

Eliezer Szmulewicz

Eliezer was born in Częstochowa in 1915. His father, Lewi Szmulewicz, a grain merchant, was a well-known *chussid* [follower] of the *Rebbe* of Wieruszów¹.

Eliezer was brought up in the religious spirit, studying firstly at Jechiel Grylak's *cheder* and, later, in the public primary school. He began to take an interest in social problems from the earliest years of his youth and joined the *Ha'Shomer Ha'Tzair* youth organisation.

In this organisation, he found his second home. He devoted all his free time to communal activity, held a leading position and participated in conventions and conferences. Within the organisation, he became widely known by the nickname "Malay".

When he was fifteen-years-old, he learned the printer's trade by working at Potaszewicz's printworks, while concurrently studying foreign languages. After learning the printer's trade, he began to work in the editorial board of the Zionist weekly *Unser Weg* [Our Way], and took part in the paper's publication.

Wishing to emigrate to the Land of Israel, in 1936, he travelled to a *kibbutz* in Mława for "*hachshara*". In the *kibbutz*, he fell ill and, after undergoing an operation, he returned to Częstochowa, where he completed his training at the *Ha'Shomer Ha'Tzair* Horticultural School. During the anti-Jewish riots in Częstochowa, a result of the Pendrak-Baran incident², he took an active part in the resistance against the *pogromczykes*, who attacked the Horticultural School (Farm).

As soon as the Germans occupied Częstochowa, Eliezer Szmulewicz organised various resistance groups which, at first, engaged in information work by spreading anti-Nazi literature and were in contact with an entire array of cities.

When the Germans introduced forced labour, he was one of the most active organisers of the *Arbeiterrat*.

On 22nd September 1942, the day of the first bloody *akcja*, he lost his large family, and he and his brother Zyskind Szmulewicz were barracked in HASAG-Pelcery. During the gruesome days of the continuous deportations in Częstochowa, Eliezer began to organise a resistance group in HASAG. He met Mojtek Zylberberg, the future commander of the underground movement in the "Small Ghetto", and they worked out a plan together.

After three months of being barracked in HASAG-Pelcery, everyone was sent back to live in the "Small Ghetto". There, the foundation was already laid for the existence of an organisation of pioneering and radically-minded youth. The entire activity was reorganised, all the groups united and Eliezer became one of the most active members of the underground

¹ [TN: Ref. to Rebbe Chanoch Henech God Justman of Pilica, who officiated as Rabbi of Wieruszów before succeeding his father as Rebbe of Pilica upon the latter's death in 1920.]

² [TN: See the details above, in the chapter "Excesses Against Jews in Częstochowa" (p.18).]

movement's technical group, producing explosives and grenades, which were known in the underground movement throughout the whole of Poland.

On 24th June 1943, two days prior to the liquidation of the "Small Ghetto", a group of gendarmes, headed by the murderer of Jews Degenhardt, came to the "Small Ghetto" and arrested everyone named Szmulewicz. Eliezer was taken unawares on that occasion, and they detained him.

The underground movement's high command immediately designated an armed group to liberate the arrested Eliezer Szmulewicz. Due to the fact that the "Small Ghetto" was at immediately surrounded by an increased guard and the final battle between the underground movement and the Nazi tyrants ensued, the plan of freeing Eliezer Szmulewicz could not be carried out.

Eliezer Szmulewicz, the member of the underground movement's technical group, fell as a hero in the war against the Nazi forces.