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Anti-Semitism in the Province: The Impact of the 1967–1968 Anti-Zionist Campaign on Jewish Life as Exemplified by the Branches of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Zabkowice Śląskie and Ziębice

Introduction

The anti-Zionist campaign carried out between June 1967 and the summer of 1968 was an important turning point in the postwar history of the Jewish community in Poland (Kichelewski et al., 2021, pp. 175–206). The event formed part of a bigger phenomenon: the Polish 1968 political crisis, which the Polish historiography labels as March 1968. Together with the students' protest, the communist government's anti-Semitism was a key element of this socio-political breakthrough, commonly known as one of the "Polish months" (Eisler, 2008). Dariusz Stola's pioneering monograph – so far the only comprehensive study on the subject – analyzes the anti-Zionist campaign (Stola, 2000b). When it comes to March 1968, the most important works include articles by

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Jerzy Eisler (Eisler, 1991, 2006), Piotr Osęka (Osęka, 1999, 2008, 2015), and Marcin Zaremba (Kula et al., 1998; Zaremba, 2004; Zaremba & Osęka, 1999), beside those by many other scholars. Importantly, new authors, such as Anat Plocker (Plocker, 2022) or Hans-Christian Dahlmann (Dahlmann, 2013; Dahlmann & Ostrowska, 2018), have recently tackled the issue of anti-Semitism at the time.

The discourse on the Jewish March and the effect of those events on the life of the Jewish community in Poland includes various perspectives (Berendt, 2009). Some authors deal with identity issues or institutional structures, while others tackle politics, diplomacy, and other subjects (Szaynok, 2008). If we look at the issue from the Jewish perspective, a fundamental question arises: what was March 1968 to the Jews? Different scholars have tried to answer this question, including historians, sociologists, literary scholars, and anthropologists (Artwińska, 2015; Dąbrowska, 2011; Eisler, 2005; Starnawski, 2016). Museologists also tackled the subject, primarily through the high-profile exhibition “Estranged: March ’68 and Its Aftermath” in the POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews (Sochańska-Kumor et al., 2018). However, I believe that the most telling definition in this context is the title of Joanna Wiszniewicz’s work *Życie przecięte* [Slit Life] (Wiszniewicz, 2008). The book contains a collection of interviews with the Jewish “generation of the March,” and ranks among many similar collections released in recent years (Baral, 2015; Naszkowska, 2018; Naszkowska & Helander, 2017; Torańska, 2008; Tuszyńska et al., 2018).

Regardless of the perspective we assume toward the above question, the events of the 1967–1968 anti-Semitic campaign form an important but not the last chapter in the history of the centuries-long Jewish presence on the Polish territory. In this context, it should come as no surprise that the research on the community’s later history, namely after the anti-Semitic campaign, remains less extensive. Apart from the works by Monika Stępień (Stępień, 2019, pp. 417–431) or Grzegorz Berendt (Berendt, 2014, pp. 317–367), few authors publish on this topic. The phenomenon is understandable, especially if we consider the 1968 caesura as the end of the rich Jewish life after the Second World War. Despite the post-March wave of emigration, such a statement may seem excessive, especially because there were still structures of institutional Jewish life in Poland: the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland (TSKŻ) and the Religious Association of Judaism (ZRWM).

So far, historical research has largely covered the stories of Jews before 1968 – that is, before the campaign. The few studies that focus on the topic in recent decades

concern the mass migration that resulted from the anti-Semitic campaign (Stola, 2000a; Szaynok, 2016, p. 415). Some works analyze the motivation of those who left the country (Szajda, 2021). Other studies examine particular groups of migrants, such as those who went to Sweden or Denmark (Górniok, 2016; Ilicki, 1988). Another issue is how the events of 1967–1968 affected the Jewish life in Poland. Here, I am referring to those who stayed and functioned within the Jewish life structures in Poland after 1968. In this context, the topic of the government's actions toward Jews and Jewish organizations proves significant. One more important question is how the community and its institutions actually functioned in the 1970s and 1980s.

This article attempts to tackle these questions. I analyze Jewish life during the anti-Semitic campaign and directly after the campaign. To show the specificity of changes and emphasize the consequences of anti-Semitism in the years 1967–1968, I chose Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice – two small, provincial communities distant from the central hubs of Jewish life such as Warsaw, Łódź, and Wrocław. Both towns lie near the border, in southern Lower Silesia, within one district – the Ząbkowice *powiat*. Right after 1945, Ząbkowice Śląskie was home to almost 1,500 Jews, and Ziębice – to more than 2,000. In the 1960s, the Jewish community in either town consisted of around 100 people.¹ Therefore, this article aims to present the lives of the Jews in Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice, together with a micro-scale analysis, with reference to the impact and consequences of the anti-Semitic campaign in Poland.

My objective is to verify the thesis that the anti-Semitism of 1967–1968 resulted in an almost complete disappearance of the Jewish population and the structures of Jewish life in small communities. In this approach, I wish to show that the Jewish March became more than “slit life” for the Jewish migrants. In fact, the March marked the actual end of Jewish life structures in selected towns, in particular TSKŻ branches. I base my research on archival queries, particularly of the State Archives in Wrocław and Kamieniec Ząbkowicki, the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) Archive, and the Jewish Historical Institute (ŻIH) Archive. Because of the topic and the sources, the article belongs to local and regional studies. In this aspect, my approach resembles that in several published books and articles (Hytrek-Hryciuk & Trębacz, 2008; Krasucki, 2018; Choma-Jusińska, 2018; Nurek, 2018; Szajda, 2024).

¹ In this context, I must add that there are two research articles on Jewish life in Ząbkowice Śląskie in the twentieth century (Pawlak, 2015; Gruzlewska, 2017).

Two perspectives: Migratory and institutional

The aforementioned extraordinarily rich literature on March 1968 and the anti-Semitic campaign provides a detailed account of particular events, key figures, and locations. We could even claim that the existing literature documents important facts and arranges them chronologically and contextually. Therefore, in this text I omit the broad framework of the discussed events. Numerous articles and studies also describe, albeit in a less detailed manner, the processes that preceded the years 1967–1968 and the position of the Jewish community in Poland. Meanwhile, an important consequence of the anti-Zionist campaign was the mass emigration from Poland, commonly known as the “post-March emigration.” This notion encompasses approximately 13,000 people who left the country when they obtained a travel document and simultaneously renounced their Polish citizenship (Stola, 2010; Stola, 2000a, p. 9). The most common destinations for emigration were Denmark and Sweden, as well as Israel, the USA, West Germany, and other countries.

The post-March migration encompasses the 1968–1971 period.² An exceptionally important context – in fact, a trigger – for that migration was the address delivered by the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR) at the time, Władysław Gomułka: “We did not prevent Polish citizens of Jewish nationality from moving to Israel if such was their desire. We believe that every Polish citizen should have only one homeland – People’s Republic of Poland” (Gomułka, 1967, p. 24). Clearly, emigration would not have become a mass phenomenon were it not for the communist government’s decisions. The researchers who study this phenomenon focus on the motives that influenced the migrants’ decision to leave (Stola, 2000a, p. 14; Szajda, 2021). Beside the broadly understood anti-Semitism, which in some cases threatened people’s safety or lives, I wish to indicate other factors. One such factor became politics and disappointment with communism as an ideology – especially in its “Polish” variant, which the Jews experienced. A particularly striking incident for some was their removal from the PZPR, motivated with the alleged “Zionism” or due to official orders. An undoubtedly more dramatic experience was losing the status of party member and a job. Being pushed out of Poland, as some post-March migrants referred to their

² Some scholars extend this period to 1972, when Jewish officers who left the army or were removed after the 1967–1968 purge obtained permission to leave (Nalepa, 2000).

departure, constituted an identity-related decision, especially for young people. Raised in Poland, within Polish culture and language, they were not planning to leave (Szajda, 2018a, pp. 143–177). However, despite their attachment to the country, many decided to emigrate and start their private and professional lives anew.

The post-March wave of emigration changed the demographic structure of the Jewish community. In many cases, those who stayed in the People's Republic of Poland simply could not leave due to their age or health condition. Another specific characteristic of this migration is the migrants' professional profile. A large number of those who left were educated people, including scientific workers. Dariusz Stola writes:

The percentage of people with higher education and students among them was eight times (!) higher than in Poland's general population. The most numerous groups included engineers, doctors, and people with education in economics and humanities [...]. By the fall of 1969, nearly 500 lecturers and scientists-researchers, with prominent and well-known figures among them, applied for a permission to leave. The migrants also included 200 journalists and editors, with 15 editors-in-chief or their deputies; more than 60 radio and television employees; and nearly 100 musicians, actors, and visual artists – with 26 filmmakers and 23 actors and directors of the Jewish Theater, including the Theater's director, the famous Ida Kamińska. Such a large share of the intelligentsia resulted not only from its high percentage among Polish Jews, but also from the particularly anti-intellectual tone of the March campaign. (Stola, 2000a, p. 10)

Besides the migrations, I wish to indicate another result of the 1967–1968 anti-Semitic events, which I deem equally important: the changes in the structures of Jewish life institutions, especially the TSKŻ and the ZRWM. The migration and the changes in those organizations remain interconnected. One key factor that affected the functioning of TSKŻ's headquarters and branches was the membership decline; for instance, some of those responsible for the boards' functioning left Poland. However, migration was not the only aspect that affected the organization. The changes began in 1967 with the pressure from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and manifested themselves in a special resolution, which shows the TSKŻ General Board's indecisiveness regarding the support for the "party line" after the Six-Day War (Szajda, 2020, pp. 60–75). One of those changes was the closure of American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (Joint) in Poland, which resulted in the liquidation of the Central Jewish Committee for Social Aid (CŻKPS). At the same time, the government closed children's and youth clubs; soon thereafter, the annual camps for Jewish youth discontinued (Pęziński, 2014, pp. 268–311).

Other important changes resulting from the campaign include staffing shifts: Leopold Domb-Trepper resigned (Markusz, 2020), while Dawid Sfard and Grzegorz Smolar left their offices and emigrated. Sfard and Smolar were long-time leaders of Jewish life after 1945 and important activists in the Jewish faction of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) and then the PZPR, as well as in the TSKŻ (Nalewajko-Kulikov, 2009, pp. 280–285). Further noteworthy issues include those related to the cuts in financial aid, the print run and frequency of the Yiddish periodical *Folks-Shtime* [Voice of the People], and the impact on the daily educational and cultural work. In some cases, the authorities – especially the local governments – eventually decided to benefit from the circumstances and seize the estates that belonged to the Jewish community. The most famous and meaningful example is the case of the Jewish Theater in Wrocław (Wieczorek, 2021, pp. 251–293).

Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice as Jewish community hubs after 1945

Lower Silesia occupied a special spot on the map of Jewish community hubs in Poland after 1945. At its peak, the territory of the then Wrocław Voivodship was home to almost 90,000 Jews (Szaynok, 2011, pp. 137–144).³ The region's inhabitants included survivors of the Holocaust in the occupied territories, and the Jews who arrived in the Recovered Territories in the first half of 1946, as part of repatriation from the USSR (Misztal, 1992, pp. 161–184; Szaynok, 1994, pp. 45–64). I must emphasize that the Jews – former concentration camp prisoners – actually became the first settlers in that area. It was the former prisoners of KL Gross-Rosen liberated from the sub-camps near Dzierżoniów and Bielawa who decided to stay in the area for the following months and consequently years (Szajda, 2018b). This settlement specificity applied to several towns in the region of the Owl Mountains and to other parts of the voivodship. Besides Dzierżoniów, the biggest centers of Jewish life in the initial years after the Second World War included Wrocław, Wałbrzych, Legnica, Kłodzko, and Świdnica. Ultimately, the region had over forty local Jewish committees, both for towns and districts. The Voivodship Jewish Committee (WKŻ) for Lower Silesia overlooked the local committees (Szaynok, 2000, pp. 50–51).

³ Other studies indicate lower numbers, although they rely solely on the committee data, omitting unregistered Jews (Rykała & Kulesza, 2002, p. 252).

Ząbkowice Śląskie, until 1946 usually referred to as Ząbkowice, and Ziębice were among many centers of Jewish life in Lower Silesia. Both towns lie within one district of Ząbkowice, in the relative vicinity of each other (fifteen kilometers). Moreover, statistics indicate that the local committees ranked among the medium-sized ones. In Ząbkowice Śląskie, at its height in late 1946, the committee gathered 1,450 Jews (Szaynok, 2000, p. 103).⁴ In Ziębice, in the second half of that same year, the committee supposedly included over 2,300 Jews (Szaynok, 2000, p. 51). The creation of both committees dates to the spring of 1946 – a time of intensified settlement of Jewish people arriving from the USSR (Pawlak, 2015, p. 139). The repatriates probably prevailed in the district's community in both towns.

The location of Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice favored Jewish settlement. The towns' assets included the vicinity of other, quite numerous committees in places such as Dzierżonów, Bielawa, or Kłodzko. The two discussed towns also had Jewish cemeteries; although destroyed during the Nazi Party's rule in the Third Reich, they remained in use after the war. In 1938, during the *Kristallnacht*, the synagogue in Ząbkowice Śląskie – the then Frankenstein – was destroyed, and was later rebuilt to serve different purposes (Gruźlewska, 2017, p. 114). Meanwhile, the synagogue in Ziębice – the then Münsterberg – survived the Nazi rule and served again as a temple after the Second World War for the local congregation.

The emigration, mainly following the Kielce pogrom in July 1946, caused a decline in the number of Jews in Lower Silesia. In February 1948, the voivodship was home to approximately 45,000 Jews. Of this number, the committee listed 651 people in Ząbkowice Śląskie and 776 people in Ziębice (Szaynok, 2000, p. 106). However, beside the number of structure members, we infer the stability of the Jewish life in Ząbkowice from other institutions that emerged and functioned at the time, such as schools or religious congregations. Both towns had educational establishments founded in the first half of 1946 (Techmańska, 2016, p. 11). In each town, the schools gathered several dozen students attending at different levels, namely in grades 1–6 (Datner, 1994, p. 106). Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice also had units of the Jewish Religious Congregation (ŻKW), which included places of worship. In Ząbkowice Śląskie, this most likely assumed the form of a room or a prayer house in one part of the building (Waszkiewicz, 1999, pp. 92–93).

⁴ For comparison, the biggest committees at the time – in Dzierżonów, Wrocław, and Wałbrzych – exceeded 10,000 members, while the smallest ones – in Lubań, Zgorzelec, and Brzeg – gathered only several dozen Jews (Szaynok, 2000, pp. 102–103).

A separate issue was production work and workplaces, including Jewish cooperatives. The data from the Lower Silesia Commissioner of the Government Committee for the Productivization of the Jewish Population show that in August 1946, the Ząbkowice district had five Jewish cooperatives: for shoemakers, carpenters, and barbers, and two for tailors. All the cooperatives hired jointly 98 people.⁵ After the Kielce pogrom, both towns established branches of the Special Committee to ensure the safety of the local Jewish community (Cała, 2014). The threat was real in both towns, as evidenced by anti-Semitic fliers, spread rumors, or actions taken against Jews (Kwiek, 2021, pp. 120, 145, 147, 187).

According to Jewish institutions' statistics, in 1949 – during the migration after establishing the State of Israel – Ząbkowice was home to 550 Jews, and Ziębice to 668 (Rykała, 2001, p. 174). A year later, the Central Committee of Jews in Poland (CKŻP) and the Jewish Association for Culture and Art (ŻTKS) merged and formed the TSKŻ. The new association became the PZPR's official "transmission line" to the Jewish masses. The organization's leaders maintained full subordination to the government, implementing all the directives according to the party's will. With TSKŻ formation, the existing Jewish committees became its branches. The Ząbkowice Śląskie branch was officially registered in 1951⁶ and had its own place, which included a common room open every day. The room served as a venue for lectures, presentations, and daily social meetings. The equipment included a radio, but a television set appeared later. The TSKŻ also housed Yiddish classes and subscribed to Jewish press and books.

During the Stalinist times, until the Polish October 1956, the organization's focus – especially that of the branch's board – was to reach the largest number of the town's Jews and indoctrinate them politically. This activity best illustrates the organization's position as the government's "transmission line."⁷ Marcin Szydzisz writes that most Jews

⁵ State Archives in Wrocław (hereinafter: AP Wr), KW PPR we Wrocławiu. Sekretariat [KW PPR in Wrocław. Secretariat], ref. no. 48, Sprawozdanie Komisarza Rządu ds. Produktywizacji Ludności Żydowskiej za okres od dnia 10 do 25 sierpnia 1946 r. [Report of the Government Commissioner for the Productivization of the Jewish Population for the period from August 10 to 25, 1946], n.d., f. 9.

⁶ State Archives in Wrocław, Kamieniec Ząbkowicki Branch (hereinafter: AP KZ), Prezydium Powiatowej Rady Narodowej w Ząbkowicach Śląskich [Presidium of the District National Council in Ząbkowice Śląskie], Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich [Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, Ząbkowice Śląskie branch], ref. no. 18/76, Protokół z przeprowadzonej kontroli Oddziału Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalnego Żydów w Polsce w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 23 listopada 1960 r. [Report of the inspection of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, November 23, 1960], f. 3.

⁷ Archives of the Jewish Historical Institute (hereinafter: AŻIH), TSKŻ, ref. no. 325/300, Protokół z posiedzenia Zarządu z rozszerzonym aktywnym przy TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śl., 23 stycznia 1954 r. [Minutes of the Board meeting with extended participation of TSKŻ activists in Ząbkowice Śląskie, January 23, 1954], ff. 15–16.

worked in cooperatives (37), followed by industry (12) and offices (10) (Szydzisz, 2019, p. 25). The TSKŻ's Ziębice branch engaged in similar activities, as they also had quarters for cultural work. Moreover, at the beginning of the 1950s, Ziębice still run a Jewish school with 36 students on different levels of education;⁸ the school closed in 1953 (Szydzisz, 2019, p. 173).

The situation changed dramatically in 1956. This stemmed from the Polish Thaw, especially the resulting mass emigration of Jews, commonly known as the *Gomułka Aliyah* (Węgrzyn, 2016). While the estimates of the PZPR's Voivodship Committee show that, in the first half of the 1950s, the local Jewish population reached 200 in Ząbkowice Śląskie and 400 in Ziębice (Szydzisz, 2019, p. 21), these numbers decreased significantly already by the end of the decade. The official statistics show that by the late 1950s, Ząbkowice Śląskie had a population of around 100 Jews.⁹ I could not access precise data regarding the size of the Jewish population in Ziębice at the time, but the number was likely similar.

Before the anti-Semitic campaign

In the 1960s, the Ząbkowice Jews formed a relatively small group. The official documentation usually lists the TSKŻ members. Depending on the period and estimates, the size of members registered in the organization varied between 30 and 40, which constitutes a small community.¹⁰ Similar statistics apply to the Ziębice branch. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs data, in the middle of 1966, the branches had 38 members in Ząbkowice Śląskie and 39 members in Ziębice.¹¹ For comparison, the numbers in other towns reached 150 in Dzierżonów, 97 in Kłodzko, and 464 in Wałbrzych.¹² Importantly, not all Jews belonged to the association, although it remained the only secular organization of this type. The Ząbkowice and Ziębice branches were two out of eight such structures in

⁸ AŻIH, TSKŻ, ref. no. 325/138, Sprawozdanie za I półrocze roku szkolnego 1951/52, 7 lutego 1952 r. [Report for the first semester of the school year 1951/52, February 7, 1952], f. 4.

⁹ AP KZ, Prezydium Powiatowej Rady Narodowej w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Protokół z przeprowadzonej kontroli Oddziału Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalnego Żydów w Polsce w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 23 listopada 1960 r. [Report of the inspection of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, November 23, 1960], f. 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., Sprawozdanie z kampanii sprawozdawczo-wyborczej w TSKŻ na terenie powiatu, 10 lutego 1966 r. [Report on the reporting and election campaign at the TSKŻ in the district, February 10, 1966], f. 85.

¹¹ Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance (hereinafter: AIPN), ref. no. 1585/52, Zestawienie oddziałów i kół wg stanu na 30.VI.1967 r. [List of branches and circles as of June 30, 1967], f. 252.

¹² Ibid.

Lower Silesia, and ranked among the smallest ones. The voivodship also had one TSKŻ club (*koło*) in Zgorzelec.¹³

Undoubtedly, the life in both branches of the TSKŻ in the 1960s constituted an activation after a still period that followed the migration of some Jews. Although the activation process remained relatively slow, we can indicate specific manifestations of intensified activity. Those cases result from the financial and material support by Joint and the Organization for the Support of Industrial, Artisanal and Agricultural Production in Poland (ORT), reinstated in Poland in 1957 (Sommer-Schneider, 2014, pp. 218–248). The mediation of these organizations allowed for the employment of specific persons – instructors tasked with the professional activation of the association's members. A good example is that of Ząbkowice Śląskie, where in the years 1963–1964, the association held a workshop on sewing patterns (three meetings a week) for sixteen women, who additionally received a stipend of 100 Polish zlotys.¹⁴ Later, the association also organized a hairdressing workshop.¹⁵ Another topic was financial aid for elderly and sick persons, and for those in need. The records for 1963 alone show fifteen cases of welfare aid, with the value of each ranging between 300 and 400 Polish zlotys.¹⁶ A further field of the association's activity was the children's and youth club. Although its formal establishment dates to 1966,¹⁷ the association organized activities for children before, for example in the form of a music band.

The everyday activity of Jews being TSKŻ members involved different age groups, whose demands they tried to meet. The activities included meetings for children and youth, such as parties, drawing and papercutting, group reading, or television screenings.¹⁸ Especially the latter proved very important, because a television set was not standard house equipment at the time. The branch's work also consisted in political events, such as lectures on important anniversaries and state holidays, for example the July 22 anniversary of the Manifesto of the Polish Committee of

¹³ AP Wr, Wydział Administracyjny KW PZPR we Wrocławiu, Komisja Narodowościowa [Administrative Department of the Voivodship Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party in Wrocław, Nationalities Commission], ref. no. 1606, Sprawozdanie z zakresu spraw narodowościowych za rok 1967 Urzędu Spraw Wewnętrznych Prezydium Wojewódzkiej Rady Narodowej (hereinafter: WRN) we Wrocławiu, 29 kwietnia 1968 r. [Report on nationalities for 1967, Office of Internal Affairs, Presidium of the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, April 29, 1968], f. 31.

¹⁴ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Protokół z przeprowadzonej kontroli w Oddziale TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 25 września 1964 r. [Report of the inspection of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, September 25, 1964], f. 54.

¹⁵ Ibid., Sprawozdanie z działalności za 1966 rok, 30 maja 1967 r. [Report on activities for 1966, May 30, 1967], f. 111.

¹⁶ Ibid., Protokół z przeprowadzonej kontroli w Oddziale TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 25 września 1964 r. [Report of the inspection of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, September 25, 1964], f. 54.

¹⁷ This is the date in the history of TSKŻ (Mizgalski, 2010, p. 86).

¹⁸ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Sprawozdanie z działalności Zarządu TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śląskich za okres miesięcy lipiec – listopad 1963 r. [Report on the activities of the TSKŻ Board in Ząbkowice Śląskie for the period July–November 1963], n.d., f. 38.

National Liberation (the PKWN Manifesto). Other significant occasions included art performances, especially the visit of the Jewish Theater from Warsaw, or art groups from Wrocław, very popular among the audience. Interestingly, different activities mention cooperation between the structures in Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice – a meeting of the youth from both towns.

In Ziębice, the cultural activity was on a similar level as in Ząbkowice. The common room in Ziębice also hosted gatherings, discussions, and television screenings; Poles visited the establishment as well. However, the ORT remained inactive in Ziębice, although the association planned to launch its work. Perhaps the issue was the branch members' average age: one report emphasizes that the branch consists mostly of older people.¹⁹

The case of the youth reemerged during the branch meetings, especially in the Ząbkowice branch. The subjects included complaints about the lack of activity among the young, problems with hiring a manager of the children's and youth club, and the repeated statement that "the priority is the work among Jewish youth, which – although not numerous – deserves conditions for a cultural outlet."²⁰ Besides the daily activities, the adolescent members could benefit from TSKŻ summer camps. For example, in 1967, fourteen children from Ząbkowice Śląskie went on the camps.²¹ If we consider only the statistics of Ząbkowice Śląskie's structures, we can assume that the leaders of the local TSKŻ achieved the desired goals. The 1966 statistics show that the branch consisted of 48 members,²² and the local memorial event on the twenty-fourth anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising included 80 participants.²³

The anti-Semitic campaign and its consequences

The anti-Semitic campaign which culminated in March of 1968, began in June of the previous year, together with the Six-Day War in the Middle East. This military conflict between Israel and Arab countries, and Israel's unexpected military success, changed the socio-political situation in the region and in Europe (Zaremba & Osęka, 1999). For example,

¹⁹ Ibid., Protokół z przeprowadzonej kontroli działalności TSKŻ Oddział w Ziębicach, 25 czerwca 1964 r. [Report of the inspection of the activities of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Poland, branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, June 25, 1964].

²⁰ Ibid., Sprawozdanie z kampanii sprawozdawczo-wyborczej w TSKŻ na terenie powiatu, 10 lutego 1966 r. [Report on the reporting and election campaign at the TSKŻ in the district, February 10, 1966], f. 85.

²¹ Ibid., Notatka urzędowa, 26 lipca 1967 r. [Official note, July 26, 1967], f. 123.

²² Ibid., Pismo TSKŻ O/Ząbkowice Śląskie do WSW PPRN w Ząbkowicach Śl., 10 stycznia 1967 r. [Letter from the TSKŻ branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie to WSW PPRN in Ząbkowice Śląskie, January 10, 1967], f. 110.

²³ Ibid., Sprawozdanie z działalności za 1966 rok, 30 maja 1967 r. [Report on activities for 1966, May 30, 1967], f. 111. The memorial event addressed the TSKŻ members as well as the entire Jewish community of Ząbkowice Śląskie.

the Eastern Bloc countries (except Romania) severed their diplomatic relations with Israel. However, the international situation affected also the state, regional, and local levels, including Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice. In the state context, the conflict led to a purge in the Polish army and to the aforementioned pressure on the TSKŻ to condemn Israel's politics and success. Meanwhile, the lowest level displayed another approach: an almost total infiltration of the community by the security apparatus and, consequently, the communist government.

Already in June 1967, the officers of the District Headquarters of Citizens' Militia (MO) reported conversations about the situation in the Middle East, especially the statements supportive of Israel. The reports mentioned four people with particular sympathies for the Jewish state, including Henryk Robak, a TSKŻ member in Ząbkowice Śląskie.²⁴ Interestingly, the note of an employee in the Department of Internal Affairs of the District National Council's Presidium (WSW PPRN) includes similar observations. The reports list "pro-Zionist" individuals and state that "the cultural life of the associations remains unchanged. The work of Jewish people in workplaces proceeds unchanged as well. The district observes no flyers or meetings."²⁵ Despite the peaceful atmosphere in both towns, the officials initiated actions that testify to the need of full control over the Jewish community. This resulted from the Ministry of Internal Affairs' orders (Stola 2000b, pp. 53–60).

Other Jewish circles in Lower Silesia, such as those in the nearby Bielawa or Dzierżoniów, exercised a similar policy.²⁶ This manifested itself in the creation of documents listing all the Jewish inhabitants of every town. In the case of Ząbkowice Śląskie, the document survived.²⁷ The list contains 101 entries with full personal data: first and last names, dates and places of birth, parents' names, and places of residence – divided by families. Interestingly, although the precise date of the register's creation remains unknown, each page contains handwritten annotations from later years: 1968, 1969, and so on. The annotations mark leaving the country – in most cases, for Israel – or changing the town of residence, and

²⁴ AIPN in Wrocław, ref. no. 053/1481 vol. 3, Informacja dot. osób narodowości żydowskiej, członków PZPR, 21 października 1967 r. [Information on persons of Jewish nationality, members of the Polish United Workers' Party, October 21, 1967], ff. 191–192.

²⁵ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Pismo WSW Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich do WSW Prezydium WRN we Wrocławiu, 1 lipca 1967 r. [Letter from the WSW of the Presidium of the PRN in Ząbkowice Śląskie to the WSW of the Presidium of the WRN in Wrocław, July 1, 1967], f. 118.

²⁶ AIPN, ref. no. 1585/7179, Pismo WSW PRN w Dzierżoniowie do Oddziału TSKŻ w Dzierżoniowie, 19 października 1967 r. [Letter from WSW PRN in Dzierżoniów to the TSKŻ branch in Dzierżoniów], f. 25.

²⁷ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Wykaz imienny ludności żydowskiej na terenie m. Ząbkowice Śl. [Name list of the Jewish population in Ząbkowice Śląskie], n.d., ff. 115–116.

some record the person's death. Another document enumerates Jew-owned real estate; this list also assembles precise data, including the cubature, the plot area, and the value. Ząbkowice Śląskie had only two apartment owners, and Ziębice – three. The remaining community members lived in rented apartments. The final component of this sensitive data set is the preserved lists of TSKŻ branch members,²⁸ which also include detailed personal information.

The cited documentation proves the communist government's interest in the Jewish life after the Six-Day War (Syrnyk, 2013, pp. 203–204). Making such lists certainly remained relatively simple in small towns, especially if the Jewish community was not numerous, and the institutional structures consisted of a single organization. The documentation indicates a deep infiltration of the Jewish community, particularly the TSKŻ structures – from political statements to detailed personal data. The repression apparatus and the local authorities had all this information at their disposal. Moreover, the local government exercised a relatively active control of the situation among the district's Jews. In October 1967, the WSW PPRN officials inspected the Ząbkowice branch.²⁹ Soon after, in November, the officials made a detailed report from the branch's meeting on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution.

The government's actions intensified in March 1968. March 19 marks the first meeting between Hersz Szwarc – the president of the TSKŻ's Ząbkowice Śląskie branch – and the WSW PPRN officials. The note from the meeting states that Szwarc viewed the atmosphere within the association as good, and emphasized that people, especially elderly persons, "condemn anyone who wants to disturb and question peace."³⁰ In the following month, Szwarc and the local government met three more times: on April 3, 8, and 16.³¹ The picture presented in the note from these meetings drastically differs from the opinion expressed in March. Szwarc claims that the board of the branch did not work, and people ceased to engage and visit the TSKŻ quarters. Szwarc declares that he remains alone, with no support from the association's members. The objective of those meetings was to examine the situation in the Jewish community and exercise pressure, in order to extort an official condemnation

²⁸ Ibid. Wykaz członków TSKŻ Oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich wg stanu na dzień 30 czerwca 1967 roku [List of members of the TSKŻ branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie as of June 30, 1967], f. 117.

²⁹ Ibid., Protokół spisany z kontroli Oddziału TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 18 października 1967 r. [Report of the inspection of the TSKŻ branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie, October 18, 1967], f. 124.

³⁰ Ibid., Notatka urzędowa, 19 marca 1968 r. [Official note, March 19, 1968], f. 130.

³¹ Ibid., Notatka urzędowa, 16 kwietnia 1968 r. [Official note, April 16, 1968], f. 133.

of the anti-state riots and obtain an expression of solidarity with the PZPR's first secretary and the "party line."

Only at the third meeting did Szwarc agree to organize a gathering of branch members. He set the date for April 18, which was only two days later. At the same meeting, Szwarc informed his interlocutor that, persuaded by his children, he had initiated his efforts to leave Poland, and that he would like to quit as the local TSKŻ's leader at the earliest convenience. This declaration could not have come as a surprise to the local authorities. Already on April 2, the authorities had information about one of the first requests for permission to leave the country from someone in the district.

The meeting of the Ząbkowice TSKŻ's members took place as planned on April 18 in the presence of Józef Smulski – the director of WSW PPRN. Twenty-four out of 35 registered members participated in the meeting. The minutes present a somewhat alternative reality: the members discussed paying the membership fee and press subscription, and involving the Jewish youth in the branch's work. Only one person, consistently with the party's vision of reality, mentioned that "some individuals exploit the current situation to create the appearances of anti-Semitism."³² The meeting concluded with adopting a resolution – a document the local government had requested earlier. The resolution states:

We wholeheartedly separate ourselves from the anti-state actions of the political bankrupts who used their positions against People's Republic of Poland and undertook actions that aim at diverting our Homeland from the path of socialist development, which is possible and implemented through the permanent brotherly alliance with the Soviet Union and the entire Soviet Bloc.³³

This declaration, structurally similar to other documents of this type published by TSKŻ branches across Poland, concludes with a declaration of solidarity with the PZPR and Poland as a whole:

We feel a strong bond with the People's Republic of Poland. For generations, we have lived and worked in Poland, and for the last twenty-three years, our Party – the Polish United Workers' Party – and the people's rule has provided us, the Jewish people, with all the opportunities to live and work according to each individual's abilities,

³² Ibid., Protokół z zebrania członków Oddziału Powiatowego TSKŻ w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 18 kwietnia 1968 r. [Minutes of the meeting of members of the District Branch of the TSKŻ in Ząbkowice Śląskie, April 18, 1968], f. 134.

³³ Ibid., Rezolucja uchwalona przez zebranych członków TSKŻ na zebraniu w dniu 18 kwietnia w Ząbkowicach Śląskich [Resolution adopted by the members of the TSKŻ gathered at the meeting on April 18 in Ząbkowice Śląskie], ff. 136–137.

and with the conditions to grow, learn, cooperate, and participate in the growth of our Homeland. [...] We condemn the actions and attitudes unworthy of and hostile toward our People's Homeland, and support the politics of the Party and its leaders, with Comrade Wiesław [Władysław Gomułka] at the forefront.³⁴

An important issue is the extent to which such a document had a social impact. Perhaps Włodzimierz Suleja is right when he claims that the resolution included “ritual phrases” and targeted primarily the officials of WSW PPRN – those who expected the passing of such a document (Suleja, 2006, p. 254). A meaningful comment on the document and the entire situation came from an event recorded only six months later. In October 1968, the board members of the Ząbkowice Śląskie TSKŻ branch arrived at the WSW PPRN headquarters. The reason for the meeting was the association leaders' need to hand in the keys and seals because they were leaving Poland for Israel.³⁵

From a branch to non-existence

As we revisit the aforementioned important consequences of the anti-Zionist campaign, we should consider these matters from a local perspective. The group of almost 13,000 post-March emigrants included Jews from Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice. Although the Jews from these towns formed a small group in the general number of emigrants, they were the majority of the local Jewish population from a local perspective. We see this in the local WSW's documentation on Ząbkowice Śląskie, where the list of TSKŻ members carries handwritten annotations: some names are crossed out, with a reason provided.³⁶ The annotations come from at least two different instances, giving us a more detailed image of how the Jewish community shrank. An undated list of the association's members – probably from around 1968–1969, when Hersz Szwarc no longer served as president – includes 26 members. A handwritten annotation (in blue) from December 20, 1969, indicates a loss of five members; an identical number of names crossed out from the list confirms this information. Another annotation (in red) from March 28, 1972, states that only 11 members remained in Ząbkowice Śląskie. Based on this single document, we can deduce that the local TSKŻ organization shrank by almost 60 percent.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid., Notatka urzędowa, 4 października 1968 r. [Official note, October 4, 1968], f. 139.

³⁶ Ibid., Wykaz osób narodowości żydowskiej, zamieszkałych w m. Ząbkowice Śl. przynależnych do TSKŻ [List of people of Jewish nationality residing in Ząbkowice Śląskie who are members of the TSKŻ], n.d., ff. 160–161.

Another document that provides a migratory perspective in Ząbkowice Śląskie is the list of people who – in the officials' eyes – left the town for a "permanent residence in Israel" after 1968.³⁷ The local WSW recorded 33 people who departed from Ząbkowice Śląskie. Although we do not know the precise number of Jews that lived in the town before the anti-Zionist campaign, we may assume that the group formed a large part of the community. I must note that many of the migrants – 58 percent – were young people, born in the 1940s and later.

The consequences of the anti-Zionist campaign, also connected to the migration, included structural changes in the TSKŻ branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie. After the previous branch president left in 1968, the following year, the TSKŻ General Board decided to dissolve the association's structures in the town. The dissolution took place on July 1, 1969.³⁸ The decision most likely caused a decisive response from the remaining Jews, who did not want the institution's branch to close. Following a visit by a representative from Wrocław, the General Board changed its decision and established a TSKŻ club on September 1, 1969.³⁹ The structure did not survive long: the club's president left Poland in January, and in February, after another visit by the representative from Wrocław, the report stated that "there are no perspectives for further activity." Soon after that, the remaining members of the organization in Ząbkowice Śląskie were moved to the branch in the nearby Ziębice. Consequently, at the beginning of the 1970s, the structures of institutionalized Jewish life in Ząbkowice Śląskie ceased to exist.

The situation in Ziębice was similar, although we lack precise data about Jewish people's emigration from the town after 1968. The records of Ziębice's TSKŻ membership provide interesting yet not fully representative information. In the early 1970s, the local TSKŻ structures consisted of 21 people – that is, approximately a half of the branch's population before June 1967. This group was joined by 11 members from the closed branch in Ząbkowice Śląskie. Consequently, the two branches, each of around 90 members before the anti-Semitic campaign,⁴⁰ declined into one branch of approximately 30 members. Archival documentation provides no detailed information on those people's age. However, some

³⁷ Ibid., Wykaz osób narodowości żydowskiej, które wyjechały na stałe do Izraela z terenu miasta Ząbkowice Śląskie [List of people of Jewish nationality who left for Israel permanently from Ząbkowice Śląskie], n.d., f. 162.

³⁸ Ibid., Pismo do Przewodniczącego PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 20 sierpnia 1969 r. [Letter to the Chairman of the PRN in Ząbkowice Śląskie, August 20, 1969], f. 158.

³⁹ Ibid., Pismo Zarządu Głównego TSKŻ do Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 1 września 1969 r. [Letter from the TSKŻ General Board to the Presidium of the PRN in Ząbkowice Śląskie, September 1, 1969], f. 159.

⁴⁰ The estimates vary depending on the source. Some sources list approximately 80 members.

sources include entries which suggest that the remaining members were elderly people, incapable of active participation. Moreover, even before the final liquidation of the TSKŻ in Ząbkowice Śląskie, the district officials deprived the association of their quarters. In January 1970, they were transferred to the local guild.⁴¹

Conflict over premises

An important issue among the anti-Zionist campaign's consequences is the conflict over premises, which we can treat as a case study. In February 1968, the Gromada National Council (GRN) in Ziębice filed an application to the town and district officials, asking for the allotment of a room occupied by the local branch of TSKŻ.⁴² The Council's arguments included the association's inactivity and an urgent need to provide the Agrarian Service (Służba Rolna) with a premises. Importantly, the GRN had its quarters on the ground floor of the building at 25 Zamkowa Street, which it shared with other institutions, including the TSKŻ. Already a month later, on March 13, a special resolution was adopted "urging for the approval of the application filed to the Presidium of the District National Council in Ząbkowice Śląskie for the allotment of a room occupied by the Association of Jews in Poland."⁴³ Neither document mentions informing the branch's board of the fact. Therefore, we may assume that the local officials believed that such decisions required no involvement of the town's Jewish community.

The situation resembles another case – from Dzierżoniów, where the local officials wanted to acquire a synagogue for a regional museum.⁴⁴ However, the case of Ziębice had its continuation. In August 1969, the GRN demanded two more rooms used by the TSKŻ branch. The arguments were identical as before: the association's alleged inactivity and the local officials' needs. The application went as far as the Office of Internal Affairs of the Voivodship National Council's Presidium (USW PWRN), with the following note: "Notably, five Jewish families live in Ziębice, while others engage in efforts to leave for Israel."⁴⁵

⁴¹ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Notatka urzędowa, 9 lutego 1970 r. [Official note, February 9, 1970], f. 166.

⁴² AP Wr, Prezydium WRN we Wrocławiu, Urząd Spraw Wewnętrznych [Presidium of the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, Office of Internal Affairs], ref. no. 1/24, Pismo do Prezydium Miejskiej Rady Narodowej w Ziębicach, 13 lutego 1968 r. [Letter to the Presidium of the Municipal National Council in Ziębice, February 13, 1968], f. 180.

⁴³ Ibid., Uchwała nr XX-21-68, 13 marca 1968 r. [Resolution No. XX-21-68, March 13, 1968], f. 179.

⁴⁴ AIPN in Wrocław, 053/1481, vol. 1, Informacja dot. Kongregacji Wyznania Mojżeszowego w Dzierżoniowie, 28 lutego 1968 r. [Information regarding the Congregation of the Mosaic Faith in Dzierżoniów, February 28, 1968], f. 37.

⁴⁵ AP Wr, Prezydium WRN we Wrocławiu, Urząd Spraw Wewnętrznych, ref. no. 1/24, Pismo do WRN we Wrocławiu, 23 sierpnia 1969 r. [Letter to the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, August 23, 1969], f. 177.

The context of the decision seems obvious. Besides taking the quarters away from the local branch, the officials suggested moving the TSKŻ to another building on the same street. The branch president rejected that solution, which resulted in eviction from the occupied quarters.

The president's attitude toward the officials was rather courageous. During his discussion with the WSW PPRN director, Leon Borsuk directly stated that the association's representatives would not leave the quarters voluntarily. When summoned to meet the chairman of the District National Council (PRN), Borsuk refused to accept the document and declared that he would not arrive in the office.⁴⁶ The mediators in the conflict were two representatives of the TSKŻ: one representing the General Board, and the other representing the Wrocław branch. Henryk Robak, who had lived in Ząbkowice Śląskie shortly before and thus knew the local conditions, states as follows in a note:

The proposed quarters at 5 Kościuszki Street, ground floor, one room of 30 square meters, has no canalization or toilet. The walls' bottom sections show signs of moisture (probably mold). The heating is provided by a tiled stove, with no basement to store coal. The place was previously a storeroom and remained unheated for years. The proposed quarters in the same building, previously used by the PKPS [the Polish Committee for Social Aid], consist of two rooms on the ground floor and present identical conditions, with the exception of water access. The establishment has no sanitary unit. The toilet is outside, with an unpleasant access and highly unsatisfactory sanitary conditions. [...] Moreover, I inspected the proposed quarters at 18 Zamkowa Street, on the low ground floor. Those include a small room of approximately 20 square meters and a kitchenette. Water access and toilet are in the hall. The room gives the impression of a ruin: the walls are moist and most likely moldy. The room is unsuitable for the local branch. Moreover, the rooms of all the proposed quarters face the street, which poses a risk of undesired events, such as window breaking, which we must consider.⁴⁷

The final fragment indicates an entirely different perspective of the Jewish community's representatives. Although the document dates to 1972, the mention of possible anti-Semitic acts of vandalism was more than a fear: it stemmed from a real threat. In the conclusion, where he rejects the suggested quarters, Robak proposes adapting the rooms of the former synagogue for the branch's activities. Since the early 1960s, the synagogue had served as a storage for the local gardening cooperative.

⁴⁶ Ibid., Notatka urzędowa, 8 listopada 1972 r. [Official note, November 8, 1972], f. 41.

⁴⁷ Ibid., Zapisek służbowy z wyjazdu do Ziębic, 13 listopada 1972 r. [Memorandum from a trip to Ziębice, November 13, 1972], f. 43.

Only several days later, the local director of the Division of Communal and Housing Management submitted a document to the USW PWRN in Wrocław, declining the allotment of different quarters. The director emphasized that the TSKŻ had two propositions of re-allotment, and, considering the sixty-five families who waited for apartments in Ziębice in 1972, “the division sees no possibility of allotting other provisional quarters for the TSKŻ, which would satisfy the association’s excessive demands in this case.”⁴⁸ It remains difficult to determine whether the eviction actually took place. The documents from later periods, for example from 1975, indicate the existence of the Ziębice branch but provide no address. However, we should note that issues with quarters had a wider scope. Similar problems emerged in Legnica, where the authorities allotted the rooms to the Municipal National Council (MRN), which gave them to the Copper Mining and Smelting Industrial Complex (KGHM), and in Wrocław.

The discussion of the local governments’ actions in the context of the anti-Zionist campaign’s consequences should consider one more issue: Jewish cemeteries. In May 1967, the TSKŻ General Board requested the Ministry of Communal Management to repeal the decision of the MRN Presidium in Ząbkowice Śląskie, where the Presidium “had taken measures toward closing the local Jewish cemetery.”⁴⁹ In 1968, the officials examined the state of the cemetery and checked for burials in the recent years.⁵⁰ As most Jews had left the town and the TSKŻ branch had closed, the local government obtained arguments for the eventual liquidation and razing of the cemetery (Bielawski, 2020, p. 90). Similar actions in the late 1960s and early 1970s were not unusual; the authorities in the neighboring districts and in the rest of Lower Silesia acted similarly. The state’s 1971 Act on the property of churches and religious associations in the Western and Northern Territories slightly changed the situation (Bednarek, 2020, pp. 251–255). However, in many cases, the Act did not affect the previously initiated actions by the officials whose decisions allotted the acquired grounds for purposes such as housing.⁵¹

According to statistics, by the end of 1975, the Ząbkowice Śląskie branch no longer existed, and the Ziębice branch consisted of 21 people. The situation in the neighboring towns

⁴⁸ Ibid., Pismo do Prezydium WRN we Wrocławiu, 16 listopada 1972 r. [Letter to the Presidium of the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, November 16, 1972], f. 42.

⁴⁹ Archiwum Gminy Wyznaniowej Żydowskiej we Wrocławiu, TSKŻ w Polsce [Archives of the Jewish Religious Community in Wrocław, TSKŻ in Poland], no ref. no, Zawiadomienie w sprawie zamknięcia cmentarza w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 23 maja 1967 r. [Notice regarding the closure of the cemetery in Ząbkowice Śląskie, May 23, 1967], n.pag.

⁵⁰ AP KZ, Prezydium PRN w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, TSKŻ oddział w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, ref. no. 18/76, Notatka służbowa, 15 lutego 1969 r. [Memorandum, February 15, 1969], f. 153.

⁵¹ A premise was the “factual management of the cemetery,” difficult to prove in many cases.

was similar: Dzierżoniów had 38 registered members, Kłodzko – 43, and Wałbrzych – 69.⁵² The final trace of Jewish activity in Ziębice is the *Folks-Shtime* article from 1976. The branch probably ceased to exist in the second half of the 1970s (Szydzisz, 2019, p. 42).

Conclusion

Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice were among many towns, including those in Lower Silesia, where Jews experienced the anti-Zionist campaign of 1967–1968. Why, then, do these two towns provide an interesting example of the influence the anti-Semitic narrative had on the Jewish life in Poland?

At the beginning of the postwar Jewish settlement, both towns were home to medium-sized Jewish communities. Gradually, with growing emigration, the communities shrank until they became peripheral not only in geographical terms, but also in terms of population. In the context of the consistently shrinking community, we may indicate the anti-Semitic campaign as the actual “final act” – a move that terminated the history of the Jewish life structures in Ząbkowice Śląskie and soon after in Ziębice. The termination stemmed primarily from the post-March emigration, and from the decline of the TSKŻ branches. Deprived of their funding and under the government’s pressure, those units no longer served as the vital centers for the community meetings and the development of Jewish culture and language. After 1968, the association’s local structures comprised a small group of older people, retirees, and pensioners who could not reactivate the organization. Consequently, the anti-Zionist campaign caused a demographic collapse, especially in small towns, which preceded the final liquidation of branches and clubs.

In Ząbkowice Śląskie and Ziębice, the communist government – mainly the officials of the voivodship, district, and municipal national councils – played an essential role in the Jews’ fate. The persons who controlled the situation according to the PZPR’s line made decisions with a significant impact on the Jewish community. The officials knew the attitudes among the Jews and their exact addresses – including those of the TSKŻ members. They were also familiar with the requests to leave the country and other events. The broadly understood local government had an interest in the cemeteries and quarters, and its officials ensured that the Jews produced an “appropriate” resolution that condemned “Zionists.” The local anti-Semitic campaign affected the attitudes toward emigration and contributed

⁵² AIPN, ref. no. 1585/7172, Wykaz oddziałów TSKŻ wg stanu na 31 grudnia 1975 [List of TSKŻ branches as of December 31, 1975], f. 4.

to the liquidation of Jewish life structures – in this case, the TSKŻ. In this context, the seizure of the quarters previously used by the Jewish community and the attitude toward the Jewish cemetery show that the government saw 1968 as the end of Jewish life in both towns.

Appendix

Archiwum Gminy Wyznaniowej Żydowskiej we Wrocławiu (Archives of the Jewish Religious Community in Wrocław)

- no ref. no., Zawiadomienie w sprawie zamknięcia cmentarza w Ząbkowicach Śląskich, 23 maja 1967 r. [Notice regarding the closure of the cemetery in Ząbkowice Śląskie, May 23, 1967], n.pag.

Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Warszawie (AIPN, Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw)

- ref. no. IPN BU 1585/52, Zestawienie oddziałów i kół wg stanu na 30.VI.1967 r. [List of branches and circles as of June 30, 1967], f. 252.
- ref. no. IPN BU 1585/7179, Pismo WSW PRN w Dzierżoniowie do Oddziału TSKŻ w Dzierżoniowie, 19 października 1967 r. [Letter from the Department of Internal Affairs of the District National Council in Dzierżoniów to the TSKŻ branch in Dzierżoniów], f. 25.
- sygn. IPN BU 1585/7172, Wykaz oddziałów TSKŻ wg stanu na 31 grudnia 1975 [List of TSKŻ branches as of December 31, 1975], f. 4.

Oddziałowe Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej we Wrocławiu (AIPN in Wrocław, Branch Archive of the Institute of National Remembrance in Wrocław)

- ref. no. IPN Wr 053/1481 vol. 3, Informacja dot. osób narodowości żydowskiej, członków PZPR, 21 października 1967 r. [Information on persons of Jewish nationality, members of the Polish United Workers' Party, October 21, 1967], ff. 191–192.
- ref. no. IPN Wr 053/1481 vol. 1, Informacja dot. Kongregacji Wyznania Mojżeszowego w Dzierżoniowie, 28 lutego 1968 r. [Information regarding the Congregation of the Mosaic Faith in Dzierżoniów, February 28, 1968], f. 37.

Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (AP Wr, State Archives in Wrocław)

1. KW PPR we Wrocławiu. Sekretariat [KW PPR in Wrocław, Secretariat], ref. no. 48, Sprawozdanie Komisarza Rządu ds. Produktywizacji Ludności Żydowskiej za okres od dnia 10 do 25 sierpnia 1946 r. [Report of the Government Commissioner for the Employment of Jews in Production for the period from August 10 to 25, 1946], n.d., f. 9.

2. Prezydium WRN we Wrocławiu, Urząd Spraw Wewnętrznych [Presidium of the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, Office of Internal Affairs], ref. no 1/24:
 - Pismo do Prezydium Miejskiej Rady Narodowej w Ziębicach, 13 lutego 1968 r. [Letter to the Presidium of the Municipal National Council in Ziębice, February 13, 1968], f. 180.
 - Uchwała nr XX-21-68, 13 marca 1968 r. [Resolution No. XX-21-68, March 13, 1968], f. 179.
 - Pismo do WRN we Wrocławiu, 23 sierpnia 1969 r. [Letter to the Voivodship National Council in Wrocław, August 23, 1969], f. 177.
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- Wykaz osób narodowości żydowskiej, które wyjechały na stałe do Izraela z terenu miasta Ząbkowice Śląskie [List of people of Jewish nationality who left for Israel permanently from Ząbkowice Śląskie], n.d., f. 162.
- Wykaz osób narodowości żydowskiej, zamieszkałych w m. Ząbkowice Śl. przynależnych do TSKŻ [List of people of Jewish nationality residing in Ząbkowice Śląskie who are members of the TSKŻ], n.d., ff. 160–161.

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Anti-Semitism in the Province: The Impact of the 1967–1968 Anti-Zionist Campaign on Jewish Life as Exemplified by the Branches of the Social and Cultural Association of Jews in Zabkowice Śląskie and Ziębice

This article presents Jewish life in two provincial towns in Lower Silesia, Zabkowice Śląskie and Ziębice, in the context of the 1967–1968 anti-Zionist campaign in Poland and its consequences. Outlining the local policies against Jews on a micro-scale, I analyze two main factors: migration and the collapse of Jewish life structures after the anti-Semitic events in Poland. Another element of consideration is the influence of local political factors and the broader authorities on Jewish life and its decline. The analysis relies on archival material from the resources of various institutions: State Archives, the Institute of National Remembrance, and the Jewish Historical Institute.

Keywords:

anti-Zionist campaign, March 1968, Jews in Poland, Lower Silesia, anti-Semitism

Antysemityzm na prowincji. Wpływ kampanii antysyjonistycznej lat 1967–1968 na życie żydowskie na przykładzie oddziałów Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalnego Żydów w Zabkowicach Śląskich i Ziębicach

Artykuł prezentuje życie żydowskie w dwóch prowincjonalnych ośrodkach Dolnego Śląska: Zabkowicach Śląskich i Ziębicach, w kontekście kampanii antysyjonistycznej lat 1967–1968 w Polsce i jej konsekwencji. Przedstawiając w mikroskali lokalne działania wobec Żydów, analizuję dwa główne czynniki: migracje oraz zapaść struktur życia żydowskiego, jako konsekwencje antysemickiej kampanii. Osobnym elementem rozważań jest kwestia wpływu miejscowych czynników partyjnych i szeroko rozumianych władz na życie

żydowskie i jego zanik, przede wszystkim w postaci likwidacji struktur Towarzystwa Społeczno-Kulturalnego Żydów. Rozważania powstały na podstawie materiału archiwalnego pozyskanego z zasobów różnych instytucji: Archiwów Państwowych, Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej i Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego.

Słowa kluczowe:

kampania antysyjonistyczna, Marzec 1968, Żydzi w Polsce, Dolny Śląsk, antysemityzm

Note:

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