

Dr. Yaakov Shatzki

## The Jews in Częstochowa to World War I

(from the book "*Tshenstokhover Yidn*" [The Jews of Częstochowa], published in N.Y in 1947)



It is very difficult to determine when the Jews [first] settled in Częstochowa.

It is not impossible that Jews lived in Częstochowa as far back as the reign of the last king of Poland, Stanisław August Poniatowski, who reigned between 1764 and 1794.

Regarding this period there is a record that the king allowed a certain Polish nobleman to take seven Jewish families into one of his buildings. This "privilege" was at the time called "*juridica*".

But this "record" should be regarded as historically very dubious because a nobleman having such "*juridica*" did not require a special permit from the king, being as the definition of "*juridica*" was that the said nobleman had "unlimited control" over his land.

But it may be that, in this instance, two separate facts became intertwined and they are that a Polish nobleman housed seven Jewish families in one of his buildings simply because they paid him the amount he asked for and, apart from that, on another occasion, the king did indeed authorise seven other Jewish families to settle in Częstochowa. Who those families were and where they lived is unknown and there are no sources to find this out.

Nevertheless, one thing is beyond doubt and that is that, in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Jews already lived in Częstochowa.

At the time, there was already a Jewish community in nearby Janów and in its Jewish cemetery were also buried the Jews of Częstochowa who passed away. Thus, Częstochowa became a small "branch" of the Jewish community in Janów. The Janów community fought fiercely for its "birthright" and hindered Częstochowa in establishing an independent Jewish community.

As to the number of Jews in Częstochowa, there are also no exact sources, but it may be assumed that their number was not few, for already in 1787-1797, there was a Jewish doctor there, named Reb Hirsch, who attended to the local sick.

The earliest reliable reports about the local Jews originate from the times of the Prussian occupation-regime when Częstochowa was annexed to the administrative department of South Prussia, which was established after the second partition of Poland in 1793.

The first mention of it, significant from a Jewish standpoint, is in connection to the Frankist movement.

Jacob Frank (1726-1791) was convicted in 1760 by a Church tribunal for the sin of blasphemy and was sent to Częstochowa.

He was imprisoned in the city fortress for thirteen years until the Russian General Bibikov, who captured the said fortress, released him from his imprisonment.

His period of incarceration in the fortress was, in fact, a continuation of Frank's turbulent life. He gathered together and managed a large group of followers around himself and even had his wife brought to him. She died in Częstochowa.

Although a few of his disciples who came to him settled in Częstochowa itself, over the course of time they dispersed to all directions and it is very doubtful that even one Frankist family remained in Częstochowa.

In a report sent to the King of Prussia by a designated officer whose task it was to inform on the conquered provinces, it is reported that "next to Częstochowa, there are few Jewish peasants to be found". This is doubtlessly an important and unique fact, a fact set out in writing by a Prussian officer who visited the country and there is no basis for not believing him.

The fact that there were Jewish farmers at the start of Jewish settlement in Częstochowa is indeed very interesting. But, the question again arises: when did they arrive there? If they were already there - as in the Prussian officer's testimony - then it is clear that they came there even before the partition of Poland and thus it should be surmised that the "privilege" given by the last Polish king to the seven Jewish families was on condition that they work the land.

As some similar cases are known of Jews at that same period in other regions of Poland, it stands to reason that all of them were actual farmers.

As proof that besides these Jews, there was another Jewish congregation in Częstochowa, who huddled in ugly wooden houses belonging to some nobleman, who had a "*juridica*" privilege and took a large income from the Jews' hands for the "patronage" he granted them, is the following fact - according to a "decree" from April 17th 1797, the Prussians permitted the Jews to leave the ugly and crowded apartments in which they lived and move to better ones.

Unfortunately, that same Prussian officer who, with respect to other cities and towns, gave details regarding the number of their Jewish and non-Jewish residents, he refrained from doing so in regard to Częstochowa. Therefore, we are missing the most important details concerning the number of Jews living in the Częstochowa "ghetto", which was apparently so hideous, that the "kind-hearted" Prussians took pity on them and allowed them to move from there to a better "ghetto".

We find another type of Jew who settled in the Częstochowa area.

The Prussian government decreed that all Jews unable to prove a reliable income be considered "Jews living on charity" and that they be banished from the conquered land's territory.

Many of these "incomeless" Jews fled in despair and hunger to the country's forests and ownerless fields and, together with nobles who had lost their property, townsfolk and villagers and gypsies among them, organised themselves into camps of bandits and plundered all throughout the country.

There are tales of such a group of bandits, the majority being Jews - which "operated" in the Częstochowa area.

Unfortunately, there is no information about the Jews' personal lives during the Prussian reign.

In 1806, the army of the Duchy of Warsaw, founded by Napoleon from the ruins of Prussian rule in Poland, succeeded in capturing the Częstochowa fortress.

The new and unstable government began to gather details about Jewish inhabitants in order to prepare its propositions for fundamental reforms.

From the reports made for this purpose, it was found that 3,349 people then lived in Częstochowa and, among them, were 495 Jews. Thus the percentage of Jews in the population had reached 14.8%.

In all the cities and towns in the Częstochowa region, there were, at that time, 6,963 inhabitants and, among them, 1,310 Jews. It emerges that around a third of all the Jews in the district lived in Częstochowa itself. Hence, the Jewish congregation in Częstochowa was the largest of the district's communities.

While the percentage of Jews in the entire district was 18% of all city-dwellers, in the rural settlements the percentage of Jewish residents was only 2%!

There is no doubt that, even during the Prussian reign, there was already a certain framework for community life in Częstochowa. Otherwise, it is unclear how any signs were found of a community-leadership at the time of the Duchy of Warsaw's rule.

The taxation policy regarding the Jews, during the Prussian occupation, created the need to organise a Jewish community to take responsibility for the payment of taxes imposed on the Jews.

In different cities, among them in Warsaw itself, the Prussian government permitted the organisation of Jewish communities and this was also the case in Częstochowa. We must conclude that this Jewish community had its own representatives - as was already the custom in all places where Jews were found.

Having no documentation from the days of the Prussian rule proving just who established Jewish communities, we may surmise that the leadership of the community that existed at the time of the Polish Duchy, actually arose even earlier - during the Prussian rule.

The first action taken by the community in Częstochowa, during the reign of the Duchy of Warsaw, was to erect a permanent house of prayer.

Its second action - and the most important one - was to elect a spiritual leader to stand at the head of the community.

On Av 8th 5568 (1808), a community assembly was held in Częstochowa. Doubtlessly, this was not the first assembly to be held since two years of the existence of the country's new government.



*The flag of the Polish regiment which returned from Napoleon's war in Russia. This flag later served as a curtain for the ark in the New Synagogue in Częstochowa.*

The character of the assembly also attests to its being a habitual meeting of a long-standing management that acted for benefit of the Jewish congregation. At that meeting, Reb Yaakov, son of Rabbi Eliezer Lewi, was elected as head of the rabbinical court and as the representative of the community.

Reb Yaakov Ben Eliezer Lewi used to sign his letters and orders officially as "*wierni kahału Częstochowskiego*" (Trustee of the Częstochowa *kehilla*).

Of the origins of the Częstochowa community's first representative - whom we know only by name - nothing is known. What is known about him is that he was a scholarly Jew and a good public functionary and, apparently, a wealthy man as well. This is also proven by the fact that he was the community treasurer, a role usually never given to poor people...

In all community matters, only he could be consulted. It is worth noting that, in a statement which Reb Yaakov Lewi signed, according to which "he made a commitment to serve the community devotedly and

loyally", a clause is also found in which states that "he will work for the benefit of community affairs, even if his action may harm another community"...

That other community was surely Janów, which looked unfavorably upon the endeavors made by the Częstochowa community to attain equal rights. The Janów community strived with all its might that Częstochowa should not separate from it. But the people of Częstochowa understood that, by becoming an independent community, they would reap more benefits than by being annexed to Janów and, therefore, they assisted their young community council in its struggles for independent government.

The community council had three delegates who divided their roles by month. Every month a different delegate acted as the community's representative and, therefore, they were also called "monthly delegates". The treasurer was forbidden to arrange payments of money above a certain sum without the written permission of the other delegates.

The monthly delegate was allowed, on his own account, to issue a payment order of up to six *gulden*. Payments exceeding this sum were made only with the signatures of all three delegates.

The head of the Bet Din worked for wages and was not permitted to renounce his pay. His salary was set at 6 *Reichsthaler* a month and, in the months of Nisan and Tishrei (which are the months of the holidays), his pay was doubled to 12 *Reichsthaler*. In addition to his wages he also received an apartment to live in, free of charge.

He also received three percent of the takings from the nearby settlements.

At the said assembly it was decided that until a Rabbi be appointed to Częstochowa, the head of court was to receive also half of the *rachash* [acronym] (payment to the Rabbi, Chazan [cantor] and Shames [sacristan]). He was also allowed to go out to the villages surrounding Częstochowa and to receive there "*Hanukkah-gelt*" ...

Besides being signed by the aforementioned Reb Yaakov Lewi, this document was also signed forty of Częstochowa's [most] prominent citizens. This is the oldest surviving document in the Częstochowa community ledger and, from it, it can be concluded that the wages for the head of Bet Din were actually not set just for Reb Yaakov Lewi - who did not need them at all - but as a matter of principle, for all those to fill the seat of head of rabbinical court into the future.

It is an important fact that in Częstochowa's vicinity there were other Jewish settlements which were administratively adjoined to it and, as proof, various payments were received from all these settlements and the head of Bet Din court was entitled to three percent of these. This also proves that Częstochowa was by then already a central community for the entire region. The organisation by districts or administrative regions functioned well, actually, during the Duchy of Warsaw's rule. Testimony to this is when the ongoing community committees joined forces to endeavour to annul decrees of general importance.

The first conflict between the communities of Janów and Częstochowa emerged as early as 1808, when it occurred to the Minister of Finances of the small and limited Duchy of Warsaw, Mr. Luszczewski, that the possibility existed to squeeze various taxes from the Jews – taxes directed at them exclusively. Together with Minister of Education Grabowski, he began a campaign against the "ignorance" ("fanaticism" in foreign languages) of the Jews and he perceived Jewish books to be the root of the evil. He found that the easiest thing was to simply confiscate all Jewish books. But, on the other hand, this action would not bring in any revenue. It was therefore decided to impose a tax on every Jew wishing to keep Jewish books in his home. A plan was devised to mark, with an official government stamp, all books which the Jews wished to retain in their possession and that a special tax was to be paid for this "favour". Although the tax, in itself, would not uproot Jewish "ignorance", it constituted a financial burden for those Jews wishing to remain in their "ignorance". They would be required to pay for this "pleasure".

There were those who hoped that the Jews would hurry to hand in their books just to avoid the tax, thus diminishing the number of "fanatical" Jews. This was also the opinion of the contemporary Minister of Education, Stanisław Grabowski!

When the circular concerning the law of stamping the Jews' books reached the community of Częstochowa, the community council immediately printed a circular in Yiddish and sent it to the neighbouring settlements - Działoszyn, Krzepice, Mstów, Cynków, Kuźnica, Kłobuck, Łobodno, Miedzno and others.

All these places actually explicitly belonged to the community of Janów, but once the Częstochowa community distributed the proclamation among them and also sent its men to stamp the books in name of the Częstochowa community, as well as giving receipts for the monies received by their emissaries, they became adjoined to the Częstochowa community.

As a consequence of this action Janów lost its rights to these locations and Częstochowa entrenched itself in them as their legal "guardians"!

The proclamation itself has great cultural and historical value and we bring it [here] in its original form and without any alterations. From it, it is possible to get a sense of the [literary] style and orthography of those days:

*To the leaders of the congregation of Israel in the towns and villages in the powiat [county] of here Częstochowa, peace and all the best forever.*

*Thursday, 6 Cheshvan 5568 [Nov. 7, 1807].*

*From the komisarz wykonawca powiat Częstochowa [commissioner of the district of Częstochowa] as well as by decree of the great lord Minister Skarbowa [the Minister of Treasury]. We announce to each and every one of you, whomever it may be, that we warn you, on penalty of one-hundred Reichsthaler, that all are to bring here whatever books, both books in the holy language and in Yiddish, anything the mouth may name or the mind may think of, including The Twin Tablets [satirical reference to the Tablets of the Covenant], to be stamped. A law and a time are given you to bring them, eight days from this date and no later, upon penalty of 100 Reichsthaler, as mentioned above.*

*And anyone concealing but one book must pay a fine of 20 Reichsthaler. Therefore, we forewarn you not to say later that we did not announce this.*

*These are the words of the heads and leaders of the Jewish community of here, Częstochowa.*

*Berish Shapiro.*

*In every town the emissary bearing this note is to receive a bearer's fee of 4 sixths [of a Reichsthaler] and the villages must each give 2 birds [probably nickname for groschen]; at the same time, we also warn all the settlements that are under our control to bring here the yearly recruits' money within two days.*

*Here, Częstochowa, on the aforementioned day.*

*Berish Shapiro.*

And it is stamped: *Kahal Adas Yeshurun* [Jewish community] of Częstochowa.

This important document teaches much about the organisation of the Jewish community in Częstochowa during the rule of the Duchy of Warsaw.

From it, we know who the contemporary head of the kehilla was and that his name was Berish Shapiro. Truly, we have no information about him but, from the contents of the proclamation, we learn that the Jews were required to declare, within eight days, the books in their possession and have them stamped and whoever disobeyed the order faced a monetary fine.

We find that the kehilla had special emissaries who were sent to all the locations and received payments from book owners. Different prices were set for townsfolk and for villagers, who paid less than the home-owners in the cities and towns.

The emissaries were, apparently, the community collectors, who took advantage of their journey to the nearby towns and villages to stamp the books to also collect the “recruits” taxes, a tax imposed on Jews which made them exempt from military service.

However, in 1812, after numerous assemblies and negotiations, the communities within the Duchy of Warsaw succeeded in becoming exempt from the regular payment of the tax in return for a general and one-time large payment of 700000 *gulden*!

At first, an emissary was seen as the bearer of evil tidings. He would summon all the Jewish residents of a city or village, read the proclamation before them. The local representative would confirm, in writing, that the proclamation had been made public and that all the local Jews had heard it. In this manner, the emissaries passed through fifteen places and, if [people] wished to pay the stamping fee or the recruits’ tax, they accepted the payment willingly. If not, residents were required to bring the money directly to the community committee in Częstochowa.

From this, it emerges that the Jewish community council in Częstochowa was the legal representative for the entire district, despite its’ lacking many of the requirements for an independent community - it did not have a permanent Rabbi nor its own cemetery. The community supplemented the items it was missing under the rule of Congress-Poland (between 1815 and 1831). Nevertheless, it was very powerful and, with its few Jewish residents, it succeeded in overshadowing many of the communities both older and with larger numbers of Jewish residents living within them.

The rapid development of the Częstochowa community was mainly bolstered by the city’s favourable geographic position and the industrialisation that was progressively expanding throughout the region.



During the Congress-Poland period, the government assisted financiers and outstanding craftsmen and encouraged them to come to the country and to help it in the development of industry and crafts.

Many entrepreneurs and professionals also flocked to Częstochowa from nearby Silesia. Among the financiers, there were also Jews and it is not impossible a few were also to be found amongst long-time Jewish residents of Częstochowa - those who had already settled there during the Prussian rule.

Although, after the foundation of the Duchy of Warsaw, they were ordered to leave the country, many of them remained in Poland nonetheless, especially in the small cities.

A sign that in Częstochowa there were already Jews who had come from Germany at the time may be seen in the fact that opulent Jews brought teachers from abroad for their sons, despite this being entailed with great difficulties because the local Christian residents opposed the arrival of foreigners to their cities, and the Catholic church opposed this as well.

In 1818, two Jewish teachers, who had been brought in to tutor Jewish children, were deported - Leon Guttenberg from Glogau [Głogów] (Silesia) and Wilhelm Imier from Praszka,.

When the designation of “special areas” to house the Jews (literally “ghettos”) began in Poland, the Częstochowa city administration also took advantage of this “privilege” and designated “special areas” for the Jews.

There were, at the time, more Europeanised Jews in Częstochowa than in the capital Warsaw.

In 1818, a group of Jews from the Częstochowa district turned to the authorities and announced that all its members were willing to adopt European attire and also to educate their sons at the general [state] schools and they therefore demanded to be freed from living in the special areas designated for Jews only.

Although there are no details regarding the city administration’s response, the fact that some of the wealthy Jews owned houses in the non-Jewish area proves that they lived among the local Christians as well, as in other cities.

There is also information about the Jews’ place in industry at the time. As early as 1827, accounts are given of Jewish factories which manufactured and sold “Częstochowa products”. These factories’ character is unknown, but there are sources testifying that some of the Jews were also involved in smuggling the goods abroad.

According to these sources, these contrabandists were often expelled from Częstochowa and relocated themselves to nearby Łódź.

Among the first pioneers of industry and commerce were those well-known families who later occupied an important place in the city’s public Jewish life.

In the 1830’s, the opulent and enlightened Hertz Kohn (b.1768-d.1862) was elected head of the Jewish community council. He aided the city’s *Maskilim* [followers of the *Haskala* movement] extensively in their efforts to propagate *Haskala* [enlightenment] and knowledge among the local Jews and even opened a private school for their children.

Jews from the surrounding cities and towns began flocking to Częstochowa to seek their livelihoods there.

Although the municipality was vigilant and did not allow extrinsic Jews to settle in the city, it was unsuccessful. These “illegal” Jews were in constant fear, but they did not leave the city. In 1829, their number reached 100, half of the entire Jewish population in the city at the time.

Apparently, Jews lacking the right to residence had abundant sources of income in Częstochowa because they spent large sums on legal defence in order to not be deported. Also, the authorities and local police received significant “revenue” from the bribes these Jews handed out...

Early on, a class of Jews appeared in Częstochowa who constituted a kind of Jewish elite who were not satisfied with the small amount of respect which could be gained through public work within the limits of Jewish communal life. They were educated and wealthy. They had gained their education at general [secular] schools inside the country and abroad. They often visited Germany and other countries and received a taste of the reforms which had been implemented in the Jewish communities in those countries. They aspired to introduce them into Częstochowa as well. Even in the craftsmen’s circle,



there were many who aspired to a “modern life”, according to the style of the Jews in Germany. In 1841, there were already 32 Jewish weavers with 160 looms and 200 helpers in Częstochowa.

The teachers who taught them the profession of weaving were almost exclusively German [masters], from whom they also learnt the German language and they saw German culture as the pinnacle of human progress.

Between 1833 and 1862, even the community circulars were written in German, but with Hebrew letters.

It is no wonder that those individuals, who saw themselves as “progressive people”, aspired to advancing in general [i.e. non-Jewish] public life, but this status could only be reached through a “personal privilege” or by converting to Christianity.

The privilege was manifested in the possibility of living outside the Jewish “ghetto” and, moreover, in being granted the right to acquire an estate.

The story of Shimon Landau-Guttenberg, the son of Wilhelm Landau, a German Jew who settled in Częstochowa back in the days of the Duchy of Warsaw, is very interesting. Shimon Landau, who was a rich merchant and industrialist in Częstochowa, approached the authorities in December 1833 requesting that he and his family be granted citizenship. In his detailed application, Landau wrote that he and his family all spoke and wrote only in Polish and German, a fact which the municipal authorities could corroborate. He continued “that my sons study at general schools and I do not exhibit any external signs as do other Jews”. He also stipulates that he will “not hire Jews in my businesses unless they dress in Polish or German attire and are fluent in both languages”. He mentions that “I have owned of a textile factory since 1822”.

The question regarding Shimon Landau’s citizenship was deliberated for about two years and only on March 12 1835 did the authorities in Warsaw answer him that his merits before the State are not sufficient so as to make him entitled to citizenship. But, he is permitted to “reside outside the ghetto, so long as he wears European clothing and sends his children to study in general schools”.

Shimon Landau’s son was “luckier”. In 1863, he was permitted to buy an estate in the Kielce region, thus fulfilling, in the third generation, the ambition of a pioneer Jewish family in Poland - to become Polish noblemen and to infiltrate the “upper circles” of the country’s society...

Among the other families, who received citizenship, the family of the banker Adam Bergman, Wilhelm Kohn, the families Wahlberg and Landowski should also be mentioned.

There were also those whose “luck did not pan out”, or who did not have enough money to rise above the Jewish public in their superiority and to liberate themselves from it.



The growth of Jewish Częstochowa brought with it the establishment of charitable institutions to aid the poor who flocked to the city, which became famous in the country for its wealth and income sources.

In 1846-47, with the onset of a financial crisis in the country that brought hunger to many of Jewish homes in the city, the Jewish community council in Częstochowa organised activities of relief and aid for its poor. Efforts were also made to hire unemployed Jews in the local lime mines but the government opposed this.

The community had not previously prepared for an enormous charity-project as was then needed, for it had always seen its poor as "temporary guests" who had come there to "try their luck" with the local residents and would only remain there as "passers-by" and, if they did not "strike it lucky", would leave and move on to Łódź, which was already then a famous city, with great opportunities for success in business and crafts. During this crisis in Częstochowa, a pioneering, enlightened Jew named Yitzhak Bursztyn or Bursztynski - a writer for the "*Algemeine Zeitung des Judentum*" [General Newspaper of Judaism], which appeared in Magdeburg (edited by Dr. Ludwig Philippsohn) - wrote a proclamation calling upon all Częstochowa Jews to become accustomed to giving donations systematically and not just suffice with throwing an offering to a poor man knocking on their door. He suggested the setting of a monthly tax over six months for the benefit of the crisis victims.

"Where are honesty and justice", he asked, "when in front of our eyes people are starving and dying on our streets? ". He called on the Jews of the city to give to the Rescue Fund and stressed in a proclamation, half of which was in the holy tongue [Hebrew] and the rest in Yiddish- German, that no donation would actually hurt those with means in the city, while bringing great benefit to those in need of it.

In the history of Częstochowa, this was the first public project to benefit the city's poor and the families who became impoverished due to the financial crisis.

The fact that the Rescue Fund was the work of one man and not organised by the Jewish Community Council proves that, despite Częstochowa's position, being second in importance only to Warsaw and despite having progressive representatives, it was not up to scratch in matters of communal organisation.

With the outbreak of the cholera epidemic in 1852, the Częstochowa Jewish community was more aware of the Rescue Fund for the victims of the epidemic. For the wealthy amongst them, they looked upon this rather as a prophylactic in order to prevent the disease from spreading amongst themselves.

At the time, the number of Jews in the city was steadily increasing.

In 1840, there were 5,004 Christians and 2,299 Jews living in Częstochowa, almost one third of the population. But the growth in Jewish number was hindered slightly due to the industrialisation of the city which also attracted many of the villagers in the region to the quickly developing industry - and they were mostly Christian. The gates to the city were all but locked to the Jews, because the Jewish area was being vigorously monitored, so that it should not grow excessively.

In 1857, the number of inhabitants grew to 8,637, among them 2,976 Jews, making up almost 34.5% of the population. In 1862, it had 3,360 Jews - 37.3% of the population.

In 1862, a great tragedy befell Częstochowa. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, a horrific fire broke out which, primarily, affected the poorer Jews of the city.

The "Polish-Jewish Brotherhood" formed a joint rescue committee for those burned. The Brotherhood's goal was also to demonstrate a fraternity in a practical manner. A Catholic priest and a Jewish Rabbi were chosen for this committee. Bernard Kohn, the owner of a large flour mill and member of the city administration, was elected as chairman. The contributors included Christians and a sum of 14,000 złotych was collected - a large sum at the time.

The fire was later used as a convincing argument to abolish the Jewish "ghetto" which had become very crowded and dirty.

Lobbying for an extension to the ghetto up to *Aleja Najświętszej Maryi Panny* [Avenue of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary], including the marketplace, began as early as 1859, but the matter remained unresolved until the end of 1862, when the municipality decided to completely abolish an area designated for Jews. The city elders in Częstochowa were proud that this happened even before the government issued a decree to abolish all Jewish ghettos throughout Congress Poland.

In the years 1861-1863 a spirit of camaraderie between Jews and Poles prevailed in the city, in support of the national ambitions of Poland and the Jews Bernard Majzel, Yitzhak Ginsberg, Yitzhak Fajgenblat and Yaakov Zejdenman were chosen as representatives of the Jews and Bernard Kohn was member of the city council.

Spirits were so high that the newspaper "*Jutrzenka*" [Morning Star or Aurora] published a letter by one of the local Jews, against Moses Hess, in which he wrote that "the land of Israel is but a dream and our homeland is Poland". The letter was written in reply to a Pole who wanted to know whether Jews in Częstochowa saw themselves as Poles.

The fact that Częstochowa was second only to Warsaw in the great activity shown by its Jews, in the years before the uprising of 1863, echoed strongly in the Polish press generally.

In 1861-1863, Częstochowa already had a considerable group of Jewish youth who were brought up in Polish culture and lived that life. Their proximity to the border enabled them, when visiting Breslau and Königsberg, to smuggle out the illegal literature that was published outside the borders of Congress Poland.

Thus, Moses Hess' book "*Rome and Jerusalem*" came into the hands of an enlightened Jew in Częstochowa even before arriving in Warsaw.

Częstochowa had an important role in the smuggling of illegal literature into the country and, during the uprising, weapons also were smuggled in for the rebels. Polish exiles abroad knew how to use the Częstochowa townspeople to their advantage in [achieving] their goals, and the Jewish youth were particularly good at underground work. Among them were also many students at schools in Warsaw and at the rabbinical seminary.

The youth put their entire hearts and souls into the Polish agenda. They spread information useful to the success of the rebellion, published articles in the weekly "*Jutrzenka*" periodical, tended to the wounded rebels and transferred them secretly to Kraków. This gained renown in revolutionary circles and it is no wonder that, in the secret orders of the rebellion's commanders in 1863, they mentioned the "strings connecting the Poles to the adherents of the Mosaic faith in Częstochowa".

In 1862 a patriotic protest was held at which Daniel Neufeld\* gave a speech. The Jewish students of the general schools also took part in the rally and some of them even participated in the actual rebellion.

When the uprising failed in 1863, a few of Częstochowa's Jews were also arrested. Shmuel Widawski was arrested and placed under police supervision for two years. Yosef Kohn fled the country, returned and was also sentenced to two years of supervision.

The most prominent of the Jewish rebels was Szymon Dankowicz. He was born in Częstochowa in 1841. His mother was a midwife. He completed public school and studied at the district school. In 1859, he traveled to Warsaw and registered as a student at the Academy of Surgical Medicine. When the academy closed down with the opening of a Polish university (*Szkoła Główna*) [The Main School], Dankowicz also transferred to it in order to study medicine. He was member of the Warsaw youth circle that set itself the goal to propagate the idea of Polish assimilation among the Jewish youth.

In 1860, Dankowicz developed the idea that the Jews had not ceased being a nation, despite having lost their land. Apparently, he was influenced by Moses Hess' book "*Rome and Jerusalem*", whose ideology aroused opposition in assimilationist circles.

A great deal of courage was needed to voice such independent ideas during this "honeymoon" period with assimilation, as Dankowicz had, because his lectures always provoked fierce arguments.

Alexander Krauzhar, who also belonged to this circle, wrote to one of his friends about Dankowicz's lecture and the arguments it caused. We see from his words that not all of the lecture's audience opposed his views. And these are Krauzhar's words:

*Opinions were heard that there is no nation without a land and that only the land where they were born should be regarded as a homeland for the Jews - many supported this view.*

The fact, which Krauzhar wrote, that many agreed with Dankowicz's opinion, at a time when it was possible to predict they would oppose it, proves that not everyone saw themselves as "Poles who are adherents to the faith of Moses". It is clear that Dankowicz did not see himself as one of them. He was the first among the contemporary Jewish intelligentsia with Jewish-nationalist views.

This is also apparent from the article written in the weekly paper "*Jutrzenka*" that was published in Warsaw, between 1863-1961, under editorship of Daniel Neufeld.

Neufeld knew Dankowicz from their early days together in Częstochowa and invited him to write articles for his newspaper.

In the "*Jutrzenka*", number 12 from 1862, an article appeared by Dankowicz entitled "Sayings and Parables in Rabbinical Literature" in which he wrote, among other things:

*Parables always present the philosophy of a nation. Therefore, every nation, whether on a high educational level or on the lowest one, gathers its parables, which constitute a memorial. They are always preserves them carefully and lovingly.*

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\* We will discuss him later in our article.

Dankowicz expressed his wish that “our people, too, should dedicate their time and energy to gather all the popular sayings, traditions and even the unique expressions of Jewish jargon”.

The article aroused dissatisfaction in the most extreme assimilationist circles, but Neufeld shielded Dankowicz and supported his views.

Dankowicz was one of the prominent figures of the Jewish youth in the days of the uprising. He participated actively in battles and was wounded as well. Thanks to the help of some Polish rebels, he was taken to Kraków for medical attention. After his recovery, he became a Hebrew teacher. In 1867 he was appointed preacher in the “Jewish Synagogue for Friends of Progress” in Częstochowa. [Translator’s note: in Dr. Shatzki’s original Yiddish version this synagogue is said to have been in Kraków].

His opening sermon, on January 18<sup>th</sup> 1868, was published by the synagogue in print. Meanwhile, Dankowicz continued his studies and received a doctorate from the University of Kraków and was appointed a teacher of religion in the city’s gymnasia [secondary schools].

Between 1868 and 1883, he held positions as a progressive rabbi and teacher of religion in small communities, because he could not remain in Kraków due to the opposition of the Jewish orthodox, who persecuted him relentlessly. He relocated to Bulgaria and became the Chief Rabbi of the young state. He left Bulgaria in 1893. Nothing is known regarding what happened to him or where he died. [Translator’s note: Alicja Maslak-Maciejewska states in “*Progressive Preacher Szymon Dankowicz (1834-1910)*” that he died in Vienna in 1910].

The poor young man from Częstochowa found fame as a lexicographer. His articles on Hebrew philology and on the influence of Hebrew on Slavic languages were published in the most important periodicals of that time. He also intended to write a history of the Jews in Poland.

Dankowicz had a restless soul which never found its permanent resting place. Many important manuscripts were lost and his name was forgotten - many biographers say that he was from Bohemia, as he served shortly as Rabbi there.

The son of the midwife from Częstochowa was the first Jewish folkloric personage in Poland and a precursor of the nationalistic idea, at a time when the ideal of assimilation was tightly bound with the concept of general progress.



*The Progressive Synagogue in Częstochowa*

## 2. The Cultural History of Jewish Częstochowa

As mentioned already, Częstochowa, after Warsaw, was the city in Poland in which *Haskala* [enlightenment] grew and developed the most in of all Poland's cities. As early as 1814, private Jewish tutors, who came from Germany to teach the children of the wealthy, were found there. The best *melamdim* [male teachers in religious Jewish boys' school] from the adjacent cities and towns, like Działoszyn, Praszka and Wieluń, also settled in Częstochowa.

One of them was the famous *maskil* [follower of the *Haskala* movement], Salomon David Gutentog, who gave private lessons in Hebrew to the children learning in general schools in Częstochowa.

The youth, sons of the wealthy, attended the state schools in Piotrkow, Kalisz and Warsaw. The rich daughters of Częstochowa were sent to the schools in Breslau, Königsberg and Berlin, where there were private boarding schools for Jewish girls in which they guarded these "daughters of Zion" and guided them towards "finding favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man". [See Proverbs 3:4]

It may be certainly ascertained that the cultural language of the Jews at the time was German. The "*Algemeine Zeitung des Judentum*" [The General Newspaper of Judaism] had eleven regular subscribers and one special correspondent in Częstochowa. Incidentally, the number of subscribers to the periodical was, at the time, greater than in Warsaw...

When the rabbinical seminary was opened in Warsaw (in 1826), many youths from Częstochowa studied there. Bernard Cymerman [Zimmerman], Maurycy Kohn and Bernard Landau studied there in 1830. Cymerman was appointed, eventually, as censor and even became a teacher in that seminary. Bernard Landau became a teacher and Maurycy Kohn was the owner of a factory and a large estate. After the rebellion of 1863, the number of students at the rabbinical seminary grew and when, it was closed (in 1863), their number had reached twelve.

Between 1826 and 1840, twenty six young Jews from Częstochowa studied in educational institutions outside their hometown. A few among them studied medicine and later worked in their profession in their hometown - for example, Dr. Landowski.

In 1841, the "*Algemeine Zeitung des Judentum*" wrote:

*In no other Jewish community in Poland is there such an animated tendency to humanism as in Częstochowa. Almost all the townspeople, even those who wearing long garments, as is the custom of Polish Jews, have a developed sense of the necessity for a better and more modern culture. All celebrate the success of the Haskala movement amongst the Jews of Germany and in other places. A considerable part of the local Jews also read books in German and Polish and mainly on the subjects of progress, ethics and fine literature. It may be said that ignorance and the superstitious belief in miracles have almost left the wise Jews.*

In a second letter from Częstochowa, in that same newspaper, it is told how *Haskala* overcame Chassidism and that, of 400 Jewish families in Częstochowa, only 25 belonged to the sect of Chassidism.

Częstochowa, it said in the same article, was the first of all the Jewish communities in Poland that, due to its connections with Silesia in the areas of commerce and industry, also came into contact with

matters of enlightenment and culture. Partly, this came from the German language, the European clothing and being accustomed to cleanliness, order and organisation, as the Jews of Silesia were, by whom the Jews of Częstochowa were greatly influenced. But since the “moralistic revolution” of 1863 in Poland, Polish was taught more widely than German.

As early as 1860, the Jews of Częstochowa took pride in the 100 young people in the city who studied at the general schools and the rabbinical seminary, nine of whom finished their studies at university that year.

The Częstochowa community began efforts for the opening of primary schools for their children.

This action was connected to the names of two Jews, who occupy the first place in the history of *Haskala* in Częstochowa. They were Yaakov Bursztynski and Daniel Neufeld.

Bursztynski, or Bursztyn, was born in 1790 in Zagórow (Konin district). He was a Hebrew tutor and was later appointed as a sworn translator of Yiddish and Hebrew by the Kalisz *województwo* [province]. He later settled in Praszka as a tutor.



When the Częstochowa City Council deported the two tutors, Guttenberg and Imier, who had no right of residence in Częstochowa, the Jewish community in Częstochowa invited Bursztynski to become its secretary. He was also employed as teacher and preacher at the city's synagogue.

Through the efforts of community leader Hertz Kohn, Bursztynski received right of residence for three years (1828-1831), but he was not allowed to also bring his family to Częstochowa.

Bursztynski was fully fluent in the Polish language, which was very uncommon in those days, when the spoken language and culture of the Jewish *Maskilim* was German.

It is therefore obvious that the local Jews made use of his knowledge of the Polish language. He would write their petitions to the courts, their business letters and was even appointed translator by the Magistrate's Court in Częstochowa. His two sons studied at the gymnasia in Kalisz and were trained in medicine in Germany.

Bursztynski became a “private lawyer” and handled all matters related to this role. This did not please the Polish lawyers and they denounced him to the city's authorities. The municipality forbade him to write the letters and petitions, but Bursztynski did not lose his senses and he addressed the mayor in a memorandum proving the legality of his doings. Meanwhile, the rebellion of 1830-1831 broke out and the conflict subsided.

At the end of 1831, the persecutions against him resumed and his opponents also used the legal argument that, considering the three years during which he was allowed to live in Częstochowa had elapsed, he had to leave the city anyway and it no longer mattered to prove that his work as a “private lawyer” was illegal.

The municipal administration demanded that he leave the city within five days. Although the community supported him, he knew there was no legal basis for him to remain in the city, because he was considered an “alien”. But he did not despair and he waged his war by himself, which he won, because the *województwo* [province] leadership allowed him to stay in town, but only on condition that he live in the area designated for Jews. Bursztynski continued his struggle and finally succeeded in being permitted to remain in his place.

As mentioned above, he was also the correspondent for the “*Algemeine Zeitung des Judentum*” in Częstochowa and the articles he printed in the paper are an important source for the research of Częstochowa’s Jewish history. Bursztynski had understood that just private tutors were not enough to solve the question of Jewish education in general.

He pointed out in his articles that the wealthy Jews with means were the ones who could afford to bring the best teachers and educators for their children and pay them handsomely, and the poor were forced to send their children to incompetent *melamdim* [teachers at religious schools] and cram them into narrow *chadorim* [plural of *cheider*] with no air to breathe.

Bursztynski’s opinion was that primary schools should be opened in Częstochowa for the children of the poor. He worked out a detailed plan according to which, at first, schools with three classes and three teachers to run them should be opened. He also declared his willingness to teach religion and morals at these schools, without compensation. School maintenance would be covered by the tuition fees. To also endow the schools with public prestige, a Parent Board should be chosen at whose head the city’s Rabbi should stand, so as to win the trust of the religious circles.

The religious, nevertheless, opposed Bursztynski’s proposition. The *Maskilim* and foremost the head of the community, Hertz Kohn, supported his proposition. A few meetings were held at the synagogue and the study-hall at which the signatures of those supporting the idea were gathered and, in 1840, the petition was handed to the authorities.

The Polish municipality was sympathetic to the request. Bursztynski wrote in one of his letters that Pazerski, the mayor, recommended to the higher State authorities that the request be fulfilled, but apparently both the petitioner and the endorsers did not know of the Russian authorities’ fundamental opposition to opening Polish schools for Jewish children. They were waiting for the Central Russian Government to pass its laws regarding schooling for Jewish children throughout the whole country.

Paskevich, the Russian representative in Congress Poland, stopped the issuing of licenses to open schools for Jews in Poland.

Bursztynski, who had not expected these delays, invited his disciple Daniel Neufeld over from Praszka to serve as teacher at the school. He came to Częstochowa and worked, in the meantime, as a private tutor.



Bursztynski was also a writer and was fluent in Polish, Hebrew, German and Yiddish. He left a book that he wrote in 1820 in manuscript form - his campaign against the blood libel and that is the only surviving manuscript. All his other writings were lost.

In Bursztynski's time, when there were no periodicals in Polish or Yiddish in Poland dealing with Jewish issues, a person, obviously, had no possibility of disseminating his views in print. He rightfully earned fame as a spreader of enlightenment, secretary of the community, tutor, unrecognised lawyer and organiser of charity projects in the city. He truly was the pioneer in the city in all these actions.

He died in the cholera epidemic that broke out in the city in 1852. During the years he lived in Częstochowa, he was very active in spreading general enlightenment among the local Jews.

The second cultural activist in Częstochowa was the well-known editor of the Polish-Yiddish weekly periodical *Jutrzenka* [Morning Star], which was published in Warsaw from 1861 to 1863, Daniel Joseph Neufeld. He was born in Praszka in 1814. In 1827, he attended the district school at Wieluń, which was run by priests. At the time, there were very few Jewish students in Polish schools, especially in the Provinces. Neufeld wished to study medicine, but family matters prevented him from doing so. The revolt of 1831 also caused his plans to be cancelled.

Neufeld settled in Działoszyn and became a tutor there. After some time, he married a girl from Praszka and relocated to that city. From there, Bursztynski brought him to Częstochowa. While the opening of the Jewish public school was being dealt with, Neufeld gave private lessons. He befriended the city's *elite*, both Jews and Poles. The Jews treated him with special deference because, besides his vast general education, he was also a great Talmudic scholar and an observant [Jew] and the Poles valued his excellent knowledge of the Polish language and literature highly.

During his time in Częstochowa, he wrote articles for the "*Algemeine Zeitung des Judentum*" and these were his first literary fruits. When Bursztynski's efforts to open public Jewish schools fell through, Neufeld tried his luck and, in 1843, he petitioned the Curator of Education in Warsaw to grant him a license to open a private Jewish school, but his request was denied.

Then, a group of important Jewish residents from Częstochowa appealed directly to Avarov, the Minister of Education in St. Petersburg, asking him to please allow Neufeld to work as a private teacher in Częstochowa and with great efforts the license was granted, but on condition that he return to Praszka to work there in his profession.

This response was given in 1847 and, in legal terms, it was possible to find grounds for this decision, because Neufeld was effectively a resident of Praszka and, as an "alien", he was not permitted to work in Częstochowa in his profession.

But Praszka was too small to maintain a Jewish school and, since Neufeld had already become connected to Częstochowa and was well-liked by its *Maskilim*, he did not lose hope that eventually he would be allowed to teach there and educate the younger generation.

On September 23rd 1850, Neufeld again appealed to the Curator of Education and requested that he be enabled to pass examinations as a certified teacher, because the curriculum at the county school from which he had graduated was the equivalent of the curriculum of general instruction at the rabbinical seminary.

Neufeld did this in the knowledge that once he passed the examinations, he would also be given the license to open the school.

After a two-month wait, the Curator of Education denied his request on the grounds that

*... to receive a teacher's degree, full examinations following the curriculum of a gymnasium [secondary school] or a rabbinical seminary are required. The school from which Neufeld graduated is a district school and therefore, he could not fulfill his request.*

Neufeld did not become discouraged and, in April 1851, he again sent a detailed memorandum about his pedagogic activity in general and requested he be permitted, based on his experience, to open a private school in Częstochowa.

At the end of the memorandum, he mentioned that he had been forced to close down the school he had opened in Praszka because there had been just three pupils remaining in it.

This time, he did not send his dispatch to the Curator of Education in Warsaw, but to the headmaster of the regional *gymnasium* in Piotrków. He also mentioned in his missive that the Jews of Częstochowa wanted him as teacher for their children by writing:

*The Jews of Częstochowa, happily, have already freed themselves from superstitions and therefore have invited me to open a school for their children.*

This time he was lucky and, in July 1851, he received the license, although this time too, he needed the aid of people who “had contacts” with the authorities in Piotrków and who lobbied on his behalf.

Neufeld opened his school on ulica Garncarska 23 and it became a model school, among the best in the area. He also established a dormitory, because Jews from the surrounding region sent their children to him as well.

The Hebrew teacher was Yosef Szajnhak, a *maskil* and the author of various books on natural sciences.

Neufeld tried to broaden the curriculum at his school, to enable his pupils to enter the *gymnasia* after completing school. He applied for permission to teach French, history and geography, but the Curator of Education became aware of Neufeld's intentions and withheld the license from him.

Neufeld's school held out until May 1860. During the ten years it existed, it turned out a generation of pupils who took on important places in the life of Częstochowa.

From the biographies of famous businessmen and renowned doctors in Łódź, Włocławek and Płock, it is known that many of them studied in Neufeld's school. It is difficult to determine whether he was a good pedagogue himself, but he always endeavored to bring the best teachers to his school. For some time, he had over one hundred pupils, of whom about one quarter came from other places. The majority was sons of the wealthy, since the tuition fees and board at the dormitory were very high.

Neufeld was not a man looking to “get rich quick” and, therefore, he did not see the school and dormitory as a source for the amassment of riches and was unable to elevate them to the level of educational institutions and boarding schools of the German Jews in Breslau or Königsberg, that

succeeded in attracting to them even pupils from Częstochowa. Due to these administrative failures, the school ended up losing money, until he was forced to close it down.

Meanwhile, the famous publisher Orgelbrand invited him to Warsaw to become editor of the Jewish section of the great Polish encyclopedia [*Encyklopedia Powszechna* (Universal Encyclopedia)] that was then beginning to be published.

At the end of May 1860, Neufeld turned to the Curator of Education, asking for a license to move his school to Warsaw but, after two months, he himself cancelled that petition.

Although the further biography of Neufeld has no connection to the history of the Jews of Częstochowa, it is worthwhile mentioning that he took part in the events of the years 1861-1863 and, for this, he was exiled to Siberia. He came back from there a sick and broken man. For a time, he had a bookstore in Piotrków and he died in Warsaw in September 1874.

He never broke his connections to Częstochowa. His family continued to live there. His daughter married Leopold Kohn, who later became a very successful manufacturer. His two sons, who became doctors, lived in Częstochowa. Several members of his brother's family converted to Christianity. The famous Polish translator, Bronisława Neufeld, was his brother's daughter.

Among the many disciples he left in Częstochowa, there were those involved in the Polish-Jewish press. One of them, Branicki, wrote for the "*Jutrzenka*", which was edited by Neufeld. In general, Neufeld published many reports from Częstochowa, many more than from other cities.

There was another author in Częstochowa, Szymon Bergman (the father of the Częstochowa banker, Adam Bergman). He wrote in Hebrew and Polish. Neufeld's favorite disciple was Mojsej [Moses] Majmon (1812-1874). He was the son of the Rabbi of Działoszyce. Majmon completed his studies at the rabbinical seminary in Warsaw. He was involved with the "*Jutrzenka*" and the "*Izraelita*" [periodicals]. He died in Częstochowa the same year as his teacher and was two years his elder.

Following the liquidation of Neufeld's school, a different *maskil* and pedagogue, Chaim Moshe, or Moryc [Maurycy, in the paragraph below], Zys tried his luck at opening a school. It was clear to him that the Jewish children in the city needed a proper school and although the ultra-orthodox opposed this, the number of Jews in Częstochowa wanting this type of school was [large] enough to establish it and guard it from the unenlightened element, who wished to destroy it.

Chaim Moshe, or Moryc, Zys, who was a tutor and Neufeld's townsman, lived in Częstochowa from 1856. In 1858, Zys petitioned the Curator of Education for a license to open a private school. For two years, the authorities hesitated granting him the license. Apparently, they thought one school (Neufeld's) was enough for a city like Częstochowa. The *Kehilla* committee, who did not wish to harm the already-existing school, did not support Zys' request at first. However, after Neufeld's school closed down, the community - the majority of its leaders being *Maskilim* - understood that the teacher Zys should be assisted in his efforts and, indeed, the *Kehilla* committee testified in its document dated August 16th 1860 that "Maurycy Zys is a good and god-fearing teacher" and, therefore, it is desirable that he should be granted the license to open an elementary school for Jewish children.

The community thereby requested to be made exempt from paying the "school tax" for, despite that fact that the public schools were open to Jewish children, their numbers in them were small. The tax the

community paid reached 700 rubles a year, and the calculation was that, if it was freed from the tax, it could maintain 150 poor children at the new school, removing them from the regular *chadorim*.

In the meantime, Zys was granted his license, but the matter hardly rested at that.

In January 1861, the Curator of Education inquired as to how much the Jewish community paid for the maintenance of the Catholic elementary school. He also wanted to know from what source it would be possible to cover the deficit created by the Jews ceasing to pay the tax, if the government granted their request.

It emerged that the matter of giving Zys a license to open his school had no connection with the community's request to be freed from the tax in order to build the general school. Since Neufeld - whom the community had planned to appoint headmaster of its [new] school - had moved to Warsaw, it decided to appoint Zys as headmaster of the school, thus making his private school a "public" one, to be maintained by the community with the monies received by its being freed from the general school tax, as Bursztynski had already requested in 1841.

The Catholic school feared it would lose part of its income, because the government was unwilling to hand over the 700 rubles once the Jews were freed from the payment. The Curator Muchanow did not wish the Jews to have a Polish school at all. Due to the Polish rebellion, the matter dragged on until 1867, and then the law was issued that the language of instruction in school was to be exclusively Russian.

Zys relocated to Łódź, where he was appointed headmaster of the Łódź community's elementary school. Actually, besides the Russian government's opposition, Polish public opinion was also against separate Jewish schools.

In 1862, in accordance with Wielopolski's school policies, general five grade county schools were opened at which everyone was welcomed.

Immediately, 47 Jewish pupils were registered in the Częstochowa school, and [thus] the matter of a special school for Jewish children was no longer relevant. The ultra-orthodox Jews were not interested in this at all and they continued to send their children to *chadorim*; the assimilationist circles also did not even want to hear about separate schools for Jewish children. They solved the question of education [individually] in accord with their ideologies and incomes.

### **3. The Jews in Częstochowa in the Years 1863-1914**

Immediately after the revolt of 1863, when Poland entered a political period, the goal of which goal to switch from an ideology of national freedom to a plan for economic independence, Częstochowa began to occupy an important place as an industrial and commercial centre.

In some fields, Częstochowa competed even with Łódź but, as in Łódź, there were great development possibilities and so many of the Jewish industrial pioneers moved there. One of them, for example, [was] Ludwig Kohn, the great cotton merchant and industrialist in Łódź between 1861 and 1870, was a Jew from Częstochowa.

There are no detailed economic statistics on the Jews of Częstochowa. It is only known that, in 1897, there were 43,863 residents in Częstochowa, of which 11,764 were Jews, making up 29.5% of the general population.

From 1857, the number of non-Jewish residents grew five-fold and that of the Jews six-fold but, in proportion to the rest of the population, the number of Jews decreased. In 1857, the Jews constituted 34.5% of the population and in 1897, just 29.5%.

In 1862 the “designated areas” for Jews were abolished. This was by a decree of Wielopolski concerning equality of rights.

As mentioned [already], the municipality of Częstochowa took pride in the fact that it decided to abolish the Jewish ghetto two years before the decree.

The abolition of the Jewish area was not limited just to the right of transit from location to location. Jews were now allowed to generally settle in Częstochowa. This caused an *en masse* influx of Jews, who came to Częstochowa from neighbouring cities and towns. But, simultaneously, many Jews who had worked hard in Częstochowa until reaching a financial status, [now] moved to Łódź and Warsaw, in which they hoped for better success in their businesses and more opportunities to put their commercial and industrial abilities to use.

Jews with little capital, and even penniless ones, made efforts and built industrial factories and commercial businesses, thus greatly aiding the city’s development and growth.

In 1897, Shmuel Rafael Landau, the founder of “Proletariat Zionism”, visited Częstochowa and gave a very interesting report.

By his estimate, there was a population of 45,000 in the city, of which 15,000 were Jewish. Landau wrote that most Jews lived on commerce. The throngs of pilgrims who came to visit the Jasna Góra Monastery helped to give life to the city’s commerce.

Landau visited the synagogue and also two lodging houses.

He wrote.

*An actual middle class is missing here. Only 400 people pay community taxes. Before a few [rich] manufacturers, there stand great masses of people who would be delighted to find employment in those factories to guarantee their livelihood.*

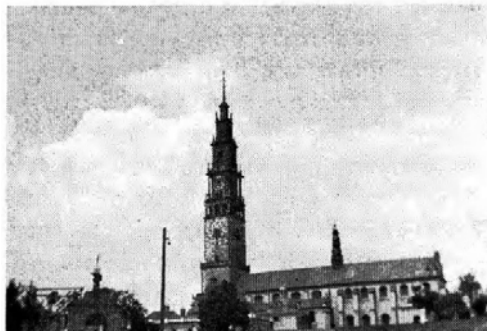
In his report, he tells of his visit to one factory, whose owner truly strove to hire only Jewish workers. In the needles and umbrella accessories factory worked 220 workers, of which over 100 were Jews, [both] men and women. The men earned between four and five rubles a week for an 11 and half hour work day and the young women – between a ruble and 80 kopeks to two and a half rubles a week. The very capable even earned three rubles a week.

Among the workers were several Jews who had earlier worked in taverns... The young women were mainly employed in sorting and packing. The work was divided so that Jews did the manual work and

the Christians worked the steam machines. There were also Jews employed in the paper, celluloid, brick and sack factories. Landau recounts:

*One factory owner showed me to a room in which 83 young women were pressing coloured paper and there was not even one Jewess among them. It should be mentioned that this manufacturer is a generous philanthropist and shows an interest in the training of Jews in farming and craftsmanship.*

In 1902, Khorosh, a Jewish-Russian economist, conducted scientific research into the financial situation of the Częstochowa Jews. He determined that the Jews in Częstochowa had developed a lively and widespread production of toys. The city was called “the Jewish Nurnberg” because, just as Nurnberg had acquired a reputation with its production of toys, so had Częstochowa, during the 1860's, excelled in the manufacture of toys.



*A picture of the Jasna Góra cathedral in Częstochowa*

Khorosh writes that one called [Reb] Shaye was considered a pioneer of this industry in Częstochowa. He was a woodworker and started out by carving memorial medallions bearing the image of Częstochowa's “holy mother” [The Black Madonna]. The medallions became so popular with the Catholic believers that collectors of fine things began looking for them in order to enrich their collections. The demand for these memorial medallions was so great that a special industry developed and many Jews -

including extremely religious ones - started manufacturing Catholic souvenir objects, which the pilgrims, who thronged to Częstochowa from all over the country, willingly purchased.

The Catholic Church could not accept this and issued strict prohibitions, in which the “believers” were ordered not to buy the objects made by Jews.

The craftsmen of Silesia, too, began infiltrating their products into Częstochowa through smuggling. The Russian customs authorities were forced to combat the flood of merchandise from beyond the border.

Despite the fact that the priests were impressed by the beautiful artwork of the Jews, and many of them even took pride in their collections of the devotional objects, the Jews were forced to discontinue this “holy enterprise”.

The decree and the bans did not include the commercialization of Catholic icons and wood reliefs. Therefore these remained in the hands of the Jews. These manufacturers [then] switched to the production of playthings, at first only wooden and later of metal also.

In the 1880's and 1890's, many young Jews from Częstochowa travelled to Nurnberg to be trained in the children's toy industry and, upon their return, developed this industry in Częstochowa.

According to Khorosh's calculation, the yearly value of the toy industry reached 150,000 rubles and, according to an estimate, the production in Częstochowa in 1908 was [worth] in excess of two million

rubles. Given that the production included exclusively cheap toys, the yearly turnover was indeed quite respectable.

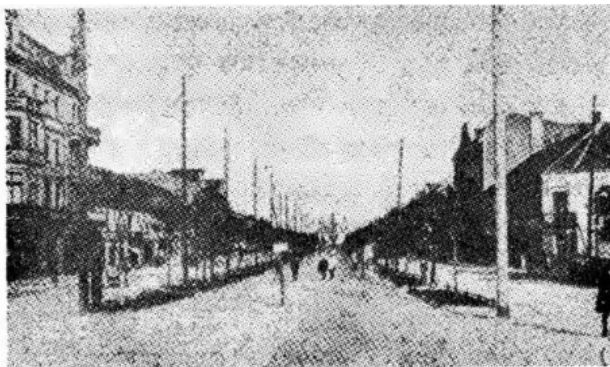
In 1900, there were fifteen toy factories in Częstochowa which employed 300 workers, of whom 805 were Jews. All the factory owners were Jewish.

Apart from the factory workers, others were employed, who worked from home and provided their produce to the factories. There were also agents who dealt exclusively in the circulation of these small craftsmen's wares.

The factories had no machines and were therefore forced to suffice with manual labor, 60% of which was done by girls who worked 12-14 hours a day and received between eighty kopeks and two and a half rubles a week!

Members of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) in Częstochowa showed an interest in the situation of the male and female Jewish workers and, in the articles they published in the papers *Robotnik* [The Worker] and *Przedswit* [The Harbinger] (which was published in London), a clear account of their "industry" is given, but it is unknown whether the party was actually active in organising the workers and improving their status.

While Jews were pioneers in the toy industry in Częstochowa, they were also very active in other areas, like the manufacture of paper and wallpaper, buttons and soap, candles and matches. The five largest frame factories were all Jewish achievements.



*Częstochowa's main avenue - the centre of Jewish commercial life*

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the mineral industry was greatly developed, using Częstochowa's natural resources. Large lime factories, brick-yards, iron foundries, metallurgy and textile industries were built. Gigantic factories were established by those of means, among them a group of wealthy Jews.

Needless to say, houses of trade, intermediary agencies, storage rooms and shipping also grew

and multiplied around the factories.

The role of Częstochowa, as a link between Russia and abroad, brought an enormous financial benefit to the city's development. Jewish Częstochowa's economic growth provoked a strong anti-Semitic sentiment and a [political] movement arose whose aim was to take the industry and commerce from the hands of the Jews and put them into Polish hands. The movement intensified, especially in Częstochowa, where this calamity struck first.

Already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, tremendous propaganda was diffused during the procession of the faithful Polish pilgrims, who swarmed to *Jasna Góra*, not to buy anything from the Jewish merchants, but to support the Polish-Catholic merchants and peddlers [instead]. There was agitation also amongst the Polish workers, which led to the pogrom of 1902. Polish ruffians from all walks of life

participated in the pogrom and their victims were precisely the poorest of the city's Jews, whose meagre shops were raided in a period of one hour.

The Jews resisted and defended their lives and property. The city's butchers particularly distinguished themselves and nothing happened on ulica Targowa, which they protected. It was also necessary to call in the army to subdue the rioters. Two people were killed and many were injured.

The PPS party, of which Częstochowa was one of the strongest bastions, issued a proclamation denouncing the pogrom.

The pogrom caused great agitation both in Jewish and Polish society and the effect of the events was immediately felt in Jewish life. The Jewish bourgeoisie in Częstochowa, who never spared its money to support Polish artists and writers, began to show more signs of active interest in Jewish communal life. There were quite a few cases in which young people from extreme Jewish assimilationist homes began to involve themselves in Jewish matters and even of a nationalistic character.

Until 1899, Jewish life in Częstochowa was inactive. There were no public institutions in Częstochowa besides the *Kehilla*, whose activities were quite insubstantial. The decisive opinion was in the hands of the assimilated Jews, from among whom the community representatives were chosen, because none better were found and especially because they were the only ones willing to bear the financial burden.

At that time, the *Kehilla* desired to find plots for a cemetery and on which to build a *mikvah* [ritual bathhouse] which the community badly needed.

In March 1899, a charitable organisation was founded with the Polish name "*Dobroczynność*" (Charity). The institution set itself the goal to build a Jewish hospital. The number of Jews in the city had grown and there were also Jewish doctors among them who could minister to a small hospital especially for ailing Jews.

In September 1900, the organisation purchased a plot of land on which to build the hospital but, *post factum* it turned out that it was unsuitable for that purpose. The project organisers despaired and nothing was done for seven years. But, in 1908, when the local abattoir was moved to a different location, they began negotiating with the municipality to acquire the newly-vacated plot on which to build the Jewish hospital. The municipality approved the request and on Sivan 18th 5669 [June 7th] (1909), the cornerstone was laid. The cost of the building was 180,000 rubles. It had room for fifty beds and the annual budget reached 30,000 rubles. A part of the expenses, a sum of 6,000 rubles was covered by tax payment to the Jewish community and the rest came from the donations of wealthy philanthropists and fees paid by the sick for their treatment.

The Polish press often praised the Jewish hospital and its magnificent organisation, which was exemplary.

Building the hospital had increased the community's prestige, which began to establish other important institutions and became a model for other communities.

Besides the trade school adjacent to the "*Talmud Torah*" [Hebrew for *cheder*, i.e. religious primary school], it also established a "*Hachnoses Orchim*" (hospitality for guests) that had 740 supporting members.



The Markusfeld family distinguished itself in its support of the community's institutions. In 1910, it built a trade school named after "Adolf and Ernestina Markusfeld", Markus Markusfeld's parents.

The school's maintenance, - which had many teachers, was supported by the family with great sums and the rest was provided by the *Kehilla* and the ICA (*Jüdische Kolonizacja-Gesellschaft* - Jewish Colonisation Association). Besides the financial support, Markusfeld also donated a rich library to the school.

Markusfeld also donated a certain sum to the "*Lira*" [a Hebrew choir] society's library, which was named the "Henryk Markusfeld Library". The grand opening took place in 1912 and Y.L. Peretz was the main orator. This was during a period of antisemitism and a boycott of the Jews, which was especially felt in Częstochowa. Peretz lectured on Jewish history in Poland and developed the idea that the Jews were not "guests" there, but were legitimate citizens. Peretz's speech made a great impression on Markusfeld and attracted him to the institution, which was Jewish-nationalistic in its spirit.

In 1901, a horticultural farm was set up next to the *Talmud Torah*. For this purpose, the ICA appropriated 18,680 rubles. The *Kehilla* added a further 3,000 rubles a year. The farm had 17 acres of land and its budget reached 10,000 rubles a year. The institution had a good reputation and, in 1907, it received the second prize at the Polish horticultural exhibition.

In 1907, the management of the farm comprised Leopold [should say H.] Markusfeld, Leopold Werde (1862-1912), Markus Henig, Y. Nowinski, Stefan Grosman, Stanisław Herc, Dr. L. Batawja and M. Frenkel. Leopold Werde was very active in the city's charitable works and was especially interested in education.

The *Kehilla* maintained two elementary schools for boys and [two] for girls. In 1910, over 300 children attended these schools. The *Kehilla* allocated 10,000 rubles a year for their maintenance. There were also three educational institutions of the "*Talmud Torah*" type in the city, two of which had special buildings. Sixty pupils attended the trade school. Werde covered, secretly, a large part of these institutions' budgets, with sums far exceeding the subsidy from the *Kehilla*.

Between 1909 and 1912, several societies and clubs emerged in Częstochowa, in which ideological debates took place but, unfortunately, no details remain of their activity.

In a report about a session of the "Jewish Society of Education" that was held in April 1907, we learn of a language struggle that took place there. The question arose as to whether lectures there should also be held in Yiddish and if Yiddish books could also be kept in the library. According to the "*Goniec Częstochowski*" [Częstochowa Messenger] newspaper, the majority supported the proposal and those who opposed it left the society.

According to that report, the supporters of Yiddish were Kwiatek, Herc, as well as Sigmund Maiorczik, who was a follower of Peretz and a collector of Jewish folklore. It should be noted here that at the same time, even in Warsaw, there were no assimilated Jews to be seen as founders of Jewish libraries, such were found in Częstochowa.

Among the most important organisations, the "*Gmiles Chassodim*" [charity] fund should be mentioned. It was funded in part by ICA. (Henryk Markusfeld was a member of the ICA Board of Directors and also a relative of the famous banker Hippolyte Wawelberg, who was in charge of the ICA's funds in Russia and Poland. This was the reason Częstochowa received much more aid from the ICA than other communities in Poland).

Jewish public life in Częstochowa developed beyond the Jewish Community Council and even entirely unconnected to it, despite it being the official representative of the local Jewry. This was due to the fact that almost all the institutions sprung up (except for the hospital) at the initiative and energy of individuals, precisely those who did not pay community taxes and hence had no influence over the community leaders.

The communal base of these institutions was generally democratic and had nothing to do with the community leaders, who held fast to their positions and did not wish to relinquish them. Those active in the other institutions were merchants, peddlers, intelligent workers and also craftsmen from diverse circles and ideological paths. Among them were also activists from different political parties, both legitimate and illegal in the authorities' eyes.

Częstochowa surpassed other Polish cities with the "social pulse" that beat in it. Many among the founders of the new systems in political and social thought found a sympathetic ear for their views in Częstochowa. Jewish political parties also appeared on the Jewish streets and they drew moral and financial aid from Częstochowa.

The busy Jewish life found more expression in the "Lira" Society than in the activity of the community. All ideologies from the Jewish streets were represented in this society. The most prominent writers and political activists gave lectures there. Even under the severe conditions of the Tsarist regime, *Lira* succeeded in bringing together representatives of all political ideologies and to hold discussions between them at a very high level and this was even echoed in the Warsaw press.

Of all the provincial cities, only Łódź and Częstochowa were lucky enough to appear in the national press, in which much was told of their activities in them. Noteworthy are, mainly, the detailed reports published in the medical press about the hospitals in these cities, a testimony to their standard and social value.

This is also the case regarding the aged care home and the horticultural farm. A time came when the public's representatives in the institutions became aware of the extent of the impairment to matters without a central institution encompassing all social needs. It would mean no longer a need to maintain special managements and budgets for each individual institution, which caused waste and unnecessary expenditures. Then a war began for the democratisation of the Jewish community councils, which began in Warsaw and, from there, spread to other cities - among them Częstochowa.

The public figures in it prepared for an attack to "bombard the fortress" of the *Kehilla*, which was held by a few assimilationist families as if it were their own.

The Yiddish press in Warsaw began the war and Częstochowa followed suit. The struggle for the democratisation of the *Kehilla* began in 1912, in the days when the Galveston immigration Movement strengthened, which had adherents in the city that leaned towards territorialism. Many young people immigrated to Galveston and the need was felt for the entire public to act in these emigrants' favour. The *Częstochower Tageblatt* [Daily Newspaper], a lively and well-edited newspaper, began the struggle for the democratic management of the *Kehilla*.

The apathy prevailing amongst the public of eligible voters in *Kehilla* elections was such that, in the elections held in 1913, of the 1,200 community-tax payers, only 14 (fourteen!) voted. Obviously, the Russian authorities did not approve these "elections" and announced new ones.

At that time, a special fundraising project was announced to erect a community building to house all the city's institutions. This campaign did not produce any tangible results but, at least, caused the best communal strengths in the city to mobilise for this cause. Even the assimilationist Jews were swept along with the current aspiring for independent Jewish communal life and this brought about a plan being made to publish a special Polish-Jewish newspaper. The Werde and Markusfeld families were to donate the required funds and the socialists Jakub Rozenberg and Dr. Zaks were chosen as editors.

In 1913, the [Jewish] Manufacturers and Merchants Union was also founded and, in 1914 - on the eve of the First World War - the Jewish press in Częstochowa began a struggle to establish a Jewish public school.

The struggle was supported by all the Jewish socialist parties and parts of the Jewish middle-class.

The *Kehilla* organised and widened a little in the public sense - although it remained mainly in the hands of the wealthy assimilationists and its annual budget reached half a million rubles and more. But they were still very far from agreeing with the view of the majority of the public that community representatives should be elected in a democratic manner.

The number of community-tax payers was 1,145, of whom 900 paid an average of 10 rubles a year. The remaining 245 tax-payers brought in 25,800 rubles together. Therefore, the leadership was, effectually, in the hands of the wealthy assimilationists and they began to show more interest in Jewish matters.

When the First World War broke out in August 1914, [the Germans were already in Częstochowa. Jews began to be dragged\*] to forced labour. A few Jews were even shot. A painful, gray and bloody period in the life of the Częstochowa Jews, who faced an unknown tomorrow, began.

#### **4. Rabbis, Scholars and Writers in Częstochowa**

As mentioned [already], until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was no independent Jewish community in Częstochowa. It was annexed as a "branch" to Janów. During the reign of the Duchy of Warsaw, it only had Bet Din. Apparently, it was only during the first years of Congress Poland (1815-1830) that the first rabbi of Częstochowa was appointed. In 1821, all Jewish community councils in Poland were abolished and a "Synagogue Supervision" (officially named "*dozór bóżniczy*") took their places. The aim of the change was clear - revocation of community council rule and its autonomous rights and establishing "Management of Synagogues and their Institutions" in its place. Naturally, there was no longer place in it for a chief rabbi to represent his entire congregation. It is likely that there were unofficial Halachic consultants in Częstochowa then and that very important matters were referred to the rabbi of Piotrków.

Even the name of the first rabbi of Częstochowa is unknown. In the book of responsa *Bris Avruhom* [Covenant of Abraham] by the rabbi of Piotrków, the name "Reb Duvid, the head of the rabbinical court at Częstochowa" is mentioned a few times. Presumably, the reference is to Reb Duvid Yitzchok, author of the commentary on the Pentateuch named "*Beis Duvid*" [House of David], published in 5567 (1807). The author signs himself as "father-of-the-court of the Częstochowa community and head-of-court of Piotrków". Reb Duvid Yitzchok passed away in 5578 (1818) (according to other sources - in 5581, 1821).

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\* Translator's note: these 2 sentences are missing from the Hebrew translation and are taken from the Yiddish original in *Tshenstokhover Yidn*.

According to other information, the first rabbi of Częstochowa was the prodigy Reb Yissuchor Wajngort. But, unfortunately, there are no details about him.

Among the first scholars of Częstochowa to be mentioned is "Reb Aryeh of Częstochowa" and it seems that he was a judge in Częstochowa. In the book "*Maase Choishev*" [Cunning Work], a commentary on the tractates "*Buve Kamme*" [*Bava Kamma*] and "*Shvies*" [*Shevuot*], written by Reb Yosef son of Reb Moishe Neumintz of Pilica, is printed an approbation by the rabbi Reb Aryeh. The book was printed in Lemberg [Lwów] in 5556 (1796). He was Reb Aryeh, known as one of Częstochowa's first scholars.

Many years passed without the name of a rabbi who served in Częstochowa. But this does not prove that there was no rabbi in the city and it may be supposed that [simply] no documentation remains of him.

Probably, in those days, no rabbis great in Torah and authors of books were appointed rabbi and therefore, no mention of them remains. They were not properly eulogised and no biographical accounts about them remain.

But, in 1850 the figure of a rabbi appeared in Częstochowa, whose name became famous not only in Częstochowa, his city of residence, but all throughout Poland and abroad - Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz (1823-1868). His town of provenance is unknown. What is known is that he served as Rabbi of Częstochowa from 1850 until his death in 1868.

It is also known that he visited Berlin and knew the Rabbi, Dr. Michael Sachs (1808-1864), a researcher of Medieval Hebrew poetry and the translator of the *Siddur* [Hebrew prayer book] and the *Machzor* [also Hebrew prayer book] for the High Holidays into German.

Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz corresponded with scholars and also knew famous rabbis and preachers in Germany. He visited Prussia many times and bought books there and held debates in Torah matters with the rabbis in those parts. This does not mean that Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz was a progressive rabbi in the style of the German rabbis. On the contrary - he was known as a pious rabbi of the Polish school who nevertheless also had a connection to the German rabbis and who did not see in *Haskala* a danger to the religious foundations of Orthodox Judaism.

Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz was also a renowned preacher. One of his faithful disciples and followers, Moishe Majmon, wrote in the "*Jutrenka*" periodical (1863, #40), of his teacher, that he visited Warsaw often and that his sermons were well-received there by the scholarly *Misnagedim* [opponents of Chasidism].

Following his death (in 1868), Szymon Peltyn, a great scholar and a *maskil*, editor of the *Izraelita* periodical, published an obituary article in his paper about the deceased, whom he apparently knew personally, and these are his words, written with great admiration:

*He was the only rabbi in our country who knew how to connect between true religiosity and free scientific thought. He was a great expert in rabbinical literature and no less so in general sciences.*

He also described how difficult it had been for Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz to explain to his community that there is no contradiction between the study of general knowledge and religious studies and the

observance of the precepts. He was affiliated with the "*Misnagedim*" and fought bravely against Chasidism and all that it entailed.

The Chasidim, on their part, persecuted him and, more than once, denounced him as going hand-in-hand with the Epicureans [unbelievers]. But he was a symbol of goodness and politeness. Void of bitterness or a revengeful thought for those opposed to his ideology, he was a man blessed with a sense of justness towards all God's beings.

His view was that one did not have to fear for the pious, for they would not become non-believers, but his concern was for the non-believers lest they become "complete *Goyim*", God forbid.

Although the community was in the hands of the assimilationists, it was managed according to the rabbi's will. He delivered his sermons in Yiddish and opposed all religious reforms, even in relatively unimportant matters.

The only thing he agreed to was the learning of Polish, followed by Russian, mathematics and a little geography at the city's *Talmud Torahs* [*cheiders*].

His house was a "meeting house for sages" [see *Pirkei Avot* 1, *mishna* 4]. The city's scholars assembled at his house and debated the new research into Jewish-wisdom of the scholars in Germany. At his house, many heard, for the first time in their lives, about Reb Yom-Tov Lipman Zunz, Michael Sachs and other scholars in Germany. The rabbi himself was a subscriber to all the Jewish-wisdom publications that appeared in the day.

A selection of Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz's sermons was published in 1863 in his book "*Nidvoys Pi*" [Offerings of My Mouth], a collection of sermons and Halachic casuistry, which was very well-received by all the literary critics in his generation.

Moishe Majmon also published a review of his book in that same periodical edited by Daniel Neufeld - whom the rabbi also valued - and praised him greatly as a model for a rabbi in Poland. Neufeld himself also expressed his affection and admiration for the rabbi in an article he printed in his weekly paper "*Jutrzenka*" (1863, #4).

The second part of Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz's sermons was published by his son in 1870, in Warsaw. It is a pity that Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz's sermons have not yet become known as material to describe the spiritual standing of the small community in that period. The allegories and descriptions he wrote in his book were taken from reality. There are no exaggerations or a moralizing tone. Only an appeal to common-sense, a moderate criticism of evil traits, that are to be gently distanced. Specifically, in his sermons, he dealt with questions of education and described the education of children in wealthy homes.

His correspondence with Jewish sages (Sachs, Zunz and Kirchheim) and Polish men of science in Warsaw and Łódź, unfortunately, were mostly lost and only a few [letters] remain.

The *maskil* Józef Graf published two very interesting letters, translated into Polish, that the rabbi wrote to the *maskil* Izydor Kempieński in Łódź (*Izraelita*, 1869, #8-9) in which there are many homiletic interpretations combined with thoughtful observations and explanations on the words of the sages,

from which may be seen the rabbi's expertise in the Jewish *Haskala* movement that originated in Germany while, at the same time, his devotion to faith and Jewish tradition.

His son, Jehuda Rabinowicz, was more a *maskil* than a pious Jew, although he too was a great scholar. He died very young, a year after his father's death (in 1869), when he was just 24.

There is no knowledge of a rabbi serving in Częstochowa between 1868 and 1887. It was probably difficult to find - after Rabbi Yitzchok Rabinowicz's death - a suitable candidate, approved by all of the townspeople, the wealthy *Maskilim* on one hand, who were the majority in the city, and the Orthodox on the other.

Between 1887 and 1894 Reb Gerszon Rawinson served as rabbi in Częstochowa and, in 1894, Reb Nachum Asz was chosen in his place.

In his days, the city developed and grew and important institutions were established within it. Reb Nachum Asz had tremendous influence over the community leaders and he was well-liked by all the city's Jews.

Besides the rabbis, there were also many Talmudic scholars in Częstochowa who were famous throughout Poland - and some, even abroad.

Names of Częstochowa Jews are very often to be found in the lists of subscribers of various *Haskala* and religious books of that time. The name of the Oppenheim family is repeated over three generations in the lists from 1850 to 1907. In 1907, a book entitled *Metsudas ben Tzion* [Fortress of Zion] was published in Piotrków; among the subscribers is an Oppenheim and his grandfather's name is mentioned in a book by the *maskil* Mandelsburg, that was published in Warsaw in 1850.

In Częstochowa there were also scholars known as "givers of endorsements" to books; in the book "*Pirkei Uves*" [*Pirkei Avot*, Ethics of the Fathers] that was printed in Krotoszyn in 1850, is the approbation of the scholar Reb Nechemie Landau of Częstochowa, the father of Bernard Landau, the industrialist and estate owner who was known as one of the pillars of *Haskala* in Częstochowa.

Among the important *Maskilim* whose names appear as "subscribers in advance" on Hebrew books were Aba'le Landau, Ezyk Szymon Ginsberg, Icek Glikson, Icek Frajman, Icek Winer, Abram Steinman, Gerszon Landau, Dawid Landau, Józef Szmidberg, Szaja Hajman, Józef Zand, Szaja Landau, Mordche Kon, Mosek Lajb Wejnberg, Nuta Rajcher and Fajgenblat.

Of the Jews who wrote in Polish, the name of Adam Wolberg is of renown. He wrote articles for the Polish press and also for the "*Izraelita*". Of special value are his articles on the architecture of the timber synagogues in Poland.

In 1910, Wolberg created a sensation with his article entitled "I Blame the Polish Press" which seeks only sensations and demoralises society and leads it from its path of political activity.

Two Częstochowa Jews wrote novels and stories in Polish. These were Edward Zaks and Maria Glikson. Zaks even wrote a novel about Jewish life. Glikson was close to the Polish Socialist Party and wrote under the pseudonym Marion.

In 1926, the last of the Częstochowa *Maskilim*, Zvi Perla, died. He was born in 1841. In 1861, he took part in the Polish nationalistic protests, was arrested and imprisoned for a few months. He knew the Polish and Hebrew languages perfectly and educated generations of Jewish youth in Częstochowa and later in Łódź.

After the rising of an independent Poland, the representative of Jewish wisdom, Rabbi Dr. Chaim Ze'ev Hirsberg, a Jew from Tarnopol, lived in Częstochowa. He was an expert orientalist - he published some of his research in Polish and Hebrew periodicals.

Following the departure from the city of Dr. Majer Bałabans (who was headmaster of the Hebrew gymnasium in Częstochowa for some years), Dr. Hirsberg carried on the work of cataloguing the Hebrew books of the Częstochowa monastery – work begun by Dr. Bałaban.

The Kraków Academy of Sciences planned to publish a catalogue of that library (which included printed materials from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the 18<sup>th</sup> century), but the Second World War broke out and undid this plan.