

SYNGAŁOWSKI Aron (1889–1956) pseudonyms Geler Aron (Żółty Aron), Aron Cześćochowski. He was a political activist, columnist and lawyer. He was born in a village near Baranowiczy, the son of Zelig, who worked in the management of an estate in the small town of Lenin in Belarus. His mother was Frida.

He had one sister and four brothers, all of whom were educated in various cities of the Russian Empire. They were very early and permanently connected to the Zionist-Socialist movement in Russia. His brother, Jehoszua (as J. Avizohar), later became a teacher in a seminary in Jerusalem. After the War, his sister Sara also lived in Israel. In 1902, his brother Nachum came to Cześćochowa, where he was employed as a teacher in a business school. He also joined the intelligentsia group which formed that city's Zionist-Socialist party.

Aron Syngałowski was educated in Kowno. In 1904, he came to his brother in Cześćochowa. Despite his young age, he gained considerable popularity as a fiery public speaker. He was a party emissary. He probably continued his education in Cześćochowa, in the State Gimnazjum. He gave one of his most important speeches, in September 1905, at the funeral of the four girls who died in the fire at the celluloid factory belonging to → Seweryn Landau.

Known as “Żółty Aron” [“Golden Aron”], he gained great popularity in the city amongst Jewish workers and the Jewish intelligentsia, and attracted audiences to the Zionist-Socialist Party. Thanks to him and other activists, it became the strongest Jewish grouping. From 1907, the reactions and the weakening party activity forced him to leave Cześćochowa. In 1909, he left for Germany and Switzerland. There, he studied law and philosophy, becoming a lawyer and gaining a doctorate.

During World War I, he served in the Russian Army. He fought on the front and was taken prisoner by the Germans.

After the War, he lived in Berlin, where he married and practised as a lawyer. In 1919, he was the first editor of the Yiddish-language newspaper “*Frajtog*” (“Friday”). He took an active part in the work of the Berlin *Kultur-Liga* organisation, which was under the influence of the Bund. As a pseudonym, he took the name of his adopted city and, from that time, he became “Aron Czenstochower”.

In 1921, with his participation, a Berlin office was established of the Russian ORT (Society for the Promotion of Work Amongst Jews), which was transformed into

an international organisation. Syngalowski became one its leaders and, with time, became president of the world ORT organisation. In February 1923, he visited Częstochowa, where he delivered a lecture on Władimir Medem, the late leader of the Bund. He lived in various countries, establishing ORT branches there, as well as crafts and vocational schools.

In 1933, after Hitler came to power, he moved to Paris. In 1940, he fled to the south of France, to the unoccupied zone. He lived and worked in Marseille. On 24th February 1943, after much effort, he managed to leave for Switzerland and lived permanently in Geneva, where the headquarters of the ORT World Organisation was located. He worked together with *Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine* CDJC, which was established in April 1943, in documenting the persecution of Jews during World War II.

During one of his visits to Paris, he suffered a severe heart attack and died on 7th October 1956. He was buried in Geneva.

His wife was a doctor, Michla Michaela Frankenberg (10th October 1887 Płock-), the daughter of Abram Jakub and Sura Dwojra Raciężer, aka Frankelsztejn. They had two daughters - Hanna and Laja.

Czenstochower Yidn, pp. III, 116, 117, 133, 370, 377, 379, 391. *Czenstochow*, pp. 139, 140. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 2nd ed., Detroit, New York, San Francisco, Maine, London 2007, vol. 19, p. 385.

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