

Szmul Niemirowski

Szmul Niemirowski played a respected role in communal and political life. He arrived in Częstochowa at the beginning of the 20th century, as the sales representative of a Russian firm. He fell in love with a young lady from Częstochowa and married her.

Despite being a Lithuanian Jew, he quickly became enamoured with the city of Częstochowa and dedicated himself to its communal and political activity. He was president of the Craftsmen's Union, president of the Retailers' Union, committee of management member of the Industrialists' and Merchants' Union, chairman of the Jewish Gymnastics-Sporting Association, member of management of the German Synagogue and also chairman of the Revisionist Organisation in Częstochowa.

He was also active in the philanthropic field. In 1922, he formed the *Beis Lechem* [House of Bread] Society and dedicated himself to this cause. He raised money in order to provide poor people with food for the holidays.

He created something positive in each of the institutions in which he was active. As president of the Craftsmen's Union, he formed a bank where the craftsmen received loans for a small interest or for no interest at all. As chairman of the Gymnastics-Sporting Association, in 1929, together with the former chairman, Szmarjahu Chajutin, he created a fund for a Jewish woodwind orchestra. In 1935, to mark the 20th anniversary of the Gymnastics-Sporting Association, he made a glorious white and blue banner. Also, as chairman of the Retailers' Union, he did not sit back twiddling his thumbs - he incessantly intervened with the Financial Bureau to decrease the taxes or split them into instalments, because the less fortunate retailers were unable to pay the high taxes set by the Financial Bureau.

Niemirowski endeavoured to draw in all circles to the communal life. He also managed to influence the Zigman, Markowicz and Helman families, as well as many others, who would certainly have stood at a distance from Jewish society.

He was the toastmaster at all the balls and banquets and was also distinguished for his oratorical capabilities. Niemirowski would say that one should not seek honours but, that if one worked for society and was not given honour, he had the right to demand it.

Niemirowski had three children - two sons and a very beautiful daughter named Bronia. She married Bolek Markowicz, a son of the Jewish industrialist from the *Gnaszyńska Manufaktura* factory. He sent one of his sons to France to study medicine.

With the outbreak of the War, the most horrific tragedy began for the whole family. Niemirowski, who was the chairman of the Revisionist Party, along with Zarnowiecki of the Independent Party, were taken as *zakładnicy* (hostages) by the Gestapo, who [later] sent them away [to Dachau], where they were annihilated.

The son, who was in Częstochowa, was not a Polish citizen, because his father was a Lithuanian Jew and he was, therefore, arrested on several occasions by the Gestapo and was beaten numerous times. Not being able to endure the emotional and physical pain, he died.

Mrs Niemirowska and her daughter Bronia, Mrs Markowicz, attempted to flee the "Small Ghetto" by jumping over the barbed wire. A German gendarme caught them and searched them. He found many valuable and costly items in their possession - gold and diamonds - [which were] sewn into their corsets. The gendarme robbed them of all their possessions and two other gendarmes shot them from behind. When the two women were lying shot in pools of blood, the gendarmes searched them once again, just in case they had something more.

That was on 4th January 1943, [the day] when the members of the underground movement, Izio Fajner and [Mendel] Fiszlewicz, put up a heroic resistance against the murderers of Jews, Rohn and Sapport.

Thus ended the life of the Niemirowski family under the rule of Nazism.