

AXER Filip (1884-1942), teacher, school principal and owner, community worker. He was born on 5th December 1884 in Przemyśl, the son of Abraham Leon (- 1929), a tax assistant, and Franciszka Fanny Zoftar née Grün.

He began his schooling in 1891 in a four-year peasant school and later in the (imperial-royal) Gimnazjum I in Przemyśl (later named after Słowacki). In 1903, he passed his secondary-leaving examination (with honours). In 1902-07, he studied chemistry in the Philosophy Faculty of Vienna University. On 16th July 1907, he received his doctorate in chemistry, in conjunction with physics.

Despite his earlier plans for a career working in industry, he began working as a teacher. In 1908, after passing the teaching examinations, he was able to teach chemistry as his main subject, with mathematics and physics as additional subjects, in secondary schools with Polish as the language of instruction. In 1911, he also gained the right to teach these subjects in schools where German was the language of instruction.

Until the end of the 1911/12 school year, he worked in the gimnazjum Przemyśl. He was then assigned to work at the (imperial-royal) Gimnazjum in Stanisławów. Then, on 17th October 1913, the School Council granted him six months' leave in order to recover his health. Most likely, he remained unemployed until the end of the 1916/17 school year. It was only in the 1917/18 school year, following a decision of the National School Council, that he worked as a temporary teacher in Stryj. There, he taught mathematics, German language and physics. In November 1920, he was moved to the II State Gimnazjum in Stanisławów, where he taught mathematics.

From Stanisławów, he moved to Częstochowa where, in 1923, he was entrusted as principal of the Association of Jewish Middle Schools' Gimnazjum (at ul. Dąbrowskiego 3a, later it was No.7). Axer, who was a spokesman for the depoliticisation of schools, worked in this position until the end of the 1923/24 school year, at which time he was dismissed.

He remained in Częstochowa and, on 1st September 1925, opened his own gimnazjum. Initially, it was located at ul. Kilińskiego 25. Probably in 1928, it moved to ul. Focha 24, to a building owned by Axer. From 1937, the school was called the *Prywatne Gimnazjum Koedukacyjne i Liceum Koedukacyjne dr. F. Axera* [Dr. F. Axer's Private Co-Educational Gimnazjum and Liceum]. In 1932, Axer also opened the *Prywatną Szkołę Powszechną im. płk. Berka Joselewicza* [Col. Berek Joselewicz Private General School] as well as the *Jednoroczną Szkołę*

Handlową [One-Year Commercial School] (for general school graduates). It should be noted here that, despite the harsh conditions under which he was required to run the school, he would grant students reductions in tuition fees. Around 150 children attended the Gimnazjum.

Axer was, presumably, the founder of the Concessionaires' Association – the Union of Jewish Secondary School Teachers, not attached to the Association of Jewish Middle Schools. He published articles in the "Concessionaires Quarterly" (the editorial offices of which were located in Częstochowa). In the "Kwartalnika", he conducted serious polemics with the owners of the Association of Jewish Middle Schools Gimnazjum, the causes of which can be seen in the great political commitment of those associated with Jewish education. Axer, who had a musical education, participated in musical education activities. In the early 1930s, on behalf of the Musicians' Trade Union, he sat on the jury of competitions for solo-singers. He was a member of the Polish Red Cross.

During the German occupation, in 1941, he was forced to live in the Częstochowa ghetto. In September or October 1942, during the liquidation of the ghetto, together with his wife, he was transported to the Treblinka death camp and was murdered.

His wife was Klara (11th September 1887 Stanisławów - 1942 Treblinka) née Pohorylle, a graduate of a teachers' college and who, in 1907, worked as a teacher. From 1918, after she passed the teacher's examination, she was allowed to work in elementary schools. She taught preparatory classes at both Axer's primary and secondary schools, as well as [working] in the secretary's office.

Snoch, *Mała encyklopedia Częstochowy*, pp. 22–23. – *Spis nauczycieli 1926*, pp. 292, 293, 294 (regarding his wife). - Kowalińska, *Żydowskie szkolnictwo średnie w Częstochowie*, pp. 453, 465; Z. Andrzejewski, *Dr Filip Axer (1884–1942)*, "Rocznik Przemyski" 2005, vol. XLI, issue no. 4, pp. 165–172; Grzędzielski, Pietrzykowski, *Polentumsträger*, p. 186; Malko, *Życie muzyczne*, p. 310; Paszkowski, *Budynek Żydowskiego Gimnazjum*, pp. 158, 159; "Szkolnictwo miasta Częstochowy 1939–1941" (manuscript from the Częstochowa Museum Library collection). - "Express Częstochowski" 1929, No. 2, p. 2 (regarding his father), 1930, No. 194, p. 2. - USC, Filip Axer's death certificate, No. 1255/1950 and Klara Axer's, No. 1512/1950. – Information from the ODDC collection.

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