

POLAND, republic in E. Central Europe; the kingdom of Poland and the grand duchy of Lithuania united formally (Poland-Lithuania) in 1569. This article is arranged according to the following outline:

THE EARLY SETTLEMENTS**JEWISH LEGAL STATUS****ECONOMIC ACTIVITY****CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE****1569–1648: COLONIZATION OF THE UKRAINE****INTERNAL JEWISH LIFE****FROM CHMIELNICKI TO THE FIRST PARTITION****AFTER PARTITION****INDEPENDENT POLAND****HOLOCAUST PERIOD****Reichsgau Wartheland**

GHETTOIZATION

PHYSICAL ANNIHILATION

Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen**Regierungsbezirk Zichenau (Ciechanow)****Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz (East Upper Silesia)****General Government**

WARSAW DISTRICT

LUBLIN DISTRICT

CRACOW DISTRICT

RADOM DISTRICT

GALICIA DISTRICT

Bezirk Bialystok**Generalbezirk Litauen and Weissrussland****Generalbezirk Wolhynien-Podolien****Demographic Total****Jewish Resistance**

PARTISANS

Jewish-Polish Relations during the War**AFTER WORLD WAR II****Rescue of Jewish Children****Renewal of Jewish Life****Cultural, Religious, and Economic Life****The Flight from Poland****Anti-Jewish Excesses****The Soviet Example****1956–1967****Final Liquidation****Later Developments****RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL****The Change of 1950****Improved Relations in 1956****The Six-Day War****Emigration to Israel****Trade Relations****THE EARLY SETTLEMENTS**

While Jews had visited the kingdom of Poland and been economically active there at an early stage of the country's consolidation, from the tenth century approximately, they had no contact with the grand duchy of Lithuania until King Gedimin conquered the regions of Volhynia and Galicia (as it was later called) in 1321.

Jews came to Poland mainly from the west and southwest and from the very beginning were of *Ashkenazi culture.

Those in the regions conquered by Gedimin had come there from the south and the southeast, chiefly from *Kiev, and were thus influenced to a large degree by Byzantine Jewish culture patterns; some think that they could have had traces of *Khazar ethnic descent and culture patterns. Jews in the region of *Lvov and its environs were of the same provenance to a large extent. In the end the western Ashkenazi culture became dominant.

Polish-Jewish legendary tradition tells about a Jewish merchant, Abraham Prochownik (unlikely to mean "the gunpowder man," which would be completely anachronistic, but probably, "the dust-covered," an epithet found in the early Middle Ages in relation to merchants), who was offered the Polish crown around the middle of the ninth century, before Piast, the first, legendary, Polish king, ascended to the throne. According to another legend, at the end of the ninth century a Jewish delegation in Germany appealed to Prince Leszek to admit them to Poland. The request was granted after prolonged questioning, and later on privileges were granted to the immigrants. Although almost certainly formulated in their present version in the 16th–17th centuries – at a time of fierce struggle between Jewish and Christian townsmen (see below) – the legends do transmit meaningful historic elements. Jews did first come to Poland as transient, dust-covered merchants, and they did come there to escape the suffering and pressure brought to bear on them in the lands of the German Empire. The theories of some historians, that place-names like Żydowo, Żydatycze, Żydowska Wola, and Kozarzów indicate the presence of Jewish villages and peasants and even the presence of Khazar settlements in the regions where they are found, have been thoroughly disproved. The first Jews that the Poles encountered must certainly have been traders, probably slave traders, of the type called in 12th-century Jewish sources *Holekhei Rusyah* (travelers to Russia). Some of them may have stayed for years in Poland, giving rise to the legends and fixing their dates. The chronicler Cosmas of Prague relates that the persecutions of the First Crusade caused Jews to move from *Bohemia to Poland in 1098. From this point undisputed and datable information on Jews in Poland begins to appear. According to the chronicler Vincent Kadlubek, under Boleslav III heavy penalties were laid on those who harmed Jews bodily.

The first sizable groups and fixed communities of Jews settled and established themselves in the region of Silesia, then part of Polish society and culture but later Germanized. A large part of Jewish settlement in what was later consolidated as the kingdom of Poland came from Silesia, and a great proportion of the immigration from further west and from the southwest passed through it. As late as the 15th century Silesian Jewry kept its ties with Poland. Jewish settlement grew steadily, though at first slowly, in Polish principalities to the east of Silesia. Excavations in *Great Poland and near *Wloclawek have unearthed coins with Hebrew inscriptions issued under the princes Mieczyslaw III (1173–1209), Casimir II the Just (1177–94), Boleslav the Curly (1201), and Leszek the White (1205). Some inscriptions directly concern the ruler, like the

Hebrew legend “Mieszko King of Poland” (משקא קרל פולסקי) or “Mieszko Duke” (משקא דוכוס); others include the names and titles of the Jewish *mintmasters, one of them even with its honorific title of **nagid*; “of the [coining] house of Abraham the son of Isaac Nagid” (דבי אברהם בר יצחק נגיד); another showing that the Jewish mintmaster was settled in Poland: “Joseph [of] Kalisz” (יוסף קאליש). Minting money was an important social and economic function, and as some of the inscriptions indicate, these finds are evidence of a circle of rich and enterprising Jewish merchants in the principalities of great Poland and Mazovia in the 12th century, some of them in close contact with the princely courts, some priding themselves on their descent from old Jewish families or on their own role in Jewish leadership. Rulers were quick to realize what they could gain from such immigrants; in 1262 Prince Boleslav the Shy forbade a monastery in *Lesser Poland to take Jews under its sovereignty.

By that time, however, a new era had already begun in the history of the colonization of Poland in general and of the settlement of Jews in it in particular. From 1241 onward the Mongol invasions caused heavy losses in life and destruction to property in Poland. Subsequently, the princes of Poland eagerly sought immigrants from the west, mainly from Germany, and gave them energetic assistance to settle in the villages and towns. Various organized groups settled in the cities that were granted the privilege of living according to German Magdeburg *Law; thus Polish towns became prevalently German in origin and way of life. Though the children of the immigrants became gradually Polonized, the traditions and social attitudes of the German town remained an active force and basic framework of town life in Poland of the 15th to 17th centuries. From the Jewish point of view the most important, and harmful, result of this basic attitude of the Polish towns was the tradition of the *guilds against competition and against new initiative in individual commercial enterprise and the activities of craftsmen. The townsmen also inherited a direct and bitter legacy of hatred of the Jews and the baleful and deeply rooted German image of the Jew.

Jews did not only come to Poland in the wake of the German *Drang nach Osten*, tracts of which are found in the 13th-century *Sefer Hasidim*, for instance, in the description of the creation of a new settlement in a primeval forest by Jews (*Sefer Hasidim*, ed. J. Wistinetzki (1924), 113, no. 371). For them the move was a continuation of and linking with earlier Jewish settlement in Poland. They also had compelling reasons stemming from the circumstances of their life in Western and Central Europe to leave their homes there and go to Poland-Lithuania. Their insecure position in this region was a compound of the atmosphere of fear and danger generated by the *Crusades, the insecurity of settlement caused by the *expulsions, the wave of massacres in Germany in particular between 1298 and 1348 (see *Rindfleisch; *Armleder; *Blood Libel; *Black Death; *Host, Desecration of), the insecurity and popular hatred in Germany and German-Bohemian-Moravian towns in the second half of the 14th century and the first half of the 15th,

the tensions and dangers created by the *Hussite revolution and wars in Bohemia-Moravia and southern Germany in the early 15th century, and the worsening situation of Jews in the kingdoms of Christian Spain after the massacres of 1391. All these factors, combined with the success of the settlers in Poland-Lithuania, induced large and variegated groups of Jewish immigrants from various countries – Bohemia-Moravia, Germany, Italy, Spain, from colonies in the Crimea – to go to Poland-Lithuania long after the original German drive had died out. As Moses b. Israel *Isserles put it in the 16th century, “it is preferable to live on dry bread and in peace in Poland” than to remain in better conditions in lands more dangerous for Jews” (Responso, no. 73). He even coined a pun on the Hebrew form of Poland (Polin), explaining it as deriving from two Hebrew words, *poh lin* (“here he shall rest”).

The results of this immigration were evident almost immediately. In 1237 Jews are mentioned in Plock. The Jewish community of *Kalisz bought a cemetery in 1283, so it must have been organized some time before, as the fact that the first writ of privileges for Jews was issued in 1264 by the prince of Kalisz also tends to show (see below). A *Judengasse* (*Jewish Quarter) is mentioned in *Cracow in 1304, lying between the town market and the town walls, but there must have been a community in Cracow long before then for about 1234 “Rabbi Jacob Savra of Cracow that sits in Poland, a great scholar and fluent in the entire Talmud” put forward his own opinion against that of the greatest contemporary scholars of Germany and Bohemia. In 1356 there is a record of the Jewish community at *Lvov; in 1367 at *Sandomierz; in 1379 at *Poznan; in 1387 at Pyzdry; and about 1382 at *Lyuboml. In the grand duchy of Lithuania Jewish communities are found in the 14th century at *Brest-Litovsk (1388), *Grodno (1389), and *Troki (1398). The volume of immigration grew continuously. By the end of the 15th century more than 60 Jewish communities are known of in united Poland-Lithuania. They were dispersed from Wroclaw (*Breslau) and *Gdansk in the west to *Kiev and *Kamenets Podolski in the east. The number of Jews living in Poland by that date is greatly disputed: At the end of the 15th century there were between 20,000 and 30,000.

JEWISH LEGAL STATUS

The foundations of the legal position of the Jews in Poland were laid down in the 13th to 15th centuries. The basic “general charters” of Jews in Poland have their origin in the writ issued by Prince *Boleslav v the Pious of Kalisz in 1264. This “statute of Kalisz” (Pol. *Statut kaliski*) – as it is called in literature – was also an “immigrant” from the countries which Jews left to come to Poland, being based on the statute of Duke Frederick II of Austria and on derivative statutes issued in Bohemia and Hungary. The Jews are seen, accepted, and defended as a group whose main business is *moneylending against pledges. With the unification of Poland into a kingdom, King *Casimir III the Great strongly favored the Jewish element in the cities of Poland, the German element having proved untrustworthy under his father, the unifier of Poland, Ladislaus I Lokietek.



Map 1. The Partitions of Poland.

Casimir broadened the statute of Kalisz while ratifying it for the Jews of his kingdom (in 1334, 1364, and 1367). Yet basically the same conception of the Jews as **servi camerae regis* and as protected moneylenders remains throughout. The legal status of the Jews changed considerably in Poland, but not through any central reinterpretation of their rights and standing, which

remained in theory based on and conceived of in terms of the Boleslavian-Casimirian statutes, codified and ratified by King Casimir IV Jagello in 1453. Throughout the 14th century, there was opposition to Jews accepting landed property as security for loans; while throughout the 15th century town and church tried to insist that Jews should wear the distinctive **badge*.

On several occasions these undercurrents broke out in sharp and violent decisions and action. During the Black Death “All Jews ... almost throughout Poland were massacred” (*omnes judaei ... fere in tota Polonia deleti sunt*; Stanislas of Olivia in his *Chronica Olivska*, for the year 1349). The martyrs were defined by German Jews as “the communities and kingdom of Cracow, its scholars and population” (S. Salfeld, *Das Martyrologium des Nuernberger Memorbuches* (1898), 82). By that time hatred of the Jews was also widespread among the nobility. In the statute of Lesser Poland of 1347, paragraph 26 claims that “the aim of the perfidious Jews is not so much to take their faith away from the Christians as to take away their wealth and property.” In 1407 the Cracow populace was diverted by the spectacle of a Jewish moneylender being led through the streets adorned with a crown set with forged coins – he was accused of forging currency – to be horribly tortured and burned in public. The citizens of Cracow claimed as early as 1369 that the Jews were “dominating” the town and complained of their cruelty and perfidy. In the main King Ladislaus II Jagello was hostile to Jews, though some of them were numbered among his financial and business agents, like Volchko, whom the king hoped in vain to bring over to Christianity.

Church circles were very active in their opposition to the Jews. Many priests and directors of monasteries, who had originally come from Germany, brought to Poland the hostile traditions concerning the city-dwelling accursed Jew. As early as 1267 the Polish Church Council of Wrocław (Breslau) outlined its anti-Jewish policy; its main aim was to isolate the Jews as far as possible from the Christians, not only from the communion of friendship and table but also to separate them in quarters surrounded by a wall or a ditch: “for as up to now the land of Poland is newly grafted on to the Christian body, it is to be feared that the Christian people will more easily be misled by the superstitions and evil habits of the Jews that live among them” (*quum adhuc Terra Polonica sit in corpore christianitatis nova plantatio, ne forte eo facilius populus christianus a cohabitantium Iudeorum superstitionibus et pravis moribus inficiatur*; Aronius, Regesten, 302 no. 724). With various modifications, this was restated in subsequent Church councils. In the 15th century this ecclesiastical attitude found new and influential expression. Cardinal Zbigniew *Oleśnicki and the chronicler Jan *Długosz were the main leaders of the anti-Jewish faction. When Jewish representatives came to King Casimir IV Jagello to obtain the ratification of their charters, Oleśnicki opposed it vehemently. He invited to Poland “the scourge of the Jews,” John of *Capistrano, fresh from his “success” in engineering a *Host desecration libel which resulted in the burning of many Jews and expulsion of the community of Wrocław. In vain Capistrano tried to influence the king not to ratify the Jewish charters. Oleśnicki himself wrote to the king in support of his effort: “Do not imagine that in matters touching the Christian religion you are at liberty to pass any law you please. No one is great and strong enough to put down all opposition to himself when the interests of the faith

are at stake. I therefore beseech and implore your royal majesty to revoke the aforementioned privileges and liberties. Prove that you are a Catholic sovereign, and remove all occasion for disgracing your name and for worse offenses that are likely to follow” (*Monumenta Mediaevi*, ed. Szugski, Codex Epistolaris s. XV, T. II past posterior p. 147). As a result of this pressure, the Nieszawa statute of 1454 decreed the repeal of all Jewish charters, but the repeal was short-lived. Perhaps central to the definition of the status of the Jews was the decision of King Sigismund I in 1534 that the Jews need not carry any distinguishing mark on their clothing. Despite the contrary resolution of the Sejm (Diet) of *Piotrków in 1538, the king’s decision remained.

Major changes in the status of the Jews occurred throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, but they came about either through the issuance of particular writs of rights by kings for towns and communities – both in favor of Jews as well as to their detriment (e.g., the *privilegia de non tolerandis judaeis* given to many towns in Poland) – or through the action of various magnates, whose power was continuously growing in Poland in these centuries. Some of the latter, nicknamed *Krolewięta* (“kinglets”), granted Jews many and costly rights in the new municipal settlements they were erecting on their expansive estates – the “private townships” of Poland, so-called in distinction to the old “royal townships.” To a slight degree, change resulted from the new economic activity of the Jews, mainly in the east and southeast of Poland-Lithuania, and their move toward colonization there.

The foundations of the legal status of the Jews in the grand duchy of Lithuania were laid by Grand Duke Vitold in writs of law granted to the Jews of Brest-Litovsk in 1388 and to the Jews of Grodno in 1389. Though formally based on the rights of the Jews of Lvov in Poland, in letter and spirit these charters reveal an entirely different conception of the place of Jews in society. The writ for the Grodno community states that “from the above-mentioned cemetery – in its present location as well as on ground that might be bought later – and also from the ground of their Jewish synagogue, no taxes whatsoever will have to be given to our treasury.” Not only are the Jewish place of worship and cemetery tax free – a concession that indicates interest in having Jewish settlers in the town – but also “what is more, we permit them to hold whatever views they please in their homes and to prepare at their homes any kind of drink and to serve drinks brought from elsewhere on the condition that they pay to our treasury a yearly tax. They may trade and buy at the market, in shops and on the streets in full equality with the citizens; they may engage in any kind of craft.” Thus, in granting the Jews complete freedom to trade and engage in any craft, the grand duke gave them economic equality with the Christian citizens. He also envisaged their having agricultural or partially agricultural occupations: “As to the arable lands as well as grazing lands, those that they have now, as well as those that they will buy later, they may use in full equality with the townspeople, paying like them to our treasury.” The Jews are here considered as merchants,

craftsmen, and desirable settlers in the developing city. As the grand duchy merged with Poland to an ever-increasing degree, in particular in the formal, legal, and social spheres, the basic concepts of the *servi camerae* also influenced the status of Lithuanian Jews (as was already hinted at in the formal reference to the rights and status of the Jews of Lvov). In spite of this, the general trend in Lithuanian towns and townships remained the same as that expressed in the late 16th-century charters. In 1495 the Jews were expelled from Lithuania. They were brought back in 1503; all their property

was returned and opportunities for economic activity were restored.

Thus, on the threshold of the 16th century, the gradually merging grand duchy of Lithuania and kingdom of Poland had both a fully worked out legal concept of the status of the Jews. In Poland, the whole conception was medieval to the core: Legally and formally the attitude to the Jews remained unchanged from their first arrival from the west and southwest. In Lithuania, on the other hand, from the start the formal expressions reveal a conception of a Jewish "third estate,"



Map 2. Major Jewish communities in Poland in 1931.

equal in economic opportunity to the Christian townspeople. Particular legal enactments in Poland took cognizance of the change in the economic role of the Jews in Polish society. In Lithuania the formal enactments were always suited to their economic role, and to a large extent the dynamics of 16th- and 17th-century development could be accommodated in the old legal framework.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

From the very first the Jews of Poland developed their economic activities through moneylending toward a greater variety of occupations and economic structures. Thus, by the very dynamics of its economic and social development, Polish Jewry constitutes a flat existential denial and factual contradiction of the antisemitic myth of “the Jewish spirit of usury.” On the extreme west of their settlement in Poland, in Silesia, although they were mainly engaged in moneylending, Jews were also employed in agriculture. When the Kalisz community in 1287 bought a cemetery it undertook to pay for it in pepper and other Oriental wares, indicating an old connection with the trade in spices. As noted above, the Jewish mintmasters of the 12th century must undoubtedly have been large-scale traders. In 1327 Jews were an important element among the participants at the *Nowy Sacz fair. Throughout the 14th and 15th centuries Jews were occupied to a growing degree in almost every branch of trade pursued at that time. Jews from both the grand duchy of Lithuania and Poland traded in cloth, dyes, horses, and cattle (and on a fairly large scale). At the end of the 15th century they engaged in trade with Venice, Italy, with Kaffa (Feodosiya), and with other Genoese colonies in the Crimea, and with Constantinople. Lvov Jews played a central role in this trade, which in the late 15th and early 16th centuries developed into a large-scale land-transit trade between the Ottoman Empire and Christian Europe. Through their participation in this trade and their contacts with their brethren in the Ottoman Empire, many Jewish communities became vital links in a trade chain that was important to both the various Christian kingdoms and the Ottoman Empire. Lithuanian Jews participated to the full and on a considerable scale in all these activities, basing themselves both on their above-mentioned recognized role in Lithuanian civic society and on their particular opportunities for trade with the grand principality of *Moscow and their evident specialization in dyes and dyeing. Obviously, in all these activities, all links with Jewish communities in Central and Western Europe were beneficial.

During all this period Jews were engaged in moneylending, some of them (e.g., Jordanis *Lewko, his son Canaan, and Volchko) on a large scale. They made loans not only to private citizens but also to magnates, kings, and cities, on several occasions beyond the borders of Poland. The scope of their monetary operations at their peak may be judged by the fact that in 1428 King Ladislaus II Jagello accused one of the Cracow city counselors of appropriating the fabulous sum of 500,000 zlotys which the Jews had supplied to the royal treasury.

To an increasing extent many of the Jewish moneylenders became involved in trade. They were considered by their lords as specialists in economic administration. In 1425 King Ladislaus II Jagello charged Volchko – who by this time already held the Lvov customs lease – with the colonization of a large tract of land: “As we have great confidence in the wisdom, carefulness, and foresight of our Lvov customs-holder, the Jew Volchko ... after the above-mentioned Jew Volchko has turned the above-mentioned wilderness into a human settlement in the village, it shall remain in his hands till his death.” King Casimir Jagello entrusted to the Jew Natko both the salt mines of Drohobycz (*Drogobych) and the customs station of Grejdek, stating in 1452 that he granted it to him on account of his “industry and wisdom so that thanks to his ability and industry we shall bring in more income to our treasury.” The same phenomenon is found in Lithuania. By the end of the 15th century, at both ends of the economic scale Jews in Poland were becoming increasingly what they had been from the beginning in Lithuania: a “third estate” in the cities. The German-Polish citizenry quickly became aware of this. By the end of the 15th century, accusations against the Jews centered on unfair competition in trade and crafts more than on harsh usury. Not only merchants but also Jewish craftsmen are mentioned in Polish cities from 1460 onward. In 1485 tension in Cracow was so high that the Jewish community was compelled to renounce formally its rights to most trades and crafts. Though this was done “voluntarily,” Jews continued to pursue their living in every decent way possible. This was one of the reasons for their expulsion from Cracow to Kazimierz in 1495. However, the end of Jewish settlement in Cracow was far from the end of Jewish trade there; it continued to flourish and aggravate the Christian townspeople, as was the case with many cities (like *Lublin and *Warsaw) which had exercised their right *de non tolerandis Judaeis* and yet had to see Jewish economic activity flourishing at their fairs and in their streets.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE

In Poland and Lithuania from the 13th century onward Jewish culture and society were much richer and more variegated than has been commonly accepted. Even before that, the inscriptions on the bracteate coins of the 12th century indicate talmudic culture and leadership traditions by the expressions used (*rabbi*, רַבִּי, *nagid*, נָגִיד). About 1234, as mentioned, Jacob Savra of Cracow was able to contradict the greatest talmudic authorities of his day in Germany and Bohemia. In defense of his case he “sent responsa to the far ends of the west and the south” (E.E. Urbach (ed.), in *Sefer Arugat ha-Bosem*, 4 (1963), 120–1). The author of *Sefer Arugat ha-Bosem* also quotes an interpretation and emendation that “I have heard in the name of Rabbi Jacob from Poland” (*ibid.*, 3 (1962), 126). Moses Zaltman, the son of *Judah b. Samuel he-Ḥasid, states: “Thus I have been told by R. Isaac from Poland in the name of my father.... thus I have been told by R. Isaac from Russia.... R. Mordecai from Poland told me that my father said” (Ms. Cambridge 669. 2, fol. 69 and 74). This manuscript evidence



Map 3. Provincial distribution of Polish Jewry in towns and villages (1931). Based on data from R. Mahler, *Yehudei Polin bein Shetei Millhamot Olam*, 1968.

proves conclusively that men from Poland and from southern Russia (which in the 13th century was part of the grand duchy of Lithuania) were close disciples of the leader of the *Ḥasidei Ashkenaz. The names of Polish Jews in the 14th century show curious traces of cultural influence; besides ordinary Hebrew names and names taken from the German and French – brought by the immigrants from the countries of their origin – there are clearly Slavonic names like Lewko, Jeleń, and Pychacz and women’s names like Czarnula, Krasa,

and even Witosława. Even more remarkable are the names of Lewko’s father, Jordan, and Lewko’s son, Canaan or Chanaan, which indicate a special devotion to Erez Israel.

By the 15th century, relatively numerous traces of social and cultural life in the Polish communities can be found. In a document from April 4, 1435, that perhaps, preserves the early *Yiddish of the Polish Jews, the writer, a Jew of Breslau, addresses “the Lord King of Poland my Lord.” The closing phrases of the letter indicate his Jewish culture: “To certify

this, have I, the above mentioned Jekuthiel, appended my Jewish seal to this letter with full knowledge. Given in Breslau, on the first Monday of the month Nisan, in Jewish reckoning five thousand years and a hundred years and to that hundred the ninety-fifth year after the beginning and creation of all creatures except God Himself” (M. Brann, *Geschichte der Juden in Schlesien*, 3 (1901), Anhang 4, p. lviii).

דש צו בקינטיניש האבע איך אי גונטר יקותיאל מיין יודיש זיגל אן דיון בריבא מיט רעכטר ווישן גהאנגן. גגעבן צו בריסלא אנדעמא אירשטן מאנטאג דש מאנדש ניסן איין יידיש צאל בונץ טאוונט יאר אינ הונדרט יאר און דר צו אין צעמא בינווא אונ' נויינציקשטן יאר נאך אנבגינן אונ' שיפונג אללר קריאטייר זונצו גוטא אליין)

Though Israel b. Hayyim *Bruna said of the Jews of Cracow, “they are not well versed in Torah” (Responsa, no. 55, fol. 23b), giving this as his reason for not adducing lengthy talmudic arguments in his correspondence with them, he was writing to one of his pupils who claimed sole rabbinical authority and income in the community of Poznan (*ibid.*, no. 254, fol. 103b). Israel b. Pethahiah *Isserlein of Austria writes, “my beloved, the holy community of Poznan.” Two parties in this community – the leadership, whom Isserlein calls “you, the holy community,” and an individual – were quarreling about taxation and Isserlein records that both sides submitted legal arguments in support of their cases (*Terumat ha-Deshen, Pesakim u-Khetavim*, no. 144). Great scholars like Yom Tov Lipmann *Muelhausen, who came to Cracow at the end of the 14th century, and Moses b. Isaac Segal *Mintz, who lived at Poznan in 1475, must certainly have left traces of their cultural influence there. Some of the responsa literature contains graphic descriptions of social life. “A rich man from Russia” – either the environs of Lvov in Poland or of Kiev in Lithuania – asked Israel Bruna, “If it is permissible to have a prayer shawl of silk in red or green color for Sabbath and the holidays” (Responsa, no. 73, fol. 32b), a desire fitting a personality of the type of Volchko. Something of the way of life of “the holy company of Lvov” can be seen from the fact that their problem was the murder of one Jew by another in the Ukrainian city of *Pereyaslav-Khmelnski. As the victim lay wounded on the ground, a third Jew, Nahman, called out to the murderer, Simḥah: “Hit Nisan till death” and so he was killed by being beaten on his head as he lay there wounded. The victim was a totally ignorant man, “he couldn’t recognize a single [Hebrew] letter and has never in his life put on *tefilin*.” The murderer was drunk at the time and the victim had started the quarrel; they were all in a large company of Jews (*ibid.*, no. 265, fol. 110a–b). The rough social and cultural climate of Jewish traders in the Ukraine in the middle of the 15th century is here in evidence. Moses Mintz describes from his own experience divorce customs in the region of Poznan (Responsa (Salonika, 1802), no. 113, fol. 129b). He also describes interesting wedding customs in Poland which differed in many details from those of Germany: “when they accompany the bride and bridegroom to the *huppah* they sing on the way ... they give the bridegroom the cup and he throws it down, puts

his foot on it and breaks it, but they pour out the wine from the cup before they give it to the bridegroom. They have also the custom of throwing a cock and also a hen over the head of the bride and bridegroom above the canopy after the pronouncing of the wedding blessings” (*ibid.*, no. 109, fol. 127a). Thus, in the western and central parts of Poland there is evidence of an established and well developed culture and some learning, contrasting sharply with the rough and haphazard existence of Jews living southwards from Lvov to Pereyaslav-Khmelnski.

Jewish culture in Poland and in Lithuania seems to have had a certain rationalist, “Sephardi” tinge, as evidenced both by outside reports and by certain tensions appearing in the second half of the 16th century. At the beginning of the 16th century the Polish chronicler Maciej Miechowicz relates that in Lithuania, “the Jews use Hebrew books and study sciences and arts, astronomy and medicine” (*Tractatus de duabus Sarmatiis* (1517), II: 1, 3). The cardinal legate Lemendone also notes that Lithuanian Jews of the 16th century devote time to the study of “literature and science, in particular astronomy and medicine.” At the end of the 15th century, Lithuanian Jews took part in the movement of the *Judaizers in Muscovite Russia, whose literature shows a marked influence of rationalistic Jewish works and anti-Christian arguments. The Jewish community of Kiev – in the 15th and early 16th centuries within the grand duchy of Lithuania – was praised by a Crimean Karaite in 1481 for its culture and learning. In about 1484 another Karaite, Joseph b. Mordecai of Troki, wrote a letter to Elijah b. Moses *Bashyazi (Mann, Texts, 2 (1935), 1149–59) telling about a disputation on calendar problems between him and “the Rabbanites who live here in Troki, Jacob Suchy of Kaffa (Feodosiya) and Ozer the physician of Cracow” (*ibid.*, 1150). He closes his letter with ideas showing a decided rationalist tendency, “The quality of the sermon will be through the quality of the subject, therefore as we have none such more important than the Torah, for in it there is this teaching that brings man straight to his scientific and social success and the chief of its considerations is that man should achieve his utmost perfection, which is spiritual success; and this will happen when he attains such rational concepts as the soul, the active reason, can attain, for the relation between a phenomenon and its causes is a necessary relation, i.e., the relation of the separate reason to the material reason is like the relation of light to sight” (*ibid.*, 1159).

In Poland a dispute between two great scholars of the 16th century – Solomon *Luria and Moses *Isserles – brings to the surface elements of an earlier rationalist culture. Luria accuses yeshivah students of using “the prayer of Aristotle” and accuses Isserles of “mixing him with words of the living God ... [considering] that the words of this unclean one are precious and perfume to Jewish sages” (Isserles, Responsa, no. 6). Isserles replies: “All this is still a poisonous root in existence, the legacy from their parents from those that tended to follow the philosophers and tread in their steps. But I myself have never seen nor heard up till now such a thing, and,

but for your evidence, I could not have believed that there was still a trace of these conceptions among us” (*ibid.*, no. 7). Writing around the middle of the 16th century, Isserles tells unwittingly of a philosophizing trend prevalent in Poland many years before. A remarkable case of how extreme rationalist conceptions gave way to more mystic ones can be seen in Isserles’ pupil, Abraham b. Shabbetai *Horowitz. Around 1539 he sharply rebuked the rabbi of Poznan, who believed in demons and opposed *Maimonides: “As to what this ass said, that it is permissible to study Torah only, this is truly against what the Torah says, ‘Ye shall keep and do for it is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the gentiles.’ For even if we shall be well versed in all the arcana of the Talmud, the gentiles will still not consider us scholars; on the contrary, all the ideas of the Talmud, its methods and sermons, are funny and derisible in the eyes of the gentiles. If we know no more than the Talmud we shall not be able to explain the ideas and exegetical methods of the Talmud in a way that the gentiles will like – this stands to reason” (see MGWJ, 47 (1903), 263). Yet this same man rewrote his rationalistic commentary on a work by Maimonides to make it more amenable to traditionalistic and mystic thought, declaring in the second version, “The first uproots, the last roots.” Later trends and struggles in Jewish culture in Poland and Lithuania are partly traceable to this early and obliterated rationalistic layer (see below).

Polish victories over the Teutonic Order in the west and against Muscovite and Ottoman armies in the east and southeast led to a great expansion of Poland-Lithuania from the second half of the 16th century. In this way Poland-Lithuania gained a vast steppeland in the southeast, in the Ukraine, fertile but unpacified and unreclaimed, and great stretches of arable land and virgin forest in the east, in Belorussia. The agricultural resources in the east were linked to the center through the river and canal systems and to the sea outlet in the west through land routes. These successes forged a stronger link between the various strata of the nobility (Pol. *szlachta*) as well as between the Polish and Lithuanian nobility. In 1569 the Union of Lublin cemented and formalized the unity of Poland-Lithuania, although the crown of Poland and the grand duchy of Lithuania kept a certain distinctness of character and law, which was also apparent in the *Councils of the Lands and in the culture of the Jews (see below). With the union, Volhynia and the Ukraine passed from the grand duchy to the crown. The combined might of Poland-Lithuania brought about a growing pacification of these southeastern districts, offering a possibility of their colonization which was eagerly seized upon by both nobility and peasants.

1569–1648: COLONIZATION OF THE UKRAINE

The Polish nobility, which became the dominant element in the state, was at that time a civilized and civilizing factor. Fermenting with religious thought and unrest which embraced even the most extreme anti-trinitarians; warlike and at the same time giving rise to small groups of extreme anarchists and pacifists; more and more attracted by luxury, yet for most

Table 1. Growth of Jewish Settlement by Places and Numbers in the Colonization Period (Poland)

Wojewódstwo (district)	Before 1569		c. 1648	
	Places	Numbers	Places	Numbers
Volhynia	13	3,000	46	15,000
Podolia	9	750	18	4,000
Kiev	–	–	33	13,500
Bratslav	2	?–	18	18,825
Total	24	c. 4,000	115	51,325

of the period developing rational – even if often harsh – methods of land and peasant exploitation; despising merchandise yet very knowledgeable about money and gain – this was the nobility that, taking over the helm of state and society, developed its own estates in the old lands of Poland-Lithuania and the vast new lands in the east and southeast. Jews soon became the active and valued partners of this nobility in many enterprises. In the old “royal cities” – even in central places like Cracow, which expelled the Jews in 1495, and *Warsaw, which had possessed a *privilegium de non tolerandis Judaeis* since 1527 – Jews were among the great merchants of clothing, dyes, and luxury products, in short, everything the nobility desired. Complaints from Christian merchants as early as the beginning of the 16th century, attacks by urban antisemites like Sebastian *Miczyński and Przeclaw *Mojecki in the 17th century, and above all internal Jewish evidence all point to the success of the Jewish merchant. The Jew prospered in trade even in places where he could not settle, thanks to his initiative, unfettered by guilds, conventions, and preconceived notions. The *keshirim*, the council of former office holders in the Poznan community, complain about the excessive activity of Jewish intermediaries, “who cannot stay quiet; they wait at every corner, in every place, at every shop where silk and cloth is sold, and they cause competition through influencing the buyers by their speech and leading them to other shops and other merchants.” The same council complains about “those unemployed” people who sit all day long from morning till evening before the shops of gentiles – of spice merchants, clothes merchants, and various other shops – “and the Christian merchants complain and threaten.” There was even a technical term for such men, *tsuvayzer*, those who point the way to a prospective seller (*Pinkas Hekhsherim shel Kehillat Pozna*, ed. D. Avron (1966), 187–8 no. 1105, 250 no. 1473, 51 no. 1476). Miczyński gives a bitter description of the same phenomenon in Cracow in 1618. Large-scale Jewish trade benefited greatly from the trader’s connections with their brethren both in the Ottoman Empire and in Germany and Western Europe. It was also linked to a considerable extent with the *arenda system and its resulting great trade in the export of agricultural products.

Through the arenda system Jewish settlements spread over the country, especially in the southeast. Between 1503 and 1648 there were 114 Jewish communities in the Ukraine,

some on the eastern side of the River Dnieper and list by S. Ettinger, in *Zion*, 21 (1956), 114–8); many of these were tiny. The table Growth of Jewish Settlement shows the main outlines of the dynamics of Jewish settlement in these regions of colonization (*ibid.*, p. 124).

The further the move east and southward, the greater the relative growth in numbers and population. The Jewish *arenda* holders, traders, and peddlers traveled and settled wherever space and opportunity offered.

Life in these districts was strenuous and often harsh. The manner of Jewish life in the Ukraine, which as we have already seen was uncouth, was both influenced and channeled through Jewish participation in the defense of newly pacified land. Meir b. Gedaliah of Lublin relates “what happened to a luckless man, ill, and tortured by pain and suffering from epilepsy... When there was an alarm in Volhynia because of the Tatars – as is usual in the towns of that district – when each one is obliged to be prepared, with weapon in hand, to go to war and battle against them at the command of the duke and the lords; and it came to pass that when the present man shot with his weapon, called in German *Buechse*, from his house through the window to a point marked for him on a rope in his courtyard to try the weapon as sharpshooters are wont to do, then a man came from the market to the above mentioned courtyard ... and he was killed [by mistake].” The rabbi goes on to tell that a Christian, the instructor and commander of this Jew, was standing in front of the courtyard to warn people not to enter. The Jew was “living among the gentiles in a village” with many children (Meir b. Gedaliah of Lublin, Responsa, no. 43). There is reference to an enterprising group of Jews who went to Moscow with the armies of the Polish king during war, selling liquor (one of them had two cartloads) and other merchandise to the soldiers (*ibid.*, no. 128). Among the Cossack units there was a Jew about whom his Cossack colleagues “complained to God ... suddenly there jumped out from amongst our ranks a Jew who was called Berakhah, the son of the martyr Aaron of Cieszewiec.” This Jew was not the only one in the ranks of the Cossacks, for – to allow his wife to marry – one of the witnesses says that “he knew well that in this unit there was not another Jewish fighter who was called Berakhah” (*ibid.*, no. 137). Life in general was apt to be much more violent than is usually supposed: Even at Brest-Litovsk, when the *rebbe* of the community saw a litigant nearing his door, he seized a heavy box and barricaded himself in for fear of harm (*ibid.*, no. 44).

Arenda did more than give a new basis to the existence of many Jewish families; it brought the Jews into contact with village life and often combined with aspects of their internal organizational structure. Thus, the Jew Nahum b. Moses, as well as renting the mills, the tavern, and the right of preparing beer and brandy, also rented for one year all milk produce of the livestock on the manors and villages. Elaborate and complicated arrangements were made for payment and collection of these milk products (S. Inglot, in: *Studja z historii społecznej i gospodarczej poświęcone prof. Franciszkowi Bu-*

jakowi (1931), 179–82; cf. 205, 208–9). In contact with village life, the Jew sometimes formed a sentimental attachment to his neighbors and his surroundings. In 1602 a council of leaders of Jewish communities in Volhynia tried to convince Jewish *arendars* to let the peasants rest on Saturday though the Polish nobleman would certainly have given them the right to compel them to work: “If the villagers are obliged to work all the week through, he should let them rest on Sabbath and the Holy Days throughout. See, while living in exile and under the Egyptian yoke, our parents chose this Saturday for a day of rest while they were not yet commanded about it, and heaven helped them to make it a day of rest for ever. Therefore, where gentiles are under their authority they are obliged to fulfill the commandment of the Torah and the order of the sages not to come, God forbid, to be ungrateful [*livot לִבְעֵט*] to the One who has given them plenty of good by means of the very plenty he has given them. Let God’s name be sanctified by them and not defiled” (H.H. Ben-Sasson, in *Zion*, 21 (1956), 205).

The interests of the Jews and Polish magnates coincided and complemented each other in one most important aspect of the economic and social activity of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility. On their huge estates the nobles began to establish and encourage the development of new townships, creating a network of “private towns.” Because of the nature of their relationship with their own peasant population they were keen to attract settlers from afar, and Jews well suited their plans. The tempo and scale of expansion were great; in the grand duchy of Lithuania alone in the first half of the 17th century between 770 and 900 such townships (*miasteczki*) existed (S. Aleksandrowicz, in: *Roczniki dziejów społecznych i gospodarczych*, 27 (1965), 35–65). For their part, the Jews, who were hard pressed by the enmity of the populace in the old royal cities, gladly moved to places where they sometimes became the majority, in some cases even the whole, of the population. Since these were situated near the hinterland of agricultural produce and potential customers, Jewish initiative and innovation found a new outlet. Through charters granted by kings and magnates to communities and settlers in these new towns, the real legal status of the Jews gradually changed very much for the better. By the second half of the 17th century everywhere in Poland Jews had become part of “the third estate” and in some places and in some respects the only one.

Jews continued to hold customs stations openly in Lithuania, in defiance of the wishes of their leaders in Poland (see Councils of the Lands). Many custom station ledgers were written in Hebrew script and contained Hebrew terms (see R. Mahler, in *YIVO Historische Shriftn*, 2 (1937), 180–205). Sometimes a Jew is found with a “sleeping partner,” a Pole or Armenian in whose name the customs lease has been taken out. That some customs stations were in Jewish hands was also of assistance to Jewish trade.

This complex structure of large-scale export and import trade, the active and sometimes adventurous participation in the colonization of the Ukraine and in the shaping of the

“private cities,” in the fulfilling of what today we would call state economic functions, created for the first time in the history of Ashkenazi Jewry a broad base of population, settlement distribution, and means of livelihood, which provided changed conditions for the cultural and religious life of Jews. Even after the destruction wrought by the *Chmielnicki massacres enough remained to form the nucleus of later Ashkenazi Jewry. The later style of life in the Jewish *shtetl was based on achievements and progress made at this time.

INTERNAL JEWISH LIFE

The Councils of the Lands, the great superstructure of Jewish *autonomy, were an outgrowth of such dynamics of economy and settlement. Beginning with attempts at centralized leaderships imposed from above, appointed by the king, they ended with a central elected Jewish leadership. The aims, methods, and institutions of this leadership were intertwined with the new economic structure. Great fairs – notably those of Lublin and Jaroslaw – since they attracted the richest and most active element of the Jewish population, also served as the meeting place of the councils. Throughout its existence the Council of the Province of Lithuania cooperated with its three (later five) leading communities through a continuous correspondence with them and between each of them and the smaller communities under its authority. Here the council was adapting the organizational methods of large-scale trade to the leadership structure. The concern of the councils with the new economic phenomena, like *arenda*, is well known. They also concerned themselves with matters of security and morals which arose from the thin spread of Jewish families in Christian townships and villages. On the whole, up to 1648 a sense of achievement and creativity pervades their enterprises and thought. A preacher of that time, Jedidiah b. Israel *Gottlieb, inveighed against a man’s gathering up riches for his children, using the argument of the self-made man: “The land is wide open, let them be mighty in it, settle and trade in it, then they will not be sluggards, lazy workers, children relying on their father’s inheritance, but they themselves will try ... to bring income to their homes, in particular because every kind of riches coming through inheritance does not stay in their hands ... easy come, easy go... through their laziness ... they have to be admonished ... to be mighty in the land through their trading: their strength and might shall bring them riches” (*Shir Yedidut* (Cracow, 1644), *Zeidah la-Derekh*, fol. 24a).

This buoyancy was based on a continuous growth of population throughout the 16th and the first half of the 17th centuries, due both to a steady natural increase thanks to improving conditions of life and to immigration from abroad resulting from persecution and expulsions (e.g., that from Bohemia-Moravia for a short period in 1542). As noted, the growth was most intensive in the eastern and southeastern areas of Poland-Lithuania, and it was distributed through the growing dispersion of Jews in the “private cities” and in the villages. At the end of the 16th century, Great Poland and Masovia (Mazowsze) contained 52 communities, Lesser

Poland 41, and the Ukraine, Volhynia, and Podolia about 80; around 1648, the latter region had 115 communities. From about 100,000 persons in 1578 the Jewish population had grown to approximately 300,000 around 1648. It is estimated that the Jews formed about 2.5–3% of the entire population of Poland, but they constituted between 10% and 15% of the urban population in Poland and 20% of the same in Lithuania.

The dynamics of Jewish economic life are evident not only in the variety and success of their activities, but also in certain specific institutions and problems that reveal the tension behind their strain for economic goals which tended to entail risks. By the end of the 16th century, Jews were borrowers rather than lenders. Seventeenth-century antisemites – Miczyński and Mojecki – accused Jews of borrowing beyond their means and deceiving Christian lenders. From their accusations it is clear that much of this credit was not in ready cash but in goods given to Jewish merchants on credit. Borrowing was a real problem with which the Jewish leadership was much concerned. Many ordinances of the Councils of the Lands, of the provincial councils, and of single communities are preoccupied with preventing and punishing bankruptcy. Great efforts were devoted to prevent non-payment of debts to Christians in particular. Young men who were building up a family were especially suspected of reaching beyond their means. These ordinances tell in their own way the story of a burgeoning economy which is strained to dangerous limits, inciting in particular the young and the daring. A good name for credit was then a matter of life and death for the Jewish merchant. The great halakhist Solomon Luria was prepared to waive an ancient talmudic law in favor of the lender because “now most of the living of the Jews is based on credit; whereas most of those called merchants have little of their own and what they have in their hands is really taken from gentiles on credit for a fixed period – for they take merchandise [on credit] till a certain date – it is not seemly for a judge to sequester the property of a merchant, for news of this may spread and he will lose the source of his living and all his gentile creditors will come on him together and he will be lost, God forbid, and merchants will never trust him again. I myself have seen and heard about many merchants – circumcised and uncircumcised – to whom, because people said about them that they are a risk, much harm was caused and they never again could stand at their posts” (*Yam shel Shelomo, Bava Kamma*, ch. 1, para. 20). Because of the importance of credit the practice of a Jew lending on interest to another Jew became widespread in Poland-Lithuania despite the fact that it was contrary to Jewish law (see *usury). This necessitated the creation there of the legal fiction of *heter iskah*, formulated by a synod of rabbis and leaders under the chairmanship of Joshua b. Alexander ha-Kohen *Falk in 1607. Widespread credit also led to the use of letters of credit specific to the Jews of Poland, the so-called **mamram* (Pol. *membrana*, *membran*; Heb. מַמְרָם, מַמְרָם, מַמְרָמָא, in initials: מַמְרָא): the Jew would sign on one side of the paper and write on the

other side “this letter of credit obliges the signed overleaf for amount x to be paid on date y.”

Jewish cultural and social life flourished hand in hand with the economic and demographic growth. In the 16th and early 17th centuries Poland-Lithuania became the main center of Ashkenazi culture. Its *yeshivot were already famous at the beginning of the 16th century; scholars like *Hayyim b. Bezalel of Germany and David b. Solomon *Gans of Prague were the pupils of *Shalom Shakhna of Lublin and Moses Isserles of Cracow, respectively. Mordecai b. Abraham *Jaffe; Abraham, Isaiah, and Jacob b. Abraham *Horowitz; Eliezer b. Elijah *Ashkenazi; *Ephraim Solomon b. Aaron Luntshits; and Solomon Luria were only a few of the great luminaries of talmudic scholarship and moralistic preaching in Poland-Lithuania of that time. Councils of the Lands and community ordinances show in great detail if not the reality at least the ideal of widespread Torah study supported by the people in general. This culture was fraught with great social and moral tensions. Old Ashkenazi ascetic ideas did not sit too well on the affluent and economically activist Polish-Lithuanian Jewish society. Meetings with representatives of the Polish *Reformation movement, in particular with groups and representatives of the anti-trinitarian wing like Marcin Czechowicz or Szymon *Budny, led to disputations and reciprocal influence. Outstanding in these contacts on the Jewish side was the Karaite Isaac b. Abraham *Troki, whose *Hizzuk Emunah* sums up the tensions in Jewish thought in the divided Christian religious world of Poland-Lithuania. It was Moses Isserles who formulated the Ashkenazi modifications and additions to the code of the Sephardi Joseph Caro. Isaiah b. Abraham ha-Levi *Horowitz summed up in his *Shenei Luhot ha-Berit* the moral and mystic teaching of the upper circles of Ashkenazi Jewry. Yet his writings, and even more so the writings of Isserles, give expression to the tensions and compromises between rationalism and mysticism, between rich and poor, between leadership and individual rights. To all these tensions, Ephraim Solomon Luntshits gave sharp voice in his eloquent sermons, standing always on the side of the poor against the rich and warning consistently against the danger of hypocrisy and self-righteousness. Fortified and wooden synagogues expressed the needs and the aesthetic sense of Jewish society of that time. In the old “royal cities” magnificent synagogue buildings were erected as early as the 16th century (e.g., the Rema synagogue at Cracow and the Great Synagogue of Lvov). Hebrew manuscripts were brought from abroad and some of them illuminated in Poland. Jewish printing developed early and many beautiful works were published. Various sources describe carnival-like Purim celebrations, and the fun, irony, and joy of life expressed in now lost folk songs and popular games and dramas.

FROM CHMIELNICKI TO THE FIRST PARTITION

The *Chmielnicki revolt and massacres of 1648–49, the Tatar incursions from Crimea, and the subsequent war with Moscow combined with the Swedish War to bring on the Jews of

Table 2. Distribution of Jews in Poland According to Size of Communities in the 18th century

Region	Percentage of communities of less than 500	Percentage of communities of more than 500
Great Poland	91.7	8.3
Masovia	93.5	6.5
Lesser Poland	76.5	23.5
Lvov	61.7	38.3
Ukraine	85.0	15.0

Table 3. Economic Structure of Jewish Population in Poland-Lithuania in the 18th century

Region	Arenda and Alcoholic Beverages	Trade	Transportation	Crafts	Professions	Unspec.
Great Poland	1.8	6.1	–	41.7	12.4	38.0
Masovia	15.2	0.7	–	19.0	13.0	52.1
Lesser Poland	3.1	4.8	1.0	24.0	11.0	56.1
Lvov	2.8	3.0	3.2	20.5	12.5	58.0
Ukraine	28.9	3.6	2.0	27.0	14.5	24.0

Poland-Lithuania approximately 30 years of bloodshed, destruction, and suffering. Thousands were killed, thousands forced to adopt Christianity. At the end of these convulsions, Poland-Lithuania had lost much territory in the east which of course was also lost for Jewish life and settlement. Thousands of refugees thronged westward, bringing heavy pressure to bear on charity and the very structure of Jewish society. The arrangements of the Councils of the Lands to prevent competition for *arenda* had to stand the severe test of diminished opportunities and increasing demand. Contemporary figures like Nathan Nata *Hannover saw in this catastrophe a fissure in Jewish life and institutions, as indicated by the tenor of his chronicle, *Yeven Metsulah*. In reality, Jewish cultural and social life in the second half of the 17th century and in the 18th continued to a considerable extent along the lines developed in the great era of the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries. Recent research has shown that *Pinsk, a community in the east of Lithuania, recovered from its troubles more completely and at greater speed than had been known before. But the dynamism had gone out of institutions and activities; inertia set in. Much that had been full of imminent promise of development and change before the disasters tended now to be petrified. Tensions that had been submerged in the buoyant pre-Chmielnicki times became more open, causing dissension and revolt. The councils and communities were burdened with the growing debts incurred mostly to meet unexpected demands for defense against multiplying libels and massacres, but at the same time the oligarchic structure within the community and the councils and the dominating attitude adopted by the larger communities toward the smaller ones – in Lithuania in particular – caused the lower strata of the population and the members of the smaller communities to suspect their in-

tentions and greatly resent the increasingly heavy tax burden. Jewish economic activity continued to develop, though Jews in the “private towns” and on *arenda* in the villages came to feel more and more the heavy and capricious hand of the Polish nobles, who by that period had lost the vigor of earlier times and become tyrannical, petty lords.

Despite the loss of territory and the worsening of conditions, the Jewish population in Poland-Lithuania continued to grow both absolutely and, from many aspects, in its relative strength in the country. With the abolition of the Councils of the Lands in 1764, a census of the Jewish population was taken. Jews tried to evade being counted by any means available for they were certain that the purpose of the census was to impose heavier taxation on them, as they had every reason to suspect the intentions of the authorities. For this reason at least 20% should be added to the official figures. Accordingly in 1764 there were 749,968 Jews over a year old in Poland-Lithuania: 548,777 of them in Poland and 201,191 in Lithuania; 16.5% of the Jewish population of Poland lived in western Poland, 23.5% in Lesser Poland, and 60% in the Ukraine and neighboring districts; in Lithuania 77% lived in the western part and only 23% in the eastern, Belorussian districts. Taking into account the overall population of Poland, it can be seen that the concentration of Jewish population had shifted eastward in the 18th century to an even greater extent than in the early and successful 17th century. The census also shows that Jews lived mostly in small communities. (See Table 2: Distribution of Jews in Poland.)

As the entire Christian urban population of Poland-Lithuania was estimated at that time to be about half a million, and as the Jews were concentrated mainly in the townships and “private towns,” there emerges a clear picture of a predominantly Jewish population in the smaller Polish-Lithuanian urban centers, at least 70% to 90% in many of these places.

The economic structure of the Jewish population at this time is shown in Table 3.

Although the predominance of unspecified professions does indicate the impoverishment of the Jews, it is largely an aspect of the evasive attitude toward the census. As this table does not include the village Jews, among whom the occupations of *arenda* and the production and sale of alcoholic beverages certainly predominated, only the following economic conclusions can be drawn with certainty: A considerable proportion of the Jews were engaged in crafts, and *arenda* and alcoholic beverages became more important as sources of livelihood as the Jews moved eastward and into villages (according to R. Mahler, *Yidn in Amolikh Poyln in Likht fun Tsifern*, 1958).

The Jewish population of Poland-Lithuania was still seething with creativity and movement in the 18th century. The messianic claims of *Shabbetai Zevi not only stirred the masses of Jews in 1665–66 but also left a deep impression on later generations. This is evident in the suspicion expressed about itinerant **maggidim* (it was also demanded that they be supervised), who were suspected of disseminating hereti-

cal and critical ideas. The personality and movement of Jacob *Frank made the greatest impact on the distressed population of Podolia, in the extreme southeast. From the same region too arose *Israel b. Eliezer Ba'al Shem Tov and the movement of *Hasidism he originated. Talmudic scholarship and traditional ways of life, which continued to flourish throughout the period, found a supreme exemplar in the vigorous personality and influence of *Elijah b. Solomon Zalman, the Gaon of Vilna, and in the way of life and culture originated by him and his circle in the Mitnaggedic Lithuanian yeshivot. At that time too the first influences of *Haskalah and *assimilation began to appear in Poland-Lithuania.

With the partitions of Poland (beginning in 1772), the history of ancient Jewish Poland-Lithuania comes to an end. During the agony of the Polish state, several of its more enlightened leaders – e.g., H. Kołłantaj and T. *Czacki – tried to “improve the Jews,” i.e., improve their legal and social status in the spirit of western and European enlightened absolutism. With the dismemberment of Poland-Lithuania, their belated efforts remained suspended. Even when broken up and dispersed, Polish-Lithuanian Jewry was not only the majority and the cultural source of Jewish society in czarist Russia, but those elements of it which came under Prussia and Austria also served later as the reservoir of Jewish spirit and manpower which resisted the ravages of assimilation and apostasy in the German and Austrian communities in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

[Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson]

AFTER PARTITION

The geographic entity “Poland” in this part of the article refers to that area of the Polish commonwealth which, by 1795, had been divided between Austria and Prussia and which subsequently constituted the basis of the grand duchy of Warsaw, created in 1807. Following the Congress of *Vienna in 1815 much of this area was annexed to the Russian Empire as the semi-autonomous Kingdom of Poland, also known as Congress Poland. The kingdom constituted the core of ethnic Poland, the center of Polish politics and culture, and an economic area of great importance. It is to be distinguished from Austrian Poland (Galicia), Prussian Poland (Poznan, Silesia, and Pomerania), and the Russian northwestern region also known as Lithuania-Belorussia.

During and after the partitions the special legal status enjoyed by the Jews in Poland-Lithuania came under attack – while disabilities remained, efforts were made to break down the Jews’ separateness and transform them into “useful” citizens. This new notion, brought to Poland from the west and championed by Polish progressives with the support of the tiny number of progressive Jews, advocates of the Haskalah, was clearly expressed during the debates on the Jewish question at the Four-Year Sejm (1788–92). The writings of H. Kołłantaj and M. *Butrymowicz demanded the reform of Jewish life, meaning an end to special institutions and customs (from the *kahal* to the Jewish beard), sentiments to be expressed later on

Table 4. Growth of Warsaw Jewry

Year	Number of Jews	Percentage
1781	3,532	4.5
1810	14,061	18.1
1856	44,149	24.3
1882	127,917	33.4
1897	219,141	33.9

Table 5. Lodz Jewry, Population

Year	Number of Jews	Percentage
1793	11	5.7
1856	2,775	12.2
1897	98,677	31.8
1910	166,628	40.7

by S. Staszic and A.J. *Czartoryski. The attack on “*l'état dans l'état*” as Czartoryski put it in 1815, was accompanied by an attack against Jewish economic practices in the village, which, it was claimed, oppressed and corrupted the peasantry. From Butrymowicz, writing in 1789, to the writings of Polish liberals and Jewish assimilationists in the inter-war period, there runs a common assumption: the Jews suffer because they persist in their separateness – let them become like Poles and both they and Poland will prosper. This assumption was also shared by many antisemites of the non-racist variety.

Some effort was made during the 19th century to implement this belief. For example, the *kahal*, symbol of Jewish self-government, was abolished in 1822, and a special tax on Jewish liquor dealers forced many to abandon their once lucrative profession. On the other hand Jews were encouraged to become agriculturalists and were granted, in 1826, a modern rabbinical seminary which was supposed to produce enlightened spiritual leaders. Moreover, in 1862 the Jews of Poland were “emancipated,” meaning that special Jewish taxes were abolished and, above all, that restrictions on residence (Jewish ghettos and *privilegium de non tolerandis Judaeis*) were removed. Nonetheless, the legal antisemitism of Russia's last czars was also introduced into Poland: in 1891 aspects of N. *Ignatiev's *May Laws were extended to Congress Poland, resulting in the expulsion of many Jews from the villages, and in 1908 school quotas (**numerus clausus*) were officially implemented. In sum, during the 19th and early 20th centuries the policy of the carrot and the stick was employed. By the end of the pre-World War I era the stick had prevailed, making the legal status of Polish Jewry nearly identical to that of Russian Jewry. The efforts to assimilate Polish Jewry by legislation aimed at making it more productive and less separatist had virtually no impact on the Jewish masses.

The “Jewish question” in Poland and the legal efforts to deal with it were to a certain extent the result of the Jews' special demographic and economic structure. From the demographic point of view two striking tendencies may be observed. First, the natural increase of Polish Jews was greater

than that of non-Jews, at least during most of the 19th century, leading to an increasing proportion of Jews within the population as a whole. In 1816 Jews constituted 8.7% of the population of the kingdom; in 1865, 13.5%. In 1897, despite the effects of large-scale Jewish emigration, 14 out of every 100 Polish citizens were Jews. This increase, attributable in part to the low Jewish death rate, was accompanied by the rapid urbanization of Polish Jewry. A few examples may suffice to illustrate this important process. Table 4 demonstrates the growth of Warsaw Jewry, where restrictions on residence were not entirely lifted until 1862.

A similar trend is found in Lodz, the kingdom's second city (see Table 5).

This remarkable urbanization – the result of government pressure, a crisis in the traditional Jewish village professions, and the economic attractions of the growing commercial and industrial centers – had the following impact on the Jewish population: In 1827, according to the research of A. Eisenbach, 80.4% of the Jews lived in cities and the rest in villages, while in 1865 fully 91.5% of Polish Jewry lived in cities. In the same year 83.6% of the non-Jewish population lived in the countryside. As early as 1855 Jews constituted approximately 43% of the entire urban population of the kingdom, and in those cities where there were no restrictions on Jewish settlement the figure reached 57.2%. The Jews, traditionally scattered, could claim with some justification that, by the end of the century, the cities were their “territory.”

This demographic tendency meant that the traditional Jewish economic structure also underwent certain changes. Jews, of course, had always predominated in trade; in 1815, for example, 1,657 Polish Jews participated at the Leipzig fair compared with 143 Polish gentiles. During the course of the century, as the Jews became more and more dominant in the cities, their role in urban commercial ventures became more pronounced. Thus, in Warsaw, at the end of the century, 18 out of 26 major private banks were owned by Jews or Jewish converts to Christianity. A wealthy Jewish merchant and financial class emerged, led by such great capitalists as Ivan *Bliokh and Leopold *Kronenberg, who played a role in the urbanization and industrialization of Poland. On the other hand, the vast majority of Jews engaged in commerce very clearly belonged to the petty bourgeoisie of shopkeepers (of whom, in Warsaw in 1862, nearly 90% were Jews) and the like. In the same year, according to the calculations of the economic historian I. *Schiper, more than two-thirds of all Jewish merchants were without substantial capital.

Two tendencies must be emphasized with regard to the Jewish economic situation in the kingdom. First, it became apparent by the end of the century that the Jews were gradually losing ground to non-Jews in trade. Thus, for every 100 Jews in Warsaw in 1862, 72 lived from commerce, while in 1897 the figure had dropped to 62. For non-Jews, on the other hand, the percentage rose from 27.9 in 1862 to 37.9 in 1897. The rise of a non-Jewish middle class, with the resulting increase in competition between Jew and gentile, marks the beginning

of a process which, as we shall see, gained impetus during the interwar years. Second, there was a marked tendency toward the “productivization” of Polish Jewry, that is, a rise of Jews engaged in crafts and industry. The following figures, which relate to the whole of Congress Poland, are most revealing: in 1857 44.7% of all Jews lived from commerce and 25.1% from crafts and industry, while in 1897 42.6% were engaged in commerce and 34.3% in crafts and industry. In this area, as in trade, the typical Jew was far from wealthy. For every wealthy Jew like Israel Poznański, the textile tycoon from Lodz, there were thousands of Jewish artisans (some 119,000, according to the survey of the *Jewish Colonization Association (ICA) in 1898) who worked in tiny shops with rarely more than one hired hand. It is noteworthy that for various reasons – the problems of Sabbath work, the antisemitism of non-Jewish factory owners, fear of the Jewish workers’ revolutionary potential – a Jewish factory proletariat failed to develop. Even in Lodz and Białystok the typical Jewish weaver worked in a small shop or at home, not in a large factory. One further development should be mentioned. By the end of the century a numerically small but highly influential Jewish professional class had made its appearance, particularly in Warsaw. This class was to provide the various political and cultural movements of the day, Jewish and non-Jewish, with many recruits, as well as to provide new leadership for the Jewish community.

The Jews, therefore, constituted an urban, middle class and proletarian element within the great mass of the Polish peasantry. There existed in Poland a long tradition of what might be called a “Polish orientation” among Jews, dating back to the Jewish legion which fought with T. *Kościuszko in 1794 and continuing up to the enthusiastic participation of a number of Jews in J. *Piłsudski’s legions. The Polish-Jewish fraternization and cooperation during the Polish uprising of 1863 is perhaps the best example of this orientation, which held that Polish independence would also lead to the disappearance of antisemitism. The idea of Jewish-Polish cultural assimilation took root among the Jews of the kingdom far earlier than in Galicia, not to mention multi-national Lithuania-Belorussia. **Izraelita*, the Polish-Jewish periodical advocating assimilation, began publication in 1866, and a number of Jewish intellectuals like Alexander Kraushar hoped for the eventual merging of the Jews into the Polish nation. Such men took comfort from the views of a few Polish intellectuals, notably the poet Adam *Mickiewicz, who hoped and worked for the same event. The slogan “for our and your freedom” had considerable influence within the Polish-Jewish intelligentsia by the century’s end.

The Jewish masses, however, had nothing to do with such views, knew nothing of Mickiewicz, knew little if any Polish, and remained (as the assimilationists put it) enclosed within their own special world. Here, too, as was the case regarding the economic stratification of Polish Jewry, a thin stratum separated itself from the mass. It was usually the offspring of the wealthy (Kraushar’s father, for example, was a banker) who championed the Polish orientation, while the typical Jewish

shopkeeper or artisan remained Yiddish-speaking and Orthodox. On the Polish side, too, Mickiewicz was a voice crying in the wilderness. It is true that the great wave of *pogroms in the Russian Empire was concentrated in the Ukraine and Bessarabia (although Russian Poland was not wholly spared); nor was there anything in Poland resembling the expulsion of the Jews from Moscow in 1891. Indeed, Russian antisemitism led to the influx of so-called Litvaks into the kingdom. But the rise of Polish national fervor, accompanied by the development of a Polish middle class, naturally exacerbated Polish-Jewish relations. The founding of the National Democratic Party (**Endecja*) in 1897 was symptomatic of the growing antisemitism of the period. The economic and political roots of this antisemitism (not to mention the traditional religious factor) were clearly expressed in 1912, when the Jews’ active support of a Socialist candidate in elections to the *Duma resulted in an announced boycott of Jewish businesses by the National Democrats. On the eve of World War I relations between Poles and Jews were strained to the utmost, a state of affairs which led to a decline in the influence of the assimilationists and a rise in that of Jewish national doctrines.

In comparison with Russia, specifically Jewish political movements had a late start in the kingdom. The Haskalah, progenitor of modern Jewish political movements, was far less influential in Poland than in Galicia or Russia. Warsaw, unlike *Vilna, Lvov, and other great Jewish cities, did not become a center of the Enlightenment; its Jewish elite, like the elite in Germany, tended toward assimilation. True, the city of *Zamosc was, for a time, a thriving Haskalah center, but Zamosc was part of Galicia from 1772 to 1815 and followed the Galician rather than the Polish pattern. Later on, the pioneers of Jewish nationalism and Jewish Socialism came from the northwest region (Belorussia-Lithuania) or the Ukraine. While in Lithuania the Jewish intelligentsia, though Russianized, remained close to the masses, in Poland the intelligentsia was thoroughly Polonized. Its members tended, therefore, to enter Polish movements, such as the Polish Socialist Party (**PPS*). Thus the *Bund, although it succeeded in spreading into Poland in the early 20th century, remained very much a Lithuanian movement. It is striking that the so-called Litvaks played a major role in spreading the ideas of Jewish nationalism to Poland; it was they, for example, who led the Warsaw *Hovevei Zion* (**Hibbat Zion*) movement, the precursor of modern Zionism. On the eve of World War I, however, Jewish political life in Poland was well developed. The Bund had developed roots in such worker centers as Warsaw and Lodz, while the Zionists felt strong enough to challenge, albeit unsuccessfully, the entrenched assimilationist leadership of the Warsaw Jewish community.

INDEPENDENT POLAND

As a result of World War I and the unexpected collapse of the three partitioning powers, Poland was reconstituted as a sovereign state. The final boundaries, not determined until 1921, represented something of a compromise between the feder-

Table 6. Decrease in the Percentage of the Jews in the Total Population in the Cities of Poland in the Interwar Period

City	Percentage of Jews in 1921	Percentage of Jews in 1931
Warsaw	33.1	30.1
Lvov	35.0	31.9
Vilna	36.1	28.2
Bialystok	51.6	43.0
Grodno	53.9	42.6
Brest-Litovsk	53.1	44.3
Pinsk	74.7	63.4

Table 7. The Natural Increase of Four Major Religious Groups in Poland in the Interwar Period

Religion	Natural Increase
Roman Catholic	13.1
Greek Catholic	12.5
Greek Orthodox	16.7
Jewish	9.5

alist dreams of Pilsudski and the more ethnic Polish conception of R. *Dmowski. To Congress Poland, purely Polish save for its large Jewish minority, were added Galicia, Poznan, Pomerania, parts of Silesia, areas formerly part of the Russian northwestern region, and the Ukrainian province of Volhynia. The new state was approximately one-third non-Polish, the important minorities being the Ukrainians, Jews, Belorussians, and Germans.

The heritage of the war years was a particularly tragic one for Polish Jewry. The rebirth of Poland, which many Jews had hoped for, was accompanied by a campaign of terror directed by the Poles (as by the invading Russian army in the early years of the war) against them. The Jews too often found themselves caught between opposing armies – between the Poles and the Lithuanians in Vilna, between the Poles and the Ukrainians in Lvov, and between the Poles and the Bolsheviks during the war of 1920. And it is probably no accident that the two major pogroms of this period, in Lvov in 1918 and in Vilna in 1919, occurred in multi-national areas where national feelings reached their greatest heights. The triumph of Polish nationalism, far from leading to a rapprochement between Jews and Poles, created a legacy of bitterness which cast its shadow over the entire interwar period. For the Poles the war years proved that the Jews were “anti-Polish,” “pro-Ukrainian,” “pro-Bolshevik,” etc. For the Jews the independence of Poland was associated with pogroms. The legal situation of the Jews in independent Poland was, on the surface, excellent. The Treaty of Versailles, concluded between the victorious powers and the new states, included provisions protecting the national rights of minorities; in the Polish treaty Jews were specifically promised their own schools and the Polish state promised to respect the Jewish Sabbath. The Polish constitution, too, declared that non-Poles would be allowed to foster their national traditions, and formally abolished all discrimination due to religious, racial,

or national differences. The Jews were recognized by the state as a nationality, something the Zionists and other Jewish nationalists had long fought for. There were great hopes that the Jews would be allowed to develop their own national institutions on the basis of national autonomy.

These hopes were not fulfilled. The two cornerstones of Jewish autonomy – the school and the *kehillah* – were not allowed to develop freely. The state steadfastly refused to support Jewish schools, save for a relatively small number of elementary schools closed on Saturday which possessed little Jewish content. The Hebrew-language **Tarbut* schools, along with the Yiddish-language *CYSHO* (see **Education*) network, were entirely dependent on Jewish support, and the diplomas issued by the Jewish high schools were not recognized by the Ministry of Education. The Jewish schools were successful as pedagogical institutions, but the absence of state support made it impossible for them to lay the foundation for a thriving Jewish national cultural life in Poland. As for the *kehillah*, projected by Jewish nationalists as the organ of Jewish national autonomy on the local level, it was kept in tight check by the government. While elections to the *kehillah* were made democratic, enabling all Jewish parties to participate on a basis of equality, the government constantly intervened to support its own candidates, usually those of the Orthodox **Agudat Israel*. By the same token the government controlled the budgets of the *kehillot*. These institutions remained essentially what they had been in the preceding century, concerned above all with the religious life of the community.

Far from barring discrimination against non-Poles, the policy of the interwar Polish state was to promote the ethnic Polish element at the expense of the national minorities, and above all at the expense of the Jews, who were more vulnerable than the essentially peasant Slav groups. The tradition of *numerus clausus* was continued at the secondary school and university level, efforts were made to deprive the “Litvaks” of Polish citizenship, local authorities attempted to curb the use of Yiddish and Hebrew at public meetings, and the Polish electoral system clearly discriminated against all the minorities. All Jewish activities leading toward the advancement of Jewish national life in Poland were combatted; the government favored Zionism only insofar as it preached emigration to Erez Israel, and in domestic politics tended to support the traditional Orthodoxy of *Agudat Israel*. Worst of all was the economic policy of the state.

According to official statistics, most likely too low, Jews made up 10.5% of the Polish population in 1921. The density of their urban settlement was related to the general development of the area. In less developed regions, such as East Galicia, Lithuania, and Volhynia, the Jewish percentage in the cities was very high, while in more developed areas, such as Central Poland (the old Congress Poland), the existence of a strong native bourgeoisie caused the Jewish percentage to be lower. As for the Jewish village population, it too was higher in backward areas, since the number of cities was naturally less. There were, therefore, substantial Jewish village popu-

lations in Galicia and Lithuania but not in the old Congress Poland (with the exception of Lublin province, economically backward in comparison with the other provinces of the region). The most striking development in the demography of Polish Jewry between the wars is the marked loss of ground in the cities. Table 6 illustrates this point. (See Map: Poland, 1931 and Map: Jews in Poland.)

Among the factors contributing to this decline was the Polish government's "colonization" policy in non-Polish areas, its changing of city lines to diminish the Jewish proportion, and Jewish emigration (though with America's gates shut this last factor was not very significant). Another major cause would appear to be the low Jewish natural increase, caused by a low birth rate. (Table 7 presents the natural increase of four major religious groups in interwar Poland.) Thus the process of Jewish population expansion in Poland ended, itself the victim of urbanization (which led, in turn, to a low birth rate). If the cities were Judaized during the 19th century, they were Polonized in the 1920s and 1930s.

The demographic decline of Polish Jewry was paralleled by a more serious economic decline. On the whole, Polish Jews between the wars continued to work at the same trades as their 19th-century predecessors and the tendency toward "productivization" also continued. The vast majority of those engaged in industry were artisans, among whom tailors predominated; those working in commerce were, above all, shopkeepers. What distinguished the interwar years from the prewar era was the antisemitic policy of the Polish state, which Jewish leaders accused of leading to the economic "extermination" of Polish Jewry. Jews were not employed in the civil service, there were very few Jewish teachers in the public schools, practically no Jewish railroad workers, no Jews employed in state-controlled banks, and no Jewish workers in state-run monopolies (such as the tobacco industry). In a period characterized by economic *étatisme*, when the state took a commanding role in economic life, such official discrimination became disastrous. There was no branch of the economy where the state did not reach; it licensed artisans, controlled the banking system, and controlled foreign trade, all to the detriment of the Jewish element. Its tax system discriminated against the urban population, and its support of peasant cooperatives struck at the Jewish middleman. Such specific legislation as the law compelling all citizens to rest on Sunday helped to ruin Jewish commerce by forcing the shopkeeper to rest for two days and to lose the traditionally lucrative Sunday trade.

More natural forces were also at work in the decline of the Jews' economic condition, e.g., the continued development of a native middle class, sponsored by the government but not created by it. According to research carried out by the *YIVO in 113 Polish cities between 1937 and 1938, the number of Jewish-owned stores declined by one, while the number of stores owned by Christians increased by 591. In the western Bialystok province, to cite another example, the number of the Jewish-owned stores declined between 1932 and 1937 from

663 to 563, while the number of Christian-owned stores rose from 58 to 310. These figures reflect both the impact of anti-semitism (in the late 1930s the anti-Jewish boycott became effective) and the impact of the developing Polish (and Ukrainian) middle class.

The Jews' economic collapse in the interwar period bears witness to the disaster, from the Jewish point of view, inherent in the rise of exclusive nation-states on the ruins of the old multinational empires. Jews were employed in the old Austrian public schools of Galicia, but not in the Polish state-operated schools. They worked as clerks in the railroad offices of Austrian Galicia, but not in Poland. Thousands of Jewish cigarette factory workers in the old Russian Empire were dismissed when the Polish state took over the tobacco monopoly. It also demonstrates the extremely vulnerable position of the Jews vis-à-vis the other Polish minorities, largely peasant nations which did not compete with the Polish element. The urban Jewish population found itself in a situation in which the traditional small businessman was being squeezed out, while the policy of the state also ruined the wealthy Jewish merchant and industrialist. This was then the end of a process already discernible in the late 19th century, immeasurably speeded up by a state which wanted to see all key economic positions in the hands of "loyal" elements, i.e., Poles.

What was the Jews' political response to this situation? In the beginning of the interwar period the *General Zionists emerged as the strongest force within the Jewish community, thus reflecting the general trend in Eastern Europe toward nationalism and, in the Jewish context, reflecting the impact of the terrible war years. In the 1919 Sejm elections the list of the Temporary Jewish National Council, dominated by General Zionists, received more than 50% of those votes cast for Jewish parties. In 1922, when Jewish representation in the Sejm reached its peak, the percentage of General Zionists (together with the *Mizrachi) among the Jewish deputies was again over 50% (28 out of 46). The Jewish Club (Koło) in the Sejm, which claimed to speak for all Polish Jewry, was naturally dominated by General Zionists, who with considerable justice regarded themselves as the legitimate spokesmen of the community. General Zionism in Poland was divided into two schools, that of "Warsaw-St. Petersburg" and that of "Lvov-Cracow-Vienna." The former came of age in the revolutionary atmosphere of the czarist regime and consequently tended to be more extreme in its demands than the Galicians, who had learned their politics in the Austrian Reichsrat. The clash between Yizhak *Gruenbaum, leader of the Warsaw faction, and Leon *Reich of Lvov was well expressed in the negotiations carried on between the Jewish Sejm Club and the Polish government in 1925. Gruenbaum, rejecting negotiations with antisemites and offering instead the idea of a national minorities bloc, found himself outnumbered in the club by adherents of Reich's position, namely that negotiations should be carried on in order to halt the deterioration of the Jewish position. In the end neither Gruenbaum's minorities bloc nor Reich's negotiations caused any improvements; the tragedy of

Jewish politics in Poland was that the government would not make concessions to the Jews so long as it was not forced to do so, and the Jews, representing only 10% of the population, could find no allies.

All General Zionists agreed on the importance of “work in the Diaspora,” though Gruenbaum, the central figure in this work, was castigated by Palestinian pioneers as the apostle of “Sejm-Zionismus.” They did not agree, however, on various aspects of Zionist policy; the efforts to broaden the *Jewish Agency and the nature of the Fourth *Aliyah caused a split within the Warsaw Zionists, Gruenbaum leading the attack on Chaim *Weizmann and upholding the young pioneering emigration while his opponents defended the “bourgeois” *aliyah* and Weizmann’s conciliatory tactics toward non-Zionist Jewry. Gruenbaum’s faction, *Al ha-Mishmar* (“On Guard”), remained in the minority throughout the 1920s, but the so-called radical Zionists returned to power in the 1930s following the failure of the Agency reform, the crisis in the Fourth Aliyah, and the stiffening of the British line in Palestine. The General Zionists, of course, did not monopolize Jewish political life in interwar Poland. On the right, non-Zionist Orthodoxy was represented by the *Agudat Israel*, which succeeded in dominating the Jewish *kehillot*, but its generally good relations with the government did not stem the antisemitic tide. On the left the dominant Jewish party was the Bund, which had disappeared in Russia but survived to play its last historic role as the most important representative of the Jewish proletariat in Poland. The Bund, like Gruenbaum’s Zionist faction, also recognized the need for allies in the struggle for a just society in which, its leaders hoped, Jews would be able to promote their Yiddish-based culture. Such allies were sought on the Polish left rather than among the disaffected minorities, but the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), for reasons of its own, had no desire to be branded pro-Jewish. Unable to create a bloc with the Polish proletariat, the Bund devoted itself to promoting the interests of the Jewish working class and took a great interest in the development of Yiddish culture. Despite the fact that this party, too, was split into factions (the split turned chiefly on different attitudes toward the international Socialist movement), it was to grow in influence. Sharing the left with the Bund, though overshadowed by it in terms of worker allegiance, were the various Socialist Zionist parties, ranging from the non-Marxist **Hitahadut* to the leftist **Po’alei Zion* (the *Po’alei Zion* movement had split into right and left factions in 1920; in Poland the left was dominant, at least in the 1920s). The moderate Socialist Zionists were concerned mainly with the pioneering emigration to Erez Israel, while the Left *Po’alei Zion* steered a perilous course of non-affiliation either with the Zionist organization or with the Socialist International. Its ideological difficulties with the competition of the anti-Zionist Bund (which went so far as to brand Zionism as an ally of Polish antisemitism) sentenced the Left *Po’alei Zion* to a relatively minor role among the Jewish proletariat, though its influence among the intelligentsia was by no means negligible.

Two other Jewish parties deserve mention. The Polish Mizrachi, representing the Zionist Orthodox population, enjoyed a very large following (eight of its representatives sat in the Sejm in 1922). The Mizrachi usually cooperated with the General Zionists, though its particular mission was to safeguard the religious interests of its followers in Erez Israel and in the Diaspora. The **Folkspartei*, on the other hand, never managed to make an impression on political life in Poland, though its intellectual leadership was extremely influential on the cultural scene. Both anti-Zionist and anti-Socialist, it could never attain a mass following.

The economic collapse of Polish Jewry, together with the rise of virulent antisemitism, led to the radicalization of Jewish politics in Poland. Extreme solutions to the Jewish question gained more adherents as the parliamentary approach clearly failed to lead anywhere; hence the growth of the pioneering Zionist movements – **He-Ḥalutz*, *HeḤalutz ha-Za’ir*, **Ha-Shomer ha-Za’ir*, and others – resulting in the large-scale emigration to Erez Israel in the mid-1930s, and also the inroads of Communism among the Jewish youth. Another symptom of this radicalization was the great success of the Bund in the 1930s; by the late 1930s the Bund had “conquered” a number of major *kehillot* and was probably justified in considering itself the strongest of all Jewish parties. This spectacular success did not occur as a result of any apparent party success, since the efforts to improve the lot of the Jewish proletariat and to forge a bloc with the Polish left had failed. Rather, the Bund’s success may be attributed to the rising protest vote against attempts to mollify the regime and in favor of an honorable defense, no matter how unavailing, of Jewish interests. Within the Zionist movement the process of radicalization was very clearly illustrated by the decline of the General Zionists and the rise of the Socialists and the Revisionists. In the elections to the 18th **Zionist Congress*, held in 1933, the labor Zionists of Central Poland received 38 mandates and the General Zionists only 12. The same congress seated 20 Polish Revisionists, whose growing strength faithfully reflected the mood of Polish Jewry. In short, a transformation may be discerned of what might be called the politics of hope into the politics of despair. The slogans of *ḥaluziyyut* (“pioneering”), evacuation, and Communist ideology became more and more palatable as the old hopes for Jewish autonomy and the peaceful advancement of Jewish life in a democratic Poland disappeared.

By the late 1930s the handwriting was clearly on the wall for Polish Jewry, though no one could foresee the horrors to come. The rise of Hitler in Germany was paralleled by the appearance of Fascist and semi-Fascist regimes in Eastern Europe, not excepting Poland. A new wave of pogroms erupted along with a renewed anti-Jewish boycott, condoned by the authorities. The Jewish parties were helpless in the face of this onslaught, especially as the disturbances in Erez Israel resulted in a drastic decline in *aliyah*. The political dilemma of Polish Jewry remained unresolved; finding no allies, Jewish parties could do little to influence the course of events. It should be

recalled, however, that the role of these parties was greater than the narrow word “political” implies. Their work in raising the educational standards of Polish Jewry was remarkable, and the Jewish youth movements were able to supply to the new generation of Polish Jews a sense of purpose and a certain vision of a brighter future.

Polish Jewish history, from 1772 to 1939, reveals an obvious continuity. The Jews remained a basically urban element in a largely peasant country, a distinct economic group, a minority whose faith, language, and customs differed sharply from those of the majority. All attempts to break down this distinctiveness failed, and the Jews naturally suffered for their obvious strangeness. A thin layer of assimilated, or quasi-assimilated, Jews subsisted throughout the entire period, but the masses were relatively unaffected by the Polish orientation. In the end all suffered equally from Polish antisemitism. There were also several basic discontinuities. The rise of an exclusively national Polish state in 1918 was a turning point in the deterioration of the Jews’ position, though the signs of this deterioration were already visible in the late 19th century. The rise of a native middle class, encouraged by state policy, put an end to the Jews’ domination of trade and forced them into crafts and industry, resulting in the emergence of a large Jewish proletariat. Politically speaking perhaps the greatest change was the triumph within the community of Jewish nationalism, whether Zionist, Bundist, or Folkist, at the expense of the traditional assimilationist or Orthodox leadership. In this sense Polish Jewry followed the same course of development as the other peoples of Eastern Europe. It was a tragic paradox that these nationalist parties, which extolled the principle of activism and denounced the passivity of the Jewish past, also depended for their effectiveness on outside forces. Neither the Polish government nor the Polish left proved to be possible allies in the struggle for survival.

[Ezra Mendelsohn]

HOLOCAUST PERIOD

The outbreak of the war (Sept. 1, 1939) and the invasion of Poland by German troops were marked by immediate heavy loss of civilian (especially Jewish) life and material damage. Military operations caused the death of 20,000 Jews, while bombing destroyed some 50,000 Jewish-owned houses, factories, workshops, and stores in about 120 Jewish communities, in some of which 90–95% of the houses went up in flames. In Warsaw alone, in the first month of the war, 30% of the Jewish buildings were destroyed when entire Jewish neighborhoods burned down. A tremendous stream of refugees sought shelter in the large cities, particularly in Warsaw. Subsequently, tens of thousands of Jewish enterprises not destroyed in the bombing were now lost in liquidation measures, bringing the total amount of Jewish property and business concerns lost or destroyed to an estimated 100,000. Jewish losses on the battlefield totaled 32,216 dead (officers and enlisted men) and another 61,000 taken prisoner, the majority of whom died in captivity.

Military operations were still going on when the German army and SD Einsatzkommandos undertook a campaign of bloody repression (see *Holocaust, General Survey). They usually arrested a group of Jews or Poles, who were kept as hostages and eventually shot. Sometimes mock executions were staged, in which the victims stood for hours in suspense anticipating execution. Pious Jews had their beards removed by blunt instruments, which tore their skin, or had their beards burned off. Swastikas were branded on the scalps of some victims; others were subjected to “gymnastics,” such as “riding” on other victims’ backs, crawling on all fours, singing and dancing, or staging fights with one another. The Nazis took a special sadistic pleasure in violating religious feelings, deliberately choosing Jewish religious holidays on which to carry out their assaults.

They instituted a special campaign of burning down synagogues, or, after destroying their interiors, turned them into stables, warehouses, bathhouses, or even public latrines (see *Synagogues, Desecration and Destruction of). At *Bedzin the synagogue at the old market place was set on fire on Sept. 9, 1939. The flames spread to the neighboring Jewish houses, and as the area was cordoned off by soldiers and SS-men who did not permit anyone to escape or to fight the fire, 56 houses were burned down, and several hundred persons were burned to death. In some places, e.g., *Wloclawek and *Brzeziny, the president or rabbi of the community was forced to sign a “confession” that the Jews themselves started the fire and to pay heavy fines as punishment for the “arson.” The tenants of the houses burned down were brought before a military court. Any Jew who tried to enter a burning synagogue in order to save the Torah scrolls was either shot or thrown into the flames. In many places the military staged *autos-da-fé* of Torah scrolls, Hebrew books, and other religious articles, and forced the Jews to sing and dance around the flames and shout that the Jews were to blame for the war. The Jewish communities were also compelled to bear the cost of tearing down the remaining walls of the houses and clearing the rubble. It is estimated that several hundred synagogues were destroyed in the first two months of the occupation.

At the same time, mass arrests of Jews were carried out in which thousands of men, women, and children were interned in “civilian prison camps” set up in synagogues, churches, movie houses, and the like, or put behind barbed-wire fences on open lots and exposed to the soldiers’ cruelty and torture. Afterward the prisoners were sent on foot to larger centers (such as *Wegrow, *Lomza, *Sieradz, *Tomaszow Mazowiecki), where some were set free and others put on forced labor or deported to Germany. In the latter instance their transport to Germany was used for propaganda purposes, as in the case of groups of Jews from Kalisz and Wieruszow who were borne around German towns in trucks bearing the inscription: “These are the Jewish swine who shot at German soldiers.”

Precise instructions issued by the High Command of the Wehrmacht on July 24, 1939, for the internment of civilian prisoners provided for the arrest of Jews and Poles of mili-

tary age at the outset of the invasion. In practice, however, a wild hunt down of Jews was made, without regard to age. In the campaign of terror that followed, hundreds of civilians, Poles, and Jews (in *Czestochowa, *Przemysl, *Bydgoszcz, and Dynow) were slaughtered outright or imprisoned in buildings which were sealed and then set on fire or blown up, the imprisoned dying a horrible death (in Dynow, Lipsk-Kielecki, Mszczonow). No precise figures are available on the number of victims in this period of terror. In the rampage of persecution throughout Poland, people were taken off the streets or dragged from their homes and put on forced labor. They were tortured and beaten, and deprived of their human dignity when forced to perform such acts as cleaning latrines with their bare hands or, in the case of women, washing the floor with their own underwear. Normal life was paralyzed by the arbitrary arrests for forced labor even at a later stage, when forced labor was “regulated” and the still-existing communities or the *Judenraete* (see *Judenrat) had to provide labor contingents on the basis of an understanding reached with the various German offices or commands.

The systematic robbery of Jewish property involved the closing of all the Jewish shops in many towns, or enforced sale of the wares at nominal prices or against worthless receipts. To facilitate the identification of Jewish property, the chief of the civilian administration attached to the army, Hans *Frank, issued an order (Sept. 8, 1939) for all Jewish stores to display a Star of David or other appropriate inscriptions on their stores by the following day. Practically all Jewish communities were also forced to make large “contributions” of money, gold, silver, and jewelry. In many towns compulsory contributions were paid several times over. Large sums were extorted from wealthy individuals under threat of imprisonment. Whenever a Nazi “visit” to the offices of the communities took place, all the money in their safes was confiscated, e.g., in Warsaw on Oct. 5, 1939, when 100,000 zlotys (\$20,000) were taken in this manner. “Legal” forms of robbery were also instituted. The civilian administrators attached to the occupation forces issued orders restricting the sums Jews could hold in their bank accounts, while the accounts themselves were blocked. Restrictions were also placed on the amount of cash a Jew could keep in his home. Jewish-owned property was frozen, Jews were prohibited from engaging in the textile and leather business, and their inventories were registered with the Nazi authorities. Any infringement entailed heavy punishment, including death.

Two decrees by Hitler (Oct. 8 and 12, 1939) provided for the division of the occupied areas of Poland into the following administrative units: (a) Reichsgau Wartheland, which included the entire Poznan province, most of the Lodz province, five Pomeranian districts, and one county of the Warsaw province; (b) the remaining area of Pomerania, which was incorporated into the Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen; (c) Regierungsbezirk Zichenau (Ciechanow) consisting of the five northern counties of Warsaw province (*Plock, *Plonsk, *Sterpe, *Ciechanow, *Mlawa), which became a part of East

Prussia; (d) Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz – or unofficially Ost-Oberschlesien (East Upper Silesia) – which included *Sosnowiec, Bedzin, *Chryzanow, and *Zawiercie counties and parts of *Olkusz and Zywiec counties; (e) the General Government of Poland, which included the central Polish provinces and was subdivided into four districts, Warsaw, Lublin, *Radom, and Cracow.

The areas listed under (a)–(d) were incorporated into the Reich. After the outbreak of the Soviet-German War, the Polish territories previously occupied by the Russians were organized as follows: (f) Bezirk Bialystok, which included the Bialystok, *Bielsk Podlaski, *Grajewo, Lomza, *Sokolka, *Volkovysk, and Grodno counties and was “attached” (not incorporated) to East Prussia; (g) Bezirke Litauen und Weissrussland – the Polish part of White Russia (today western Belorussia), including the Vilna province, which was incorporated into the Reichskommissariat Ostland; (h) Bezirk Wolhynien-Podolien – the Polish province of Volhynia, which was incorporated into the Reichskommissariat Ukraine; and (i) East Galicia, which was incorporated into the General-Government and became its fifth district.

The Jewish population of this entire area was 3,351,000, of whom 2,042,000 came under Nazi rule and 1,309,000 under Soviet occupation in September 1939. The ultimate fate of the Jewish population under Nazi rule was the same in all the areas, though the various administrative areas differed in the degree and pace of persecution, depending on local leadership (a Nazi principle of administration).

Reichsgau Wartheland

The area was subdivided into three *Regierungsbezirke* (“administrative districts”) – Poznan, *Inowroclaw, and Lodz. On Sept. 1, 1939, it had 390,000 Jews (including 4,500 in Poznan, 54,090 in Inowroclaw, and 326,000 in the Lodz district – 233,000 in the city of Lodz). Like all Polish areas incorporated into the Reich, Wartheland was from the beginning designated to become “*judenrein*” (*Heydrich’s “*Schnellbrief*” of Sept. 21, 1939). In a secret order to the *RSHA (Reichssicherheitshauptamt – Reich Security Main Office) and the high *SS and police officials, issued on Oct. 30, 1939, *Himmler fixed the period of November 1939–February 1940 for clearing the incorporated areas of their entire Jewish population and the majority of their Polish population as well. A similar decree was issued on Nov. 4, 1939, by Wartheland’s Gauleiter Arthur Greiser.

Arrangements were made for the transfer of 100,000 Jews from its territory during this period. In fact, more than 50 Jewish communities were deported wholly or in part to the Lublin district between the fall of 1939 and May 1940; the larger communities among those deported were Poznan, Kalisz, Ciechocinek, *Gnieszno, Inowroclaw, Nieszawa, and *Konin. In some towns the deportation was carried out in stages, with a small number of Jews remaining, engaged in work for the Nazi authorities. In some instances, the regime of terror drove the Jews to desperation, so that they chose “voluntary” exile. This happened in *Lipno and in Kalisz, where many Jews, unable to

withstand the persecution, fled from the city in October and November 1939. In Lodz, over 10,000 Jews, including most of the Jewish intelligentsia, were deported in December 1939. For weeks the deportees were kept at assembly points, and had to supply their own means of subsistence, though they had been deprived of all their valuables. Large assembly points were located at Kalisz, Sieradz, and Lodz. There, the *Selektion* (“selection”) took place in which able-bodied men, aged 14 and over, were sent to labor camps which had been established in the meantime, while women, children, and old men were deported in sealed freight cars to the Lublin and *Kielce areas. This occurred in the severe winter of 1939–1940, and upon arrival at their destination, some of the deportees were dead, others nearly frozen, or otherwise seriously ill. The survivors were bereft of clothing, food, and money. A few found refuge with relatives or friends, but most of them had to find places in the crowded synagogues and poorhouses. For the Jewish communities of the Lublin and Radom districts, the influx of deportees was a very heavy burden. Most of the deportees perished before mass deportation began.

GHETTOIZATION. At this time, a second campaign was launched to concentrate the Jewish population in ghettos. The first ghetto in Wartheland was established at Lodz, on orders given by *Polizeipraesident* (Chief of Police) Johannes Schaefer (Feb. 8, 1940). By the latter half of 1940, all the Jewish communities that had survived the mass deportations were sealed off in ghettos. Lodz ghetto had a population of 162,000 on the day of its establishment (May 1, 1940). The large ghettos in Wartheland included *Pabianice (with about 8,500 persons), *Kutno (7,000), *Belchatow (5,500), *Ozorkow (4,700), *Zelow (4,500), *Zdunska Wola (10,000), Wloclawek (where 4,000 were left after the deportations), and *Wielun (4,000). Lodz became a central ghetto (*Gahetto*) for the entire province, absorbing Jews sent from ghettos that were liquidated or reduced in size, as well as from the Reich, *Vienna, and *Prague. Between Sept. 26 and Oct. 9, 1941, 3,082 Jews from Wloclawek and the vicinity arrived at Lodz Ghetto, and between Oct. 17 and Nov. 4, 1941, approximately 20,000 arrived from Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Emden, Duesseldorf, and Luxembourg. From May to August 1942, 14,440 “selected” Jews from liquidated ghettos arrived at Lodz.

From the end of 1942 until its liquidation in August 1944, Lodz was the only remaining ghetto in Wartheland. Its comparatively long existence was due to the fact that it became one of the largest industrial plants working for the Wehrmacht or private contractors. In August 1943, some 76,000 workers (about 85% of the entire ghetto population) were employed in 117 warehouses. According to the Nazi *Ghettoverwaltung* (“ghetto administration”), the total wages and production in 1942 reached a value of 27,862,200 RM (\$5,572,440). Large tailor shops also existed at Pabianice, Belchatow, Ozorkow, and other ghettos in the Lodz district. Lodz Ghetto bore the imprint of its *Judenaeltester* (“Jewish elder”) Mordecai *Rum-

kowski, who at an early stage imposed his rule over the ghetto. The ghetto was administered by division of the population into various socio-economic groups, each with a different status, in accordance with their status in the ghetto hierarchy or their usefulness for the war industry. In those areas of ghetto life in which the Nazis allowed the Jews autonomy, Rumkowski held absolute power.

PHYSICAL ANNIHILATION. Partial liquidation actions affecting certain categories of Jews, such as the sick and the old, began in Wartheland as early as the fall of 1940 (in Kalisz). In September or October 1941, experiments in the murder of Jews were carried out in Konin county, where Jews were forced into ditches and covered over with wet quicklime. On Dec. 8, 1941, the murder camp at *Chelmno began operation. On Jan. 2, 1942, Greiser’s *Erlass, die Entjudung des Warthelands betreffend* (“Decree on Clearing all Jews from the Wartheland”) was issued. In December 1941, the remaining Jews from *Kolo and Dabie were deported to Chelmno, followed in January 1942 by the inmates of the ghettos of Izbica Kujawska and other places. From Jan. 16 until mid-May 1942, numerous transports of Jews were dispatched from Lodz Ghetto to Chelmno. By May some 55,000 were murdered there. Between March and September 1942, all the remaining ghettos, with the exception of Lodz, were evacuated. Lodz ghetto was the scene of a bloody “action” against children under 10 years of age, the old, and the sick, resulting in the murder of 16,500 persons.

In mid-1943, Himmler and Albert Speer (Reich Minister for Armament and War Production) entered a long-drawn-out contest over the disposition of Lodz Ghetto. Himmler sought to incorporate the ghetto industries into the ss camp combine in the Lublin district, while Speer tried to retain a monopoly over this important industrial center. Their rivalry prolonged the existence of Lodz Ghetto until the summer of 1944, by which time Germany’s strategic situation had deteriorated to such an extent that the evacuation of Poland was imminent. In August 1944, Lodz, the only ghetto still left in Europe, was liquidated and all its inmates, some 68,500 Jews, were deported to *Auschwitz.

Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen

This area, with a total Jewish population of 23,000, had few and small Jewish communities; e.g., *Danzig, *Torun, and *Bydgoszcz. The province became “*judenrein*” at a comparatively early stage. The Jews and Poles were exposed to a campaign of terror from the very beginning, which resulted in the massacre of part of the Jewish inhabitants. Others fled from the area, and the rest were deported to the General Government. The last transport of Jews (some 2,000 persons) from Danzig and Bydgoszcz, including the surviving Jews of *Koenigsberg, arrived at the Warsaw Ghetto on March 10, 1941.

Regierungsbezirk Zichenau (Ciechanow)

According to the 1931 census, there was a Jewish population of 80,000 in the area of this newly created administrative district. In the first weeks of the occupation, a large number of

Jews from the towns near the German-Soviet demarcation line, e.g., *Ostrow Mazowiecka, Przasnysz, *Ostroleka, and *Pultusk, were forced to cross over to the Soviet zone. Their expulsion was accompanied by acts of terror, such as forcing the Jews to cross the Bug or the Narew rivers and opening fire on them, so that some people drowned or were shot to death. This group shared the fate of all the other Polish refugees in the Soviet Union. At the end of February 1941, about 10,000 Jews from Plock and Plock county were driven out, first passing through the Dzialdowo transit camp, where they were tortured and robbed, and from there to various towns in the Radom district, where within a year most of them died of starvation and disease. In Ciechanow, Mlawa, Plonsk, Strzegowo, and Sierpc, the Jews were segregated into ghettos, along with the few Jews left in towns whose Jewish populations had largely been expelled to the Soviet Union in the fall of 1939. These ghettos situated in the administrative area of East Prussia, ruled by the notorious Erich Koch, endured particularly harsh and bloodthirsty treatment, and the murder of members of the Judenrat and ghetto police was a frequent occurrence. In the fall of 1942 the ghettos were liquidated and the Jews dispatched to *Treblinka.

Regierungsbezirk Kattowitz (East Upper Silesia)

According to statistics published by the "Central Office of the Councils of Elders of the Jewish Communities in East Upper Silesia," comprising 32 communities, a Jewish population of 93,628 existed in these communities in March 1941. The largest among these were Bedzin (25,171), Sosnowiec (24,149), Chrzanow (8,229), Zawiercie (5,472), *Dabrowa Gornicza (5,564), and *Oswiecim (6,454). Jews played an important role in the life of this highly industrialized region (in mining, metallurgy, and textiles), and were heavily hit by the early-instituted "Aryanization" process.

A special office, the Dienststelle des Sonderbeauftragten der RRSS und Chefs der deutschen Polizei fuer fremdvoelkischen Einsatz in Oberschlesien, headed by Gen. Albrecht Schmelt (and commonly referred to as the Schmelt Organization), was in charge of sending the comparatively large number of skilled Jewish workers to German firms in Silesia and the Reich. No German firm was permitted to employ Jewish workers without the consent of the Schmelt Organization, and the latter maintained complete control over the Jewish "work effort." The German firms paid the Jewish workers at the normal rate (in this the Katowice (Kattowitz) area differed from the other occupied areas), but the workers received only a part of their wages and the firms had to submit the remainder to the Dienststelle. In 1942 the Schmelt Organization controlled 50,570 Jewish workers. When the evacuation of Jews from East Upper Silesia took place (starting May–June 1942), the Jewish workers were deported to Auschwitz, which was the major concentration camp as well as the largest industrial combine in Silesia.

The chairman of the Central Office of the Councils of Elders in Sosnowiec, Moshe Merin, exercised a decisive in-

fluence on the internal affairs of the Jewish communities and had considerable authority over the Judenraete (the Jewish councils). The formal ghettoization of East Upper Silesia did not take place until a comparatively late date. In Bedzin and Sosnowiec, for example, a closed ghetto was not established until May 1943, but it was liquidated by August 1943. These ghettos also absorbed the Jews left over from previous *Aussiedlungen* ("evacuation actions"). Merin was a consistent protagonist of the strategy of "rescuing" Jews by voluntarily providing the Nazi Moloch with contingents of victims to give others the chance of survival. He carried out this policy to its extreme, lending his own active cooperation, as well as that of the ghetto police, to the *Aussiedlungsaktionen*.

General Government

Originally, the General Government consisted of four districts, Warsaw, Lublin, Radom, and Cracow. When the district of Galicia was added, the Jewish population reached 2,110,000. The transfer of the administration from military to civilian authorities, which took place at the end of October 1939, did not alleviate the harsh conditions, for the uncontrolled terror of the first period was then replaced by "legally" imposed restrictions and persecution. The first proclamation, issued by General Governor Hans *Frank on Oct. 26, 1939, stated that "there will be no room in the General Government for Jewish exploiters," and from the very first day of his rule, Frank inundated the Jewish population with a flood of anti-Jewish measures. The personal rights of Jews were severely curtailed in all spheres of private and social life. Jews were deprived of freedom of movement, the right to dispose of their property, exercise their professions, and benefit from their labor. They were denied social and medical insurance benefits (which the antisemitic regime in Poland had granted them), religious observance (ritual slaughter and public worship), and a normal school education for their children. Finally, they lost the right to dispose of their own persons. Jews could no longer associate freely and Jewish societies, institutions, and organizations were disbanded and their property confiscated. The Judenrat, a quasi-representative body of the Jews, was established in their place by the Nazi authorities.

WARSAW DISTRICT. This district was divided into 10 counties, Warsaw, Garwolin, *Grojec, *Lowicz, *Skierniewice, *Sochaczew, Blonie, Ostrow Mazowiecki, *Minsk Mazowiecki, *Siedlce, and *Sokolow Podlaski. In the first half of 1940 the total Jewish population of this district was 600,000, of whom 400,000 lived in Warsaw. Its Jews were concentrated into ghettos in the western counties in 1940, and in the eastern counties in the fall of 1941. The Warsaw Ghetto was established on Nov. 15, 1940. The ghettos in the western part were of short duration. From the end of January to the beginning of April 1942, 72,000 Jews from this area were brought into the Warsaw Ghetto, where they lacked even the most rudimentary means for existence. With their arrival, the total number of refugees

in the ghetto rose to 150,000, but the population was being constantly decimated by starvation and disease.

In the fall of 1941, the Jews in each of the eastern counties were concentrated into between five and seven ghettos. This step was in fact in preparation for *Aussiedlungsaktionen* which began with the Warsaw Ghetto on July 22, 1942, and continued until Oct. 4–6, 1942. In the General Government these actions, under the code name of “Einsatz Reinhard,” were always carried out by special commando units (see Reinhard *Heydrich and *Holocaust, General Survey), headed by the ss and police chief of the Lublin district, Odilo *Globocnik. A decree issued by Frank on June 3, 1942, transferred the civilian authority’s jurisdiction over the Jewish population in the General Government to Wilhelm Krueger, its chief of ss and police.

On the eve of its destruction, the Warsaw Ghetto contained 450,000 Jews, of whom approximately 300,000 were deported to Treblinka by Sept. 21, 1942. Officially, 35,639 Jews remained in Warsaw as workers in German factories, employees of the Judenrat, or policemen. In fact, some 60,000 were left, including those in hiding. It is to be noted that Himmler’s order to Krueger of July 19, 1942, formally fixed the date of Dec. 31, 1942, as the final date for “cleansing” the General Government of the Jews. Between July 19 and 24, 1942, the Jews of *Otwock, Minsk Mazowiecki, and Siedlce were deported. Between September 22 and 27, most of the ghettos in the Sokolow Podlaski, Wegrow, and Minsk Mazowiecki counties were liquidated, followed, in the last days of October, by the remaining ghettos in the Warsaw district. Small groups of Jews tried to hide out on the “Aryan” side or in the countryside. In order to lull the intended victims into a false sense of security, Krueger issued a decree (Oct. 28, 1942) when the annihilation of the Jewish population in the district had been almost completed, providing for “residential quarters” in Warsaw and Siedlce. His aim was to influence the Jews in hiding to believe that these “newly established ghettos” which had already passed through a partial liquidation would now be a safe haven for the survivors. In this he was largely successful. The intolerable conditions in which the Jews found themselves, hiding out in the forests amid a hostile population, induced them to seek out and settle in the new “residential quarters.” Only a short while later they were deported. The “new” Siedlce Ghetto, for example, did not last a month, and by November 25, Siedlce was *judenrein*. In November, too, the liquidation of most of the Jewish labor camps was begun and after “selections” the workers were deported to the Warsaw Ghetto. In the course of the *Aktion* on Jan. 18–19, 1943, the ss men met with armed resistance from the Jewish Fighting Organization and were forced to cease action for the time being. The Warsaw Ghetto, according to Himmler’s decree (Feb. 16, 1943), was to be liquidated at the earliest possible date, and the workers and machinery were to be transferred to the Lublin ss camps.

LUBLIN DISTRICT. The 10 counties in the Lublin district – Lublin, *Biala Podlaska, *Bilgoraj, *Chelm, *Hrubieszow, *Janow

Lubelski, *Krasnystaw, *Pulawy, *Radzyn, and *Zamosc – had a Jewish population of 250,000 in March–April 1941, including 55,000 refugees and deportees. In the beginning, the eastern part of the Lublin district was regarded as a “Jewish reservation” and Jews from parts of Poland that had been incorporated into the Reich, as well as from the Reich itself, from the Czech Protectorate of Bohemia-Moravia, and from *Austria were deported there on a systematic basis. Jozefow, Izbica Lubelska, Krasnystaw, and Zamosc were some of the towns which served as concentration points for these deportees. The local population was also displaced, generally in order to make room for the new arrivals. Even after this plan for the “Jewish reservation” had been given up, tens of thousands of Jews deported from Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Austria continued to stream into the district, to be “evacuated” to the *Belzec death camp, whose murder installations began functioning in March 1942.

The Nazi ideologists also regarded Lublin as a reservoir of “World Jewry,” which presumably maintained secret links with Jewish communities everywhere (see *Hitler). As a result, the Lublin district was turned into an experimental station for various Nazi schemes for the annihilation of Polish Jewry. It was the headquarters of “Einsatz Reinhard” from where its “action groups” began their destructive march through the General Government. The first ghetto in the district was set up in the city of Lublin in April 1941. Since the area designated for the ghetto was too small to hold the approximately 45,000 Jews who were in Lublin at the time, the Nazi authorities forced over 10,000 to leave the city “voluntarily” and move to other towns in the district. The restricted area of the ghetto and its dense population caused epidemics and a high rate of mortality. In November and December 1941 there were 1,227 cases of typhus and the mortality rate that year was three times that of a year before the war (40.8 per 1,000).

In the second half of 1940, about 50 forced labor camps for Jews were established in the Lublin district for local Jews and Jews from other districts. In the winter of 1940–41, there were over 12,000 Jews in these camps. Many succumbed to the intolerable living and working conditions – starvation; wretched accommodations (usually in decrepit old barracks, stables, and barns); lack of hygiene; strenuous work (regulating rivers, draining swamps, and digging canals); and inhuman treatment by the camp commanders. In Osowa camp, 47 inmates were shot in July 1941 after two or three of them had contracted typhus. The Judenraete in ghettos from which the workers had come organized aid for them. The Warsaw Judenrat, for example, spent 520,000 zlotys (\$104,000) in aid to the camps in 1940, and the Lublin Judenrat, 150,000 zlotys (\$30,000). The “evacuation” campaign in this district preceded those in other parts of the General Government. In the period from March 17 to April 20, 1942, 30,000 Jews from Lublin Ghetto were deported to Belzec and murdered there, while 4,000 others were deported to the Majdan Tatarski Ghetto close to Lublin, which existed until Nov. 9, 1942. In the same period, 3,400 Jews from Piaski and 2,200 from

Izbica were dispatched to Belzec, preceded by about 17,000 Jews from Pulawy county (May 6–12). The ghettos which had thus been made *judenrein* became temporary collection points for Jews deported from the Reich, the Protectorate, and Vienna, and after a short stay there they were sent on to Belzec to be murdered.

Krueger's decree of Oct. 28, 1942, set up eight ghettos in the Lublin district, and like the ghettos in the Warsaw district, their existence was of short duration. By Dec. 1, 1942, five ghettos were left (Piaski, Wlodawa, Izbica, *Lukow Lubelski, and Miedzyrzec Podlaski) and the last of these was liquidated in July 1943. The Jewish workers remained in the concentration and labor camps until November 1943. On Nov. 3–7, 1943, 18,000 Jews were murdered in *Majdanek concentration camp, over 13,000 in the Poniatowa camp, and approximately 10,000 in the Trawniki camp, to which several thousands of Jews had been deported from Warsaw after the ghetto revolt in April 1943.

CRACOW DISTRICT. The Cracow district, consisting of 12 counties (Cracow, Debica, *Jaroslaw, *Jaslo, *Krosno, Miechow, *Nowy Sacz, Nowy Targ, *Przemysl, *Sanok, and *Tarnow), had a prewar Jewish population of over 250,000. By May 1941 this number dwindled to 200,000, in spite of the additional influx of 20,000 refugees and deportees from the incorporated areas, including Silesia, Lodz, and Kalisz, in the fall of 1939 and spring of 1940. The expulsion of Jews from the Cracow district, where the General Government capital was situated, was accelerated. In the first few months, Jews living in the border towns along the San River were expelled to the Soviet zone. From the spring of 1940 to November 1941, Jews living in the spas and summer resorts in Nowy Sacz and Nowy Targ counties were expelled, and from May 1940 to April 1941, 55,000 Jews left Cracow voluntarily or were driven out. The Jewish population thus became concentrated in an ever-decreasing number of places – in Cracow county, in seven townships and 10 villages, in Nowy Sacz in five places, and in the Nowy Targ county in seven.

The first ghetto was established in March 1941 in the Podgorze quarter of Cracow. A wall sealed it off from the rest of the city and the gates of the wall had the form of tombstones. The first “evacuations” took place in Cracow Ghetto, which underwent three such actions, on May 30–31, October 28, 1942, and March 13–14, 1943. In the final evacuation, 2,000 Jews were murdered on the spot, about 2,000 were deported to Auschwitz, and approximately 6,000 were sent to the nearby camp in *Plaszow, located on the site of two Jewish cemeteries. The first *Aktion* in Tarnow took place on June 11–13, 1942, involving 11,000 Jews. The Jews of Przemysl county were murdered on July 27–August 3 (after 10,000 Jews from the county had been concentrated in the city). At the beginning of August, the Jews from Jaroslaw were deported to Belzec, followed at the end of that month by deportation of the Jews from Cracow county, where at an earlier date the Jews from the ghettos in *Bochnia, *Wieliczka, and Skawina had

been concentrated. In September 1942 approximately 11,000 Jews from Sanok county (earlier concentrated at a camp at *Iziaslav (Zaslav) were deported to Belzec or shot in the surrounding forests. That month the ghettos in Tarnow county were finally liquidated.

Krueger's decree of Oct. 28, 1942, setting up six ghettos in the Cracow district (Cracow, Bochnia, Tarnow, Rzeszow, Debica, and Przemysl), was immediately followed by murder “actions” there. From June to November 1942, a total of over 100,000 Jews were murdered, and by Jan. 1, 1943, according to official figures, 37,000 destitute Jews were left in “residual ghettos” and a number of camps. There were over 20 labor camps in the Cracow district, the largest at *Mielec (with 3,000 Jewish inmates on the day of its liquidation, Aug. 24, 1944) – and others in Pustkow (1,500), Rozwadow (1,200), Szebnie (2,000–2,500), and in Plaszow with two branches in Prokocim and Biezanow. Plaszow, a collection point for the Jews who survived the liquidation of ghettos and camps in the entire district, had 20,000 imprisoned there in the fall of 1943. In March 1944, large transports were sent from Plaszow to Auschwitz, Stutthof, Flossenbug, and *Mauthausen, while the 567 Jews left were liquidated in January 1945 together with the rest of the Jewish survivors from the Cracow district.

RADOM DISTRICT. The newly created Radom district, comprising the larger part of the Kielce province and parts of the Lodz and Warsaw provinces, had a Jewish population of about 360,000 on Sept. 1, 1939. In this district too the evacuation of the Jews proceeded at a rapid pace. First of all, the district had been heavily bombarded, and there were cities and towns in which up to 80% of the Jewish population had lost their homes and sought refuge elsewhere. Secondly, the deportations from the incorporated areas, the Protectorate (an undetermined number from Prague), and Vienna brought into the district large numbers of homeless Jews – 4,000 from Wartheland, about 10,000 from the Plock county, and 4,000 from Vienna. In 1941, the total number of refugees and deportees reached 70–75,000 (over 20% of the local Jewish population). In 1940–41, a kind of internal expulsion process went on in the district, e.g., in December 1940, when 2,000 Jews were expelled from Radom, and in October 1941, when several thousand were driven out from Tomaszow Mazowiecki.

The ghettos in this district were created at an earlier stage than in other parts of the General Government – in *Piotrkow at the end of October 1939, and in *Radomsko at the end of December that year. Ghettos were set up in March–April 1941 in the three large cities of the Radom district – in Radom (which in January 1941 had 28,000 Jews), Czestochowa (36,000), and Kielce (20,000). At the end of 1940 the ghetto of Tomaszow Mazowiecki was established (this town had 16,500 Jews in June 1940), divided into three different sections (the Radom Ghetto also consisted of two sections in two different quarters of the city). Many places were in ruins, causing severe overcrowding in the ghettos, and in some of the smaller ghettos there were as many as 12–30 persons to a room. In or-

der to prepare for the *Aussiedlungen*, the Nazis concentrated the Jews in a few ghettos. In the first stage, the Jews who were still living in villages were expelled to the neighboring towns. In the second stage, the Jewish population from the smaller towns was concentrated in the large ghettos, and each of the 10 counties had several concentration points assigned to it. At the end of this stage, over 20,000 Jews were living in a few large, heavily guarded ghettos.

The first deportation, to Treblinka, took place on Aug. 5, 1942, in Radom. The Kielce Ghetto inhabitants were deported on August 20–24, and the Czestochowa Ghetto inhabitants, between Sept. 2 and Oct. 5, 1942. By Nov. 7, 1942, most of the Jews had been deported to Treblinka. On Jan. 1, 1943, according to a German source, there were only 29,400 Jews left in the four ghettos (“residential districts”) in Radomsko, Sandomierz, *Szydlowiec, and Ujazd, provided for in Krueger’s second decree (Nov. 10, 1942). These ghettos came to an end in January 1943. Only the Jewish slave laborers in the labor camps were left, mainly near the industrial concerns of Radom, Kielce, Czestochowa, Ostrowiec-Swietokrzyski, Skarzynsko-Kamienna, Blizyn, Piotrkow, Tomaszow Mazowiecki, and other towns. These were in fact concentration camps run by the district ss and police chiefs, to whom the German factory owners directly paid the fees for exploitation of Jewish manpower (as was the case in the other districts also). Some of these camps went through a series of transfers and “selections” but continued to exist until the second half of 1944. The German *Hasag* factories in Czestochowa were still functioning as late as January 1945.

GALICIA DISTRICT. The district of Galicia, established in August 1941, comprised the *Stanislav and *Tarnopol provinces and the eastern part of the Lvov province, and consisted of 16 counties. The 1931 census report indicated a Jewish population in this area of 500,000. As a result of the great influx of refugees from Nazi-occupied Poland in the fall of 1939, the number of Jews had considerably increased, and it is estimated that at the outbreak of German-Soviet hostilities, there were 600,000–650,000 Jews in the area, taking into account the natural increase from 1931 to 1941. The German invasion was accompanied from the very beginning by the mass murder of Jews, initiated and perpetrated by local Ukrainians with the support and participation of the Einsatzkommandos and the German army. Pogroms took place in Lvov (on the “Petlyura Days,” July 25 and 27), in Tarnopol, *Zolochew, and *Borislav. Many of the Jews living in the countryside, about 25% of the total Jewish population, were murdered in this period.

In the part of Galicia temporarily occupied by the Hungarian army (Kolomyya, Borshchev, and *Gorodenka), the situation was quite different, the Hungarian commanders taking the Jews under their protection and preventing murders from taking place. During the short period of German military occupation, until Aug. 1, 1941, when its civilian administration took over, several tens of thousands of Jews were killed. The civilian administration immediately introduced the anti-Jewish

legislation applying to the General Government. In fact, some of the provisions of this legislation were applied even before a “legal” framework was created. The first ghettos were set up in the beginning of October at Stanislav (for about 30,000 Jews) and Tarnopol (18,000). These were followed in the spring of 1942 by ghettos in Kolomyya and Kolomyya county, and at *Chortkov. By the second half of 1942, ghettos existed in all the cities and towns, and a large part of their population had already been deported to Belzec. The last ghetto to be established was the one at Lvov, in August–September 1942, after several postponements. This came after the great *Aussiedlung* action, 36,000 surviving out of a population of about 150,000. Krueger’s decree of Nov. 10, 1942, provided for 32 ghettos in the Galicia district, in Lvov, Stanislav, Tarnopol, Chortkov, *Stry, *Drogobych, *Sambor, Borshchev, *Zholkva, *Brody, Rava-Russkaya, *Rogatin, and *Skalat.

Large-scale physical extermination campaigns began in the second half of 1941 and were initially directed mainly against Jews in the professions and intellectuals. During the High Holiday period, on Oct. 12, 1941, about 10,000 Jews were shot to death at the Jewish cemetery of Stanislav. In November numerous executions took place in Lvov, when the first attempt was made to organize a ghetto there, and mass shootings occurred in Kolomyya county in December of that year. This is only a partial listing and it is estimated that some 100,000 Jews were murdered in July 1941–March 1942. In the latter month, the extermination camp at Belzec went into operation and from then until the end of 1942, about 300,000 Jews – 50% of the Jewish population of the district – were deported to Belzec or shot on the spot, or taken away for execution in the forests. The others remained for a short while in the ghettos and labor camps, and by June 1943 they were all liquidated. According to ss-*Gruppenfuhrer* Fritz *Katzmann’s report on the “Final Solution” in Galicia, only 21,000 Jews were left in Galicia, distributed in over 21 camps, the largest of which was the Janowska Street camp in Lvov. Selected workers from liquidated ghettos were transferred to this camp in Lvov, while those who were no longer fit for work were executed in the vicinity. In the second half of 1943, nearly all the Jewish labor camps were liquidated and their inmates murdered. In this period, several thousand Jews who had been engaged in agricultural work were also murdered.

Bezirk Bialystok

This district, created in July 1941, was attached to but not incorporated in East Prussia. The chief of the East-Prussian provincial government was also appointed head of the civilian administration of the Bialystok district and the central provincial organs at Koenigsberg were responsible for all district affairs. The area of the district, practically identical with Bialystok province, was divided into seven counties: Bialystok, Grodno, Bielsk Podlaski, Grajewo, Lomza, Sokolka, and Volkovysk. The Bialystok district suffered two eruptions of war, on Sept. 1, 1939, and June 22, 1941. The first German occupation was restricted to the western part of the district

and lasted only a fortnight, after which the area was turned over to the Soviets. The Soviet occupying forces imposed far-reaching changes in the economic, social, and political life of the Jews. The Jewish population of the district in September 1939 was estimated at 240,000–250,000. Later on, the district was flooded by a stream of refugees from the western and central part of Poland. Among the officials and specialists brought in from the Soviet Union, there were also a considerable number of Jews, and the total increase in population is estimated at 100,000. It may therefore be assumed that in June 1941 the district had a Jewish population of about 350,000.

The second German invasion was accompanied by mass murders, carried out by the *Einsatzkommandos* comprising Tilsit police battalions. These operated in the rear of the army and caused the destruction of entire communities (Jedwabne, *Kolo, Stawiski, *Tykocin, and others). In Bialystok, over 6,000 Jews were murdered between June 27 and July 13, 1941. The great synagogue was burnt down and at least 1,000 Jews who had been forced into it perished in the flames. Special murder campaigns were instituted against Jewish intellectuals. Antisemitic elements within the local Polish and Belorussian population, as well as among the Polish police which continued to serve under the occupying power, took an active part in the mass murder of Jews. (Even before the war, the influence of the Polish antisemitic parties had been especially strong in this area.) Most of the ghettos were established in August 1941. The larger among these were Bialystok (over 50,000), Grodno (25,000), *Pruzhanj (12,000), Lomza (10,000), *Sokolka (8,000), and Bielsk Podlaski (7,000). Grodno Ghetto consisted of two parts, one inhabited by artisans and skilled workers and their families, and the other by the rest of the Jewish population. Each had its own Judenrat and ghetto police, but the chairman of the Judenrat of the artisans' ghetto had the title of *Generalobmann* ("chief chairman") and represented both parts vis-à-vis the authorities.

While the ghettos were in the process of formation, "selections" and mass slaughter of Jews often took place. In Szczuczyn, for example, the ghetto was inhabited almost entirely by women and children, most of the men having been killed. The overcrowding in the ghettos was phenomenal. In Czyzow, for example, 200 persons were squeezed into seven tiny houses. Systematic mass annihilation began on Nov. 2, 1942. In a single day, most of the ghettos were wiped out (except for Bialystok, Pruzhanj, the first part of the Grodno Ghetto, *Krynki, and Sokolka). Before reaching their final destination at the extermination camp of Treblinka, the deportees were kept in assembly camps for a period of three to 10 weeks, during which many of them succumbed to the inhuman conditions. In November, 120,000–130,000 Jews were killed in the murder campaign. The *Aktionen* were renewed in February 1943, after the liquidation of the Pruzhanj, Sokolka, and Krynki ghettos. In Bialystok Ghetto, the first "action" took place on Feb. 5–12, 1943, resulting in the deaths of 13,000 Jews, of whom 1,000 were killed on the spot. Over

40,000 persons were killed in the third phase of the extermination campaign. Bialystok Ghetto was the last in the district to be liquidated (Aug. 16, 1943). Armed resistance, organized by the Jewish Fighting Organization (see Mordechai *Tenenbaum), was suppressed by German military forces, including tanks. Over 30,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka, Majdanek, and Auschwitz.

Generalbezirk Litauen und Weissrussland (Lithuania and Belorussia)

The Polish parts of these districts, which belonged to Reichskommissariat Ostland, consisted of almost the entire Vilna and Novogrudok provinces and of the northern portion of Polesie province. In 1931 this area was inhabited by over 230,000 Jews. From September to December 1939, a large number of refugees arrived in the area, especially in Vilna. For nearly 11 months (from Oct. 10, 1939, until the end of August 1940), Vilna and its environs formed a part of Lithuania. In August, the entire country was absorbed by the Soviet Union. Under Soviet occupation, thousands of Jews were arrested and deported to distant parts of the Soviet Union, but several thousand escaped to the United States, Palestine (see *Berihah), and *Shanghai. It is therefore impossible to determine the size of the Jewish population in June 1941. The larger communities in the Lithuania district were Vilna, Vileika, *Oshmyany, Svienciany, and Trakai (*Troki); in the Belorussian district they were *Novogrudok, *Baranovichi, *Lida, *Slonim, *Molodechno, and *Stolbtsy. Like everywhere else in "Ostland," the military invasion brought in its wake large-scale murder by the *Einsatzkommandos*, in this case *Einsatzgruppe A*. In many places they had the assistance of locally recruited "Hiwis" (*Hilfswillige* – local volunteer units). On July 11–Dec. 24, 1941, 45,000 Jews were killed in Vilna (which in 1931 had a total Jewish population of 55,000). At approximately the same time, 9,000 Jews were slaughtered in Slonim; 5,000 in Vileika; 4,000 in Molodechno; 2,500 in Novogrudok; 1,800 in *Volozhin, and other places. During the murder campaign, or a short while later, ghettos were established where further mass executions took place (Vilna Ghetto was set up on Sept. 6, 1941). Many small communities were completely wiped out.

Ghettos continued to exist in Vilna, Vileika, Oshmyany, Novogrudok, Lida, *Glubokoye, Slonim, and Baranovichi, and in a few smaller communities from which Jews were dispatched to larger ghettos in the summer of 1942, in preparation for the second phase of the annihilation program. Vilna Ghetto was also used for this purpose. Jacob Gens, chief of the Vilna Ghetto and of the ghetto police, had some measure of jurisdiction over the smaller ghettos in "Wilnaland," and the Vilna ghetto police participated in the *Aktion* that took place in Oshmyany at the end of October 1942. In Belorussia the same procedure was initiated of concentrating the Jewish population of a certain area in one of the larger ghettos in preparation for murder "actions." Here there was an almost continuous murder campaign, with breathing spells only between one *Aktion* and the next. The longest such period of

respite was granted to Vilna Ghetto, lasting from early 1942 until September 1943.

The final phase extended from August 1942, when the ghetto in Slonim was destroyed, until September 1943, when the Jews of Vilna, Novogradok, and Lida were sent to their deaths. In the course of August and September 1943, about 10,000 Jews were deported from Vilna Ghetto to concentration camps in Estonia. Six thousand were murdered on September 23, and the ghetto was liquidated. Several thousand Jewish workers employed outside the ghetto were exterminated later (July 1944). Specialists and skilled workers were sometimes concentrated in certain houses in the liquidated ghetto or sent to labor camps. Such camps, containing the pitiful remnants of the liquidated ghettos of Belorussia, were located at *Koldychevo (near Baranovichi) and Kelbasin. They too ceased to exist at the end of 1943.

Generalbezirk Wolhynien-Podolien

Of the Polish territories, this district, which formed part of the "Reichskommissariat Ukraine," contained the larger part of the Polesie province and the entire Wolyn (Volhynia) province belonging to prewar Poland. The 1931 census of the population in this area indicated about 300,000 Jews. The larger communities were Pinsk, Brest, *Kobrin, *Kovel, *Dubno, *Rovno, *Lutsk, *Ostrog, *Kremenets, and *Vladimir-Volynski. Here too, a large influx of refugees came from Poland shortly after the outbreak of the war, while a certain number of Jews were moved by the Soviets to other parts of the U.S.S.R., so that it was impossible to determine the size of the population in June 1941. A mass slaughter in this district was carried out mainly by Einsatzgruppe C, commencing with the German invasion. The murder action at *Rovno was carried out on Nov. 5–6, 1941, when 15,000 Jews were shot. In general the local Ukrainian population cooperated in the annihilation campaign against the Jews.

Only a few communities escaped in the initial phase (one of these was Kovel). As was the case elsewhere, the surviving Jews were herded into temporary ghettos. Dubno Ghetto was among the first to be liquidated (May 27, 1942), and 5,000–7,000 Jews were killed. The first *Aktion* took place on May 10, 1942, and the handful of Jewish workers who survived it were shot on May 23, 1942. In Kovel the "city" ghetto was destroyed on June 2, 1942, with 8,000–9,000 victims, while the "workers'" ghetto in the city was liquidated on Sept. 18, 1942. Lutsk Ghetto came to an end on Aug. 20, 1942 (17,000 people murdered). In Kremenets, the ghetto's agony lasted for two weeks, starting on Aug. 10, 1942, in the course of which 19,000 Jews went to their deaths. In September, it was Vladimir-Volynski's turn (18,000 victims) and from October 28 to 31, the Jews of Pinsk Ghetto were murdered. As in "Ostland," the mass executions took place in the vicinity of the ghettos, in front of prepared mass graves, and were marked by extraordinary manifestations of sadism. The Ukrainian police displayed a murderous zeal in their cooperation with the Nazis. In the course of December 1942, the Jewish workers who had

survived the mass executions were also liquidated. In a report on a trip in the Ukraine in June 1943, Hans Joachim Kausch of the Propaganda Ministry stated that the Jews of that area had been "completely" liquidated and throughout his entire stay there he had found only four Jews, working as tailors in an SD camp.

Demographic Total

Up to September 1939 Poland had a Jewish population of 3,351,000. Exact figures on the number killed between September 1939 and 1944 are not available, but the following account is a relatively well-founded estimate. Shortly after the end of the war, the Central Committee of Polish Jews began registering all surviving Polish Jews and by June 15, 1945, 55,509 had registered. Since some people registered several times with different local committees a round figure of 55,000 is assumed, which included a certain number of Jews who succeeded in returning to Poland from the Soviet Union. To this must be added 13,000 Jews in the Polish army formed in the U.S.S.R. in 1941, and approximately 1,000 Jews (out of 2,000) who had saved themselves by posing as "Aryans" and had not registered with the Jewish committees, bringing the total to 69,000. The number of Polish Jews who were saved by fleeing in September 1939 to the Soviet Union, to certain European countries, to Palestine, or to North and South America, or who survived the camps in Germany, is estimated at a maximum of 300,000 (250,000 of whom had fled to the U.S.S.R.). The sum total of surviving Polish Jews is therefore about 369,000, i.e., 11% of the prewar population, while 2,982,000 Jews were killed.

Jewish Resistance

Nazi plans called for a campaign of repression utilizing legal and economic restrictions and hard labor to bring about a rapid reduction of the Jewish population by pauperization, starvation, and epidemics. The Jews developed a system of self-defense to thwart the rapid achievement of the plans for their destruction, or at least succeeded in slowing down the realization of the Nazi program. Jewish resistance applied to all spheres of life – economic and spiritual; on an individual as well as on a collective basis; and in the final stage, when the Nazis resorted to the "Final Solution" (physical annihilation) of the Jews, it took the form of armed insurrections. In the economic sphere, the Jews succeeded in circumventing the regulations designed to isolate them from the gentile society, due to the fact that large numbers of Jews were put to work outside the ghetto. They established secret industries in the ghetto itself, by which they staved off rapid starvation and carried on business with the "Aryan" market. Foodstuffs were also smuggled into the ghetto by various means, often displaying astounding inventiveness. Jewish industrialists and artisans managed to obtain substitutes for all kinds of raw materials. In Warsaw Ghetto, for example, the export of wares produced in the ghetto workshops under orders of the German "Transferstelle" was in no proportion to that of articles produced in secret and exported without the knowledge of the official German office. The considerable gap between

legal and illegal economic activities became characteristic of the economic situation in all the occupied areas. Officially the Jews were given the opportunity of working for the German economy only, military as well as civilian, for as long as this served the German war effort. In practice, many of the Jews, inured by a long tradition of existence under harsh conditions of persecution, and fortified by a powerful will to live, were able to break out of the economic straitjacket into which the Nazis had forced them and to surmount the dangers of the ghetto walls.

The Nazis were disappointed by the ability of the ghettoized Jews to adapt themselves to the abnormal conditions of their existence, and surprised that “so few” Jews were dying from “natural” causes and that there were no mass suicides. At a meeting of Nazi officials, held in Cracow on Aug. 24, 1942, General Governor Frank openly admitted: “By the way, I wish to state that we have sentenced 1,200,000 Jews to death by starvation; the fact that the Jews are not dying from hunger will only serve to speed up enactment of further anti-Jewish decrees.” Thus, the Jews’ vitality served to frustrate partially the biological war that the Nazis waged against them and was one of the causes for the Nazis’ decision to resort to the “Final Solution.”

Jewish aid organizations which existed before the war, such as the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), *TOZ, and *CENTOS, the Yidishe Sotsiale Alaynhilf (YISA) founded in May 1940, and, after liquidation of the last in Oct. 1942, the Juedische Unterstuetzungsstelle (JUS), established formally in March 1943, were permitted by the General Government to carry on their activities in its area. The YISA set up a highly diversified system of social and medical assistance. Almost every ghetto provided some form of public assistance, such as soup kitchens and accommodation for deportees and refugees. As early as May 1940, according to an incomplete list, some 200 welfare committees were sponsored by the Judenraete, and their budgets were provided mainly by the JDC. These committees also collected funds, clothing, and other articles among local Jews. By the end of 1941 the YISA organization was active in over 400 localities in the General Government, maintaining 1,500 social and medical institutions and serving 300,000 adults and 30,000 children. This, of course, was not enough to cope with the demands posed by the constantly growing pauperization of the Jewish population and the continual influx of new arrivals (in some ghettos, 60% of the population was dependent on public assistance). The constant lack of nourishment and hygiene in the ghettos, which the Nazis set up in the most dilapidated parts of the towns, resulted in diseases and epidemics to which the entire Jewish population might have easily succumbed. However, health and sanitary departments were set up and maintained by the Judenraete and TOZ which in turn subsidized 117 hospitals and 123 out-patient clinics and sanitary posts. To prevent the spread of the epidemics to the “Aryan” city quarters, the Nazi authorities used police measures, the results of which were even worse than the epidemics. In fact the ghetto

population was so weakened that a large loss of life could not be avoided. In Warsaw, Lodz, Lublin, and Kutno, 15–20% of the Jewish population died in the two or three years of the ghettos’ existence.

The Jews also displayed moral resistance to the starvation and debilitating forced labor, whereby the Nazis hoped to divest the Jews of all interest in spiritual life and dehumanize them. Moral resistance took varied forms. Pious Jews convened in secret for prayers, disregarding the dangers thus incurred; yeshivah students continued their studies and held clandestine *minyanim* to which they took the orphans to recite *kaddish* for their deceased parents. They also abstained from using the public soup kitchens which under ghetto conditions were not kept *kasher*, despite the greater suffering this entailed for them. Nonobservant Jews had their own means of moral resistance. Teachers established clandestine student groups and conducted classes in private homes. Persons who had been active before the war in cultural societies established secret libraries, choirs, orchestras, and dramatic groups, and held lectures and celebrations of important historical anniversaries. The Judenraete also established schools, wherever the Nazi authorities did not put obstacles in their way. (According to a decree issued by Frank on Aug. 31, 1940, the Judenraete were to be permitted to run elementary and vocational schools, but with few exceptions were prevented from actually doing so by the local Nazi authorities.)

Intensive cultural and educational activities were carried on in the Warsaw ghetto by the Yidishe Kultur-Organizatsye and the CENTOS, and in Vilna Ghetto by the cultural department of the Judenrat. Lodz Ghetto also maintained a large network of schools until the summer of 1941 (45 schools with 500 teachers and an average monthly attendance of 10,300 children). In most ghetto schools the emphasis was placed on Jewish studies. The teaching of history and geography was prohibited. Cultural activities fulfilled the dual purpose of protecting the inhabitants of the ghetto, especially the youth, against the demoralizing atmosphere of the ghetto created by the Nazis, and of strengthening their resistance to Nazi attempts to deprive them of their human dignity.

Organized physical and armed resistance was closely linked to political activities in a number of ghettos, and took various forms. Illegal publications, including pamphlets, were issued periodically or singly, and were either handwritten or duplicated. (In Warsaw Ghetto, for example, incomplete reports indicate that from mid-1940 to April 1943, 40 illegal periodicals were issued by various illegal movements representing every shade of political opinion.) Organized secret listening-in to foreign broadcasts, to reduce the Jews’ isolation from the outer world, provided information on the political and military situation, and served as a source of hope and encouragement. In some ghettos, political parties – particularly workers’ parties, e.g., the Bund, Po’alei Zion, and the communists – actively opposed the Jewish ghetto administration, i.e., the Judenraete and the ghetto police. (In Lodz Ghetto, opposition to Rumkowski’s regime took the form of street demon-

strations and strikes in the ghetto workshops.) Opposition to the Judenraete was also voiced in the underground press. The parties' youth movements conducted a cultural education campaign among their secret membership.

At a later stage, when the mass deportations began, the movements made preparations for armed resistance to the deportation "action." It was on the basis of organizing armed resistance that the political parties began to cooperate. Thus, in Warsaw Ghetto, a Jewish Coordinating Committee was set up in October 1942, composed of representatives of all the Zionist parties (with the exception of the Revisionists) – who were united in the Jewish National Committee – and of representatives of the Bund. On Oct. 27, 1942, the Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB) was established which united the above-mentioned Jewish parties and the communists under one command. The heroic revolt of Warsaw Ghetto (which lasted from April 19 until the end of May 1943) was the result of the collective, self-sacrificing efforts of the youth of almost all political parties. The Revisionist Jewish Military Organization took an active part in the fighting. Similarly, in Bialystok Ghetto, a united fighting organization was set up on the eve of the revolt that broke out on Aug. 16, 1943.

In Czestochowa, the planned revolt was frustrated when an unexpected deportation "action" (on Sept. 21, 1942) barred access to the bunkers where the arms were hidden. During the liquidation of Bedzin Ghetto, underground fighters of the Zionist youth movements fought against vastly superior Nazi armed forces from fortified bunkers until they all fell. In Cracow Ghetto, the fighting organization, consisting of Zionist and Communist youth, carried out acts of sabotage and direct attacks on the Germans (such as the armed attack against German officers in the Cyganeria Café on Dec. 23, 1942). In Vilna Ghetto, a United Partisans Organization was founded in January 1942, comprising in later stages members of all the political movements. Following the Gestapo demand for the surrender of the Vilna underground commander, Yizhak *Wittenberg, in July 1943, the leadership of the organization was forced to give up the struggle inside the ghetto, and smuggled its members into the forests, where they set up a partisans' group under the name of *Nekamah* ("Revenge").

Revolts broke out in the extermination camps of Treblinka (on Aug. 2, 1943) and Sobibor (Oct. 14, 1943) in which large numbers of prisoners managed to escape (most of whom were later killed). These insurrections later brought the murder installations in those camps to a halt. An armed revolt of the Jews in the "Sonderkommando" in Auschwitz took place on Oct. 7, 1944.

[Isaiah Trunk]

PARTISANS. The guerilla warfare in Poland (i.e., within the area designated by post-World War II boundaries) was confined to the territories of the so-called General-Government and the province of Bialystok. The first Jewish attempts to organize partisan units were undertaken by the resistance movement of the *Warsaw Ghetto in spring 1942, but these, as well as some other early attempts, failed due to lack of ex-

perience and the lack of support from the local population. In July 1942, the Germans began to implement the so-called Operation Reinhard. At that time, mainly in the provinces of Lublin and Kielce, there began a spontaneous movement of thousands of Jews fleeing the townlets to the forests to escape deportation. Many of them formed groups that offered active resistance to the Nazis. Although numerically strong, they had very few arms and no supply bases at all. Those who managed to hold out through the winter of 1942/43 came in contact with the Polish underground, as in the course of spring and summer 1943 a number of Polish partisan units began to operate from the forests.

The attitude of the Polish partisans toward the Jews depended upon the political framework to which they belonged and the goodwill of local commanders. The closest relations were between the Jewish partisans and the Communist-dominated People's Guard (*Gwardia Ludowa*). About a dozen Jewish partisan units were subordinated to the command of that organization and later acted as its units. Among them were: partisan detachment "Chil" (known also as the Second Company of the "Holod" battalion), under the command of Yehiel Grynszpan, which operated in the eastern part of the Lublin province; detachment "Emilia Plater," under the command of Samuel Jegier, and detachment "Kozietulski," under the command of Mietek Gruber, in the northern parts of the Lublin province; detachment "Berek Joselewicz," under the command of Forst, in the southern part of the Lublin province; detachment "Lwy" ("Lions"), under the command of Julian Ajzenman (Kaniewski), in the northern part of the Kielce province; detachment "Zygmunt," under the command of Zalman Fajnsztat, in the southwestern part of the Kielce province; detachment "Iskra" ("Spark"), under the command of Lejb Birman, in Rzeszow province; and detachment "Mordecai Anielewicz" commanded by Adam Szwarcfus, Mordecai Growas, and Ingac Podolski, in the forests near Wyszkw (northeast of Warsaw) which was organized after the Warsaw Ghetto uprising by remnants of the Jewish Fighting Organization. Jews also constituted a significant percentage in a number of other units of the People's Guard.

Remnants of the fighters in the *Bialystok Ghetto uprising formed the partisan unit "Forwards" ("Foroys"), which was later part of a Soviet partisan brigade under the command of General Kapusta. The attitude of the *Armia Krajowa* (Home Army), sponsored by the Polish government-in-exile residing in London, and of the Peasants' Battalions ("Bataliony Chłopskie") were different. These organizations did not accept Jewish units, but some of them accepted individual Jewish fighters, while others often took part in the murder of Jews. The extreme right-wing National Armed Forces ("Narodowe Siły Zbrojne") were strongly hostile toward Jews, organized attacks against Jewish partisans, and murdered all Jews they found hiding in the forests. Some Jewish units managed to operate independently of any Polish underground organization. The greatest of them was the unit in the Doleza forests under the command of Abraham Amsterdam.

A number of Jews won great fame in various Polish partisan units, mainly in those belonging to the People's Guard. Among the best known are: Colonel Ignacy Robb-Rosenfarb (Narbutt), commander of the People's Guard in the Kielce region; Colonel Robert Satanowski, commander of a partisan brigade; Colonel Niebrzydowski, commander of the Peasants' Battalions in the Miechów region; Major Menashe Matywiecki, member of the general staff of the People's Guard; Alexander Skotnicki, commander of the "Holod" battalion; Yehiel Brewerman, commander of the detachment "Bartosław Glowacki," and Captain Lucyna Herz, the only Polish woman officer parachuted into the woods for partisan activity. Jews also played a significant role in the Special Attack Battalion, which organized parachute units for guerilla warfare in the rear of the German army. The commander of that unit was the Jewish officer Lieutenant Colonel Henryk Toruńczyk. Four of the 12 units parachuted into the forests during the summer and autumn of 1944 were commanded by Jewish officers: Robert Satanowski, Julian Komar, Joseph Krakowski, and Zygmunt Gutman (later known as one of the best partisan commanders in the Kielce province). The significant feature of the Jewish partisan movement in Poland was that almost all Jewish partisans started their guerilla activity at a very early period (second half of 1942), when the Polish partisan movement hardly existed; thus Jews constituted in the early period a high proportion of the partisans and guerilla fighters. Among the first nine partisan detachments organized at the beginning of 1943 in the Kielce province, four were Jewish units, with a number of Jews present in all other units. Later in spring 1944, when the partisan movement in Poland grew rapidly, thanks to the great flow of arms from England (for the *Armia Krajowa*) and from the Soviet Union (for the left-wing guerillas), the Jewish communities were already destroyed and there were no more Jewish youth who could fill the partisan ranks. (See also: *Partisans.)

[Stefan Krakowski]

Jewish-Polish Relations during the War

Relations between Jews and Poles in occupied Poland were complicated in nature, especially in the Polish underground movements. The entire Polish population was vehemently anti-German, but the vast majority of people were also violently antisemitic. In the first month of the war, antisemitism seemed to have completely disappeared out of hatred for the Nazis, but it reemerged soon afterwards.

The Polish political parties' attitude to the Jews before the war generally remained much the same during the entire period of occupation. The right-wing parties, led by the *Narodowa Demokracja* (Endecja) officially denounced Hitler's barbaric methods, but in fact remained antisemitic and regarded the Nazi "solution of the Jewish problem" in Poland with quiet satisfaction. The extreme right-wing radicals, the *Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny* (ONR) and the *Falanga*, rejoiced over Hitlerism and approved of the Nazi murders. They contended that the victims were no better than murderers, and deserved their fate. The Polish Socialist Party (PPS), on the

other hand, and especially its left wing (RPPS) and the reorganized Communist Party (PPR) condemned the murder of the Jews in their illegal publications, took part in campaigns to aid Jews, and appealed to the Polish people to assist. A similar stand was taken by the Democratic Party and the People's Party, although the latter, formerly an important party, did not have a uniform approach. In general it identified itself with the stand taken by the Polish government-in-exile represented inside Poland by the Delegatura. The Delegatura also maintained contact with the Jewish National Committee and the Jewish Coordinating Commission. Through the Delegatura these Jewish bodies were able to keep in touch with Jewish political movements and organizations abroad.

Relations between the Jews and the Delegatura, initially quite friendly, deteriorated in the course of time. This was due to the Delegatura's negative attitude in regard to supplying the Jewish Fighting Organization with sufficient quantities of arms. It was not until the resistance of the Jewish Fighting Organization in Warsaw in January 1943 that the fighters at last received a small quantity of arms from the Delegatura. The strained relations with the Delegatura were partly the result of the reactionary and antisemitic groups' influence within the Polish underground, which grew in strength as the German front moved back toward Poland and a general anti-Soviet attitude came to the fore. (Anti-Soviet feelings among the Poles were also heightened by the story of the Katyn massacre, and the resulting break in Soviet-Polish diplomatic relations in the summer of 1943.) Anti-Jewish agitation among the Polish population was also fed by the reports of the situation of the Jews in Eastern Poland under the Soviet occupation, when Jews were appointed to official positions. The Delegatura also adopted a negative attitude to the Jewish partisan movement, refusing to support it or even to recognize its existence.

As the Soviet army drew near the Polish frontier, a rapprochement took place between the *Sanacja* (the ruling party of Pilsudski's successors) and the *Endecja* and between the *Sanacja* and such outright Fascist organizations as the ONR, whose military arm, the National Armed Forces (NSZ), was recognized in March 1944 as a component of the Delegatura's underground army, the *Armia Krajowa*. The NSZ went so far as to murder Jewish partisans and Jews who had succeeded in escaping from the slaughter taking place in the ghettos. More and more, an anti-Jewish tendency made itself felt in the official underground publications issued by the Delegatura.

The Nazi propaganda machine cleverly exploited the antisemitism existing among the Polish population. Reviving the old Polish slogan of "Żydo-Komuna," they identified Jews with Communism and succeeded in further poisoning the prevailing anti-Jewish feelings among the Poles. As a result, Jews who had been in hiding on the "Aryan" side were denounced to the Nazis. In many places Poles not only assisted in the search for Jews, but joined the Nazis in torturing and killing them as well. The Polish police, with hardly any exception, took part in the "actions" and on several occasions were

themselves in charge of rounding up the Jews and dispatching them to the death camps.

There were, however, some social groups and individuals, from all segments of the population, who helped Jews at the risk of their own lives. The activities of the "Council for Aid to Jews," which provided "Aryan" documents and shelter in Polish houses, rescued children, and extended financial aid, helped some 50,000 Jews. There were more than a few individual Poles who had the moral strength to overcome the fear of death (the punishment for giving refuge to Jews) and the pressure exerted on them by the prevailing anti-Jewish climate of opinion, to stretch out a helping hand to the persecuted Jews. Some of these Poles, along with their families, had to pay with their lives for the courage they displayed in aiding Jews.

It may be concluded that the attitude of the Poles to the Jews was marked by both active participation in the murder of Jews and rescue efforts at great risk. The motives for these attitudes also varied from religious, humanitarian, or simply materialistic considerations, to a "biological" hatred of Jews. Of all the occupied countries, the percentage of Jews saved in Poland was the smallest, since the predominant attitude was hostile, while rescue was an exception to the rule.

[Isaiah Trunk]

AFTER WORLD WAR II

Rescue of Jewish Children

When Poland was liberated in 1945, thousands of orphaned and abandoned Jewish children were wandering through villages and in the streets of the towns. Many were found in Polish homes and in convents. Some had been baptized, and some had been exploited by the peasants as a source of cheap labor. The official Jewish committees (*komitety*) established institutions for homeless children. Jewish parents applied to the Jewish organizations for help in finding children, who had been entrusted to non-Jewish families in order to save their lives but later disappeared without trace. Some Poles refused to return Jewish children, either because they had become attached to them or because they demanded financial remuneration for maintaining the child and for the risk they had incurred in hiding Jews from the Germans. There were a few cases of Jewish children living under conditions of starvation and terror. With the mass repatriations from the Soviet Union, 31,700 children under 14 years of age returned to Poland, including many hundreds of orphans, who also needed immediate care. Three separate bodies worked to save Jewish children. The first of these, the official Jewish committees, acting under the auspices of the authorities, maintained 11 boarding schools with a total of 1,135 orphans, and day schools and nurseries which cared for about 20,000 children. The youth department of the committees cared for about 7,700 boys and girls. Material conditions were good, but education was oriented toward Polish assimilation. The second, the Jewish Religious Council (Kongregacja), sent people to redeem children from Polish homes, particularly at the request of religious relatives. These children were delivered to their relatives abroad, or sent to be

adopted by Jewish families in the United States, Great Britain, and other countries. The third organization was established by the Zionist movement, and given the abbreviated name of the "Coordination" (Koordynacja). Its emissaries wandered through Poland to rescue children, very often risking their lives in doing so. The Koordynacja established four children's homes, which housed hundreds of children aged between two and 12. The older children were sent to "children's kibbutzim" of the youth movements. Funds were supplied mainly by the *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). The special psychological problems of the Holocaust period, such as fear and hatred of Jews, necessitated the establishment of a special seminary for educators at Lodz. The Koordynacja systematically sent children abroad, with the intention of finally enabling them to reach Palestine. By the end of 1947, more than 500 children had been taken out of Poland. Together with their teachers and educators they entered *Youth Aliyah institutions in Germany, Austria, and France, most of them settling later in the State of Israel. Scores of Jewish children are believed to have remained in Poland, mainly in Catholic institutions and convents.

[Sara Neshamith]

Renewal of Jewish Life

The first attempts to renew Jewish life took place in Lublin, the seat of the Polish Committee of National Liberation. In a manifesto issued on July 20, 1944, this committee published a solemn declaration assuring equal rights and full rehabilitation to the survivors of Polish Jewry. The Jewish Committee was formed to extend emergency aid to Jews converging on Lublin from the liberated parts of Poland. This group included adults who returned from the forests and other hiding places or who miraculously survived the concentration camps, and children who found refuge in convents or with individual Polish families. In October 1944 the Jewish Committee was renamed the Central Committee of the Jews in Poland and moved to Warsaw when the Polish capital was liberated. The committee was composed of representatives of the various Jewish parties and was presided over by the Zionist Emil *Sommerstein. At first it was primarily concerned with providing material assistance to the Jewish survivors and facilitating their return to a productive life. Before long, however, the committee extended the range of its activities to social and cultural spheres.

By 1945 it comprised 10 districts (*województwa*), two sub-districts, and about 200 local committees. Several dozen Jewish cooperatives, in a variety of trades, and 34 Jewish farms run by several hundreds of Jewish agricultural laborers were founded. A considerable number of Jewish weeklies and bi-weeklies, representing every shade of Jewish political opinion, made their appearance. Among them was the organ of the Central Committee, *Dos Naye Lebn*. An elementary school having Yiddish as the language of instruction with Hebrew as a compulsory subject was established in Lodz. There was also a society of Jewish writers, journalists, and actors in that city, while in Lower Silesia the Jewish Society for Art and Culture

was formed. After the Zionist pioneering youth movements were reorganized, they established hundreds of training farms, children's homes, etc., and prepared their members for *aliyah*. In July 1945 the JDC entered the Jewish scene in Poland. Through the Central Committee, it subsidized a variety of social welfare agencies, emphasizing the care of children, the aged, and the sick. In addition the JDC provided food, clothing, and medicine to educational and cultural institutions, and supported a variety of plans to help able-bodied men and women become productive again. The following year, *ORT began its work in Poland, creating a network of vocational schools. In the medical field TOZ provided the assistance. At the beginning of 1946, this organization was running eight mobile clinics, seven hospitals, and medical aid stations in all major cities.

In addition to the 80,000 Jews already in Poland, over 154,000 Polish Jews were repatriated from the U.S.S.R. in the summer of 1946, bringing the total Jewish population of Poland close to 250,000. The Polish government and the Communist-dominated ruling party (the Polish Workers' Party – PPR) encouraged the Central Committee in its social and cultural activities and lent support to the Jewish efforts to establish new economic foundations and restore communal life. At the same time, the government placed no obstacles in the path of Jews who wished to emigrate. It permitted the Zionist movement to exist and displayed a friendly attitude to the aspirations of the *yishuv* in Palestine and later to the State of Israel. Polish government support (or at least tolerance), aid from world Jewry, and, especially, the growth of the community by mass repatriation from U.S.S.R., led many Polish Jews in the immediate postwar period to believe that the conditions being created in the “new” Poland would enable them to live a free and full Jewish life.

Cultural, Religious, and Economic Life

At first these hopes had some basis in fact. In 1946–47 two Yiddish theaters were founded – in Lodz and Wroclaw – and employed some 80 actors. In 1950 they joined forces as the Jewish State Theater with a government subsidy under the direction of Ida *Kaminska. The theater discontinued its activities after 1968, when most of the Jews emigrated from Poland. A publishing house and a literary monthly came into being. The Society for Art and Culture founded Jewish libraries, promoted amateur societies in various cultural fields, and arranged public lectures. The *Jewish Historical Institute embarked upon a program of collecting and publishing historical material on the Holocaust. According to figures published in the anniversary edition of *Dos Naye Lebn* (1945–47), the Central Committee's Board of Education served 34 Jewish schools staffed by 179 teachers and attended by 2,874 children. Jewish religious life was renewed in every town where Jews resettled. In prewar Poland there had been 2,000 rabbis, 8,000 ritual slaughterers and religious teachers, and 10,000 yeshivah students. Of these, only a few dozen rabbis, slaughterers, and about 100 yeshivah students survived the war, mainly in the

U.S.S.R., but only a few of them refrained from emigrating and remained in postwar Poland. Nevertheless, the Union of Religious Communities was established, comprising some 30 communities. The Union attended to Jewish religious needs by refurbishing and using two synagogues which had not been destroyed – one in Warsaw and the other in Wroclaw – establishing prayer-houses in all the communities, providing *mazzot* for Passover, arranging for the supply of *kasher* meat, and founding *kasher* public kitchens. In cooperation with the Central Committee, the Union rededicated Jewish cemeteries and reburied according to Jewish rite the victims of Nazism buried in mass graves.

In mid-1948, the Union of Religious Communities formally joined the Central Committee of Jews in Poland. The cooperation between the two bodies, however, lasted only into the early 1950s, when the Stalinization taking place in the country also affected Jewish life and made the cooperation of secular and religious bodies impossible. By the end of 1960, there were 23 member communities in the Union, and by 1966 the number was reduced to 18. The number of individual members varied greatly from one community to another; thus, in Warsaw, there were only 20 registered members, while in Katowice there were 1,200 and in Wroclaw 2,000. The Union of Religious Communities was still in existence in 1969, but the mass emigration of 1968–69 reduced its membership severely. At the end of 1947, there were 200 Jewish cooperative societies, with a membership of 6,000. About 15,000 Jews were employed in communal institutions, coal mines, heavy industry, textile factories, and a variety of government and private factories; 124 Jewish families were employed on farms. By the end of 1946, ORT was conducting 49 different vocational courses staffed by 81 instructors and attended by over 1,100 pupils. Contact with Jewish communities outside of Poland was maintained by both the Central Committee and by the various Zionist groups which were active in the early postwar years. In the beginning of 1948, the Central Committee joined the *World Jewish Congress and participated in its meetings and conferences.

The Flight from Poland

The revival of a sound Jewish community life in Poland was the declared aim of those Jews who had been Communists before the war. They believed that the conditions were now ideal for the renewal of Jewish life and argued that a revived Jewish community would both demonstrate the vitality of the Jewish people and the failure of Nazism and other forms of antisemitism. The majority of Polish Jews, however, including those who were being repatriated from the Soviet Union, did not want to reestablish their lives in Poland, where the Nazis had found thousands of collaborators among the local population eager to cooperate in the extermination of the Jews. Moreover, pogroms continued even after the Nazi occupation ended. To most Polish Jews it was unthinkable to renew their life on the Polish soil soaked with the blood of millions of Jews. Thus tens of thousands of Polish Jews who fled from the U.S.S.R.

and Poland made their way to Romania and Germany in the hope of reaching Palestine. After the *Kielce pogrom this exodus took on an organized and semi-legal character. A coordinating committee for *aliyah* was formed from representatives of all Zionist groups to make arrangements for up to a thousand persons a day to cross the Polish border at three points in Lower Silesia near Kudowa. The operation lasted about six months, until the end of 1946 (see *Berihah). Thereafter, Jews encountered difficulties in leaving Poland, but emigration did not come to a stop. In 1949, when the Zionist parties were disbanded, all former Zionists were permitted to leave for Israel, and some 30,000 people took advantage of this opportunity. Thus, mass emigration continually depleted Polish Jewry from 1944 to 1950. The Central Committee, which did all in its power to combat this movement, was forced to accept the reality of a drastic decrease in the Jewish population.

Anti-Jewish Excesses

Jewish emigration from Poland was motivated not only by the recent tragic past and by prewar Zionist education, but also by the continuation of a clear and present danger to the Jews. There were murderous attacks upon Jews on Polish roads, railroads, buses, and in the towns and cities. The murders were committed by members of Polish reactionary organizations, such as the NSZ (Narodowe Sily Zbrojne). In cruelty and inhumanity, their crimes often equaled those committed by the Nazis. Beginning in 1945 the assaults upon Jews swiftly assumed mass proportions. In two pogroms – one in Cracow on Aug. 11, 1945, and the other in Kielce on July 4, 1946 – thousands of Polish men, women, and children ran amok in the Jewish quarters, killing in Kielce 42 Jews and wounding 50 others. The attacks spread throughout the country, and in 1945 alone 353 Jews were reported murdered. The wave of anti-Jewish excesses continued well into 1946 and reached its climax in the Kielce pogrom. The government and the ruling party issued declarations designed to placate the Jews and there were public protests against antisemitism by intellectuals and large parts of the working class. Above all, the Jewish Communists and the Central Committee of Jews in Poland tried to reassure the Jews that the government would stamp out the antisemitic underground. The Jews, however, did not heed the exhortations and raced for the borders. By the end of 1947, only 100,000 Jews remained in Poland.

The Soviet Example

A second factor discouraging any hope for a viable Jewish community in Poland was the rising tide of antisemitism in the U.S.S.R. Soviet antisemitism was at first disguised as a campaign against “rootless cosmopolitans.” This was followed by the judicial murder of leading Jewish writers and artists and the total liquidation of Jewish cultural life in the Soviet Union. The campaign culminated in the so-called *Doctors’ Plot (see *Antisemitism, in the Soviet Bloc). These Soviet developments had an immediate effect on the Polish scene. In 1948 the central committee of the ruling party, the PPR, on Moscow’s initiative, accused its first secretary, Wladyslaw Go-

mulka, and his associates of rightist-nationalist deviation, and Poland became, more than ever, a Soviet satellite. The entire country was overrun by the Soviet secret police. Under these circumstances Poland’s attitude toward its Jews could not be substantially different from the Soviet model.

Nevertheless, Stalinist antisemitism was effected in Poland without bloodshed and mass arrests. It was the cultural activities of Polish Jewry that were immediately affected, reduced in their scope, and adapted in their content to the new spirit. The Stalinization of Poland was carried out by a variety of measures. The existing workers’ parties were merged into a single party, and all other parties were liquidated. The Soviet Union was glorified and its policies in internal and foreign affairs were slavishly copied. In all creative activities “socialist realism” became the rule. In the Jewish sphere, “unifications” and liquidations were carried out. The first to be liquidated were the Zionist parties and the Bund in November 1949. This was followed by a ban on the operation of the JDC and ORT, in spite of the assurance given by the Polish Committee of National Liberation in its manifesto of July 20, 1944, and the appeal in December 1945 by the Polish provisional government for foreign aid to be extended to Polish Jews. Similarly, the recognition of the JDC’s work expressed in November 1946, when JDC director, Joseph *Schwartz, was awarded a high decoration by the government, no longer had any meaning.

An act of liquidation by “unification” affected the Union of Jewish Cooperative Societies, representing 200 societies, 15,000 workers, and substantial assets (originally financed by the JDC) which was forced to merge with the general Polish Union of Cooperatives. On May 16, 1949, a “recommendation” was made to the Central Committee of the Jews in Poland to secede from the World Jewish Congress. Finally, the Central Committee itself, whose continued existence as a seemingly independent representative body was not in harmony with the new trend, was ordered to merge with the Jewish Society for Art and Culture. The new organization bore the name Cultural-Social Association of the Jews in Poland (Kultur-Gezelschaftlekker Farband fun di Yidn in Poyln). All Jewish schools were nationalized in the 1948–49 school year, resulting in the further reduction of Jewish studies. Yiddish as the language of instruction and the teaching of Hebrew had already been eliminated. Such organizations as the Jewish Agency came to be regarded as “agents of imperialism,” and any contact with them was highly suspect. The spiritual life of Polish Jews was now restricted to preoccupation with the “progressive” tradition. The mass emigration had resulted in a radical reduction in the number of district and local Jewish committees. Their total number dropped to 30. The largest concentrations of Jews were in Warsaw (about 8,000), Wroclaw (about 6,000), Lodz (about 5,000) and Szczecin, Katowice, Cracow, Legnica, and Walbrzych.

In spite of these far-reaching quantitative and qualitative changes, the leaders of the Cultural-Social Association and the other Jewish establishments (such as the Historical Institute, the theater, the publishing house, the literary journal, and the

newspaper *Folksshtime*), both in Warsaw and the provinces, did all in their power to maintain at least a modest level of Jewish activity. In fact, in the period 1950 to 1957, Jewish life in Poland was relatively stable. Even so, there were those in the association who, encouraged by the ruling party, sought to promote assimilation and achieve results.

1956–1967. Stalin's death in 1953 resulted in an easing of tension, but Gomulka's assumption of power, in 1956, completely transformed the Jewish scene in Poland. Revelation of the innumerable crimes committed in the U.S.S.R. during the period of Stalin's rule enabled the Jewish newspaper *Folksshtime* to publish a passionate protest against Soviet antisemitism and its destruction of Yiddish literature and culture. In Poland it was once more possible to foster Jewish literature and to re-establish contact with Jewish organizations abroad. The JDC and ORT returned to devote themselves primarily to the approximately 25,000 Polish Jews who were being repatriated from the U.S.S.R. under an agreement between Gomulka's government and the Soviet Union (along with hundreds of thousands of people who had been Polish citizens in 1939 but for some reason had not been repatriated after the war). Once again the JDC extended aid to the sick, the aged, and children. It also assisted various cultural institutions, including schools. ORT, for its part, reestablished its network of vocational training schools.

The great majority of Jews repatriated from the U.S.S.R. did not, however, have any intention of staying in Poland. Even before their departure from the Soviet Union, most of them resolved to move on from Poland, primarily to Israel. Similarly, thousands of long-established Jews now decided to leave Poland for good. Their decision was influenced by the antisemitic incidents that occurred soon after Gomulka's rise to power. Poland again allowed Jews to emigrate, and some 50,000 people left the country in 1958–59. In some cases, whole towns were emptied of their Jewish population, and the Jewish community in Poland was now reduced to about 30,000 people. Of those who remained some 3,000 were too old or too sick to earn their livelihood and were supported by the JDC, as were various children's homes, camps, and clubs. In addition, the JDC financed the Historical Institute, the Cracow Jewish Museum, cultural enterprises, the reestablishment of Jewish cooperatives, and the construction of a Jewish home for the aged.

The Jewish cooperative movement, revived after 1957 with help from the government and the JDC, was soon able to stand on its own feet and to transfer 20% of its yearly profits – ranging from one to two million zlotys – to the Jewish Cultural-Social Association. This situation prevailed until 1967.

Final Liquidation

In 1968–69, a fourth mass emigration of Jews from Poland took place, resulting in the virtual dissolution of the Jewish community as an identifiable and creative group. It also spelled the final disillusionment of those Jews who hoped the Gomulka regime would differ from the Soviet Union in its ap-

proach to the Jews. The Six-Day War (1967) and the March 1968 student riots in Polish university towns were seized by the Polish government as the opportunity to utilize popular antisemitism for its own political purposes. When the party faction called the Partisan Group, led by Minister of Interior Mieczyslaw Moczar, initiated antisemitic action in an attempt to oust Gomulka from power, the Polish Communist leader adopted a clearly defined anti-Jewish policy. In March 1968 Gomulka publicly declared those Jews whose loyalty wavered between Poland and Israel to be “rootless cosmopolitans” unworthy of holding public office. He reiterated, however, the principle that Israel-oriented Jews should be allowed to immigrate to the Jewish state. In the course of 1968, Jewish youth camps, schools, and clubs were disbanded. Jews were dismissed from whatever public positions they still held, and the Cultural-Social Association was reduced to a mere paper existence. Restrictions were placed even on the status of Yiddish, a language which had been used in Poland almost as long as Polish itself. Yiddish was declared a foreign language, with the result that any publication in Yiddish had first to be translated into Polish before it could be released for distribution. In practice this signified the end of the Yiddish publishing house “Yidish Bukh” and of *Yidishe Shriften*, the literary journal. The Yiddish newspaper *Folksshtime*, which formerly appeared four times a week, was now restricted to a weekly appearance. The JDC and ORT were again forbidden to operate in Poland, and the Jewish cooperatives were again handed over to the general Cooperative Union. The Jewish home for the aged, financed by the JDC, was turned into a general institution.

The liquidation of all organized forms of Jewish life was accompanied by a relentless antisemitic campaign carried through the press, radio, and television. The majority of Polish Jews, the tragic remnant of a community that had once numbered over 3,250,000 people, reacted to these events by choosing to emigrate. Since the Polish authorities allowed Jewish emigration only to Israel, and then only upon renunciation of Polish citizenship, many Jews who intended to immigrate to other countries (Canada, Australia, Scandinavia) ostensibly applied for papers and visas to Israel. Efforts to assure the continued existence of Jewish life in Poland were in vain. Young Jews, most of whom left the country, were especially shocked by the antisemitism displayed by leading Polish Communists. The few Jewish institutions still in existence in 1971 were devoid of all creative content and had been stripped of all authority. (See also *Cooperatives; *American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; *ORT; *OZE; *Berihah.)

[David Sfarid]

Later Developments

In the following two decades the Jewish population of Poland stabilized at around 6,000. There remained only a single synagogue in Warsaw and in the whole country there was no rabbi. The Jewish cemetery in Bialystok was transformed into a public garden and the famous Jewish cemetery in War-

saw was repeatedly desecrated by gangs who stole the marble from the graves.

The Social and Cultural Society of Jews in Poland came under the full control of the Ministry of Interior and almost all of its social functions were terminated. After the Jewish cooperatives were liquidated, the Polish government began to defray the rather modest budget of the society.

In 1976–77 the Jewish issue again became a motif in the official propaganda campaign which came on the heels of the Polish workers' protest movement against rises in food prices and the activities of the "Committee for the Defense of the Workers" and dissidents.

The prolonged instability of the situation resulted in intensified exploitation of the Jewish issue, and the press directly attacked and ridiculed Jewish religion, tradition, and customs with the result that Jewish life was compressed into a lifeless framework which, nevertheless, still continued to function. The Jewish Cultural-Social Committee remained in existence, as did the Jewish Historical Institute and the Jewish Theater. The newspaper *Folksshtime* also continued to appear. The institute received permission to resume publication of the academic journal *Yidishe Bletter*, whose publication had ceased several years earlier.

In the latter part of 1977 the Poles took several tactical steps to improve their image with regard to Jewish matters. In October and December 1977 the chairman of the Organization of Former Jewish Partisans and Fighters in Poland (Stefan-Shalom Greik, an Israeli), the chairman of Yad Vashem (Dr. Yitzhak Arad), and a representative of Kibbutz Loḥamei ha-Getta'ot (Zevi Schneir) were invited to Poland in connection with the implementation of a plan to establish a Jewish exhibit hall in the former extermination camp at Auschwitz. It was the first time that the authorities in Poland displayed a readiness to permit Israeli institutions to participate in the implementation of the plan, and even to be assisted by the advice of Israeli experts. The Warsaw Institute of Jewish History was also invited to assist in drawing up the plan. The pavilion was opened at a ceremony held on April 17, 1978, in the presence of Polish authorities and Jewish delegations from Israel and the Diaspora. Its official name was "The Destruction and the Struggle of the Jews in Occupied Europe." In June, however, it was closed to the public, although it was claimed that the closure was only temporary to improve the amenities there, and that it would be opened to individuals on request.

A definite anti-Zionist, anti-Jewish tone was expressed in government propaganda used in its fight against the increased strength and demands of Solidarity in 1980 and 1981, although the current demographic distribution of Jews in Poland certainly did not warrant any such attacks. Individual Jews did participate in the Solidarity movement.

Poland's transition to a democratic system of government and a market economy which began in 1989 after nearly five decades of Communist rule took place against the background of economic crisis and industrial unrest. At the same time, the new freedom experienced by Polish society had an

invigorating effect on the small, mostly elderly Jewish community that remained in the country. A significant renewal of Jewish cultural and religious life took place, and people previously estranged from Jewish tradition, especially among the young, began to acknowledge their Jewish identity. Communal and cultural activities were strengthened and encouraged by the renewal of ties with Israel and increasing contacts with world Jewry. Two important events exemplify this positive trend: The community acquired its first resident rabbi in over 20 years, and a Coordinating Commission of Jewish Organizations, which represented and acted on behalf of the whole community, was established. The new body brought together the Jewish Social and Cultural Association, the Mosaic Religious Association, the Jewish Historical Institute, the Jewish Theater, and the bi-weekly paper *Dos Yiddishe Wort* (formerly *Folkssztyme*).

A range of educational and cultural activities was provided by the Social and Cultural Association (TSKZ), which had branches in 15 cities. Courses in Jewish history and Yiddish as well as song and dance classes were held. The Jewish Historical Institute conducted research and published scholarly papers and books on the history of Jews in Poland. Welfare activities were carried out with the financial support of the JDC.

On the positive side of Polish-Jewish relations was the continuing interest in the history and culture of Polish Jews among the Polish intelligentsia. The awareness of the need to preserve the Jewish heritage and recognize the Jewish contribution to Polish culture originated in liberal Catholic, Protestant, and opposition circles in the 1980s.

Among the initiatives taken were annual weeks of Jewish culture, seminars on Jewish subjects, festivals of Jewish films, exhibitions as well as efforts to restore and maintain Jewish cemeteries and monuments. From the mid-1980s, in an attempt to improve their image abroad the Communist authorities encouraged Jewish studies. The Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the Jews in Poland was created at Cracow's Jagellonian University in 1986. A number of conferences and symposia were held with the support of the state and the participation of Western, including Israeli, scholars. A large number of books on Jewish subjects were published to meet the growing demand. In post-Communist Poland, state authorities continued to support a range of cultural activities. A foundation called Eternal Memory was set up by the treasury for the restoration and preservation of Jewish cultural monuments.

The community, however, experienced a rising tide of antisemitism. The change to a pluralist democracy opened up opportunities for extremist nationalist groups using antisemitism as a tool in the political struggle. Their propaganda identified Jews with the Communist regime and blamed them for all the shortcomings of Polish life. The removal of restraints on freedom of expression meant that antisemitism was now openly voiced in public and everyday life with grass-roots antisemitism well attested in public polls.

Government and Solidarity personalities became targets of anti-Jewish campaigns, which drew attention to their real or alleged Jewish origins. At the time of the 1990 presidential and 1991 parliamentary elections these tactics were freely used even by the mainstream political groups. Antisemitic publications, including reprints of the notorious *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, were distributed widely. Acts of vandalism at Jewish institutions, synagogues, and cemeteries multiplied as Polish skinheads sought to emulate their Western counterparts. The need to obtain economic assistance from the West, which acted as a brake on political antisemitism during 1980s, prompted President Walesa's initiative in 1991 to create a Council on Polish-Jewish Relations. An advisory body attached to the president, its function was to promote better understanding between Poles and Jews by drawing-up educational programs for Polish youth, organizing events and exhibitions, and providing a reaction to antisemitic incidents.

The continuing dispute over the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz had been at the center of the crisis in Catholic-Jewish relations from 1984 (see *Auschwitz Convent). The controversy was widely debated in the Polish press: a range of views from openly antisemitic to liberal was expressed revealing a disquieting level of prejudice and a lack of understanding between Poles and Jews. The crisis was finally resolved in 1993 with the relocation of the nuns at the convent.

While some elements within the Catholic Church supported right-wing Christian parties with known antisemitic tendencies, the Polish bishops, in an effort to improve relations, issued an unprecedented statement taking a clear stand against all manifestations of antisemitism. The episcopal letter, read in churches on January 21, 1991, presented Vatican II teachings on the relations between the two faiths and dealt with a number of controversial issues such as Polish responsibility for the Holocaust, alleged Jewish responsibility for Communism, and antisemitism past and present. At the same time the Catholic Seminary in Warsaw published a book on Judaism and the Jews for school teachers written in a similar spirit.

[Lena Stanley-Clamp]

By the mid-1990s most of the Jewish communities in Poland – Warsaw, Cracow (Krakow), Lodz, Stettin (Szczecin), Danzig (Gdansk), Kattowitz (Katowice), and Breslau (Wroclaw) – had synagogues. The eastern part of the country, once teeming with Jewish life and with great centers such as Lublin and Bialystok, probably had no more than 50 Jews. The Coordinating Committee of Jewish Organizations in the Polish Republic (KKOZR) coordinated activities of the various Jewish bodies. Under the auspices of the Lauder Foundation, a club was established which organized many events for young people including Jewish summer camps and athletics. The Jewish groups included persons orphaned in the Holocaust and brought up by non-Jews and a veterans' organization. An important item on the agenda was the preservation of synagogues and cemeteries throughout the country. Many of these were in a state of disrepair or being used for secular purposes.

Poland had a chief rabbi whose seat was in Warsaw and another rabbi for youth. A primary school and kindergarten were opened in Warsaw. Jewish courses were offered at the universities in Warsaw and Cracow. Warsaw's Jewish Historical Institute was an important archive and venue for cultural events while Cracow had a Center for Jewish Culture. The Warsaw Yiddish Theater was the only regularly functioning Yiddish theater in the world. Most of the actors were non-Jews. Poland was the scene of considerable Jewish tourism including pilgrimages to Holocaust sites, which bring many Jewish youth groups, such as the March of the Living.

In the early years of the 21st century, around 8,000 Jews were registered with the community, but it was estimated that as many as 30,000–40,000 had some Jewish ancestry.

RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

Poland was among the first countries to recognize Israel (May 18, 1948). During the period preceding the establishment of Israel, Poland was unstinting in its support for the *yishuv*. At a convention of Soviet-bloc foreign ministers, the Polish foreign minister introduced a resolution congratulating Israel and condemning Arab aggression. Polish public opinion also strongly supported Israel and its struggle, as evidenced by resolutions passed by various public institutions, including the National Conference of Polish writers. Israel also received practical aid. In 1948, before the declaration of independence, a Haganah camp was set up in Poland, where 1,500 young Jews underwent preparatory military training before leaving for Israel. During the actual fighting, shipments of wheat were brought to Israel by a Polish boat. In August 1948 an Israel legation was established in Poland, one of Israel's first diplomatic missions.

The Change of 1950

The cooling of U.S.S.R.-Israel relations from 1950 affected relations between Poland and Israel. A certain ambivalence characterized Poland's attitude toward Israel, for, together with criticism of Israel on the international scene, particularly at the UN, there was also understanding and sympathy for Israel's problems and a courteous attitude in official relations, in contrast to the attitude of other member states of the Eastern bloc, even in 1950–55, which were particularly difficult years for Israel relations with East Europe. The change, which started to make itself felt at the beginning of 1950, was reflected in a decrease in the number of exit permits issued, although emigration from Poland never ceased altogether. Polish authorities began to display animosity toward the Israel legation, with a view to minimizing its contacts with Polish Jewry. During this period there were mass arrests and staged trials in a number of Eastern European countries, and, while the situation did not reach such proportions in Poland, police measures were intensified there and the Israel legation was put under police surveillance. A sharp turn of events occurred in 1953, when the Israel minister in Warsaw, A.L. Kubovy, who was stationed in Prague, was declared *persona non grata* as a

result of a similar action taken against him by the Czechoslovak government after the *Slánský trial. Thereafter two other Israel diplomats were expelled.

Improved Relations in 1956

Wladyslaw Gomulka's ascension to power as secretary of the Communist Party in the fall of 1956 ushered in a liberalization in Poland's internal regime and a more independent foreign policy. Relations toward Israel improved primarily through an open emigration policy. Israel's problems were given more objective treatment in the press. In 1956 Israel again appointed a resident minister in Warsaw after a three-year period during which a chargé d'affaires headed the Israel legation. In 1963 the mission was elevated to the level of an embassy. After 1956 there was also a broadening of cultural and scientific relations in the form of reciprocal visits by individuals and delegations. Nevertheless, the Polish government maintained a constant reserve and did not respond to all of Israel's initiatives, sometimes even failing to implement plans they themselves had suggested. Thus, for example, cultural and scientific relations were not established on a formal basis, although such a step would have been justified by the extent of these activities. Nor was a Polish-Israel Friendship League set up in Poland, although an Israel-Polish Friendship League functioned in Israel.

Nevertheless, Poland was undoubtedly foremost among the East European countries in fostering relations with Israel, especially in the areas of culture, science, and information. Israel artists participated regularly in international music festivals in Poland, and many Polish performers appeared in Israel. Radio musical programs were exchanged. Exhibitions of Hebrew books were held in Poland, and Polish books were distributed in Israel. Regular exchanges of scientific publications took place, and individuals and figures in public life paid reciprocal visits. Exhibitions of graphic art were organized in Poland and in Israel. Of special note during the period between 1956 and 1967 were the tour of a Polish medical delegation in Israel; the visit to Israel of the chairman of the Polish Academy of Sciences; and the visit of the Israel ministers of health and welfare to Poland. After 1956 Israel participated regularly in the International Fair in Poznan. An information bulletin distributed by the Israel embassy influenced public opinion, and the Polish press often drew upon it.

In the political arena (e.g., in voting at the UN), Poland continued to identify with the U.S.S.R. but nevertheless was willing to support the election of Israelis for various functions in international agencies. Its spokesmen would point out that Poland's guiding principle was to foster relations both with Israel and with the Arab states, but neither at the expense of the other. An event in May 1966 seemed to herald a marked improvement in Polish-Israel relations and a development in Israel's relations with the entire Communist bloc: A convention of Israel diplomatic representatives in Eastern Europe was held in Warsaw with the participation of Foreign Minister Abba Eban. It was the first time that such a convention was

held in a capital of the Eastern bloc, and Warsaw was willing to serve as its venue; it was also the first visit in an East European capital by an Israel foreign minister. Eban held discussions with the Polish foreign minister, Adam Rapacki, who displayed the attitude usually accorded an official foreign visitor.

The Six-Day War

Fairly normal relations were maintained between the two countries when the U.S.S.R. began escalating the Middle East crisis, which resulted in the Six-Day War. Significantly, a visit to Poland at the end of April by the Israel minister of welfare, heading a delegation for the establishment of the Auschwitz memorial, was handled in a way that reflected a change for the worse in Poland's attitude. The fact that the visit was not mentioned in the press was interpreted as one expression of the attempt to minimize the Jewish character of the Holocaust. In the first half of May, Polish newspapers and communications media were still presenting a balanced view of the Middle East crisis. A sharp change occurred, however, during the second half of the month. The press began to give unilateral coverage to the Arab-Soviet position. Grotesque accusations with antisemitic overtones were leveled against Israel and its leaders. On May 28 the president of Poland sent a message to Nasser expressing "full support for the struggle of the Arab nations." After that time, Poland's statements were characterized by an animosity toward Israel even more venomous than in other East European countries.

According to all indications, Polish public opinion generally supported Israel in its struggle for survival, but in the hands of groups competing for power in the party and in the Polish government, the Middle East crisis became a weapon for infighting, with the declared intent of displacing Jews from public positions. On June 12, 1967, following the Soviet Union's example, Poland notified Israel that diplomatic relations between the two countries were being severed, and inimical demonstrations against the Israel diplomats initiated by the authorities took place in sight of the diplomatic staff that came to take leave of the Israelis at the Warsaw airport. The Dutch embassy, which represented Israel's interests in Poland from that time, strongly protested against this behavior.

Immigration to Israel

In 1948 there were approximately 70,000–80,000 Jews in Poland. This number was swollen by thousands of Jews who returned from the U.S.S.R. in 1956–57 under the Polish-Soviet repatriation agreement. One of the major tasks of the Israel legation in Poland was the struggle on behalf of the majority of Jews who wished to migrate to Israel. Despite accusations leveled periodically by Polish authorities at the Israel legation and its staff for propagandizing and organizing the Jews for migration to Israel, there was continuous emigration. Between 1948 and 1949 the Polish authorities were issuing several hundred passports a month to Jews wishing to emigrate, especially to the aged, handicapped, and women left alone. Between 1949 and 1956 the number of passports issued decreased to a few dozen per month. The major years of Polish Jewish im-

migration to Israel were 1956–60 with their numbers reaching around 52,000. The peak year was 1957, during which some 31,000 Jews migrated to Israel. Despite the breakdown in diplomatic relations in June 1967, the Polish government continued to issue exit permits for emigration to Israel, but the motivation for this policy became more and more an antisemitic intent to “purge” Poland of its Jewish population.

Trade Relations

A trade agreement signed between Poland and Israel in 1954 was renewed annually until 1968. The numerous industrial and agricultural products traded were valued at approximately \$4 million in both directions. Major Israel exports were citrus fruit and tires, with Poland exporting frozen meat, sugar, iron and steel products, and chemicals. Two Israel exports added in the later years were potash and cotton, which then exceeded the citrus export. During 14 years the scope of the agreement had doubled, in effect, and in certain years it had tripled. A shift in the trade balance in Israel's favor occurred in the first months of 1966 and continued thereafter due to a steep increase in the export of potash. Upon the severance of diplomatic relations, Poland was in debt to Israel for over \$5 million, but despite its hostile attitude toward Israel it did not revoke the trade agreement of 1954, and it was automatically renewed in 1968. By then, however, the agreement was meaningless, with Israel having discontinued its exports to Poland to avoid increasing the Polish debt, which was, in effect, a credit extended to Poland without interest. In June 1968 the Israel government informed the Polish government of the revocation of the trade agreement. Poland's debt to Israel, then \$2.7 million was repaid thereafter.

[Moshe Avidan]

Following the severing of commercial ties between Israel and Poland in 1968, the first exchange of goods between the two countries was renewed in 1976. Israel exported citrus to Poland (\$834,000) and imported books (\$5,000). In 1977 goods in the value of \$1.5 million were exported to Poland and \$600,000 worth of merchandise was exported from Poland to Israel.

In 1986 Poland was the first of the Communist bloc countries to re-open low-level diplomatic relations with Israel which had been severed since the Six-Day War. Interest sections dealing with visa regulations and cultural and economic ties were established in Warsaw and Tel Aviv. Full diplomatic relations were restored in 1990. A framework for the promotion of good relations was provided by the establishment of the Polish-Israeli Friendship Society. There was a steady growth in cultural exchanges and trade expansion. Poland has shown a strong interest in acquiring Israeli technology in the fields of agriculture, telecommunications, health, and hotel industry. There was an unparalleled growth in tourism, facilitated by direct air links, with Israelis visiting Poland in great numbers. President Walesa visited Israel in 1991 and President Herzog visited Poland in 1992. By 2003 Israel's exports to Poland had grown to around \$95 million, with imports at \$60 million.

[Lena Stanley-Clamp]

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POLANSKI, ROMAN (Liebling; 1933–), film director, writer, and actor. Born in Paris, Polanski went to Poland with his parents at the age of three. During World War II, he managed to escape the ghetto, while his parents were sent to a concentration camp, where his mother died. As a young boy he survived in the Polish countryside, living with various Catholic families. In 1945 he was reunited with his father.

In the 1950s, still in Poland, he took up acting and also became a well-known filmmaker. He moved to Paris and made two films in England – *Repulsion* (1965) and *Cul-de-sac* (1966) – which won him international acclaim. Polanski also won several international awards for his film *Two Men and a Wardrobe* (1958). Among his other films are *Mammals* (1961); *Knife in the Water* (Oscar nomination for Best Foreign Language Film, 1962); and *Rosemary's Baby* (Oscar nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay, 1968), which showed his mastery of suspense and the macabre, as well as *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967), starring his wife, Sharon Tate.

In 1968 Polanski had gone to Hollywood – until 1969, when the circumstances of his life took on the nightmarish quality of his films. While Polanski was out of town his wife, who was eight months pregnant with their first child, as well as four of their friends, were brutally murdered at a party at their home by the Charles Manson gang. Polanski returned to Europe and continued to make films there, such as *Macbeth* (1971) and *What?* (1973). In 1974 he returned to the U.S. and made *Chinatown* (Oscar nomination for Best Picture and Best Director, 1974) and *The Tenant* (1976).

However, in 1977 he fled the country again, this time to avoid being incarcerated on a charge of statutory rape after having been involved in a sex scandal with a 13-year-old model. Living in Paris, Polanski continued to make films, such as *Tess* (Oscar nomination for Best Director, 1979), *Pirates* (1986), *Frantic* (1988), *Bitter Moon* (1992), *Death and the*

Maiden (1994), *The Ninth Gate* (1999), and *The Pianist* (Oscar for Best Director, 2002).

He also acted, most notably in *The Fearless Vampire Killers; What?; Chinatown; The Tenant*; the French film *A Pure Formality* (1994); and the Polish film *The Revenge* (2002).

His autobiographical *Roman by Polanski* was published in 1984.

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[Jonathan Licht / Ruth Beloff (2nd ed.)]

POLÁNYI, JOHN C. (1929–), Canadian chemist and Nobel laureate. Born in Berlin, he moved to England in 1933 with his Hungarian parents, Michael and Magda. He graduated B.Sc. (1949) and obtained his Ph.D. (1952) in chemistry from Manchester University. After a post-doctoral research fellowship at the Canadian National Research Council Laboratories in Ottawa (1952–54) and Princeton University (1954–56) he joined the chemistry faculty at the University of Toronto where he was appointed professor in 1962 and continued to work there with his research group. Polanyi's research interests develop themes explored by his father, Michael *Polanyi, namely the atomic interactions that form the basis of chemical reactions. The theoretical basis for his earlier contributions was the computer integration of the classical equations of motion allied to the methodology of infrared chemiluminescence. In principle, this approach, termed "surface aligned photochemistry," analyzes the visible emission from a variety of molecules adsorbed to crystals in an ultra-high vacuum. He shared the 1986 Nobel Prize in chemistry with Dudley Herschbach and Yuan Lee. Subsequently Polanyi and his colleagues in their Toronto laboratory adapted laser techniques and reactive rather than inert adsorbing surfaces to analyze chemical reactions in even more detail occurring virtually instantaneously. Polanyi's many honors include the Centenary Medal of the British Chemical Society (1965), the Wolf Prize in Chemistry (1982), and the Royal Medal of the Royal Society of London (1989). He was appointed Officer of the Order of Canada (1974) and Companion of the Order of Canada (1979). He was elected to the Royal Society of Canada (1966), the Royal Society of London (1971), the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1976), the U.S. National Academy of Sciences (1978), and the Pontifical Academy of Rome (1986). He received an honorary doctorate from the Weizmann Institute (1989). He has played a prominent part in many national and international organizations concerned with scientific research and education.

[Michael Denman (2nd ed.)]

POLÁNYI, KARL (1886–1964), economist and anthropologist. His scientific work was based on the place of economics in society, and the relation between production and distribution