

THE FOUNDATION OF THE "YOUNG ZIONISTS" AND OTHER MEMORIES

by David Menszes, Tel Aviv

I was born in the Polish-Jewish town of Kutno, which became famous for the two great personalities who lived and worked there: 1) the great genius and scholar Mr. Yehoshele Kutner, who was for many years a rabbi and mentor to the religious Jews in Kutno and beyond. 2) The great famous writer Shalom Asz, who so wonderfully described Kutno in his first book *"The Shtetl"*.

My parents were very pious people. The father – a Kocker chassid, the grandfather – a Ger chassid. So, the whole family was chassidic Jews. For many years, they lived in small towns, traded in leather, raised and married children and their daughters took up the finest sons-in-law, were provided dowry with financial support. They led beautiful honorable houses, as is fit for chassid leaders. This went on quietly and idyllically for many years.

At the beginning of the 20th century, new winds were blowing in Russian Poland, with stormy-revolutionary events. Understandably, this has had an impact and influence on the Jewish environment as well. It was felt that the socio-economic structure was collapsing, that the economic positions of Jews were being shaken. This was particularly evident after the Russo-Japanese War and the brutal Kishinev pogrom¹. The great Jewish emigration began. A new phenomenon in Jewish life. At that time, the approaches and grasps of large sections of the Jewish middle class and even of the merchant chassidic class also changed psychologically. Those who once looked upon a craftsman as a man of lower rank, have now sent their children to learn a trade on their own. There was no great choice in the small towns; They became shoemakers, tailors. A bit higher-ranked – boot-stitchers, watchmakers, wood-workers etc.

I became an apprentice

At home, too, our livelihoods have become weaker. The leather attic, always packed with merchandise, was now empty and dilapidated. I was thinking of a purpose for me, the 11-year-old. All the above-listed subjects did not please my father, nor did he fit his pedigree. After much deliberation, he decided to make me a military tailor. Mother explained to him the virtues of the profession: first, there are very few such tailors – in Kutno only one; And secondly, they are dealing with high-ranking military officers, officers, generals, high-ranking government officials, with an open hand and a rich pocket, some of whom may have livelihoods over their heads. If so, my father decided to take me on the train to the only military tailor in Kutno – Baczke.

Early in the morning, the first day after Sukkot, I left for work at Baczke's. Opening the door, coming into the house (knocking was not customary at the time), I

immediately saw a wooden bed before my eyes, in which two grown-up girls were lying. Thinking that I had accidentally got lost in a stranger's house, I wanted to go out, but one of the girls exclaimed, "Boy, boy, do not go, you came here to be on apprenticeship, right? You are a little early, wait a minute, Daddy's coming soon." The room was a dormitory, a kitchen and, most importantly, a workshop.

Not long after, Baczke came in. A tall Jew with broad shoulders, a wide-brimmed beard with a protruding belly, from under whose vest appeared the fringes of his *talit katan*. Hearing my "good morning", he looked at me with his big gray eyes: "Ah, this is Gershon's boy? What is your name?" "David" – I answered. "Take a seat, sit down, soon the companion Yosef will come, he will show you what to do."

Yosef came – a middle-aged, fat man. Even before the age of 30, he already had a fine bald head. He was good-natured, with small sympathetic eyes and soon engaged with me. First thing: he put a thimble on the third finger of my right hand, gave me a needle with a piece of cloth and told me to make stitches – in and out, out and in, as if sewing. "So, you will stitch for a few days until you and your hand get the hang of it."

... Comes in Mrs. Baczke (she was his second wife), a tall, thin Jewess with long thin legs, a big mouth and big severe feline eyes. Without saying "good morning", she immediately turned to me: "Listen, boy, today is the first day, I will let go, but from tomorrow you need to know: as soon as you enter, you must first sweep the house, bring down coals from the attic, heat the kitchen as it will be used for cooking and heating the press iron."...

Yosef was a man without bitterness, always good-natured, cheerful. During work, he continuously sang songs from the Yiddish theater. He also came from a good, affluent home, where there was no shortage of livelihoods. His parents – the Pakulskis – traded in fatty foods: goose, turkey, sausage, lard, Swiss cheese, fish, egg, butter. Yosef brought with him the smell of all the fat things, but also some of the good things he did not forget to take with him: liver, pickles, sausage, goose fat. He never came to work empty-handed. He disliked politics, did not listen to any party, as was the fashion at the time. He had a bride, and she was the whole world for him. When he finished work, no matter how late it was, he ran to the bride and kept sending her presents.

With great enthusiasm I set out to learn Russian. Twice a week went to a teacher – shamefully, I forgot his name. I remember well his big forehead with a head of wild disheveled hair, a big black bow around the collar of his shirt, a cape and a black wide-brimmed hat. A member

¹ TN: 19-21 April 1903 and on 19-20 October 1905. After a blood libel accusation in an antisemitic publication, 49 Jews were murdered, Jewish women were raped and about 1500 houses destroyed, in the 1903 pogrom. In 1905, an anti-tzarist

riot turned into a pogrom. 19 Jews were killed, 56 injured. This was followed by 600 other pogroms in the whole Russian Empire, with a major impact on Jewish emigration to the West and to pre-Mandate Palestine.

of the Socialist-Territorialist Party². Unfortunately, my study of Russian did not last long. It was near Passover. Expecting not to work for eight days on Passover, they had worked for many weeks before the holiday until 10 pm, and from Purim onwards³ – until midnight. Therefore, nothing came out of my Russian.

Happy Jews

Baczke had a close friend – Chaim Mroz. A cheerful Jew, not tall, stocky, with a red face and a neatly trimmed black beard. He used to catch up with us in the kitchen workshop. He did not like Baczke piety much. A simple Jew, far from scholars, but with respect and politeness for scholars and erudites, he always said: "It is better to be good than pious". His livelihood was dealing in old clothes. Because of his trade, he traveled to London 2-3 times a year to buy his merchandise. There, Chaim Mroz bought his merchandise from the dealers, brought it to Kutno, repaired, dyed, pressed – until they became virtually new, as most of his customers were peasants from the surrounding villages. It was a long-established business. The Christians knew: if you want to have a good dress of true English material and also really cheap, you can buy it at Chaim Mroz's... The business was going well, there was plenty of livelihood and joy in his house. He himself was always a good mood, a joke, a nice word. I was always happy to see him enter the workshop, especially when the work was, for some reason, not going smoothly and Baczke turned around with an angry face. With his jokes and cheerfulness, Chaim broke the tense mood. He always had pockets full with apple and other goodies. Just as he was crossing the threshold, he shouted at Yosef: "Hey, just throw away the chimney, the rotten cigarette. It's really poison. Take an apple instead!"

Chaim Mroz had a 20-year-old son, handsome, mature, and polite. By profession he was a tailor, but somewhat different from an ordinary craftsman, because of his fine demeanor and attitude. Abraham was a member of the "*Poalei-Zion* Party", read many books, studied the Bible with a teacher, a Litvak and a Zionist, whom the pious chassidim considered a conspirator, leading down honest Jewish children on the same path...

Abraham, like his father, often came to our workshop. Joking was not his nature, which is why he used to talk about serious matters: literature, Zionism, *Eretz Israel*, freedom, or even about the Bible. When his words entered my head, my young heart pounded and wanted to know more... The truth is, Baczke did not like Abraham's eloquence so much, in the middle of the work. He always cast his big eyes at me, to see whether my hands were working, while listening to Abraham's sermons. Only when Abraham was already too far gone, Baczke politely said to him: "Abraham, perhaps you could leave the Bible for Shabbat?" There was no patience and politeness in Baczke's nature, but he was his best friend's son and the

hoped that there might be a match with his daughter Rachel – and that made him so polite...

From time to time, I used to go to Chaim Mroz's house, to see Abraham and ask him various questions, about religion, socialism, Zionism and so on. Abraham tried, as far as he could, to answer all the questions, clarified everything and always ended with the words: "Most importantly, you must read, as much as possible." On one occasion, he showed me stamps of "*Keren Kayemet le'Israel*". When I saw them for the first time, a strong enthusiasm embraced me. I remember: a Star of David in the middle, at the side, a lion and a round dial around. I bought the stamps, and on every letter I wrote, I pasted a Zionist stamp next to the official postage stamp.

Every Saturday morning, I walked into an orchard, not far from the synagogue, with an "unsuitable" booklet under my jacket and sat there and read. It told my dad that I was going to the synagogue to pray. I did not want to go with my dad in a Kocker *shtiebel* and in general – how does it fit to go in shorts, dressed as a German? Only one thing I always needed to remember. The *parasha* of the week, the *parasha* that is read in the Torah, because quite often my father used to ask me a question: "David, what *Sidra* is going on this week?". So, he wanted to make sure if I was really in the synagogue...

A certain Shabbat in the morning, sitting in the garden and reading, comes Abraham with a friend – a long-dressed young man with a chassidic pale face. Abraham introduced me to his friend Manase and he asked me what I was reading? Not waiting for my answer, he takes the booklet from my hand and gives a look, "Oho, you read 'Anna Karenina': don't you think that this book is a little too difficult for you?", he asks. "Yes, a little difficult", I replied. "If so," says Abraham, "stop all the novels. When you grow old, you will read them. Ask me all the questions that you want, I saw that you have an interest in Zionist-Socialist problems. Meet me this Wednesday, and I will introduce you to a Zionist family that has a large private library of books that may be of interest to you and are suitable for you."

A few days later, I met Abraham on the Broad Street⁴, we cut through the Old Market and entered Butchers' Alley. Most of the butchers lived here, among whom revolved the huge figure of Mordechai Pszorek – a lawless man with two iron hands, whom Shalom Asz described in his "Motke the Thief". Because of him, the Gentiles were afraid to enter the street...

In an enlightened home

In this alley, deep in a courtyard, stood a separate wooden hut. When we entered the first room, I was surprised. All the walls up to the ceiling were covered with books. On the table, on the benches, on the floor – books and books everywhere. Only on one piece of empty space, opposite windows, were hung the images of Herzl and Nordau. Abraham introduced me to the Erdberg family:

² TN: Territorialists were looking for an alternative homeland for Jews, apart from *Eretz Israel*.

³ TN: that is, one month before Passover.

⁴ TN: AKA Królewska St.

Moshe Erdberg, a Jewish-dressed man with a long black beard into which a single gray hair had been thrown. An enlightened Jew with a very noble demeanor and calm language. His wife, a serious, intelligent person participated with her husband in all Zionist and cultural activities. Their son and daughter grew up in the same spiritual world as their parents, only in radically modern clothing. The whole family was bound up with Zionism.

Moshe Erdberg took the first volume of Graetz's⁵ "History of the Jews" from the bookshelf and, giving me the book, said: "The first thing a Jew needs to know is the history of his people. Take, take it home. Read, read slowly and learn. When you want to relax, you can now read the two brochures I am giving you: 1) 'Moses' by Dr. Yosef Klausner⁶. 2) 'What do you need it for?' by M. L. Lilienblum⁷. The brochures are just out of the Zionist 'One-Kopek Library'⁸ in Odessa".

After the tea with which we were treated, we thanked him and left the house.

Saturday morning, as always, instead of going to the synagogue, I went to the garden. I sat and read the brochures "Moses" and "What do you need it for?". They made a strong impression on me. I have read them several times. Later Abraham came with Manase and two other companions. And finally, one who introduced himself as "Comrade Elberg." A philosophical conversation soon developed: Is there such a thing as absolute, perfect happiness? Manase, who was then working in a soap factory – thought that such a thing was not possible; when life consists of a constant struggle and striving even for those who already have everything and think that they are perfectly happy, death comes and completes the whole account. So, where is the perfect happiness? So, I listened to the debate. Suddenly, Elberg took out a cigarette and started smoking. Although I was not religious at the time, not even praying, I was surprised and confused. Smoking on Shabbat?... Whispering, I asked him: "Tell me, comrade Elberg, I want to know: is there a God?". Elberg looked at me and answered: "I cannot answer you. I can only advise you: read, read more – you will finally find out for yourself"...

Manase's death

A few days later, when I arrived early to work, Abraham was already there. Clean-shaven, sadder, in a soft black hat and a black tie. One could soon see that something terrible had happened. To my silent "what happened?" question, Abraham quietly replied: "Comrade Manase is no more. Yesterday afternoon, he was in the factory, mixing soap in a boiling cauldron; he bent over, fell into the cauldron and was burned." Saying this, tears flowed from his eyes. We also had tears... I do not know where I got the courage from, but I asked Baczke to let me

go to the funeral. I soon added that I would do extra time at work to catch up. Looking at me and Abraham, he agreed without saying a word.

On the same day, the whole *shtetl* became aware of the tragic death of Manase. The "Poalei-Zion" party, together with the "Bund", issued a call to the Jewish workers to suspend work for two hours during the funeral. A small crowd accompanied the coffin from the city to the cemetery, but at the cemetery, near the newly excavated grave, a huge crowd of workers and youth waited. This was done especially so as not to arouse any suspicion on the part of the police. Because speeches against capitalism and for socialism were forbidden – and against the power. For such speeches, people were severely punished and sometimes sent to Siberia.

At the new grave, the first to speak was his close friend Abraham, in a muffled voice, as one speaks to a living: "Comrade Manase, with your death the Jewish workers, the *Poalei-Zion* Party, lost a loyal fighter and the Jewish people – a devoted son. We swear to continue this holy struggle, for the Jewish working class and for its land *Eretz Israel*."

A member of the *Bund*: "Manase is a victim of capitalist exploitation, he was not the first and not the last victim. Although Manase belonged to a different party, a different ideology, he was still one on the labor side. An oppressive power does not make a difference between the parties, it oppresses the class. But we do not need to mourn to continue the struggle with our united forces, for the working class, for its liberation. That is our task."

Other party representatives spoke out. With heavy spirits the big crowd departed.

Late in the evening, on my way home from work, Elberg met me. He calls me into a dark entrance to a house and shoves a bundle of proclamations for me to distribute. "Be careful!", he advised me. After today's events, I took on eagerly what he asked me to do. It was a call to the people: to overthrow the bureaucratic self-rule of tsarism, for freedom, for socialism, and so on.

The next Saturday night, I paid a visit to my uncle Henech. After a while, I pull out a proclamation from my bosom pocket and hand it over. He glanced at it, turned pale and slapped me. "You idiot! Do you know what you are playing with? What do you want, have me sent to Siberia?" He left the house, came back in a few minutes, already calm, without the proclamation. I understood where he had thrown it – in a very disgusting place. I was sorry, but I could not speak, because my uncle was still angry and did not stop scolding me.

I finished reading Graetz's "History of the Jews" and started to read "Old New Land" by Dr. Herzl. This book attracted me like a magnet. Every evening, as soon as I got home from work, I sat down to read by a dark-napkin

⁵ TN: Zvi Hirsh Graetz (31 October 1817, Xions, Prussia, now Poland – 7 September 1891, Munich). Historian, famous for history of the Jews in 11 volumes.

⁶ TN: Historian and Professor of Jewish Literature (20 August 1874 Lithuania – 27 October 1958 Jerusalem).

⁷ TN: Moshe Leib Lilienblum (22 October 1843, Lithuania – 12 February 1910, Odessa). Jewish scholar and author.

⁸ TN: Founded by Yosef Sapir (12 April 1869, Odessa – 3 March 1935, Jerusalem). Zionist leader.

lamp. Once, I was seated, absorbed by my reading, and the father enters. He angrily asks, "Hey, you, have you finished the evening prayers yet? What will be your purpose? What are Dr. Herzl's books worth to you? Go pray, rather." I did not answer – and the storm was over...

Kutner mikveh

The *mikveh* was not far from the *Beit Midrash*. Before entering, the *mikveh* Jew asked me: "Young man, do you want a separate room, or a bath in a common room?". Feeling the ruble in my pocket, I said: "a separate room"... The Jew looks down at me from above and says: "Well, if so, you will have to wait. Today is Passover eve and everyone goes to *mikveh*..."

Crossing the threshold, I could not catch my breath. The thick steam with the smell of sweat stung. The *mikveh* was built as a "U", on the three sides the small rooms and in the middle, stairs going deep down into the *mikveh* to immerse oneself. Opposite this was the large common room of the baths: concrete floor, long benches around the walls, above them, boards with nails to hang the clothes, and near the second wall taps with cold and hot water and many buckets. The bathtubs are scattered in the middle of the room, in no order. The steam and the heat are dense. Jews lie in the baths and moaning with pleasure, others run with empty or full buckets of hot water to shower or pour into the baths.

Naked Jews with broad beards, thick bellies, part with hernia, rashes on the body, hunchbacks, bald head, red eyes and red nose, move in the steam like shadows. Jews with broad shoulders and curved backs – porters. God created them straight, but this life distorted them. A collection of nude shapes and figures...

If only one puts out one leg, another person is already putting his leg in the bath. The used water is not always emptied. One just pours until it is full. When a heavy Jew entered a bath, making a splash, everyone around was drenched. The noise and clamor are deafening. All the time, the *mikveh*-Jew shows up and shouts: "Jews! Hurry up, today is Passover eve, other Jews are waiting for a bath!" Anyone who has not seen the picture cannot imagine it. Hardly anyone can understand today just how serious was the preparation for greeting the sacred holiday...

The "stock exchange"

On Saturday nights was the biggest stroll on the "stock exchange." Meetings were forbidden. If a proclamation or a socialist pamphlet was found on someone, the whole group was arrested and it even ended once with deportation to Siberia. Larger meetings were generally not possible. One piece of advice was given: on Saturday nights, stroll on the avenues that lead hundreds of people to the train. On the surface, it is ostensibly an innocent stroll; but here, everything that is needed is delivered, all decisions, news and demands are made.

I, too, hang out with everyone on the stock exchange. Once with my friend, Kam, but more often with our neighbor's daughter. She was politely called a 14-year-

old girl, but well developed, tall, blond, with blue eyes and two long braids of hair, which were tossed when she walked.

Every second week, on Saturdays, political speeches are held in the park, according to an agreement – each time from a different party. Most speakers came from other cities. All the way from the railway line to the park, some members of the party were spread, to warn if the police showed up and allow the speaker and the audience to disappear...

I was present at several such speeches. I did not really understand much, but I felt a lot... I felt proud and brave to attend an illegal meeting...

Y. L. Perek in Kutno

The revolutionary storm quickly subsided, and the reaction rose again is head. With great cruelty, she suppressed the revolutionary movement. The speakers no longer came. The speeches in the forest in the park had stopped. The "stock market" also weakened. Their place had been taken by literary activity. In Kutno, a branch of the St Petersburg "Jewish Literary Society" was formed. Virtually the entire youth got involved in reading books. While walking, many boys and girls carried booklets under their arms. The book was fashionable...

The biggest celebrations for the youth were the literary lectures that took place in the city theater. There were such personalities as Y. L. Perek, Hillel Zeitlin, H. D. Nomberg and other great writers. Posters were posted in the city – half Yiddish, half Polish, to the effect that Perek will have a lecture, e.g.: "The Yiddish Literature". On Saturday evening, before the appointed time, we would go into a festive mood to the theater. The hall was filled not only with Yiddish-speakers, but also with half and fully assimilated intelligentsia. On stage – a table with a red bouquet of flowers. When Perek appeared in the hall, everyone stood up and gave him a stormy ovation. While speaking, there would be a restrained, strained silence. After the lecture, the audience applauded for a long, long time. Until late at night, people stood in conversation and chatted, discussing the thoughts that Perek had expressed. I did not understand much, only feeling all the exalted mood and the magic of his personality...

Young Zionists Union

In the summer of 1912, On the 9th of Av, on my own initiative, in the garden on "Cobbler Street", was held the founding meeting of a *Zeirei-Zion* Union, as it was called at that time. Some twenty young people took part. After my brief introduction, Abraham Erdberg, a well-known *Zeirei-Zion* figure in the city made a lengthy speech. His speech seemed to be strong and convincing enough, as all the participants declared their allegiance to the new union. The following were elected to the committee: Comber, Erdberg, the writer of these lines, and others. Due to the weakened partisan-political activity in those years, the emergence of the new organization aroused interest and awakening among the Jewish youth in Kutno. Many of them became loyal, devoted colleagues of *Zeirei-Zion*.

Shortly after the meeting, I left Poland and settled in England.

In England, Argentina and Uruguay

After a year of living in London, the *Zeirei-Zion* in the British capital numbered about 600 members who, together with other Jewish workers and general organizations, staged a large-scale street demonstration against the Beilis trial⁹, which took place in Kiev that year (1913). About 50,000 Jews took part in the demonstration. I was one of the speakers. That same year, I had the honor of chairing an evening with the participation of Shalom Aleichem, who was in London on his way to the United States. Fate had it that, three years later, after the death of the great writer, I should chair the memorial service in London.

In 1915, Ber Borocho¹⁰ came to London and spent many days in the British Museum, for reading, teaching and studying. The close acquaintance with this interesting personality greatly influenced my further life course and also in the case of Borocho, a strange coincidence happened, that three years later I had to eulogize him at a mourning meeting in Buenos-Aires, Argentina.

In 1915, I was elected to the Central Committee of *Poalei-Zion* in England. A little later, I met Vladimir Jabotinsky, where he spread his idea of a Jewish Legion in England and found many supporters for it. He came to a meeting of the Central Committee of *Poalei-Zion*, to refer to the necessity of this Legion. Here, as everywhere, he encountered a great deal of opposition, but the next morning I, with another comrade, Firszt, joined the General-Jewish Committee for the Legion.

In 1916, as a sailor (because there was no other legal option to leave England as an English citizen – it was not possible), I arrived in Argentina where I spoke in the local press and in public speeches about the importance of the Jewish Legion. Here, too, a *Poalei-Zion* party was formed on my initiative. At the request of the Central Committee, I visited the provinces and the Jewish colonies in Argentina, founded by Baron Hirsch. I also organized (for the first time in Buenos Aires) a street demonstration on May Day, with red flags and orchestra.

In 1917, I moved to Uruguay, in the capital Montevideo, where about 300 Jewish families lived at the time. My lecture was attended by about a hundred listeners and a *Poalei Zion* party was formed in Uruguay. After two months in this country, I returned to Argentina. Here, I spread the news of the Balfour Declaration. I presented lectures on its meaning and published articles on the subject in the Yiddish press. I called on the Jewish youth to join the Legion. It did not take long and we were privileged to have the happy moment: voluntary Jewish youth going to the shores of *Eretz Israel*, to fight for a Jewish state with arms in hand, accompanied by over

10,000 Jews to the ship and I were able to speak from the ship to the enthusiastic crowd.



The author – In uniform of the Jewish Legion (1917)

We left Argentina. On the way, the ship stopped in Brazil, where a delegation from the Jewish community prepared a warm welcome for us.

Back in Kutno – through *Eretz Israel*

Arriving in England, we were taught military laws in the city of Plymouth for six weeks. Then, a 1000 youths from America and other countries traveled to *Eretz-Israel*. It was ceasefire time and our tasks were only to guard Turkish prisoners of war, patrol, guard. The war was almost over and the English did not have much interest in teaching us as real soldiers. Jabotinsky disagreed with this approach, arguing that day in and day out we should be taught how to use weapons, make drills and perform other military tasks. There was also the question of reorganizing the demobilized Legionnaires later. I was part of a delegation, along with David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, who demanded that the 7,000 Legionnaires be allowed to settle in the country.

⁹ TN: blood-libel accusation against Menachem Mendel Beilis, leading to a famous trial in Kiev 1913, where he was recognized innocent.

¹⁰ TN: Marxist Zionist and leader of *Poalei Zion*, (3 July 1881, Ukraine – 17 December 1917, Kiev).

At that time, the *Poalei Zion* Conference was held at Spector's Hotel in Jaffa, which had to decide on a merger with *HaPoel HaZair*, which actually took place in Petah Tikva. I was delegated to the Jaffa Conference by the 38th Battalion of the Jewish Legion.

We opted to meet with Jabotinsky and talk with him about the need to turn the demobilized Legionnaires into settlers. Meanwhile, word spread that the first to be demobilized would be the legionnaires of Argentina, because this country was neutral in World War I. At my request, Jabotinsky confirmed this information in writing, adding that we must not allow ourselves to be demobilized as long as the peace treaty has not been signed.

In 1919, I returned to Poland. At the train station in Warsaw, gendarmes with guns were waiting for me and took me to the police, where I was accused of... bolshevism. That night was spent sleeping on a hard bench in a police station. In the morning, a military investigator checked all my papers and released me. I traveled to Kutno.

During my seven years of absence, the city had changed. Especially its Jewish inhabitants. They were torn

apart in those days of social confusion and storm. Almost all the parties and organizations that worked in liberating Poland had their successors in Kutno. I made an appearance there, at a meeting of *Poalei-Zion* and later, I found myself at the cemetery eulogizing an active party-member, a younger daughter of Shaye the boot-sewer.

The Central Committee of *Poalei-Zion* decided to send me to lecture in the provinces. While in Dobczyce¹¹, I learned that the Kutno police had twice searched my parents' home. I took my decision, left Poland and returned to London.

In 1920, I participated in the Fifth World Conference of the *Poalei-Zion* in Vienna, at which the split on the Right and Left took place. From Vienna, I traveled back to London in the same train compartment as David Ben-Gurion. Although we did not belong to the same party, our friendship continued.



When I left the country, I settled in Israel.

¹¹ TN: small town 20 km south of Cracow.