

Regarding the History of the Jews in Krzepice

In 1914, a brochure was published in Włocławek by a certain priest, Stanisław Muznerowski, containing information about Krzepice, supported by archival documents. There, among other things, it is also stated that the oldest knowledge of Jews in Krzepice dates back to 1633. How many Jews lived, at that time, in Krzepice itself is unknown, because the Jews of Krzepice were included with the Jews of Działoszyn and, together, they numbered 1,956 souls.

Subsequently, it is mentioned there that, in 1720, three Jewish families lived in Kuźniczka (a suburb of Krzepice). That brochure also mentions that, in 1765, 30 Jews lived in Kuźniczka and that they had already built their own study-hall, which had previously been forbidden, and for which they had eventually received permission from Archbishop Adam [Ignacy] Komorowski. Further on, Muznerowski reports that, in 1810, there were 270 Jews in Krzepice, in 1847 - 1,045 Jews, in 1860 - 1,069 Jews and, in 1914, an estimated 2,500 Jews.

In the same brochure, it is also mentioned that the priest Wojtek Rupiński, on 25th June 1711 and 10th December 1715, lent the management of the study-hall in Koniecpol (a town near Częstochowa) 13,000 złoty on 10% interest, from the capital accumulated by the Krzepice cloister. In 1716, Rupiński lent the management of the study-hall in Działoszyn 5,000 złoty, on similar terms.

In 1721, he again lent 500 tinfe (a silver coin in the time of Jan [II] Kazimierz [Waza]) and, five years later, on 20th August, he lent a further 2,700 złoty to the Jews of Działoszyn. Incidentally, it is also mentioned there that the Jews did not meet the terms of repaying the loan and were threatened with excommunication (*klątwa* [a curse]).

Based on this information, it emerges that, in certain towns around Częstochowa, there were already Jewish settlements before there was any trace of a Jewish community in Częstochowa itself, and that their financial situation was a difficult one, as they were forced to resort to borrowing money, which they were unable repay.