

Sz. Oderberg

## The “Trio” Which Once Was and Its Remnants

We were always considered the “three who are one” - each of us completed the other two.

We acted together, dividing the work according to each one’s personal tendencies and, always, supporting each other. All three of us were graduates of the Hebrew high school, students at the university and graduates of the Faculty of Law - a “trio”, who did not continue in the profession we had studied, for we all had a common “weakness” - namely, Zionist-public service amongst the maturing student youth who were being trained.

We were three and only I remain to light a memorial candle for the other two, who perished in the Holocaust, who were an inseparable part of both my body and soul.

We stayed together everywhere in our joint life. Our “distinguishing marks” were our personal names - Jakub (Horowicz), Dudek (Dawid Kartuz), and Semek (Szlojme Oderberg), the writer of these lines).

Jakub Horowicz was born in 1911. He was always a composed individual and mindful of his appearance. He operated mainly amongst the more mature youth. He had an ability to find a rapport with different factors and acted as our natural, “Foreign Secretary”. Together with this, he was always willing to perform any task laid upon him.

He commenced his public activity as part of “*Herzliya*”, the Zionist Organisation and the “Zionist Youth”. When the academic *kibbutz*<sup>1</sup> was founded in our city, he immediately became one of its closest friends. He procured work for it and saw to the betterment of the living conditions of the academically trained “*kibbutzknikim*” [*kibbutz* members].

(Also, during the Nazi occupation of Częstochowa, he continued serving the public through his work in the Judenrat.



When the Nazis spread a malicious rumour that they would be sending the entire Jewish intelligentsia in a convoy to Palestine, it was natural for him to believe them and he joined the convoy. Of course, it later turned out that the rumour regarding the “journey” was a satanic trap by the Nazis, by which many of our townspeople, mainly members of the intelligentsia, were annihilated. Jakub Horowicz’s last march towards the homeland, which ended in his destruction, was characteristic of his life and death.)

Dawid Kartuz [pic left] was born in 1912. He was a graduate of the Hebrew high school and the University of Kraków. He was one of the organisers of “*Herzliya*” and of the “Zionist Youth”. He travelled to neighbouring towns and gave speeches on behalf of the Zionist Organisation and the National Funds, and he was the first cell leader, as well as a member, of the district leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: Preparatory kibbutzim were established throughout the diaspora to train future kibbutz members.]

He was a gifted orator, had a quick intellect and was always in a hurry - truly a volcano. He despised trivialities and organisational minutia. He loved public appearances and, yet, he was a disciplined soldier, who always obeyed the movement's orders, even when they stood in contrast to his own interests.

Once a new generation of instructors had grown in our city, Dudek was called on to also give of his energy further afield. He was sent to organise the movement's work in Śląsk [Silesia] (Bielsko and the surrounding area), as well as to save the horticultural farm (training grounds) in Czechowice from atrophy and failure.

Although Dudek always fled from honours, they pursued him. He was then elected to the main leadership of the nationwide movement, moved to its centre and began visiting dozens of locations throughout Poland on its behalf, bringing the movement's message to hundreds and thousands.

His speeches inspired both young and old, and strengthened the belief of the masses in a complete redemption. But the messenger, who brought tidings of the return to Zion to multitudes, did not live to see his dreams materialise. (Dudek and his wife happened to be in Wilna when Hitler's troops approached this city and, there, they met their deaths, forever silencing the song of his tempestuous life.

My grief and sorrow are immense to have lost those so dear to my soul, with whose pure souls my own soul was entwined. May my lament for Dawid and Jakub serve as a bunch of flowers on their unknown graves.)