

Efrojim-Nechemje Trombkowski z"l



Photo № 57

Efrojim-Nechemje Trombkowski belongs amongst the modern [orthodox] figures and representatives of religious life in Częstochowa. He was born in Częstochowa on 4th July 1921 to Henoach and Blima née Dawidowicz, the daughter of the Kłobuck halachic authority and ritual slaughterer, Rabbi¹ Dawid-Cwi Dawidowicz.

When Hitler's war broke out, Efrojim-Nechemje Trombkowski was eighteen years old. He was still too young to be known for his unique capabilities. He made his appearance on the horizon of communal life in the sorrowfully, renowned HASAG-Pelcery camp. When all were embittered, spiritually broken, had lost their fortitude and were struggling, Efrojim-Nechemje Trombkowski appeared and, to his run-down, tortured brothers and sisters, he sang:

*"A time is yet to come,
Israel will be free".*

Into the general apathy of the 6,000 Jewish inmates in HASAG-Pelcery, he brought a ray of hope by singing his beloved songs – *Exile Song, The Little Fish, Jewish Mother, Dudele* and *Częstochower Mame'le* [Little Częstochowa Mother]. He obtained a prayer-shawl, a skullcap and a *machzor*², and became the *de facto* cantor in HASAG-Pelcery. On the tragic High Holidays of the years 1943 and 1944, he prayed in the camp before a public of 4,000 worshippers,

¹ [TN: The abbreviation that appears in the original is "O.H.", presumably *ה"ח* or *ה"ח"א* in Hebrew. As this abbreviation has no meaning in this context, it is likely that it is a misprint of the abbreviation "MO.H." (*מורי*), short for "Moreinu Ha'Rav" or "Our Teacher the Rabbi", which is a title commonly used in such cases.]

² [TN: Special prayer-book for the Jewish holidays, in this case, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.]

risking his life, because the Nazi authorities did not permit this. One single marriage was celebrated in HASAG-Pelcery and he, Efrogim-Nechemje Trombkowski, was the one who officiated under the *chuppah* and in the *kiddushin* [wedding ceremony] in accordance with religious law.

The happy chance was that he was not evacuated to Germany, and was liberated in Częstochowa on 16th-17th January 1945. He could not remain in his hometown of Częstochowa, where more than ninety percent of the Jewish population had been exterminated. So he travelled to Łódź, where he served as official cantor and ritual slaughterer, recognised by the local rabbinate.

At the start of 1946, he left Łódź and came first to Schwandorf, where he served as cantor. Immediately [afterwards], he was engaged as town cantor in the Bamberg synagogue. An inner driving force pushed him to complete himself in the field of vocal training. So, he studied diligently, making constant progress. All those who knew him foresaw a great, famous future for him. He participated in all Jewish festive occasions and officiated at the wedding ceremonies of all the couples who married in Bamberg.

On 30th January 1946, he married a young lady from Radomsko, Fela Blogier, and led a quiet, comfortable life. His external appearance was that of a man of fine presence and elicited absolute deference towards him, not just on the part of the Jews, but also from the general population.

He gained renown for his "*El Moleh Rachamim*"³ at the many memorial ceremonies at which he appeared. On 20th October 1946, he appeared in Landsberg at the memorial service for the Częstochowa *landsleit*. He performed with all his glory and splendour, with his impressive appearance and voice, which elicited amazement and tears from everyone.

At the end of July 1947, he underwent an operation and, as tragic fate would have it, he was taken away forever, on 22nd August 1947 (6th Elul 5707) at the blossoming age of twenty-six. Two months after his death, his wife gave birth to a son, who bears the name of his father - Efrogim-Nechemje Trombkowski.

³ [TN: Heb., *God Full of Compassion; memorial prayer.*]