



NIE
TYLKO
PRZEMYSŁOWA

Dzieciństwo w Litzmannstadt

Catalogue for the exhibition

**NOT ONLY PRZEMYSŁOWA...
Childhood in Litzmannstadt**

Author of the exhibition boards and catalogue

Agnieszka Fronczek-Kwarta, PhD,
Anna Dudek

Exhibition design and catalogue graphic design

Renata Borowska

Editor of the boards and catalogue

Szymon Nowak

Publisher

Museum of Polish Children – victims of totalitarianism.
German concentration camp for Polish children in Łódź
(1942–1945)

The following materials were used in the creation of the exhibition title board and catalogue cover:

photographs of building blocks from the collection of the Museum of Toys and Play in Kielce and a photograph of a suitcase belonging to forced labourer, Władysław Tęgos.

The Museum gratefully acknowledges Malwina Ratajczyk for her participation in the photographic session which provided the basis for both the exhibition title board and the catalogue cover.



ISBN 978-83-972544-9-7

All rights reserved

**NOT
ONLY
PRZEMYSŁOWA...**

Childhood in Litzmannstadt

Ladies and Gentlemen,

the occupied city of Łódź was transformed into a transshipment hub, not for goods but for people. The German authorities defined the humanity of the inhabitants of these lands in their own peculiar way, according to their "usefulness" to the Third Reich. Amidst all this was a child, who lost their rights and basis for functioning overnight.

"Prisoner child" incarcerated in camps and ghettos. "Orphaned or semi-orphaned child" placed in children's homes or foster families. "Regermanised child" entered with parents on the Volksliste. "Stolen child" intended for Germanisation. "Convict child" incarcerated in detention centres and prisons. "Pupil – «Zögling»" incarcerated in the Jugendschutzlager in Przemysłowa Street, in Dzierżązna and in Konstanyńów Łódzki. "Child apprentice" of the Training Workshop of the Ministry of Aviation of the Third Reich. "Displaced child" incarcerated in resettlement and transit camps. "Child forced labourer" sent to slave labour. „«Banditen Kinder», «Terroristen Kinder» children" from families involved in the Polish independence underground.

On the 80th anniversary of the liquidation of the German camp for Polish children and young people in Przemysłowa Street in Łódź, the Museum of Polish Children – victims of totalitarianism presents the exhibition: "Not Only Przemysłowa... Childhood in Litzmannstadt".

Through this initiative, the Museum seeks to commemorate the youngest victims of the Second World War in Łódź and its surrounding areas. The opening of this outdoor exhibition also marks the launch of the "Saving memories from oblivion" campaign, dedicated to preserving the memorabilia of the children of war. The Museum, in partnership with this campaign, welcomes anyone wishing to donate memorabilia such as letters, photographs, personal items and documents that confirm their wartime experiences. Furthermore, we encourage witnesses of these events to record their memories in collaboration with the Museum. The resulting collection will form an essential part of a future exhibition. Memories and objects fade, risk destruction and fall into oblivion over time. Now is the crucial moment to safeguard them. Let us work together to preserve the memory of the children of war.

Director and staff of the Museum of Polish
Children – victims of totalitarianism



SAVING MEMORIES FROM OBLIVION

Not only Przemysłowa, not only Łódź

Attics, cellars and wardrobe drawers still hold memorabilia from the years of the Second World War and the German occupation, which tell children's war stories. This is a part of our national identity. There is no family in Poland that escaped the trauma of war between 1939 and 1945. Museum staff share fragments of their own family stories.

We encourage you to look at your own family history and share its story with us. Together, let's save mementos of childhood memories from the war and occupation from being lost or destroyed.



Photo source:

Grandfather Władek – Władysław Tęgos, born 22 April 1926 in Dzierawy near Koło. At the age of sixteen, he was sent to forced labour in Munich, to a BMW factory producing aircraft engines for the Luftwaffe. He was accommodated in the Allach subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp. He survived the bombing of the factory. After liberation, he was taken by the Americans to Coburg. He returned to his homeland in July 1945. He died on 5th August 1996. (Fronczek family collection)

Grandmother Jasia – Janina Dudek née Wiedeńska, born 11 April 1928 in Laski near Bełchatów. At the age of sixteen, she was imprisoned in resettlement camps in Łąkowa and Kopernika Streets, before becoming a forced labourer at the Bamberg AG silk factory in Wuppertal. She was evacuated to Belgium, the Netherlands and later to France, where she ended up in an American hospital in Mourmelon (Marne department). She returned to her homeland after August 1945. She died on 25th January 2021. (Dudek family collection).

Aunt Marianna – Marianna Łuczywek née Nowak, born 26th December 1932 in Wola Makowska near Skierniewice. As a result of German aggression, she was left without the care of her father, only with her mother and younger brother, Ryszard. In 1940, she sent this photo to Germany with the annotation "As a memento to my beloved Daddy, from his daughter". Her father was in captivity as a prisoner of war at the time. (Collection of the Łuczywek and Nowak families).

Dad Zenek – Zenon Zbigniew Skalski, born 24 August 1927 in Budzynek. Pictured between his father, Stanisław, and mother, Anna. A half-orphan of war. At the age of fifteen, he lost his father, who, after two years of arrest, died in 1942 in Auschwitz. Dad was the head of the school in Budzynek and a member of the Union of Armed Struggle in Łęczyca. (Skalski family collection).

FORGOTTEN PLACES – GERMAN CHILDREN'S HOMES



Children up to the age of 12-14 were kept in children's homes. These included orphans, half-orphans or children abandoned for economic reasons even before September 1939 as well as those deprived of their homes and guardians as a result of the war. There were more than a dozen such centres in Łódź and the surrounding area. They provided a rudimentary care for the youngest, but primarily, they were places for selecting children for Germanisation. Children's homes during the occupation were managed by the Social Welfare Department and, in the initial period, by religious associations and congregations. Children were frequently transferred between such places, with some passing through as many as three or four different institutions.



Städt-Kinderheim (Municipal Children's Home), ul. Brzeźna 3 (Erhard-Patzerstrasse) [1]. Located within the former factory complex of August Härtig, the Germans established an Altersheim (old people's home) on the ground floor, a Kinderheim for children aged 6 to 14 on the first floor and a Jugendheim for young people up to the age of 21 on the second floor.

Records indicate that children were held here from March 1942 until January 1945. The facility had a capacity of between 130 and 164 children. A total of 463 children of both sexes, of both Polish and German origin, passed through the institution during this time. Conditions were known to be harsh, described as almost camp-like". By the end of the occupation, 80 children remained. The building is currently occupied by commercial premises.



Kinderheim (children's home), ul. Przędzalniana 66 (Mark-Meissenstrasse) [2]. Before the war, this building housed the S. Żeromski Municipal Educational Home. During the occupation, the site became a centre for children aged six and over, selected for Germanisation. Records indicate that children were first detained here in August 1940. The centre had the capacity to accommodate up to 150 pupils. It ceased operation on 3 July 1944, at which point 34 children were being held. A total of 890 children had passed through the institution by that time. The building currently houses a medical facility.



Kinderheim (children's home), ul. Lokatorska 12 (Zobtenweg) [3]. Until the outbreak of war, this building housed the Girl's Handicraft School of the Little Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The school was closed in the initial months of the occupation, although the sisters briefly operated an eatery on the premises. They were soon relocated to a dormitory at ul. Kapliczna 16 and in 1942, they were displaced to the camp in Bojanowo near Rawicz. The Kinderheim itself operated from 1939 to 1 November 1944 and had a capacity for 140 pupils. A total of 1,022 children passed through the centre. After the war, the building was returned to the sisters, who currently operate a kindergarten there.



Säuglingsheim (Infants' Home), ul. Krzemieniecka 5 (Am Volkspark) [4]. This building belonged to the Red Cross. The occupation authorities opened the Infants' Home in a section of the premises. It operated from 1939 to September 1944 and was intended for the youngest children, up to the age of four. It had a capacity of 100 places.

In total, 857 pupils passed through the centre and 85 children died, most during an epidemic in March and April 1940. At the time of its closure, there were 69 children who had been deported from Łódź. Following the war, the building housed a Dermatological Hospital, but is now vacant.

Kinderheim (children's home), ul. Karolewska 51 (Thaerstrasse) [5]. The occupying authorities used the buildings of a pre-war children's home for this centre, which operated until 1945. It had a capacity for 130 children, housing children up to the age of 14. A total of 884 children passed through the centre, and 100 of them died. The buildings are no longer extant.

Other centres:

Übergangsheim (the transit children's home), ul. Kopernika 36 (Friedrich Gosslerstrasse) [6].

Kinderheim (children's home), ul. Cmentarna 10a (Friedhofstrasse) [7].

Kinderheim (children's home), ul. Przyszkole 38 (Ardenenstrasse) [8].

Mariawitisches Waisenhaus (orphanage), ul. Rewolucji 44 (Zietenstrasse 266) [9].

Erziehungsheim "Juvenat" (the "Juvenat" Educational Home of the Ursulines), ul. Czerwona 6 (Rotgarnstrasse) [10].

Erziehungsheim Sienkiewiczówka (the "Sienkiewiczówka" Educational Home of the Sisters Servants), ul. Pabianicka 65 (Breslauerstrasse) [11].

Temporary Home run by the Society of Saint Francis de Sales, ul. Wodna 34 (Ostmarkstrasse/Askanierstrasse) [12].

Photo source:

Museum of Polish Children, photo by R. Borowska

IN SEARCH OF “GOOD BLOOD”

In accordance with German racial policy, the search for individuals possessing “good blood” – those meeting the required psychophysical criteria – was conducted in every orphanage and camp. Children who were selected were sent for further examination to specialised centres. Only after successfully completing this process were they sent to Germanisation centres. In addition to children, adults were also subjected to this process of Germanisation, or Regermanisation.



Abteilung Erb und Rassenpflege des Gesundheitsamtes (Race and Inheritance Branch of the Health Department), ul. Piotrkowska 113 (Adolf Hitler Strasse) [14]. The German authorities established the Health Department in a tenement house owned by Albert Böhme. Officers of the Race and Inheritance Branch within this department were responsible for conducting initial racial selections. Accounts exist of children from orphanages being selected by the head of the department, H. Grohman, and transported for further examination to the premises at Piotrkowska 113. The tenement house currently contains commercial and office premises.



Rasse und Siedlungshauptamt SS Aussenstelle Lager (race camp), ul. bł . A. Pankiewiczza 15/ formerly ul. Sporna 73 (Landsknechtstrasse vel Wotanstrasse) [13]. The occupation authorities established a race camp in the buildings of the gymnasium previously run by The Bernardines. This camp operated from autumn 1940 until January 1945. Specialised examinations were carried out there, including anthropological examinations to identify Nordic features. Whole families, as well as single adults and children, were detained in this camp. Following the war, the buildings were returned to the monks. The Bernardine School Complex is currently located there.

Lebensborn (centre of the “Fount of Life” association), ul. Krajowa 15 (Humuserde 15) [15]. It is likely that a Lebensborn centre was established by the Germans in the Łódź-Helenów area. The existence of this centre is evidenced only by a 1942 report from the Government Delegation for Poland. One of the possible locations was suggested to be the buildings of the former Jewish orphanage.

Photo source:
Museum of Polish Children, photo by R. Borowska



Photo source:

Kwapisz Teresa, born 25 February (V) 1938 in Łódź, Poland. Taken from her carer, transported to Bruczków, then to Germany. She was given a new identity - Irmgard Schebesta. In 1950, she stayed at the Bad Aibling centre in the American occupation zone (Institute of National Remembrance).

Ryszard Schmit, born 8 April 1933 in Łódź, Poland. He was placed in the Children's Home at ul. Przędzalniana 66. He was then transferred to Ostrów and subsequently to Germany. He was later sought by his grandmother (Institute of National Remembrance).

“THEY DISPLACED OUR WHOLE FAMILY”

The Resettlement Headquarters in Poznań, specifically its Łódź branch, in collaboration with the labour office, established five resettlement camps in Łódź and Konstancin Łódzki.

Displaced families, including children and individuals were held in these camps for brief periods before being sent to perform forced labour.



Durchgangslager I (resettlement camp), ul. Łąkowa 4 (Wiesenstrasse, later Flottwelstrasse) [16]. Situated within the factory complex of Baruch Anszel Gliksman, it acted as the main processing centre. It operated from December 1939 until the end of 1944. Today, the factory buildings are home to the Vocational Training Institution. An obelisk bearing a memorial plaque, erected in front of the property, commemorates the wartime events that took place there.



Durchgangslager II (resettlement camp), ul. Żeligowskiego 41/43 (Gneisenastrasse) [17]. Within the buildings of the cotton wool factory “Łofawa” Dora Friedman i sp.k., a second resettlement camp was opened in 1940, and it remained operational until the end of 1944. The original factory buildings have since been demolished, and a residential complex now occupies the site.



Auffanglager/Sammellager (reception/collection camp), ul. Kopernika 53/55 (Friedrich Gosslerstrasse) [18]. This camp was set up in the buildings of the Friedrich Abel spinning mill and, due to its location, served as a primary collection point. Displaced persons arriving in Łódź, or those selected for labour, were initially sent here before being redirected elsewhere to await onward transport. The camp functioned from 1940 to 1944. The renovated factory buildings now house a medical facility.



Sammellager/Krankenlager (collection camp/hospital), ul. 28. Pułku Strzelców Kaniowskich 32 (Tauentzienstrasse) [19]. A makeshift hospital was established in the factory buildings of the Łódź Anti-Beggar Society for sick displaced persons and forced labourers. Prior to this, the Albertine Sisters ran a night shelter for women here until February 1940. This centre remained in operation until January 1945, making it the longest-serving of the Łódź resettlement camps. As before the war, the now-modernised complex continues to serve the needs of vulnerable women in Łódź and is currently home to Nursing Home Care No 2.

Photo source:
Museum of Polish Children, photo by R. Borowska.

“HUMANITY OWES TO THE CHILD THE BEST THAT IT HAS TO GIVE”

The 1924 Geneva Declaration

“My family was placed in room 3, which housed 800 people in total. There were no beds or bunks, it was as if there were sectors or sleeping places separated from the passage by wooden planks. There was straw scattered on the floor and we slept on it. We covered ourselves with whatever clothing we had; some had blankets. The sanitation of the room, like that of the rest of the rooms, was very bad, as the whole place was smelly and dirty. And it was extremely cramped. The sleeping space for one person was 45 cm wide. [...] The primitive toilets – latrines – were located outside the building.”

Ildefons Aleksy, born 14.03.1927 in Gniezno, prisoner of the resettlement camp in Konstantynów Łódzki, forced labourer.

“There was a children's hospital nearby to which ill children were taken from us. I couldn't accompany my sick son Zdzisław to the hospital because I would have had to leave the rest of the children and my sick husband unattended. They didn't take sick children to the hospital without an accompanying adult.”

Maria Jaskólska née Grygiel, prisoner of the resettlement camp, mother of Zdzisław, who died at the age of 7 months.

“...they stood in groups, holding hands tightly. The younger ones nestled up to the older ones. A few of the eldest, aged around 13 to 14, cared for the others. The older girls and boys were holding babies in their arms, who could barely walk. The children wore summer clothes, which were dirty, with some soiled by urine and faeces. They held in their hands bundles containing all their possessions: pieces of bread, small toys, mirrors, etc. They were frightened and didn't want to talk. It was only after some time that we managed to explain to them that we were not Germans and that we wanted to help them.”

An account by Jan Zielina, a Polish doctor from the resettlement camp in Żeligowskiego Street, describing children from Lidice and Ležáky. Seven of them were chosen for Germanisation and 82 children were killed.



Source of quotes: Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Łódź, ref. Ds. 37/67, t. I, k. 122, 201; t. II, k. 387-388.

Photo source: Propaganda photographs of a hospital room from a resettlement camp in Łódź (Institute of National Remembrance).

DETENTION CENTRES – TEMPORARY ISOLATION FOR CHILDREN

In occupied Łódź, there were three detention centres under the authority of the State Police, where adults, young people and even children were held. The most common charges brought against the youngest included neglect, theft, vagrancy and parental refusal to sign the Volksliste. Arrested children and young people were sent to various locations, including a camp in Przemysłowa Street, a prison in Sterlinga Street or to Radogoszcz prison.



Staatspolizeistelle in Litzmannstadt (Gestapo detention centre), ul. Anstadta 7/9 (Gardestrasse) [21]. The buildings of the Gymnasium of the Association of Jewish Secondary Schools were used as a Gestapo detention centre from November 1939 to January 1945. The building has now returned to its educational role and is home to the 12th S. Wyspiański High School. A memorial plaque is affixed to the front of the building.



Kriminalpolizeistelle Litzmannstadt – Polizeigefängnis (Criminal Police Detention Centre), ul. Kilińskiego 152 (Buschline) [22]. The Criminal Police Detention Centre was opened within the building of the 12th district of the State Police in December 1939, and it remained operational until January 1945. Today, the building houses the Łódź Prosecutor's Office.



Polizei Präsidium Polizeigefängnis (Police Presidium Detention Centre), ul. Kopernika 29 (Friedrich-Gosslerstrasse) [23]. In the tenement building, which had served as a prison during the partitions and in the interwar period, the occupying authorities opened an investigative prison in January 1940 and a remand centre from 1942. Gallows was erected in the courtyard of the building, where death sentences were carried out. Today, the building houses the 4th Police Station of the Łódź Police Department.

"I don't remember the precise date, but I believe it was in the autumn of 1942, when a man in civilian clothing came to the flat and told me that he would take care of me. He took me from the flat to the police detention centre in Kilińskiego Street in Łódź. I was held there for several months and then, with a group of other young boys, I was transported to a camp for Polish children and young people, also in Łódź."

Michał Zdanowski, born 29 September 1936. After his mother's arrest, six-year-old Michał was left alone in their flat for three months. A prisoner of the Kripo detention centre and of the camp in Przemysłowa Street.

Source of quote:

Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Łódź, Interview report of witness Michał Zdanowski (1970), ref. S 36.2019.Zn, k.1410v. Photo source: Museum of Polish Children, photo by R. Borowska

PRISONS – WITH AND WITHOUT COURT JUDGEMENT

The occupying authorities in the lands incorporated into the Third Reich introduced a criminal law for Poles and Jews that equated youths from the age of 14 with adults. Consequently, juveniles appearing before a German court often did not understand the charges against them or the sentences they received.



Polizeigefängnis (police prison for men), ul. Sterlinga 16 (Robert Koch Strasse) [24]. Within the buildings of the pre-war prison, the occupying authorities opened a police prison on 10 September 1939. It remained operational until January 1945. This prison became notorious for the torture employed by Gestapo officers during investigations. After the war, the building continued to be used for the same reason, housing the prison of the Provincial Office of Public Security. Today, a medical centre operates within the building, and memorial plaques are affixed to the front.



Polizeigefängnis für Frauen (police prison for women), ul. Gdańska 13 (Danzigerstrasse) [25]. A police prison for women operated within the buildings of the pre-war prison from September 1939 to January 1945. Among the inmates was a group of girls who were later sent to the camp in Przemysłowa Street. Currently, the building houses the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź.



Gefangenenlager/Sammellager Radogosch (prison camp/collecting camp), ul. Liściasta 17 (Wasserpfad) [26]. A prison/transit camp, established for the Intelligenzaktion, operated within Glaser's factory from November 1939 to January 1940. One of the youngest prisoners was Janina Borowska (born 22 June 1935). The buildings now house the "Prima" Piston Ring Factory. A memorial plaque is affixed to the front of the building.



Auffanglager/Sammellager (transit camp/collection camp), ul. Zgierska 147 (Hohensteiner Strasse) [27]. Within the buildings of Samuel Abbe's woollen and silk fabric factory, a transit/collection camp operated from late 1939 until June 1940. Subsequently, the Erweitertes Polizeigefängnis und Arbeitserziehungslager (extended police prison and labour education camp) was opened there in July 1940. Political and criminal prisoners were incarcerated here. During the liquidation of the prison in January 1945, the Germans murdered the inmates by burning them alive. This event has become known in collective memory as the "Radogoszcz Massacre". Today, the site is home to the Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź – Radogoszcz Martyrdom Division.

Photo source: Museum of Polish Children, R. Borowska

“UPBRINGING” AND WORK – CAMPS AND TRAINING CENTRES



Polen-Jugendverwahrlager der Sicherheitspolizei in Litzmannstadt (security police camp for children and young people), ul. Przemysłowa 34 (Faust Strasse) [28]. In December 1942, a camp for children and young people was established in an area separate from the Łódź Ghetto. It was the only Jugendschutzlager in occupied Poland. It is estimated that approximately 3,200 children passed through the camp and its branches in Dzierżazna and Konstancynów Łódzki. The youngest inmate was Janina Kazimierzak, who was sent to the camp at the age of one and a half. More than 100 children died there, and 77 of those who died in the camp have been identified. The prevailing sanitary and living conditions, coupled with the harsh labour and punishment system, led to the physical and psychological destruction of the young prisoners. A housing estate was built on the site of the former camp in the 1960s. Six buildings from the time of the camp's operation have been preserved within the new urban landscape. A memorial plaque is affixed to the Headquarter's building, and two "Kinder Muster" sculptures, by Marcin Mielczarek, PhD, relating to the camp sites, have been placed within the housing estate space.



Arbeitserziehungslager – AEL (“educational” labour education camp) Sikawa, ul. Beskidzka 54 (Stockhof, Am Bach 40) [29]. The camp was built on the grounds of a farm. It operated from March 1943 to January 1945. It primarily housed individuals who refused to work or escaped from forced labour. Towards the end of its operation, it also served as a police prison. Today, Penal Institution No 1 in Łódź operates on the site.



Ausbildungswerkstätten [AW] des Reichsluftfahrtministerium (Reich Ministry of Aviation's Training Workshop), ul. Wodna 34 (Askanierstrasse) [30] and the dormitory, ul. Piramowicza 11/13 (Pulvergasse) [31]. Within the buildings of the Mechanical School and the Gymnasium of the Salesian Society, the occupier opened training workshops. The first participants on the courses were the final-year students of the school, which was closed in the spring of 1940. The facility functioned as part of a larger system, with similar facilities located in Poznań, Kraków, Częstochowa, Warsaw and Lviv. The three-month courses trained future forced factory workers for the armaments industry. The institution ceased its activities at the turn of 1944/1945. Today, the building houses the Salesian School Complex.

Photo source:
Museum of Polish Children, photo by R. Borowska

FORCED LABOUR

"I remember when we were led into a large barracks, the room was full of crying children, and among them my lamenting brother and quiet me, who didn't yet realise that this was not a trip, but a prison."

Ewa Gauss-Nowakowska, born 22 June 1938 in Poznań, Poland. Imprisoned in the camp in Przemysłowa Street in September 1943, along with her brother Andrzej, who was one year older. In July 1944, along with the youngest prisoners, she was transported to the camp in Potulice.

"As a 14-year-old boy in 1942, I was working at the ammunition factory in Wodna Street in Łódź. Following my participation in sabotage at the munitions production, encouraged by older workers, I was taken to Radogoszcz prison and subsequently transferred to the Sikawa labour camp. I survived the ordeal; I was beaten and tortured [...]"

Stanisław Denis, born 18 September 1928 in Łódź, he was mistakenly issued with a death certificate and then released from the camp. Exhausted and weak, he went into hiding from the occupying forces, who, having realised their error, began a search for him.

"Our entire group was transported to Łódź and accommodated in the church of the Salesian priests [...] and as soon as we arrived, each of us was photographed, and then we were issued identity cards. [...] Next to the church, there was a production hall where all the girls worked. The area around the church was fenced off, and guards with guns kept watch at the entrance gate 24 hours a day. [...] Our living conditions were very difficult. We were placed in a church building that was not heated. We slept on wooden bunk beds with bedticks on them, and we covered ourselves with blankets. [...] We received small, low-calorie rations and were therefore constantly hungry. The sanitation was also poor."

Krystyna Kubiak, born 31 May 1928 in Kalisz – an inmate of Training Workshop of the Ministry of Aviation of the Third Reich at ul. Wodna 34.



Source of quote: Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Łódź, Testimony of Krystyna Kubiak (1990), ref. S 4/00/Zn, t. IVa, k.85-86; Obozy hitlerowskie w Łodzi, eds. Głowacki, S. Abramowicz, Łódź 1998, pp. 193-194, J. Sowińska-Gogacz, B. Torąński, Mały Oświęcim. Dziecięcy obóz w Łodzi, Warsaw 2020, p. 98.

Photo source: Prisoners of the camp in Przemysłowa Street (Institute of National Remembrance).

LITZMANNSTADT GHETTO

In Łódź, in a separate area encompassing Bałuty and the Old Town, the German authorities established an isolated district for Jews in February 1940 – the Litzmannstadt Ghetto [32], which remained operational until August 1944. It was the largest ghetto after Warsaw and the longest-lasting in occupied Poland. More than 200,000 Jews passed through it, of whom only a few thousand survived. This city within a city served as a large camp working for the war needs of the Third Reich.



"Someone's brother, someone's sister, someone's father, someone's mother, a cousin or an aunt! Everyone left someone behind. You have not seen such despair at the height of the displacement, you have not heard so much weeping and lamenting. Here and there stand a handful of weeping women, children and helpless men who have parted from their loved ones in such a cruel way." These words refer to some of the most tragic events in the ghetto's history – the "Allgemeine Ghesperre". Over the course of seven days in September 1942, the German authorities transported 15,000 people to the Chełmno nad Nerem extermination centre, including children under the age of 10, the elderly over the age of 65 and the sick and infirm.



The ghetto Gypsy camp (Zigeunerlager) [33]. Within a small area fenced off from the ghetto, the German authorities established a camp for Roma and Sinti from Burgenland in November 1941. It housed more than 5,000 people, including 2,689 children. Due to poor sanitary and living conditions, a typhus epidemic soon broke out there. Fearing the spread of the epidemic to the town and ghetto, the occupiers decided to liquidate the camp, which took place in January 1942. The inmates were taken to the extermination centre in Chełmno nad Nerem.

Text source:

Kronika getta łódzkiego/Litzmannstadt Getto, vol. 2, eds. J. Baranowski, K. Radziszewska, A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, J. Walicki, E. Wiatr, P. Zawilski, Łódź 2009, p. 481.

Photo source:

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

MARYSIN – AN ENCLAVE WITHIN THE GHETTO



"The President, playing on Saturday afternoon in Marysin, reviewed the children staying there at the summer camp. Troops of children, led by their educators, marched in front of the Head of the Jewish Council of Elders with a gallant step."

Marysin, situated in the north-eastern part of the ghetto, holds a particular symbolic significance. On the one hand, it was the location of Radegast station, from which transports of Jews departed for the extermination centres. On the other hand, amongst the ghetto's inhabitants, it was regarded as a relative haven of prosperity. This was due to its farmland, gardens and recreational areas, and also as an enclave where children's laughter could still be heard. Within this space, orphanages operated at ul. Marysińska 100 and ul. Okopowa 119 until 1941, when they were moved to a single site at ul. Franciszkańska 102.

The area also housed a school at ul. Marysińska 48 and the hakhsharas, where Jewish young people were trained in agricultural work. Summer camps for the poorest was established there. The Children's Summer Camp Office and the Children's Kitchen Department were based at ul. Zagajnikowa 23. One unique place at Marysin connected the experiences of both Polish and Jewish children. Until the area was separated from the ghetto to become a German camp for Polish children, a preventorium for Jewish children functioned at ul. Przemysłowa 34. Later, the camp commandant's office was located at that address.



Text source:

Kronika getta łódzkiego/Litzmannstadt Getto, vol. 1, eds. J. Baranowski, K. Radziszewska, A. Sitarek, M. Trębacz, J. Walicki, E. Wiatr, P. Zawilski, Łódź 2009, p. 197.

Photo source:

State Archive in Łódź.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archives:

Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance

Polish Red Cross

Chief Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland – Institute of National Remembrance 1991-1999.

District Commission for Investigation of German Crimes in Poland

State Archive in Łódź

Head of the Jewish Council of Elders in the Łódź Ghetto

State Archive in Poznań

Reich Governor – Poznań

Museum of Independence Traditions in Łódź

A-10933

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Collections of the Dudek, Fronczek, Łuczywek, Minich, Nowak, Skalski, Śliwiński, Złotowski families.

Documents and printed sources:

Branch Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation in Łódź, ref. S 4/00/Zn, Ds. 37/67, S 36.2019.Zn.

A. Augustyniak, *Na targu niewolników III Rzeszy*, Warsaw 2024, p. 28.

Compilation:

Boczek H., Boczek E., Wilczur J., *Wojna i dziecko*, Warszawa 1986.

Cygański M., *Z dziejów okupacji hitlerowskiej w Łodzi 1939-1945*, Łódź 1965.

Dzieci i młodzież w latach drugiej wojny światowej, ed. Cz. Pilichowski, Warszawa 1982.

Hrabar R., Tokarz Z., Wilczur J.E., *Czas niewoli, czas śmierci. Martyrologia dzieci polskich w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej*, Warszawa 1979.

Kronika getta łódzkiego/Litzmannstadt Getto, vol. 2, eds. Baranowski J., Radziszewska K., Sitarek A., Trębacz M., Walicki J., Wiatr E., Zawilski P., Łódź 2009, p. 481.

Ludność cywilna w łódzkich obozach przesiedleńczych, ed. J. Żelazko, Łódź, 2010.

Łódź pod okupacją 1939-1945. Studia i szkice, eds. T. Toborek, M. Trębacz, Łódź-Warszawa 2018.

Nauczono nas płakać bez łez..., eds. I. P. Maj, A. Janicki, Łódź 2021.

Obozy hitlerowskie na ziemiach polskich 1939-1945. Informator encyklopedyczny, ed. Cz. Pilichowski, Warszawa 1979.

Obozy hitlerowskie w Łodzi, eds. A. Głowacki, S. Abramowicz, Łódź 1998.

Ossowski A., *Dzieci z zielonego autobusu. Z zeznań o niemieckim obozie dla polskich dzieci przy ul. Przemysłowej w Łodzi (1942-1945)*, Łódź – Warsaw 2022. Person

K., Steinert J.-D., *Przemysłowa Concentration Camp. The Camp, the children, the trials*, London 2022.

Pilichowski Cz., *Zbrodnie hitlerowskie na dzieciach i młodzieży polskiej*, Warsaw 1972. Podolska

J. *Litzmannstadt-Getto. Miejsca. Ludzie. Pamięć*, Łódź 2020.

Raport o stratach poniesionych przez Polskę w wyniku agresji i okupacji niemieckiej w czasie II wojny światowej 1939-1945. Opracowanie, vol. I.

Rozenstajn S., *Notatnik*, edited by M. Polit, Warsaw 2008.

Sowińska-Gogacz J., Torański B., *Mały Oświęcim. Dziecięcy obóz w Łodzi*, Warszawa 2020.

Tulacze. Wysiedlenia z ziem polskich inkorporowanych do III Rzeszy podczas II wojny światowej, ed. L. Majewska, Łódź 2023.

Witkowski J., *Hitlerowski obóz koncentracyjny dla małoletnich w Łodzi*, Wrocław-Warsaw-Kraków-Gdańsk 1975.

Zabrał ich ogień... Piekiło więzienia na Radogoszczu w świetle losów ludności Kraju Warty w okresie II wojny światowej, eds. K. Czekaj-Kotynia, A. Janicki, B. Kowska,

J. Parol, Łódź 2021.

Zbrodnie hitlerowskie wobec dzieci i młodzieży łodzi oraz okręgu łódzkiego. Materiały z sesji naukowej zorganizowanej 12 VI 1979 r. w Łodzi, eds. A. Galiński,

J. Zamojska, Łódź 1979.

Zbrodnie i sprawcy. Ludobójstwo hitlerowskie przed sądem ludności i historii, ed. Cz. Pilichowski, Warszawa 1980.

Film notation and reportages:

Record of a witness to the fate of Krystyna Złotowska née Klimkiewicz, 2024, Museum of Polish Children.

Shots from the film "Litzmannstadt – gehenna polskich dzieci" [*Litzmannstadt – Gehenna of Polish Children*], photo by Michał Tuliński, directed by Katarzyna Pełka-Wolsztajn, 2024

We extend our sincere thanks to the management and staff for their assistance:

the State Archive in Łódź,

the State Archive in Poznań,

the Institute of National Remembrance,

the Museum of Toys and Play in Kielce.

EN DE UA





Ministerstwo Kultury
i Dziedzictwa Narodowego



muzeum
dzieci
polskich
ofiar totalitaryzmu