

KANCEWICZOWA Kamila née Horwitzów (1879–1952), pseudonyms “Julia”, “Kamyk”, “Koncewicz”, “Leonia”, “Skalińska”, “Skała”, political activist. She was born on 30th November 1879 in Warsaw, the daughter of Gustaw and Julia née Kleinmann. Her paternal grandfather, Lazar Horowitz (1804-1868) was Chief Rabbi of Vienna.

After completing her medical studies in Zurich, in 1904, she returned home. At the end of the 1904, she became a member of the Warsaw Workers Committee of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). She was active in the Jewish organisation of the PPS and participated in a demonstration on pl. Grzybowski. In March 1905, she was a delegate to the 7th Congress of the PPS (at that time, she was elected as a member of the Jewish Section). She also took part in the breakthrough in the party’s evolution to the left. She was on the June Council which supported the position of “the young”. In September 1905, she was arrested and then released under the October amnesty.

Soon after, she moved to Częstochowa and began working with the local OKR PPS. As a delegate, in February 1906, she participated in the 8th PPS Congress. Shortly after the Congress, she took part in the PPS district reporting conference in Dąbie (now a suburb of Częstochowa). There, she reported on program matters.

Adam Uziembło recalls her activity in the Częstochowa district of the PPS, “Julia (Horwitz) had extensive experience. Her advice proved useful in many cases. She took in hand the entire organisational structure. She had mastered technique and funding. She took over the organisation of the District Offices, meaning that she stood at the centre from where she could observe all activities. She had complete relations with Warsaw, from where she took orders and to where she reported on the activities in the district. She had the force and could distribute it. Finally, she maintained contact with work in the villages and, theoretically, with military, railway and combat work, only partially sharing these relations and issues with Leonard [Mieczysław Michałowicz]”.

From the spring of 1906, she was again active in Warsaw, including the preparation of a vigorous operation to free ten prisoners from Pawiak. She was arrested on 16th December 1906 and sentenced to leave the Kingdom of Poland. Until 1910, she worked in a psychiatric clinic in Lausanne and, 1910-1914, in a similar clinic in Paris. At that time, she was active in the Overseas Organisation of the PPS-Left, including representing the party at the 2nd International Congress in Copenhagen. In 1912-1914, she was a board member of an inter-party organisation, the Fund to Aid Exiles and Political Prisoners in Russia.

In 1914-1916, she worked in an Austrian military hospital in Brno and, from 1916, in a clinic in Waldau near Brno. From 1919, she worked in municipal hospitals in Warsaw and, from 1923, as a school doctor.

In 1923-1929, she headed the Women's Central Committee (KPP) and edited its press organ "Robotnica". In 1924-1927, she participated in various international congresses of communist and women's organisations. In 1927, she was a delegate to the 4th Congress of the KPP. She was twice arrested for party activity – in 1928 and 1929. In 1930, she was released on bail from prison and emigrated to the Soviet Union.

She worked in hospitals near Moscow, in a sanatorium for the nervously ill in Golitsyn, and then at the Psychiatric Institute in Moscow.

She belonged to the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), serving in many communal functions. On 10th September 1937, she was arrested by the NKVD and sent to a labour camp. She was released in 1944 and, for a time, worked as a doctor in the Caucasus region.

In the summer of 1945, she returned to Warsaw and joined the Polish Worker's Party. She was an inspector in the Audit Bureau at the Presidium of the National Council (later at the Supreme Audit Office). From 1948, she was vice-director of the State Institute of Mental Health (later, it was Main Mental Health Clinic).

She died on 27th October 1952 in Warsaw and was buried in the Powązki Military Cemetery.

Słownik biograficzny działaczy polskiego ruchu robotniczego, vol. II, p. 556. – H. Piasecki, *Żydowska Organizacja PPS 1893–1907*, Wrocław 1978, p. 137. – A. Uziembło, *W Częstochowie i na Rakowie*, „Niepodległość” 1936, vol. XIV, pp. 352, 359. – Wikipedia.

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