

My heartfelt thanks to the spiritual patron of Jewish historical science in Europe, DR FILIP FRIEDMAN, for his objective and matter-of-fact critique and forward to the book "CHURBAN CZENSTOCHOW".

The Author

CHURBAN CZENSTOCHOW

PART I

INTRODUCTION

The tragedy of Jewry in Częstochowa is part of the general Jewish annihilation in Poland and in the whole of Europe. Polish society's black reactionary forces had always laid in wait [to pounce] upon Częstochowa's Jewry.

The Jewish populace in Częstochowa faced a united hatred on the part of Polish society's antisemitic factions and groupings. The Polish democratic elements were too weak to be able to fight against the reactionary and antisemitic groups. The unconscientious, clerical Polish worker of the ChD (Christian Democrats) and the NPR (National Workers' Party) wished to push the Jewish worker out from his workplace. The Polish merchant wished to eliminate the Jewish interfeerer, to free himself of his competition. The industrialist wished to remove the Jewish manufacturer, as a result of his calculations in the production process. The Polish clergyman also wished to remove the Jewish population from the city, because he considered Częstochowa to be a holy, Catholic city. The man of the underworld, the rowdy and the hooligan were always waiting for the opportunity to be able to rob Jewish property and goods.

In such an atmosphere and under such conditions, artistically staged events were constantly embellished, bringing about various excesses¹.

The year 1939 is a critical point in the history of the Polish people. One could have believed that Polish society would have second thoughts and, in the moment of their own national catastrophe, would take a worthy stand on the question of the Jewish misfortune.

The disappointment, however, surpassed all expectations.

During the German occupation, many Poles put themselves at the service of their own national enemy in the fight against their fellow citizens - against the Jews.

Many Poles, in their chase after material profit, caused a large number of Jewish victims. They became rich at the expense of the Jewish misfortune, spattering their hands with Jewish blood.

The German occupation period in Europe was a systematic application of all persecutions, until the total liquidation of the Jewry. Częstochowa was the eighth largest Jewish community in pre-war Poland.

The Nazi occupation force, which was the manifestation of criminal and degenerate elements, made efforts in every country to group society's lowliest characters around itself. For the temporary reward of assuring their own lives and better material conditions, it took these elements into its service. With other peoples, these elements were, over time, schooled, uniformed and, under the leadership of the SS, formed special units. With Jews, this was only expressed in secret service. SS men sought out Jewish degenerates. For the price of being allowed to move freely outside the ghetto and for the promise that they would survive the

¹ [TN: Viz. outbursts of antisemitic violence, in the form of riots etc. This term appears often throughout the literature in this context, and is commonly used in Polish and Yiddish.]

War, such villains presented confidential information on everything that was happening in the ghetto. These traitors wormed their way into all circles, social strata and groups.

Much to our regret, in Częstochowa, too, there were [such] Jewish degenerates to be found, who were in service of the German authorities and who caused many, many Jewish casualties. In the end, they also paid the same price - with their lives.

In the great destruction, in which European Jewry paid with six million victims, Częstochowa Jewry gave up fifty thousand [people] from all echelons of society.

The devout Jews went to their deaths as martyrs of the Jewish religion and faith, with the cry of "*Sh'ma Israel*" on their lips.

The middle classes - the so-called bourgeois circles - perceived their misfortune, in the barbaric war, something that Hitler's ideology had caused.

The workers' circles perceived, in the fire that had been lit in Europe, the ultimate war between fascism and socialism, which took on the most brutal forms.

The combatants of the underground movement fought with the resolve to fall as heroes in battle, waging war on the enemy by paralysing his assault force.

The Jewish underground movement was forced to fight on various fronts, [both] with the direct and indirect enemy.

The direct enemies were:

- 1) the commandos who engaged in murdering the Jews;
- 2) the armed forces of the SS (*Sturmstaffel*²), Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei* [Secret State Police]), Schupo³ and Kripo⁴;
- 3) the armed forces travelling to the eastern and western fronts;
- 4) the munitions factories producing armaments for the German war apparatus, and
- 5) informers of all kinds, also including Jewish ones.

There is a dual maths: regular arithmetic and a social one. Simple mathematics is expressed in $2 \times 2 = 4$, [while in] the social one, as a result of the natural process of expansion, 2×2 can become 7, or even 8 and 9.

The number of victims of Jewry in Europe is given as an arithmetical number and not from the standpoint of the social mathematics. When we take into account, from the social standpoint, that among the annihilated there was a large number of middle-aged people, juveniles and children, whose process of expansion was cut short and entire generations were uprooted, then we must come to the conclusion that the actual number of victims suffered by the Jewish

² [TN: Ger. "Storm Squadron"; later renamed "Schutzstaffel" (Protection Squad).]

³ [TN: Short for "Schutzpolizei des Reiches", or the "State Protection Police" of Nazi Germany, a branch of the Ordnungspolizei. Schutzpolizei is the German name for a uniformed police force.]

⁴ [TN: Short for "Kriminalpolizei", or "Criminal Police", the Kripo was under orders of the SS and consisted mainly of plainclothes policemen and detectives.]

people exceeded the figure of nine million. [Viewed] in such a manner, the city of Częstochowa lost about 80,000 lives.

During the period of the greatest Jewish tragedy in Częstochowa, when 50,000 souls were destroyed in a sadistic manner, a small number of survivors were held in the HASAG camps. [They] were employed under hard conditions of slavery and pondered how to free themselves of the Nazi yoke and what forms that fight should take. While Jews fought heroically in the allied forces, while Jewish partisans fought in the forests and various fronts in order to liberate Europe and restore freedom to the oppressed, Częstochowa's Polish society was concurrently dancing in the locales to the sound of the new waltz hit-song, "Ah, how well we are without the Jews." (*Ach, jak nam dobrze bez Żydów.*)