łódź, present in the calendar of the city ceremonies, on 29 August (which is the probable day of the last transport from the Ghetto to the former Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp). Their organiser is the President of the City of Łódź and the Jewish Community in Łódź. Due to that fact and the origin of the people brought to Litzmannstadt, the celebrations are of nationwide character and guests come from all over the world. Survivors and their families have a special place among them. The Museum actively participates in the organisation of the above-mentioned events and accompanying events.

At the turn of 2018 and 2019, thanks to the support of the European Union funds (within the project entitled “Construction of a modern museum

with innovative solutions. Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź as a creative institution". The project was implemented within the framework of the ROP 2014–2020 for the Łódź Voivodeship: "Cultural heritage and infrastructure for culture – Integrated Territorial Investments". The Division was adjusted to the needs of the disabled and a new calefactory and ventilation system was installed. The latter element of the project allowed us to broaden our educational offer with workshops for youth and the possibility to hold historical meetings for the citizens of Łódź.

Moreover, the facility gained conditions adjusted to the new permanent exhibition – the mock-up of the Ghetto of Łódź. Since 2015, a team of experts (the full list of people involved in the project can be found at http://radegast.pl/pl/informacje/autorzy_i_partnerzy,4.html) implements a project that consists of two elements: physical mock-up of the Ghetto and website of educational character. During the first stage, they gathered a base of archival and contemporary resources in the form of photographs, building designs, plans and maps of the former area of the Ghetto. Then, they identified the facilities and classified them according to street names and building numbers. The base that was thus created is the basis for the external company to realise the historical model. The mock-up of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto is created in the scale of 1:400, for the period of May 1942 (its basis is an aerial photograph of the area taken by Germans during World War II). Due to its size (4x10 m) and character (it reflects the real historical buildings and their surroundings), it is the biggest, and the only, exposition of its kind in Poland/Europe. The gathered archival materials allowed the team to create an educational portal (www.radegast.pl), which imparts historical knowledge in a popular-science form of 8 didactic paths. The aim of the portal, apart from the informational and design ones, is to educate people all over the world and give them an opportunity to take a virtual thematic walk around the territory of the former Ghetto. The construction of the mock-up will be finished in 2019. Our next aim is to enrich it with multimedia and to increase the level of interaction with the visitors.

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Saved to remember

15 stories on the 15th anniversary of the foundation of the Survivors' Park

All the people who survived the Litzmannstadt Ghetto carry the pain of the past inside them, but they prove with their lives that "strong, deeply rooted trees no wind can pull out or uproot!" The Survivors of the Łódź Ghetto do a lot to remember their past and to prevent people from forgetting. In Łódź, they have their Trees of Remembrance in the Survivors' Park.

The idea to plant in Łódź a lane of trees that would symbolise the people who survived the Holocaust was conceived by Halina Elcewska, a Survivor of the Łódź Ghetto, whose idea was taken up in 2004 by the President of Łódź, Jerzy Kropiwnicki. On 30 August 2004, the first Trees of Remembrance were planted by 387 people who came from all over the world to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. Since then, each year new trees arrive at the park: birch, larch, oak, maple, lime, hornbeam, beech, pine and spruce trees. Nowadays, there are over six hundred thirty of them. Each person or family honoured with a tree in the Survivors' Park is given a certificate signed by the President of the City of Łódź and their names are engraved on granite plaques along the main alley named after Arnold Mostowicz. The Trees of Remembrance are a symbolic mark of their presence in their native city. The Survivors' Park in Łódź commemorates those who survived, thus it is a testimony of the victory of life over death.

In 2014, when the building in the Survivors' Park was occupied by Marek Edelman Dialogue Center, we began to gather information about the Survivors and their families. We collect documents, interviews, archival photographs, films, we keep in touch with the families. The people who have their trees in the Survivors' Park have their place in Łódź, and we take symbolic care of it by getting to know and passing on the stories of their families to subsequent generations.

The exposition "We are eternal trees..." prepared for the 75th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto is the third part of the project "Trees of Remembrance". The title comes from Rachmil Bryks' poem *Keep your spirits up*, which was written in 1940 in the Łódź Ghetto in Yiddish and was kindly given to us to form part of this project by the author's daughter – Bella Bryks-Klein. More stories of the Survivors and their families are being created.

75th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

Rachmil Bryks

Keep your spirits up

It's only the wind blowing –
Keep your spirits up, my child...
We are old trees,
Deeply and widely rooted into the earth,
With huge crowns that decorate the world.
Strong winds of storm
Can pluck out our leaves,
Our branches break,
But not the crowns!
Strong, deeply rooted trees
No wind can pull out.
It won't uproot them either!
We are eternal trees,
That bear nourishing fruit to the world,
We will stand forever!
It's only the wind blowing –
Keep your spirits up, my child...

*Łódź Ghetto, 1940, translated from Yiddish into Polish
by Marek Tuszewicki. Poem shared by the author's
daughter, Bella Bryks-Klein*



STORY NUMBER ONE

Tree with the number "0"

Halina Elczewska, née Goldblum

Łódź – Warsaw (Poland)

I left something behind

"Although my body is in Warsaw, my heart is always in Łódź. This is my City. Forever. And in that City there are places which are especially close to my heart, such as the Survivors' Park... And people who are especially close to my heart..." said Halina Elczewska in 2013, several months before her death.

In fact, her name was Helena, in honour of her grandmother Helena Frydenberg, who died in Japan in 1919, the very same year in which she came into the world on 11 November. She always celebrated her birthday together with the Polish Independence Day.

Her father, Maurycy Goldblum (b. 1882), worked in Markus Kon's factory at 3/5 Łąkowa Street. The family lived under that address until the outbreak of World War II. Her paternal grandmother, Regina (née Kon), was related by marriage to the owners of the factory. Halina's mother, Franciszka (Frydka), née Frydenberg. It was a well-off family. At their home you could find a grand piano and a governess, the father bought a holiday house in Włodzimierzów.

Halina had two sisters. An older one, Jadwiga (b. 1916, the future wife of Arnold Mostowicz), and Inka (b. 1922).

She was educated, as she always emphasised, in the best school in the world – Eliza Orzeszkowa Grammar School at 21 Kościuszki Avenue. She had fond memories of her teachers, including her teacher of Polish, Stefania Skwarczyńska,



and a teacher named Lewinkopf, who smuggled love letters between the female and male grammar schools in his hat. She emphasised that at her school there were never any conflicts between the Jewish and the Catholic students and almost all of the girls were in love with the handsome priest.

After her matura exam, she took up a job in the English-Polish Trade Association at 1 Kościuszki Avenue. Soon after that World War II broke out. The Goldblums – like all the Jews – were forced to move to the Ghetto. They did it very early, in November 1939. They took up residence at 39 Brzezińska Street (today's name of the Street is Wojska Polskiego). A single room had to accommodate the parents, the three sisters – Jadwiga, Halina and Inka – and their Polish caretaker – Miss Helena. Halina's father filled in the Ghetto the role of the director of the Economic Department, then acted for a short time as the director of the post office, but he was dismissed due to the fact that he did not speak Yiddish. He remained, however, closely connected to the Ghetto administration.

Halina Goldblum worked at 4 Kościelny Square, in the Control Commission, and then in the Employment Bureau. In 1942, she married Pinkus Inzelsztajn (b. 1910), who was a policeman in the Ghetto, and then the director of the tailors' resort. They took up residence at 10 Jakuba Street. Halina admitted that her situation in the Ghetto was reasonably good. Above all, she did not suffer hunger. "It's strange, but I couldn't eat my entire life. My children suffered because of it, because I often forgot that I needed to feed them", she later reminisced.

Her whole family lasted out in the Ghetto almost to the very end, to its liquidation. They were taken away to the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camp on 24 August 1944. It was there where her husband, her parents and her younger sister, Inka, died. On 6 October 1944, together with her sister Jadwiga, she was taken away to the Gross Rosen camp, from where they were transferred to the subcamp in Halbstadt, where they lived to see the end of the War. Immediately after the liberation of the camp, they moved to the nearby city of Mieroszów (German Friedland) near Wałbrzych. Arnold Mostowicz, who had to recover from severe illnesses but also worked as a doctor in hospital, reached the town as well.

Halina became... the Vice-Mayor of Mieroszów. "That adventure didn't even last a year, but I was very lucky. I began to work on 20 May 1945 and I worked all my life", she stressed.

In 1946, together with the Mostowicz family, she moved to Wrocław, where she became the headmaster of the School of Factory Advisers. She considered the construction of the new school building in 1950 to be her greatest professional success. "It was the first completely new building in Wrocław and in the whole Lower Silesia after the War", she said with pride.

In Wrocław, she remarried – her second husband's name was Maciej Elczewski. She admitted that back then both of them were fixed on communist

ideals. "Will you marry me, comrade?", her admirer, activist of the Polish Socialist Party and, later on, of the Polish United Workers' Party, was supposed to ask her. In March of 1948 their first daughter, Majka, came to the world, in April of the subsequent year – Ala, in 1951 Zosia was born. At that time, they already lived in Pomerania, where Elczewski acted as the First Secretary of the Voivodeship Committee of the PUWP, and in 1952 became a Polish People's Republic Sejm deputy of the first term of office. In 1953, the whole family moved to Warsaw. Elczewski was the editor-in-chief of "Chłopska Droga" ("The Peasant Way"), while she worked as the director of the division of the Workers' Publishing Co-Operative "Prasa".

After her husband's death in 1957 (he was only 40, she was 38), Halina Elczewska began her work in the popular-science department of the Polish Television. She hosted programmes popularising geography. She worked there full-time until 1969. After the March events, two of her daughters – Maja and Ala – moved abroad. Her youngest daughter needed constant care. This fact made her take early retirement. She still, albeit sporadically, co-operated with the television. After Zosia's death, she engaged in social activities. In 1991, she co-created the Association of Jewish Combatants and Victims of World War II, for many years she acted as a member of its Board. At that time, she regularly attended the celebrations commemorating the Łódź Ghetto. When in 2004 there appeared a realistic conception of building in Łódź a monument dedicated to the victims of the Ghetto at the Radegast Station, she suggested commemorating the Survivors as well and planting trees that would symbolise those who lived.

"We created a park of remembrance of those who died and those who survived. Our children and grandchildren will visit this place whenever they are in Poland and in Łódź", she said during the ceremony. Her tree – a grand oak – marked with the number "0" is situated in the very heart of the Park. Her daughters and her granddaughter Ania (b. 1979) stress the fact that for Halinka this place had a very special meaning.

On 17 May 2013 in Łódź, in the Survivors' Park, Halina received the Decoration "For Merit to the City of Łódź" awarded by the City Council of Łódź. When she was in Łódź, she used the opportunity to visit the flat in which she lived before the War. It was her last visit in the family city. Although she used to say that "old Jewish women from Łódź die hard" and promised to live to see the day of the 70th anniversary of the liquidation of the Ghetto to celebrate the decennary of the Survivors' Park, she, unfortunately, did not fulfil that promise.

Halina Elczewska died on 2 December 2013. She was buried in the Military Cemetery in Powązki in Warsaw. Numerous friends and acquaintances, as well as children she befriended, attended the funeral. Her daughter Maja lives in New York, Ala – in Copenhagen, her granddaughter Ania studies English literature and teaches creative writing at the University of Geneva.

STORY NUMBER TWO

Tree no. 217 – Arnold Mostowicz

Tree no. 123 – Jadwiga Mostowicz, née Goldblum

Łódź – Warsaw (Poland)

Memory is the most important question

The main alley in the Survivors' Park that leads from Jan Karski's Mound to the Monument of the Righteous Among the Nations was named after Arnold Mostowicz, doctor from the Łódź Ghetto, writer, creator of the Monumentum Iudaicum Lodzense Foundation.

Arnold Mostowicz was born in Łódź on 6 April 1914. His paternal family came from Krośniewice. In late 19th century, his father – Ignacy Moszkowicz – came to the City that at that time was called “the promised land”. First, he worked as an errand boy, then as a seller in Zachariasz Warszawski's company, which was a wholesale trade mission of the Krusche-Ender plant. Simultaneously, he studied intensively. However, before he passed his matura exam and went to Warsaw to study law, he had brought almost his entire family to Łódź. All took up residence in the house at 9 Cegielniana Street (currently 26 Więckowskiego Street).



Arnold Mostowicz's maternal grandfather – Salomon Goldsztajn – worked in Łódź as a feldsher and was a religious man, yet completely assimilated with Polish culture. He had a five-room flat in Narutowicza Street, which proved his wealth and importance. He gave his daughter Erna a dowry (the prenuptial agreement specified that the grand piano, paintings, jewellery and furniture were part of her fortune). The father-in-law forced his son-in-law to take up a specific job. Thus, Ignacy earned his living working in a fabric warehouse and later running a shop with textile materials together with his brother-in-law. At the same time, he actively participated in the cultural life of the Jewish Łódź. “His greatest passions were literature and theatre, in the times spent in Warsaw he was an active member of the literary circles, he befriended such writers as Icchak Perec and Szolem Ajelchem”, Arnold Mostowicz reminisced with pride. After World War I, his father – already in Łódź, together with Mojżesz Broderson – ran a theatre studio that was soon transformed into the Ararat theatre, he directed theatrical plays, was the vice-president of the Hazomir choir, wrote poems and newspaper columns. He was a versatile man. When in the interwar period the family suffered poverty, he developed a method of production of canvas – a special fabric used for embroidery, which up to that moment was only imported from abroad.

It was this invention that allowed him to get rich in a short time, as much as to send his son to study medicine in France in 1932.

Arnold Mostowicz studied in Toulouse for six years. He returned to Poland right before the outbreak of World War II. In September 1939, he fled from Łódź from the approaching German army and ended up in Warsaw. During the siege of Warsaw, he worked in the Baby Jesus Hospital. Then he returned to Łódź and spent nearly five years in the local Ghetto. His parents stayed in Warsaw and died in Treblinka. Mostowicz worked in the Ghetto in the isolation hospital and the emergency medical centre. He married Jadwiga Goldblum (b. in October 1916), whose father worked before the War in Markus Kon's factory in Łąkowa Street. They survived until the liquidation of the Ghetto.

Mostowicz and his family were taken away to Auschwitz on 24 August 1944, from where he got to several other Hitlerite camps in the territory of the Reich. Right after the War, he managed to find his wife and sister-in-law. They stayed for some time in a town called Mieroszów (German Friedland) near Wałbrzych, where he worked for a short time as a doctor in the local hospital. However, he had to put his medical practice on hold, because the diseases he suffered from in the Ghetto and the camps – pulmonary tuberculosis and typhoid fever – reared their ugly head once again. He engaged in journalism and literature. Among other things, he worked as the editor-in-chief of "Gazeta krakowska" ("The Cracow Newspaper") and "Szpilki" ("High Heels"). He also wrote books that popularised science (*Biology changes man*, *Biology changes medicine*, *Biology teaches to think*). Moreover, he wrote fantasy literature. In the books entitled *Us from space*, *The mystery of the Great Pyramid*, *Feud over the Sons of the Sky* he tried to explain the mysteries that had been intriguing the human kind for centuries. He published a number of comic books based on the theories of Erich von Däniken. He dabbled in translation as well. He edited anthologies of French and Soviet humour, published stories written by French humourists: Alphonse Allais and Pierre Henri Cami. He lived in Wrocław, Cracow and Warsaw. Occasionally, he came to Łódź. Łódź, however, claimed its rightful place in his memory.

In August 1994, during the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, Mostowicz uttered the following, memorable, words:

"A nation can be murdered with the use of bullets or gas, but it can also be murdered by killing its memory".

A year later, the Monumentum Iudaicum Lodzense Foundation was established in Łódź, whose first president he became. Its aim is to take care of the heritage of the Jews of Łódź, mainly the Jewish Cemetery in Bałuty.

"My main concern is to restore the memory of the murdered Jewish nation. The Cemetery is the starting point for future actions, which will be aimed at reminding people of the role and the significance of the Jews of Łódź in the develop-

ment of the City”, he explained to journalists. According to Mostowicz, Łódź is the only city in Europe in which Jews played such an important and creative part in the social, political and cultural life of the whole city. They brought in their spirit.

“In fact, the Jews of Łódź wrote a beautiful page in the book of history in every possible field”, he stressed.

Arnold Mostowicz often commented on the tragedy of the Jews of Łódź, whether by writing his memoirs and reportages from the Ghetto entitled *The yellow star and the red cross*, by reviewing *The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto* and the memoirs of the witnesses of the Holocaust, or by recounting his own experiences in Dariusz Jabłoński’s film *Photoamateur*, whose co-scriptwriter and narrator he was.

In 1998, the City Council conferred him the title of the Freeman of the City of Łódź. Arnold Mostowicz died on 3 February 2002 in Warsaw and was buried in the Military Cemetery in Powązki. Several years ago, the main alley in the Survivors’ Park was named after him.

The Mostowicz family had two sons: Ryszard (b. 1947) and Jerzy (1949–1964). They also had two granddaughters. Julia lives and works in Basel, she has one son, Bruno. Dorota lives in Southampton in England.

STORY NUMBER THREE

Tree no. 418

Josef Buchmann

Łódź – Frankfurt Am Main (Germany)

Reborn like the legendary phoenix

He realises that future belongs to the young. And that it will be them who will decide what the future will look like. That is why he dedicates part of his fortune to aid young talented people. However, he also wants to commemorate his nearest and dearest that died during the Holocaust.

Josef Buchman was born in Łódź on 10 July 1930 (although we can find another date in the documents: 12 December 1929). His father, Lajzer (Eliezer) Buchman (b. 1894), whose name was alternately spelled with a single or double “n”, was a trade union activist representing the butchers’ trade union. His mother, Chaja Sura (b. 1899), came from the pious Haftornik family. They lived at 78 Zgierska Street, near Bałucki Market. Josef (sometimes two names appear in the documents: Josek Lajb) remembers that he used to go to the market with his mother to buy vegetables. However, his fondest memories concern the holiday trips to Wiśniowa Góra.

“There is only one family photograph preserved from that period. It presents all of us together. It was sent to my uncle in America and I got it back after the War”, he says. Nowadays, it stands in a place of honour in his flat in Frankfurt.



Josef was the only boy in his family, beside him there were four sisters at home: Ruchla (b. 1920), Szajndla Sala (b. 1923), Ala (b. 1927) and the youngest one, Estera (b. 1932). He used to have two more sisters, yet he never met one of them, because she had died before his birth.

Josef's maternal grandfather was a gabbai, or a person who takes care of the synagogue, collects and distributes donations and helps the needy. His grave, like the graves of other members of the family who died in Łódź, is located in the Łódź cemetery. The grave of Josef's sister Ruchla, who died on 15 November 1939, has been discovered and renovated.

In 1940, when the Germans were confining the Jews of Łódź in the Ghetto, the Buchmans stayed in their flat in Zgierska Street. Initially, Josef's father worked as a butcher, but for a very short period of time. Then he was a carter. He died in the Ghetto of pneumonia on 1 May 1942 at the age of 48. His resting place has not been determined yet. Josef and his sisters worked in sewage disposal services. It was very hard work, one of the worst, but quite well-paid. Even the ten-year-old Esterka worked. The family managed to rescue her from deportation during the so-called General Curfew, when the Germans ordered the removal from the Ghetto of all children under 10 years of age.

Buchman stresses the fact that his older sisters helped him greatly. "As the only boy in the family, I was greatly pampered", he admits. They managed to avoid the subsequent transports.

In 1943, they moved to another building in the same street, under the number 84. They worked until the liquidation of the Ghetto. In August, Josef, together with sisters, was taken away to Auschwitz. He was incarcerated in several camps, to be finally liberated from Bergen-Belsen by the British.

"Among the British officers there was Chaim Herzog, the future President of Israel", he recalls.

In 1945, Buchmann returned to Łódź. “I wanted to find my family and I managed to find my aunt. I got to know that my sisters were in Słupsk and went to see them. Because communism was beginning to take its rule in Poland, we decided to go to our uncle in America. But before we could do that, we had to reach Germany. Frankfurt was situated in the American zone”, he recounts.

They registered in the displaced persons camp and waited for the documents that would enable them to go to the United States. Finally, one of his sisters went to France and the other decided to emigrate to Australia. But he stayed, intent on going to America. Meanwhile, his uncle died and he did not have any more relatives he could visit. He stayed in Frankfurt.

“It just so happened”, he emphasises. As a very young man, he started to pursue a glittering career. Buchmann speaks sparingly about it, but he does not conceal the fact that he made his fortune on the black market. “I started my business dealing in socks, I established a small factory and sold them to Belgium”, he says.

When in 1948 the displaced persons camp was dissolved, Josef and his friends (other Survivors of the Ghetto) opened a small shop in the very heart of Frankfurt. Already in mid-1950s a project was created that would yield a huge success to Buchmann in the future. In a short time he became a tycoon on the real estate market. In 1962, he built the first skyscraper in Frankfurt. At the same time, it was one of the first constructions of that type in Germany. Since then, he has made many more great investments, including the Northwest Center, which changed the appearance of the city and gave it a completely different look.

For many years, he has been devoting the earned money mostly to education, culture and social service. “I don’t want to put my money into mortar and stones alone, but also in people”, he has once confessed.

In the first place, he established doctoral scholarships for young scholars in different fields. He helped in establishing contacts between young Israeli and German people. For over a decade, he has been funding stays in Israel for Polish students. Already in 1982, he created a foundation that organised student exchanges between universities in Tel Aviv and Frankfurt. He would like Łódź to participate in the project as well. Until today, over 250 exhibitioners took advantage of the opportunity to complete doctoral internships funded by Buchmann. In 1995, the Department of Law at the Tel Aviv University was named after Josef Buchmann. Ariel Sharon, the Prime Minister of Israel, said during the ceremony of awarding him the honoris causa doctorate of the Tel Aviv University in 2002, “Josef Buchmann is a living testament of the fate of the Jewish nation, which even after the tragedy of the Holocaust was capable of being reborn like the legendary phoenix, and built a new life”.

For over 30 years, Josef Buchmann has also been present in his native city of Łódź. He came here in late 1980s, when Poland was still under the communist rule. “When I saw the poor Jewish Community in Zachodnia Street, I decided

to help it”, he says. For many years, he has been sending money towards a dining facility for elder members of the Community. He also started to finance cleaning works at the Jewish Cemetery in Bracka Street in Łódź. He gave money to build small graves on the Ghetto field, where tombs of people who died during the War are.

Several thousand concrete gravestones were erected then. In 2004, he donated 250 thousand euros (over one million zlotys) to the City for the construction of the Radegast Station. The Hall of Cities was erected thanks to the generous donation of Mr Buchmann. “In memory of Eliezer and Chaja Sara and their families taken away from this Station to Auschwitz” – these are the words that we can read on the plaque standing in the vicinity of the Ghetto victims memorial.

A year later, the businessman financed the creation of the database of the Jewish Cemetery in Łódź, whereas in 2009, he considerably supported the construction of the Monument of the Righteous Among the Nations in the Survivors’ Park.

During the celebrations of the 65th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński, decorated Josef Buchmann with the Commander’s Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland for outstanding contribution to the activities in favour of Polish-Jewish dialogue and in the development of cooperation between nations.

STORY NUMBER FOUR

Tree no. 550

Marian Turski (Turbowicz Mosze)

Łódź – Warsaw (Poland)

A man of dialogue and understanding

Marian Turski was born on 26 June 1926 in Druskininkai (now in Lithuania) as Mosze Turbowicz. His father – Elias Turbowicz (1897–1944) – came from Kletsk near Nesvizh (now in Belarus) and worked in the coal industry. His mother – Rachela née Werebejczyk (1901–1985) – came from the region of Druskininkai and Porechye (now in the territory of Lithuania). His grandfather ran a shop there, his uncle – a pharmacy. Turski’s mother studied mathematics in Russia, but she returned to Poland and took up residence in Łódź. Here she met her husband-to-be, whom she married in 1924. When the time of birth of her first-born was approaching, she went to visit her parents (as tradition required), hence Marian was born in Druskininkai (back then a Polish town), but he was connected with Łódź throughout his childhood.



The Turbowicz family lived at 11 Mielczarskiego Street (formerly Szkolna Street), but in early 1930s they moved to 14 Sterlinga Street. Turski's younger brother – Sewek – was born in 1932.

At first, Marian studied in the school at 11 Piotrkowska Street and then went to the Bilingual (Polish-Hebrew) Grammar School at 21 Magistracka Street (today Kamińskiego Street). He was poor at gymnastics, but excellent at Hebrew.

From pre-War Łódź he remembers Piotrkowska and Narutowicza Streets as elegant high streets and Kościuszki Avenue – a stately strolling alley. "I remember Mosze Kusewicz, a cantor of world renown, sing in the synagogue in Kościuszki and Bronisław Huberman, a famous violinist, perform in the Tabarin club in Narutowicza", he recalls.

In the 1930s, the family barely made ends meet, because the father fell seriously ill. At that time, Marian earned his living by giving private lessons. Every day, the owner of the newspaper stand gave him free newspapers in return for lessons for his son. In 1940, the Turbowicz family had to move to the Ghetto, to 7 Kościelna Street. "The flat was situated almost opposite the Kripo office", he reminisces. His father became the director of the coal yard. Marian attended school for two years and managed to pass the so-called small matura exam during that time. He also gave private lesson to the son of the superintendent of the Meat Department. "Thanks to him I got a job in a meat processing plant, somewhere in Brzezińska Street, near Franciszkańska. Those were fantastic two months, because I could eat raw meat, but it was short-lived. Then I worked in the wood resort in Marysin", he said.

From 1942, he acted in the anti-fascist organisation called the Trade Union Left. "It seemed to be the only available form of resistance to the things that happened in the Ghetto", he admits.

In August 1944, the Turbowicz family was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Marian's father and brother died in a gas chamber. His mother landed up in Bergen-Belsen and survived the War. In January 1945, Turski took part in a death march. He landed up in Buchenwald. In April, when American troops were approaching the camp, he survived his second death march to Theresienstadt. There he lived to see the camp liberated by the Russians. He fell ill with typhoid fever. Right after the War, he came to the hospital in Friedland, where he was treated by Arnold Mostowicz. Soon after he had engaged in political activity, he organised the Union of Youth Struggle in Lower Silesia. It was then when he assumed his new name. He also managed to find his mother, who had survived the War. In 1946, he began his studies in Wrocław – he studied law and history.

Then he took up residence in Warsaw. He was a delegate to the Peace Congress in Paris and Prague. Already during his university years, Marian was a vigorous political activist; at first, he took part in the youth organisation of the Polish Workers' Party, then the PUWP. He worked in the Press Department of the Polish United Workers' Party and from 1958 he managed the historical department of the

“Polityka” (“Politics”) weekly. As a journalist, he travelled a lot, also to the United States.

“For a Jewish boy from the pre-War Poland, the ideals of ‘liberte, egalite, fraternite’ had a magic power of attraction. People of my generation and origin dreamed of them. I’m under the impression that the fascination with the Great French Revolution opened in us a way to accept the idea of communism”, he explained his life path in 2012, when he received the French Legion of Honour Order.

His significant other is Halina Paszkowska (b. 1927). She escaped from the Ghetto to later fight in the Warsaw Uprising as liaison under the nom de guerre of “Lusia” in the “Rafałki” troop. For over 50 years, she worked as a production sound mixer in Polish cinematography – she provided sound to more than 200 documentary films, 20 feature films and many episodes of the Polish Film Chronicle. In 2010, she received the lifetime achievement award of the Association of Polish Filmmakers.

Their daughter, Joanna, is an outstanding flautist. She graduated from the Warsaw Music Academy, but for many years she has been living in Chicago, where she develops her artistic and pedagogical career. Her portfolio includes several music albums, i.a. “Polish Suites”, on which we can find pieces written by distinguished citizens of Łódź: Grażyna Bacewicz and Alexandre Tansman, and containing Polish motifs (e.g. the “Hommage a Lech Wałęsa” mazurka).

She has two children: Klaudia (b. 1987) studied architecture and visual arts, for several years has been living in Warsaw, Konrad (b. 1989) – business studies.

Marian Turski is called a one-man institution. People joke that he has mastered the ability to teleport himself and be in several places at the same time. He is a member of many associations and organisations, especially those that take care of the memory of the Polish Jews. He is the vice-president of the Association Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, a Central Board member of the Association of Jewish Combatants and Victims of World War II, a member of the International Auschwitz Council and the Institute of Remembrance of the Wannsee Conference. Moreover, he is one of the initiators of the construction of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews and, since 2009, the Chairman of the Council of this institution. From the very beginning (i.e. since 1995) he was a Board member of the Monumentum Iudaicum Lodzense Foundation.

In 1997, he was decorated with the Commander’s Cross with Star of the Order of Polonia Restituta. In 2012, he received the Order of the Legion of Honour – the highest decoration awarded by the French Government, in 2013 he was decorated with the Grand Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany for his activity in favour of Polish-German relations.

Marian Turski is the author of hundreds of articles and historical studies as well as the co-author and editor of many books (i.a. “Patrice Lumumba and his country”, “Operation Terminal”, “They were children back then”) and guest of many academic conferences. In 2014, a biographical film about him, entitled “My happiest day”, was directed by Michał Bukojemski.

STORY NUMBER FIVE

Tree no. 443

Roman Kent (Kniker)

Łódź – New York (United States)

We don't dare to forget



Roman Kent was born in 1925 in Łódź. He was the third child, but the first son, in the family of the factory owner Emanuel Kniker and his wife, Sonia née Lifszyc. He had two older sisters – Regina (b. 1921) and Dasza/Dorota (b. 1923). Then Leon came into the world (b. 1929).

The Knikers lived at 38 Śródmiejska Street (today Więckowskiego Street), right behind the mansion of Maurycy Poznański, the son of the richest factory owner in Łódź. They occupied the whole second floor of an elegant tenement house. The flat was so big that – as Roman Kent recollects – he could ride a bike around the dining room. His mother took care of the house and the children, aided by

a Polish servant. The Knikers' factory was situated across the street and it employed over a hundred employees. Nowadays, there is no trace of it, a new school building stands in that very same place. The neighbouring parcel also belonged to Emanuel. Part of the building was used as office space, some rooms were let out by the owner.

Young Romek attended the Jewish School at 21 Magistracka Street (today Kamińskiego Street) and was one of Mosze Turbowicz's (Marian Turski's) classmates. In his free time after school, he played football on the premises of the factory or rode his bike. He walked on foot to school, but when it was raining or cold, a horse-drawn cab took him there. For his 10th birthday, the boy got a dog – it was a ginger Pomeranian – called Lala, which he described after the war in a children's book entitled "My dog Lala". Lala accompanied him in his plays at home and after school, waiting for his return on the balcony and greeting him profusely when he finally came back. "I have to admit that Lala was more important for me than my brother or sisters. She earned her privileged position thanks to her patience, consideration and affection", Roman wrote about her when almost half a century had passed. Lala also went with the family on holiday to Poddębina near Tuszyn, where the Knikers had a villa. It was a holiday fun centre for the local kids, where in the summer a basketball and volleyball

court as well as a football pitch were organised. It was there where the family spent their last holidays before the outbreak of the War.

When the Germans marched into Poland, first, the Knikers had to leave their flat in Śródmiejska Street. Initially, they found themselves a place in one of the factory buildings, where there were empty rooms, but then they were ordered to leave that spot as well. In late 1939, they had to move to the Ghetto. They took up residence in a tiny wooden house in Spacerowa Street, near Łagiewnicka Street, in the immediate proximity of the Bałucki Market. In the neighbouring house lived Dawid Sierakowiak, with whom Roman attended the Jewish Grammar School. Lala, who had puppies, stayed in the factory in Śródmiejska, but she found them in the Ghetto already on their first night and every day she circulated between the old and the new home. She came to stay with the family for the night and returned to her puppies in the morning. "She showed us that love is stronger than hate and that no weapon, barbed wires or German patrols are an obstacle to displaying that feeling", Roman Kent wrote many years after the war.

In the Ghetto, he worked in the leather resort, where he made footwear for the Germans. In 1943, his father died (he is buried in the cemetery in Bracka Street). In August 1944, Roman with his mother, brother and sisters was taken away to Auschwitz, from where several months later he and Leon landed up in Gross Rosen and then in Flossenbürg. They were walking in a death march to Dachau when on 23 April 1945 they were liberated by the American army.

The brothers began searching for the rest of the family. As it turned out, their mother was murdered in Auschwitz-Birkenau, but both their sisters survived the War and were already in Sweden. They all met in Lübeck. Sadly enough, Dasza died several months later, debilitated by her stay in the camps. Renia decided to stay in Sweden, where she married Symcha Bunim Kopelman. The brothers Kniker, in their turn, together with other children and adolescents that survived the Holocaust, managed to emigrate to the United States. They reached New York in 1946. At first, they lived in a foster family in Atlanta, Georgia. Roman studied business at the Emory University and Leon – medicine at the Tulane University. After graduation, they both left for New York and changed their surname to Kent. Leon became a well-known neurosurgeon.

Roman quickly succeeded in the import/export business and in a short time went from rags to riches. Initially, he sold wares from the trunk of a car, but with time his products started to be included in various important catalogues, they appeared on the green stamps of the S&H Lottery and the Royal Kent tableware was presented in numerous TV programmes, as we read on official pages.

In 1957, Roman Kent met his wife-to-be, Hannah née Starkman. They have two children: Jefferey and Susan, and three grandchildren: Dara, Eryn and Sean. For many years Kent has engaged in education connected with the Holocaust and care over the Survivors and the Righteous. He was induced to it by an observa-

tion that many of those people failed to cope with life as well as he did and that their lot is very difficult. In 1980, he produced a film entitled “Children of the Holocaust”, dedicated to the memory of the children that died during the Holocaust. The narrator of the motion picture is the Swedish actress Liv Ullman, whom the Kents befriended. The documentary won The International Film Festival Award in New York.

Currently, Roman Kent is the Chairman of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors and the treasurer of the Jewish Claims Conference. From 2003, he was the Vice-President, and since 2011 has been the President of the International Auschwitz Committee. He is also a member of the International Auschwitz Council.

“One minute spent in Auschwitz seemed a whole day, one day seemed a whole year, one year seemed the whole eternity”, he said in the former German camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau in January 2015, during the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of its liberation.

“<Remember> was the word that my father often repeated to me during the Holocaust. Today, 70 years later, this commandment to remember is, in fact, completely unnecessary. I, a Survivor of Auschwitz, cannot forget the nightmare I endured in the concentration camp even for a while”, he stressed. “The atrocities I witnessed at the entrance gate to Auschwitz are more than enough to deprive my of peaceful sleep for the rest of my days”, he added.

Roman Kent is also the Chairman of the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous. He wrote and published his memoirs entitled “Strictly Business: Rumination from Auschwitz to Atlanta” and a children’s book “Lala. A true story of a boy and his dog in the times of the Holocaust”.

“We, the Survivors, continually stood face to face with death. However, we did not yield to despair. Despite the hopelessness, we created life in that dark world. Today, we still remember the pervasive evil we had to live through. We, the Survivors, don’t dare to forget the millions that were slain. For if we were to forget, the conscience of humanity would get buried together with the victims”, he stressed in 2015.

STORY NUMBER SIX

Tree no. 386

Chaim Kozienicki

Łódź – Tel Aviv (Israel)

Cross for the Polish-Jewish dialogue

Chaim Kozienicki was born on 16 June 1928 in Łódź as son of Szalom and Chaja Sara. He had an older brother, Ezra. They lived at 75 Kilińskiego Street, then at 60 Kilińskiego Street. His father was a carpenter, his mother took care of the house. “At home, my



parents talked with each other and with my brother in Yiddish, but they talked with me in Polish. I was the Pole of the family. However, I talked in Yiddish with my grandparents, because we visited them every Saturday”, recalls Kozienicki.

In primary school, Chaim was a very good student and he read a lot, especially in Polish. He was interested in history and wars. “Tadeusz Kościuszko, Józef Poniatowski and Józef Piłsudski were my idols,” he reminisces. Once he even got scared that God would punish him for sneaking out from prayers to read Polish books. Right before the War, he got interested in Zionism. He understood that as a Jew he should have Jewish idols as well. Slowly, he adopted that ideology as his own.

In March 1940, he was relocated to the Ghetto with his family. Initially, the Kozienicki family took up residence in their relatives’ home in Ciesielska, then in a small house at 30/32 Drukarska Street. It was the last house by the wires, on the very border of the Ghetto; a guard stood under their window. “On the one hand, it was dangerous, because he could start shooting anytime, but on the other hand, the thought of stealing something from our garden didn’t cross anybody’s mind, which was important, especially when the vegetables had already grown”, he recounts. From the times of the Ghetto he remembers mostly hunger. It was the most poignant sensation. “I was hungry all the time”, he admits.

For two years, Chaim attended a school in the Ghetto, and when his education ended, he started working in the leather factory in Łagiewnicka Street, which produced backpacks for the German army. Then he became an office boy and, finally, a clerk. His father continued to work in his profession, as a carpenter. His mother was employed in the linen resort and his brother – in a metalwork factory.

In the Ghetto, Chaim became an active member of a youth Zionist organisation. Meetings made him happy and gave him hope that one day the War would be over and a new, better life would come. However, when he came home and saw the prevailing misery, he broke down. Thus, he tried to act: he co-created a literary and

a self-education circle, he established a small library, he wrote articles and poems, he participated in talks about the future. In the Summer of 1944, he got ill. During his stay in hospital, his parents and brother were taken away from the Ghetto. Chaim landed up in one of the last transports to Auschwitz. He did not lose hope. He set out from the Radegast Station together with the employees of the metalwork resort on 29 August 1944. He reached his destination on 1 September. "The last thing I managed to note down in my journal was: <We reached a place called Auschwitz. Apparently it's some sort of boarding house, because people wear pyjamas>. We didn't know anything about Auschwitz, but it's possible that the adults knew. I didn't", he recollects.

After a few days in Auschwitz, Chaim was transported to Stutthof and he became the number 84209. He worked in a concrete factory and several weeks later he landed up in Stolp (Słupsk), where a railway truck repair workshop functioned. In February 1945, he was taken away to Burggraben, from where he walked to the Hel Peninsula in a death march. He nearly lost his life in a barge tossed over the waves of the Baltic Sea. Later, he would write a picturesque description of those events in his journal. It was at that time when he witnessed the wrecking of the German liner Cap Arcona. Liberated in May 1945, he had to stay in hospital due to extremely low weight (he weighed only 25 kilograms!) and tuberculosis. Three months later, he was taken by the Red Cross to Sweden, where he underwent a two-year treatment. It was then when he started writing a diary that he kept until 1950.

In the Spring of 1947, he illegally got through to the Palestinian coast on a ship "Chaim Arlozorov". In Palestine lived his paternal grandfather, Jehuda Kozenicki, and his father's siblings: brother Rafał and sister Rywka. Chaim already knew that his brother, Ezra, had survived the War. He was also in touch with the members of a Zionist organisation who had survived the War and dreamed of Eretz Israel as well. During a fight with some Britons on the ship, he got injured and incarcerated in the internment camp in Atlit near Haifa, from which he later escaped. He became a member of the Kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon, but he wished to fight. In May 1948, he volunteered to the army. He fought in the Israeli War of Independence. He was a member of the elite infantry troops called Givati. After the War, he started a family. His wife was Estera Zalcberg. Together they took up residence in Givataim. They have two children: their son, Sammy, was born in 1954, their daughter, Orly – in 1959. Their grandchildren are called: Einor, Ido, Gaya and Mia.

For many years, Chaim Kozenicki came to Poland with groups of Israeli youth to help them get to know the history of the Holocaust as well as the history of Polish and Łódź Jews. In 1997, his memoirs entitled *Neurim batofet* were published in Hebrew, which were translated into Polish in 2009 as *Dorastanie w piekle* (Eng. *Growing up in Hell*). In August of that same year, Chaim Kozenicki was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland for acting in favour of Polish-Jewish dialogue.

STORY NUMBER SEVEN

Tree no. 636

Lucjan Dobroszycki, Felicja Dobroszycka

Łódź – New York (United States)

He documented the history of the Łódź Ghetto

There are not many scholars who have done as much for the memory of the history of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto as the historian Professor Dobroszycki, who was a Survivor of the Ghetto himself, and then devoted almost all his professional life to studying and editing documents related to the Holocaust, and to memorialising those times.

Lucjan (Aron Lejb), called Lutek by his friends, was born on 15 January 1925 in Łódź. He lived with his parents and siblings in Bałuty, at 2 Młynarska Street and attended school in the same street. He had four siblings: older brother Szmul (1922–1989), two other younger brothers: Szymon (1932–1944) and Jakub Ber (1934–1944), and a little sister, Rywka, who died of diphtheria in her childhood.

His father, Efraim Fiszel Dobroszycki (1895–1944), was a weaver. He served in the Polish army during the Polish-Soviet War, in which he sustained a leg injury that made him use a walking stick for the rest of his life. Lutek's paternal grandfather, Izaak Dobroszycki, died in Łódź shortly before the War and was buried in the Jewish Cemetery. His grandmother, Fridla née Engel, died in the Ghetto.

Lucjan Dobroszycki's mother, Gitla née Mińska (1900–1944), was a housewife. Her mom died at a young age and her father, Mendel Miński, remarried – his second wife was Chawa Korenblum, who treated Gitla as her own child and her children as her own grandchildren. Gitla had two brothers and four sisters.

In September 1939, Lutek's father, together with his oldest son, Szmul, left Łódź and found himself on the Soviet side. Fiszel came back to Łódź, while Szmul stayed in the East, fought in the Red Army and survived the War.



The Dobroszycki family lived until the liquidation of the Ghetto in their one-room flat in Młynarska Street. Lutek got involved with the leftist movement and became a member of a secret anti-fascist youth organisation. When in the Summer of 1944 the liquidation of the Ghetto started, his mother was detained as the first member of their family and deported from the Radegast Station to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Soon afterwards, Lutek's father was taken away, together with his two younger brothers: Szymon, aged 12, and Jakub, aged 10, who probably landed up in gas chambers straight away.

Lucjan Dobroszycki found himself in one of the last August transports to Auschwitz, together with a group of friends from the organisation that stuck together, including: Stefan Krakowski (Szmul Erlich), Sewek Wilner, Henryk (Hersz) Doktorczyk, Marian Turski (Mojsze Turbowicz) and Henryk "Rysiek" Podlaski. They went through the same camps: Czechowice-Dziedzice, Buchenwald, Teresin. Podlaski died of exhaustion in April 1945 during the evacuation of the Buchenwald camp, the rest survived the War.

Only few people from the numerous Dobroszycki family lived through the War. Among his mother's siblings only ones sister – Pola – together with her daughter, Edzia, survived the Ghetto and the camps. After the War, they moved to Israel. Szajna's two daughters, Rywka and Bronia, survived as well. Unfortunately, Gitla's brothers: Majer, Chaim, and sisters: Roza, Miriam and Szajna, died.

Among his father's siblings, three sisters were murdered during the War: Ester, Rywa and Lea. Among the numerous children – Lutek's cousins – only two sons of his aunt Lea lived through the War: Szymon and Lipman Rosengarten. Fiszel's older brother, Samuel Dobroszycki, moved from Poland to the US in the 1920s. He died in New York in 1970.

After the War, Lucjan returned to his native Łódź. He started studies at the University of Łódź and then in Leningrad. Upon his return, he took up employment in the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. In 1957, he married a native of Łódź, Felicja Herszkowicz.

Felicja was born on 30 May 1935 in Łódź. Her parents, Mordechaj Herszkowicz (1912–1988) and Miriam née Zyngier (1910–2012), lived through the War in the Soviet Union. His father, enlisted in September 1939, landed up in Lvov after the dissolution of the Polish Army. Felicja and her mother left Łódź and in November 1939 reached Lvov through Małkinia and Białystok. Once reunited, the family got to Poltava and then to Kamensk-Uralsky. Repatriated to Poland in 1946, they took up residence in Łódź at 65a Gdańska Street. They worked in the textile factories of the city. Felicja graduated school, the first one established by the Society of Children's Friends, and then studied at technical universities in Leningrad and Warsaw.

After the wedding, the Dobroszyckis lived in Warsaw. Felicja worked as a translator from Russian. In 1960, their daughter Joanna was born. As a researcher,

Lucjan Dobroszycki dealt almost exclusively with the period of World War II, created catalogues of Polish conspiratorial press from years 1939–1945, edited the history of the “reptile” press in the General Government published by the German propaganda apparatus. He was also interested in the historiography of the Łódź Ghetto. Already in late 1950s, he edited and prepared for print fragments of “Dawid Sierakowiak’s Journal” and later he wrote an article about Szłomo Frank’s diary. In 1963, together with Danuta Dąbrowska, he started to work on a complete edition of “The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto”. They had published two volumes and were working on subsequent ones when the anti-Semitic campaign of the 1968 was unleashed and they never saw the light of the day. The Łódź Publishing House that published “The Chronicle” resigned from the project. Still in 1967, Lucjan Dobroszycki defended his PhD thesis. In August 1968, in protestation against the invasion of the armies of the Warsaw Pact on Czechoslovakia, he withdrew from the Polish United Workers’ Party, together with four other researchers from the Institute of History. At the same time also Krystyna Kersten and Bronisław Geremek gave back their party cards.

Felicja’s parents emigrated to Sweden. The Dobroszyckis lingered for quite a long time before they finally decided to leave Poland on 28 November 1969. They took up residence in New York. Their Polish friends feared that a historian with a zest for archiving would not be able to cope with the new situation. “With no command of English, not very resourceful and on the wrong side of forty, Lucjan did not seem like a good candidate for an immigrant in the US”, wrote Jerzy Jedlicki in his memoirs. However, soon after his arrival in New York, Dobroszycki got a job in YIVO, the Yiddish Scientific Institute in New York, where he engaged in cataloguing and describing a collection of several thousand photographs documenting the life of Jews in Poland in years 1864–1939. On their basis, together with Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblet, he prepared an exhibition entitled “Image Before My Eyes” and a book under the same title. He also published an important study entitled “Restoring Jewish Life in Post War Poland”. In 1987, Yale University Press published “The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto”, a one-volume selection of records from the Bulletin of the Everyday Chronicle. In 1985, Dobroszycki took up the position of the head of department that dealt with the history of the Shoah at the Yeshiva University. In 1994, he was awarded the prestigious award of the Interfaith Committee of Remembrance for his “irrepressible effort of documenting truth about the Shoah”. He had a lot of work and academic plans. He died suddenly on 24 October 1995.

Felicja Dobroszycka lives and works in New York. She still holds the position of librarian at Columbia University in Manhattan. Joanna Dobroszycka graduated from medical studies and works as a doctor. Her children – twins Lucjan and Hania – are currently beginning their studies. It was her who procured a tree in the Survivors’ Park for her parents.

STORY NUMBER EIGHT

Tree no. 331

Hadassa Wizenberg née Karo

Łódź – Tel Aviv (Israel)

I had beautiful childhood



Hadassa Wizenberg was born in Łódź on 10 December 1927 as Elka [Edzia] Karo. Her mother, Sara Horowitz, was one of seven children. She came from Zduńska Wola, where her father – Jakub Horowitz – had a manufactory. Hadassa's father – Nechemia (Haiman, Heniek) Karo – came from Łódź. Her grandparents ran the English Bar at 23 Piłkowska Street. The grandfather, Szaja Karo, was very religious, and the family business was taken care of by the grandmother, Szejndle. "I remember the revolving door at the entrance to the restaurant.

And that my grandfather had his permanent place at a table and people often came to him to seek advice. He was a wise man", recalls Hadassa. When the Germans ordered the Jews to move to the Ghetto, her grandfather refused. Indeed, he did not go to the Ghetto, he died in January 1940. He was buried at the Jewish Cemetery, in the Ghetto Field. The family treasures his religious books and commemorative bottles from the English Bar, discovered after the War.

Nechamia (Heniek) Karo was the oldest of nine children, born in 1899. During World War I, he landed up in Piłsudski's Legions and participated in the Polish-Soviet War. The cult of Marshal Piłsudski survived in his family. Shortly after the war he got married. He worked in a factory owned by a German named Wuttke, but he left in 1936, when he established a woollen fabrics warehouse at 27 Piłkowska Street with his brother-in-law.

Hadassa, called Dziunia by her family, was the only child. She went to a private girls' grammar school in Piramowicza. Apart from that, she attended eurythmics classes and took private piano lessons at home. She lived in a tenement house at 15 Zawadzka Street (currently Próchnika Street) in the right outhouse on the second floor. She perfectly remembers the layout of the flat and can draw its every fragment. "As a girl from a good family I never went out alone and I didn't know the children who played in the yard. I could only see them play from my balcony", she recounts. Her parents led a very busy social life. On Saturday nights, they went out to dance in the Tabarin or Casanova clubs and often went to the theatre. "A Polish woman, Helena Kowalska, took care of me. I loved her dearly. She was the one who cooked at home. My mum, however, baked delicious cakes: yeast cake with crumble topping, cheesecake,

poppyseed cake, apple pie, elongated chocolate cake”, Hadassa enumerates. “I had very happy childhood, I was loved, my parents loved each other, it was nice and cheerful”, she says. The Karos took their daughter to Poniatowski Park, to morning film screenings at the Rialto cinema or at the Capitol, which was situated right next to the house. Hadassa remembers that the last film she saw with her father was Suez. “I fell in love with Tyrion Power, the main protagonist, that’s why I remember it”, she recollects.

At the beginning of War, men had to leave Łódź, they ran to the East.

The wool warehouse was confiscated by the Germans, and Hadassa and her mother had to move out of the flat. Nechamia returned to his native city only for his father’s funeral, to say the kaddish. Day by day, he moved his family, including his wife’s relatives from Zduńska Wola, to Częstochowa. As a member of the Łódź Committee in Częstochowa, he had connections there. A part of the family: his sisters, brother and cousins stayed in the Ghetto of Łódź – now Litzmannstadt; most of them died during the War. Częstochowa was relatively peaceful until the liquidation of the Ghetto. Dziunia (Hadassa) took care of children, she taught them to write and read. Her mother occupied herself with tailoring. Her father did not have any permanent employment and provided for his family by selling different things. In the Autumn of 1942, transports to Treblinka started. Dziunia and her parents evaded selection once, but then – in unknown circumstances – Nechamia was shot dead and Sara landed up in another transport. She was murdered in Treblinka. For the whole time, Dziunia stuck with her cousin Hana (Anusia) Shapira. They both worked in the Hasag munition factory. They managed to hide when the Germans were gathering people that were supposed to take part in a march to the Reich. They returned to Częstochowa, from where they got through to Warsaw and in late 1945 they reached Łódź. Dziunia graduated from a pedagogical seminary. She emigrated to Palestine as a minder of children who were war orphans.

In Cyprus, she drew the name Hadassa. Dziunia died, Hadassa was born. In 1948, she met her husband-to-be in a kibbutz. Josef Wizenberg (b. 1927) came from Warsaw. He lived in the Warsaw Ghetto until its liquidation and then got through to the Praga district via sewers and hid in the capital until the end of the War. His parents had a safe house in the countryside, but they were denounced and killed. Josef Wizenberg went to Germany and in 1947 he got through to Palestine. The Wizenbergs got married in 1952 in Kibbutz Megido, but they left, because they wanted to study medicine to which the Kibbutz did not want to consent. Finally, Josef took up law studies, while Hadassa worked as a nurse to later graduate from psychology studies and take care of youth. In 1957, their son, Uri, was born, in 1960 – their daughter, Sheli. “For a long time, me and my husband spoke Polish at home, but with time the whole family started speaking Hebrew. Unfortunately, every year I have fewer and fewer friends with whom I can communicate in Polish”, says Hadassa, speaking beautiful Polish. Josef died in 1990. Hadassa lives surrounded by the love of her children and grandchildren. She also has two great-grandsons: Ben and Itamar.

Her son, Uri Wizenberg is the chairman of the Association of Former Residents of Łódź in Israel. Although he came to Łódź for the first time as an adult man, he knows the city as if he were born here. He married Anat. They have two children: daughter Reut and son Ido, and one grandson: Ben.

STORY NUMBER NINE

Tree no. 222 – Gita Bajgelman

Tree no. 632 – Henry Bajgelman

Łódź – New York (United States)

Longing for a home



Henry Chaim Bajgelman was a member of a musical family that was very important in Łódź. His father – Szymon Bajgelman – came from Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. He was a clarinetist that performed with orchestras. Also Chaim's oldest brother, Dawid Bajgelman (b. 1888), and two older sisters: Chaja (Helena, b. 1898) and Ida (Ita, b. 1900) were born in Ostrowiec. Dawid was a composer and conductor, well-known in the interwar period. Their younger brothers and sister came into the world already in Łódź, where the family moved in early twentieth century. All of them became musicians:

Szlama Lajb was a violinist, Abraham played the piano and was a member of the popular jazz band called The Jolly Boys as well as of other jazz formations, Róża was a pianist as well. The youngest brother – Chanan called Hilek (b. 1916) – was an accordionist and saxophonist. Also Bajgelmans' cousins and brothers-in-law engaged in music. Together, they performed in different formations and orchestras, including the Łódź Symphonic Orchestra that gave rise to today's Artur Rubinstein Philharmonics in Łódź.

Chaim (Heniek) Bajgelman was born in 1911 as Szymon and Rywa's last but one child. From childhood he learned to play several instruments. He was a violinist and saxophonist. In the 1930s, he performed in the Ararat theatre and in night jazz clubs. During the War, Chaim was engaged to the Ghetto orchestra created by his brother Dawid, he played in variety shows staged in the community centre at 3 Krawiecka Street. In the Ghetto, the whole Bajgelman family lived close to one another, in Krawiecka and Zawiszy Streets.

Chaim, like other members of his family, was taken away from the Ghetto in August 1944 to Auschwitz. He passed through several camps: Kaltwasser, Flossenberga, Altenhammer (Ruda Śląska). In the last-mentioned camp he got

additional bread rations for playing the violin. On 20 April 1945, the Germans forced the prisoners to set out to the West, in the so-called death march. Three days later, the Americans liberated those who had survived. Chaim, together with a few other survivors from Łódź, landed up in a displaced persons (refugee) camp in Bavaria. He started to search for his family.

It turned out that only him and his youngest brother, Chanan (Hilek), survived. Hilek came back to Łódź from the camps, but died in August 1945 of tuberculosis. He was buried at the Jewish Cemetery. Also Chaim's brother-in-law Abraham Bajgelman (Róża's husband) returned from Russia to Łódź for a short period of time. Abraham found the instruments hidden by Dawid Bajgelman in the building of Glazer's factory, which were not surrendered to the Germans in 1944: two violins and a saxophone. He took them to Germany. He kept Dawid Bajgelman's violin and left the remaining instruments to Chaim. In the territory of the USSR, Pinchas, Dawid's son, also managed to survive the War.

Chaim – who had assumed the name of Henry although his friends had always called him Heniek – together with other musicians who had survived the Łódź Ghetto and who were partly related to one another, established in Cham a jazz band called The Happy Boys, which in years 1945–1949 performed in displaced persons camps and in American military bases. The swing-jazz band mostly played pre-War music and pieces that were created in the Ghetto, including the distinguished compositions authored by Dawid Bajgelman. However, premiere songs were written as well. Henry Bajgelman wrote for the band a new composition with lyrics, which became a great post-War hit – *We long for a home*. For Survivors, music was a chance to return to normal life.

In 1947, Henry Bajgelman married Gita Glazer, who before the War was engaged to his younger brother Chunem.

Gita Glazer (b. 1919) had four brothers: Samuel, Jakub, Seweryn and Leon, and two sisters: Perla and Pola. Their father – Józef Mordechaj – was a very religious man and a teacher. Their mother, Tova, together with her sons, ran before the War the Veritas factory, which produced men's shirts and undergarments. Before the War, the Glazers lived at 12 Północna Street, then at 1 Północna Street. Gita attended a girls' grammar school. At the beginning of the War, her parents as well as her brothers Samuel and Seweryn with their wives moved to Warsaw, where they landed up in the local Ghetto. Gita and Pola stayed in Łódź and lived at 158 Franciszkańska Street (from 1943 at 4 Kościelny Square) with their sister Perla, her husband, and their brother Leon, who in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto ran the clothes and linen resort as well as several factories. Gita worked in the linen resort that belonged to her brother. Sent on one of the August transports, she landed up in Ravensbrück and other camps. In the first days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, her father, brothers and sisters-in-law, managed to get through to the Aryan side, where they were hidden by Jerzy Koźmiński's

family. They all lived to see the end of the War. After the War, the Glazer family tried to resume their pre-War business in Łódź, they even had a factory in Zachodnia Street, where they produced army uniforms. Gita also returned to Łódź, but soon after her fiancé's death she went to Munich, where Leon Glazer took up residence as well. Samuel and his wife Mina went in 1947 to Jerusalem, Sewek and Fania – to Buenos Aires.

In 1949, Gita and Henry Bajgelman with Leon and his wife emigrated to the United States and took up residence in New York. Henry played the saxophone and violin in different jazz bands, but he also made money on the side as a seller. In 1958, together with his friends from Łódź, he invested in the real estate market, he managed one of the hotels in Manhattan, but music remained his passion till the end of his life. The Bajgelmans' daughter, Riva (Berelson), was born in New York in 1952, their son, Shimon, in 1955. They both got their names after their grandparents: Rywa and Szymon Bajgelman. Henry died in 2002, Gita in 2011. After their parents' death, Riva and Shimon donated their family heirlooms, including the instruments from the Łódź Ghetto, to the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Gita has had her tree in the Survivors' Park since 2004, Henry got his in 2019.

STORY NUMBER TEN

Tree no. 582

Chava Rosenfarb

Łódź – Montreal (Canada)

The Queen of the Yiddish language



"There was something specific about Łódź. People loved the city dearly and were attached to it. They said that if you came to Łódź once, you were connected with it forever. That city had charisma of its own", claimed Chava Rosenfarb, who devoted to Łódź hundreds of pages written in Yiddish. She called one of her books "Of Lodz and Love". And despite the fact that after 1948 she never came back to Łódź, she had great fondness for her native city.

She was born in Łódź on 9 February 1923. She was the daughter of Syma Pinczewska (b. 1898) and Abram Rosenfarb (b. 1897), a member of The Bund, who before the War worked as a waiter in the United restaurant in Piotrkowska Street. They both came from poverty-stricken Jewish families from Końskie. They moved to a big city to change their lives. They got involved with The Bund, a workers' socialist party, which was popular among the Jewish

proletariat of the interwar Łódź. Syma worked in a factory as a quality controller and later became a housewife. When her husband lost work, she came back to the factory.

Chava and her younger sister, Henia (b. 1926), grew up in a tenement house at 75 Żeromskiego Street. They were brought up in a house in which the Yiddish culture reigned. Among several dozen families only one flat was occupied by a Polish family. Chava graduated from Medem Private School, where the language of instruction was Yiddish, and then she continued her education in a Polish-Jewish girls' grammar school, in which even the Jewish teacher hated Yiddish. "It is a language of servants and people of lower rank", she believed. But Chava remained faithful to the language of her nation, although she admitted that her first poems were written in Polish. She thought that Polish was better suited to write love poems. "Yiddish is a language of workers, of the proletariat, and Polish was a language of aristocracy and a romantic language", she explained.

Her informal debut took place even before the War. Her father showed her poems to Mojsze Broderson, the creator of the Jung Jidysz group and the Ararat theatre, who recognised that the girl was talented. Chava began to write almost immediately after she learned to write. She loved literature, especially Russian writers, like Dostoevsky and Tolstoy. Among Polish writers she esteemed Żeromski and Reymont, among Polish poets she liked Słowacki the most. Although she loved Polish culture, Chava did not have any Polish friends.

"There was a huge gap between the Poles and the Jews. We didn't talk with one another, even in the yard. We observed one another from a distance", she said many years later. Her closest friend was Zenia Marcinkowska (future novelist writing in Swedish).

When the Germans marched into Łódź and the persecution of Jews began, the Rosenfarbs hid in their flat Jewish books that were supposed to be burned. Later, they smuggled them to the territory of the Ghetto. In the Ghetto, they initially took up residence at 11 Lutomska Street, flat no. 7, then they moved to 8 Łagiewnicka Street, flat no. 37. Their flat acted as the Ghetto's library.

Chava continued her education in the Ghetto and passed her matura exam in 1941. This, however, was not the end of her education. She got involved with a group of writers creating in Yiddish. Simcha Bunem Szajewicz confirmed that her poetry was interesting and that she should continue writing. It was him who invited her to literary meetings that took place in the flat of a painter and poet Izrael Lejzerowicz at 14 Rybna Street. She met Szajewicz in the so-called Academic Department of the Ghetto, where she worked for Rabbi Hirszenberg, correcting his translations of psalms into Yiddish. Later, she participated in poetic meetings and created her own texts.

The Rosenfarb family was deported to Auschwitz in August 1944. In the camp, all the works Chava had written were taken away from her. She promised to herself that if she survived, she would write about the Ghetto, and she did it years

later. Her father was transported from Auschwitz to Dachau. He died a day before the liberation of the camp, in a train bombed by the Americans, when he was being transported with other prisoners further into the Reich.

Chava, together with her mother and sister, was resettled to the Sasel camp near Hamburg and then to Bergen-Belsen, where they lived to see its liberation by the British. In a displaced persons' camp in Germany, she met Heniek Morgentaler (b. 1923), who had also gone through the Łódź Ghetto and then Auschwitz and Dachau, and together with his younger brother survived the Holocaust.

The Morgentalers and the Rosenfarbs were friends with one another before the War. Chava with her mother and sister illegally crossed the border with Belgium. Heniek studied medicine in Germany and later in Brussels. In 1949, they got married and a year later emigrated to Canada. They took up residence in Montreal.

In 1950, the Morgentalers had a daughter – Goldie (she was named after her paternal grandmother, who died in Auschwitz), and several years later – a son, Abraham. Both Chava and Henia called her son Awrom (Bamie) in remembrance of their father, Abraham, whom they had lost. Heniek Morgentaler became in the 1960s a proponent of women's right to abortion and a fierce activist in that field.

Chava divorced her husband in the 1970s and got involved with Bono Wiener (1920–1995), who had emigrated to Australia in the 1940s.

After the War, Rosenfarb first reconstructed and then published her poetic texts from the Ghetto, i.a. "Di balade fun nechtikn wald un andere lider" (1948), "Geto un andere lider" (1948), she also wrote a great epic poem "Der bojm fun lebn" ("The tree of life"), where she vividly described the environment of the Jewish artists from the Ghetto. The book was published in Yiddish in 1972. Many years later, it was translated into English and formed a text of over one thousand pages. The book was published by an Australian publishing house. In 2000, she published in English two more books: "Storks" and "Of Lodz and Love", in which she described the life in Poland before World War II, including in the interwar Łódź. Then there was a collection of short stories entitled "Survivors". Chava's daughter, Goldie, helped her to translate her works into English. She is a professor in English literature at the University of Lethbridge and specialises in Victorian and Jewish literature. She admits that her mother was an exceptional writer.

"Men predominate among Yiddish writers, women wrote mainly poetry, but not novels, and that is why my mother is one of her kind. And, what's crucial, she showed the Jewish world in Poland in its complexity".

In 1979, Rosenfarb won the Itzik Manger Prize, the most prestigious Yiddish literature award. She was recognised as one of the last great Yiddish literature writers and the most distinguished woman writing in that language. Her younger sister, Hania, was a teacher of Yiddish language and culture in Paris and later in Toronto. She married Nochem Reinhartz. They have two children: Adele and Awrom. It was her who

fought out information on plaques on the houses in the territory of the Łódź Ghetto to be written in Yiddish as well. "It was Yiddish that was the language of the Jewish Łódź, not Hebrew", she stressed.

Chava spoke about Yiddish with equal admiration, "Yiddish is a beautiful language. Rich, full of philosophical references and humour. Wonderful", she explained. It was that language in which she wrote beautiful and sometimes bitter words about Łódź.

In the last years before her death, Chava Rosenfarb lived in Lethbridge with her daughter and son-in-law, Jonathan Seldin, professor in mathematics and information technology. She died on 30 January 2011. Henry Morgentaler died in 2013, Bono Wiener in 1995.

Abraham Morgentaler lives in Boston. He has two daughters: Maya and Hannah.

In years 2015–2017, Marek Edelman Dialogue Center published in Polish a three-volume novel by Chava Rosenfarb entitled "The tree of life" (nearly 1800 pages about Łódź and the Łódź Ghetto!). The next volume will be published in 2020.

STORY NUMBER ELEVEN

Tree no. 584

Jankiel Herszkowicz

Łódź (Poland)

The songster of the Łódź Ghetto

Jankiel Herszkowicz is one of the most famous characters of the Łódź Ghetto. He composed simple satirical songs in Yiddish and sang them in the streets of the Ghetto. They told the story of poverty, hunger and cold, but at the same time gave people hope and a little bit of joy. He survived the War and returned to Łódź. Jankiel Herszkowicz came from Opatów. He was born in 1910. His family came to Łódź shortly before the War. He was a tailor by profession. In the Ghetto, he landed up with his whole family.





He lived at 6 and 13 Rybna Street, then at 1 Starosikawska Street, and finally at 20 Berek Joselewicz Street. His parents and younger brother were taken away to Chełmno nad Nerem and murdered there in 1942. Jankiel himself got a job in a shop, then in a bakery, and, finally, he was employed in a printing house. In his free time, he composed songs to well-known tunes and sang them in the streets. The whole Ghetto knew and repeated them. Some added their own lines and that is why the Survivors remember different versions.

Jankiel wittingly commented on the situation in the Ghetto and criticised high officials, even the Head of the Jewish Eldership, Chaim Mordechaj Rumkowski. Allegedly, Rumkowski once put the troubadour under arrest for that. However, in "The Chronicle of the Łódź Ghetto", we can find the information that he twice rewarded him for his talent. Herszkowicz was also the author of the hit song *Leben zol prezes Chaim* (*Long live President Chaim*), which made him famous in the Ghetto.

From late 1941, the songster performed his songs in a duo with Karol Rozenchwajg, who accompanied him on a guitar or a zither.

In 1944, Jankiel was taken away to Auschwitz-Birkenau, then he landed up in other camps. The end of the War saw him in Brunswick. Allegedly, the ability to compose humorous lyrics to well-known melodies helped him survive the camp. In 1945, Herszkowicz returned to Łódź, where he met his older brother, Mejer, who lived through the War in the USSR. Unfortunately, he died of a severe illness in 1946. Jankiel participated in the post-War Jewish life, but his audience who new Yiddish dwindled by the year. In early 1950s, he married a Polish woman named Bogumiła Niewiadomska, with whom he had two sons: Jerzy and Aleksander. The boys attended Perec Jewish School, where they learned Yiddish, but they gradually parted from the Jewish tradition.

Jankiel Herszkowicz couldn't find himself in the post-War reality of Poland. The anti-Semitic hate campaign in March 1968 and the emigration of his friends were for him a painful experience. He thought about emigrating to Denmark, but his wife did not want to leave the country. He committed suicide in 1972. Despite that fact, his songs still live today. In the 1990s, Jankiel's son Aleksander Herszkowicz got engaged in the works of the Jewish Religious Community. He died a sudden death in 2006. His daughter and Jankiel's granddaughter, Łucja, participated in numerous projects dedicated to her grandfather, for example she sang in a ballet performance "The colour yellow" and she co-created the international theatrical enterprise entitled "General Curfew '42". Jankiel Herszkowicz's son Jerzy for 30 years was a military professional serving in a radio engineering regiment. For the last couple of years, he has been coming back to his roots.

In 1966, Herszkowicz's songs were recorded by the broadcast station of the Polish Radio in Łódź, within the framework of the cycle "It made it easier to survive". Thanks to that the voice of the troubadour of the Ghetto was immortalised on tape. Many years later, his story became a pretext to produce several films, e.g. the Israelis shot a film entitled *The king and the fool*, in which the songster of the Ghetto was contrasted with Rumkowski. In turn, a Canadian director David Kaufmann, who calls Herszkowicz "the Bob Dylan of Łódź", directed a documentary *Song of the Lodz Ghetto*.

In 1994, Josef Wajsbil published in Paris a book entitled *Jankiel Herszkowicz. Der gezang fun lodzer getto (Ballads from the Łódź Ghetto)*, whereas Gila Flam in Israel described Herszkowicz in her book *Singing for Survival*.

Albums with recordings of his songs appear in Canada, Italy, France, the United States. They are sung by subsequent generations. The band Brave Old World, who played Herszkowicz's songs on the 70th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto in the Survivors' Park, contributed greatly to popularising his works.

Jankiel Herszkowicz's songs help to tell and comment on the difficult story of the Łódź Ghetto in work with students.

STORY NUMBER TWELVE

Tree no. 620

Stefan Skotnicki Salamonowicz

Łódź – Nijmegen (The Netherlands)

I grew up with two mothers

Stefan Skotnicki was born in Łódź on 11 April 1935. His family lived at 35 Andrzejka Street. He was the son of Jerzy Salamonowicz and Hanna née Spiro. Together with



them lived Zofia Kacprzak (née Podębska), child minder and daily, who played in Stefan's life a very important part.

Jerzy was a co-owner of a small chemical factory in Łódź called Syntex, run together with his partner and friend, Lewinkopf. After the outbreak of World War II – already in December 1939 – Stefan's parents decided to escape to Sandomierz, where his mother's relatives lived. In the same lorry the Lewinkopf family with their son Jerzy (after the War known under the name Kosiński) escaped from Łódź to Sandomierz.

When in early 1942 the Germans began to create the Ghetto, little Stefan with Zofia, who pretended to be his mother, left Sandomierz. "I soon realised what consequences we would have suffered, not only me but Zofia as well, if we had been recognised", he reminisces many years after those events. "I quickly understood that I had to behave as if I had been invisible: I couldn't draw anybody's attention, I couldn't look at anybody, I couldn't get in touch with anybody".

Zofia came from a small village near Sieradz. It was there where they went, seeking refuge. "I remember a small, one-room cottage with an attic, where hay was stored. Sitting there, I could hear Zofia talk with her family. They tried to convince her that what she was doing was wrong, dangerous not only to her, but to them as well", he recounts.

He and Zofia escaped from there that very same night. Several weeks later, they found refuge in Warsaw, then in Otwock. In October 1942, Stefan's father was arrested and incarcerated in Radom. Several months later, he landed up in Auschwitz. On 23 January 1943, the Germans conducted the liquidation of the Sandomierz Ghetto. Stefan's great-grandmother was killed on the spot, his grandmother committed suicide and his mother was packed into a railway truck headed to Treblinka. He was the only one who decided to jump out of a racing train through a small, wired window. She succeeded. She was young and resourceful. She went to Otwock and

found her son. They all took up residence in Warsaw. Stefan's mother – under an assumed name of Halina Skotnicka – lived down town with her friends. She worked in Toebbens' factory, which produced clothes for Wehrmacht. On 1 August 1944, when the Warsaw Uprising broke out, she found herself by accident in the Wola district, where Stefan and Zofia lived. Only ten days later, German troops, or rather Ukrainian army commanded by General Vlasov, marched into Wola. The Skotnickis were banished from the capital. They found temporary refuge in a nearby village of Borzęcin, then in Ożarów, and in December 1944 they reached Piotrków Trybunalski. There, in January 1945, they were "liberated" by the Red Army.

"Indeed, I saw the Russian army as our liberators. I was nearly 10 at that time and I vividly remember my enthusiasm evoked by the fact that I didn't have to be afraid anymore. That the time of living in constant fear, of living like an animal that is being hunted down, had come to an end", he explains.

They immediately returned to Łódź. Their old flat was completely ravaged. In June 1945, Jerzy Salamonowicz suddenly appeared. He survived Auschwitz, typhoid fever, "death march", Mauthausen, and, finally, the Ebensee camp. There he got liberated by the American army. The family started to rebuild their life.

"I grew up with two mothers, because, of course, Zofia, stayed with us, and I tried to forget the dark days of the War", he recounts. In 1948, the family officially changed their name to Skotnicki.

Stefan started his education right from the fifth grade, but he got along. In 1951, he got into the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical Academy of Łódź. Still as a student, he began work as an assistant in the Department of Histology and Embryology and later in the Second Clinic of Surgery of the MAŁ. In 1957, he graduated from medical studies with honours ("cum laude"). In 1962, he defended his PhD thesis and in 1965 he acquired specialisation in general surgery.

In the meantime, in 1963, he married Mirosława Łapot. In 1965 and 1967, the family grew bigger when their son, Piotr, and daughter, Ewa, were born. "Everything was indicating that we would be a happy family, enjoying our existence in the Polish People's Republic. Unfortunately, there came the year 1968", Skotnicki recollects.

First, Doctor Skotnicki was dismissed from the Medical Academy. His work contract, on the basis of which he was employed as an adjunct in the Second Clinic of Surgery in Łódź, was not prolonged, without any justification. "It turned out that as a <Zionist element> I had, or could have, a negative influence on the students. They didn't pay any attention to my argument that I was out of Łódź during the March events", he says.

Thanks to his connections, he managed to get a job in Pirogow Hospital, but the trip he had been planning to London to the Cardiosurgery Centre as a British Council Visiting Fellow was cancelled by the Ministry of Health without any

justification. The Skotnickis were also crossed out of the list of people awaiting flat allocation. They experienced other forms of harassment as well. They came to a conclusion that emigration was the only solution in that situation. "Taking that decision was for me relatively easier than for Mirka, my wife and the mother of our children. As a native-born Pole and a Catholic, she was suddenly faced with the decision to leave forever her country, her family and her friends, with no hope that she would see them ever again. I, in turn, did not hope that the system would ever change", he recalls.

In early 1969, the Skotnickis made a request to be allowed to leave the country. "The decision to emigrate proved to be extremely difficult for our parents, but also for Zofia, because for the previous 6 years we had lived in Łódź with her and her husband, making up one family. Just like she had been a mother to me in my childhood years, now she had the privilege to fulfil the duties of a grandmother", he continues.

On 5 August 1969, the Skotnickis left to Rome, but their final destination was California. However, it turned out that in The Netherlands a new cardiosurgery ward was being created at that time and searching for employees. Stefan got a job on the surgery ward at the University of Nijmegen. The possibility of easier contacts with parents outbalanced other arguments. Despite the new language and an unknown culture, the family managed to settle in quite quickly.

In 1979, Skotnicki was appointed professor in cardiovascular surgery. Apart from his professional activities, he took active part in different social initiatives, in years 1981–1982 he acted as the co-founder of the Medical Bank of Aid to Poland. In 2000, he retired and was awarded the Gold Cross of Merit by the President of the Republic of Poland.

In The Netherlands, Ewa and Piotr finished their studies, began their families and had children. Poland, however, is the country of their birth. For Professor Skotnicki, it still is his homeland.

STORY NUMBER THIRTEEN

Tree no. 42

Ruth Eldar

Łódź – Jerusalem (Israel)

I have always thought in Polish

Ruth Eldar was born in Łódź in 1929 as Rutka Berlińska. He came from an affluent, well-assimilated Jewish family; she spoke in a beautiful literary language, quoted Polish poets and wrote poems herself.

She had a happy childhood. Her father, Izydor Berliński, was born in 1899 in a religious home. He was educated in a cheder, but attended secular schools as well, he spoke several foreign languages. He enlisted to Piłsudski's Legions – the



cult of Marshal Piłsudski flourished in his home for the whole interwar period. As Ruth recollected, her father was an outstanding orator. “My granny said that <pearls spilled out of his mouth>”, she wrote in her memoirs. In 1925, he married Róża Fajtlowicz, who was a member of one of the oldest Jewish families of Łódź, which had come to the city already in the eighteenth century. “My great-great-grandfather Izrael Fajtlowicz bought a plot of land for the old cemetery in Wesola Street. He donated money for the construction of the first synagogue in Wolborska Street, created the Jewish Community in Łódź”, Ruth enumerated with pride.

In Kościelny Square, the Fajtlowicz family had a huge warehouse of food and colonial products, in which they sold exotic fruit, chocolates or cosmetics. Izydor helped to run the family business. The Berlińskis with their children, Rutka and her brother, Salek, who was two years her senior, took up residence in a tenement house at 37 11 Listopada Street (today's Legionów Street). It was a cultured home, with a piano, concerts and mornings spent in the philharmonics. Salek attended the Hebrew school run by Kaczenelson.

In the Summer of 1939, Izydor was mobilised as an army officer. He was taken prisoner by the Germans and for several months worked for them as a translator. In mid-1940s, the Germans allowed him to go back to Łódź. At that time, the Ghetto was already in existence and the Fajtlowicz's flat at 4 Kościelny Square, right next to the church in Zgierska Street with a view of the bridge, had to accommodate the whole Łódź branch of the family. Three other families were quartered there. “For me, it was a dreadful experience. At home, I shared a room with my brother. My mother thought about changing the flat to a bigger one”, Ruth recollected. The situation deteriorated gradually. Although her father had a good job, hunger began lurking in the house. Rutka attended school until 1941, then – just like everybody else – she had to go to work. Izydor Berliński worked as a warehouse keeper in the cobblers' resort.

Abramek Koplowicz, a young poet of the Ghetto, reminisced about him thus: “When <Her Leiter> is gone, Mr Berliński calls the tune. Berliński is okay, a good leader he is”. “My dad was a charismatic, joyful person, he always wore a smile. Everybody liked him”, Ruth recollected. Her mother worked in the millinery resort, and her brother in the Electrical Department. Initially, Rutka was employed in the cobblers’ resort, then in the tailors’ resort, in Leon Glazer’s factory, where the so-called “nursery” functioned. Apart from work (they sewed dolls’ clothes) children had lessons there and could attend a literary-theatrical group. “For us, it was a haven. A place where we could laugh and play. We were taught to sing, recite and draw under the instruction of the best pre-War teachers. We performed on the premises of the Ghetto before a real audience”, she recounted. Meanwhile, the situation in the Ghetto became more and more difficult.

On 24 August 1944, Rutka, together with her brother and her parents, was taken away to Auschwitz. Her parents landed up in a gas chamber straight away. Salek went through several other camps, but did not survive the War. Rutka survived as the only member of her closest family. In 1945, she returned to Łódź, where she found her grandmother, uncle and aunt. She lived at 5 Zielona Street (back then Legionów Street), graduated from a grammar school and worked in the Makabi club. In 1946, together with a group of Zionist youth, she went to Paris, where, two years later, she married Józef Englander (Eldar), who came from a family of musicians from Warsaw. In Paris, she graduated from a fashion design school. In 1950, the couple went to Israel to help build the new country. They took up residence in Jaffa first, then in Tel Aviv. Initially, Józef worked as a physical worker, then as an educational officer in a veteran hospital, he organised concerts. In 1958, their only daughter was born. She was named Anath in memory of Józef’s mother, who had died in Warsaw during the War. They spent five years in Brussels. Upon their return, they took up residence in Jerusalem. Ruth opened a fashion house. “All the first ladies wore my clothes, first and foremost, the prime minister’s wife, Mrs Begin”, she used to say with pride. Her husband died suddenly of a heart attack. After that event, she sold her house in Jerusalem and took up residence near Tel Aviv.

From 1989, Ruth often came back to her native Łódź, where she had a flat and many friends. She was a beautiful woman, always wore elegant clothes and make-up, she spoke beautiful Polish, knew countless Polish poems by heart. She debuted in Polish as the author of memoirs entitled *To shake the pillars of the temple*. By describing the people she knew and those that played a crucial part in her life, she wanted to show that the tragedy from the past was not nameless. “It is the only way to battle the anonymity of the mass death of World War II”, she confessed in the introduction.

For the last time, Ruth Eldar came to Łódź to celebrate the anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto with her daughter, Anna, and her granddaughter, Lee. It was her farewell to Łódź. She died in June 2019.

STORY NUMBER FOURTEEN

Tree no. 308

Leon Weintraub

Łódź – Stockholm (Sweden)

I still consider myself a Lodzermensz

“Both this tree and this stone with my name on it in the Survivors’ Park are very important to me, because they constitute a visible sign and proof of my ordeal in the Ghetto, but they also leave my family’s mark in Łódź. And I have a fondness for Łódź and still consider myself a Lodzermensz...”

Leon (Luzer) Wajntraub was born on 1 January 1926 in Łódź at 12 Solna Street. He was brought up by his mother, Nacha (Natalia, Nadzia) née Bajrach.

Merely eighteen months after his birth, his father, Samuel (Salomon) Wajntraub (1893–1927) died. He was a weaver and he lost his left forearm in an accident at work at a conveyor belt. After Samuel’s death, his family severed relations with his wife and son; they could not pardon Nacha for taking off the traditional wig. Leon’s mother earned their living running a laundry at 2 Kamienna Street. In the place where the entrance to the laundry room used to be, nowadays we can find the “Lovers from Kamienna Street” relief, which is an illustration to one of Agnieszka Osiecka’s song under the same title. “We led a very humble life. Our flat consisted of two tiny rooms with a partition that enabled us to receive the laundry. Right behind it there were tables that at night acted as beds for my sisters; me and my mum slept in the other room. Mum was aided by two Polish women, who had her in great esteem, because she got by on her own and didn’t break down”, he reminisces.



Lolek (as Leon was called at home) had four older sisters: Lola (b. 1920), Franka (b. 1921), Malka (b. 1921) and Róża (b. 1924). Three of them survived the War. No family photographs of the siblings have remained from before the War, only singular pictures of Leon's mother, aunts, grandfather...

"I attended the cheder at 5 Solna Street, but after a year I begged my mum not to send me there ever again. I finished six classes of a primary school in which only Jewish children were taught. At home, we spoke Yiddish, at school – only Polish. I liked school and, in any case, I was a very good student. Had it not been for the War, I would have continued my education in the dreamed-of grammar school in Sienkiewicza Street.

The Wajntraubs had to move to the Ghetto already in the Winter of 1939. First, they took up residence at 39 Brzezińska Street, then at 59 Brzezińska Street and, finally – until the liquidation of the Ghetto – in a flat at 7 Jakuba Street. For several months, Lolek was able to continue his education at a school in the Ghetto, but then he had to go to work. In the Summer of 1944, the family managed several times to avoid being taken away from the Ghetto.

"We were deadly afraid of all changes that this transport could bring. We decided to hide in order not to be deported, and wait it out. We packed all our stuff and hid in a nook behind a wall. The Germans went from home to home and checked if nobody stayed behind. On one occasion, we forgot to take a backpack, which was spotted by the Germans during the search. They said aloud that they would shoot if they found anybody. So my mum left the hiding place and asked them not to shoot", she reminisces.

They were taken to a transit camp in Czarnieckiego Street and next to the Radegast Station, from where they were taken away to Auschwitz. The night before the transport, Róża managed to get through to them to say goodbye. She decided to wait for the front with a conspiratorial group. Many years later, he found out that she died in the Stuthoff camp.

In Auschwitz-Birkenau, Leon was separated from the rest of his family. His mother and aunt Ewa were immediately directed to execution. His sisters went to the women's barracks. After several weeks, Leon managed to sneak out of Auschwitz. Unnoticed by the SS men and kapos, he joined the transport to Wüstegiersdorf (Głuszyce). Next, he landed in Dörnhau (Kolce), where he performed electrical works: he set up overhead lines for the paramilitary Organisation Todt. He stayed there until the end of February 1945. After a death march he landed up in Flossenbürg death camp and then went to next labour camps. He was freed by French troops on 23 April 1945. Due to emaciation (he weighed only 35 kilograms), he had to stay for several weeks in hospital in Donaueschingen and then in a French military sanatorium on the Reichenau Island. He accidentally found out that three of his sisters survived in Bergen-Belsen and in September 1945 he went there to meet his family. It seemed a miracle that all four of them were rescued.

In the Autumn of 1946, Leon began medical studies in Göttingen. In 1947, he married Katja (Kaethe) Hof, a German Slavist, who translated, for example, Janusz Korczak's works. In 1948, their first son, Michał, was born. In 1950, Leon came back to Poland to continue his studies. A year later, he was joined by his family. After his graduation in 1953, he started work in the First Clinic of Obstetrics and Female Diseases of the Medical Academy in Warsaw. More sons were born. In January 1966, he defended his PhD thesis and in Autumn of that same year he became the Head of the Ward of Obstetrics and Female Diseases in the Poviast Hospital in Otwock. He published 30 scholarly papers. However, three years later, due to the growing anti-Semitism in Poland, in March 1969 Leon lost his job as head of hospital ward and in September he emigrated to Sweden with his family. He worked as a specialist in obstetrics and female diseases in the hospital in Lulea in the North of Sweden and then in Stockholm.

He retired in 1991. He is fascinated by genealogy: he managed to retrace his family tree as far back as to the eighteenth century. He also engages in social activities. Since 1992, he has been delivering lectures on the Holocaust in Sweden, Germany and Poland. In 1997, he recorded his memoirs for Steven Spielberg's Shoah Foundation. Decorated with the Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany, he was also awarded the badge of honour of the Jewish Community in Stockholm.

Leon has three sons from his first marriage with Katja Hof and a daughter from his second marriage with Eva Maria Loose, as well as 7 granddaughters, 3 grandsons and 6 grandchildren. And it surely is not the end...

Who rescues one life, rescues the whole world...

STORY NUMBER FIFTEEN

Tree no. 218

Jehuda Widawski

Łódź – Tel Aviv (Israel)

He still comes back to Łódź

For the last 30 years he has come to Poland, especially to Łódź, several times a year. He has also promised to participate in the 75th anniversary of the liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, a month after his hundredth birthday, to say kaddish for the deceased.

"I try to maintain the memory of the Jews of Łódź for the future generations so that they would never be forgotten", he says.

Jehuda (Idek, Aron) Widawski was born on 26 July 1919 in Turek. His parents ran a grocery shop and a haberdashery warehouse there. His father – Abraham (b. 1893) – graduated from Talmudic studies. His mother – Lea Ordenans (b. 1897) – came from Łódź, graduated a grammar school and knew several languages.



Lea's father – Szlomo Mendel – ran a warehouse of raw materials for textile production in Łódź. He wanted his daughter to marry a well-educated man. It was a traditional Jewish family. At home they spoke in Yiddish and ate kosher food. Their oldest son – Gabriel (b. 1918) – was sent to study in the yeshivah in Lublin. At first, Jehuda attended a cheder, then a primary school. There were three other children at home: two sons – Chaim Mosze (b. 1922) and Jehoszua (b. 1924) – and a daughter named Jochewet (b. 1930). In 1929, the Widawskis moved to Łódź. They took up residence at 19 1 Maja Street and then at 56 Zachodnia Street.

Jehuda continued his education in a night grammar school at 57 Cegielniana Street (currently Stefana Jaracza Street). He did not finish school, because he was raring to start work, he wanted to be an entrepreneur. He learned the trade in his family business, just like his brothers, but he wanted to set up his own enterprise.

He exuberantly talks about how, at 16, he managed to obtain from the Voivode of Łódź a permission to run his own business. He established it at 43 Lipowa Street. His company employed Jewish seamstresses who sewed undergarments and clothes. It produced textiles for the army and delivered some to shops. In years 1935–1939, he actively participated in a Zionist organisation in Łódź. After the War broke out, Jehuda still ran his company in Lipowa Street for some time, but already in December 1939 he and his family rented a flat on the premises of the Ghetto and started moving there with all the furniture and sewing machines. They took up residence at 13 Zielna Street, where they initially ran a tailoring studio. Later, they opened a haberdashery plant in Młynarska, where collars for women's dresses were

produced to be sent to Germany. When the Ghetto was being gradually turned into a labour camp, the Widawski family was very useful in the organisation of tailoring workshops. Jehuda trained youth and children in the trade, for which he obtained additional food rations. He also conducted vocational workshops, so that the youngest residents of the Ghetto could show their knowledge of the trade and not be sent out of the Ghetto. The tailoring shop for juvenile workers was situated in 27 Żydowska Street. In September 1943, the Widawskis moved to 50 Zgierska Street.

Jehuda and almost his entire family were taken away from Łódź to Auschwitz on the last transport, on 29 August 1944. His parents and his oldest brother, Gabriel, died immediately in Auschwitz-Birkenau.

"I think about them not only every day, but every single hour. I can still see them in front of my eyes", he reminisces.

Chaim Mosze was taken from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, where he was murdered in January 1945. Jehoszua and Jehuda were taken away to the labour camp in Friedland. Jochewet was sent from Auschwitz to the Stutthof concentration camp. She died in January 1945 during the evacuation of the camp by sea. Jehuda and his brother returned to Łódź after the War. Together with his maternal uncle Jehoszua Ordenans (his mother's brother), he established a textile company – again at 43 Lipowa Street – which quickly made it big: everything it produced was sold in a blink.

On 4 April 1946, Jehuda married Dobrysia Wassercug (b. 1918), who was also a resident of the Łódź Ghetto. She survived together with her mother, Sara Rywka (Blum), and brother, Menasze, among the 800 Jews who were left in the



Ghetto to tidy it. Her father died of a heart attack shortly after the liberation of Łódź. In November 1947, Jehuda and Dobryśia's son, Abraham, was born in Łódź. Jehuda's daughter, Lea, was born in Israel in 1952. She holds a PhD in Biblical studies. She is a lecturer at the Bar Ilan University in Ramat Gan. Her husband, Mordechai Himelferb, works in a hospital. They have two daughters: Shiri and Eliran.

Already in late 1970s, Jehuda started to come back to Łódź. He has built several thousand tombstones at the Jewish Cemetery, in the Ghetto Field. He helps to renovate the Cemetery and was one of the sponsors of the Righteous Among the Nations Monument. Jehuda comes to Łódź as often as he can. His wife died in 2000.

For many years, Jehuda Widawski has been a member of the Board of the Association of the Former Residents of Łódź in Israel and cooperated with the Yad Vashem Institute. He has become a member of the Monumentum Iudaicum Lodzense Foundation. On 29 August 2009, Jehuda Widawski received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta from the hands of the President of Poland Lech Kaczyński. He was also decorated with the badge "For Merit to the City of Łódź" awarded by the City Council of Łódź. He took part in the renovation of the synagogue and yeshivah in Lublin, as well as in the commemoration of the Jews from Turek.

Every year, during the celebrations of the anniversary of the liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto, he says kaddish for the deceased at the Jewish Cemetery. "It is not a prayer, but a scream of despair", comment those who listen to Jehuda Widawski's voice full of pain.

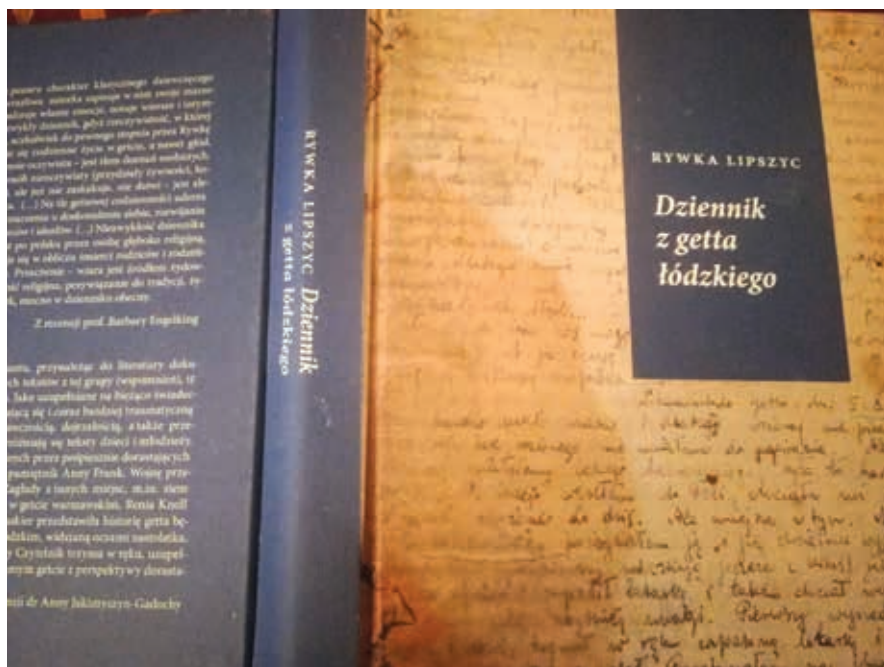
Rywka Lipszyc's Journal

When it seemed that all the journals and personal documents created in the Ghetto of the occupied Łódź have already seen the light of the day, exceptional reference material appeared – a squared notebook, in which an anonymous teenager wrote her journal in neat handwriting.

I was asked by one of the friends of our Centre for Jewish Studies, Prof. Robert Shapiro from New York, if I could verify the credibility of the notes that were donated to the Holocaust Center of North Carolina and, at a later time, edit them. Of course, I agreed and it was probably one of the most important decisions taken in my whole professional life, one that influenced many aspects, also those of a more private nature, among which I no doubt have to rank all the friendships struck all over the world thanks to the Journal. I began editing the Journal not knowing anything about its author. I only had a handful of basic information: the Journal was written in the Ghetto by a rather young woman, between 4 October 1943 and 12 April 1944. In total, 94 daily entries – 112 pages – survived. There could have been more – the journal ends rather abruptly. The text was written with a fountain pen, in a neat handwriting, in navy blue or black ink, in beautiful Polish with asides written in Hebraic alphabet. Only near the end of the Journal did the author work her name into the text. Thus, she revealed her identity and, at the same time, allowed me to reach the other protagonists of her diary, including the ones I had the chance to meet in person.

From Rywka Lipszyc's Journal, we can spin stories on at least three plains. The first story appertains to the author. The next one is embedded in the fate of Rywka and her Journal after they left Łódź – it is a story full of plot twists and, in fact, still an unfinished one. Finally, I would like to explain why this Journal is so important and why here, in Łódź, Rywka's native city, it should become a required reading.

Rywka was 14 when she began writing her diary. Even skimming through her text, we have no doubt that she was a sensitive person, with an inclination to grand emotions, which she expressed with, among other things, the use of exclamation marks (I counted 370 exclamation marks and 29 triple exclamation marks) and suspension points (not 3 dots in a row, but whole lines of dots, under which Rywka hid her most secret thoughts. They appear about 2000 times). It would seem standard behaviour at that age. However, Rywka's affectedness can be perceived in a different light when we know that at that time she had already lost both parents. Her father



2553 **Anmeldung.** 5

Familienname Lipszyc geb. Kowka Bała
 Vornamen Sara, Maria
 Vornamen der Eltern Jakob, Sara, Maria
 Mädchenname der Mutter Kowka
 Stand ledig Geburtsort Litzmann
 Geburtsdatum 19.10.1909 Religion Mos.
 Beruf Arbeiterin
 Der Obengenannte bezog am 10. X 1941 in 7 Personen 1 Zimmer Küche
 in der Wohn. Nr. 16 an der Kaulbachstr.
 Nr. 38 Reg. Nr. 2816 Karten Nr. 6416



died on 2 June 1941 and the memory of his last days ranks among one of the most moving scenes in the Journal. Her mother's death (at the age of 40!) in July 1942 preceded by two months yet another tragedy with which our heroine had to come to grips – the deportation of children and the elderly to Chełmno nad Nerem during the General Curfew, perhaps the most tragic period in the history of our City. At that time Rywka lost her siblings: five-year-old Tamarcia and ten-year-old Abramek. Also her father's brother, a respected Rabbi named Jochanen Lipszyc, was taken away. Rywka and her younger sister, Cypora (four years her junior), was taken in by Jochanen's wife, Chaja Iska, and moved in with her and her three daughters at 38 Wolborska Street. After Aunt Iska's death in July 1943, the girls were left alone, officially under care of the oldest one, Ester, who at time was already twenty.

The room in which Rywka lived with her cousins, Estera, Chaja and Minia, was the place in which she most often wrote her Journal. Apart from the room, Rywka puts pen to paper in the tailors' resort, although sometimes she has to hide her notebook from her instructors' eyes.

Rywka works in a plant called "Glazer's resort" after its director's name. In fact, it was quite a sizeable factory which employed several hundred teenage (juvenile) seamstresses. Work was for them a guarantee of life, since work passport, as Rumkowski used to say, was life passport as well. Additionally, all the people employed in the resort were given soup. Rywka does not complain about her work – when she is writing, there are fewer and fewer orders and wares coming to the Ghetto, and the girls often only go through the motions of their work. Apart from that, courses are organised for girls in the Ghetto, in the so-called nursery. Officially, they are courses in cutting and sewing, unofficially: classes in Yiddish, mathematics, history. Great joy for children devoid of school. Moreover, Rywka has friends in the resort. Some of them she meets in her free time as well. It is a group of girls under the care of a teacher called Fajga Zelicka. At that time, it is Mrs. Zelicka whom Rywka considers the greatest authority and, apart from her, Rywka's closest friend, Surcia Zelwer. Surcia was a couple of years older than the other girls and acted as a spiritual guide of sorts – she encouraged her charges to read, talked with them and, above all, encouraged them to write. It must have been Surcia who came up with the idea to make the Journal Rywka's confidant that was supposed to shape her persistence and character. (Sara Zelwer wrote her own memoirs after the War, but – unfortunately – Rywka does not appear in them. Asked about her several years ago, shortly before death, she could not recall such a person). It is worth stressing that before the War Fajga Zelicka worked as a teacher in Bejs Jakow schools for girls from religious Jewish families. Both Sara and Rywka attended such a school until the outbreak of the War. In those schools, the same curriculum as in primary schools applied, thus girls, apart from learning Hebrew and religion, had to have a perfect command of Polish literature and history. It shows quite clearly on the pages of Rywka's Journal: beautiful Polish,

frequent references to set texts, poetic attempts resonating with Polish Romanticism, a volume of Mickiewicz's poetry close at hand.

It cannot go unnoticed that while writing, Rywka focuses mostly on her emotions. For that reason, the Journal should be considered typical of teenagers that engage in writing diaries influenced by the mood of growing up. The character of this Journal, however, is exceptional, due to the nightmare of the Ghetto that appears in it. Admittedly, the picture of the Ghetto is not drawn with great precision and attention to detail preserved for future readers, as was done by the teenage Dawid Sierakowiak or the mature diarist Jakub Poznański. The difficult everyday reality of the Ghetto pours into Rywka's notes mostly as background. It seems that Rywka got used to this life, yet it cannot be stated that she accepted it. Thus, the information sneaked between the lines is of great worth to scholars due to its objectivism. Thanks to Rywka we can come to know, for example, how people managed to observe the Sabbath: less religious people covered for those to whom it was important.

The history of the post-War fate of the Journal is a story that spans three continents and connects many people (I proudly emphasise the fact that they are my friends now). Rywka took the notebook with her as part of her personal belongings during the liquidation of the Ghetto in August 1944. All five girls were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, together with 65 thousands of residents of the Ghetto, in August 1944. Of course, all personal belongings were taken away on the spot and those considered useless were burnt. How did the Journal survive? We do not know. Probably, the Germans did not have time to burn it. In the Spring of 1945, in the ruins of Crematorium III, a Red Army doctor named Zinaida Berezovska found the Journal and took it with her to Omsk. Then it ended up in Moscow and, finally, with Zinaida's granddaughter Anastasia to California. In the Spring of 2009, I was asked to help in editing the Journal. I shared the work with Judy Janec. Rywka became our spiritual foster daughter. While I tried to piece Rywka's and her family's fortunes in the Ghetto together, Judy – equipped with more time and faster Web browsers – began her post-War search. I can only assure you of the strong emotions that accompanied our every discovery, such as the one that Rywka lived through the War and her last trace could be dated to 10 September 1945. The awareness that her cousins survived and live in Israel (in January 2017, Estusia died) made us euphoric. The culmination of our struggle was the amazing ceremony in November 2015, when in Bnei Brak in Israel, all the people (all of them women!) engaged in editing the journal in Poland and the US met. The Journal ended its journey in Israel. Rywka's will, expressed in one of registration forms, was to emigrate to Palestine. Thus, in compliance with the will of Anastasia, the legal owner of the Journal, it was passed on to Rywka's family living in Israel, who, in turn, donated it to the Yad Vashem Institute.

That is all about the Journal. The story is closed. However, we cannot close Rywka's story. What we know has been recreated thanks to post-War

documents and her cousins' memories. On the ramp in Auschwitz-Birkenau, Rywka was separated from her sister Cypora. Cypka did not go through selection procedures and landed up in a gas chamber. Rywka and her cousins were deemed fit to work and sent to the camp in Christianstadt, where they produced ammunition. From there, they were directed on a six-week death march to Bergen-Belsen. On the day of the liberation of the camp, 15 April 1945, one of the cousins, Chana, died. Estera, Minia and Rywka went to hospital. Rywka turned out to be the weakest of the three – doctors decided to direct Estera and Minia to rehabilitation stays in Sweden, while they thought Rywka would not survive more than several days. Her cousins bade her farewell and left. Rywka's further fate remains a mystery, both for them and for us, although documents helped us to confirm that she was given yet another chance and directed to the North of Germany. As notation on her registration card stated, in September she was sent to the hospital in Niendorf. But there the trail goes cold.

When Rywka's cousins made their recovery, they went to Palestine and shortly afterwards to Israel. They got married and had children. We can say that the Lipszyc family flourished. Estera and Minia are surrounded by a bunch of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Will we be given the chance to finish Rywka's biography? I do not know. But I believe we will.

For the time being, we can only look at her in the light of her Journal. It is a text that becomes more and more powerful with every reading. There are some elements of it that I would like to emphasise. Rywka's world is, predominantly, a world of women. She herself was surrounded by women and, paradoxically, the post-War fate of the Journal was also connected with women. I view our Ghetto heroines with admiration: they are so full of solidarity, they support one another. Teachers help their students, not limiting themselves to the duty imposed by work.

Of course, this manless world is for Rywka not a norm, but an enforced situation. On 5 April 1944, before the Passover, she wrote down:

This will be the third Seder without Daddy, the second one without men in general, but last year Aunt Chaiska was still with us and today... today there is Estusia... Oh, it's so tragic! If only Abramek were with us! Oh, God, I miss Father the most at Pesach, at the Seder.

The Journal is a perfect description of family situation in the Ghetto. Rywka does not hide her strained relations with her cousins, their struggle with the constant lack of food and the conflicts that arose of it.

Comparing the text with other personal documents, we can come to completely contradictory conclusions. If we juxtapose it with Anne Frank's diary, we will see a broad spectrum of problems, relations and people in Rywka's writings. In turn, juxtaposition with another diarist from Łódź, Dawid Sierakowiak, shows us that Rywka's world was very narrow. She does not describe the Ghetto as a phenomenon,

she has no ability to synthesise. When she contemplates the fact that there are no beggars in the Ghetto, she sees it as something positive. She does not understand that beggars were the first people to be sent to death and the unemployed did not fit into Rumkowski's policy of survival through work.

There are scenes in the Journal that would be considered to be verging on kitsch were they used as part of film script. Such is, among others, the information about her friend Lusia, who is crying and irritates Rywka with her sobs, because she interrupts an assembly. As it turns out, "Lusia had to burn her violin (in the Ghetto all instruments had to be surrendered) and from time to time burst out crying".

Rywka fights with her own identity. On the one hand, her faith links her inextricably with Jewishness ("Oh, it's so good to be a Jew, but a true Jew, a Jew in the true sense of the word! That is why I have to draw as much of this knowledge as I can, from far and wide... And I will not let anybody interrupt me in this" – her words written in the Ghetto take on an exceptional meaning!), but on the other, she is firmly rooted in Polish tradition. She struggles with the language – she resents herself for not learning Yiddish or Hebrew and writing in Polish instead.

Rywka's Journal is a unique testament of religious formation. For Rywka, faith has great significance and constitutes the foundation of her strength. Faith arranges her world. Maybe it is worth looking at Rywka's testimony as a way of coping with difficult situations. Researching the Holocaust, we often collide with the impossibility of understanding why. How did it happen that in the twentieth century the Shoah took place? Rywka does not get angry with God, she does not get angry with adults. She has a system of values that puts her reality in order. On 14 February, she wrote in her Journal to one of her friends, Chaja:

"Dear Chajusia!!! I grieve greatly because of you.... You worry too much about that displacement, come to your senses, Chajusia! For heaven's sake! Mind you, you cannot go on like that. I understand you perfectly well, I know what it means, but everything has its limits..... Chajusia, maybe because of that great grief.....

Now I'm going to write you what I have observed. So, when everything is normal (if I can call it so at all), I can go through different states, different moods, but now? Now I must not!.. Now I must keep my spirits up..... I have to see so as not to, God forbid, lose the ground beneath my feet".

*Rywka Lipszyc, Journal from the Łódź Ghetto,
ed. by E. Wiatr, Cracow-Budapest 2017.*

The book was published by Austeria Publishing House. Museum of the History of Polish Jews POLIN is the partner of the publication.

The flame will remain in us

Celebration 2019

The main proceedings took place on 29 August 2019 at the Jewish Cemetery in Łódź in Bracka Street and at the Radegast Station. The ceremony that took place at the Cemetery was religious in nature and kaddish was said for the intention of the victims of the Holocaust. Priests of Christian churches also said a common prayer for the deceased. Among the invited guests there were some Survivors with their families, among others Leon Weintraub. Michael Schudrich – the Chief Rabbi of Poland and Grzegorz Ryś – the Metropolitan Bishop of Łódź were present as well.

Votive candles were lit in front of the memorial dedicated to the victims of the Łódź Ghetto and concentration camps.

The invited guests, hosts, organisers and citizens of Łódź that came to the celebration, went from the Cemetery to the Radegast Station – a place from which Hitlerites organised transportation of the inhabitants of the Ghetto to concentration camps, where the majority of them did not get a chance to survive.



75th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto



During this part of the ceremony, Polish and Israeli national anthems were performed and the army assumed guard of honour over the place. Marian Turski – one of the Holocaust Survivors, Polish journalist and historian – took the floor and spoke about the identity of the Jews of Łódź – a group that includes also himself. He spoke about the cultural and artistic tradition, and about the need to embrace it with respect and provide continuation.

After his appearance, the President Hanna Zdanowska took the floor and said, “I have a speech prepared for this occasion, but after the words that we have just heard silence should fell, silence that we should – each of us individually and all of us together – take to our hearts and carry further. We should treat it as a commandment, as a commitment for all the inhabitants of our City. Since there are many young people with us here today, let me quote a fragment of a poem written by the teenage Abramek Koplowicz entitled “Dream”. *When I’m twenty years of age, I’ll start observing our beautiful world. I’ll sit in a huge motorised bird and I’ll rise into the expanse of the universe. I’ll soar, I’ll fly into world so beautiful, so remote, I’ll soar, I’ll fly over rivers and seas.* This is the proof that it is always worth dreaming. So live in such a way that your dreams have a chance to be fulfilled. May your world be beautiful and secure and may people never and nowhere experience a tragedy similar to the one that happened here.

But before the day came during which Survivors, their Families, organisers and partners of the Celebration, as well as numerous citizens of Łódź could meet, there took place a number of events of artistic, academic and symbolic character.

Several preceding days were filled with happenings that will both make history and be remembered by all the people who participated in them.

Marek Edelman Dialogue Center tended to the organisation of the events, whose hosts were the President of the City of Łódź and the Jewish Religious Community of Łódź.

It is nearly impossible to describe all the meetings that took place on those days. Therefore, I will try to make a short, synthetic overview.

During the Celebration, people prayed for the intention of the Victims and their Families in many sanctuaries of the City. Catholics, Mariavites, Lutherans, Calvinists, Methodists and, of course, Jews prayed alike. Those were especially touching moments, since they emphasised that it is not our affiliation to one or another church that is the most important thing, but our human community, empathy and bringing solace in misery.

Guests from outside Poland, especially from Israel, visited Łódź under care of excellent guides and historians, who took them on a dramatic journey into the past, but also to places that, although not directly connected to the tragedy of the Ghetto, for many are simply the Land of Their Childhood. Inhabitants of the City took part in those rambles and had a chance to look at familiar, domesticated places from a slightly different perspective. For many of them, their own streets and homes revealed themselves in a context completely different from the everyday one.

Overall more than a dozen exhibitions were organised. On the exhibitions, we could see photographs and documents... For some, they are only a history lesson, but for others – the most sacred relics.





“The Book of Job teaches us that no justification for suffering is sweeter to God than silence. Silence, however, is not an aim in itself, but only a tool, making way for a more profound answer, because we cannot be silent for the whole time, we finally have to say something. *There is a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak* (Ecclesiastes 3: 7). Tearing corresponds to silence and mending corresponds to speaking. The situation is the same with speaking about pain and suffering; on the one hand, it is difficult to talk about them, because pain precludes all attempts at wording, but on the other hand, talking about them and searching for answers is necessary to learn to hope. We are torn between searching for sense and wanting to forget. During the meeting, we will contemplate why, after so many years, it is still difficult to talk about the Holocaust. In order to get tools to answer that, seemingly obvious, question, we will familiarise ourselves with chosen answers to a more primal question: why did Shoah take place?”

This was the introduction with which Rabbi Dawid Szychowski provided his lecture. That appearance, so strong in its purport, gave rise to a series of excellent lectures prepared by scholars connected with the Museum of Independence Traditions and the Museum of the City of Łódź.

Apart from purely academic deliberations, people could also enjoy artistic experiences of the highest order. Among them we have to enumerate the premiere of Brian Michaels and Katarzyna Gorczyca's performance entitled “Searching the Silence” (Video: Jakub Urbański, Music: Maciej Klich). The artists speak thus about the idea of the performance:

“In most towns and villages in which Polish Jewish culture flourished silence fell like a leaden blanket. It is our intention to search that silence to discern the traces of Jewish, Polish life. To listen to the silence and discover echoes, images, sounds and smells of culture that used to hum with life. Culture that used to be an important part of the Polish world. Searching the silence, we want to reshape it into a sound and thus have a part in rediscovering the dignity and worth of those who were slain”.

Artistic attractions appeared as well, like “Ten to Ten. A living memorial of love through song” to name just one. Its author, Jane Arnfield, is a scholar and director, professor in drama at the Northumbria University in the United Kingdom and a Leverhulme Trust International Academic Fellow in the Institute of Sociology at the University of Łódź. As the organisers of the Celebrations write, “her research translates biographic testament into the language of theatrical testament”.

Apart from theatrical performances, the participants of the Proceedings, also had the chance to watch films during screenings at the Marek Edelman Dialogue Center, which was the organiser of the Celebrations. Among them, there were i.a. the premiere screening in Poland of the motion picture entitled “The Boy Who Was Left Behind”, which is devoted to the figure of Richard Lewkowicz.

Of course, there were plenty of meetings with literature and its authors. Among them, with the daughter of one of the Survivors – Ellen Korman Mains – and her book entitled “Buried Rivers. A Spiritual Journey Into the Holocaust”.

Concerts enjoyed great popularity as well. One of them, organised in the Reicher Synagogue, gathered a huge number of those who wanted to listen to Dawid Gurfinkiel singing with the accompaniment of music played by Marek Kądziała’s band. The celebrations of the anniversary of liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto is an event that gives food for reflection on life and death, which is set far from entertainment in the broad sense. However, in Gurfinkiel’s concert, “Jidyszkajt”, there was a hint of joy. Joy of life that, despite the war trauma of the pervasive Holocaust, won in the persons of the Survivors and their Families. The standing ovation, initiated by one of the Survivors, Leon Weintraub, was the best proof that it was precisely the way the concert should be interpreted.

The concert “We Long for a Home...” in The Survivors’ Park at Marek Edelman Dialogue Center was an artistic proposal of the highest quality. As the organisers write,

“<We Long for a Home> is an innovative attempt at reconstructing the legendary formation The Happy Boys, which was established in Germany, right after the end of the War. (...)

Four years later, in 1949, after dozens of concerts, The Happy Boys ended their extraordinary story. The musicians rode off in different directions to travel



the world. Only memories from the times when life was beginning to head towards normality again remained. (...)

The author of the script and the director of the concert entitled <We Long for a Home...> is Miron Zajfert, the creator of last year's "Get to tango". The music aspect of the event was supervised by the outstanding trumpeter, composer and arranger, Robert Majewski, accompanied by Henryk Miśkiewicz, Michał Tokaj, Sławomir Kurkiewicz, Marcin Jahr, Grzegorz Nagórski and Bartek Dworak. Preserving the instrumentarium used by their music precursors from the past, those remarkable artists reactivated the makeup of The Happy Boys jazz band.

The exquisite jazz band is accompanied by exceptional vocalists: the rising star of Polish jazz – Wojciech Myrczek, one of the leading artists on our music scene – Aga Zaryan, and the legend and master of swing singing – Andrzej Dąbrowski".

The hot August night in the Park reverberated with music, which – I am convinced – will stay for a long time in the minds of the hundreds of guests that came to the concert.

Granting of Memory Trees to further Survivors in the Park at Marek Edelman Dialogue Center and the symbolic burial of the foundation stone for the new synagogue in Pomorska Street complemented that remarkable time.

Then, on Saturday, on the border of the Ghetto, lights of memory were lit up. The votive candles will burn out. The flame will remain in us...

Restoring memory...

(2004–2018)

60th anniversary (2004)

The celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the liquidation of Litzmannstadt Ghetto began with a multimedia concert “The children from the Łódź Ghetto”, devoted to the youngest victims of the Ghetto as well as to those who died in the camps in Chełmno nad Nerem and Oświęcim. On the wall screen people could see photographs from the Łódź Ghetto and the film entitled “The last generation” – children read out fragments of journals of the youngest victims of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. The venue where this music event took place was the former factory of Izrael Poznański in Ogrodowa Street.

Residents of Łódź, including the President Jerzy Kropiwnicki, participated in open Friday prayers during the greeting of the Sabbath ceremony in the former synagogue in Rewolucji 1905 r. Street. Also the Chief Rabbi of Warsaw and Łódź, Michael Schudrich, was present.





The main proceedings began with morning prayers in synagogues and a mass at the Church under the invocation of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kościelny Square. Prayers, including kaddish and “El Mole Rachmim” were also said at the Jewish Cemetery in Bracka Street and at the Radegast Station. It was there where the President of the City of Łódź said, “When the time to settle accounts





comes, you can either be silent together with the torturer or scream together with the victim. There is no other choice for my City than to cry out together with the victims so that our voice could be heard in the whole world”.

The March of Remembrance that went along Bracka, Zagajnikowa and Stalowa Streets to the Radegast Station was attended by Survivors of the Holocaust, inhabitants of Łódź, representatives of the City and State authorities (including Prime Minister Marek Belka) as well as representatives of Prague, Vienna, Berlin, Frankfurt, Cologne and Düsseldorf, from which Jews were deported to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

“We are fulfilling the testament of our nation and restoring the memory of those whose life was so brutally destroyed”, said Eljezer Zyskind, the head of the Organization of Former Residents of Brzeziny in Israel and one of the Survivors of the Ghetto.

The people gathered at the Radegast Station lit candles and visited the exhibition in the station building. The musicians of the Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonic in Łódź performed the Hebrew Rhapsody.

In the evening, in Poznański's Palace, the guests signed Jerusalem Peace Stones. Among other people, the following put their signatures: Helena Bergson, Ryszard Kaczorowski, Longin Pastusiak, Abp. Władysław Ziółek and Jerzy Kropiwnicki. Eugene J. Ribakoff (the head of the “American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee” organisation) was honoured with the Commander's Cross, while Tova



Ben Zvi, a pedagogue and songstress, obtained the Officer's Cross for outstanding contribution to activities in favour of Polish-Jewish understanding.

During the concert in the Grand Theatre, the mixed choir of Polish Radio in Cracow and the Camerata Silesia Choir directed by Wojciech Michniewski performed Alexandre Tansman's "The Prophet Isaiah" oratorio. Also the following three cantors gave their performances: Benzion Miller, Alberto Mizrahi, Yaacov Motzen, as well the Choir of the Great Synagogue of Jerusalem directed by Elli Jaffe.

The next day, in the Survivors' Park (83 Wojska Polskiego Street), people began to plant trees as a symbol of remembrance of the victims of the Ghetto. Each of the trees was given a number. A commemorative stone was unveiled as well.

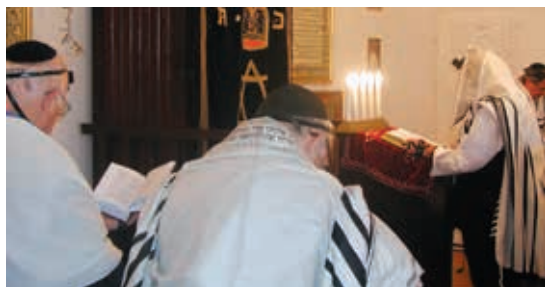
In front of the old forge (in Wojska Polskiego Street), celebrations commemorating the liquidation of the Gypsy Ghetto were held and a commemorative plaque was unveiled on the building of the former I.L. Perec Jewish School at 13 Więckowskiego Street.

In turn, in the Old Market, the music show entitled "The Invisible" directed by Jerzy Kalina was presented for the opening of the Dialogue of Four Cultures Festival. Joseph Malovany – a famous tenor and the Great Cantor of the Synagogue in Fifth Avenue in New York sang traditional Jewish songs.

On the initiative of one of the Survivors, Halina Elczewska, the inhabitants of the Ghetto who survived the Holocaust met in the Museum of the City of Łódź.

61st anniversary (2005)

The celebrations were inaugurated by a concert of the songstress Tova Ben Zvi (one of the Survivors of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto) and the Clil Choir in Teatr Nowy. "Together we create the history of returning to the roost, of restoring memory, and, above all, the history of mutual friendship and love", said the Vice-President of Łódź, Włodzimierz Tomaszewski.



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

People prayed for the intention of the victims in the Synagogue and the Church under the invocation of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kościelny Square. At 18 Pomorska Street, the hotel “Linat Orchim” (Hebrew for “callers’ respite”) was opened.

The ones who survived the nightmare of the Ghetto met in the Survivors’ Park. Also the Mayor of Tel Aviv, Ron Hulda, and the Ambassador of Israel in Poland, David Peleg, were present. The participants of the proceedings could also visit the exhibition entitled “Łódź Ghetto – Henryk Ross’ photographs”, which was opened in the Museum of Art.

At the Radegast Station, people could see an open exposition in the Tunnel of the Deported.

62nd anniversary (2006)

The celebrations began with prayers at the Jewish Cemetery and March of Remembrance to the Radegast Station. Here Heidi Kanke-Werner, the Vice-Mayor of Berlin, unveiled a plaque commemorating the Jews from Berlin who were deported to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

The main alley in the Survivors’ Park was given the name of Arnold Mostowicz, an Honorary Freeman of the City of Łódź and doctor in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto. The hero’s granddaughters participated in the ceremony. Along the alley, plaques with names of Survivors and numbers of trees were placed. More trees were planted as symbols of life.

In the place where Kościuszki Avenue opens out into Zielona Street, a plaque was unveiled that commemorates the Reformed Synagogue destroyed by the German occupant.





63rd anniversary (2007)

The places where the proceedings of the next anniversary were held were, traditionally, the Jewish Cemetery, the Radegast Station and the Survivors' Park. Apart from Jerzy Kropiwnicki, also David Peleg (the Ambassador of Israel in Poland),



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto



Szewach Weiss and Michael Schudrich (the Chief Rabbi of Warsaw and Łódź) took part in the celebrations. President Kropiwnicki yet again assured that the crimes of the past would not be forgotten.

The day after the official proceedings, the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society Division Łódź organised Jewish culture tours.



64th anniversary (2008)

The celebrations in front of the Jewish Cemetery began with a speech delivered by Symcha Keller – the Head of the Jewish Religious Community in Łódź. He also performed Psalm 130 “Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord”. Jehuda Widawski – one of the Ghetto Survivors – said the kaddish.

A fragment of the Chryzantem Street (between Bracka Street and the gate of the New Jewish Cemetery) was given the name of Abram Cytryn.



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Litmanstadt Ghetto

65th anniversary (2009)





Several days before the official celebrations, Jan Karski's bench was placed on the Memorial Mound. Karski was a courier from the times of World War II, one of the Righteous Among the Nations and an Honorary Freeman of the City of Łódź.

The proceedings of the 65th Anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto were inaugurated with the exhibition entitled "Destruction of Jewish Towns" in the Museum of Independence Traditions. The President of Łódź, Jerzy Kropiwnicki, performed the official unveiling of the obelisk in honour of "Żegota" Council to Aid Jews in the Survivors' Park. In front of the old forge at 84 Wojska Polskiego Street, people paid tribute to the murdered Romani and Sinti people.





The camp for Polish children and youth in Przemysłowa Street was commemorated as well – the ceremony took place under the Broken Heart Monument in the Grey Ranks Park.

In the evening, the participants of the celebrations said prayers for the deceased and lit votive candles at the Jewish Cemetery. A plaque commemorating the Jews deported by the Germans to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto was unveiled on the wall of the Cemetery.

In the Church under the invocation of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kościelny Square a mass was said for the intention of the victims.

At the Radegast Station, votive candles were lit in front of the matzevot, a plaque commemorating the children of the Ghetto was unveiled and wreaths were deposited. To satisfy tradition, the participants of the proceedings took part in the March of Remembrance to the Survivors' Park, where the main celebrations took place with the participation of the President of the Republic of Poland Lech Kaczyński, the First Lady Maria Kaczyńska and the President of the City of Łódź Jerzy Kropiwnicki.

"In no other country did people hide as many Jews as in Poland. (...) The Jews fell victim to the murderous totalitarianism of German Nazism", said the President of the Republic of Poland, Lech Kaczyński.

The ceremony was also attended by such people as the Chief Rabbi of Poland Michael Schudrich, the Head of the Jewish Religious Community in Łódź Symcha Keller, the Mayor of Tel Aviv Ron Huldai, the businessman Mordechaj Zisser, and the former Ambassador of Israel in Poland Szewach Weiss. The proceedings would not be complete without the Survivors of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, members of their families and the residents of Łódź.

Lech Kaczyński and Jerzy Kropiwnicki unveiled the only monument in the world that commemorates the Polish people who rescued Jews during World War II, authored by Czesław Bielecki. The monument is composed of the symbols of the Jewish nation (the Star of David) and the Polish nation (a rising eagle). The sculpture includes plaques with names of Poles who were honoured with the Righteous Among the Nations medal. During the unveiling ceremony, 450 doves were freed.

The President of the Republic of Poland decorated the people merited for the Polish-Jewish dialogue and the Poles who rescued Jews during the Holocaust. Jehuda Widawski, Symcha Keller and Ruth Eldar (the author of the memoirs entitled "To shake the pillars of the temple") obtained the decoration "For Merit to the City of Łódź". The celebrations were topped out with planting trees of remembrance in the Survivors' Park.

Andrzej Krauze's oratorio "Righteous of This Land" premiered at the andel's hotel. The composer dedicated his work "to the Survivors, the Righteous and their families".

A meeting of the Survivors of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto was organised in Poznański's Palace. Jerzy Kropiwnicki decorated Aleksandra Szychman-Dziewulska (an activist fighting for bringing Poles and Jews together) and Eliezer Lolek Grynfeld (Abramek Koplowicz's half-brother) with the Merit for Culture – Gloria Artis.

The celebrations of the 65th anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto ended with Krzysztof Penderecki's concert in the Grand Theatre. Its programme included "The Seven Gates of Jerusalem" and the premiere composition entitled "Kaddish. To the Abrameks of Łódź, who desired to live. To the Poles who saved Jews".



66th anniversary (2010)



Tomasz Sadzyński, the acting President of the City, said, “The time has come to pay tribute to the Poles who risked their own lives to save Jews. I believe that despite the beliefs which divide us – be them religious, social or political – we are motivated by a common goal: to let Łódź continue to teach people how to be tolerant and respectful”.

Nadav Eshcar, the Vice-Ambassador of Israel in Poland, said, “6 million Jews died in that war – it was the most extreme example of xenophobia. Unfortunately, today, in 2010, its manifestations still happen. This ceremony and this monument bear testimony to the fact that we all want such crimes never to happen again”.





After the celebrations had ended, the guests visited Zbigniew Januszek and Sławomir Grzanek's exhibition entitled "Boundary line". The authors of the exposition juxtaposed archival photographs of the Ghetto with contemporary pictures of the Bałuty district.

67th anniversary (2011)

"We are fit for fight to save the material memory about the Jews of Łódź. We have to save the Jewish Cemetery and the last Synagogue in Łódź", said Symcha Keller, the Head of the Jewish Religious Community in Łódź.

The President of the City of Łódź, Hanna Zdanowska, proclaimed, "Dialogue is our greatest profit from the regained memory of Łódź. The best proof that the future begins with getting to know the truth about the past".



The Ambassador of Israel in Poland, Zvi Rav-Ner, reminded us that the memory of that tragedy is not only Jewish or Polish, but global.

At the Radegast Station, the exhibition entitled “Jews of Western Europe on the 70th Anniversary of the Deportation to the Litzmannstadt Ghetto” was opened.

The concert entitled “Lament of Empty Houses” that took place in front of the now constructed building of the Dialogue Center in the Survivors’ Park topped out the ceremony. The artists who performed during the concert were the Klezmatess band and Urszula Makosz.



68th anniversary (2012)

The proceedings coincided with the 70th anniversary of the so-called General Curfew (Allgemeine Gehsperr). To satisfy tradition, the celebrations began with rabbis’ prayer at the Jewish Cemetery in Bracka Street. The Head of the Jewish Religious Community in Łódź, Symcha Keller, spoke about the necessity to save material and spiritual memory of the Jews of Łódź. The representatives of the President of the Republic of Poland and of the authorities of Łódź, the Ambassador of



Israel, Zvi Rav-Ner, the Ambassador of Austria, Herert Krauss, representatives of the Embassies of the Czech Republic and the United States, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, were among the people who deposited flowers on the grave of the victims of the Ghetto.

At the Radegast Station, the commemorative letter of the President Bronisław Komorowski was read out.

Votive candles were lit by the plaque commemorating the children who died in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, i.a. during the

General Curfew. On the 70th anniversary of the extermination of over 15 thousand inhabitants of the Ghetto, an exterior exhibition dedicated to those tragic events was opened in the Survivors' Park. The Dialogue Center organised a March of Remembrance that went through the key places of the history of the Ghetto. Students of Łódź were accompanied by representatives of the Jewish Religious Community and guests from Israel. Two more Survivors of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto got their trees.

Also representatives of the Survivors, Elena Elczewska (the initiator of the creation of the Park) and Jehuda Widawski, participated in the celebrations.



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

69th anniversary (2013)



“Let us remember not only about the death in the Ghetto, let us remember about the life that went on there. It was full of culture, science and religion, until the very end...”, said Michael Schudrich, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, during the proceedings.

After the traditional parts of the ceremony, the President of Łódź, Hanna Zdanowska, reminded us that there are among us Survivors of the atrocities of the Holocaust, including the ones present during the celebrations: Josef Buchmann and Jehuda Widawski, who still cherish the living memory of the truth of those times in their hearts. She assured the gathered crowd that Łódź remembers the people who built the City.



In the Synagogue at 18 Pomorska Street, the Ambassador of Israel, Zvi Rav-Ner, ceremonially decorated the residents of the Łask Commune who hid Jewish children during the occupation with posthumous medals and diplomas "Righteous Among the Nations". They were received by the descendants of Antonina Łęzak, Marianna and Edward Szubański, and Ewa and Mikołaj Turkin.

70th anniversary (2014)

Like every year, people prayed at the Jewish Cemetery in Bracka Street for those who died in the Ghetto and extermination camps. Jehuda Widawski, one of the Survivors, recited a kaddish. Prayers were also said by the Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski and Lutheran Bishop Jan Cieślak. "We are equal here in the face of the victims of that crime that we cannot forget", said Symcha Keller, the Head of the Jewish Religious Community in Łódź. Representatives of the Survivors, authorities of the Republic of Poland and the City, led by the President of Łódź, deposited flowers under the monument dedicated to the victims of the Ghetto.

Apart from the representatives of City authorities, the Survivors, their families and the residents of Łódź who did not forget those tragic events took part in the March of Remembrance to the Radegast Station.

"Memory is not only a tribute but also an admonition for the future generations. (...) The Survivors are with us today. Łódź remembers your cause", said the President of the City of Łódź, Hanna Zdanowska. In his letter, the President of the Republic of Poland wrote, among other things, "I take off my hat to the witnesses of history and together with them I pay tribute to those who were murdered here".





As the Secretary of State of the Republic of Poland, Władysław Bartoszewski, reminded us, “We have a moral imperative to constantly and consistently resist discrimination”.

In turn, the Ambassador of Israel in Poland, Zvi Rav-Ner, appealed to the gathered crowds to remember the misfortunes of war and not to let history repeat itself.

In the Survivors' Park, the Brave Old World band performed their repertoire entitled “Songs from the Lodz Ghetto”. Next day, in that very same place, more trees of remembrance – symbols of life and tribute to the ones who survived the nightmares of the Ghetto – were planted. The Four Cultures Quartet played in the



Arthur Rubinstein Philharmonics, supported by the local string orchestra and choir. In turn, in the Synagogue at 28 Rewolucji 1905 r., two cantors gave their performances – Yaacov Motzen and Israel Rand. On 30 and 31 August 2014, church services were held for the intention of the people murdered in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

Among the events accompanying the 70th anniversary of the liquidation of the Łódź Ghetto, we could find: vernissage of the exhibition “Saved from destruction – albums from the Łódź Ghetto” at the Gallery 87 (87 Piotrkowska Street), presentation of Maciej Świerkocki and Mariusz Sołtysik’s graphic novel “Nation of Perdition” in the Dialogue Center, film project “The hell of the promised land”, during which over 20 motion pictures dedicated to the Łódź Ghetto were presented, exhibition “Litzmannstadt Ghetto 1940–1944”, and an open-air show “They took us all, old men as well as infants...” at the Radegast Station, exposition “Ghetto in the 21st century” in Monopolis and exhibition “Pearls from the Ghetto. Artistic creation in the face of tragedy” in the Museum of the City of Łódź.

71st anniversary (2015)

“We were, we are, we will be...”, said Leon Weintraub, one of the Survivors, who also appealed for remembrance, peace and tolerance. After the formal part of the celebrations, concert “Shalom in the Survivors’ Park” took place in the Dialogue Center. Songs from the Ghetto as well as poetic texts of Abramek Koplowicz and Abramek Cytryn were performed by the Children’s Choir of the Grand Theatre in Łódź and students from the Primary School no. 33 in Łódź. The programme included also pieces presenting the four cultures of the City: Polish, Jewish, German and Russian.





72nd anniversary (2016)

Like every year, the celebrations began with remembering the victims at the Jewish Cemetery in Bracka Street in Łódź. Later, the participants went in the March of Remembrance to the Radegast Station. There, as tradition required, the formal proceedings took place. "This special moment of sorrow and immersion in reflection over suffering puts a stop to all discussions and intellectual divagations, because it is a moment created to enable meeting and conversation with God, to ask the Creator a question about the sense of all of this", declared Dawid Szychowski, Rabbi of the Jewish Community of Łódź. "It is a tribute to hundreds of thousands of people murdered in the past, and, at the same time, a warning for future generations", said the Vice-President of Łódź, Krzysztof Piątkowski, at the Radegast Station.



73rd anniversary (2017)

Prayers for the deceased who died in the Ghetto and extermination camps and the successive March of Remembrance from the Jewish Cemetery to the Radegast Station began the celebrations of the 73rd anniversary of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto and the 75th anniversary of the General Curfew – the extermination of Jewish children.



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto



The celebrations at the Radegast Station began with a performance of the Polish National Anthem sung by the Children's Choir of the City of Łódź. Next, the gathered people listened to commemorative speeches.

"We silently bow our heads as a tribute to the murdered people when we speak about their fate in order to prevent similar genocidal designs from repeating. (...) the obligation to guard the truth about what happened under German occupation rests upon our nation", wrote the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, in the letter read out during the ceremony.

Leon Weintraub, one of the Survivors, recognised the contribution of the City of Łódź to the process of nurturing the memory of the tragic fate of the Jewish population of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto and, at the same time, appealed for retaining the memory about the Holocaust. This year's celebrations were topped out with the opening of the exhibition "Our childhood was taken away from us 1939–1945" in the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź.

74th anniversary (2018)

After the main celebrations, a music show "Signed Bajgelman: Get to Tango" in Teatr Nowy took place. Dawid Bajgelman's works in Jarosław Bester's arrangement were sung by Grażyna Auguścik, Dorota Miśkiewicz and Jorgos Skolias. The Tubis Trio jazz band presented their own version of those pieces during the concert entitled "Signed Bajgelman: Impressions" in the Dialogue Center. Dawid Bajgelman was also the protagonist of the exhibition "Bajgelman – traces", which was opened in the Dialogue Center.



Timeline of the Anniversaries of the Liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto

A journey of remembrance and truth

The last train to Auschwitz – Birkenau left from the Radegast Station on 29 August 1944. That put an end to the three-week liquidation of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, as a result of which 67 thousand people were taken away to concentration camps. Most of them died in the gas chambers of Auschwitz – Birkenau.

The youth of Łódź commemorated the victims and the Survivors of the Ghetto in a remarkable way on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of those events that fell this year. 200 students went on a train to the former camp in Oświęcim.

The trip was organised by the Łódź Regiment of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association, which is why the majority of its participants were scouts. Also students of two secondary schools that boast their patriotic traditions – Home Army General Education Secondary School no. 33 in Retkinia, engaged in promoting the memory of World War II, and the Centre for Vocational and Continuing Education – took part in the excursion. The students of the Centre are known for their participation in patriotic events as a formation known as Guardians of Tradition.





A train of the Łódź Agglomeration Railway (ŁKA), specially rented to serve the needs of the project, left the Marysin Station at seven. Long before sunrise, in silence broken from time to time by the sounds of departing trains, votive candles flamed up. The youth paid their tribute to the victims of the Ghetto during a scout assembly at the Radegast Station. Nobody needed to remind the gathered students what kind of place it was. Today, the renovated railway siding, from which trains transporting people from the Ghetto left, seats a museum and a memorial of the greatest tragedy in the history of Łódź.

Vice-President of the City, Krzysztof Piątkowski, accompanied the young people till the very last minutes before the departure of the train.

“A hard day lies ahead of you, one that will surely become an unforgettable lesson. I want to thank you for the trouble you take, for your courage and determination in reminding people of the difficult truth. The enormity of degradation, suffering and nightmare that this place was got tangled up in the fate of our City. Today, building and developing a modern, friendly and hospitable city, we have to cultivate our identity but, first and foremost, remember the victims of the dehumanising times of War”, said the Vice-President during the assembly.

The trip to Oświęcim was initiated by the State Auschwitz – Birkenau Museum.

“In 1944, mass transports of prisoners from the Litzmannstadt Ghetto set out to Auschwitz. In August and September 1944, several thousand arrested participants of the Warsaw Uprising were deported to KL Auschwitz”, said Maria Martyniak, PhD, from the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the

Holocaust. "In 2019, 75 years elapse from those events. That is why we would like to engage the youth of the two aforementioned cities – Łódź and Warsaw – in a special way.

The young people saw the most important symbols of the crime of mass genocide – the KL Auschwitz and Birkenau camps. The guides showed them the evidence exhibited in camp blocks: photographs of the prisoners as well as piles of clothes, personal belongings and cut-off hair that are the only remnants of the victims killed by the Nazis. The students saw the reconstructed gas chambers, the wooden barracks and one of the most important places – the ruins of the biggest crematorium, which the Germans attempted to destroy shortly before the end of the War. The rubble has been left untouched since the end of the War and nowadays it is one of the most important places of truth about the crime.

The most touching moment was the meeting with Leon Weintraub, one of the survivors from Łódź, who was imprisoned in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto and later taken away to Auschwitz. He remembers perfectly well his wartime experience: the inhuman conditions of the Ghetto, the constant hunger, fear and desperate fight for survival. He remembers his way to Auschwitz: the cattle trucks, the ramp, the selection, the disinfection, the everyday life in the barracks, but also the moment that saved his life. Leon Weintraub managed to escape from Auschwitz, illegally joining a group of prisoners destined to be transported to work. He stayed in other camps until he was liberated by the French Army in 1945.

After the War, he became a doctor. In 1969, he was forced to emigrate to Sweden due to the wave of antisemitic public mood.

"Those atrocious times did leave in us a certain truth that I will always preach as a doctor: there are no races, no human types that are more or less





valuable than others. A newborn baby always looks the same. The blood that flows out of a wound is always of the very same colour”, Leon Weintraub said.

He is a witness to the truth of the crimes of the Holocaust. During his frequent travels, he often tells his listeners about his experiences. He is full of life and energy, but he always worries when people, either individuals or groups, distort facts, i.e. wrongly interpret the notion of “Nazism” and use symbols connected with that ideology.

The final act of the excursion consisted in depositing 200 votive candles at the International Monument to the Victims of the Auschwitz Camp in Brzezinka.

“The attitude you presented today was exceptional, our guides are delighted with you. Let us hope that this project that commemorates the victims of the Litzmannstadt Ghetto, which you find so important, will become a tradition and will be continued in the future”, said Andrzej Kacoryk, the Director of the International Centre for Education about Auschwitz and the Holocaust and the Vice-Director of the State Auschwitz – Birkenau Museum in Oświęcim.

“Please remember what our guests – former prisoners of the camp – always say: You have to live and forgive, but you cannot forget”, said one of the guides, upon parting with the young visitors.

The organiser of the trip was the Łódź Regiment of the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association in co-operation with the City of Łódź Office and the State Auschwitz – Birkenau Museum. Substantive support was provided by the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź and Marek Edelman Dialogue Center in Łódź.

We invite everybody to watch the video relation from the trip at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olHnOjnd0Cg>

