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Notes and Reviews

(Yizkor Books)

Czenstochover Yidn, edited by Dr Rafael Mahler, with the collaboration of an editorial collegium comprising Alkona Chrobolovsky, Raphael Federman, Aba Kaufman and Wolf Glikzman; published by the United Czenstochover Relief committee and Ladies Auxiliary in New York, 1947, 404 pp.

Books on the Destruction of Cześćochowa

- 1.) Orenstein, B., *Churbn Czenstochow*, published by the Central Administration of the *Cześćochower Landsmannschaft* in the American zone in Germany, 1948, 463 pp.
- 2.) Brener, L., *Resistance and Destruction in the Cześćochowa Ghetto*, Jewish Historical Institute in Poland, Warsaw, 1951, 177 pp.
- 3.) Waga, Sz., *Churbn Czenstochow*, published by the Central Union of Polish Jewry in Argentina [Unión Central Israelita Polaca en la Argentina], Buenos Aires, 1949, 225 pp.

Czenstochover Yidn

In the foreword to the book, it is explained, and we quote:

Yet, our book "Czenstochover Yidn" was not devised as a stone marker over the cemetery of Jewish Cześćochowa, but as a Book of Life. Our Book of Life, "Czenstochover Yidn", is also our Book of Lineages. May this book "Czenstochover Yidn" help to unite our landsleit throughout the globe even more.

These words do not only mirror the lineage of a Jewish community in Poland, but also a section of the Jewish life of the Jews in Poland. Dr R. Mahler rightfully says, in his preface to the book, that:

... every [new] historical monograph about an important Jewish community in Poland is an achievement of very great significance, not only for the science of Jewish History, but also for the historical and, consequently, the national and cultural consciousness of the Jewish People all over the world.

Yes, there is absolutely no doubt that *Cześćochowers* around the globe have enriched the Jewish People's national cultural treasury. The *Cześćochower landsmannschaft* in New York was the first, or one of the first, to commemorate the ruined and destroyed hometown with the word. They were unwilling to accept the idea that *Cześćochowa's* bygone, pulsating, Jewish life should be silenced by the German hordes. And, during the period when *Cześćochowa* went down with blood and fire – when the foundations of an old, respected community crumbled and collapsed like an oak under the axes of the German hangmen – *Cześćochowers* in New York and in other states in America and Canada, in Israel, in France, in Argentina, in Australia and in other parts of the world, began to rebuild [and] to revive their hometown in writing and with the word.

An attempt was made to encompass the life of the *Cześćochowa* community, from its foundation to the outbreak of the War, in a comprehensive manner, as well as what was known regarding the destruction itself. And, as we shall subsequently see from the comments in the press, this [attempt] was largely successful, although various movements, such as the Zionists or the *Aguda*, and the

religious elements in general, found no place in this book (the reason for this being that there was no material about these movements - every conceivable document concerning them was destroyed during the Holocaust).

The activity of the Częstochowa *kehilla* also failed to be given its due attention in the book and this is also partially due to the same reasons given above for the omission of the movements (the writer of these lines is currently working on the history of the Jewish *kehilla* in Częstochowa between 1930-1935, based on documents which have been found). But nevertheless, despite those few omissions, the book contains the following sections: The Development of the Settlement; Częstochowa's Financial Life; Culture and Education in Częstochowa; Social Institutions; The Jewish Workers' Movement in Częstochowa; Pogroms; The Destruction of Częstochowa; *Częstochowers* in America; Neighbouring *Landsmannschaften*; *Częstochowers* in the Land of Israel; *Częstochowers* in Canada; *Częstochowers* in Argentina; [and] *Częstochowers* in Paris.

Besides this, the book includes memories and pictures of Częstochowa, biographies of the Editorial Board and their contributors and biographies of Częstochowa townspeople as well. A separate chapter covers the subject "*Częstochowers* in the Fight Against Fascism" and those who departed to their eternal rest.

And now, let us hear the comments in the press:

Glantz-Leyeles, A., in his column *World and Word* in [Der] *Tog*, expresses, at the same time, both his enthusiasm for the almost, too wealthy publication and his sorrow for the life which is no more.

Warszawski, Icchok (Isaac Bashevis [Singer]), writes in *Forverts*, 6th June 1948, that

Already from the title page, one can easily notice that the job was taken seriously. This book is truly splendid - everything is beautiful. The work was carried out according to a plan, with order. The language is generally good and clear. Were all the Jewish 'landsmannschaften' to publish such books about their own cities, a large picture of life in the old home would be created, with which nothing would compare. The Who's Who section and Częstochowers in America are truly treasures of Jewish life.

The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York labelled the book a "work", due to the importance of the assembled material.

Liebman, I., in the *New Yorker Wochenblatt*, 20th June 1947, writes that

This publication has such a scope, such responsibility [and] such daring, that it crosses over the border of localisation and assumes the form of national importance.

Mahler, Dr Rafael, writes in *Landsleute* of June 1947, that

The spirit of 200 years of Jewish History in the hometown does not become lost for the Częstochowers: the history of their own hometown must become, for Częstochowers throughout the globe, a source of inspiration [and] a reservoir of strengthening in the struggle for a joyous Jewish People in a free world.

Matis, David, writes in *Freiheit*, 1st august 1948:

In the book 'Czenstochover Yidn', the reader will find a treasure trove of materials, both on Częstochowa and on the Częstochowa Jews in America and other countries.

Mark Yudel, in the Yearbook of the Jewish Book Council in America, 5708 [1947-48], Vol. 6, says that *The 'Czenstochover Yidn' anthology may serve as an example for other landsmannschaften.*

Katz, Benjamin, says in the *Landsleute* journal, June 1947, that
The book 'Czenstochover Yidn' deserves great praise and one gets a joyous feeling leafing through the book's large, almost Talmud-like pages.

The Editorial Board of *Landsleute*, in that same issue, says:
You can well be proud of this book, 'Czenstochover Yidn'

Zeitlin, Aaron, says in the *Morgen Journal*, 4th January 1949: “
This book brings a sea of information. A sea, as is known, is not dry and also the information in this book is not dry, Heaven forbid. This book is filled to the brim - a true monograph of a Jewish city - a monograph and – an epitaph.

Szacki, Dr Jakub, says in Vol. 37 of *YIVO Blätter* that
At any rate, it must be said that this is one of the best Yizkor books ever published.

With such reviews, both in quantity and quality, we *Częstochowers* can well aggrandise ourselves and, with hopes for a similar reception from the public opinion, we set out to publish this [current] book, *Czenstochov*, with new materials about our hometown.

The Books on the Destruction

1) In his book *Churbn Czenstochow*, B. Orenstein made an attempt to describe the catastrophe of the Jewish community in *Częstochowa* under the German Nazi occupation. He diligently gathered testimonies from *Częstochowa landsleit*, who were in Germany during the first years after the War (see Dr Cwi Kantor's remarks [there] on p. 10, and pp. 401, 402, and 403 as well), and he assembled the material for the book based on their memories and experiences, and on the background of the events which he, himself, also lived through. The author also utilised a number of official documents on the *Częstochowa Judenrat* and the *Częstochowa* municipal authorities (see p. 403).

The book is divided into four main parts, each of which contains a series of chapters.

The first part encompasses a brief chronicle of the Jewish community in the years preceding the War and during the War itself - from the beginning to the end, until liberation. In setting forth the account of the downfall of *Częstochowa* Jewry at the hands of the Nazi Germans, the author endeavoured to include all aspects of the contemporary life. Suffice it to say that, of the close to 500 pages which the book comprises, nearly half are dedicated to the Destruction. B. Orenstein overlooked almost no aspect of ghetto life, which had developed over the course of those tragic years. He depicts the marching in of the Germans, *Bloody Monday*, the establishment of the *Judenrat*, the forced labour, the Jewish Police, life in the *Big* and *Small Ghettos*, the Resistance Movement, cultural life, the tragic selections and deportations, life in HASAG and other circumstances brought about by life in the ghetto. An interesting chapter is the description of the *Arbeiterrat* [Workers' Council] which was created, which ushered in a fine moment in the dark ghetto life.

The author went with the *Surviving Remnant* from HASAG to Buchenwald, to Dora and to Bergen-Belsen. The description of these events, during those last days, constitute an important contribution to the chapter* “Transport of Prisoners in Sealed Carriages”, in which Death took a hefty share (I myself lived through one such transport from *Oświęcim* [Auschwitz] to Dachau in the days of the

* [TN: The chapter in history, not in a particular book.]

second half of January 1945. W.G.). The author concludes this part with the liberation of Bergen-Belsen.

The second part contains the accounts of the *Częstochower* Holocaust survivors who found themselves, after the War, in Germany - their organisation and activities. The vitality which this group of people displayed, at the time, is truly wondrous. Orenstein also did not fail to provide an image of the first little seeds sown for an organised post-War Jewish community in Częstochowa.

The third part is dedicated to figures and personalities of bygone Częstochowa. It contains people and personalities from all the social and economic strata.

The fourth part is dedicated to the *In Eternal Memory* section - these are headstones^{*1} raised on the ashes and dust of a number of Częstochowa *landsleit*.

These are, briefly, the book's contents. And, as we stated above, the author deserves recognition for his endeavour to compile a work on the demise of a Jewish community in Poland. On top of everything, when one takes into consideration the domineering, subjective elements of Orenstein's sources - the effort and work were doubled.

The author could have avoided certain inaccuracies, especially concerning the pre-War years. Many [of his] facts have lost their historical value as they have, in the meantime, been recorded in the light of documents which were not available to Orenstein.

The lack of space does not allow us to enumerate, in detail, a whole series of such facts. So, we shall limit ourselves to just a few:

Orenstein's description of how the *Judenrat* was established is weakened by accounts of the same event in L. Brener's book. It is also incorrect that the *Judenrat* in Częstochowa was appointed by the Gestapo (p. 62).

Certainly, every *Judenrat* - including the one in Częstochowa - was in the hands of the Gestapo hangmen. But, administratively, it was under the *Stadthauptmann* [City Captain]. The *Judenrat* topic requires thorough research. On p. 67, Orenstein refers to the Star of David [compulsory armband] as a "mark of shame". Why so? It would also be extremely important to find out about the arrests in September 1940 (pp. 67-68). We do not find this fact in any of the other writers, unless this should have a connection with Sz. Waga's account of the arrest of Jewish lawyers in the summer of 1940 (Waga, pp. 99-100). What Orenstein writes regarding the date, on which the *Big Ghetto* was created, is also unclear. This fact is mentioned on pp. 68 and 84. In truth - and this was corroborated by a photo reproduction in Brener's book, pp.20-21 - the ghetto was created in April 1941 and not in 1940. It is also important to rectify that the prohibition on Jews using the railway was not implemented at the same time that the ghetto was established - as Orenstein writes on p. 77 - but at the start of 1940, as is attested to by the regulations of the contemporary General Governor H. Frank, may his name be obliterated, for the entire General Government [in Poland] (Waga, p. 38).

All in all, Orenstein's book is another brick in the monument of "A Mother and a City in Israel", such as was Jewish Częstochowa.

*1 [TN: Each page in this section consists of an etching of a tomb in a graveyard, with a headstone bearing the names of those commemorated on that page.]

2) An important addition to the literature which has appeared until now regarding the destruction of the Częstochowa community in the War years of 1939-1945, is L. Brener's book ***Resistance and Destruction in the Częstochowa Ghetto***. Its documentation is from sources which were not available to writers of other books on the destruction of the Częstochowa Jewry and which the author utilised appropriately.

This wealth of bibliographical material consists of

- the *Judenrat's* statistical books, which are a treasure trove of information;
- official documents of the police, the Gestapo and the *Stadthauptmann*;
- internal correspondence between the aforementioned German bureaus, as well as the exchange of letters between the *Judenrat* and the German administrative municipal management, the Gestapo, the police and other German offices.

Nevertheless, the author makes no pretence of having been comprehensive [enough] to have given a complete picture of those tragic years. There is no such thing - and it cannot be. The publisher is therefore also correct in stating that:

The book, presented, does not make any pretence of being a complete, arduous and scientific study. But, for all that, Brener's book constitutes an important and valuable collection of materials.

On the other hand, despite these approbations, this book [still] falls under the rules of critique, which I shall write subsequently [on p. 208, following the summary].

This book contains eighteen chapters, which encompass the martyrdom of the Częstochowa Jews from the very beginning of the War on 1st September 1939, to the day upon which Częstochowa was liberated by the Russian armies on 16th-17th January 1945.

The first chapter contains the events of the day on which the city was taken by the Germans. These events include the *Bloody Monday*, the burning of the New and Old Synagogues, the hounding and persecution which every German allowed himself at the expense of Jews and these events, in general, foreshadow what the Jews could expect from the German regime.

In the second chapter, the author relates how the *Judenrat* was established [and] about its duties and powers. This chapter is an important contribution to the history of the *Judenrat* and its activities, as well as [defining] its role in the lives of the Jews in the ghettos, during the years under the German occupation. This chapter is based mainly on the *Judenrat's* statistical books (Volumes 1, 2 and 3), the *Stadthauptmann's* reports and the testimonies of Częstochowa residents. The author also does not forget to tell about the internal differences of opinions which prevailed within the *Judenrat* and which drove several of its members to resign their positions. Brener recognises that:

The 'Judenrat' needed to deal not only with the ghetto's internal life, but also carried out all the demands and orders of the German administrative organs and also of any other German bureau. (p.14)

At the same time, the author shows us that the *Judenrat* far exceeded its authority in carrying out the German regulations and demands, thus bringing about detrimental consequences for the Jews in the ghetto (pp. 15, 17, 18 and more).

The third chapter brings us a treasury of information regarding the implementation of the ghetto and about the motives for this decree. Hemming the Jews into separate living quarters, and isolating them from the surrounding non-Jewish populace, was estimated to hasten the process of the self-destruction of the Jews in the ghetto through diseases, through hunger and by creating unbearable living conditions, for one thing, and for another, the German plan was to have all the Jews gathered together in one location in order to be able to control the masses during the final stage of the

annihilation. As the Częstochowa ghetto was an **open** one, it had many travellers who arrived from different cities in Poland and also [some] Jews, who had been banished from those parts of Poland which had become annexed to the German Reich. This chapter contains hitherto unpublished documents and provides photo reproductions of official regulations.

The chapter *Forced Labour* encompasses the first stage of the suffering, which Jews were forced to endure when they were caught for work. The viciousness of each German, and his conviction that the Jew had no rights or protection, added cruelty to the hunt for people which the Germans had set themselves. In addition to the scourge of catching people for work, there also came the demand, from the Germans, in which the Częstochowa Jews were to provide work-forces for the labour camps in Przyrów, Cieszanów and labour camps around the city. In this respect, also, the *Judenrat* displayed one standard for the poor masses and another for the wealthier.

The descent of man, the moral and ethical fall into the depths of hell, selling oneself to the devil for the illusory safety of one's own skin, is reflected in the chapter *The Jewish Police*. Brener reaches the conclusion that, with just a few exceptions,

The early attitude of indifference, and later of ridicule, of the Jews towards these policemen, turned into an attitude of open hatred and contempt. (p. 37)

Later, following the liquidation of the *Big Ghetto*, Brener writes of the policemen that:

They had become true servants of the Schutzpolizei, at the expense of the few thousand Jews who were still alive. (p. 38)*

The chapter *The Economic Situation of the Jews in the Ghetto* is extremely sad. This chapter, albeit far from complete, still presents a concise overview of the financial ruin of the Jews in the Częstochowa ghetto - extreme poverty, an hour-by-hour wrangle for a chunk of bread; hunger and pain on the one side and a luxurious and opulent life on the other. And, over both extremes, the terror of the German *satraps* and marauding knights reigned, constraining the scanty opportunities which could perhaps have given some meagre sustenance to a Jewish person.

Rays of light in the darkness of the life in the ghetto were the activities of social aid and culture. The first attempted to alleviate the people's need and, through this humanitarian aid to others, the demoralisation which pervaded the ghetto was at least partially hampered. The cultural activity alleviated the spiritual injuries and torments. These two chapters contain a wealth of information and constitute an important contribution to the cultural chapter in the ghettos in Poland under Nazi Germany.

The next chapters cover the underground activity in the ghetto, the demographic ratios and the eve of the Liquidation. The second is built upon statistical numbers, diagrams and similar documents. This is an important and useful work for the future historian, who will write about the demography of the Jewish population in Poland under the German occupation. The chapter on the underground movement is proof that, had the circumstances been that an organised fighting movement of Jews in every ghetto had arisen in time, the end of Polish Jewry could perhaps not have been so tragic and cruel. Of course, the German murder-machine would have triumphed over the Jewish resistance, but the extermination policy and its results would not have gone as easily as they did and, consequently, the number of fatalities would have been smaller.

The book's most tragic chapters are *The Eve [of the Liquidation (p. 70)]* and *The Great Liquidation [p. 76]*. The Jews in the city sensed that their end was nigh. Each attempted to escape the end by any means possible or to, at least, hold it off until later. The German cynicism and contempt for anything that was not German was manifest in the operations of the final extermination of the ghettos. The

* [TN: Official German uniformed police force.]

German deceived the Jewish populace with all kinds of false promises in order to divert their attention from the death that he carried with him. Murdering people became an integral part of an ideology. Brener dedicated more space to these chapters than to the others. He summed up, if you will, the years from the start of the War until the liquidation of the *Big Ghetto*. The penultimate act of the great tragedy is reflected in these two chapters.

The last act in the destruction of Częstochowa took place in the *Small Ghetto* and in HASAG. This act, which began in September-October 1942 and ended in January 1945, is like a continuation of the Great Liquidation *akcja* [operation]. By all ways and means, the falling *Reich* wished to, at least, show the German People *one* victory and this was – the killing off the Jews. In every ghetto in Poland, just like in Częstochowa, the German murdered and burned the few Jews remaining after the liquidations, in order to achieve the victory [he had] promised.

But this murder-triumph, albeit a great one, was incomplete – because, in the final tally, thousands of Jews were saved. In the Częstochowa HASAG camp, some 5,200 souls were saved - this was also the case in other camps. And a large number, in keeping the spirit of the captives up, took to the Underground Movement, as Brener writes in the chapters *Resistance Movement in the Small Ghetto* [p. 113] and *Underground Work in HASAG and in the Konięcpol Woods* [157].

Thus far, in the contents of the book, Brener sensed the responsibility which he had taken upon himself with this work. He knew that he would not be able to avoid the subjective and it is precisely this knowledge which should have always reminded him to not allow himself to be dominated by the subjective elements in certain places in the book, to which attention needs be drawn:

On p. 15, Brener says:

Besides [these], Szmul Wajnryb (merchant), who was the Gestapo's man, was also incorporated (into the 'Judenrat' W.G.) ..."

Upon what source does Brener base this, when he makes this assertion? Even if we accept the author's opinion, this could only have been ascertained in the later years of the War and not at the very beginning. If there is proof, the author is required to provide the source.

On p. 49, Brener writes:

During the entire time of the occupation, to the [final] deportation, domestic peace did not reign between the 'Judenrat' and the TOZ. The first open falling out took place as early as December 1939. Members of the 'Judenrat' incited the Gestapo to take an interest in the TOZ.

To prove that these rows had taken place, Brener should have provided a source. The subsequent parts of the chapter constitute too weak a foundation for Brener's accusations.

On p. 80, Brener writes:

... and two members of the 'Judenrat', Kopinski and Kurland, who assisted in the selection."

We shall not, now, go into the fact of which communal positions the two Jews mentioned held in the Jewish community prior to the Second World War, and what their roles were as members of the *Judenrat*. On the other hand, we do not wish to overlook the objective circumstances that had been created, by which members of the *Judenrat* were influenced. The fact is that they were granted a power, albeit an inconsequential one, without any lasting basis - an illusory power, dependent on the Germans. [However, that] did, after all, alter the way of thinking and the approach of the *Judenrat* members [differently] from person to person. Here, however, a completion and an explanation of the words "assisted in the selection" is called for. Such an explanation would have been a very important contribution to the history of the *Judenrat*.

A similar completion is required for the word "other" on p. 17, and for the word "selections" on p. 18, footnote 26. An amelioration of the words "Degenhardt's Jewish confidantes" on p. 99 is also necessary, as well as an elucidation of the term "cosmic operation" on p. 106.

It should be noted that certain facts are repeated - for example, on pp. 56 and 58, 105 and 129, [and] 104 and 128 - without any bearing on the issue at hand. In my opinion, the "underground activity" did not need to be divided into three chapters. The chronological order could have been maintained, and the events would have come out more distinctly, had the whole movement been covered in a single chapter. This also has a bearing on the tragic date of 4th January 1943. Brener divided that day's events into two episodes: the first on p. 118, in the chapter *The Resistance Movement in the Small Ghetto*, and the second on pp. 96-98, in the chapter *The Small Ghetto*.

It is also important to correct one date - on p. 60, Brener writes that

On the night of 30th April 1941, the Gestapo and the Gendarmerie went out onto the ghetto's streets with a precise list of Communist activists, and carried out great arrests.

Firstly, these arrests were carried out in April 1942 and Perec Tenenbaum (Majorek's* father), Tenenbaum and others, were indeed arrested then, whereas Icek Rzasinski, Szmul Niemirowski and Zarnowiecki had already been arrested and had been sent away during the first months of the War. If my memory serves me [correctly], this occurred in the winter months of 1940 - [in any case,] all agree that [it did] not [happen] in 1942 [sic 1941].

All in all, Brener's book is an extremely important work on the destruction of Częstochowa. We hope that, in a second edition, Brener will take these and similar remarks into consideration and enrich his work with new sources.

3) Szlomo Waga's book [*Churbn Czenstochow*] is based mainly on personal experiences. In the book, no other sources or testimonies are presented other than the events which the author lived through himself and to which he was eye-witness. The author passed the War years in Częstochowa, together with the entire Jewish populace, and yet he did not encompass all aspects of life in the ghetto. Certain events, such as "Bloody Monday" for instance, which caused the author himself to become a *zakładnik* [hostage], Waga describes more comprehensively. In others, he limits himself to a briefer account. On one hand, this type of approach has the benefit of elucidating certain facts in greater detail. [However,] on the other, the lack of detail causes the essence of [other] facts to be insufficiently illuminated. The aforementioned chapter may serve as an example, or chapter 17 (pp. 89-95), *The Liquidation of the Jewish Factories*, which Waga wrote at length. It is the opposite case with the chapter *The First Decrees* (pp. 36-39), in which a broader background to these decrees should have been provided - it is brief and incomplete.

This book contains forty-one chapters, the majority of which are mentioned in similar books by other writers. Of course, Waga tells it in different words and he adds many details. Waga, too, expresses himself in a negative manner regarding the role of the *Judenrat*. He views this institution as an organ for the satisfaction of the German rulers, at the expense and damage of the Jewish population (see pp. 82-89). Such was the case as regards to squeezing taxes from the poor masses [and] buying one's way out of [forced] labour, which only the wealthy could do. Thus, the entire workforce for the Germans, with all the hardships and tribulations the workers suffered, was made up of the poorer social strata. Waga also did not fail to note the moral descent of the elements which served in the police force. It is understood that the element, in general, is being dealt with here and not individual, good people - exceptions. Waga witnessed the debauchery of the constables, high officials of the *Judenrat* and similar servants [of the Nazis] at the city's night locales, while the masses of people

* [TN: Brener says there (p. 60) that "Majorek" was the nickname of the Częstochowa Communist activist Majer Tenenbaum.]

were starving. Here, above all, the martyrdom of the children emerges, who were the providers of livelihood for poor homes [Ch. XXV, p. 125].

The author does not take the story to the final liberation of Częstochowa and certainly not to the end of the War. He concludes his memoirs with what the Germans called *The Journey to Palestine* (pp. 219-225).

Waga's book, albeit a subjective document, has however the virtue that it reflects the atmosphere and the emotional tension of the people in the ghetto. To lift out the kernels of historical truth is a task for the historian and researcher. This book is, therefore, also an important document on the destruction of Częstochowa. We shall go one step further and state that, without Waga's memoirs, the history of Jewish martyrdom would have lost very important episodes. No one else, until now, has mentioned the story of the arrest of the lawyers (pp. 99-100) and the exchanging of the detained lawyers for other Jews to be sent to Oświęcim. This remains a mystery to this day.

On the other hand, we wish to indicate several episodes which Waga omitted and which require elucidation. The author, for example, does not mention the establishment of the *Judenrat* nor the underground movement. How could such an observer and chronicler of events have come to overlook such important episodes? From what source Waga took the fact that two or three people returned from the Oświęcim camp (p. 99) also demands an explanation. As far as is known from research work on this camp and from personal experience - having been there for almost two years - no such thing happened to a Jew. We also wish to note that the affair of TOZ versus the *Judenrat* was described in a more complete manner and, by the way, a documented one, in Brener's book *Resistance and Destruction in the Częstochowa Ghetto* (pp. 43-51). We would also wish to ask: Why did Jews feel downcast by wearing the Star of David sign (p. 37)?

Overall, Waga's book is an impressive inscription on the headstone of the Częstochowa Jewry and this book should be found in every Jewish home, in general, and with *Częstochowers* in particular.

Summary of the Three Books on the Destruction of Częstochowa

As the historian and bibliographer of the last destruction, Dr Phillip Friedman presents, in another part of this book [p. 68], nearly one-hundred pieces which have been published on the destruction of Częstochowa to date. A look into Vol. 37 of the *YIVO Blätter* (pp. 250-263) regarding the Holocaust archive at YIVO, shows that, in comparison with other destroyed communities, Częstochowa has a very considerable number of testimonies concerning both the ghetto (p. 254) and the camp (p. 258). Moreover, as far as is known to us, there is still an array of writings which have, until now, not yet been published. From all this, we learn that Częstochowa *landsleit*, both those who invested work and effort into publishing their experiences in book form, and those who have brought shorter notes to us as well, have now fulfilled their obligation to immortalise our hometown in word and in writing. When we also take into consideration this book, *Czenstochov*, with the new material which is soon to appear - the merit becomes [even] greater.

It would, however, be a fatal mistake on the part of the *Częstochowers* in America and around the world to bring themselves to a halt with that which they have hitherto achieved. Our *landleit's* work must emerge also in different forms and ways. What we are speaking about is spreading the literature and keeping it in one's home in a prominent place, so that everyone should see it and the child may ask his parents what significance these books have for them. The parents will then fulfil the words *Ve'higadto Le'bincho - And you shall tell your son* [Exodus 13:8] – [by telling him] about the great annihilation of his nearest and dearest. These words need to be engraved into the minds of our children in such a manner, that they should not forget their parents' hometown. For if they do

forget the hometown, they will also forget the parents [themselves]. We have begun the Eternal Memorial for our martyrs with the monumental work *Czenstochover Yidn* and, despite our modest achievements, we are but halfway there.

Help us proceed onward in commemorating Czestochowa.

