

## BUILDING THE “NEW JERUSALEM”: JEWISH ARTISTIC PATRONAGE IN ŁÓDŹ, 1880–1907

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**Abstract:** The article focuses on the issue of Jewish bourgeoisie’s artistic patronage in Łódź at the the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The selected time range (1890–1907) covers the period of both the city’s rapid development and flourishing of culture and artistic life until the outbreak of the 1905 Revolution. What’s characteristic of the Jewish bourgeoisie patronage in Łódź, is the tendency to finance projects that not only created a sense of community in a multiethnic city, but also emphasized the significant but distinctive role of Jews among townspeople. In this article, the issue of patronage is discussed on selected examples, taking into account shaping of public space and private initiatives in both architecture and fine arts.

### Introduction

The last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Kingdom of Poland were a period of gradual economic stabilisation. The granting of freehold to peasants, a favourable economic situation, and the availability of the Russian market led to profound economic and demographic transformations. Agriculture – obsolete and unprofitable – was gradually supplanted by industry. The expansion of railway lines and the development of means of communication boosted trade, as did the free flow of money and a strong rouble. Favourable economic conditions contributed to urbanization, opening new perspectives for the full bloom of culture, art, and architecture. In the Kingdom of Poland’s new metropolitan industrial centres, Jews played a more prominent role than other nationalities, embodying the idea of progress. Fredrick Bedoire noted:

Their extensive contacts across national boundaries contributed to an effective, rapid dissemination of innovations [...] With no roots in the old feudal society and despised from time immemorial, the Jews were guided forward by an attitude of crucial scrutiny and by

the messianic notion of progress – of a Jerusalem of modernity in Europe and the United States, a New Jerusalem in which Jews could live in harmony with Christians.<sup>1</sup>

According to Bedoire, it was the Jewish bourgeoisie that performed a key task, shaping visual images of metropolises, as Paris, Berlin, and Vienna “set the tone of the New Age with great railroad stations of iron, as well as overloaded drawing-rooms in a fantastic mixture of styles.”<sup>2</sup>

A phenomenon of Jewish supremacy in industry, trade, and other fields was also visible in the main centres of the Kingdom of Poland, where members of the bourgeoisie participated in various economic and artistic initiatives. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the Kronenbergs, the Blochs, the Bergsons, the Wawelbergs, the Eigers, the Natansons and the Poznańskis, the Konstads, the Silbersteins, the Hertz, and the Eitings, who rendered great service to Warsaw and Łódź.

This paper concerns patronage by the Jewish bourgeoisie in Łódź at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The issues raised are limited to the fine arts and selected examples of architecture.<sup>3</sup> The time span in question, 1890–1907, covers the years of the city’s prosperity, manifested, among other things, in the execution of prestigious assignments in the field of private and public construction works. The full bloom of architecture was accompanied by increased interest in painting and sculpture, reflected in attempts to create a permanent display area and the organisation of several exhibitions. In 1905, during the revolution, most buyers and patrons of the arts left Łódź as it plunged into chaos; local artists did the same, so the date may be accepted as a symbolic dividing line, closing the first stage in the shaping of the city’s artistic life. The years 1890–1907 are an interesting period not only from the point of view of the industrial development of Łódź, but also because of a deepening crisis of assimilationist ideas, especially noticeable in Eastern European countries, where the process of integration, characteristic for Western European Jews, was slower, encountering resistance from dominant groups of traditionalists. A specific feature of patronage by the Jewish bourgeoisie of Łódź was the financing of cultural and artistic initiatives, building a sense of unity among the multinational communities of the city, emphasizing at the same time a role and distinctness of the Jews in its ethnic structure. For this reason, the support covered in the first place architecture, especially public utilities: temples, cemeteries, schools, and hospitals. Patronage of painting and sculpture, the figurative nature of which conflicted with biblical prohibitions, could only exist and develop in an emancipated environment, which made up a negligible percentage in a few large cities of the Kingdom of Poland. Supporting painters and sculptors through both regular funding and *ad hoc* commissions did not bring immediate profits, nor did it create prospects for profitable capital investment. In the long run, it was associated with risk, especially

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<sup>1</sup> Bedoire 2004: 503.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*: 493.

<sup>3</sup> Patronage and collecting by the Jewish bourgeoisie in Łódź was addressed by, i.a., Strzałkowski 1991; Zawadzki 1991: 117–139; Badziak, Strzałkowski 1994; Szram 1998; Stefański 2002: 127–138; Michalak 2008: 235–245; Stefański 2008: 215–234; Gadowska 2010; Kacprzak 2012: 143–178; Stefański 2012: 67–90; Stefański 2014; Kacprzak 2015.

in the case of subsidies to Jewish artists, whose works remained “unknown to ordinary people, indifferent or unpleasant to the intelligentsia.”<sup>4</sup> The issue of collecting art works was somewhat different. Appropriate collections reflected well on the prestige of their owners, their good taste and culture. The popularity that works of Polish artists enjoyed in the Kingdom of Poland proves the aspirations of the Jewish elites to acculturation; it should, however, be remembered that significant collections of such a profile were created primarily in Warsaw, where citizens particularly succumbed to the charms of the manorial lifestyle, being a model for the local bourgeoisie.<sup>5</sup>

Wealthy Łódź Jews – industrialists and intellectuals – were eager to buy works of art, among which the most popular were painted by famous Polish masters such as Jan Matejko, Henryk Siemiradzki, Julian Fałat, Jan Stanisławski, Jacek Malczewski, Ludwik de Laveaux, Józef Chełmoński, Józef Brandt, Franciszek Żmurko, Zygmunt Andrychiewicz, Pantaleon Szyndler, Henryk Pilatti, Stanisław Wyspiański, Vlastimil Hofman, Juliusz Kossak, Anna Bilińska-Bohdanowiczowa, Władysław Podkowiński, Jan Rosen, and lesser artists, whose paintings simply appealed to buyers for aesthetic reasons. In the period under discussion, the Jewish elite, in spite of being accused of showing indifference to the situation of the fine arts in Łódź, supported local artists, especially Jews, more actively than the Warsaw elite. They owned canvases by Samuel Hirszenberg, Leopold Pilichowski, David Modenstein, Maurycy Trębacz, Józef Buchbinder, and others, and these works were the basis of the collection.<sup>6</sup> Purchases of works by foreign, Italian, German, and French artists were very rare: these were mainly genre paintings and landscapes; among them were no works representing new artistic trends, such as postimpressionism, expressionism, or fauvism. Unlike Jewish collectors in Vienna, Berlin, Paris, and Wrocław, those of the Łódź elite preferred conservative-academic and realistic painting; from new trends they chose symbolism and secession. It seems that at the turn of the century in Łódź, buyers purchased primarily what was offered by art dealers, works presented in Warsaw’s “Zachęta” and at exhibitions organized in the city or those offered by local artists. It is significant that, despite financing many artistic events and purchases in art galleries, no significant Jewish collections of paintings and sculptures were created in Łódź, except for a collection of graphics belonging to Zenon Kon or the Silbersteins’ collection. They were quite coherent and reflected real “collector’s passion,”<sup>7</sup> which Walter Benjamin defined as “the struggle against dispersion of this world,” the desire to “bring together what belong together.”<sup>8</sup>

A popular definition of patronage indicates that it relies on the care that art lovers provide to artists, mainly on sponsoring the latter, but as Marta Rudnicka has rightly pointed out, to see patronage as a manifestation of disinterested philanthropy is to misunderstand it.<sup>9</sup> In fact, it aims, first of all, at building the prestige of the founder, although it sometimes involves a genuine interest in art. In the case of Łódź, Jewish

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<sup>4</sup> Aleksandrowicz 1910: 76.

<sup>5</sup> For the names of the most prominent Jewish collectors and owners of art works in Poland, see Bandurska et al. 2012: 14–26.

<sup>6</sup> Strzałkowski 1991; Kacprzak 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Kacprzak 2012: 147.

<sup>8</sup> Benjamin 2015: 239.

<sup>9</sup> Rudnicka 2008: 318.

patronage became an area of activity of the new elite, a tool of its legitimization policy; this gave rise to many implementations shaping the public space, and representative objects became an indication of the social position of specific sponsors.

## The City

The first documented references confirming Jewish settlement in Łódź date back to the 1800s.<sup>10</sup> At that time, the town was an agricultural village of no more than two hundred people, of which the Jews made up about 6%. In 1808, the Jewish population in the city had grown to 13%, and in 1820 to 34%.<sup>11</sup> An author of a monographic sketch about Łódź, published in 1853, described it as an “agricultural-Jewish town.” He wrote: “It is not distinguished from the surrounding settlements: a small, dirty market and a few poor and rarely built-up streets.”<sup>12</sup> Thanks to expansive development of the textile industry and trade, within a few decades the city had turned into a large industrial centre. In 1870–1890, as a result of migration and population growth, the number of adherents to the Jewish religion in the city increased from 10,000 to over 31,000.<sup>13</sup> With a steady influx of people and favourable economic conditions, the city continually expanded. Construction activities were not limited to the development of new open spaces but were connected with the process of the restructuring and the transformation of existing spaces. Wooden buildings were replaced by brick ones; newly erected constructions reflected the financial means of their owners, becoming landmarks of the developing metropolis. By the early 1860s, Jews inhabited a northern section of Łódź, while it should be noted that this area was dominated by a poorer population. Wealthier people, who knew foreign languages and functioned without any problems in non-Jewish surroundings, settled outside the area. After 1862, the situation changed and the Łódź Jews were given the opportunity to live in any place of their choice. The Łódź large-scale industrial bourgeoisie derived its wealth primarily from textiles. Representatives of other industries made up a small percentage in this group, which made the environments of Łódź and Warsaw different from each other. In Warsaw, before the 1860s, the Jewish elite was comprised of bankers and representatives of wealthy merchants, and it was not until the last decades of the century that the meaning of industry as a source of fortune was noticeable. Admittedly, the pioneers of Łódź capitalism, such as Izrael Poznański, Markus Silberstein, or Szaja Rosenblatt, started their careers as small traders and entrepreneurs, but their wealth was generated through favourable investments in textile production. The concentration of capital also resulted from well-arranged marriages. The first generation of the Łódź bourgeoisie was not prepared for the role of art patrons.

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<sup>10</sup> Alperin 1928: 151–178. Filip Friedman, referring to the work of Rev. Stanisław Muznerowski, *Przyczynki do monografii Łodzi*, published in 1922, thinks that the statement by A. Alperin is incorrect, pointing out that as early as in 1775 “there was one Jewish family, consisting of 2 people, living in the Łódź brewery”; Friedman 1933: 465.

<sup>11</sup> Baranowski 1980: 136.

<sup>12</sup> Flatt 1853: 9.

<sup>13</sup> Puś 2000: 26–27.

Their education was limited to elementary or secondary school, in the case of both Jews and Germans. Their efforts to increase wealth marginalised any undertaking or financing of cultural initiatives. At that time, the position of the Warsaw elites was well established, and their education and economic security allowed them in the 1860s and 1870s to take an important position in the process of shaping and promoting culture, not only their own Jewish culture, but primarily the general Polish culture, towards which these circles seemed to be inclined. In Łódź, similar activities were suppressed for years by isolationism resulting from religious and moral constraints as well as the language barrier. The circles of the Łódź bourgeoisie of Jewish origin remained faithful to Judaism and tradition, although strong influences of the assimilationist ideology diminished this attitude at the end of the century. Integration dilemmas are well illustrated by this description of Simcha Meir, a character in the novel *The Brothers Ashkenazi* by Israel Joshua Singer, who, going to the German Huntze family on business, decides to abandon his traditional Jewish clothing and shave his beard.

The first cut filled him with fear, his hands were shaking, as if he had cut into flesh. He got accustomed and cut more boldly [...] He cut small sidelocks even more, not leaving any traces of them [...] he pulled his pants from the uppers and threw them on the shoes in order to look as if he was dressed in the German style [...] bought a rigid collar with a black tie similar to a flying swallow. He had been heavily sweating before he managed to fasten the rigid collar with his tie, since it did not want to stick to his Hasidic neck. He put on the shortest cut coat [...] A velvet vest with red stripes and a thick gold chain of a watch, which he had received as a fiancé, decorated his chest. With a silver cigarette case in his pocket and a black, thin cane with a silver knob in his hand, he got into a closed carriage so no one could notice his clothes [...].<sup>14</sup>

One of the elements creating the prestige of the big-city bourgeoisie, which had considerable influence on their attitude towards art, was their level of education. Fields of studies undertaken by the third and subsequent generations of Łódź industrialists reflect, above all, a desire to protect family interests, but it is difficult not to notice that especially at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and in the following decades, descendants of large families increasingly chose humanities and artistic studies or became engaged with art or literary work as amateurs.<sup>15</sup> In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, philanthropic activity and patronage of culture and public institutions became the confirmation of high social status. Unlike in Warsaw, where founders focused their attention on financing investments perceived by the society as significant for development of the country as a whole, the Łódź elites primarily supported local projects, taking into consideration interests of the local community. This does not mean that the Jewish bourgeoisie of the "Russian Manchester" were not interested in Polish culture and art. On the contrary, their patronage covered, for example, Polish theatre. This sphere, of course, was a space of cooperation between representatives of different denominations; yet we should not downplay the great support and contribution of Jewish industrialists to the development of the Polish stage in Łódź.

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<sup>14</sup> Singer 1998: 247.

<sup>15</sup> Ichnatowicz 1971: 99; Pytlas 1993: 51–52.

In 1901 the weekly *Izraelita* informed its readers about the visit of the writer Henryk Sienkiewicz, and the painter Henryk Siemiradzki: “Masters of a word and a brush came to Łódź to celebrate the opening of the new Grand Theatre, which was half-filled with the Israelite intelligentsia”.<sup>16</sup> The theatre building was designed by Adolf Zeligson, and its construction was financed by private individuals, first and foremost the Poznańskis and the Silbersteins. During their visit in Łódź, Siemiradzki and Sienkiewicz were accompanied by Sara Poznańska and Regina Silberstein, whose husbands a year later made efforts to establish the Polish Theatre Society. Maurycy Poznański and Stanisław Silberstein, together with other art lovers, turned to the governor of Piotrków in regard to this issue. In 1903, the Ministry of Internal Affairs in St. Petersburg registered the Polish Theatre Society in Łódź. A correspondent of *Izraelita* noted:

Several dozen of our fellow worshippers enrolled as members of the Polish Theatre Society [...] apart from single donations, they transferred, among others, as capital endowment [...] the Poznańskis: 5,000 roubles, the Silbersteins: 1,000 roubles, Edward Heiman: 1,000 roubles, etc. [...] Tied with the society by shared goals and aware of civic duties, they actively support every good cause, not only by offering work but also by material help.<sup>17</sup>

During the revolutionary events of 1905–1907, the Poznańskis were abroad, and Maurycy Poznański resigned from the duties of the vice-president of the society. For a short time, he became involved in works of the “Teatr Polski” Joint-stock Company, which was organisationally and financially supported by Maurycy and Karol Hertz.<sup>18</sup>

Patronage of the Łódź Jewish bourgeoisie fulfilled itself most fully in the public space through financing charitable, educational, and religious institutions and funding scholarships. In terms of artistic patronage as traditionally understood, we may consider commissions assigned to specific architects for the construction of buildings of various institutions, such as hospitals, shelters, schools, theatres, and temples. Generally, such initiatives were supported collectively, but many others were often financed individually, including the Jewish Hospital of Izrael and Leonia Poznański; a building of the Jewish Talmud-Torah Jewish Crafts School, founded by Zygmunt and Berta Jarociński; and affordable flats for poor Jews funded by Anna (Fania) née Jarociński and Maksymilian Goldfeder.

Founders chose an architect and supervised the whole undertaking. Taking into account the activity of the Łódź Jewish bourgeoisie in this field, we may say that it essentially contributed to shaping the city space, and their aesthetic preferences determined its visual image.<sup>19</sup> In the period in question, prestigious commissions were assigned to three creators, graduates of the Institute of Civil Engineers in St. Petersburg: Adolf

<sup>16</sup> N.K. 1901: 453.

<sup>17</sup> N.K. 1903: 601.

<sup>18</sup> For more about the patronage by the Poznańskis and Silbersteins of the theatre in Łódź, see Zawadzki 1991: 117–128.

<sup>19</sup> Architectural styles typical of Łódź architecture of those days, such as eclecticism and art nouveau, were treated by contemporaries as manifestations of bad taste equated with uncontrollable expansion of the *nouveaux riches*; it still should be remembered that customers chose projects that were fashionable, not differing from Western European patterns.



Zeligson, David Lande, and Gustaw Landau-Gutenteger. Lande designed for many private individuals and executed government commissions, and his rich artistic output included public utilities, industrial buildings, and large-city tenement houses. Gustaw Landau-Gutenteger, considered to be the author of the Łódź *art nouveau*, was mainly employed by Jewish and German clients, but there is no information about the artist's longer-term cooperation with a particular patron.<sup>20</sup> This was not the case for Adolf Zeligson and the Poznańskis.<sup>21</sup> Commissioned by Izrael Poznański, the architect created a design for the reconstruction of the Old Town synagogue at Wolborska Street in 1895, about which the weekly *Izraelita* meticulously informed its readers, emphasizing the merits and the generosity of the patron:

Renovation of the synagogue in the old city is coming to the end. It was started in 1896 by I.K. Poznański, may his soul rest in peace, who offered a considerable sum for this purpose [...] A reconstruction and renovation design was made by a builder A. Zeligson; painting works were entrusted to Mr S. Wiezner. One of the altars, the offering of Mr Poznański, was performed by the foundry of this company.<sup>22</sup>

Thanks to the patronage of the Poznańskis, Zeligson was entrusted with the development of the spatial concept for the new Jewish cemetery in Bracka Street and design of the funeral house. In 1900 he was commissioned to design a mausoleum for Markus Silberstein, father-in-law of Maurycy Poznański, who died in 1899.<sup>23</sup> Zeligson is also an creator of the palaces of Maurycy and Karol Poznański in Nowo-Cegielniana and Długa Streets; he was likely also a co-creator of the Poznańskis' palace in Ogrodowa Street. In addition, he designed factory buildings for the Poznańskis and Silbersteins. Before Zeligson, the architect of Izrael K. Poznański's factory was Juliusz (Adolf) Jung, whose arrival in Łódź was, according to Krzysztof Stefański, a researcher of the city's architecture, associated with construction of the Reformed Synagogue.<sup>24</sup> Work on its erection began in June 1881 and lasted, with short breaks, until 1887; it was supported by donations from the most loyal Łódź citizens. A design was developed by a German architect, Adolf Wolff, a creator of synagogues in Ulm, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, and Karlsbad. Among those who contributed to the foundation of the building were Izydor Birnbaum, Markus Silberstein, Stanisław Heyman, Józef Sachs, August Baruch, Hugo Wulfsohn, Salomon Barciński, Herman Konstadt, and Jakub Hertz. The cost of the investment amounted to 225,000 roubles, most of which came from I.K. Poznański.<sup>25</sup> It was also Poznański

<sup>20</sup> Majer 1977: 43–50.

<sup>21</sup> Stefański 2002: 127–138; Stefański 2008.

<sup>22</sup> N.K. 1902: 519. A short press release also mentioned other industrialists supporting the construction: Zygmunt Jarociński 5,000 roubles, M.A. Wiener 3,000 roubles, Jakub Hertz 1,000 roubles; Szaja Rosenblatt funded an iron balustrade and J. Flachs – a candelabra with 85 gas flames.

<sup>23</sup> *Rozwój* 1900: 3.

<sup>24</sup> Juliusz Jung, supporting construction of the synagogue, also designed the Jewish Hospital of the Foundation of the Poznańskis, partners in marriage, Poznański Palace at Ogrodowa Street and reconstruction of Poznański Palace in Nieznanowice; he also worked for the Konstadt's and Silbersteins.

<sup>25</sup> *Dziennik Łódzki* 1887: 2–3.

who chaired the First Synagogue Committee in 1887.<sup>26</sup> A designer of the building gave its exterior a distinctly neo-Roman character, typical of Western European architecture. The interior was dominated by oriental elements. Such stylistic variations, first applied by Gottfried Semper in the Dresden synagogue, reflected the double cultural identity of assimilated Jews. Each item of its furnishing was funded by generous donors. Adolf Goldfeder gave the synagogue the *Aron Hakodesh*, and Markus Silberstein donated an ornate parochet. Thanks to subsidies from Herman Konstadt, Maurycy Frenkel, Józef Dobranicki, M. Schlossberg, and Maurycy Heyman, it was possible to order a Moorish-style ornamental balustrade. During construction of other synagogues and smaller private prayer houses, funds from social gatherings or individual grants were used. Interestingly, Jewish industrialists also supported the construction of temples of other denominations and co-funded many public utilities in the city. In addition to Zeligsón, previously mentioned, Landau-Gutenteger, and Lande, other architects employed by the Jewish bourgeoisie worked in Łódź; some orders were also entrusted to foreign companies. It is worth mentioning monumental tombstones from the new Jewish cemetery in Łódź. A design for the Poznańskis' mausoleum was produced by the Cremer & Wolfenstein company in Berlin, while the mosaic decoration of its dome was created by Johann Odorico. To build the Markus Silberstein mausoleum, his successors employed an Italian company, Guido Fossati. A massive granite tombstone was erected on the grave of Arnold and Valeska Stillers in the form of a pylon with a relief cast-iron door ordered in Berlin from Otto Richter.<sup>27</sup>

## House, palace, residence

In Jewish tradition, a central place belonged to home and family. Thus it was not by accident that a desire to emphasize one's own position was most fully reflected in the arrangement of private flats, shaping their appearance and furnishing the interior. A house was a showpiece for its owner, evidence of economic success and exemplification of the needs of "the self-satisfied burgher who know something of the feeling that the next room might have witnessed the coronation of Charlemagne as well as the assassination of Henry IV."<sup>28</sup> A Łódź journalist, Zygmunt Bartkiewicz, contemptuously noted at the end of the century:

[...] today, Łódź is teeming with palaces or houses wishing to be palaces. Do they have a style, do they correspond externally or internally to the needs of their owners? – this is another thing, but they are certainly shining with slate roofs and gilded balconies, they are bending under immense loads of mouldings and balustrades, so they evoke in other groups of

<sup>26</sup> According to the protocol of the election of the Committee, apart from Poznański it consisted of: H. Konstadt (vice-president), I. Birnbaum, S. Rosenblatt, J. Sachs, M. Silberstein, H. Wulfsohn, M. Frenkel, I. Hertz, S. Barciński, M. Pinkus, Z. Lichtenfeld; Walicki 2000: 49.

<sup>27</sup> About mausoleums on new Jewish Cemetery in Łódź cf. Gadowska 2016: 18–134; Stefański 2016: 77–98.

<sup>28</sup> Benjamin 2015: 245.



“citizens” jealous desires to have palaces or houses that are even even shinier, with even more mouldings.<sup>29</sup>

Indeed, tenement houses and palaces of the Jewish elite in Łódź may be surprisingly diverse stylistically, although against the background of 19<sup>th</sup>-century architecture they did not stand out in any particular way, mingling in with the landscape of a developing city. Unlike the synagogue in the Old Town, which after renovation acquired a Moorish character, the mortuary house in the new Jewish cemetery maintained a style similar to the façades of private homes and residences that were maintained in the convention of late historicism and the eclectic, and less frequently – modern secession. The most famous example of the Łódź palace is, of course, a building erected for the Poznańskis in Ogrodowa Street, in the centre of a factory complex. It is a bold architectural and urban project aimed at passing a clear message to the public about the historical origins of the family, its power and its unchanging good fortune. An original design for the palace was already established in 1888; its author was probably Juliusz Jung, previously mentioned. The building was to house reception and private rooms, offices, and warehouses, as well as a winter garden.<sup>30</sup> In 1898, the design was somewhat transformed, as elements taken from the Italian and French Renaissance replaced the neo-baroque decoration. An anonymous correspondent for *Goniec Łódzki* reported:

In the future building, a ground will house storage space the upper floors will consist of 18 rooms and a flat for the company owner [...] a huge orangerie will be arranged upstairs [...]; its structure has already been imported from abroad. Similar orangeries may be seen only in America.<sup>31</sup>

Implementation of the project lasted until 1903 and it cost not less than 15,000 roubles. The interior decoration was entrusted to Samuel Hirszenberg, who created allegorical representations referring to the art of German symbolism. The cycle of preserved *panneaux* intended for the dining room consists of the composition: *Entrance (Landscape with Rider)*, *Muse (Woman with Lyre)*, *Farewell (Landscape with Genre Scene)*, and *Woman with Fruit*. The ballroom was decorated with musical and pastoral scenes.<sup>32</sup> Despite many years of research on architecture in Łódź architecture, little is known about other painting decorations of the residences of the Jewish bourgeoisie. Apart from the project implemented by Hirszenberg under the Poznańskis’ patronage, we can mention paintings in the palace of Jakub and Anna Hertz, which were made by a famous artist, Antoni Piotrowski – a student of Wojciech Gerson and Jan Matejko.

It was briefly mentioned in a local daily that its author happily praised the employer’s choices.

This positive indicator of the development of artistic taste among our industrial and commercial spheres also raises the circumstances that in this case, serious and expensive work

<sup>29</sup> Tinta 1899: 41.

<sup>30</sup> Stefański 2014: 103.

<sup>31</sup> *Goniec Łódzki* 1898c: 3; Stefański 2014: 104.

<sup>32</sup> A few of them were reproduced in Berlin *Ost und West*. See *Ost und West* 1904: 671–675, 677.

was entrusted to the countryman, and not, as we had practiced so far, to a foreigner. More confidence in our own people, more support for our artists, and the financiers of Łódź may play such a role in the history of our art as history contributed to the good of the Florentine merchants of the Medici.<sup>33</sup>

The Hertz family being related to the Poznanskis, it is no wonder that Piotrowski was also involved in works on the country residence of the latter in Nieznanowice near Kielce.

An important element of the interior design of the residence was paintings and sculptures. At first they were purchased like furniture – in Vienna and Berlin.<sup>34</sup> Over time, many industrialists, particularly of Jewish origins, chose the Zachęta and local art salons. Desirable paintings depicted sentimental genres, landscapes, and portraits. The latter were ordered from famous Polish and Jewish artists. The *oeuvre* of Stanisław Heyman, associated with Warsaw, who was a graduate of the Academy in Vienna and Munich, and who became “a portraitist only of industrial and financial moguls”<sup>35</sup> at the end of his career, includes two images of the Poznańskis<sup>36</sup> and portraits of Anna and Jacob Hertz. In 1902, at the request of the Hertzes, Natan Altman made a posthumous portrait of their son Leon. A similar task was fulfilled by Leopold Pilichowski for Julius Kunitzer’s family. In the 1920s, Pilichowski created a painting of Oskar Kon, the owner of Widzewska Manufaktura. At the same time, Kon was collaborating permanently with the architect and designer Henryk Hirszenberg. Henryk was probably a creator of the tombstone of Albert, the industrialist’s son, at the Łódź Jewish cemetery.<sup>37</sup>

Portrait painting remained the primary source of income for many local artists, including the most esteemed ones, such as the Hirszenbergs and the Pilichowskis. The creation of pictures was also assigned to Polish artists. However, only the wealthiest Łódź inhabitants could afford it; this group included Żaneta Poznańska, whose portraits were painted by Teodor Axentowicz and sculpted by Konstancy Laszczka.

The most prominent Łódź artist covered by the patronage of the local bourgeoisie was Samuel Hirszenberg, who owes his career to Maksymilian Kohn, the chief physician of the Poznański Foundation Hospital and the wealthy Silberstein and Poznański families. Thanks to their support, the young artist enjoyed a “good reputation” and was guaranteed a scholarship for further education. In 1885, *Dziennik Łódzki* published a list of the names of Łódź citizens whose generosity enabled the painter to start his studies in Munich. Donors included, among others, I.K. Poznański (220 rb.), H. Konstadt (120 rb.), Markus Silberstein (120 rb.) and Dr Kohn (75 rb.).<sup>38</sup> A few months later, the same newspaper reported the purchase of Hirszenberg’s picture *Babunia* [*Granny*] by a citizen for the sum of 500 roubles, which enabled the artist to acquire “funds for

<sup>33</sup> *Goniec Łódzki* 1898b: 2.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Jordan 1986.

<sup>35</sup> Piątkowski 1915: 2.

<sup>36</sup> The first one is a missing collective portrait of whole family, the second one, dated 1891, depicts Izrael Kalmanowicz Poznanski, sitting in a leather armchair.

<sup>37</sup> In the 1930s, Hirszenberg made plans to build “Gan Albert” – a garden in Tel Aviv, to memorialize Albert Kon’s shooting in Łódź.

<sup>38</sup> *Dziennik Łódzki* 1885a: 2.

the road to further develop his talent.”<sup>39</sup> In the following years, the Łódź newspapers systematically informed their readers about the progress and success of the painter, and art salons operating in the city willingly organized his exhibitions. His paintings were bought by the Jewish elite and intelligentsia. Among the purchasers, apart from the Poznańskis, Silbersteins, and Kohns, were Zygmunt Lichtenfeld, Henryk Birnbaum, Róża Barcińska, Stefan Barciński, Mieczysław Pinkus, Józef Sachs, and Dawid Lande. The artist’s popularity was supported by numerous awards, including a bronze medal at a 1900 Paris show for his painting *The Wandering Jew*.<sup>40</sup>

Leopold Pilichowski’s career was similar. The artist, from Piła, spent his first years in Łódź under the care of his uncle, Dawid Hirszenberg, father of Samuel. His works appealed to Saul Fryszman, the owner of a small weaving plant, and then to the Silbersteins, who invited him to attend plein-air workshops at the Lisowice Estate in Skierniewice. According to the findings of Tamara Sztyma Knasiecka, for Henryk Glicenstein (born in Turek), a turning point was meeting two sisters: Felice and Rebeka Jakubowicz living in Łódź, and the editor Henryk Elzenberg, associated with *Dziennik Łódzki*. As in the case of Hirszenberg and Pilichowski, Glicenstein also received support from the local press, thanks to which he became known to the Łódź elite.<sup>41</sup>

## Female patronage

In Łódź, as in other large urban centers, women played a fundamental role in the promotion of culture and art. Due to their position in the society of those days, their role was limited to specific areas of activity, usually related to participation in charities and associations providing help to those in need. Apart from charitable activities, other organized events included concerts, balls, dancing evenings, meetings, and lotteries.

Given the absence of accurate research on the emancipation of the Łódź female members of the Jewish bourgeoisie, it is difficult to judge the extent to which they found fulfilment in the field of artistic patronage. The exception is the quite well-documented activity of Teresa Silberstein, who not only organized charity events, but also bought works of art, supported painters, and organized the first large painting exhibition in Łódź.

Teresa (Hudesa) Silberstein *née* Kohn, a daughter of Mojżesz and Hinda *née* Fajersztajn, came from a wealthy Warsaw family. Probably, like many Jewish girls from her community, she received a secular education and loved Polish literature.<sup>42</sup> Her granddaughter, Maria Kaminska, recalled:

<sup>39</sup> *Dziennik Łódzki* 1885b: 2.

<sup>40</sup> It is possible that the award of the medal to the Łódź artist was influenced by the fact that one of his protectors, Stanisław Silberstein, was a member of the jury for the department of Russian industry at the Paris exhibition. See *Izraelita* 1900: 264.

<sup>41</sup> Sztyma-Knasiecka 2008: 28.

<sup>42</sup> A problem of education and assimilation of Jewish girls is discussed, i.a., by Landau-Czajka 2006: 176–193.

She was rumoured to have taken part in the 1863 uprising, which we, as children eagerly believed with all our heart, and perhaps with some justification. Besides, she boasted, like my mother, about her affinity with the Feuerstein family, who apparently had at their disposal the privileges granted to their ancestors by Casimir the Great.<sup>43</sup>

After getting married to Markus Silberstein, she moved to Łódź, where, thanks to growing wealth and her husband's position, she became one of the most important female representatives of the local bourgeoisie. Being a well-versed and well-assimilated person, she quickly emerged in the public space as an efficient organizer of many ventures, in which she also engaged her sisters: Anna Kohn and Klaudia Justyna (Klotylda) Lichtenfeld, who were also married to respected Łódź citizens.<sup>44</sup> In 1893, on her initiative, the *Żydowskie Kołko Żeńskie* (Jewish Women's Circle) was formed; it collected funds for summer camps for poor children of the Jewish faith. In 1899, Teresa Silberstein took a position next to Józef Birnbaum, Maurycy Poznański, and Julius Bielschowsky in the management of *Łódzkie Towarzystwo Muzyczne* (Łódź Musical Society).<sup>45</sup> In January 1898, the Łódź industrialists and intelligentsia circles, under her leadership, sought to organize a great art exhibition, income from which was to be donated to the organization of summer camps for Jewish children. The idea of the exhibition, which was to be accompanied by meetings and concerts, was welcomed by Łódź citizens, regardless of their faith. Preparations for the exhibition and its course were described by newspapers and magazines. Notes on this subject appeared, among others, in *Izraelita*:

Whoever is aware of the significance and bliss of the summer camp, should warmly support the noble thought of the chairwoman of the committee, Mrs. Markus Silberstein, who, wishing to multiply the institution's funds, decided to organize a temporary exhibition of paintings and sculptures owned by individuals, thus being inaccessible to the wider public [...] The initiators of this new philanthropic enterprise should be congratulated on a perfect idea, and although annual balls in favour of summer camps have fully achieved their goal, the painting exhibition, as a completely new thing in Łódź, will undoubtedly be remembered by the committees of the summer camps for good.<sup>46</sup>

The committee for selecting works of art for the exhibition included, among others, painters recommended by the Silbersteins and Poznańskis: Samuel Hirszenberg and Leopold Pilichowski, Natan Altman, Dawid Modenstein, Antoni Piotrowski, and the architects Dawid Lande and Adolf Zeligson.<sup>47</sup> Hirszenberg and Pilichowski each received 250 and 100 roubles respectively for their work on the committee.<sup>48</sup> The opening of the exhibition took place on 1 March. Entrance tickets were sold by Teresa

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<sup>43</sup> Kamińska 1960: 28.

<sup>44</sup> Anna was the second wife of Dr. Maksymilian Kohn; Klaudia Justyna married Efroim Zalman (Zygmunt) Lichtenfeld, born in Lublin – a director of the “Dąbrówka” Worsted Wool Cotton Mill Joint-Stock Society in Łódź.

<sup>45</sup> *Rozwój* 1899a: 3; *Rozwój* 1899b: 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Izraelita* 1898a: 52.

<sup>47</sup> *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 1898: 359.

<sup>48</sup> *Goniec Łódzki* 1898c: 2.

Silberstein, Anna Kohn, and Brana (Bronisława) Pinkus.<sup>49</sup> A catalogue, published on the occasion of the exhibition, lists the artists whose works were presented: Józef Brandt, Józef Chełmoński, Julian Fałat, Maurycy Gottlieb, Maksymilan Gierymski, Leon Wyczółkowski, Władysław Czachórski, Władysław Podkowiński, Antoni Piotrowski, Henryk Siemiradzki, Stanisław Heyman, Franciszek Żmurko, Józef Buchbinder, and Anna Bilińska-Bohdanowicz. Among them, an important role was played by Jewish painters and sculptors from Łódź: Samuel Hirszenberg, Henryk Glicenstein, Natan Altman, Lazar Rozeberg, and Leopold Pilichowski. At the end of the exhibition, the camp committee thanked several institutions, local newspapers, Łódź and Warsaw citizens – for their work on behalf of the exposition.<sup>50</sup>

The committee, headed by Teresa Silberstein through the whole period of its operation, also organized balls and dances with the involvement of local artists. An example of this activity is a social gathering held in March 1902, during which invited guests listened to a short concert featuring two violinists, Róża Süß and Pola Cohn, as well as the cellist Julian Birnbaum, and then admired “living paintings” arranged by Samuel Hirszenberg.<sup>51</sup> From 1898–1902 three interesting images of Teresa Silberstein were created. In 1898 Henryk Glicenstein sculpted her image in white marble,<sup>52</sup> and in the following years two portraits were painted by Konrad Krzyżanowski (1899) and Samuel Hirszenberg (1902).<sup>53</sup> The last significant art project commissioned by Teresa Silberstein was the previously mentioned tombstone of Marcus Silberstein, made in concrete and marble according to Zeligson’s design.

Teresa Silberstein withdrew from public life in 1907, after the sudden death of her son, Mieczysław. She left Łódź and settled on the estate in Lisowice, where she died on 10 July 1914. Her artistic interests were inherited by her daughters, Sara Poznańska, Jadwiga (Diana) Eiger, Ewelina Paimall, Ada (Ajdl) Propper, and her sons Stanisław and Mieczysław Silberstein. After Teresa’s death, the palace in Lisowice (rebuilt by Zeligson), being the “indivisible joint property” of her descendants, served as a “family nest,” remaining the place for summer meetings of the owners.<sup>54</sup>

Mina Konsztadt, a daughter of Dawid Dobrzyński from Wrocław, like Teresa Silberstein and other representatives of the Jewish bourgeoisie in Łódź, focused on philanthropic activity, but it is worth mentioning that after the death of her husband Herman in 1895 she founded a funerary house and a house for employees of the new Jewish cemetery in Łódź. The cost of the investment amounted to 18,000 roubles, and its implementation was entrusted to Zeligson, who had previously worked for the Konsztadts on enlarging the exhibition windows at the tenement house at Piotrkowska 58 and was the author of the spatial development concept for the cemetery. The building, completed in 1898, distinguished itself by its size and

<sup>49</sup> Wife of Mieczysław (Mendel) Pinkus, a Łódź merchant and entrepreneur born in Płońsk.

<sup>50</sup> *Izraelita* 1898b: 177.

<sup>51</sup> *Izraelita* 1902: 164.

<sup>52</sup> A statue by Glicenstein, located in the collection of the Polish Museum in Rapperswil, has for many years been considered an image of Sara Silberstein née Poznański.

<sup>53</sup> The portrait by Krzyżanowski is stored in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw. The portrait painted by Hirszenberg is owned by the Polish Museum in Rapperswil.

<sup>54</sup> Mortkowicz-Olczakowa 1959: 50.

form, combining features of industrial and functional architecture with decoration in an oriental, moorish style. Another building erected thanks to funds donated by the Foundation of Mina and Herman Konstanad was the Jewish Men's Common School at 42 Zawadzka Street, designed by Gustaw Landau-Gutenteger, and a hospital for Jewish children in Radogoszcz designed by the same architect.

Contrary to Mina Konsztadt and Teresa Silberstein, Leonia Poznańska née Hertz, the wife of Izrael Poznański, was not an active philanthropist: she was not interested in art. Maria Kaminska recalled her as a woman who could neither read nor write. The only information indicating Poznański's wife's artistic taste concerns purchase of the works titled *Zburzenie Świątyni Jerozolimskiej* [*The Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem*] by Tadeusz Popiel in Warsaw's "Zachęta" in 1886. In the same year – in which was obviously a matter of chance, she won one of Samuel Hirszenberg's paintings. The Łódź press reported that she also offered 75 roubles to Hirszenberg, aimed at supporting him in his studies in Munich.<sup>55</sup>

Activity in support of art by other representatives of the Jewish elite before 1918 is largely unknown. The purchase of paintings and sculptures by them cannot be considered in terms of patronage; they are rather an expression of a certain attitude, reflecting the fashion prevailing in the bourgeoisie circles. The situation changed after the end of World War I, when the women's activity in the city's social life grew significantly beyond philanthropic activity.

## Summary

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the metropolitan Jewish bourgeoisie of the Kingdom of Poland, having achieved a high material status, "assimilated land-gentry patterns"<sup>56</sup> or imitated the elites of the West, which was manifested in the acquisition or construction of representative objects, the collection of works of art and crafts, and the promotion of artistic creativity. The pursuit of formal ennoblement was expressed through the possession of estates, the construction of city residences, and the building of collections aimed at emphasizing public awareness of the significance of the owners, but also, in the long run, at camouflaging the sources of their capital.

Gaining profits from trade and industry was in fact treated with contempt, especially in the environment dominated by the elite of noble descent. This was the case in Warsaw, where a significant role was still played by the Polish aristocracy, to which the Jewish bourgeoisie aspired and with whom they wanted to integrate. Was there a similar situation in Łódź? According to Anna Żarnowska, for Łódź business people, at least until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the founding and acquisition of real estate primarily constituted an attractive investment. The specificity of the city, resulting from its rapid development and industrial character, influenced the shaping of attitudes and

<sup>55</sup> *Dziennik Łódzki* 1886a: 2; *Dziennik Łódzki* 1886b: 2.

<sup>56</sup> Kacprzak 2012: 145.



aspirations different from those in Warsaw. Imitating Polish aristocracy had little significance in a city deprived of any centuries-old tradition of nobility, and the Jewish elite in this period opted rather for coexistence with the economically strong German bourgeoisie, considering the purchase of a residence or estate as "a symbolic act of crowning their success."<sup>57</sup> The case for supporting the visual arts seemed a little different. It was determined on the one hand by reasons of prestige, and on the other hand by a desire to manifest belonging to Polish and Western European culture. Taking into account both premises, attention should be paid to the phenomenon, characteristic of Łódź, of promoting local Jewish artists. This patronage, consisting in constant cooperation, commissions, and single purchases of works of art, contributed to the emergence of significant artistic circles in the city, which, at the beginning of Poland's independence in 1918, dominated the arts in Łódź. It can therefore be assumed that support received by Jewish artists was an expression of the cultural ambitions of the bourgeoisie and of the intelligentsia, and it was also one of the means of realizing the emancipatory aspirations of these groups. In the second decade of the twentieth century, patronage by art lovers covered not only specific artists or artistic undertakings but also institutions promoting artistic activity. It was manifested through donations and work for the exhibition entities.<sup>58</sup> In 1914, Stanisław Silberstein funded a scholarship for painters at the Museum of Science and Art in Łódź to send them abroad, "on the condition, however that during their stay grantees would have to make one or more copies of outstanding works and transfer them exclusively to the museum."<sup>59</sup> Similar scholarships for artists, painters, sculptors, and technicians were funded by the industrialist Jakub Hertz.<sup>60</sup>

An interesting but poorly documented aspect of Jewish patronage in Łódź was the activity of women. The press of the period reported about various forms of involvement of the Jewish elite in the organization of exhibitions that took place in 1907; thanks to catalogues that have been preserved, one can find out what kind of creativity they were interested in and which artists they preferred. Yet it is not enough to formulate conclusions about their real contribution to the promotion of art.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, artistic patronage remained only a comparatively attractive space for their activity. Although many women were able to pursue this field through home-based education focused on the humanities, the reality is that they were dependent on their husbands and fathers and had limited opportunities to make their own decisions, especially financial ones. The case of Teresa Silberstein, who skilfully combined art with charity, is an exception to the rule.

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<sup>57</sup> Żarnowska 2004: 198.

<sup>58</sup> In 1911 the Museum of Science and Art was opened in Łódź. One of its founders was Dr Ludwik Przedborski, who together with Dr Mieczysław Kaufmann and a few representatives of the Polish intelligentsia, was a member of the institution's first management board. In 1912, the number of board members was increased. It was joined by i.a. Marcei Barciński, Franciszek Hirsberg, and an architect Ignacy Berliner. See *Czas. Kalendarz na rok 1912* 1911: 59.

<sup>59</sup> *Rozwój* 1914a: 3.

<sup>60</sup> *Rozwój* 1914b: 3.

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