

**Sz. Oderberg**

## **Zionist Youth in Częstochowa**

In the 1930's, the "Zionist Youth" organisation operated amongst the local young people.

Its origins were in the organisation of young students and graduates of the Jewish high school - its pupils formed the nucleus and leadership of "Zionist Youth".

As in other cities, Częstochowa, in 1929, saw the rise of the youth organisation "Herzliya" Following the national merger of "*Ha'Shomer Ha'Leumi*" [The National Guardian], "Herzliya", "Hebrew Youth" became "Zionist Youth".

At first, the youth gathered in the Jewish High School, with the full approval of the high school's management (its Director, Mr. Prost, came to Israel, became a teacher in Tel-Aviv and, afterwards, the director of the high school in Rehovot. He died in Israel) and its teachers, [who] were Dr Mering, who perished in Treblinka, Janowski z''l and Professor Dr Ch. Z. Hirsztberg (now lecturer at Bar-Ilan university) - as well as leaders of the local Zionist organisation: Dr Bram, J. Gerichter, Icek, Czestochowski and others.

Over the course of the years, "Zionist Youth" broadened its activities beyond the school walls and operated, for some time, at the Zionist Organisation building and at various halls in the city - at the Viner, Imich [and] Gostynski buildings and at the abandoned "Oron" factory, in which a few youth organisations were based.

It was then a period of Zionist awakening among the Jews of Poland, but the youth, that had been brought up to a bourgeois life, was distant from political activities.

A section of this youth amused themselves with ideas about "*Weltschmerz*" [Ger.; world-weariness]. The working youth warmed to socialist ideas and were not interested in the problematics of the Land of Israel and the youth, who were studying, were mostly unorganised and only "fulfilled" their immigration if their parents emigrated.

The great merit of the "Zionist Youth" was in instilling the idea of the Redemption and practical Zionism in student youth and, through it, to include wider youth circles of both assimilationist and ultra-orthodox families. Even in homes in which Zionism was viewed as a good and beneficial idea, it is good only for others.

The bourgeois Zionist Youth found, at its beginning, a way to the hearts of many novices, from all social strata.

The different activities of the "Zionist Youth" were mainly informational lectures: on the history of Zionism, Jewish history, sociology, education problems, the Land of Israel, the individual and society etc.. They incorporated educational tools, similar to those of the World Scouting Movement - summer camps, marches, troop meetings etc..

Those who remember the conditions of political activity in the Diaspora, in a hostile environment, can appreciate the value of the "Zionist Youth" activity.



*The leadership of the "Zionist Youth" in Częstochowa*

*In the picture (among the others): Sz. Oderberg, C. Grauman,  
J. Horowicz, B. Tempelhof, J. Tenenbaum, Sz. Kamrat, D.  
Kartuz and M. Szajn*

At the head of the "Zionist Youth" in our city, stood a "triumvirate": Szlojme Oderberg - now in Israel (Holon), Jakob Horowicz z''l and Dawid Kartuz z''l, and, over the course of the years, after the changing of the guard, new leaders were appointed as leaders: Mojsze Szajn - now in Israel (Kfar Bilu), Szmul Kamrat (Ramat-Gan), Juda Tenenbaum (Holon), Zvi Grauman, Basia Tempelhof, Nechemie Blechsztajn, Miryam Czarnylas and Miryam Pelc who have passed away.



*A class of the "Zionist Youth" in Częstochowa*

*In the picture (among others): Sz. Oderberg, Sz. Altman, Sz. Braun, T. Danziger, M. Horowicz, B. Tempelhof, Laks,  
M. Moszynski, M. Czarnylas, L. Kokosówka, M. Rozen and Sz. Szajnweksler*

The "Zionist Youth" engaged, with full enthusiasm, in the raising of funds and was, for many years, "the champion of youth" in collecting donations for Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael, whose [local] branch was, initially, by Sz. Oderberg and J. Tenenbaum.

Under the influence of the movement's indoctrination and aspiring to become pioneers, many trainees went to training centres. Among those going to the training point in Łódź were Izaak Chawes and Basia Tempelhof z''l, and, to distinguish the living [from the deceased], Chana Stopnicki - now in Israel, in kibbutz Usha - Ester Kenigsberg (kibbutz Negba), M. Ch. Szajn, Sara Grauman (Tel-Aviv), God Czubatka (Holon) and Ester Bratt (Rishon Lezion).

K. Zubermań and Miryam Pelc z''l trained in Cieszyn and, for agricultural training, Miryam Czarnylas z''l went to Krajowice.

The agricultural farm at Czechowice (next to Bielsko [-Biała]) was initially run by Dawid Kartuz and, later, by Szlojme Oderberg.

Among the first immigrants [to the Land of Israel] were: Józef Szajn, who participated in the *Maccabiah* [Jewish Olympics] as boxing champion (now resides in Tel-Aviv). The following immigrated with their parents: trainees Tovah Braun (now in kibbutz Ein Hashofet) and Tovah Danziger (in Haifa) and a few students, Kamrat, Fridman, Sara Bratt and others whose names we've forgotten.

(The results of the educational activity were seen even in the horrendous and difficult period of the Nazi occupation. The "Zionist Youth" trainees maintained an internal connection amongst themselves and encouraged the Jewish public to take a proud stance. They operated underground in Częstochowa and in other places as well (Treblinka), together with the rest of the movements and displayed a social maturity, as they were taught in our movement.)



*A group of General Zionist pioneers in 1937*