

M. Fajnrajch

SS (Zionist-Socialist Workers Party) in the War Against the “Good Boys”¹

Prior to the revolution of 1905, a gang of “good boys” reigned in Częstochowa, who terrorised the Jewish population. The leaders of this band were Icyk “*Shlize*” [The Slippery], his brother Jankel, Mojsze “*Patze*” [Blunderer], Majer Hudia’s [son] and others. With the rise of the Revolutionary Movement, several members of that gang severed their ties with it, switched over to our side and became loyal fighters in the ranks of the SS [Party]. The others perceived us as a threat to their rule. They joined the Russian police, served as spies and helped persecute the Labour Movement.

Among their victims were Szymon the baker with a whole host of bakery workers, who were denounced to the police and sentenced to six months in jail. With their assistance, Comrade Kopl Gerichter was also arrested and given a beating one Saturday.

Soon afterwards, on a Sunday in May 1905, the SS mobilised several groups of labourers, mainly from Wajnberg’s and Icyk’l Szaja’s factories, armed them with revolvers, sticks, stones and even canisters of vitriol¹, and they encircled the Old Market, the main spot where the gang was operating. At the time, they were busy with the fruit sellers. These were Jews and peasants, from the surrounding *shtetls* and villages, who brought their fruit to town. The band had a “monopoly” over them, as they had over many other small merchants, and took a [protection] payment from each of them. After that, the gang began to disperse. That was what the groups in all the corners had been waiting for. Mojsze “*Patze*” walked towards Tendler’s building, to his home. Two workers, with revolvers, let him pass by and, at that same moment, treated him to two bullets. One hit him in the arm and the other in the neck. He managed to scramble to Lichter’s leather shop and collapsed. A worker with a canister of vitriol gave him a bit of “water” to drink - and he was left dead.

The other groups concentrated by the milk wagons, where Icyk “*Shlize*,” the leader of the gang, had hidden under a cart. The police came and took “*Shlize*” under their protection. For a while, he went about town with a police escort. He later fled to Oberschlesien [Górny Śląsk]. He returned to Częstochowa a couple of years later and immediately fell dead from a bullet from an SS member. But the reign of the “Good Boys” had [already] ended on that day in May 1905, when the band was destroyed. The Old and New Markets - the Jewish stallholders and little merchants - breathed freely.

¹ [TN: Yid. “woyle yingen,” term meaning “gangsters.”]

¹ [TN: This word appears twice in this article; here it is spelt פֿאַטעזיאַל (*fateziol*), and below it appears as פֿאַטעריאַל (*faterial*). As we have not been able to ascertain the existence of either these words, and as the substance was a highly corrosive liquid carried in small containers which killed the person ingesting it, it is our opinion that the reference must be to vitriol or a very similar substance.]