Maria Ziemna

Interviewer: Marta Cobel-Tokarska

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Mrs. Maria Ziemna lives with her daughter in Bielany, one of the districts of Warsaw. Her apartment is tastefully decorated, filled with books and keepsakes from times gone by. I met Mrs. Ziemna several times and at first she had difficulties overcoming her fear and tension. But when that happened, the story went on smoothly. Mrs. Ziemna defines her identity in various ways, at some moments of her life she felt more Polish, at others more Jewish. It was not until the time of war, while hiding 'on Aryan papers,' that she felt her Jewish identity.

About my family first, right? Because I thought I'd be talking about myself first, about my birth… That's all right, I can talk. The closest to me was my mother's mother, my beloved Grandma Antonina Rumeld, maiden name Herzman. She came from Chocholow [town in the Tatra Mountains, 100 km south of Cracow]. My grandma had nine siblings, and I think she was the eldest. Their mother died early, she had cancer, and Grandma looked after her siblings, took care of the house. Five out of her nine siblings emigrated to America before World War I.

I think they were the only Jewish family in Chocholow. Grandma spoke in a highlander dialect because they lived there among highlanders. They had a store there, and maybe also a diner.

Grandma married relatively late for those times, when she was about 25, she was an old maid then. Antonina and Herman Rumeld. She called the shots in that marriage, he was more passive. They had four children, the eldest was my mother, then there was a son: Karol, then there were twins: Stefan and Alfred. Alfred died when he was ten. Three children were left, whom Grandma educated. She had only completed three grades herself. They lived in Tarnow [city 90 km east from Cracow] for some time, then in Cracow. In Cracow the children continued their education, and tutored others all the time, because they were poor. And Grandma made money boarding people.

After World War I [after 1918] my Grandma went with her husband to Zakopane [town at the foot of the Tatra Mountains, about 100 km south of Cracow] and ran boarding houses. She bought the villa Pogon. The owners used to be the Radziwills [1] and Pogon was their coat of arms. She ran that boarding house until the war broke out.

During the dead season, when Grandma had no guests, she always fed a group of poor painters, who offered their paintings in return. I think I had a closer relationship with Grandma than with my mother. I loved her dearly; she ran the boarding house very energetically, very well. Despite the fact that she had finished only three grades, she was able to get all business done in the office. Her husband didn't help her much; he did something, some registrations. They didn't celebrate Jewish holidays in the boarding house; there was always a Christmas tree there. There was no kosher food. And the guests were mixed.

The dead season was November. Grandma used to come to us, to Cracow, then. She spent her time away from her own matters, with us. She worked very hard. Just before the war, her sons and

the daughter took their parents from Zakopane and split them in such a way that they took the mother to Warsaw. And she died there after the bombing. [Editor's note: In September 1939, after WWII broke out, the Germans bombed the area of Poland, particularly large cities like Warsaw]. And her husband, Grandpa, stayed with us in Cracow.

When it comes to Grandpa, Herman Rumeld, I know that in my childhood he used to play poker with me and tell me stories. I know he used to write. I don't know whether it was in Yiddish or in Hebrew, but he wrote stories in one of these languages, apparently very good ones, but all that got lost. He came from a more religious, Jewish family. I know he used to be a teacher when he was young, but I don't know what he taught. Then during World War I he was in the Austrian army 2, he was injured, later he had a disability pension.

My grandparents, fortunately, died a natural death. Grandpa Rumeld was extraordinarily patient, when he was sick, he never complained. I didn't have a close relationship with him, but I admire him for dying so bravely. He was a very quiet, calm person, who lived in the shadow of his wife. That's how it was.

I have to say one more thing about this family from Chocholow. Because here I hold a grudge against my parents for separating from that part of the family which remained more Jewish. Because I remember that some relatives used to come from Chocholow to Zakopane, nobody introduced them to me or me to them. They were received somewhere at the back, given some food, money, clothing, but I was kept away from it. And so I hold a grudge, because I didn't really know that family.

That's all about my mother's parents, and when it comes to my father's parents, I had looser ties with them, even though they lived in Cracow. They lived on Sarego Street, not far from our apartment on Dietla Street, where I lived until I was twelve years old. Grandfather Herman Zipper had a shipping company, together with his partner Margulies and he was well off. Grandma Basia [short for Barbara] Zipper apparently used to play piano really well, but I never heard her play. She was a quiet person. And only she used to go to the Tempel [the Tempel synagogue in Cracow] on holidays, and I used to go to pick her up and walk her home. I had little contact with them.

I loved Grandma [Rumeld] most, and to them [the Zipper family] we used to go for dinners on Sundays. Grandma Zipper died just before the war, in June 1939, of diabetes. And Grandpa died during the war, I'll talk about that later, how it was with Grandpa.

My father's name was Ludwik Zipper. He was born on 25th February 1893. And, well, Father graduated from the Faculty of Law. I have his diploma, a huge sheet of paper, with signatures of very well known professors, his graduation diploma from Jagiellonian University 3.

Grandfather Zipper wanted my father to work for his company. But my father worked there only for a few days, because Grandpa kept telling him what to do, where to go, to say good morning, to introduce himself... So Father got himself a job somewhere else. For many years, until the war, he worked for Powszechny Bank Kredytowy [Polish for 'common credit bank'] as a bank managing clerk. He was well paid, we were well off.

My mother's name was Anna Zipper, maiden name Rumeld. She was born on 8th February 1896. She finished a classical gymnasium on Wolska Street. She knew Latin and Greek well; she even

helped my daughter with Latin. As an unmarried woman she was a clerk in the Cracow power plant. After she got married she did nothing. That is, she didn't work, she led a social life, in coffeehouses and such; that was before the war, she had her friends and she used to get together with them.

The concentration camp was a horrible experience to her. She had had such a calm, organized life. My mother was hard of hearing. Once she went out to greet her fiancée who was returning from the front. She had the flu, she didn't recover completely and that caused an atrophy of the ear nerve.

I don't know exactly how they met, but my father took part in the war [WWI, 1914-1918], he served in the heavy artillery, having graduated from the Austrian officer cadets' school, then in the Austrian army on the Italian front 4, and then in the Polish army on the Bolshevik front. They got married in 1919. I think in Cracow, probably in the Tempel [the Tempel synagogue], but I don't know for sure.

My father had only one brother, Kuba [short for Jakob], who died in unclear circumstances in Zakopane, as a young boy. So I can only tell you about Mother's siblings. I already said that one brother, Alfred, died as a child, so two uncles were left.

The older one, Karol, was a doctor, a gynecological endocrinologist. He had four wives in his life. He had no children. I remember his first wedding, which took place in the Tempel in Cracow; I was just a few years old then. Later, just before the war, he changed religions, converted to Evangelism [he became a Protestant] and married a girl 20 years younger than him, Wanda Rutkowska, but everyone called her Marta. I loved her very much. She was three years older than me. Marta was Catholic. She died in 1948. Later Karol had two more wives. Karol was the only one in the family who leaned towards communism, he wasn't in the Party, but he had such tendencies.

The second uncle, Stefan, was a professor of Polish. That's the twin who lost his brother when they were ten. Stefan married a girl from Warsaw, from a wealthy home. Her name was Cesia [short for Cecylia]. Stefan and Cecylia Rumeld. She taught French, and he taught Polish; they taught in Jewish high schools in Warsaw. Cesia taught in the Mirlas school [a private high school whose owner was Mrs. Mirlas] but I don't know where the school was located before the war [during the war secret classes were held in private homes].

Cesia's maiden name was Kamienicka; hers was a well known Warsaw family. Her uncle owned the Plutos plant, a well known candy factory. As for her father, I don't know what he did, but they were very rich people. But I don't think that they [Cesia and Stefan] used it [took advantage of Cesia's father's wealth], they lived off their teachers' salaries. It was a very loving marriage.

They both died in the ghetto 5. I have to say this: Karol, who was outside the ghetto, sent someone to take his brother out, but he didn't really want to take his sister-in-law, whom he didn't like. They were bargaining about the sister-in-law, Stefan didn't want to leave without her, and later it was too late to leave. That's how it was. I can't forgive Karol for that, because I loved Cesia and Stefan very much.

I was born in 1922. On 1st July. I can say I had a good childhood. I was born at home, on Dietla Street in Cracow. 101 Dietla Street, back premises, third floor, it was a house on the border of the Jewish district. It was the apartment of my grandparents, the Rumelds, who went to Zakopane.

Three bedrooms, arranged one next to the other, there was a dining room in the middle one. At the beginning some tenant lived in the first room.

That's where we lived until I was twelve. Then we moved to 5 Krasinskiego Avenue, next to where the department store Jubilat is today. That was a type of an apartment I've never had since that time. Three bedrooms that were about 120 square meters, a hallway, a pantry next to the kitchen, the servant had her own bedroom with a window. And in the bathroom there were appliances that I still don't have, for example, apart from a sink, there was a special dish for brushing teeth, like at a dentist's, a round bowl for spitting. So that you wouldn't spit into the sink. There was also a bidet and other appliances like that.

It was a very beautiful apartment, on the 5th floor; we lived there until the war broke out. Because those were some of the most beautiful houses in Cracow, the Germans quickly turned it into a German district. And they took this apartment from us with everything that was in it. Except for those things that we managed to take out. There were Persian carpets, there were good paintings there.

Our servant's name was Jozia Klosowska. She was with us for many years, and remained in that apartment with the Germans. After the war my mom went to Warsaw and Jozia still lived there. We treated the servant very well, but not to the extent of her being a member of the family. I wasn't allowed to be rude to her, we used to address her in the third person singular, 'Jozia will do this and that.' She had to know her place. She didn't eat at the table with us, but she was treated well. She had her own room with a sink; she could use the bathroom of course, too. Did I feel anything for her? No, no, Jozia just did everything. She cooked, she cleaned.

Aside from that, a dressmaker, Natalia, used to come to our home. We would put a sewing machine in Jozia's room then, and Natalia would sew whatever was needed in the house. She used to get 3 zloty a day and accommodation. My mom had a friend, Mrs. Minder, the best dressmaker in Cracow. She didn't usually get things made by her, because it was very expensive, but she used to get patterns from her and then Natalia was able to copy everything. She would stay with us for a week or two, at times.

I can't remember what it was like with the laundry. Whether Jozia did the laundry or somebody else came. There were no washing machines then. My mom did some shopping, she would get better, but lighter things. I don't know where she shopped, in Cracow there were Meinl colonial stores [Meinl was the name of the owner of the store]. There was a store on the market where my Mother used to buy cold cuts.

I used to get money to buy a newspaper called 'Cinema,' because I was interested in actors. I collected pictures of Shirley Temple [born in 1928, American actress, most popular and famous child star of all time] and Gary Cooper [1901-1961, American actor known for his parts in westerns], my love. We also read IKC [Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny - Daily Illustrated Courier] 6 at home.

My father was a managing clerk at a bank, and there were such customs then, that a bank manager used to get sweets from the clients. Father used to get wine, or beer, very often. But I wasn't really into it; I didn't really like to eat. It wasn't until just before the war that I got some appetite. Or maybe during the war. When there was nothing.

Other than that, I had a wonderful kitchen in Zakopane, my grandma fed guests there five times a day. How can you eat five times a day? Breakfast, lunch, dinner, afternoon snack, supper, and all of that, very abundant. And it was really very good food. But at home we ate very modestly, because Father had liver problems, he used to get attacks. The camp [Majdanek, later Gross-Rosen, where Mrs. Ziemna's father was sent to during the war] cured him from it. We used to get cooked meat, some diet things, and the entire family ate it because of Father.

When I was still living on Dietla Street, I used to go to a public school, probably on the same street. There were a lot of Jewish kids there, poor. I was a wealthier girl, and I didn't like going to that school, because the teacher favored me. And it annoyed me. It was unfair towards the other children. Whenever something happened to some other child, she would treat him or her sharply, but would be gentle to me.

I remember one friend from that school, her name was Mania Schneider. I lived on 101 Dietla Street, she lived at number 105. Her family had a soda water company. Such huge men, athletic Jews, water producers. Next to our house there was the Dietla Park, which was destroyed later, because they ran a tram line there. We used to play in that park.

I went to that school for a year or two, and later Mother moved me to the St. Scholastyka School, where there were only a few Jewish girls in each class. The level of teaching was very high in that school, I really had to study there. I remember one friend from that school, her name was Ada Laksberger. She went to Israel after the war; she came to Poland once and visited me with her son. She wasn't my close friend. Just a classmate. She's dead now.

Later I went to the Queen Wanda public high school, which was located first on Franciszkanska Street, opposite a church, later on Oleandry. The level of teaching was very high there. And I had friends in that school. There were a few Jewish girls in the class; I remember two, Mia Karmel and Halina Klug. They both died during the war.

However, my close friends weren't Jewish, they were Catholic. The closest one was Marysia Ziemlik, we always walked home after school together, we stood on the corner for a long time, couldn't part. Marysia spent the entire war in her apartment in Cracow. She had a Jewish boyfriend, who she hid in her apartment, she was very much in love with him, but later [after the war] he left her and went to Israel.

When it comes to teachers in the high school, our homeroom teacher, Mrs. Kublinska, taught us Latin. She limped and was cross-eyed. And whenever she saw a girl with some boy, then that girl was finished. She [the teacher] would finish that girl with caustic remarks. Once I had the pleasure of meeting her when I walked with some boys and after that she taunted me a lot. I remember Mrs. Zborowska best; she was a French teacher, who taught us really well. During her class we could only speak French; we started with a prayer in French, which I still remember. I use this language until this day. I have a daughter in France, and my granddaughter doesn't speak Polish, so I speak French with her.

The principal was a person of Jewish origin, her name was Bergun. She was a very strict person. We had to wear uniforms; there were different uniforms in summer, and different ones in winter. She used to make us take our aprons off to see if we're wearing uniforms underneath. And in the cloak room they used to check if we had regulation coats. When some girls wanted to wear suits, they

were always in trouble. We weren't allowed to.

We used to go to the Slowacki Theater, and once I had a regular skirt on, not pleated, under the apron. It was also navy blue, but not pleated. And in the theater one of the teachers told me, 'You must go home because you don't have the proper skirt on!' However, I didn't go home, but somehow got in through another entrance. Those were the times. It's hard to believe it. When you see how today girls dress up and put makeup on…

I want to talk about other friends that played a rather important role in my life. In Zakopane, where my grandma had the villa Anastazja on Zamojskiego Street, not far from that place, there lived Mrs. Marta Katz, who was sick with tuberculosis, with her daughter. That girl's name was Stella Katz and we used to play together. She always had beautiful toys, dolls from abroad. Her mother was a Romanian Jew, she married a man much older than her, an engineer who worked for the railroad and had a high position. It was a rarity for a Jew to work for the national railroad. Stella was my age.

Later, because her father depended on the institution he worked in, he was moved for a year or two to Vilnius. It was during the school year and Stella lived with us then, she went to the same school as I did, just a year below. I remember we understood each other really well, there was even some telepathy going on: often I would answer her a question she asked in her mind. That's how close we were to each other.

I also want to say something about the Gliksberg and Lichtenbaum families from Warsaw, who used to come almost every year to ski. There were two boys. Jas Gliksberg was related to Grydzewski from 'Wiadomosci Literackie' 7, he was his nephew [Mieczyslaw Grydzewski, in fact Mieczyslaw Grycendler (1884-1970), a historian and columnist. He was a founder and editor of interwar literary magazines Skamander and Wiadomosci Literackie]. He sent me 'Wiadomosci Literackie' home for two years. Jas was a little younger than me, and Jerzy Gliksberg was his cousin. The wife of Mieczyslaw Fogg with their son Andrzej came with them once as well [in fact Mieczyslaw Fogiel (1901-1990), a well known singer]. The company in Zakopane was mixed, maybe with a majority of Jews, but Poles used to come, too. The Gliksbergs and Lichtenbaums all died.

I haven't managed one important thing yet: I was often sick as a child. When we lived in the first apartment I went through all the childhood diseases, whooping cough, diphtheria, scarlet fever, chicken pox, measles, bronchitis and anginas. And I had a broken arm. There was a doctor, who used to treat me wonderfully; his wife was a cousin of my grandma Basia Zipper. Michal Leinkram, his name was, he lived on Sebastiana Street. They had two daughters. He was a general practitioner.

The only test I ever had done in childhood, was a urine test, and he did it himself. Until I turned 16, I never had any other tests done, there were no vaccinations then, so I had to go through all those diseases. He always gave a good diagnosis, always knew how to cure me.

When I was sick, my father used to come to me at night, because Mom was deaf. He would stroke me; sometimes he would sit with me all night. And then he would go to work. I was very attached to my father, perhaps more than to my mother. But during the day Mom took care of me.

I was abroad once. I was six or seven, I was sick with a kidney infection and the doctors said it would be good to go south and warm the kidneys in hot sand. And we went to Vienna first, a doctor there examined me and recommended to go to the island Grado, near Trieste. We went to Vienna, the three of us, my parents and I, and in Vienna we parted. Father went to Karlsbad, that is to Karlovy Vary 8, for therapy, because he had a gall bladder and liver problem, and he usually went alone. And Mom and I went to Grado.

We stayed at a Jewish boarding house there. It was called Zipfer, I remember that because we are called Zipper, and that boarding house was called Zipfer. It was a very expensive boarding house, and we were rather average guests, not the richest. Children had a separate diet, for example their meals weren't made with olive oil, as they usually are in Italy, but with butter, and if they ate nicely, they would get a present. I ate nicely, but if I got a present, it was cheaper than the ones those richer kids got. But it was heaven there: boats, special kayaks for children in the sea, special cars for children, baths, lying in the sand. And, indeed, I got cured for good. Six weeks. It was the only such trip in my childhood.

And in Vienna there was some family from Father's side. I know their name was Reibner. My parents stayed at a hotel, and I slept at their place: they gave me dirty sheets, I remember. They had a horrible mess in their house, which was shocking to me, because our house was always tidy. But the lady of the house, who was a divorcee, had some friend, and she would put makeup on at such an untidy dresser, and would always leave the house looking very elegant. You couldn't see a trace of that mess on her.

I know my grandfather used to send money there, because they were a poor family. He was still helping them even at the beginning of the war. They most likely died as well, because there was no news from them after the war.

When I came out of those diseases, I practiced a lot of sports. In winter I used to do gymnastics, I skated, skied, cycled, swam. I also took eurhythmics for some time. I was an average student, didn't like to study much, but read one book a day on average. My entire education somehow formed then.

I also wanted to say something about the animals in our home. We always had some canaries, fish, but, most importantly, we had a dog. The dog's name was Jim, it was a wire-haired fox terrier, and it wasn't a good dog, because he used to bite. He used to bite children, especially if a child ran, he would grab it at the leg. Before Father got third-party insurance, we had to pay for doctors, veterinarians, and so on. But other than that he was a dear dog.

My father used to play bridge or go pick up women. He liked women, probably had some affairs. I don't know if in Cracow, or only when he left alone for vacations. All in all, Father would go to play bridge, Mother would go to a café, and I stayed with the servant and had supper with her. That's how it usually was. But I wasn't upset with my parents. I thought that's the way it's supposed to be.

We didn't go anywhere, travel, I only used to go to Zakopane [to Grandma Rumeld], once or twice I went to the seaside [the Baltic Sea], to Orlowo. I used to spend time rather by myself. There were no trips together, no outings downtown to see something, no Sunday excursions. We had dinners at my grandparents' on Sundays, and that killed the possibilities. I, for example, poorly know Cracow, because my parents never went with me anywhere, never showed me anything. We may

have gone to a museum once. Once we went on a trip ‘into the unknown’ which turned out to be an excursion to Oswiecim [town ca. 50 km west of Cracow. During WWII the Auschwitz camp was located there].

I was rather passive and weak-willed, now that I think of it. I was like that for a very long time. I was very reliant; Jozia had to even fasten the collar to my apron. I never did anything myself, absolutely nothing, nothing. I used to get milk when I was still in bed, I didn’t gulp it down, but sipped slowly from a cup. I had a somehow prolonged childhood. I matured late, just before the war.

Everything changed all of a sudden, because when the war broke out, Father left, as he was drafted into the army. We found out about the death of Grandma in Warsaw, my Mom was wailing for several days and unresponsive; here they were kicking us out of the apartment, and all of a sudden I became the one to decide about everything. From a completely spoiled only child, I matured all of a sudden, you can say, in a few days. Suddenly, I had to do everything, decide about everything.

I had a boyfriend before the war. But I only went out with him. We didn’t even kiss. It was more of a friendship... My future husband was his cousin. The other one’s name was Jurek Minder; he was the son of that best dressmaker in Cracow, Zosia Minder. His father was an attorney, but he didn’t have a big practice, they were mainly supported by Zosia. Her father-in-law was also a tailor and they had a large men-women workshop together on Karmelicka Street.

Jurek was raised like an aristocrat, they were very rich. They had a butler, so for example he used to send me letters through the butler. He went to the Sobieski Gymnasium, I went to the Queen Wanda Gymnasium, we had dancing lessons together. But I couldn’t dance with him because he was tall, and I was very short. The teacher used to pair us up according to height, so when we danced together once, they quickly separated us.

I was friends with a few more boys from his class. Until today I keep in touch with Felek Blondell [formerly Blonder] who lives in Melbourne, Australia. Jurek taught me how to ride a bicycle, and when he came to Zakopane, we skied together. He also was with us on holidays in Orlowo. Later he found himself another girl who he had a serious relationship with.

With school we used to go to YMCA [Young Men’s Christian Association], I learned to swim there. I had no contact with any youth organization. I belonged to the scouts for two days, I think. I went to an assembly once and didn’t like it at all. I never went to any camp, because my parents were afraid to send me.

Our school had a summer resort in Harbutowice near Lanckorona [a town about 25 km south of Cracow], where each class used to spend three weeks during the school year, usually in spring. Those were the only trips I was allowed to go on without my parents, without Mom. And once I went to Bukowina [Bukowina Tatrzanska, a town about 100 km south of Cracow], for a ski instructor course. That was the second last winter before the war.

The last winter before the war I was sick, I had pleuritis. I stopped school then and spent a whole year in Zakopane. When I felt better, I started skiing again. Then there was summer. The last summer before the war. I remember, a young man came there, and I liked him a lot. He was from

Drohobycz, he came with his parents and a younger brother. He was a Polytechnics student already. Marian Horniker. He courted me, but we used to go everywhere the four of us: me and my friends, Irka Trepper and another Irka, and him. For example to Warta to dance. I was a very good dancer because as a child I always danced with all guests in the boarding house. Marian complimented me. I remember, it was the first time I felt something towards a boy, but I never saw him again in my life. I don't know if he survived the war or not. I have no idea. I never had the courage to look for him.

At school they drilled us into worshipping Pilsudski 9, and it was the same at home. When Pilsudski died , I remember that Father took us to the bank with him. My father's bank was on the corner of the market and Szczepanska Street. There were tall windows on the first floor and chairs put right next to them, and we sat there and watched the passage of the funeral procession. [The funeral of Pilsudski on 18th May 1935 became a large funeral procession. The body was put to rest in the Wawel Castle in Cracow, where Polish kings and national heroes are buried]. And at school there were six weeks of mourning, everyone wore black bands.

That's what I remember when it comes to politics. Father was in the Polish army, fought against the Bolsheviks 10, so my parents felt Polish. I also feel like a Pole of Jewish origin. Because my life took place between Cracow and Zakopane, as a child I was certain that Poles lived in Cracow and Jews lived in Zakopane. I thought that for a long time. I couldn't really see the difference. I wasn't raised in any religion. When I was a small child I used to say some poem to God, I remember. Some neutral prayer. I grew up to be agnostic.

At school [high school] that's what it looked like: there was religion, I always had to deal with the priest who always asked why I wasn't attending religion lessons. During lessons of Catholic religion we used to leave the classroom. We always played in the hallway with Mia Karmel. And Rabbi Szmelkes used to come, who never managed to teach us anything. He would teach us Hebrew letters, the history of Jews. When he wanted to test a student, he would call her up, and hug and hold her. But we didn't realize what it was back then, naturally. And that's the way it was, because everyone had to have a grade on the report.

I also remember one scene from school when they were asking every student what her father did, during the homeroom period. And then Mia Karmel said her father was unemployed. I remember that the entire class laughed, me too. Because it was very funny, for a Jew to be unemployed. Because a Jew traded… But no, before the war I never encountered anti-Semitism.

When it comes to Yiddish, I don't know if anyone from my family knew it. Maybe that Grandpa from Zakopane. Probably yes, because he didn't speak very fluent Polish. Whether Grandma knew it, I can't say. But she didn't use it. And my parents didn't know it, but they knew German, because back then this was Galicia 11, and they taught German in schools. And when they didn't want me to understand, they spoke in German. But later I could understand a little.

A year before the war Hitler kicked out those Jews from Germany who had Polish citizenship 12. They came to Poland, some people took them into their apartments, others helped in different ways, materially. My parents didn't feel like taking anyone to our apartment, but they paid a certain amount of money for them. A few of those German Jews ate at my grandma's in the boarding house, for free of course. Were my parents aware of the fact that the war was coming? Probably yes, but insufficiently, because if they had been sufficiently aware of it, we could have

afforded to leave the country. So they didn't really realize what staying in the country meant. But we could feel the war coming. From the moment those Jews were kicked out, there was this certain atmosphere. Some people read 'Mein Kampf,' and they knew more or less ...

There was one family that used to come to Zakopane. Their name was Igler, he was a rich oilman from Jaslo [a town in southern Poland, about 150 km south-east of Cracow]. His wife used to come to us with their son and daughter, the daughter's name was Malwina, I remember playing with her, and the son's name was probably Henryk. They were very rich and left the country on their own plane at the beginning of the war. I think later they lived in the States. That's all I know.

Just before the war I spent two weeks in Nowy Sacz [a city in southern Poland, about 80 km southeast of Cracow] at Irka Tepper's. Her father was the manager of a brickyard in Biegonice near Nowy Sacz; the owners of the brickyard were his parents-in-law. Just before the war Father came and took me to Zakopane. Recruits were already on trains, there was some drinking, some upsets already, he didn't want me to travel by myself, so he came to pick me up.

The entire family got together in Zakopane, my uncles, my parents. And they deliberated on what to do. They packed trunks with bedding, dishes, some things from the boarding house. They sent it in trunks to Cracow, but everything got lost on the way. And they decided not to leave their parents in Zakopane, because Zakopane was near the border. They took Grandma to Warsaw, and Grandpa to Cracow. During that time the other Grandpa, Grandpa Zipper, lived with us, because in June, before the war, Grandma [Zipper] died and their apartment was liquidated. I lost my bedroom, both my grandparents lived there.

A day or two before the war my father headed east, because he was a reserve officer and was drafted into the army 13. When the war broke out, bombings began, we were running down to the basement etc. I remember a few days like that.

I also have to tell you about the dream I had at the beginning of the war. I had a dream that I'm lying down on a white bed with a net, clean, soft, I'm in the middle, and around me in the room, in the apartment on Dietla Street, orthodox Jews are packing some parcels, paper, boxes, ropes, some great commotion around me, and my bed like an oasis. And it was a prophetic dream, that I would survive the war.

On the third or fourth day of the war Mom and I left. There were no trains then yet. We met with Mrs. Mamber, my mom's friend from school who used to write for IKC. She was a baptized Jew [i.e., she changed her faith]. She was with her son, daughter and husband, and we got a cart and a horse together. The daughter of Dr. Leinkram, Maryla, also came with us. She was very close to my mom; she was three years younger than me. First we walked to Wieliczka [town about 30 km east from Cracow], we spent the night there, and later began escaping east on that cart. And it was a great adventure, with shooting, running away, jumping out. Mrs. Mamber was very fat and when she had to jump off during the bombing, she would jump off that cart very quickly, but when she was to get back on it again, we had to lift her up. We slept in barns on the way. The further east we got, the poorer the country was getting. Near Cracow, for example washrooms were normal, had four walls, and the further we got, the fewer walls they had, and in the end we had to go to a cowshed where animals lived.

We were heading towards Rawa Ruska [a town about 250 km east of Cracow, today in Ukraine]. I remember one place to sleep in a poor shack, where they made Russian dumplings. They only had flour, water and potatoes, they didn't even have salt. I remember those shacks, where there were horrible flies, we had to fan ourselves with branches, as we couldn't stand it otherwise. Mrs. Mamber's little dog also came with us, he was white and well taken care of at first, but later was covered with leaves because he got dirty in those barns.

I remember it as an adventure, although it wasn't fun on the way, they would shoot very often, we kept seeing corpses, horse corpses, it was war. Then we got to the town Belz, the one from the song. [Editor's note: 'Mayn Shtetele Belz/My little own Belz,', lyrics by Agnieszka Osiecka; a town about 250 km east of Cracow, today in Ukraine]. It was absolutely incredible for me, complete exotics. A market consisting of houses 1.5 meters wide, where there was only a store, a hallway and one room. In windows girls with long black hair in disarray. They were selling garlic cakes on the market, there was a tzaddik's house on another street... And we learned there that the Russian army had entered Poland 14, so we turned back. The Mambers' son kept going east. I have no idea if they survived.

So we returned to Cracow. Both my grandfathers and the servant had stayed in the Cracow apartment. I decided then I would never leave my grandfathers again. Despite the fact that Mom and I got an invitation from Uncle Harry from America, so we could have left through Switzerland. But I decided I wouldn't leave my grandfathers. And I never regretted it because they fortunately died natural deaths.

I took a medical course then. It was organized by doctors from the Jewish hospital in Kazimierz 15. There's still a hospital there in the same place today. It's not called 'Jewish hospital' anymore, naturally. [The pre-war Jewish Hospital on Skawinska Street, today the hospital of the Collegium Medicum of Jagiellonian University]. I remember the doctor told us nobody got sick from being cold, that it's germs. Then we had practice in the hospital, they told us to wash some men beaten up by Germans. I went together with a friend, two of us, because we were afraid. I didn't know what a naked man looked like, and we were ashamed. It was an old, dirty Jew that we washed. The course lasted two or three months. You simply had to have some qualifications. Anything.

Later our district was turned into a German district and we had to get ready to move. The Germans kept coming to the apartment and taking things away. We started moving things from the apartment to our non-Jewish friends, a Persian carpet, some paintings, but we didn't manage to take a lot. One day they [the Germans] came and ordered us to leave. We lived at the Leinkrams' for some time, they had a big apartment. We got parceled out there, the four of us, into various walk-through rooms.

The situation was that their older daughter Irena had a fiancé, they studied medicine together. They also went east, both of them. They were arrested, he was suspected to be a spy. He was probably killed. She came back to Cracow disconsolate, she had always been a fat girl, but then she lost twenty-something kilograms. And the loss of her fiancé had such an effect on her that she would become very angry at everything.

We ran the household together. There was a servant. There was also Irena's dog, she used to ostentatiously give him the best pieces, when it was very difficult to get any food. Overall she was acting very provocatively towards the entire family. I remember some quarrel when they cursed us

along the lines that we wouldn't survive the war. Well, but we survived and they didn't. That's what happened. We lived there for a few months. I was taking a dressmaking course then.

What was happening to the family in Warsaw then? Grandma Rumeld was already dead. When she died, Marta and Cesia, both daughters-in-law, were with her. Uncle Stefan Rumeld went east in September 1939 when they were calling men to leave Warsaw, and Karol Rumeld was drafted into the army, was in captivity, but managed to escape. Marta went to him to Lwow. In the meantime I was in Warsaw at my aunt Cesia's [Uncle Stefan Rumeld's wife]. I went there to see whether we should move to Warsaw with the family.

I took some things with me, I remember that my favorite bicycle got lost in transport... but I didn't decide, fortunately, to bring the family along. I went there in 1940, before the closing of the ghetto, but they were already building the walls. There were armbands 16. After the German-Russian war broke out 17 Uncle Stefan returned to his wife Cesia to the Warsaw ghetto. Karol and Marta also returned to Warsaw. They had some papers 18 and didn't live in the ghetto, but outside.

At Cesia's I lived with her parents on Elektoralna Street. They didn't have any jobs then. Her mother sat all day and would copy books. She was a woman who never worked, very rich, apparently she was looking for some kind of activity. She would sit at a desk and practice calligraphy, copying books. I met with my friends then, those Glicksbergs, Jas and Jerzyk. They took me out of Warsaw one day, to their summer home in Skolimow.

I took my high school exams in Warsaw. Those were secret classes organized in the Mirlas high school where Cesia taught. But I didn't go to those classes regularly, just studied a bit with my aunt and passed the exams. Why did I decide to go back to Cracow? I don't know, maybe I was afraid of the ghetto? It's hard for me now to describe my feelings from that time.

When I returned to Cracow, we found an apartment in our old area, on Falata Street, and we lived there for some time, but the Germans used to come there as well to take away whatever they could from the apartment. Later we lived together with some other Jewish family. Until we left Cracow.

There was a young man in that family, he used to make some springs for some device, and he hired me to do that. We worked at home, in the kitchen. I remember he proposed to me, he promised he would send us all to the countryside, but I didn't like him and had no intention to marry him. When I finished the dressmaking course, I started working for Zosia Minder, or rather for her 'girl' [help] on Grodzka Street. All that was happening at the end of 1940.

In the meantime we lost all our sources of income. My grandfather, who had a shipping company and was a wealthy man, had a partner. The partner was wise enough to take all his money from the company's account, but my grandpa left his share. Germans gave the business to a Treuhänder 19, the money was taken away and we were left with no means. Father wasn't there. We started selling whatever we had.

When they started creating a ghetto in Cracow, you had to have money to rent an apartment there. And if you didn't, you went to a place where they put a crowd of people in 20. We didn't feel like doing that, so we decided to leave. There were such trains on ramps which went in unknown directions, not to concentration camps then yet. And we signed up, packed our things, and took a

horse carriage to go to that ramp, and they put us on that train 21. We rode for two days and two nights, and we got to Miedzyrzec Podlaski [town about 150 km east of Warsaw] where they unloaded us in some lice-ridden synagogue. Typhus raged.

Miedzyrzec Podlaski was a town where the majority of the residents were Jews. Jews who lived there didn't speak Polish. We were completely exotic to them; they hadn't seen Jews like us before. They were almost hostile towards us. We left our grandfathers in the synagogue, and went to look for an apartment, but the Jews didn't want to rent us one. Because we didn't speak Yiddish. Even Poles there spoke Yiddish. In the end we rented an apartment from Poles, on Polna Street, almost a rural area. A large room which we divided with a wardrobe. My grandfathers were behind the wardrobe, we were in front of it. There were glass doors, a few steps and an exit to the outside. And next to us, two houses further, there was a pig slaughterhouse, a secret slaughterhouse, those animals were squealing all the time.

In Miedzyrzec there was a Schlager, as they used to call him, walking the streets, he was a German who knew Polish, Ukrainian, he used to go to some Jewish family in evenings and played the violin there. He even had a Jewish girlfriend. But he would get up in the morning, go out with his dog, and had to kill a Jew, always before breakfast, so that he would have a good appetite.

I slept with Mom in one bed, next to the door. One day I woke up, and there's a dog's mouth right next to the bed and there's Schlager standing, and another German next to him. He liked pretty girls and I was pretty. I was wearing Mom's wedding ring on my hand, I wore it to sell it. He asked, 'Verheiratet?', that is, if I was married. I asked, 'Mom, what does it mean?' And Mom didn't hear. And he somehow got upset and they left, didn't do anything to me. It was a miracle.

Grandfather Zipper, who was 80, worked until the war. But he got sick in Miedzyrzec, he had uremia. There was a doctor, but it wasn't proper treatment, because there were no medications, no tests, and he died, rather quickly. A weird thing happened: he was lying there in agony, and the housekeeper, at whose house we were staying, came in to ask how Grandpa was doing. We were standing at that glass door, and all of a sudden the glass broke. It was November, freezing temperatures. And he died then, at that very moment. I don't believe in miracles, but that's how it was.

My father came to us from Lwow after the German-Russian war broke out [in June 1941]. It was a couple of days after the death of his father, in November. Because he had some money, he said, 'We must move, we have to find a different place.' That's what saved us, because we were easily visible there, you entered the room directly from the street. We found a room with a kitchen at a local bailiff's, the Wieliczkos', a house in an annex, on Warszawska Street. We weren't there for long, because the Germans took over the front houses and we had to give up our room and the kitchen to the tenants from the front. However, they didn't kick us out, but gave us a small room in the attic.

There were the four of us then: I, my parents, and Grandpa Rumeld, also severely sick. He was dying very quietly, calmly, slowly; my mom took care of him herself. I worked in the garden of the Wieliczkos', and thanks to that I had dinners there. A humpbacked man lived there, his name was Mr. Chojecki. Mr. Chojecki had an application office, but didn't know German, and my father knew German very well, so he used to write those applications for him, and also made some money.

When my father came, he wouldn't go out, he wouldn't put the armband on, in fact, only my mom was going out then. Once she had an incident with that Schlager, because she bought bread in a bakery where Jews weren't supposed to be buying, and his dogs attacked her, knocked her down, but he didn't kill her. They couldn't make a ghetto in Miedzyrzec, because the majority of the residents were Jewish, so they began raids after Jews. [Editor's note: In 1940, a ghetto was created in Miedzyrzec.] They took people away on trains.

They didn't like us, those Jews, but we did manage to make friends with some of them. My mom became friends with one family, whose name was Hausman or Hausner. I learned only one sentence in Yiddish. Because there were very many beggars there, whom we usually didn't give anything to, because we had nothing. And the sentence was: 'Hab gurnisht wus tzu geben' – I've got nothing to give. And my mom went to the market and wanted to buy vegetables. That Jew told her she wouldn't sell her anything if Mom didn't speak Yiddish. Mom asked her what 'a carrot' was in Yiddish. 'A markhevke' [Translator's note: 'marchewka' means 'a carrot' in Polish, the last letter was changed from 'a' to 'e' to make it sound 'more Yiddish.'] There were funny stories like that.

I had a few friends among Jews who spoke Polish. There was Chajcia [diminutive for Chaje] Wiernicka, very beautiful, but she had a scar on the cheek, once a monkey at a zoo scratched her. They had a photo shop. Chajcia had tendencies towards the Germans. The Germans took over that shop, and she lived with one of them. There was also Stenia [diminutive for Stefania], who had a Polish fiancé, and Ideska, but I don't remember their last names.

Miedzyrzec was a town of bristle, there were a few brush factories. Germans took those factories over, but the manager was a Jew, the former owner. They kept him in this position as a specialist. And my Jewish friends got a job there. Who was hired depended on that Jew, and my mom went to ask him to hire me as well. But she behaved somehow inappropriately, didn't know when it was Saturday or something. He didn't hire me and this saved my life. Because my friends, who were making very good money in that factory, were all taken to Majdanek 22 one day. Chajcia Wiernicka had a relationship with a German, a German prisoner there in the camp. Chajcia died in Majdanek.

And there was a huge raid, they went through literally all houses [searching for Jews hiding from the deportations]. We had that one room, and next to it there was a passageway to the attic. We went to hide there, only had a bucket for excrements, and sat there all day, nobody betrayed us. A religious family of a Jewish shoemaker lived in our house, they were all taken away, they had a few kids. Our housekeepers took their things. But no one gave us away, a hunchbacked servant took that bucket to empty it, brought us some water to drink. And we survived that first raid.

In that house, apart from the house owners, there lived two boys, Polish, who worked as drivers in the Todt organization 23. There was the housekeepers' son, the housekeepers' daughter, and there was a girl with the family who lived in that room with the kitchen we had lived in. A group of young people, we used to hang out together, we even danced. I was the only Jew in that group.

One day Father said we had to go to Warsaw in order to survive. He talked to those boys from the Todt organization, took a nice pre-war suitcase as a present and went to their manager, said he's an army officer – he didn't say he was a Jew – and had a Jewish wife… Todt trucks used to go to Warsaw. It was dangerous on trains. Father asked if they would allow his daughter to go to Warsaw. And that manager agreed. I had some papers that Father brought for me. There was an incorrect date of birth, because Father forgot when his daughter was born, he made me two years

older. He didn't change the last name... all in all, those weren't good papers [i.e., they didn't look credible and authentic].

I went to Warsaw with that and I had the address of Dr. Kanabus on Krasinskiego Street. Her husband was a surgeon and did surgeries on Jews' foreskin during the war 24. They were friends with my uncle Karol. When I got off that truck and got on a tram, I had only one piece of luggage with me, and those were all my belongings. I went to the apartment, Dr. Kanabus wasn't there, but her mother was, Dr. Budzielewicz. Later Marta [Uncle Karol's wife] came for me. They put me up in an apartment on Suzina Street in Zoliborz [district of Warsaw, on the western bank of the Vistula River].

There were two sisters, communists, who had the same husband in turn. He divorced one of them, married the other, had a son with her, and they all lived together. Their last name was Imach. One of the sisters was Olga Imach; I don't remember the first name of the other one. That husband wasn't there then, he was in the east with his communist friends, and I spent a few days there.

Later they produced some documents for me, and moved me to Grochow [a district of Warsaw, on the eastern bank of the Vistula River], where I stayed at Mr. and Mrs. Skolimowski's. He was also a communist, who was active in the AK 25. They had three children, three little daughters, and I helped his wife with the house chores, never leaving the house.

In the meantime my parents also came to Warsaw, even though Uncle Karol didn't want that. They were also placed with the Imach sisters [Editor's note: the Imach sisters knew that Jews lived with them]. My parents got papers in the name Zaremba, they didn't learn the new data well when they got arrested, but those were good papers. My last name was then Zaczynska, Maria Zaczynska, and they were Ludwik and Anna Zaremba. Those were good papers because they were confirmed by the village administrator of the commune of Czestocice, who, in case someone would ask about them, would confirm their authenticity.

So we all ended up in Warsaw in 1942, in the fall. But I saw my parents only after the war. When they were placed on Suzina Street, I was already in Grochow. Wide arrests were carried out in Zoliborz. Those Imach sisters were so stupid that when they sent a package to some partisans, they wrote who the sender was. That parcel was found on some partisan and they [the Germans] already had them. The Germans came to their apartment. It was the ground floor, my parents jumped out of the window, but the house was surrounded and that didn't help. They were arrested. One of the sisters wasn't at home then and that's how she survived. Only Olga and my parents were arrested.

They took them to Pawiak 26. Olga Imach was so stupid that she told everyone in their cell that my mother was Jewish. But in the cell there were only very cultured ladies, most belonged to the conspiracy [Polish Underground], and they hushed Olga up. And they didn't let her talk about it anymore. My parents were never interrogated, because they were arrested by accident, in a way, in that apartment, as the main suspect was Olga Imach. But they didn't let them go. Maybe, if we had had money, we could have bought them out, but there was no money, besides it turned out it was better that they remained in a camp [they were moved from Pawiak to the camp in Majdanek, as Poles], and we don't know if they would have survived in Warsaw.

In Majdanek my mom worked at the food distribution for Jews, she saw horrible things there. And Father came down with the spotted typhus. And there was, for example, prince Radziwill [a member of a well known Polish aristocratic family] with Father, who used to get great parcels and shared them with prisoners. Besides Father knew German and was a so-called Schreiber [German for writer] on the block, thanks to that he managed somehow. My mom also knew German, but because she was almost deaf, she couldn't deal with such things. She survived by being very inconspicuous.

Later Father was moved to Gross-Rosen 27, and then from Gross-Rosen they rushed them on foot to Bergen-Belsen 28, where there were burning pyres of corpses. My Father witnessed the following incident there: some Russian cut off a piece of human meat and started eating it. The Germans saw it and threw him onto that pyre, he was burned alive. And my father worked there [volunteered] on removing corpses, because he used to get an additional piece of bread for it. Those corpses usually had no ears, the ears were eaten by neighbors lying in the hospital, because they were the easiest to cut off. Father was gravely sick in Bergen-Belsen, they all had dysentery, because after the war the Americans gave them canned food, people rushed at it, and they began to get very sick, and die.

My mother was moved to a branch of Ravensbrück 29, Genthin 30, it was called a labor camp, but of course it was a concentration camp. She worked there in a weapons factory, but had a very good manager. Once they even took mom there in the camp to a dentist and put a filling in her tooth. The German dentists admired how nicely she had a bridge done by a Jewish dentist from Cracow.

And me? Well, first I was at Mr. and Mrs. Skolimowski's. I was there when I found out about the arrest of my parents, Helena Plotnicka told me about it. She was a communist activist, who was friends with my uncle [Karol]. A wonderful woman, who took care of me, protected me during the occupation. She put me up in several places. Later I lived in Czerniakow [a district of Warsaw]. My last name was still Zaczynska, later I changed it several times.

I joined the AL 31, because I simply had such a contact. Plotnicka was that contact. I belonged to an AL group in Wola [a district of Warsaw], on 53 Wolska Street. We had meetings there, learned to use weapons, got leaflets to distribute and so on. And they taught us about the ideology of the AL. I was excited about it then, because I was unaware.

I lived in Czerniakow and met my boyfriend there, Tadeusz. It was very funny, because when he saw me, he started singing the following song: 'I know nothing about you, where the wind brought you from, I don't know your virtues, I don't know your faults, I know only one thing, and I want to know one thing, what you did with my heart.' Our affection began. He was in the AK, I was in the AL, when I was posting up leaflets on houses, he would come with me to protect me; later he helped me move to another house.

I had a couple of pictures on me, and on one picture, from my school friend Marysia Zemlik, there was written: 'To dear Zipperek – Marysia' ['Zipperek' - diminutive of the maiden name of Mrs. Maria Ziemna: Zipper]. The housekeeper of the house I lived in apparently went through my things when I was away and saw the picture, and told Tadeusz. He repeated it to me, I confessed who I was, and cut that caption off [the picture].

He came from a simple family, his parents were illiterate. He finished the Wawelberg high school and worked as a driver before the war. He was a couple years older than me. During the occupation he was taken to Krolewiec [Koenigsberg, ca. 300 km north of Warsaw, today Kaliningrad, Russia]. He was a huge strong man, and he came back from Krolewiec hooked up under a train car in very cold weather, minus40 degrees Celsius.

In 1943, during the uprising in the ghetto 32, I was still with Tadeusz. I remember one incident: we went to the Vistula River, and there was an exit of a canal from the ghetto. There were lots of Hebrew or Yiddish magazines, and a military policeman stood there, waiting for someone to come out 33. Tadeusz wasn't bothered by my origin, and I was even nasty, I blackmailed him. When I had a fight with him, I told him I would go up to a German and tell him who I was.

Later I moved to an apartment on Radna Street, where I rented a walk-through room. For some time I worked for a dressmaker on Szara Street. Everybody in that family was dark-haired, very similar to Jews. That dressmaker sewed a lot for the Germans, a German woman would bring her fabric to make two blouses, she'd make two, and a third one for herself. And once a cousin came to that dressmaker, a black-haired boy with black eyes and said to me, 'You look like a Jewish woman.' That was a death sentence then, but I asked, 'Like a pretty one?' And that was that.

Later I got a job on the corner of Zytnia and Mlynarska, making clogs. The clog factory was organizationally connected to the AL on Wolska Street. I was earning very well there, but didn't work there long. I'll tell you why. There, on Wolska Street, the owner of the apartment had a daughter, Halina, who belonged to the organization [AL]. 1st of July is my birthday, but also the name-day of Halina. Halina decided to organize a party for our group, but I wasn't invited. At night, during the party, they got arrested. They found weapons, they found leaflets. No one out of that group returned. They were taken to Auschwitz, maybe some of them were killed immediately.

In any case, Halina had my address written down. I lived on Radna then. I didn't have a Kennkarte 34 yet, I had only started applying for it. The owner at work wanted to get rid of me, so he took advantage of the situation. At home the housekeeper said that an agent was looking for me. Fredek came with a friend, moved me to Marta and Karol's. Fredek was a Jew, a young man from Sambor [today Ukraine], who came from there with Karol after the Germans took over the town. He later died in a partisan unit.

Marta and Karol lived on Kozminska Street then, in a German house, they had a large room and a kitchen in the attic. Marta worked in a German kitchen on the corner of Gornoslaska and Rozbrat streets, where there was a school for German children and a kitchen for German teachers. Uncle [Karol] was with her, because he was also hiding. Another Jewish woman lived with them, Tekla Turczak. She had Ukrainian papers. I don't remember what her real name was. She came to Warsaw from a village near Lwow.

For some time I wasn't allowed to leave the house. And I never saw Tadeusz again. They never allowed Tadeusz to come to me, and I didn't know how to fight for it, I was too passive. I also didn't want to endanger them. He died before the Warsaw uprising 35. One day Tekla saw his name on a list of people to be executed.

Then the Warsaw uprising began. Before the uprising the school principal handed us the key to her apartment on Gornoslaska Street, so that we would look after it. And she left, just like all the

German civilians. There were food reserves in the kitchen we worked in. We gave it to our boys – Marta also belonged to the AL then. Marta was summoned to the Old Town and I stayed with Tekla. Several months before the uprising Plotnicka sent Uncle Karol east, near Chelm, to her brother's property. Because my uncle had gotten caught once on a street, by a szmalcownik 36.

During the first days of the uprising, cows were hitting. [Editor's note: high-explosive shells which made sounds resembling the 'mooing' of a cow, and were, therefore, called 'cows.'] A cow hit our attic and flew out the window. The attic caught fire, and I picked up a sack with sand, [so heavy] that I normally wouldn't be able to lift it, and carried it upstairs to the attic, and we put the fire out together, because that cow only went through and flew farther. I could tell you about thousands of incidents like that from the entire war period, when I was close to death, but apparently I wasn't meant to die.

Later Tekla was taken away by the Germans. She was in some house on Gornoslaska, which the Germans had just seized. They took her somewhere to Lower Silesia, I don't remember what that camp was called. [Tekla survived the camp on Aryan papers, as a Ukrainian.]

One day partisans from Radoslaw [AK group 'Radoslaw'] came to my apartment. There was a Jewish woman with them, saved from the ghetto, from that factory 37. She was probably in close relations with the commander of that unit. He asked me to give her some clothes. I told them to take whatever they wanted, those were Marta's things and I wasn't allowed to dispose of them.

I met another girl that lived in the same house as me then, on Kozminska Street, she was a servant at some German's. Also a Jew who was in hiding. She gave me the address of her family in Lublin, said that maybe we'd meet there after the war. But I don't remember her first or last name. I wanted to get over to the other side of the Vistula, because I knew that if I got to a German camp, I wouldn't survive for certain.

I ran towards the Vistula. On the way there, in some ruined house, I met a member of the AK, who had a bullet in his head. There was no blood, the bullet was stuck in the head, he said he couldn't see anything, he had gone blind from it. I had a first-aid kit, but I was afraid to take out that bullet, I only dressed the wound. I had to leave him, and kept on going, to the Vistula.

I was waiting near the Vistula for about two days; it was the end of September. I knew I wouldn't get on any boat, because I didn't have money. I decided to swim across. It was the 20th or 21st of September, low level of water, 52 cm – I checked it in a calendar of the Warsaw Uprising, in 2005 – in the middle of the river there was a ford, so that you could walk a little. But that wouldn't help the situation, because the river was lit with flares and shot at with machine guns, so you had to hide your head under the water.

I undressed down to my underwear, beside me there was a member of the AK who was also undressing; we were to swim together. I had some oil with me then, we put it on, because the water was cold. We started swimming in the evening. I tied a scarf on my head with pictures and the Kennkarte. I didn't even take the money I had in my purse, because I thought it wouldn't be valid over there. I had a really beautiful necklace that I could have put on my neck, but I also didn't take it. That man swam poorly, I helped him a little, pushed him there, and somehow he swam. When we got to the other side, we ran across a patrol boat and they told us, 'Get on, get on'. It was dark already 38.

The led us to a villa in Saska Kepa [district of Warsaw on the eastern side of the Vistula River], where the command was. The commander was a Russian, he had a Polish last name and that's why he was placed in the Polish army, the way it was then. Two more men from the AK swam over and they were naïve enough to admit they were from the AK. They immediately took them to a different unit, I don't know if they deported them or not.

I was aware of the situation and told them I was a private person, a Jew who wanted to save herself. They left me, put me in a basement, and tried to make a pass at me there, but fortunately not aggressively. They gave me vodka to drink. I was wearing only a bra, a shirt, underwear, and a scarf on my head. On the next day they brought me a suitcase with things, so that I could pick something. I got dressed in some smart suit, and I also found some shoes. They also gave me some useless stuff, a pillowcase or something, and they let me go free.

So, off I went. I found an army hospital. I had my false Kennkarte on me. A doctor came, I asked if he could hire me as a nurse. 'What's your name?' I said, 'I can show you my Kennkarte, my name is such and such, but it's a false Kennkarte, because I'm a Jew.' 'Oh, we don't need Jews here.' And from then on I knew I couldn't confess my origin. That's why I was hiding for many years, only recently I opened up.

Then I got on some truck and they took me to Anin [during the war a town near Warsaw on the east bank of the Vistula, today within the city limits]. In Anin there was also an army hospital, there were Polish, Ukrainian, Jewish women, a mixed group, sisters nurses, who took care of me. I had a fever, I had a cold. They took me to a bath where I washed myself for the first time since the uprising. When I got better, they gave me a permit and put me on a truck that went to Lublin 39.

In Lublin I went to the address I had gotten from that girl during the uprising. She never made it to Lublin, probably died during the uprising, but they accepted me. Later I went to the Fighting Youth Union 40, they directed me to work at the Milicja [Polish post-war police] Main Headquarters. I was housed with two sisters, the Telatycka sisters, Poles, who worked there as well. We had a cold room, they had a bed and sheets they brought from a village, I only had a greatcoat, one pair of underwear. Winter came. They infected me with scabies, because they used to go to various shady pubs to meet with soldiers. To cure scabies, when you have no hot water, no bedding, no change of underwear, that's torture. In the Milicja I worked in the personnel department, I was a clerk.

Together with the Main Headquarters I moved to Warsaw in March 1945. I was assigned an apartment on Jaworzynska Street. After some time Tekla showed up. I took her in and recommended her to work in the headquarters. I had no news about my parents. Then I decided to go to an officers' school in Lodz. When I was at school, my mother returned. She found me through friends from Zoliborz. One day I had a surprise: the Milicja brought my mother. She spent one night with me and then went back to my apartment on Jaworzynska Street.

I was in Lodz when the war ended; they were firing their guns out of joy and so on. There were celebrations and parties there because of the end of the school year, Tekla and a few people from the headquarters came over.

Tekla came from a very religious Jewish home, and couldn't even imagine having a boyfriend other than a Jewish one. In Lodz she met an officer, a Jew, and they had a closer relationship which ended tragically for her. A very uncommon thing, during their first sexual encounter Tekla got a

blood infection.

She was in hospital. I went to visit her every other day. But I wasn't there till the end. That's the huge mistake of my life, and my mother couldn't help me. The last two days I didn't go to see Tekla. I went to Zakopane, because in the meantime my mother got our villa in Zakopane back. Tekla's funeral was organized by the headquarters, I will be regretting until the end of my life that I wasn't with her till the last moments.

At some point my father came back. After the war ended Father left the Bergen-Belsen camp and went to the town of Helmstadt [in Germany]. He went to a Polish mission there, and as a lawyer, became a defendant of Poles in German courts. The bank he used to work in before the war had its head office first in Vienna, then in Paris. Father got in touch with the head office in Paris and received an offer of work in a branch in Belgium. He wanted to get us over there, but I told him I didn't want to be a proletarian in a foreign country, I was that stupid. But I never wanted to leave Poland, and maybe I don't regret it, I'm not suited for emigration… And Father returned to us.

I joined the Party during that time, but my adventure with the party didn't last long, because I sobered up quickly 41. I left only in 1958, I couldn't do it earlier. [Editor's note: In the 1950s the political regime in Poland was particularly rigid.] When Father came back, I handed them my resignation and decided not to work for the Milicja anymore.

First I tried to get into a medical school, because I had dreamed about it all my life, but, fortunately, I didn't get in, even though I passed the exams. Now I think it was a good thing, but back then I cried over it. I met an acquaintance who told me the pre-war Higher School of Journalism was being re-opened, they got their building on Rozbrat Street back, would have pre-war professors and accept students without exams. So I went to the school of journalism and began my practice at PAP [Polish Press Agency].

In 1948 I married Aleksander Ziemny 42, a cousin of Jurek Minder. I had known Aleksander in my childhood, he was a pre-war acquaintance. He worked then [in 1948] for 'Przekroj' [a weekly illustrated magazine which has been published from 1945 in Cracow, currently published in Warsaw], after our wedding he moved to Warsaw, where he worked in several editorial offices. I won't talk more about it; it was a very unsuccessful marriage. I don't have a single good memory from those ten years.

After finishing university I didn't work for a while. In November 1948 my older daughter, Alina, was born, first we rented a room in a shared apartment on Zajaczka Street, later we got assigned a room with a kitchen on Dzielna Street. The second daughter, Malgorzata, was born in 1954. Before that, when I was still pregnant, we managed to get a larger apartment and moved to a house on Zjednoczenia Avenue.. This is where I have been living until this day.

After the divorce my husband first offered to give me 2,000 zlotys [a month], which at the beginning was quite a lot, but later was losing its value, but I never asked for more. It was hard financially, I often had to borrow money to make ends meet, but I tried not to borrow too much.

I worked in turn at 'Dokumentacja Prasowa' and 'Przyjaciolka' [a weekly women's magazine]. From Przyjaciolka I switched to the Polish Chamber of Foreign Trade, where I dealt with xerographic publication and one day I learned that 'Rynki Zagraniczne' [a magazine published by the Chamber]

needed a proof-reader. I went to the editor, there was a contest and I won.

In the Polish Chamber of Foreign Trade the work was such that you had to stamp a card, like in a factory, and after half a year I would get a letter from the human resources saying: ‘Citizen Ziemna was six minutes late over the period of six months.’ Later we would sit down and there would be nothing to do. The manager often told us to spread papers around so you couldn’t tell there was nothing to do. But when I started correcting ‘Rynki’ in the printing house of Kurier Polski, I felt good at work for the first time. Later I started working for Kurier Polski. I had two jobs at the same time. I also worked nightshifts in some other editorial offices, because I was already alone and had two children to raise. My parents, especially my mother, helped me to take care of the house and the children.

I also wanted to talk about my friend, Stella Katz. Stella is in Israel, if she’s still alive. She survived the war with her parents in Vilnius [today the capital of Lithuania]. They were an assimilated family, didn’t look particularly Jewish. After the war they went back to Cracow, her father’s sister survived there. When I had the first baby, Stella came to Warsaw for a few days, I saw her then. Her mother died of tuberculosis exactly when Stella was in Warsaw. Stella was infected with tuberculosis, she went to Lower Silesia [region in south-western Poland], to a Jewish therapeutic center, she met a Jewish boy there, from a simple Jewish family, whom she had a relationship with, and decided to go to Israel with him.

When she was leaving, we were living on Generala Zajaczka Street then, my Alinka [diminutive of Alina] was two years old, it was 1950. We walked Stella to the Gdansk Train Station and she wrote to us from Israel, and even sent my child oranges once. But Stella’s letters used to come to my mom’s address. Unfortunately, at the end of her life, my mom destroyed her [Stella’s] address and this is how I lost contact with Stella. I tried to find her through the association of Jews in Cracow, but somehow never managed to find her. I’ll never see her again… I simply don’t know how to find her.

In the meantime I was in the States visiting my American family. In 1961 I got an invitation and money for the trip. I sailed on the Batory [ship] to Montreal, and from there I took a plane to New York. In New York there was Cousin Stanley, my mom’s cousin, the son of Harry Herzman, my grandma’s brother. Together with Stanley I went to Mobile, where the last sister of my grandma [Antonina Rumeld,], Aunt Rozia [diminutive for Roza] lived. We arrived in Mobile a day after the death of her husband.

Aunt Rozia had had two husbands. Her older sister was in the States first. A brother of that older sister’s husband saw Rozia’s picture and asked to get her over to the States so that he could marry her. They brought her over as a young woman, she had that husband, she had two children with him. He died, she married again. The second husband adopted her children and she had four more children with him. I heard that second husband used to give her a rose every day – a rose for Roza [Translator’s note: Roza means ‘a rose’ in Polish]. She had several surgeries, she was sick very often, but she outlived him.

When I got there, I was very moved, because I saw some resemblance to my grandma. Rozia didn’t remember much, names of towns near Chocholow… She recalled Sucha Gora, where she served at a mansion. It was a very religious family, over there in Mobile they would bring very expensive kosher food from other cities. I remember that cousin George’s wife asked if my parents ate kosher

food in Majdanek. So I told her that my father even ate a cat once.

Later I went to Los Angeles, to a daughter of my mom's friend. I can't call her a friend really, because only our mothers were friends. Her name is Maria, maiden name Dawidowicz. Marysia [diminutive of Maria] had a Polish Jew for a husband, they were very well off, had two children. I spent three weeks there, but I didn't feel comfortable there. I went back to the country on a Polish ship. They were trying to talk me into staying, but I wouldn't have been able to go to the States and support the entire family, as simple as that.

When it comes to my parents, my father didn't want to go back to the job at the bank, because he kept saying that banks under communism aren't real banks. He worked at the Headquarters of Foreign Trade, at the end in the Ministry of Internal Trade.

My parents lived in a room on Czarnieckiego Street, but one day they got an apartment on Lisowska Street, a room with a kitchen. Earlier Uncle Karol convinced Mother to sell the villa in Zakopane. She had rented it out, to an orphanage, and they kept destroying it and didn't pay rent regularly. My uncle had a third wife, Hanna Panenko, maiden name Romer, and he wanted to have money for her. So they sold the villa.

So I'm reaching the end of my story. I worked hard at two jobs plus nightshifts, I was raising my children. My older daughter took up studies at the Warsaw Agricultural University, Faculty of Landscape Architecture. She passed the entrance exams with the highest marks, during the inauguration of the academic year she stood on a podium. My second daughter wasn't as good of a student. My ex-husband used to come to her, he became a good father and used to help her with her studies. I never forbade him to contact his daughters; he comes to visit his daughter until this day.

In 1970 my father died. He worked until he was 75. At the end of his work he had an accident, he was run over by a motorcycle, had a concussion, and after that he was never the way he used to be, he changed. When he died, he had been retired for two years. I have to tell you about his death, because it was the worst event in my life, even though I lived through so much death around me. I lost the closest people, but his death was a huge, sad experience.

We were on that day, 8th of February, at my mother's birthday. There was a dinner at my parents' and at the end of the dinner Father wanted to have some vodka with me. I said I didn't want any. Later I regretted it, because I thought that maybe if we had had some, then maybe he wouldn't have gotten that heart attack… Such a sudden death, it was horrible. And in 1971, a year after her grandfather's death, Alina went to France.

So my daughter Alina left thanks to $100 I got from the family in America. Alina knew French poorly. She was supposed to go only for a month, but she immediately found a job, first she packed some parcels for some Jew. She signed up for a language course at Alliance Francaise and at the end of the month she called to tell me she's not coming back. She didn't apply for refugee status because of us, because she didn't want to make it impossible for us to go abroad. Later she worked for a family with two children. Then she fell in love with a German, who, when he found out she was Jewish, backed out.

Alina learned French very quickly and found out there was a job in her profession: a garden designer, in Metz. She met her future husband there. An architect, 16 years older, divorced, who had two children, a son and a daughter. During that time he bought a house in a village near Metz, an old, ruined, maybe two-hundred-year-old country house, which he slowly renovated. My daughter saw his garden, overgrown with nettles as tall as a person and started working on the garden because it was her passion. And she stayed there. They got married, and she gave birth to a daughter, Julia.

Alina is still there, until now. They renovated the house beautifully in the meantime. When she was about to have her baby, I went there and painted the kitchen, I still had strength. Now Alina's husband is retired, and she has two rooms that she rents out. She takes care of the garden, makes preserves, attends to guests; she does all that by herself. After having the baby she never went back to her old job. She didn't like working for someone, she works hard for herself.

My second daughter, Malgorzata, was severely sick. First she had tuberculosis. She was in a resort. She was 18 when she came down with Crohn's disease. In the meantime she finished an optical school; she didn't go to a university, because she was sick. She started working as an optician. Thanks to the fact that she already worked, she got a disability pension, which she still receives now. Later I got her involved in proofreading.

I retired at the time of the martial law in Poland 43. Before that I belonged to Solidarnosc 44. During martial law, when the editorial offices started operating again, I used to substitute for absent employees and started working on proofreading books. This entire row of books [Mrs. Ziemna points at bookshelves in her room] that's the publisher Puls, my proofreading. [Editor's note: Puls was initially an underground publishing house] We also worked for the publisher Muza. Later Malgosia [diminutive of Malgorzata] got a job as a proofreader, now she works in the Academy of Fine Arts, in the dean's office.

My mother died in 1987, she was 91. Half a year before she died, she fell, and even though they claimed nothing was broken, she never got up again. Mother was very hard of hearing, after the war she got her first hearing aid from the United States, still crude and heavy. Later she had better hearing aids and she was very happy, she said she could hear the ticking of a clock for the first time in many years. But at the end of her life she couldn't really use the aid. Her mental abilities deteriorated, contact with her was very poor. The last half a year she lay in bed like a vegetable, she had nurses who took care of her.

My parents got baptized [converted to Catholicism] after the war. Not me. I considered it falsehood to accept a religion if I'm never to believe, right? It would be dishonest. So I didn't get baptized. But my parents were somewhat religious.

I baptized my children, so that they could take the first communion, so that they're not different. They found out they were Jewish very late, when they were grown up. From me? I'm not sure, I think it was actually my ex-husband who told them. When Alina was at school, when she was ten or twelve, some boy from the neighborhood, from the same floor, told her she was Jewish. She repeated it to me, and I told her: 'So tell him he's a Jew.'

I have a lot of friends, acquaintances, who I don't know whether they know that I'm a Jew. They don't ask, I don't volunteer the information, never. If somebody asks, I never lie, I always tell them

who I am. But, if they don't ask... Although, sometimes I'd like to talk about that.

Nowadays I don't go to those meetings much [in Jewish organizations in Warsaw], because I don't like them. I went a couple times to the Jewish Theater 45, once I went for a common meal to some cheder or something, but I didn't like it because it was very messy. But I work as a volunteer as a social help in the Jewish community. There are some people who call someone [someone older, requiring care]. My daughter Malgosia goes there more often, I am less mobile when it comes to walking.

Because I still like to swim, Malgosia and I started going to warm seas. We were in Spain, Greece, Crete and Rhodes, on Corfu, Tunisia, Sicily, and so on... We also went to Israel. First we visited Jerusalem, Yad Vashem 46, and so on, then we went to Eilat and spent time at the seaside. The last day we took a taxi to go sightseeing in Tel Aviv.

On the ship, during the trip, we met some Jews from Tunisia and from Russia, who were trying to talk us into moving to Israel. But when it comes to me, I wouldn't be able to live in Israel. Mainly because of the lack of greenery, it's a desert, you have to know how to live in a desert. And I can't imagine living there, among Jews only. I was never that attached to Judaism... I used to hide the fact that I'm Jewish for so many years... At the end of the occupation, in 1944, I had a dream that I was black. It's winter, I'm dressing up warmly to cover as much as possible. Stockings, a hat, gloves on my black hand... But what should I do with the face?

Glossary:

1 The Radziwill family
one of the oldest and largest Polish-Lithuanian aristocratic family lines, coat of arms Trumpet. The origin of the Radziwill family dates back to the 15th century, its protoplast was Krystyn Oscik, a dignitary from the circles of the great Lithuanian prince, Witold. His son, Radziwill Oscikowicz was the great Lithuanian marshal. The Radziwills performed most important state functions in the federal, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, administrative as well as military: they were chancellors, voivodes, Lithuanian hetmans. From the beginning of the 17th century the family was divided into two lines: connected to Birze and Nieswiez. In the 19th century a part of the family settled in central and western Poland, still playing an important political role. In the inter-war years the Radziwills were leaders of conservative parties: Janusz in Poland, Konstanty in Lithuania. Representatives of the family are still alive today.

2 KuK (Kaiserlich und Königlich) army
The name 'Imperial and Royal' was used for the army of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, as well as for other state institutions of the Monarchy originated from the dual political system. Following the Compromise of 1867, which established the Dual Monarchy, Austrian emperor and Hungarian King Franz Joseph was the head of the state and also commander-in-chief of the army. Hence the name 'Imperial and Royal'.

3 Jagiellonian University

In Polish 'Uniwersytet Jagiellonski,' it is the university of Cracow, founded in 1364 by Casimir III of Poland and which has maintained high level learning ever since. In the 19th century the university was named Jagiellonian to commemorate the dynasty of Polish kings. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jagellonian_University)

4 Italian front, 1915-1918

Also known as Isonzo front. Isonzo (Soca) is an alpine river today in Slovenia, which ran parallel with the pre-World War I Austro-Hungarian and Italian border. During World War I Italy was primarily interested in capturing the ethnic Italian parts of Austria-Hungary (Trieste, Fiume, Istria and some of the islands) as well as the Adriatic littoral. The Italian army tried to enter Austria-Hungary via the Isonzo River, but the Austro-Hungarian army was dug in alongside the river. After 18 months of continuous fighting without any territorial gain, the Austro-Hungarian army finally succeeded to enter Italian territory in October 1917.

5 Warsaw Ghetto

A separate residential district for Jews in Warsaw created over several months in 1940. On 16th November 1940 138,000 people were enclosed behind its walls. Over the following months the population of the ghetto increased as more people were relocated from the small towns surrounding the city. By March 1941 445,000 people were living in the ghetto. Subsequently, the number of the ghetto's inhabitants began to fall sharply as a result of disease, hunger, deportation, persecution and liquidation. The ghetto was also systematically reduced in size. The internal administrative body was the Jewish Council (Judenrat). The Warsaw ghetto ceased to exist on 15th May 1943, when the Germans pronounced the failure of the uprising, staged by the Jewish soldiers, and razed the area to the ground.

6 Ilustrowany Kurier Codzienny [Daily Illustrated Courier]

a daily informative-political newspaper published in Cracow in the years 1910-1939. The founder and chief editor throughout the entire existence of the newspaper was Marian Dabrowski. IKC politically represented the center, after 1926 – it was pro-government. Since the 1920s it was the most popular paper in Poland, with a circulation of 150,000copies. It appeared in the entire country, had 12 local branches in, among others, Warsaw, Poznan, Katowice, Vilnius. IKC had many regular supplements. The most famous was the Sunday supplement Kurier Literacko-Naukowy [Literary-Scientific Courier], which featured distinguished Polish writers of the 20 inter-war years, among others, Jerzy Andrzejewski, Jozef Czechowicz, Maria Pawlikowska-Jasnorzewska.

7 Wiadomosci Literackie [Literary News]

a weekly cultural-literary magazine published in Poland in the years 1924-1939. The founder and chief editor was Mieczyslaw Grydzewski. Almost all distinguished Polish writers of the 20 inter-war years published in it. It was an opinion-forming magazine, reaching many readers, shaping the literary tastes of a wide audience. Journalist campaigns, for example against censorship were carried out in its columns. Every year the magazine awarded its own literary award. It published 36 special issues about great Polish writers, such as Mickiewicz, Slowacki, Prus, Staff, Zeromski. Since 1930 Wiadomosci Literackie was also a social magazine: reportage and literary criticism sections

were introduced. It had a democratic-liberal character. After the war broke out Grydzewski emigrated to London where he published a magazine under the title of Wiadomosci, referring to the tradition of Wiadomosci Literackie.

8 Karlovy Vary (German name
Karlsbad): The most famous Bohemian spa, named after Bohemian King Charles (Karel) IV, who allegedly found the springs during a hunting expedition in 1358. It was one of the most popular resorts among the royalty and aristocracy in Europe for centuries.

9 Pilsudski, Jozef (1867-1935)
Polish activist in the independence cause, politician, statesman, marshal. With regard to the cause of Polish independence he represented the pro-Austrian current, which believed that the Polish state would be reconstructed with the assistance of Austria-Hungary. When Poland regained its independence in January 1919, he was elected Head of State by the Legislative Sejm. In March 1920 he was nominated marshal, and until December 1922 he held the positions of Head of State and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army. After the murder of the president, Gabriel Narutowicz, he resigned from all his posts and withdrew from politics. He returned in 1926 in a political coup. He refused the presidency offered to him, and in the new government held the posts of war minister and general inspector of the armed forces. He was prime minister twice, from 1926-1928 and in 1930. He worked to create a system of national security by concluding bilateral non-aggression pacts with the USSR (1932) and Germany (1934). He sought opportunities to conclude firm alliances with France and Britain. In 1932, owing to his deteriorating health, Pilsudski resigned from his functions. He was buried in the Crypt of Honor in the Wawel Cathedral of the Royal Castle in Cracow.

10 Bolsheviks
Members of the movement led by Lenin. The name 'Bolshevik' was coined in 1903 and denoted the group that emerged in elections to the key bodies in the Social Democratic Party (SDPRR) considering itself in the majority (Rus. bolshynstvo) within the party. It dubbed its opponents the minority (Rus. menshynstvo, the Mensheviks). Until 1906 the two groups formed one party. The Bolsheviks first gained popularity and support in society during the 1905-07 Revolution. During the February Revolution in 1917 the Bolsheviks were initially in the opposition to the Menshevik and SR ('Sotsialrevolyutsionyery', Socialist Revolutionaries) delegates who controlled the Soviets (councils). When Lenin returned from emigration (16th April) they proclaimed his program of action (the April theses) and under the slogan 'All power to the Soviets' began to Bolshevize the Soviets and prepare for a proletariat revolution. Agitation proceeded on a vast scale, especially in the army. The Bolsheviks set about creating their own armed forces, the Red Guard. Having overthrown the Provisional Government, they created a government with the support of the II Congress of Soviets (the October Revolution), to which they admitted some left-wing SRs in order to gain the support of the peasantry. In 1952 the Bolshevik party was renamed the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

11 Galicia

Informal name for the lands of the former Polish Republic under Habsburg rule (1772-1918), derived from the official name bestowed on these lands by Austria: the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria. From 1815 the lands west of the river San (including Krakow) began by common consent to be called Western Galicia, and the remaining part (including Lemberg), with its dominant Ukrainian population Eastern Galicia. Galicia was agricultural territory, an economically backward region. Its villages were poor and overcrowded (hence the term 'Galician misery'), which, given the low level of industrial development (on the whole processing of agricultural and crude-oil based products) prompted mass economic emigration from the 1890s; mainly to the Americas. After 1918 the name Eastern Malopolska for Eastern Galicia was popularized in Poland, but Ukrainians called it Western Ukraine.

12 Zbaszyn Camp

From October 1938 until the spring of 1939 there was a camp in Zbaszyn for Polish Jews resettled from the Third Reich. The German government, anticipating the act passed by the Polish Sejm (Parliament) depriving people who had been out of the country for more than 5 years of their citizenship, deported over 20,000 Polish Jews, some 6,000 of whom were sent to Zbaszyn. As the Polish border police did not want to let them into Poland, these people were trapped in the strip of no-man's land, without shelter, water or food. After a few days they were resettled to a temporary camp on the Polish side, where they spent several months. Jewish communities in Poland organized aid for the victims; families took in relatives, and Joint also provided assistance.

13 Umiastowski Order

Col. Roman Umiastowski was head of propaganda in the Corps of the Supreme Commander of the Polish Republic. Following the German aggression on Poland, and faced with the siege of Warsaw, on 6th September 1939 he appealed to all men able to wield a weapon to leave the capital and head east.

14 Annexation of Eastern Poland

According to a secret clause in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact defining Soviet and German territorial spheres of influence in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union occupied Eastern Poland in September 1939. In early November the newly annexed lands were divided up between the Ukrainian and the Belarusian Soviet Republics.

15 Kazimierz

Now a district of Cracow lying south of the Main Market Square, it was initially a town in its own right, which received its charter in 1335. Kazimierz was named in honor of its founder, King Casimir the Great. In 1495 King Jan Olbracht issued the decision to transfer the Jews of Cracow to Kazimierz. From that time on a major part of Kazimierz became a center of Jewish life. Before 1939 more than 64,000 Jews lived in Cracow, which was some 25% of the city's total population. Only the culturally assimilated Jewish intelligentsia lived outside Kazimierz. Until the outbreak of World War II this quarter remained primarily a Jewish district, and was the base for the majority of the Jewish institutions, organizations and parties. The religious life of Cracow's Jews was also concentrated here; they prayed in large synagogues and a multitude of small private prayer

houses. In 1941 the Jews of Cracow were removed from Kazimierz to the ghetto, created in the district of Podgorze, where some died and the remainders were transferred to the camps in Plaszow and Auschwitz. The majority of the pre-war monuments, synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Kazimierz have been preserved to the present day, and a few Jewish institutions continue to operate.

16 Armbands

From the beginning of the occupation, the German authorities issued all kinds of decrees discriminating against the civilian population, in particular the Jews. On 1st December 1939 the Germans ordered all Jews over the age of 12 to wear a distinguishing emblem. In Warsaw it was a white armband with a blue star of David, to be worn on the right sleeve of the outer garment. In some towns Jews were forced to sew yellow stars onto their clothes. Not wearing the armband was punishable - initially with a beating, later with a fine or imprisonment, and from 15th October 1941 with the death penalty (decree issued by Governor Hans Frank).

17 Great Patriotic War

On 22nd June 1941 at 5 o'clock in the morning Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union without declaring war. This was the beginning of the so-called Great Patriotic War. The German blitzkrieg, known as Operation Barbarossa, nearly succeeded in breaking the Soviet Union in the months that followed. Caught unprepared, the Soviet forces lost whole armies and vast quantities of equipment to the German onslaught in the first weeks of the war. By November 1941 the German army had seized the Ukrainian Republic, besieged Leningrad, the Soviet Union's second largest city, and threatened Moscow itself. The war ended for the Soviet Union on 9th May 1945.

18 Aryan papers

Jews hiding during the war by adopting a false Aryan identity had to produce documents confirming their new personal data. Such documents were mainly the 'Kennkarte,' that is, identity card, and also birth certificate, proof of address, an employment card, and so on. Having a birth certificate and proof of address was enough to apply for a 'Kennkarte': therefore many people tried to obtain only a Christian birth certificate, for example from priests. Aryan papers were produced by underground organizations including Aid Organization for Jews 'Zegota', which used the services of a 'legalizing cell' of the AK; altogether it produced 50,000 false documents for its charges. The papers could also be obtained for a large sum of money on the black markets from professional forgers and from employees of city halls. Sometimes Polish friends of Jews gave them their own documents.

19 Treuhänder

In November 1939 the Germans in the General Governorship created a Trust Office - Treuhandstelle. The trust, or receivership, order was applied to state enterprises, private firms important for defense and all companies, real estate and farms belonging to Jews and to 'enemies of the Reich.' The order implemented the taking over of property from those people and transferring them into the hands of a trust fiduciary (a 'Treuhänder'), who was to transfer the major part of their revenue to the Trust Office, that is the occupant authorities. The most valuable

companies were, of course, given to the German management. There weren't enough willing Germans to handle the mass of Jewish houses and firms, so 'Treuhänder' were recruited among Poles. Relationships between a 'Treuhänder' and a former owner varied: especially in the case of enterprises a 'Treuhänder' often allowed the former owner to remain in the company as the manager. In many other cases a former owner was simply thrown out of his house or company.

20 Podgorze Ghetto

There were approximately 60,000 Jews living in Cracow in 1939; after the city was seized by the Germans, mass persecutions began. The Jews were ordered to leave the city in April; approx. 15,000 received permission to stay in the city. A ghetto was created in the Podgorze district on 21st March 1941. Approx. 8,000 people from suburban regions were resettled there in the fall. There were three hospitals, orphanages, old people's homes, several synagogues and one pharmacy run by a Pole operating in the ghetto. Illegal Jewish organizations began operating in 1940. An attack on German officers in the Cyganeria club took place on 22nd December 1942. Mass extermination began in 1942 - 14,000 inhabitants were deported to Belzec, many were murdered on the spot. The ghetto, diminished in size, was divided into two parts: A, for those who worked, and B, for those who did not work. The ghetto was liquidated in March 1943. The inhabitants of part A were deported to the camp in Plaszow and those of part B to Auschwitz. Approximately 3,000 Jews returned to Cracow after the war.

21 Evicting of Jews from Cracow in 1940

According to assumptions of the German occupation authorities, Cracow, as the capital city of the General Governorship, was to be emptied of Jewish inhabitants. In the summer of 1940 the Germans allowed only 11 thousand Jews to temporarily remain in the city, which meant displacing 40 thousand people. The displaced persons in general could move to all towns in the General Governship; however, Jewish communes in many towns refused to accept them. The reason was severe overcrowding in ghettos. In the end in Cracow 15 thousand Jews remained, who were locked in the ghetto in March 1941.

22 Majdanek concentration camp

Situated five kilometers from the city center of Lublin, Poland, originally established as a labor camp in October 1941. It was officially called Prisoner of War Camp of the Waffen-SS Lublin until 16th February 1943, when the name was changed to Concentration Camp of the Waffen-SS Lublin. Unlike most other Nazi death camps, Majdanek, located in a completely open field, was not hidden from view. About 130,000 Jews were deported there during 1942-43 as part of the 'Final Solution.'. Initially there were two gas chambers housed in a wooden building, which were later replaced by gas chambers in a brick building. The estimated number of deaths is 360,000, including Jews, Soviets POWs and Poles. The camp was liquidated in July 1944, but by the time the Red Army arrived the camp was only partially destroyed. Although approximately 1,000 inmates were executed on a death march, the Red Army found thousand of prisoners still in the camp, an evidence of the mass murder that had occurred in Majdanek.

23 Todt Organization

Named after its founder, Nazi minister for road construction Dr. Fritz Todt, this was an organization in Nazi Germany for large-scale construction work, especially the construction of strategic roads and defenses for the military. By 1944, it employed almost 1.4 million workers including thousands of concentration camp inmates and criminals.

24 Surgeries on Jews' foreskins during the war

most men among Polish Jews were circumcised, which greatly reduced chances of survival of those who were hiding on the Aryan side. A few doctors undertook to do surgeries removing the effects of circumcision. In Warsaw the surgeries were performed by, among others, Dr. Feliks Kanabus and Dr. Andrzej Trojanowski. Patients were friends of the doctors, mainly from the medical circles. Not many such surgeries were carried out, probably just about 100.

25 Home Army (Armia Krajowa - AK)

Conspiratorial military organization, part of the Polish armed forces operating within Polish territory (within pre-1st September 1939 borders) during World War II. Created on 14th February 1942, subordinate to the Supreme Commander and the Polish Government in Exile. Its mission was to regain Poland's sovereignty through armed combat and inciting to a national uprising. In 1943 the AK had over 300,000 members. AK units organized diversion, sabotage, revenge and partisan campaigns. Its military intelligence was highly successful. On 19th January 1945 the AK was disbanded on the order of its commander, but some of its members continued their independence activities throughout 1945-47. In 1944-45 tens of thousands of AK soldiers were exiled and interned in the USSR, in places such as Ryazan, Borovichi and Ostashkov. Soldiers of the AK continued to suffer repression in Poland until 1956; many were sentenced to death or long-term imprisonment on trumped-up charges. Right after the war, official propaganda accused the Home Army of murdering Jews who were hiding in the forests. There is no doubt that certain AK units as well as some individuals tied to AK were in fact guilty of such acts. The scale of this phenomenon is very difficult to determine, and has been the object of debates among historians.

26 Pawiak

Prison in Warsaw, which opened in 1829, between Dzielna and Pawia Streets (hence the name Pawiak). During the German occupation it was one of the main custodial prisons used by the German security forces in the General Governorship. Of the approximately 100,000 prisoners (80 percent men, 20 percent women), some 37,000 were murdered, and over 60,000 were sent to concentration camps and for forced labor to the Reich. Pawiak was demolished by the Germans in August 1944. At present there is the Pawiak Prison Museum on the site.

27 Gross-Rosen camp

The Gross-Rosen camp was set up in August 1940, as a branch of Sachsenhausen; the inmates were forced to work in the local granite quarry. The first transport arrived at Gross-Rosen on 2nd August 1940. The initial labor camp acquired the status of an independent concentration camp on 1 May 1941. Gross-Rosen was significantly developed in 1944, the character of the camp also changed; numerous branches (approx. 100) were created alongside the Gross-Rosen headquarters, mostly in the area of Lower Silesia, the Sudeten Mountains and Ziemia Lubuska. A total of

approximately 125,000 inmates passed through Gross-Rosen (through the headquarters and the branches) including unregistered prisoners; some prisoners were brought to the camp only to be executed (e.g. 2,500 Soviet prisoners of war). Jews (citizens of different European countries), Poles and citizens of the former Soviet Union were among the most numerous ethnic groups in the camp. The death toll of Gross-Rosen is estimated at approximately 40,000.

28 Bergen-Belsen

Concentration camp located in northern Germany. Bergen-Belsen was established in April 1943 as a detention camp for prisoners who were to be exchanged with Germans imprisoned in Allied countries. Bergen-Belsen was liberated by the British army on 15th April, 1945. The soldiers were shocked at what they found, including 60,000 prisoners in the camp, many on the brink of death, and thousands of unburied bodies lying about. (Source: Rozett R. - Spector S.: Encyclopedia of the Holocaust, Facts on File, G.G. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. 2000, pg. 139 -141)

29 Ravensbrück: Concentration camp for women near Fürstenberg, Germany. Five hundred prisoners transported there from Sachsenhausen began construction at the end of 1938. They built 14 barracks and service buildings, as well as a small camp for men, which was completed separated from the women's camp. The buildings were surrounded by tall walls and electrified barbed wire. The first deportees, some 900 German and Austrian women were transported there on 18th May 1939, soon followed by 400 Austrian Gypsy women. At the end of 1939, due to the new groups constantly arriving, the camp held nearly 3000 persons. With the expansion of the war, people from twenty countries were taken here. Persons incapable of working were transported on to Uckermark or Auschwitz, and sent to the gas chambers, others were murdered during 'medical' experiments. By the end of 1942, the camp reached 15,000 prisoners, by 1943, with the arrival of groups from the Soviet Union, it reached 42,000. During the working existence of the camp, altogether nearly 132,000 women and children were transported here, of these, 92,000 were murdered. In March of 1945, the SS decided to move the camp, so in April those capable of walking were deported on a death march. On 30th April 1945, those who survived the camp and death march, were liberated by the Soviet armies.

30 Genthin

a labor camp for women, located about 90 km from Berlin, a branch of Ravensbrück concentration camp. It was created in April 1939. About 1000 women from Poland, the Soviet Union, the Czech Republic, France and Yugoslavia were imprisoned there. The prisoners worked at the Silva Metalwerke, GmbH arms factory. The Germans managed to successfully hide it from the attacks of the allies. On 8th May the camp was liberated by the Soviet army. About 600 people were alive.

31 People's Army (Armia Ludowa, AL)
Polish military organization with a left-wing political bent, founded on 1st January 1944 by renaming the People's Guard (set up in 1942). It was the armed wing of the PPR (Polish Workers' Party), and acted against the German forces and was pro-Soviet. At the beginning of 1944 it numbered 6,000-8,000 people and by July 1944 some 30,000. By comparison the partisan forces numbered 6,000 in July 1944. The People's Army directed the brunt of its efforts towards destroying German lines of communication, in particular behind the German-Soviet front. Divisions of the People's Army also participated in the Warsaw Uprising. In July 1944 the Polish Armed Forces (WP, Wojsko Polskie) were created from the People's Army and the Polish Army in the USSR.

32 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (or April Uprising)
On 19th April 1943 the Germans undertook their third deportation campaign to transport the last inhabitants of the ghetto, approximately 60,000 people, to labor camps. An armed resistance broke out in the ghetto, led by the Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB) and the Jewish Military Union (ZZW) - all in all several hundred armed fighters. The Germans attacked with 2,000 men, tanks and artillery. The insurrectionists were on the attack for the first few days, and subsequently carried out their defense from bunkers and ruins, supported by the civilian population of the ghetto, who contributed with passive resistance. The Germans razed the Warsaw ghetto to the ground on 15th May 1943. Around 13,000 Jews perished in the Uprising, and around 50,000 were deported to Treblinka extermination camp. About 100 of the resistance fighters managed to escape from the ghetto via the sewers.

33 Leaving the Warsaw ghetto through canals
During the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto in 1943, two groups of soldiers of the Jewish Combat Organization went through the city canals out onto the Aryan side and were taken to the forest in Lomianki from there. The first group, acting during the uprising in the area of Toebbens and Schultz shops left on 29th April. The departure of the second group, on 10th May, was organized by Symcha Ratajzer ‘Kazik’ with the help of bribed workers of the city sewage system. In that group of about 40 people, there were, among others, Marek Edelman and Cywia Lubetkin. The Germans realized that Jews were leaving the ghetto that way and put wire entanglements in the canals, let in poisonous gases, locked gates. Small groups of civilians also used to leave through the canals, sometimes even several months after the liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto.

34 Kenkarta
(German: Kennkarte - ID card) confirmed the identity and place of residence of its holder. It bore a photograph, a thumbprint, and the address and signature of its holder. It was the only document of its type issued to Poles during the Nazi occupation.

35 Warsaw Uprising 1944
The term refers to the Polish uprising between 1st August and 2nd October 1944, an armed uprising orchestrated by the underground Home Army and supported by the civilian population of

Warsaw. It was justified by political motives: the calculation that if the domestic arm of the Polish government in exile took possession of the city, the USSR would be forced to recognize Polish sovereignty. The Allies rebuffed requests for support for the campaign. The Polish underground state failed to achieve its aim. Losses were vast: around 20,000 insurrectionists and 200,000 civilians were killed and 70% of the city destroyed.

36 Szmalcownik

Polish slang word from the period of the German occupation (derived from the German word 'Schmalz', meaning lard), referring to a person blackmailing and denouncing Jews in hiding. Szmalcowniks operated in all larger cities, in particular following the liquidation of the ghettos, when Jews who had evaded deportation attempted to survive in hiding. In Warsaw they often formed organized groups that prowled around the ghetto exists. They picked out their victims by subtle signs (e.g. lowered, frightened eyes, timid behavior), eccentric clothing (e.g. the lack of the fur collar so widespread at the time, or wearing winter clothes in summer), way of speaking, etc. Victims so selected were threatened with denunciation to the Germans; blackmail could be an isolated event or be repeated until the victim's financial resources ran out. The Polish underground attempted to combat the szmalcowniks but in vain. To this day the crimes of the szmalcowniks are not entirely investigated and accounted for.

37 Gesiowka

Informal name of a prison in the Warsaw ghetto, located on 24 Gesia Street. It was created in the summer of 1941 in the building of a former military prison. It was subordinate to the Jewish Order Service. The director of the jail was Leopold Lindenfeld, and the director of the women’s unit – Sylwia Hurwicz. The jail could accommodate 200-300 people, but there were often two-three times as many prisoners. Among the prisoners there were mainly Jews who did not wear armbands, smugglers and others who had committed petty crimes. Executions of people convicted of being on the Aryan side took place twice in the prison. After the complete liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto, in July 1943, a concentration camp was created in the area of Gesiowka, a branch of the Majdanek camp. Its prisoners were to work on destroying buildings on the territory of the former ghetto, removing rubble, leveling the ground. Until the end of 1943 almost 3,700 prisoners from Auschwitz were brought in: Greek, French, German, Austrian, Belgian and Dutch Jews, and in 1944 a group of 3,000 Hungarian Jews, and a smaller group of Polish Jews. In July 1944 the evacuation of the prisoners began. 350 people stayed behind: they were to liquidate the camp buildings. Those prisoners were liberated on 5th August 1944 by the soldiers of the Warsaw Uprising.

38 Stopping of the east front in the summer of 1944

since the spring of 1944 a great offensive of the Red Army to the west was taking place, which resulted in the taking over of the terrains of eastern Poland: Lwow, Lublin, Vilnius. On 1st August 1944 an uprising of Poles directed against the withdrawing Germans broke out in Warsaw. It had a political role as well; the Polish underground wanted to free the capital of Poland from the German occupation with their own hands, and appear in front of the Soviet Army as a host. The Germans, however, still held a military advantage over the insurgents: Poles were suffering losses. At the beginning of September the Red Army took over Praga: a part of Warsaw located on the east side of the Vistula River. Stalin issued an order to stop the offensive action: he intended to wait for the

Germans to defeat the insurgents. Despite pressure of the western allies, he didn't help the insurgents, and also impeded help. On 2nd October the uprising capitulated. The Germans removed the inhabitants and razed the city to the ground. The Red Army stood on the right bank of the Vistula until January 1945.

39 Polish authorities in Lublin in 1944

On 22nd July 1944, in Lublin Chelm the Polish Committee for National Liberation (PKWN) announced the assuming of power in Poland. The Committee was founded two days earlier in Moscow, was an organ completely dependent on Stalin and dominated by communists. A manifest published by PKWN described a temporary system of power in Poland. The function of a Parliament was assumed by the National Council - also dominated by the communists' joint representation of left-wing organizations. PKWN was the only executive authority and could issue decrees with a power of laws. It began creating local administration, at first in the form of national councils, later bringing back the institutions of voivodes and prefects. PKWN also began organizing Milicja and local Offices of Public Safety (political police). It also commanded the People's Army, created by combining the Polish division of the Red Army and the underground army (communist People's Army and Polish units of Soviet partisanship). On 31st December 1944, the PKWN was converted into the Temporal Government and considered by the Soviet Union to be the only authority in Poland.

40 Fighting Youth Union (ZWM)

Communist youth organization founded in 1943. The ZWM was subordinate to the Polish Workers' Party (PPR). In 1943-44 it participated in battles against the Germans, and hit squads carried out diversion and retaliation campaigns, mainly in Warsaw, one of which was the attack on the Café Club in October 1943. In 1944 the ZWM was involved in the creation and defense of a system of authority organized by the PPR; the battle against the underground independence movement; the rebuilding of the economy from the ravages of war; and social and economic transformations. The ZWM also organized sports, cultural and educational clubs. The main ZWM paper was 'Walka Mlodych.' In July 1944 ZWM had a few hundred members, but by 1948 it counted some 250,000. Leading activists: H. Szapiro ('Hanka Sawicka'), J. Krasicki, Z. Jaworska and A. Kowalski. In July 1948 it merged with three other youth organizations to become the Polish Youth Union.

41 Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR)

Communist party formed in Poland in December 1948 by the fusion of the PPR (Polish Workers' Party) and the PPS (Polish Socialist Party). Until 1989 it was the only party in the country; it held power, but was subordinate to the Soviet Union. After losing the elections in June 1989 it lost its monopoly. On 29th January 1990 the party was dissolved.

42 Aleksander Ziemny (born 1924)

Poet, essayist, translator. He was born into a Jewish family in Cracow. During the war he was in exile in the Soviet Union. He made his literary debut in 1940. He came back to Poland as a soldier of the Polish Army. Since 1946 he published poems and articles in such newspapers and magazines as Przekroj, Odrodzenie, Zycie Warszawy, Rzeczpospolita, Szpilki. He translated poetry from

English, Russian, Jewish and Hebrew. He was the author of a known selection of translations of classic Hebrew poetry ‘Poeci Zlotej Ery’ (Poets of the Golden Era) and a collection of articles, ‘Resztki mniejszosci, czyli o Zydach polskich dzisiaj’ (Remains of a minority, or about Polish Jews today).

43 Martial law in Poland in 1981

Extraordinary legal measures introduced by a State Council decree on 13th December 1981 in an attempt to defend the communist system and destroy the democratic opposition. The martial law decree suspended the activity of associations and trades unions, including Solidarity, introduced a curfew, imposed travel restrictions, gave the authorities the right to arrest opposition activists, search private premises, and conduct body searches, ban public gatherings. A special, non-constitutional state authority body was established, the Military Board of National Salvation (WRON), which oversaw the implementation of the martial law regulations, headed by General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the armed forces supreme commander. Over 5,900 persons were arrested during the martial law, chiefly Solidarity activists. Local Solidarity branches organized protest strikes. The Wujek coal mine, occupied by striking miners, was stormed by police assault squads, leading to the death of nine miners. The martial law regulations were gradually being eased, by December 1982, for instance, all interned opposition activists were released. On 31st December 1982, the martial law was suspended, and on 21st July 1983, it was revoked.

44 Solidarity (NSZZ Solidarnosc)

A social and political movement in Poland that opposed the authority of the PZPR. In its institutional form - the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union Solidarity (NSZZ Solidarnosc) - it emerged in August and September 1980 as a product of the turbulent national strikes. In that period trade union organizations were being formed in all national enterprises and institutions; in all some 9-10 million people joined NSZZ Solidarnosc. Solidarity formulated a program of introducing fundamental changes to the system in Poland, and sought the fulfillment of its postulates by exerting various forms of pressure on the authorities: pickets in industrial enterprises and public buildings, street demonstrations, negotiations and propaganda. It was outlawed in 1982 following the introduction of Martial Law (on 13th December 1981), and until 1989 remained an underground organization, adopting the strategy of gradually building an alternative society and over time creating social institutions that would be independent of the PZPR (the long march). Solidarity was the most important opposition group that influenced the changes in the Polish political system in 1989.

45 Ester Rachel Kaminska Public Jewish Theater

Created in 1950 through the merging of the Jewish Theater from Lodz and the Lower Silesian Jewish Theater from Wroclaw. The seat of the management of the theater was first located in Wroclaw and then moved to Lodz. Ida Kaminska, Ester Rachel Kaminska's daughter, exceptional actress and the only female director in Jewish interwar theater, was the artistic director from 1955. The literary director of the theater was Dawid Sfard. In 1955 the seat of the theater was moved to Warsaw. Ida Kaminski was the director of the theater until 1968 when, due to increasing anti-Semitic policies of the government, she left for Vienna (from Vienna she went to Tel Aviv and later to New York). Most of the best actors left with her. After Kaminska's departure, the theater was directed by Juliusz

Berger and, since 1969, by Szymon Szurmiej. The theater performed its plays all over the country and, since 1956, also abroad. The theater still stages plays by Jewish writers (for example Sholem Aleichem, An-ski). It is the only public theater, which puts on performances in Yiddish.

46 Yad Vashem

This museum, founded in 1953 in Jerusalem, honors both Holocaust martyrs and 'the Righteous Among the Nations', non-Jewish rescuers who have been recognized for their 'compassion, courage and morality'.