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Spatially Jewish: Jewish Life in Łódź before the Holocaust as Revealed in Maps and Spatial Sources*

Abstract: In less than a century, the Jews of Łódź turned from being confined to a small, overcrowded Jewish district to a major partner in forming the industrial town. Nonetheless, this full participation did not last long. When the ghetto gates were open, Łódź Jews left all they had built and moved to the once confined area and its vicinity. This paper brings together new sources, methodologies, and practices from spatial studies and digital humanities. It results in presenting new information and a different perspective on the already researched Jewish community in Łódź. It highlights how Jews contributed to the city's growth and how living in the industrial town affected the urbanity of the Jewish community in Łódź.

Keywords: Jewish settlement in Łódź, the spatial turn, urban morphology, Digital Humanities.

Słowa kluczowe: osadnictwo żydowskie w Łodzi, zwrot przestrzenny, morfologia miejska, humanistyka cyfrowa.

Following the *spatial turn* in Jewish studies, this paper discusses the spatial life of the Jews of Łódź from their first settlement in the confined Jewish district and later Nowe Bałuty through the erection of new Jewish neighborhoods in the city center until the forced migration to the ghetto.[1] It

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[1] For more information on the *spatial turn* in Jewish studies, see Julia Brauch, Anna Lipphardt, Alexandra Nocke, "Exploring Jewish Space: An Approach," in Julia Brauch, Anna Lipphardt, Alexandra Nocke (eds.), *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions*

reviews the development of Jewish areas in town, the makeup of the Jewish population within these areas, how Jews conceived their place of living, and how they coped with leaving it.

Jewish settlement in Łódź before WWI is examined according to the morphological development of the initial Jewish district and the evolving Jewish presence in the city center through the erecting of buildings affiliated with the Jewish community, both sacred and profane. New Jewish settlements in the city from the turn of the century until WWII, namely those of the middle and upper classes, are explored through map analysis and mapping of vast spatial information extracted from two archival sources: the Jewish community's tax records and Łódź's address book.

The use of maps, extraction of spatial data, and mapping of historical sources allow not only visualization of knowledge but also a thorough and more profound investigation of urban processes. A subjective point of view is added by examining ego documents (oral testimonies and memoirs) to complement the study of anonymous spatial information. These documents are especially helpful in describing the end of one of the crucial chapters of Jewish residency in the city center of Łódź when Jews were deported to the ghetto.[2]

Confinement in a Jewish district

Nineteenth-century Łódź was part of the Polish Kingdom, a semiautonomous country in the Russian Empire.[3] Transforming Łódź from a small medieval townlet into an industrial town was part of a campaign to establish industrial towns to ensure the Polish Kingdom's partial autonomy under the Tsar's rule.[4] Łódź's political and geographical location made it

of Place (Hampshire–Burlington, 2008), 1–26; Charlotte E. Fonrobert, "The New Spatial Turn in Jewish Studies," *AJS Review* 33 (2009), 1:155–164; Barbara E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space* (Stanford, 2006).

[2] After the war, Łódź was a prominent center for Jewish repatriates. See, e.g., Shimon Redlich, "Jews in Postwar Lodz," in id., *Life in Transit: Jews in Postwar Lodz, 1945–1950* (Boston, 2010), 53–86; Eliyana R. Adler, "Give Me Łódź: Jewish Communal Life in a Polish Manufacturing City," *Jewish Culture and History* 24 (2023), 4:397–415.

[3] See Erwin A. Gutkind, Wojciech Kalinowski, Imre Perényi, "Evolution of Cities in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," in Gabriele Gutkind (ed.), *Urban Development in East-Central Europe: Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary* (New York, 1972), 88–108; Wacław Ostrowski, "History of Urban Development and Planning," in Jack C. Fisher (ed.), *City and Regional Planning in Poland* (Ithaca, 1976), 9–56.

[4] To be more accurate, the townlet was not transformed into an industrial city. The new town was built to the south of the townlet, and the townlet's morphological structure remained the same (see ibid.).

attractive as a textile industry center.[5] Weavers from Silesia and Saxony were encouraged to settle in the city through government financial and bureaucratic aid. The weavers brought knowledge and equipment that the area lacked.[6] The establishment of the industrial town south of the townlet divided the city into the Old Town and the New Town.

The industrial city and the Jewish district in Łódź were created almost simultaneously. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Jewish community in the area was small, and Jewish immigration was sparse.[7] Nevertheless, Łódź's authorities espoused the Russian Tsar's decree of founding Jewish districts in cities across Congress Poland.[8] Łódź's Jewish district was established when the city was transformed into an industrial town. After some negotiation, the Łódź municipality designated a small portion of Old Town as the Jewish district. However, the district was not limited to Jews only.[9]

This research examined layers of historical maps to study the development of the Jewish district in the first half of the nineteenth century. The morphological examination followed the study of the Polish geographer Marek Koter, who examined the morphological development of Łódź's city center.[10] The methodology for this section of the study is rooted in

[5] The area's natural resources offered plenty of wood and water, essential for the textile industry. See Marek Koter, "Rozwój przestrzenny i zabudowa miasta," in Ryszard Rosin (ed.), *Łódź. Dzieje miasta*, vol. 1: do 1918 r. (Warszawa–Łódź, 1988), 148–191; Stanisław Liszewski, "Functional and Spatial Changes in the Industrial Districts of the City of Łódź," in Stanisław Liszewski, Craig Young (eds.), *A Comparative Study of Łódź and Manchester: Geographies of European Cities in Transition* (Łódź, 1997), 57–72; Ostrowski, "History of Urban Development," 9–56. Moreover, the Polish Kingdom's location in the western part of the Russian Empire improved the status of its industrial cities. See Jacek Kochanowicz, "The Polish Kingdom: A Periphery as a Leader," Paper prepared for the XIV International Economic History Congress in Helsinki, Finland, 2006.

[6] Kazimierz Badziak, "An Outline History of Łódź before 1918," in Stanisław Liszewski (ed.), *Łódź: A Monograph of the City* (Łódź, 2009), 23–50.

[7] In 1793, 11 of 190 Łódź inhabitants and its vicinity were Jews; in 1808, 58 of 434. After establishing the Jewish district in town, Łódź's population grew to 2,837; the number of Jews rose to 397. See: *Pinkas Ha-kehillot, Poland: Lodz*, https://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_poland/pol1_00004.html [retrieved: Nov. 2016].

[8] Glenn Dynner, "Jewish Quarters: The Economics of Segregation in the Kingdom of Poland," in Rebecca Kobrin, Adam Teller (eds.), *Purchasing Power: The Economics of Modern Jewish History* (Philadelphia, 2015), 91–111.

[9] Filip Friedman, "Rewir żydowski," in id., *Dzieje Żydów w Łodzi, od początków osadnictwa Żydów do r. 1863* (Łódź, 1935), 43–70; Anna Rynkowska, "Ludzie i domy," in ead., *Ulica Piotrkowska* (Łódź, 1970), 68–93.

[10] Marek Koter, "The Morphological Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century City Centre: Łódź, Poland, 1825–1873," in Terry R. Slater (ed.), *The Built Form of Western Cities* (Leicester–London, 1990), 109–141.

urban morphology. Michael Conzen, the method's founder, suggests that a local community is embedded in a particular area, a result of which is that the area is influenced by the community's characteristics and everyday life. Thus, the city represents a socio-geographical locale and projects the demands, aspirations, ideas, and "personality" of the "local society." The city offers a view not only of everyday routines but also of the evolution of urban society throughout history. Conzen points out that urban society, urban life, and urban landscape create spatial uniformity despite or due to the constant tension between the society and its environment.[11] According to this view of "the city as an archive,"[12] urban morphology diagnoses local development patterns and distinguishes change processes.[13]

In its first twenty years, the Jewish district in Łódź comprised only three streets while its population quadrupled.[14] Due to this crowdedness, Jewish and non-Jewish inhabitants called for an expansion of the district. This materialized in 1841, and the expansion allowed Jews to live in three more streets (Fig. 1).

The crowded area of the Jewish district was one reason for establishing Nowe Bałuty—the "Jewish" village—in the 1850s in the Radogoszcz Province, north of the Old Town. Bałuty's location outside of Łódź's city limits and its administrative legislation, but still bordering the city, entailed minimal restrictions on Jews, allowing them to remain close to relatives and workplaces.[15] Bałuty was annexed to Łódź in 1915. Thus, it was not part of the city maps in the nineteenth century. A map from 1913 does incorporate Bałuty and shows the proximity of its center (Bałucki Rynek) to the Old Town Center (Stary Rynek) and the first New Town Center (Nowy Rynek).[16] Bałuty's dense Jewish population, its proximity

[11] Michael R. G. Conzen, "The Morphology of Towns in Britain during the Industrial Era," in Michael R. G. Conzen, Jeremy W. R. Whitehand (eds.), *The Urban Landscape: Historical Development and Management* (London, 1981), 87–126.

[12] Sylvain Malfroy, "Can There Be a Joint Venture between Urban History and Urban Morphology?," *Urban Morphology* 8 (2004), 2:114–118.

[13] James E. Vance Jr., "Introduction: Urban Morphogenesis," in id., *The Continuing City: Urban Morphology in Western Civilization* (Baltimore–London, 1990), 3–40.

[14] In 1825, approximately 350 people lived in the area, and in 1841, approximately 1,600 people lived in the district.

[15] *Pinkas Ha-kehillot, Poland: Lodz*. For comprehensive information on Bałuty, see Kazimierz Badziak, "Historyczne Bałuty do wybuchu I wojny światowej," in Marcin J. Szymański, Dagmara Staniszewska, Tomasz Kochelski (eds.), *Bałuty: Legenda i rzeczywistość* (Łódź, 2017), 7–50.

[16] APŁ, PL_39_609_2913, or Maciej Janik et al., *Łódź na mapach, 1793–1939* (Łódź, 2012), 152–153.

to the Old Town, and its annexation into Łódź brought the entire area to be considered morphologically Jewish.[17]

Fig. 1. Map of the Old Town in Łódź with areas designated for Jewish settlement, 1841. Source: APŁ PL_39_609_516

In 1857, despite the ability to move to Bałuty, the district's population increased to more than 3,050.[18] Unlike the 1841 expansion, which was legal, not structural, in 1859, a newly planned section on arid land added four new streets to the Jewish district. The drawing also shows the location of the first synagogue to be built in the area (and the city) (Fig. 2).[19]

[17] As may be seen in Hanzl's study of the entire Jewish settlement in Łódź in Małgorzata Hanzl, *Morphological Analysis of Urban Structures – the Cultural Approach: Case Studies of Jewish Communities in Łódź and Mazovian Voivodeships* (Łódź, 2017), and the author's personal experience while searching for materials regarding the Jewish district.

[18] *Pinkas Ha-kehillot, Poland: Lodz*.

[19] Construction of the synagogue began in 1863, following the Tsar's dismissal of the Jewish district's decree. It was completed in 1871. According to Jacek Walicki, funding for its construction came primarily from donations, see Jacek Walicki, "The Communal Synagogue at Wolborska Street 20," in id., *The Synagogues and Prayer Houses of Łódź to 1939*, trans. Guy Russell Torr (Łódź, 2000), 15–35.

Fig. 2. Jewish district expansion project in the Old Town in Łódź, 1859. Translated and remade by the author of the article. Original map: APŁ PL_39_609_608

Nonetheless, historical maps show that, despite the new expansion and the ascription of plots to families (Fig. 3), the latest addition was scarcely filled until the turn of the century.[20] This could be attributed to the time it takes to build a new neighborhood, to the desire of Jewish residents to remain close to their families and community despite the crowdedness, or—with the nullification of the decree forcing Jews to live in the confined

[20] These were the years of massive development all over town, clearly the heyday of Łódź.

district—to the fact that Jews might have preferred living in the New Town instead of staying in the expended Jewish district.[21]

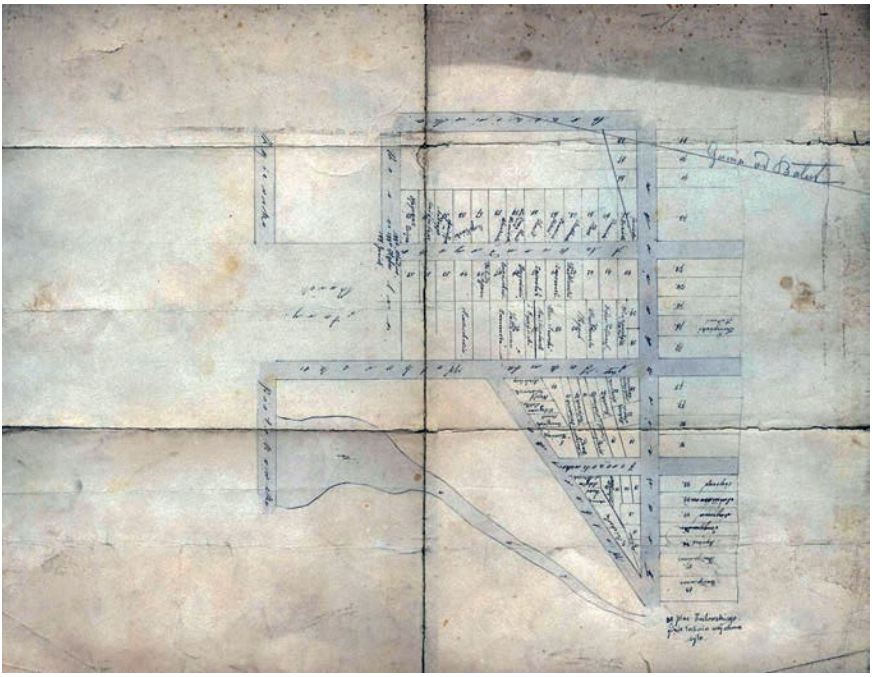


Fig. 3. Families' ascription for the new plots. Source: APŁ PL_39_609_606 I–II

City maps and typological examination of houses in the Jewish district and the city center show that the two developed at the same rate, and their housing typology was similar. A significant structural difference was due to the Jewish district's location in the medieval Old Town, as opposed to the well-planned New Town. This manifested in different sizes and shapes of plots, bringing a slight change in the subdivision of plots as years went by and, following that, the sizes of buildings.

Despite the parallel development of the Old Town and New Town, until the 1860s, whether related to their confinement or not, Jews differed also in occupation. An occupational transformation occurred during the 1860s when Łódź's wealthy inhabitants shifted from commerce to

[21] According to *Pinkas Ha-kehillot*, in 1862, the same year Jews were allowed to leave the Jewish district, the total population reached 5,380.

industry.[22] Nonetheless, Jewish occupation remained, on the whole, domestic, as factories worked on the Sabbath, the day on which Jews did not work[23] (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4. The old synagogue on Wolborska Street in the Jewish district. Construction began in 1863 and was finished in 1871. Funding for its construction came primarily from donations. Source: APŁ PL_39_596_22

[22] Between the 1860s and WWI, the composition of German and Jewish industrialists changed occasionally. See Stefan Pytlas, "The National Composition of Łódź Industrialists before 1914," *Polin* 6 (1991), 37–56.

[23] See Ben-Zvi, "From the Pale of Settlement," *Ha-Magid* (1900), 5 (Hebrew), http://web.nli.org.il/sites/jpress [retrieved: Aug. 2017].

Therefore, in the first half of the nineteenth century, preliminary conditions of spatial confinement in the Old Town contributed to the otherness of the Jewish inhabitants in that area of Łódź. The physical separation of the Old Town and New Town, the settlement in an existing place, as opposed to the well-planned New Town, restrictions of dwelling, different occupational backgrounds, overcrowding, and poverty combined with internal Jewish restrictions (maintenance of religion and tradition), pushed Jews toward commerce and domestic work. Nonetheless, the close distance of the Jewish district to the city center and the adjusted occupations enabled the next generations to integrate into the city and its population.

Participation in the industrial boomtown

With the integration of Jews into the textile industry and its accompanying occupations, Jewish religious, secular, commercial, and cultural aspects started appearing in town. The location of synagogues outside of the original Jewish district shows the expansion of Jewish residency to other neighborhoods and the attendance and visibility of the Jewish community and its buildings in central places in Łódź.[24] The erection of the Old Synagogue in its original location shows that even after Jews were entitled to live outside the Jewish district, a large congregation remained in the Old Town. Jewishness was also visible in the urban landscape through semi-private and semi-religious spaces such as shtiblach (small rooms for services) and Sukkoth (*Kuczki*) in tenement houses around town[25] (Fig. 5).

Despite the permission to migrate from the Old Town to the New Town after the abrogation of the Tsar's decree and construction of synagogues, a massive intermigration occurred only a generation or two later. In the final quarter of the nineteenth century, alongside a flourishing Jewish culture, some Jews were successful in business, acculturated, and became entrepreneurs in the industrial town. The once confined Jewish district would become the heart of a wider area containing Jewish inhabitants:

[24] Until 1939, there were only five registered synagogues in Łódź, unlike hundreds of shtiblach. Nonetheless, the shtiblach were not grandiose and prominent to the public eye.

[25] For more information on shtiblach see Jacek Walicki, "Houses of Prayer," in id., *The Synagogues and Prayer Houses*, 79–92; Andrzej Rykała, "Żydowska przestrzeń sakralna dawnej i współczesnej Łodzi na przykładzie synagog i domów modlitwy," in Mariusz E. Kulesza (ed.), *Czas i przestrzeń w naukach geograficznych. Wybrane problemy geografii historycznej* (Łódź, 2008), 103–130.

poor traditional Jews to its north, in Bałuty, and wealthy acculturated Jews to its south in a new Jewish area.[26]

Fig. 5. The progressive synagogue at Kościuszki Aleja was built between 1881 and 1887. Its most elaborate presence in the city center showed the prominence of Jewishness in the city. Source: APŁ PL_39_596_344

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Jews owned much real estate and many factories in Łódź.[27] Moreover, Jewish architects, some of whom were already Łódź-born, started working for the Jewish bourgeoisie and others, including city authorities.[28] Thus, tenement houses, official buildings, and commercial

[26] See Ruthie Kaplan, Rachel Kallus, "Formal and Cultural Readings of a Vanished Community: Explorations of the Jewish District of Łódź," *Journal of Urbanism* 15 (2022), 3:367–392.

[27] In 1864, Jews owned 10% of Łódź real estate (when, according to *Pinkas Ha-kehillot*, Jews formed 20% of the city population); in 1913, they already owned more than 30% of Łódź real estate (at that time, according to *Pinkas Ha-kehillot*, Jews formed one-third of the city population). See Wiesław Puś, "Napływ i osadnictwo Żydów w Łodzi – rozmieszczenie przestrzenne ludności żydowskiej," in id., *Żydzi w Łodzi w latach zaborów 1793–1914* (Łódź, 1998), 10–39, espec. 35.

[28] Among the famous Jewish architects of the turn of the century were Dawid Landé, Gustaw Landau-Gutenteger, and Adolf Zeligson, who was recognized as the Poznański family architect.

buildings that sprung up across town were connected with their Jewish initiators and builders. In this sense, what developed in Łódź was a common phenomenon in other countries as well, as noted by American scholars:

> Traditional Jewish community depended on and fostered a degree of residential concentration and segregation. Subsequent entry of large numbers of Jews into major metropolitan areas, coupled with opportunities for social mobility, posed new challenges—similar to those faced by many other ethnic groups—to a group committed simultaneously to integration and group survival.[29]

Owning real estate in the city was also manifested in the erection of a new Jewish neighborhood in the city center. Several factors helped the creation of that neighborhood to the south of the original Jewish district, many of which occurred in the last half of the nineteenth century. Again, as in the first half of the nineteenth century, the development of the city and the settlement of the Jewish inhabitants went hand in hand. The first and most important factor was the abolition of the Jewish district decree, enabling Jews to live anywhere in the city. Moreover, when the new Jewish neighborhood was built at the turn of the century, Jewish industrialists were thriving.[30] In terms of urban development, land ownership was transferred to the city's inhabitants in the 1860s, enabling the purchase and sale of land.[31] To that, one may add the integration of the various parts of the evolving town and the creation of a joint city center along Piotrkowska Street.[32] All of the above: The shift of one of the old city centers from the New Market (Nowy Rynek, today Plac Wolności) to the south, the released land, and the new capital of local and new Jewish entrepreneurs left a void of empty lands ready to be purchased by Jewish hands.

Spatial sources and methodology

Before examining the Jewish settlement in Łódź at its peak, particular attention should be given to the archival sources and methods used to research the interwar period. The spatial approach and new methods

[29] Steven M. Cohen, Deborah Dash Moore, "Preface," in Donald L. Dotterer, Deborah Dash Moore, Steven M. Cohen (eds.), *Jewish Settlement and Community in the Modern Western World* (London–Toronto, 1991), 7–12.

[30] See Pytlas, "The National Composition of Łódź Industrialists," 37–56. At a certain point, Litvaks—Jews from the pale of settlement—joined local entrepreneurs.

[31] Badziak, "An Outline History of Łódź," 23–50.

[32] Koter, "The Morphological Evolution," 109–141.

and practices from the field of digital humanities allowed profound and extensive spatial research and the use of materials that were not utilized before or were analyzed for different purposes. Using archival sources that carry a spatial character but are not maps requires an introduction to how they can be turned into maps. The primary archival sources for examining the interwar period were the Jewish community tax records and Łódź's address book. Robert Moses Shapiro worked extensively on Łódź's Jewish community tax records.[33] However, he did not study the records' spatial contribution. Łódź's address book, as far as known, was not researched.

Both sources are mainly related to the Jewish middle class. The Jewish community tax was a means of organizing community institutions and helping impoverished people. Therefore, only the middle and upper classes appeared in the records. A review of the literature shows that, when Łódź's address book was issued, the middle class was mainly registered in directories and address books.[34] However, this class contained many social strata.

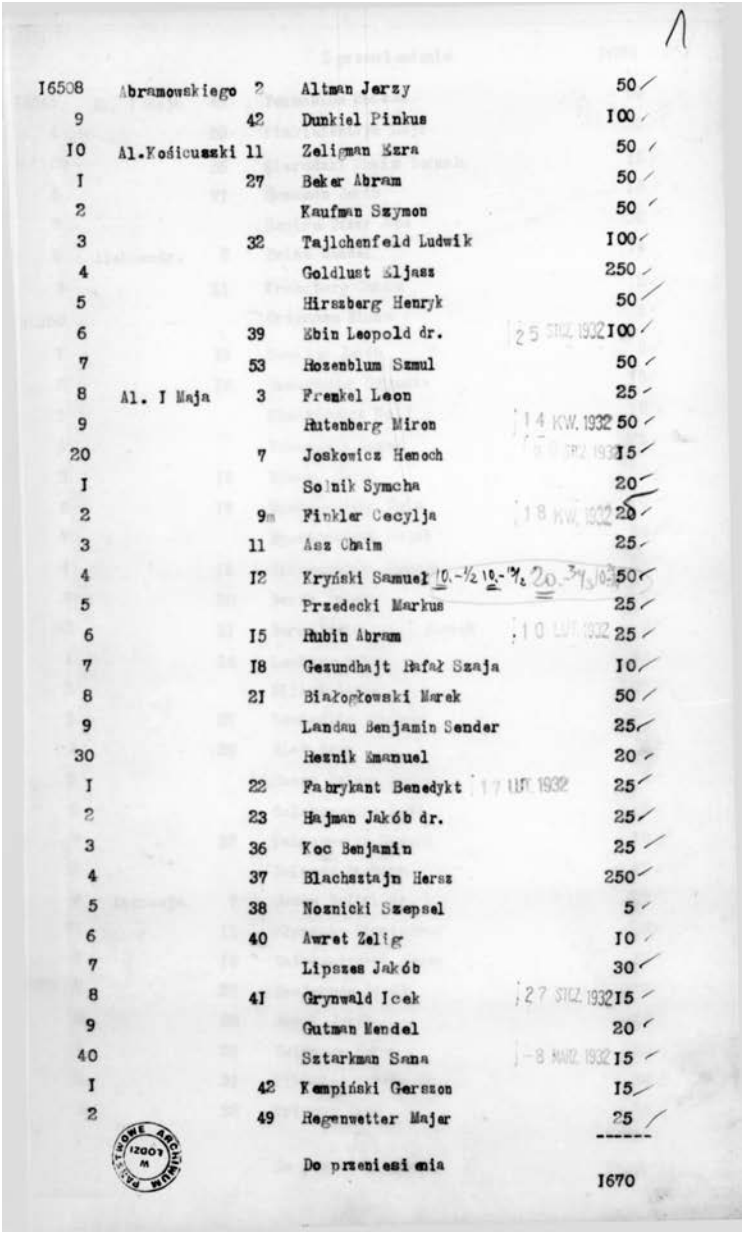
The Jewish community tax records are an essential statistical source and significantly contribute to the historiography of the Jewish community. For example, they show the distribution of households' socio-economic conditions and the percentage of women paying taxes (divided between those who pay their own and widows who continue their husbands' legacy). They also provide a comprehensive source for the spatial dispersion of the Jewish taxpayers in Łódź according to the collected tax. The tax records cover the period of 1917–1939.[35] Unfortunately, some books are missing. Therefore, the tax records of 1921 and 1931 were chosen for analysis as they are complete lists and represent the beginning of each decade. The file of 1921 holds 8,739 taxpayers, and the file of 1931 has 18,664[36] (see Fig. 6).

[33] Robert M. Shapiro, *Jewish Self-Government in Poland: Lodz, 1914–1939* (U.M.I. Dissertation Information Service, 1989).

[34] See, e.g., Gareth Shaw, "Directories as Sources in Urban History: A Review of British and Canadian Material," *Urban History Yearbook* 11 (1984), 36–44; Gareth Shaw, Tim Coles, "European Directories: A Universal Source for Urban Historians," *Urban History* 22 (1995), 1:85–102; Natan Marcus, "An Address Book – Vienna in the Eyes of the Viennese," in Sharon Gordon, Rina Peled (eds.), *Vienna 1900 – Blooming on the Edge of an Abyss* (Jerusalem, 2019), 37–64 (Hebrew).

[35] The lists are accessible on APŁ website, collection: 1917–1918 – Składki gminne (sygn APŁ 39/228/0/-/573); 1919 – Rozkład podatków gminnych (sygn APŁ 39/228/0/-/574); 1920–1939 – Rejester Poborczy (sygn APŁ 39/228/0/-/575-642).

[36] According to the Jewish community key from 1931 (a Jewish family consisted of 4.5 persons), in 1921, there were ~156,000 Jewish inhabitants in Łódź, i.e., in 1921, families paying Jewish community tax consisted of $(8{,}739\times4.5)/(156{,}000\times100)=\sim25\%$ of the Jewish population. In 1931, there were ~202,000 Jewish inhabitants in Łódź, i.e., in 1931, families paying Jewish community tax consisted of $(18{,}664\times4.5)/(202{,}000\times100)=\sim42\%$.



I6508	Abramowskiego	2	Altman Jerzy	50
9		42	Dunkiel Pinkus	I00
I0	Al.Kościuszki	11	Zeligman Ezra	50
I		27	Beker Abram	50
2			Kaufman Szymon	50
3		32	Tajchenfeld Ludwik	I00
4			Goldlust Eljasz	250
5			Hirszberg Henryk	50
6		39	Ebin Leopold dr.	25 STIC. 1932 I00
7		53	Rozenblum Szmul	50
8	Al. I Maja	3	Frenkel Leon	25
9			Rutenberg Miron	14 KW. 1932 50
20		7	Joskowicz Henoch	I5
I			Solnik Symcha	20
2		9a	Finkler Cecylja	18 KW. 1932 20
3		11	Asz Chaim	25
4		I2	Kryński Samuel	50
5			Przedecki Markus	25
6		I5	Rubin Abram	10 LUT. 1932 25
7		I8	Gezundhajt Rafał Szaja	I0
8		2I	Białogłowski Marek	50
9			Landau Benjamin Sender	25
30			Reznik Emanuel	20
I		22	Fabrykant Benedykt	17 LUT. 1932 25
2		23	Hajman Jakób dr.	25
3		36	Koc Benjamin	25
4		37	Blachsztajn Hersz	250
5		38	Noznicki Szepsel	5
6		40	Awret Zelig	I0
7			Lipszes Jakób	30
8		4I	Grynwald Icek	27 STIC. 1932 I5
9			Gutman Mendel	20
40			Sztarkman Sana	8 MAR. 1932 I5
I		42	Kempiński Gerszon	I5
2		49	Regenwetter Major	25
			Do przeniesienia	I670

Fig. 6. An example of 1931 tax lists

Łódź's address book, issued in 1939, supplies information regarding everyday life in the city.[37] The book—under the control of the Łódź City Council (Zarząd Miasta Łodzi)—provided addresses and telephone numbers of people and businesses in the city and its provinces and included information on Łódź and other large cities. In the introduction, the editor explained the need for such a book:

> For several years, the city of Łódź did not have an exemplary directory. Because there have been significant changes in recent years in the organization of state and local authorities, as well as in industry and trade—we decided to fill these deficiencies with the help and understanding of the Society.[38]

One may assume that the address book was not only the desire to organize the city and reach the level of other Polish and European cities but also to adjust it to the requirements of state and local authorities in light of the changes imposed by the Sanation (*Sanacja*) regime after Piłsudski's death in 1935. Antoni Żumański reinforced this point, as he stressed the time it took to convince the public of the necessity of such a directory and suggested the "invaluable services" the guide would provide "in everyday work to state and local government authorities and offices, military formations, social, educational and economic institutions, industrial, commercial and financial institutions, scientific institutions and freelancers."[39]

The book contained 76,500[40] personal entries, over 15,000 firms, and almost 3,000 official institutions. Divided into eight main chapters, it included a historical-statistical review of the city and general information about Łódź and its provinces, and other large cities. Its purpose was authoritative and intended for the local population rather than for visitors to the city. The section on vacations and spas shows the intention of internal urban use; these were all placed outside Łódź. Nonetheless, this should be viewed in light of the 50% population growth between 1921 and 1939, i.e., the permanent citizens were also new to the city.

[37] The next Łódź address book appeared in 1947. Due to the war, it included entirely different inhabitants.

[38] Antoni Żumański, "Od Redakcji" [From the editor], in *Księga Adresowa Miasta Łodzi i Województwa Łódzkiego, 1937–1939*, ed. Antoni Żumański (section 73544, scan 11). All quotes from Polish and Hebrew texts are translated by the author of the article.

[39] Ibid. The address book title indicates the time it took to collect the information.

[40] In 1939, Łódź population stood at 672,000 inhabitants. Nonetheless, unlike the Jewish community tax records, it is hard to consider every person registered in the address book as the head of a family, as in many cases, several members of the same family were registered in the book.

Unlike the tax records, which included Jews alone, the address book was general and did not refer to ethnic or religious affiliation. To uncover Jewish inhabitants, Jewish names had to be found. As Łódź had been a multicultural city, names that would sound Jewish in other places could also be of German origin in Łódź.[41] To determine Jewish identities, a careful hierarchy was decided upon: distinct Jewish given names, i.e., Rywka, Awram, Jankiel, etc., were included, but not names from the Old Testament—e.g., Dawid, Jakób, and Izydor—as these names were also commonly used by Poles and Germans; distinct Jewish surnames like Lewi, Syrkin, etc. were easily determined and added. Furthermore, by cross-referencing the names with the tax records and Yad Vashem information and by sifting out two or more neighbors with the same surname that could suggest family members, individuals and families were included. Finally, famous people like Szymon Dzigan and Izydor Tuwim and individuals with distinct Jewish occupations, such as rabbis or Talmudists, were added.

Based on these definitions, more than 40% of the people enrolled in the personal part of the address book were Jewish.[42] The assumption is that many more, registered in the book under Polonized or Germanized names, were also of Jewish origin. Another interesting phenomenon is that, despite the antisemitism prevailing in Poland at the end of the 1930s, Jews were registered in the address book with their Jewish names, as opposed to the tax lists where they appear in their Polish names. A prominent example is Mieczysław Pinkus, registered as Mendel Pinkus in the address book.

Both the tax lists and the address book are scanned and available online.[43] Nonetheless, the scanned material needed to be transformed into computer-readable text to analyze the information. The tax lists were OCRd using TRANSKRYBUS by preparing a unique model for reading their text style.[44] The address book was OCRd using ABBYY FineReader. The address book's parts appear in different printing layouts and need different methods of digitalization processing. The OCRd text was exported to Excel tables and was manually corrected and processed.

[41] For the problem of Jewish surnames in Łódź, see Wiesław Puś, "Napływ i osadnictwo Żydów w Łodzi – nazwiska Żydów łódzkich," in id., *Żydzi w Łodzi*, 10–39, espec. 37–39.

[42] In 1939, the Jewish population constituted approximately 35% of the city's population.

[43] APŁ scanned the tax lists in JPG format, and Cybra (Łódzka Regionalna Biblioteka Cyfrowa) scanned the address book in PDF format.

[44] Optical Character Recognition – digitizing scanned words.

Historical addresses were converted to current addresses and mapped using ESRI GIS.[45]

Maps constructed from the spatial information of the Jewish community's tax records show that the Jewish middle class comprised a wide range of social strata, also with respect to their residency. One does not find concentrations of specific levels of taxpaying inhabitants. Moreover, people from the lower levels of taxpayers and higher levels could have lived in the same building. Additionally, taxpayers grew numerically over the years, and their spatial dispersal grew. In 1931, one may find taxpayers in Bałuty, the part of town considered poor.

Maps constructed from the spatial information of Łódź's address book show that Jews lived in the city center, not on the outskirts. At the same time, Christians may be found both in the center and outskirts. The institutional part of the address book shows that Jewish institutions were located mainly in the city center, especially where the most significant number of middle-class Jews lived. Moreover, Jewish institutions shared space with non-Jewish institutions.[46]

The new Jewish middle-class neighborhood

At the peak of Jewish settlement in Łódź, in 1939, the borders of the new neighborhood's core reached the streets extending from Stary Rynek (today Plac Wolności) to the north and Zielona and Narutowicza Streets to the south; the area of Plac Dąbrowskiego to the east and 28. Pułku Strzelców Kaniowskich Street to the west. A heatmap of Jewish middle-class settlement from 1939 (see Fig. 7) shows two concentrations of Jewish settlement on both sides of Piotrkowska Street, Łódź's main street.[47] The northern section of Piotrkowska Street and Nowomiejska Street, the continuation of Piotrkowska Street to the north, does not show concentrations of Jewish settlement, as the heatmap is based on dwelling addresses. Piotrkowska and Nowomiejska Streets carried a commercial

[45] ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) GIS (Geographical Information Systems) – converting spatial material into maps.

[46] See Ruthie Kaplan, "Urban Transformations: The Spatial Conduct of the Jewish Middle-Class in Interwar Łódź, Poland," *Mobile Culture Studies* 8 (2024), 81–102.

[47] A heatmap is a primary method of visualizing density. The radius represents points, not geographic measurements. As mentioned, density-based clustering may also be examined when specifying the number of persons per area. The heatmaps were created using the ESRI ArcGIS Pro default "Heatmap" symbology with "Radius" equal to 15.

character; thus, although they had a robust Jewish presence, they do not appear as Jewish as other streets in terms of residence.

On Kamienna (today Włókiennicza) Street, for example, in the 1880s, most building requests—except for the building on 11 Kamienna Street, where city architect Hilary Majewski lived—were made by Jews. According to Puś, in 1892, 57.9% of real estate in Kamienna Street was owned by Jews; in 1913, the number grew to 72.7%.[48]

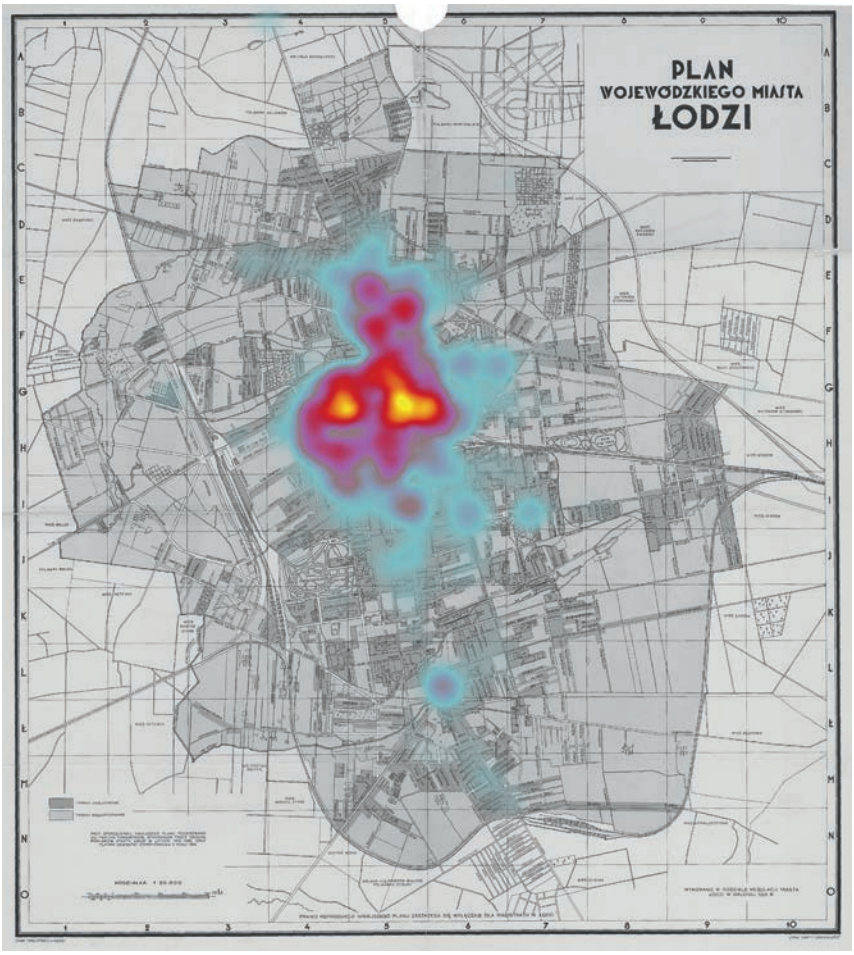


Fig. 7. A heatmap visualizing the concentration of the Jewish settlement in Łódź in 1939, according to the personal part of Łódź's address book

[48] Puś, "Napływ i osadnictwo Żydów w Łodzi – rozmieszczenie przestrzenne ludności żydowskiej," 10–39, espec. 36.

In the 1921 tax records, only 87 families residing in Kamienna Street paid taxes. The tax ranged from 50 Polish marks (two taxpayers) to 3,000 (two taxpayers). The highest number of taxpayers (29) in this street in 1921 paid the amount of 200 Polish marks. In 1931, 223 families paid tax on that street; the tax amount ranged from five Polish złotych (105 families paid this amount, the highest number of taxpayers) to 4,000 Polish złotych. Registration in the address book in 1939 shows the highest percentage of Jewish residency on this street; 493 of the 525 (94%) registered in the address book were recognized as Jewish (Fig. 8).

On the one hand, the low amount of taxpayers in 1921 does not necessarily indicate a low number of Jewish residents. The growth of taxpayers and the high number of Jewish middle class in the street in 1939 might show a rise in the socio-economic ladder of the residents of this street. On the other hand, the growth of Jewish residency might show the use of smaller apartments, attesting to a worsening in living conditions.[49]

The new Jewish neighborhood was not a matter of the Jewish community slowly moving into an existing neighborhood. Historical maps show that the area that would become the new Jewish neighborhood was almost empty until the late 1890s. Streets in the area did not exist before the end of the nineteenth century or were sparsely inhabited. For example, Kamienna Street is only marked in pencil on a city map from 1877, suggesting it is a new planned street. Aleja Pierwszego Maja does not appear on that same map. It is seen for the first time only on a map from 1894 (as Passage Szulc). In that map, many plots on the street are still empty.

As mentioned, the new Jewish neighborhood was also not a matter of the entire community shifting from one neighborhood to another. Not all middle-class Jews migrated to the new Jewish neighborhood. Many Jewish families lived across town in distant, non-Jewish neighborhoods. Also, many Jews remained in the Old Town and Bałuty. Middle-class Jewish families also continued living there, forming merely an economic and cultural transformation, not a spatial one (Fig. 9).

[49] The 1931 census statistics indicate that city districts four and five primarily featured one-bedroom apartments and a significant percentage of indoor bathrooms. These districts housed most of the Jewish middle class and included Kamienna Street. See Michał Trębacz, "Żydzi łódzcy w świetle liczb – spis powszechny 1931 r.," in Mariusz Kulesza, Małgorzata Łapa, Jacek Walicki (eds.), *Rola wspólnot wyznaniowych w historii miasta Łodzi* (Łódź, 2010), 215–239.

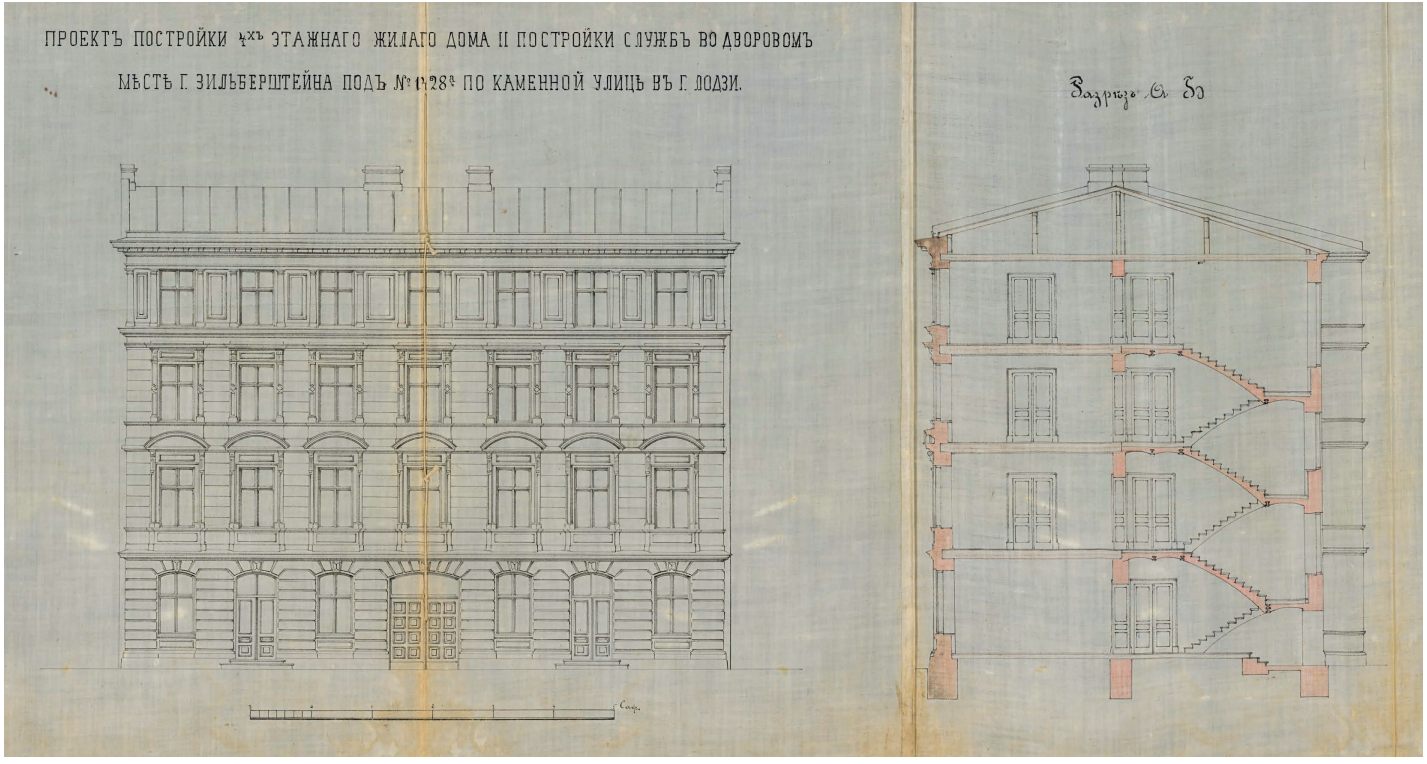


Fig. 8. A façade and section of the planned building for Boruch Icek Silberstein on 17 Kamienna (today Włókiennicza) Street. The file dates to 1890. The project's architect was Hilary Majewski, who lived on number 11 of that street. Source: APŁ 39_1_0_4_1613_12_10523330

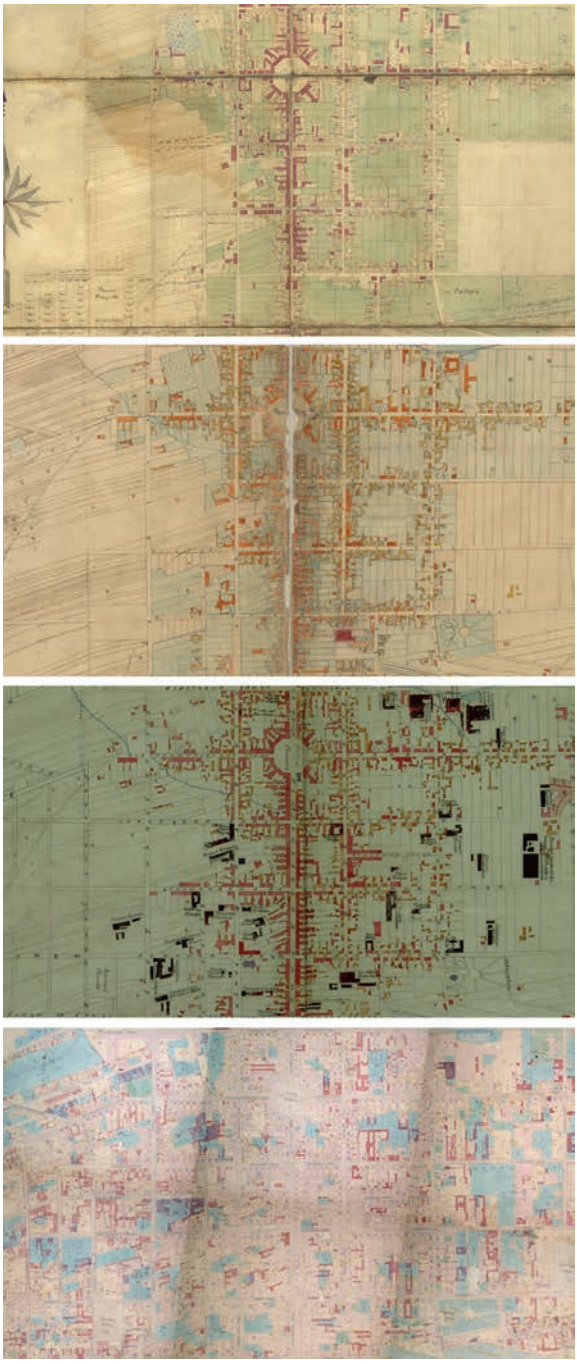


Fig. 9. Maps for Jewish neighborhood

The impact of the ghetto

My spatial research ends in 1939. The history of the Łódź ghetto is an extensive research subject on its own.[50] However, when researching the spatial conduct of Jews in a city, one cannot overlook the change in Łódź's Jewish space when the war began. This final section tries to show the necessity of moving to the ghetto through a spatial look at the materials used for this research: maps and ego documents.

When the ghetto gates were open, approximately 160,000 of Łódź Jews were forced into the small ghetto area.[51] Later, more arrived from neighboring towns and villages, and Europe.[52] To understand the size of the movement of Łódź's Jewish inhabitants into the ghetto, one should note that, according to Łódź's address book in 1939, approximately 5,000 Jewish middle-class families (approximately 22,000 persons) already lived in what was to constitute the ghetto area.[53] Approximately 25,000 middle- and upper-class families (more than 100,000 people) lived outside this area in the new Jewish neighborhood and across town[54] (see Fig. 10).

In his book *Memories from Ghetto Lódź*, Feivel Podé wrote:

> If one did not live among us those days and did not see the horror in Jewish homes, one would never have understood the size of the disaster we experienced. Feelings of despair like it was the end of the world in every Jewish house. For days and weeks, the transfer and deportations were discussed, but no one believed such things would happen. Who thought that one day, the Germans would deport thousands of people from their homes? The house that was until now a shelter from harassment and persecutions of the Germans now became a boiling pot: Yelling, crying, arguing. Jews walked around in their houses as dreamers, examining the ceiling, the walls, the pictures, the furniture, the doors—as if those items were new and had never been seen before, although they had lived in these apartments for years or even their entire lives. People grew old in a few hours, during one night. Neighbors did not recognize one another. Despair and helplessness ruled it all.[55]

[50] See the numerous and significant works of Ewa Wiatr, Adam Sitarek, and Joanna Podolska.

[51] Approximately 75,000 left or were deported from the city before the ghetto gates were open. Michal Unger, "The Internal Life in Lodz Ghetto 1940–1944" (PhD dissertation, the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1997).

[52] Ibid.

[53] Since this area was poorer and more traditional, the average number of family members may have been higher.

[54] Tens of thousands of residents who lived in the city but were not registered in the address book should be added to this number.

[55] Feivel Podé (Podemski), *Memories from Ghetto Łódź* (Ra'anana, 2004), 57 (Hebrew).

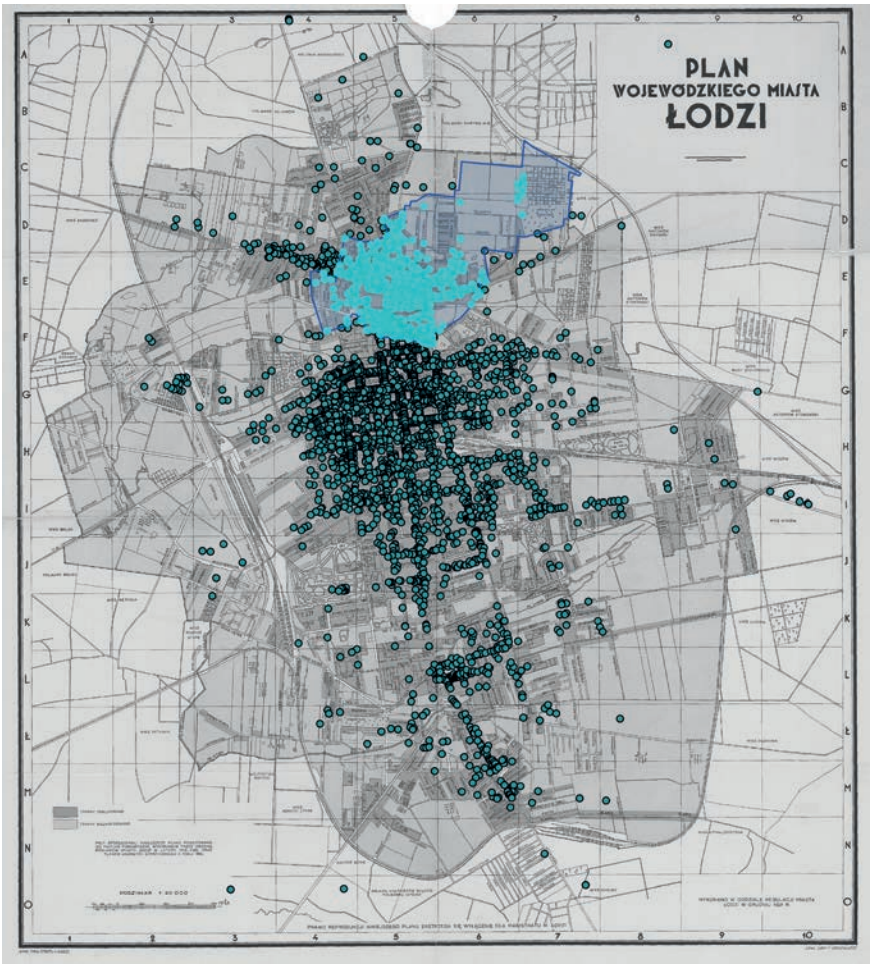


Fig. 10. A city map with the ghetto area encircled. In dark turquoise, middle-class Jews, ~25,000 families, lived outside the ghetto area. In light blue, middle-class Jews living within the future ghetto lines, ~5,000 families

In the deeply moving description, Podé provides us with an entrance into the profound reaction of the Jewish inhabitants of Łódź to their decree. In the following paragraphs, we will see what people felt about the Old Town and Bałuty area before it turned into the ghetto and how they reacted to the relocation imposition.

Moving away from the maps and entering into the *Sitz im Leben* of the Jews at that crucial moment requires attention to their feelings toward the area they were about to enter. Ego documents, namely memoirs and

oral testimonies of former Jewish inhabitants of Łódź, offer a spatial understanding of where people lived in the city center and how they conceived the ghetto area.

Bernice Pickard lived in the new Jewish neighborhood and tells of life in better conditions:

> Well, we had a very nice updated apartment, which at such time, you know, you don't have too many. Because it had all the facilities indoors. We had a bathroom. We had an indoor washroom, you know, kitchen, and like, four rooms. So this was—even with a big family—the boys were in the two bedrooms, and my parents had one bedroom.
>
> It was a very nice place, where we had a bathtub, you know? . . . So, we had a nice place, beautiful floors.[56]

Alongside these, many chose to describe their living area in contrast to the ghetto area to reimagine their days living in the city center. Bernice Pickard continued: "But . . . when you compare it where . . . my grandparents lived, you know, my grandmother, she lived closer to the ghetto area. You didn't have all these facilities." When Bernice is asked about the neighborhood in which she lived, before mentioning the life next to a park, she mentions again: "Well, this didn't belong to the ghetto—the area. No, it had nice stores."[57]

Eva Nagler, who also lived in the new Jewish neighborhood, testified that her family was not well off. They sublet two rooms in another person's apartment. Despite her family's economic position, when Eva was asked about the ghetto, she replied: "The ghetto was in a suburb called Bałuty. It was the poorest and most decrepit suburb in Lodz."[58] The same criticism is also raised by Luba Lachman when she talked about her family's thoughts upon entering the ghetto:

> [T]hat was, of course, the poorest quarter, and the Poles went out of there. Before the war, Poles and Jews lived there. But it was, it was the old town, the oldest part of town. There were no facilities, running water, or sewage; it was . . . an impoverished quarter of the city.[59]

[56] Bernice Pickard, Interview 46438, interview by Merle Gross, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 4 Nov. 1998.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Eva Nagler, Interview 4862, interview by Sharon Savdie, Visual History Archive, USC Shoah Foundation, 5 Oct. 1995.

[59] Luba Lachman, Interview by Dina Shefet, Yad Vashem, 20 Oct. 1996 (Hebrew).

This opinion of the ghetto area did not emerge in the 1930s. Since the industrial city was re-established to the south, the Old Town and Bałuty were considered poor and unplanned. Already in 1897, in his famous novel *The Promised Land* [*Ziemia obiecana*], Reymont depicted walking along Piotrkowska Street:

> [O]n both sides of the street there rose serried ranks of houses of every description: palaces in the Italian style, used as cotton warehouses; common blocks of building, foursquare, three-storeyed, provided neither with plaster nor with roughcast; magnificent houses—baroque balconies of gilt iron, wrought in undulating curves, wanton with Cupids beneath the friezes and under the windows—through which you could see a row of weavers' looms. Then there were tiny houses of wood, all awry, with green moss-grown roofs; and in the courtyard behind them rose tall chimneys and factory buildings, beside a palace in the ponderous Berlin-Renaissance style: red moulded brick door-posts and lintels of stone, and great bas-reliefs along the frontage (allegories of Commerce), and two turreted pavilions on either side, separated from the main building by a splendid iron grating, in the rear of which stood the colossal walls of some factory.[60]

Reymont related implicitly to the unique character of the city, with wealthy palaces next to simple tenement houses and factories. However, when continuing to the north (where the Jewish district resided), the description becomes gloomier:

> And here the mud was growing blacker and more liquid. . . . Sometimes waste products and factory refuse came pouring down in dirty streamlets, reddish or bluish or yellowish; and the flow of offscourings from the houses and the factories behind them was so abundant that they brimmed over the kennels, which were neither wide nor deep, and deluged the foot-paths with a many-coloured flood—even to the much-trodden thresholds of the wretched little shops. And out of these came, from mire-befouled and dingy recesses, a mingled stench of filth and putridity, and the strong odours of herrings, rotting vegetables, or spirits.[61]

We might think that Reymont, the famous Polish novelist, was writing in an antisemitic manner, which was not uncommon for the *Zeitgeist* of that era. However, Reymont was not the only one who described the Jewish area in such words. Aharon Z. Eshkoli, the well-known Hasidism researcher, was even more caustic when he wrote about the Jewish area:

[60] Władysław S. Reymont, *The Promised Land*, trans. Michael H. Dziewicki (New York, 1927), 107–108.

[61] Ibid., 111–112.

> The center—and border as one—of the Old Town was the Staw—the stenchy stream that was an epidemic carrying sewage in the city of smoke and smells—the poison of all the industry in a town lacking channelization and ventilation—which on its borders gathered hundreds of Jewish merchants and suckled their poor living in a stale atmosphere that was not seen in the east and west. . . . When the Germans came during the First War and clogged the stream—to prevent a pandemic in town—it was a terrible command for the wretched people.[62]

This way, facts, wrapped in opinions, became statistics when written by the official ghetto archives staff.[63] The official explains that the ghetto conceived two areas, the initial Jewish district and a vast part of Bałuty:

> [A] neglected, deserted spot that until 1916 was not subject to any municipal law or jurisdiction. Houses were built at whim, with no plan beyond their owner's desire, along crooked alleys, following no pattern and submitting to no fire, sanitation, or zoning regulations. Its isolation was evidenced by its having no gutters or street lighting. And it was a breeding ground for disease.
>
> After the area was incorporated into the city of Lodz in 1916, a slow improvement began, although not enough to bring its conditions up to the level of the rest of the city. Its inhabitants were considered the city's outcasts. In recent years, some small houses for civil servants and well-paid workers were constructed, modern homes whose appearance contrasted with their surroundings. . . .
>
> The second part, the Old Town, Lodz's oldest quarter, was until 1861 the Ghetto of Lodz, where in small, cramped spaces the Jews had kept their nests. . . .
>
> This area, which was now to be inhabited by Jews from the city, had the highest percentage of wooden houses, of decaying houses, of houses in danger of collapsing and begging to be torn down, of houses that had not been repaired in decades, of houses filled with dirt and trash and lacking the slightest comfort.[64]

Over 30,000 apartments in the ghetto area did not have running water, sewage, or toilets. The only thing that separated it from the most faltering regions was electric lighting, which existed in 42,551 rooms, of which 39,317 were living rooms. Such facilities were also not common in many areas of the city. However, information is accurate for 1931; during the 1930s, the city underwent some improvements.[65]

And so, with the awareness of the need to leave their modern homes in a good neighborhood and move to the poorest, outcast, disease-stricken

[62] Aharon Z. Eshkoli, "Lodz Community – A Great City in Israel," *Machanayim* (1948) (Hebrew).

[63] Alan Adelson, Robert Lapides, Marek Web, *Lodz Ghetto: Inside a Community under Siege* (New York, 1989), 19.

[64] Ibid., 35–36.

[65] Ibid., 36.

part of town, families fought for a suitable place to live: "[A]t the same time, the Jewish community opened a department for distributing apartments in the ghetto, and people tried to achieve as better an apartment as possible, with the help of favoritism, of course."[66]And when families achieved the right to an apartment in the ghetto (see Fig. 11):

> [E]very day, in the snowy streets of Łódź, convoys of people were carrying on their backs pieces of furniture, packages, and suitcases. Sleds loaded with personal belongings and small handcarts were pushed by frightened children. Every day, a stream of people drifted into the ghetto.[67]

Fig. 11. Moving into the ghetto. Source: Virtual Museum Heritage of the Jews of Lodz

As mentioned, Jews in the city center held unpleasant feelings about the ghetto area. In his testimony, Zvi Goldberg consoled himself by claiming that, in every difficult moment, there is some good; if the Jews had to move to the city, he said, they would not be welcomed with open arms. It was fortunate for those Jews who were deported to the poor area, to Bałuty, where each had a family member and where they were welcomed.[68] Goldberg's use of the words "move to the city" shows evocatively that the ghetto area was not conceived as part of the city.

The otherness and confinement of the initial Jewish area and Bałuty remained as areas beyond the pale from day one until the end. Bałuty was

[66] Sara Selver Urbach, *Looking through My Window: Memories of Lodz Ghetto* (Jerusalem, 1964), 27 (Hebrew).

[67] Ibid., 27.

[68] Zvi Henoch Goldberg, Interview by Rina Rotberg, Yad Vashem, Tel Aviv, 16 Mar. 2008.

always viewed as a poor and sick place, where the margins of society lived, both Christians and Jews. It is not surprising, therefore, that those two areas were chosen to form the ghetto area, both for their large number of Jewish residents and their inherited poor conditions.

Still, as this paper shows, for generations, many Jews managed to defer themselves from this area and settle in the city center and maintained a sense of distance and repulsiveness toward that area even though most of them still had relatives living there and were aware of their being Jewish areas. When the war broke out and with the order of the deportation to the ghetto, these families, beyond the shock and fear of war, had to give up their apartments in the modern, comfortable area and move to the place they despised. Nevertheless, before knowing what was to come, with the streets of Łódź and even private homes turning into places of fear and constant hustling, the move into the ghetto was sometimes an act of relief and consolation.

Epilogue

Over a hundred years, Jews formed an essential part of the industrial town. Despite their confinement in the first half of the nineteenth century, a vivid Jewish settlement was formed and paralleled the emerging industrial city. Different starting points are noticed in other uses of building plots. Still, in later years, a vast part of the community was directly or indirectly integrated into the textile industry and the city.

The location of Jewish neighborhoods and institutions in town shows the transformation of the Jewish community from being restricted and distanced to being prominent. The location of synagogues, some of which were extremely impressive and monumental, and semi-private Jewish places throughout town enhance this prominence. Moreover, the appearance of many Jews in the city's address book, an abstract indicator of city space, enhanced their prominence. This emerged despite growing antisemitism in the 1930s. Still, the heatmap shows that, although the Jewish middle class lived almost everywhere in town, besides its outskirts, the preferred location was the new Jewish neighborhood between the new city center and the original Jewish district.

Unfortunately, 1939, the year when the address book was issued, was the last year Jews could feel prominent in Łódź. Already in 1940, Łódź's Jews had to leave all they had and move to the dilapidated ghetto area. The

feelings people living in the city center, both Jews and non-Jews, had for this area before the war are well felt all along the years, in documents and ego documents. These feelings made the move to the ghetto even harder.

This paper shows the importance of spatial research in Jewish studies, as well as the importance of archival materials and the methods for analyzing them. Spatializing and visualizing archival material provide insight into what our imagination sometimes cannot see. The spatial research shows that, as with any community, Łódź's Jewish community was not one unit. Although the city and the Jewish settlement within it were socio-economically intermingled, one cannot include all areas where Jews lived as one large Jewish area. Moreover, although living in Jewish areas, Jews were not segregated, and spatial, lingual, and cultural encounters occurred. It also shows the great contribution of Jews to the physical development of the city. Within that, studying the Jewish middle class brings forward an "invisible" class and widens the study beyond the well-known Bałuty or famous industrialist families.

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