

Bialystok Jewish Cemetery
A historical study commissioned by
the District Enterprise of Municipal Economy in Bialystok

Commissioner: Mrg. Barbara Tomacka

in cooperation with conservators:

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I. *Preliminary Information:*

This historical study concerns the Jewish cemetery in Białystok, located at Wschodnia Street.

It was developed at the request of Regency Enterprise of Municipal and Housing Management in Białystok (*Rejonowego Przedsiębiorstwa Gospodarki Komunalnej i Mieszkaniowej w Białymstoku*). During the work a number of difficulties were encountered, the most serious was the lack of archival materials that would answer the following questions: when and from whom was the land for cemeteries bought, are its borders shown on the plan of Białystok from 1937 the same as when it was marked out? No cemetery plan was found.

Further obstacles are the inaccessible archives of the *Jewish Historical Institute* /no employees?/, renovation of the library at this institute, as well as the unfinished work on the tombstone records carried out by Janine Tyszka at the order of the *Voivodship Conservator of Historic in Białystok*. To date / i.e. until March 1985/, the inscriptions were read, and registration cards were placed for about 100 gravestones. Around 6,000 tombstones survived until 1984. If we assume that only 1/3 has inscriptions, there still is a lot to read. The inscriptions are mainly in Hebrew. When preparing record cards, group support is needed, and there are not many people willing to do this job.

The unfinished accounting work hampers the analysis of sepulchral monuments, and, also, makes it impossible to develop a catalog of sepulchral monuments.

This documentation is amended from the development of a catalogue of sepulchral monuments and instead the chapter-list of sepulchral monuments with registration cards. **Recognized as monuments, all tombstones preserved in the cemetery, regardless of their time of creation or artistic values, because the Jewish cemetery together with the tombstones is the only witness in Białystok of the existence of a large Jewish community here.**

At the same time, it should be pointed out, that after the completion of work on the sepulchral register the list of sepulchral monuments with registration cards can be updated. During this study, a rich collection of photographs and negatives were taken of the Jewish cemetery in Białystok, located in the Office of Research and Documentation of Monuments in Białystok. I will use photographic materials to develop analysis of sepulchral monuments. They have also been used in the photographic part of this report. Most likely, the selection of the photographic material that had to be carried out was not the best. Not included are the pictures of all the symbols appearing on the tombstones. This study was aware of the impossibility of presenting all the pictures.

Given that the development of record cards of tombstones is an integral part of this report, one copy should be given to each interested party: i.e. the cemetery, Municipal Office; Department of Municipal Economy and Housing.

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II. *Summary of materials used in this report:* See list in original

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III. *Object Topography*

The Jewish Cemetery in Bialystok was established c. 1890 until 1943, owned by the Jewish Municipality in Bialystok. Abandoned in 1966, it was taken over by the Treasury.

The cemetery is located in the northern part of Bialystok, at the southern end of the Bialy-Suprasl Road. The Jewish cemetery is located just west of this road.

The Jewish cemetery is separated from the road earlier marked out. In 1888, the cemetery of the Roman Catholic parish of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, from U. Wschodnia shares its southern and western borders with the Jewish cemetery. Single-family houses have been prominent in the eastern end of the Jewish cemetery.

The Jewish cemetery at Ul. Wschodnia in the 19th century was located in the village of Bagnowka, a commune of Dojlidy. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the village of Bagnowka was a key component of the Karakul-Sobolewski (?), owned by the Radziwill family. From 1807, together with the entire municipality, it found itself in the Russian partition. After the First World War, in 1919, it found itself within the borders of Bialystok, when, pursuant to the ordinance of the Komisarza Generalnego Ziem Wschodnich, the area of Bialystok was enlarged, absorbing the suburbs.

In the Wygoda district, at the end of the nineteenth century, next to these cemeteries, an Orthodox cemetery and an Evangelical cemetery were also marked out. The Orthodox cemetery was located on the eastern side of Ul Wasilkowska Street, at its intersection with the road to Suprasl; the Evangelical cemetery / 1883 / was located on the left side of Ul. Wasilkowska and on the south side of the highway. These cemeteries were marked out from the **building** (? *Od zabudowy*).

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The Jewish cemetery on Ul. Wschodnia street was established when in the Jewish district of ul. Kalinowskiego / ul. Bema / there were two Jewish cemeteries: one from 1766 / at ul. Sosnewej, next to Kalinowskiego /, the other at ul. Bema from 1849. The synagogue was also located in this district / next to ul. Wesolowski/.

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IV. History of the Cemetery

Already, in the 16th Century, the Jews settled in Bialystok. The first Jewish cemetery was established before 1580 on the back of the southern frontage of the market. In 1772 he was closed.¹

The Jewish community was founded in the early 18th century. According to church documents, this took place in 1771. Some historians believe that the *kehilla* was established with the permission that Jews obtained from the **body** (*od wlascie ciela Bialeostoku*) of Bialystok in 1718 to build the

synagogue.² In 1764, a new building was erected opposite the existing synagogue, which survived until the end of the 19th century.³ In 1765, the Jewish population of Białystok was 761 people.

Through the initiative of the funeral fraternity Hewra Kadisz in 1766, the Jewish cemetery was marked out at ul. Kalinowskiego / u. Sosnowa /.³

J.K. Branicki, who was the town's owner, **moderated the care** (? *Otaczał opieką*) of Jews living in Białystok. Among others, they gained the right to free grazing of cattle on land and pastures, were excluded from municipal authority, and subordinated to court. In 1766, burghers and Jews were subordinated to the landowner's authorities.⁴

At the end of the 18th century, the number of Jewish inhabitants of Białystok increased significantly, to 1,788 people. At that time, the population of Białystok numbered 3,930.⁵

In the nineteenth century, the population of the city was increasing rapidly, including the population of the Jewish (Mosaic) religion. In 1840, the demarcation of a new Jewish cemetery was drawn. It was located next to Ul Bema.⁶

At the end of the 19th century, the Jewish population constituted 77.9% of the city's population. Catholics, at that time, constituted 9.5% of the population, Orthodox, 7%, Protestants 5.5% and other denominations 1.1%. Such proportions survived until 1914, i.e. until the First World War began.⁷

Most likely, with such a large Jewish population, the existing cemeteries were insufficient and that is why around 1890 the cemetery in Bagnowka was established.

In the late nineteenth century, there was a tendency to move cemeteries outside the city, thus the former evangelical cemetery / 1883/, when the evangelical cemetery at ul. Suraska / next to Ul. Mazowiecka / [was closed], later the Roman Catholic and Orthodox cemeteries were marked out when the cemetery at Sosnowa Street and at Rocha Chapel were closed. All comparable cemeteries were located in the Wygoda district. In 1890, a new Jewish cemetery was established in this neighborhood. It was not possible to determine when and from whom the commune bought land for the cemetery. The Jewish cemetery was not yet marked on the city map from 1887. In Sections I and II of the Jewish Cemetery, there was a tombstone, on which the dates of death were read, 1874, 1876.⁸ This fact did not have any connection with the demarcation of the cemetery before 1890, although it may have been. It can be assumed that the date indicates death and not about the fact that a tombstone was issued this year. Transfer of the corpse from the family to other cemeteries was allowed. There were such cases among the Jews of Białystok, although confirmation in archival documentation of exhumation and transfer of corpses in the 1930s [is no longer extant].⁹

It was not possible to determine what area the cemetery had at the time of its demarcation. In 1937, the area of the cemetery was 12.5 ha. Most likely it was the same as when it was laid out.¹⁰ Presumably, just after the demarcation, the Jewish cemetery was fenced with a brick wall, not plastered. This wall has survived in fragments to this day.

The adjacent Roman Catholic cemetery was surrounded by an identical wall. In the southern part of the fence of the Jewish cemetery was a brick gate, plastered, finished with a square cornice, open in the middle part of the arch(?). Originally, the gate was two or three openings: on the axis in the middle part, the entrance clearance closed with a lowered hatch in the triangular/arched gable; a recess, most likely a breach after an inscription plaque. Presumably, the cemetery wall was covered with bricks?, as was the case in the fence of the Catholic cemetery. Other gates, similar in appearance, were located on Ul. Cmentarna, from which the cemetery was bordered on the west. Ul. Cmentarna separated the Jewish cemetery from the above-mentioned Catholic one. In approximately 1949, this street ceased to exist.

On the side of the gate on Ul. Wschodnia, there were two buildings in the area of the cemetery.¹¹ No mention was made of their structure, appearance, and functions. Most likely one of them served as a funeral home, the other a gravedigger's house.

In 1905-1906 anti-Jewish riots took place in Bialystok. On July 30, 1905, riots broke out, the result of which was 39 people / 23 men and 16 women/ died that day.¹² The bloodiest pogrom of Jews in Bialystok took place in June 1906. Apart from those killed and wounded, many apartments, shops and factories were plundered.

In honor of those murdered, at the Jewish cemetery near Ul. Wschodnia a monument was erected. The erected obelisk was made of black marble, extremely valuable. The epitaph carved on this monument was composed by the Hebrew poet Zalman Schneour.¹³

Suprasl residents were buried next to the Jews of Bialystok at the Jewish cemetery in Bialystok.

Although the Civil Registry Files of the Jewish Community located in the Civil Registry Office in Bialystok are complete, they should be treated with caution, as they do not state at which of the three Jewish cemeteries the dead were honored.

Most likely, from 1890, the Jewish dead were buried in the cemetery at Ul. Wschodnia, although funerals had to take place on the old one (cemetery). This took place, for example, in 1920, when Bialystok was occupied by the Soviet army, due to the distance from the [Bagnowka] cemetery to the city of the deceased at the old cemetery at Sosnowa Street, which was already closed / in its western part from Odeska Street/.¹⁴

After the Soviet army left the city, a ceremonial funeral of the killed Jews on August 25, 1920 took place on the cemetery. The funeral was held on August 29. The widowers Gabriel Gurman, Benjamin Damski, Ickok Fizer, Benjamin Garber, Icko Zlotarz were buried.¹⁵

In 1922, the concrete *ohel* was built on the cemetery for Chaim Hertz Halpner {Halpern}. It was founded by Bialystok Jews living in New York. The emigration of Bialystok Jews to America, Argentina and Palestine took place in the 1880s.¹⁶

The cemetery on Ul. Wschodnia street operated until 1941, i.e. until Bialystok was occupied by the Germans. The cemetery at Ul. Zabia was marked out in the created ghetto. The Bialystok ghetto was liquidated in 1943.

Table: A list of the Jewish population who died in Bialystok in 1890-1942. Ed. based on data from the Registry Office in Bialystok.

Year	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897
Deaths	641		657	699	842			658
Year	1898	1899	1900	1901	1902	1903	1904	
Deaths	782	806	999		769		485	

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Year	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913
Deaths	672	687	602	604	681	618		506	590
Year	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1922
Deaths	568	818	862	1263	965	957	953	502	320?
Year	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Deaths	408	442	426	464	402	409	446	411	435
Year	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Deaths	439	498	441	477	476	526	496	720	

Year	1941	1942
Deaths	969	941 ¹⁷

[Total Deaths: 29,332]

The above data shows that every year from 1890 to 1943, about 500 burials (average) came to the Jewish cemetery, the highest mortality among the population, and, thus, the most burials were during the war and after the First World War.

The Jewish cemetery on Wschodnia operated for 50 years. Data on burials in 1941 and 1942 refer to the cemetery at Zabia.

During the years when the cemetery functioned, about 76 plots [sections?] were marked out. According to the residents of Bialystok, the cemetery at Wschodnia survived the war without any damage.

Deprived of care, as the Jewish Community in Bialystok ceased to exist after 1943, i.e., after the liquidation of the ghetto and deportation of the Jewish population to Majdanek, it slowly began to be destroyed. In 1966, the State Treasury took it over.

The last burial took place at the cemetery on April 14, 1969, until then the cemetery had no decision to close.

In 1970, the Voivodship National Council made a proposal to take care of the cemetery to take over for the Religious Association of the Mosaic Confession in Warsaw.¹⁸

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The appeal of the Voivodship National Council remained unanswered. The cemetery was unusable, without care it was further devastated. The fence was completely demolished, and marble tombstones were stolen. An unfortunate decision was also made to build single-family houses in the cemetery.

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V. Characteristics of the Cemetery

A. Spatial Layout.

The cemetery was marked out on the plan of an irregular polygon; at the turn of the 19th and 20th century it was surrounded by a brick wall, *not plastered*.

Presumably the wall was covered with **bricks**?. Fragments of the wall survived until 1978 on Ul. Wschodnia / photo. 16 / and from the side of the Roman Catholic cemetery. Partially preserved is the gate on Ul. Wschodnia, brick-built, *not plastered*. **Currently single-axis, wide entry clearance on the axles closed with a lowered hatch. The hatch underlined by a brick cornice, in the triangular trough of the indentation, will probably break out of the originally fixed plaque with the inscription. /?/**

Due to the large area, the cemetery had more entrances, probably from Cmentarna Street. One of them was probably on the axis of the monument erected in 1905 in honor of the victims of the pogrom.

The plan of the cemetery, marked on the city map in 1937, as well as the current plan of the cemetery from 1984 on a scale of 1: 500 shows that the quarters/sections at the Jewish cemetery were marked out regularly. They occupied the South-West and North-West part of the cemetery. In the *middle* of the cemetery, a monument to the victims of the pogrom, a black marble obelisk, was erected. / Photo. 13 /.

The paths between the plots have ground surface. Jewish cemeteries were usually filled without paths and avenues, and to save places they were buried in layers. At the cemetery at ul. Wschodnia, we are dealing with planned activities. Matzevot and gravestones were arranged in rows. Currently, this is not easy to say, because the spatial arrangement of the cemetery is blurred by overgrowing alleys and quarters with self-seeding, turned over matzevot and other types of tombstones. The eastern part of the cemetery was completely destroyed due to the construction of buildings.

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B. Vegetation

Plant cover of the cemetery consists mainly of native species (except Siberian carragans), deciduous species predominate. Only in the north-east part of the cemetery there is Scots pine. *The cemetery was completely devoid of any trees. The current stand is self-seeding.* No regular plantings.

The southwestern part of the cemetery is covered by multi-species thickets, among which there is common ash, ash-leaved maple, Norway maple, silver birch and common lilac. The regulations of the Jewish cemeteries were also neglected, and it was forbidden to pick grass from the cemetery. They were visited once a year, during the month of Elul / September /. Priests did not enter the cemetery, except on the occasion of the death of someone from the family. The dead were prayed for in the houses and synagogues. Undoubtedly, this contributed to overgrowing of cemeteries with self-seeding.

Species of trees and trees protruding in the cemetery

Pinus Silvestris – Scottish Pine

Robina Pseudoacacia - Locust

Fraxinus Excelsior – Ash tree

Quercus Rubera – Red Oak

Acer Platanoides- Norway Maple

Acer Negundo – Ash-leaved Maple

Caragana Arborescens – Siberian Carragana

Cratargus Monogyna – Single Hawthorne

Betula Verucosa – Silver Birch

Prunus Sp - Sliwa

Rosa Sp -Rose

Caprinus Betulus - Hornbeam

C. Conditions

The cemetery is preserved in poor condition. The fence was dismantled. It was not until 1984 that it was again fenced. The eastern part was completely destroyed. Houses were erected on it. Between the houses, *there is a hill made of tombstones moved from old Jewish cemeteries* (ze starych cmentarzy zydowskich). The old alley system is being obliterated by overgrowing with self-seeding plants, which also destroys gravestones.

The most valuable marble tombstones were stolen. A similar fate befell granite stelae, after which only plinths are left. *Presumably the matzevot from the eastern part of the cemetery were used as material for foundations of the surrounding houses.*

Tombstones in the western part of the cemetery are in poor condition, often broken, stelae fallen. The matzevot are covered with moss which destroys the inscriptions, damp.

The only *ohel* in the cemetery without doors and windows is exposed to devastation.

The tombstones in the northern cemetery are mostly devoid of inscription plaques, so it is not possible to determine who belongs [to each stone].

Near the *ohel* there are fragments of gravestones / plinths and fragments of cast iron fence, rusted, broken.

VI. Analysis of sepulchral monuments.

The tombstones preserved at the cemetery come from the end of the 19th century and from the middle of the 20th century. From the twentieth century, *matzevot* / Jewish gravestones in the form of a vertically arranged stone slab/, topped with a half-circle, decorated with a flat relief and covered with an inscription. In the upper part of the *matzevah*, symbolic representations were placed. They are made of sandstone or granite [for] obelisk tombstones. With a pedestal stand, the tree of life was made of marble or granite.

The oldest tombstones are preserved in the south-west part of the cemetery / section I-IV /. In sections I and II there are gravestones with the date of death earlier than the date of the cemetery / 1874, 1876 /.

The basic type of tombstone found at the cemetery on Wschodnia street is a *matzevah* made of sandstone, embedded in the ground / photo. 33, 34 / or mounted on a pedestal / photo. 41, 58 /.

Matzevot embedded in the ground are plates [slabs] in the form of a cuboid, and such cuboid narrowed at the top. In the upper part of the *matzevot*, using bas-relief technique, pictographic symbolic elements are carved out (e.g. photo 35.36), often also symbolic elements are engraved / photo. 61 /, beneath

which an inscription was placed in a separate engraved rectangle. There are also matzevot with no symbols.

There were occasional *matzevot*, whose inscriptional plates were framed by pilasters. Their basic element was a vertical panel, placed on a high pedestal, with decorative framing. One such type preserved at the cemetery was made in 1922. A plate is placed on a rectangular pedestal, an inscription board is placed on the western front wall, placed vertically between a pair of pilasters. Pilasters without plinths, with gelled stems, with heads of stylized acanthus leaves. The plate is topped with a gable closed by a half-polished stone. The side corners of the gable are decorated with a pair of accretionaries in the shape of a stylized polpalmet.

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At the top, two triangles were entwined in the form of the star of David. On the base there is a deepened panel with corners cut out, on the panel an inscription-Hebrew letters T.N.S.B.H. / May his/her soul be bound in the wreath of eternal life./ A frequent type of gravestone is the obelisk. It was made of granite or black marble. In Section I, two examples of marble tombstone have been preserved. The obelisks were given a simple geometric form, without decorative elements. In the 20th century, plinths of this type of tombstones were made of sandstone, molded into stone blocks, on the western wall, with an inscription in Russian, German or Hebrew. The inscription was engraved on a placard/plaque, often made in the form of a scroll rolled up at the bottom. The obelisk was made of granite. The inscription on it was in Hebrew. An example of this type is the gravestone of Dawid J. Szapiro, who died in 1920 / at the age of 65, a merchant. / Currently, the tombstone has no upper part, which lies at the base. The condition as of 1982 is seen in a photograph from the BBiDZ collection in Bialystok. The tombstone is in Section 24.

Another type of gravestone from the beginning of the 20th century is a tombstone in the form of a tree of life / photo 32 /, made of granite. A preserved example of such a gravestone is in Section I.

Due to the ban on placing sculptures and figural ornaments in the cemetery, the tombstones in the cemetery were modest. The tombs of the aristocracy were distinguished only by the richness of marble. The oldest tombstone found in the cemetery from 1874 was made of marble. It was erected for Ester Rozenhal. The upper part of the obelisk is broken off, the remainder of the inscription in Hebrew [reads]:

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[?????] / Mrs. Ester MOWICA(?), daughter our rabbi and Hacoheh Zeew Wolf, of blessed memory. / The wife of Rabbi Mosze Meir may his memory be blessed, / Rozenhal. / She departed on Thursday 13 Nisan / III-IV / 634/1874 / WMD / according to the smaller date / T.N.S.B.H. / May her soul be bound in the wreath of eternal life /.19

In addition to sandstone, granite and marble, concrete is used to make tombstones as well. It was used for sarcophagi located in the cemetery and the *ohel*. Sarcophagi in Section III have decorative elements. The *ohel* was built in 1922 from the funds of the Bialystok Jews, who emigrated to New York. It was built

on a square plan, covered with a tent roof. The door opening is in the south wall, the window openings in the west and east walls. The windowpanes (?) are enclosed in flat bands. Originally, the door was filled with a single-leaf door with a transom. There were windows in the window openings. The window and door openings are rectangular topped with a half circle. On the eastern side of the doorway, an inscription in Hebrew is engraved: "This *Ohel* / built by the Congregation / people of Bialystok in New York in America / 50 years ago/ in the month Elul / 1922." / Photo. 31 /.²⁰

A similar *ohel*, according to the accounts of Monika Krajewska, was in Zabłudow.

Inscriptions were engraved on all tombstones on the west side. The letters were there. According to J. Tyszko, spelling mistakes are often found in the Hebrew text. Next to Hebrew we find verses in Yiddish. An example would be the tombstone of Meir Sturmak, located in Section XXIII from 1920. Afterwards, a short inscription in Hebrew:

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Here our dearest and a respectable man was buried, our honest and righteous master, our teacher Rabbi Meir son of Rabbi Tudrus Sturmak. He passed away in the eighth day, Holy Sukkot 681/1920 /T.N.S.B.H. [There is a verse in Yiddish:] "Kinder Gedannkt ojer Fater [Children, Remember your father]."

The impact of the assimilation on the Jews of Bialystok is visible on many obelisks, tombstones and tree-style monuments. Jews from the second half of the nineteenth century often began to use Christian tombstones, analogous tombstones such as the tree-of-life on a pedestal. The obelisk occurs in the nearby Roman Catholic and Orthodox cemeteries.

Inscriptions on this type of tombstones were engraved in Hebrew and Russian, as well as Hebrew and German, and in the 1930s in Polish / phot. 50 /.

For example, inscriptions in German can be tombstones / actually plinths / in Section I:

The tenderest daughter rests here, the joyful wife, the ? mother, Mrs. Marie 'Minna' Kohn. Born Goldbaum. Born on 14 Tischri in 1885. Died on 27 Adar in 1901. May your memory be blessed. "/ Foto 40 /

On a similar tombstone of Hanny Rubinstein [in German]: "Here rests Hanna Rubinstein, Born 1816, Died 1898."

Examples of inscriptions in Russian are on the gravestones of, in Section I /photos 39,37 /, Szlomy Hirsza Zina and D.O. Menachowski; in Section XXIV that of D.M. Shapira.

At the Bialystok cemetery, among those inscriptions preserved and read, short inscriptions have the advantage. They inform about the name of the deceased, his father's name and surname, in the case of a woman, the husband's name and surname, the date of death, as well as positive features of the deceased. An example may be the inscriptions cited above.

Among the inscriptions of the nineteenth century, which were read, there are examples describing in detail the life of the deceased / photo. 33 /:

The aged old man, aged eighty, lived with his excellent reason in accordance with the Torah and in fear of God - the treasures of the whole soul he loved the Torah and knowledge in truth and nobility was the support of our teacher, Reb Naphtali Herc, son of Rabbi Yehoshua of blessed memory ... in Lithuania was his city of birth; he was a great merchant from his youth. Until old age, he dealt much with Torah. in the year 639 / 1878-79 /, during his stay in the city of St. Petersburg, he suddenly succumbed to an injury because he was run over by a carriage and broke his leg and from that time he walked with a crutch for the remaining days of his life / ... /photo 35 /.

Let the great and righteous husband rest here, God save him. Our wise rabbi and learned son of Rabbi Mordechaj, of blessed Memory, Wendel, whose life flame died in the ninetieth year of his life, [he departed] to eternity on day 11 and VII-VIII 654/1894 / in a good old age, without jealousy and hatred, favored people honestly towards his brothers, all his deeds will be judged on the lips of many, in fear of God. He has done all, his days were happy, may he receive good (?) judgment from TNSBH / let his soul be included in the wreath of eternal life.

Inscriptions on women's tombstones mainly praise virtue and piety of the deceased /Photo 36/: "Here lies a God-fearing woman who hardly did anything without the fear of the heavens, generous lady Rachel Hinda, daughter of Rabbi Mosze Chackeles, wife of rabbi Kaplan. / A the age of seventy-six she departed on Wednesday 26 Nisan III-IV 653/1893. W.M.D. according to a small date. / T.N.S.B.H / May her soul be bound in the wreath of eternal life.

The Hebrew letters P.N. are found on nearly all tombstones. / skrot - tu rests here / and T.N.S.B.H./ May her / his / his soul be bound in the wreath of eternal life.

Religious prohibition prohibits the depiction of human figures in Jewish art. Often there is a hand alone. Ornaments are plant motifs / incl. **winna latorosi** (?) of animals / animals, objects related to worship, representations of birds, fantasy creatures / m. in. gryphons /, crowns.

At the same time, there are ornaments specific to European art: various motifs, cartouches, and a vase with flowers.²³ On the tombstones, next to these motifs, there can also be symbols related to the profession of the deceased / such symbols are found in the cemeteries in Warsaw and Krakow/. In the Bialystok cemetery their occurrence was not found. General symbols of death, broken candles and broken trees are found. **drowning periods** (?tonace okrenty) / in Bialystok at Ul. Wschodnia was not found.

The sign distinguishing the graves of priests / kohen / from the Aharon family are two hands joined in blessing, fingers spread apart, thumbs and index fingers touching each other. Levites /priests helpers /

washed their hands before the blessing. They have gravestones with a view of the bowl and pitcher or hands with a pitcher. The writer, rewriting the holy scroll on the tombstone, had a carved hand holding a goose pen, books, a sheet of paper. Studying the Bible was the most vigorous occupation and the highest virtue for Jews.

The women had carved candlesticks on their tombstones because they lit the Sabbath candles on Friday evening. In addition, **guilty of** birds (?winna latorosl ptaki), birds symbolized the death of a young woman, who left small children.

In some cemeteries next to the representation of exotic animals such as lions, tigers, there are native animals such as squirrels, storks, hares, dogs, frogs. There are no such symbols at the cemetery on Wschodnia. Often, although not always, the animal symbolized the name of the deceased: Lew-Arie; Hebrew name /Lejb / in Yiddish; Jelen = Ciwi, Hirs; Niedzwiedz - Dow, Ber, **Golab** - Jonah, in some cases the name David symbolized the star of David in the matzevot.²⁴

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At the Bialystok cemetery, we find tombstones where the lion symbolizes the name of the deceased, for example, the tombstone in Section 3 of Ari Lejb Farber from 1905. Under the relief of the lion, an inscription in Hebrew: "Childlike and righteous of God, God keep him, / designates his destiny according to the course. / Lord of Honor / Our Master, Our dear Rabbi Arie Lejb, son of Rabbi Chaim Farber. Died 22 Sivan V-VI 665 /1905/ T.N.S.B.H.":²⁵

An example, when the lion is only a symbol of belonging to the Jewish people of the tribe of Judah, and not a symbol of the name may be the matzevah of Jehuda Wendel / photo. 35 /, located in Section I.

The symbol of the name are also two deer on the matzeva Ciwi Hirsza Smagler d. in 1906, and in the third quarter. "A Good and Righteous Man, Let God Preserve Him / Our Master Our Rnauzycie rabi, Ciwi Hirsz Son of Rabbi Jehoszua Smagler / He Gone On Sunday 5 Elul VIII-IX / 666/1906 / W.M.D./ T.N.S.B.H /." ²⁶

Matzevah, located in Section 4, belonging to Dawid Sidronski, from 1910 / photo. 46 /, the star of David is crowned and, in this case, it symbolizes the name of the deceased. There are gravestones in the cemetery where the star is not a symbol of the name, but of the week, where the middle field indicates the Sabbath day, while the tops of the Triangles / Star of David are arranged in two Triangles / six days of the week. The authors of the tombstones are unknown, most likely they were of local origin.

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Symbols appearing on matzevot in the cemetery at Ul. Wschodnia

I. Symbols of woman's death

- three-pronged candelabra
- three-pronged candelabra with two leaves
- three-pronged candelabra with bowed/broken? candles and two birds
- five-pronged candelabra with two birds

- three-pronged candelabra with broken candles
- three-pronged candelabra with bowed/broken? candles
- seven-pronged candelabra/ menorah
- broken tree, bird
- two candles, between them a piggy bank [tseddaka box], symbol of the deceased's charitable activity

Symbols of man's death

- named Arie – lion
- named Tsvi – two deer
- belonging to the Jewish people – lion leaning on a book, a lion, lion leaning on a tree, two lions leaning on a book, two griffons in the middle of a vase, two griffons, a deer
- named David – Star of David,
- belonging to the priests, descendants of Aaron – Crown of Torah and hands, hands
- scholar – book
- education, charity of the deceased - book, hand throwing a coin into the piggy bank [tseddaka box]
- charity, charity - pious piggy bank, Torah defender - heraldic cartouche / Torah shield symbol

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VII. List of gravestones with registration cards

Section I

1. Gravestone of Rachel Kaplan, daughter of Mosze Chackels, d. 1893, made of sandstone, concrete, dimensions 91x64x12. Condition: matzevah covered with moss, damp, broken edges. /photo 36/.
2. Grave of no name, end of the XIX century. /photo 33/ made of sandstone, dimensions 75x56x10, condition: tombstone broken, covered with moss.
3. Gravestone of Meity Dewory [Mrs. Devora], daughter of Benjamin, died 1895. Made of sandstone, dimensions 130x59x10. Condition: covered with moss, damp, left-side broken. /photo 34/ NOT EXTANT 2020
4. Gravestone of Chaya Lampert, daughter of Tsvi Hirsz Lampert, died end of XIX century, make of sandstone, dimensions 109x55x9, condition: covered with moss, sides broken. NOT EXTANT 2020
5. Gravestone of Jehuda Wendel, son of Mordechai, died 1894, made of sandstone, dimensions 110x55x12, condition: good, in some places covered with moss, damp in lower part.

6. Gravestone of Fejgel Tiferman [Tibermas], daughter of Gaon Yehuszua, died 1901, sandstone, concrete, dimensions 121x53x10, condition: matzevah inclined forward from the sarcophagus, covered with moss, wet below.

7. Gravestone of Gitel (not Nitel) Lipszic, died end of XIX century, sandstone, dimensions 122x55x1?, condition: the stone lies on the ground, covered with moss, broken at 122cm height. Broken edges, damaged inscription board. [reference here is to the old, damaged stone of Gitel Lipszic not the new granite one standing adjacent]

8. Gravestone Malka Litwinski, daughter of Eli Tsvi Litwinski from Karbin [Kobrin?], died 1899, made of sandstone and concrete, dimensions 41x53x12, condition; stone is covered with moss, broken at 41cm height, damp, covered with moss.

9. Gravestone of Ester Rozenhal, daughter of cohen, Zeev Wolf, died 1874 [1894 error in report], made of black marble, dimensions 95x47x28. Condition: obelisk collapsed broken in two parts, next to the pedestal on which the obelisk stood.

10. Gravestone of Rachel Wigdorowicz, daughter of Gershon Hefner, died 1902, made of black marble, obelisk fallen in good condition.

11. Gravestone of Mrs. Feigel, daughter of Sender Peres [Pres], died 1894, made of sandstone, dimensions 91x54x11. Condition: good, leaning slightly backwards. Lichen(?) in several places, covered with moss, floral ornament at the bottom covered with moss and sand.

Section II

12. Gravestone of Mrs. Bili, daughter of Israel, died 1897, made of sandstone, dimensions 106x52x11, good condition.

13. Gravestone of Nata Potok, son of Ari Lejb, died 1914, made of sandstone, dimensions 70x48x9, condition: plate is tilted back and, in many places, covered with moss and lichen, damp.

14. Gravestone of Minem Szuw, daughter of Josef, died 1906, sandstone, dimensions 81x53x10, condition: places covered in moss, damp edges are broken.

15. Gravestone of Chana Zawacki, daughter of Shlomo Maszanznika, died 19??, made of sandstone, dimensions 96x50x10, condition: covered with moss, broken edges.

16. Gravestone of NN, from beginning of the 20th century, made of sandstone, dimensions 42x55x10. Condition: face covered with moss, damp, broken.

17. Gravestone of Yitzhak Gendelman, son of David, died 1909, made of sandstone, dimensions 107x52x16, condition: façade broken, covered with moss.

18. Gravestone of priest, Eltanan(?) Kaplan, son of Jehuda, died 1894, made of sandstone, dimensions 62x51x11, condition: edges of the façade broken.

19. Gravestone of NN, end XIX century, fallen to the ground, broken in two. /section I/

20. Gravestone of Jakob Szapiro, died 1910, made of sandstone, dimensions 57x56x1?. Condition: right corner is broken, façade is damp, covered with moss.

21. Gravestone of priest Mosze Rotszild, son of Jehuda Hacoen, died 1903, made of sandstone, dimensions 90x47x11, condition: facade inclined backwards, covered with moss, broken.
22. Gravestone of priest Tsadok Pruzanski, son of Szmuel, died 1900. Made of sandstone, dimensions 92x52x10, condition: façade damp, covered with moss /photo 45/
23. Gravestone of Yitzhak Zilbert /photo 44, son of Elijahu Akiva, died 1912, made of sandstone, dimensions 110x56x11, condition: stone laying down, damp, covered with moss and lichen.
24. Gravestone of Sara Rowic /photo 43/, daughter of Szmuel Ber, died 1897, made of sandstone, dimensions 113x59x10, condition: façade covered with moss, broken.
25. Gravestone of Rivka, daughter of Manisz Warszawic, died 1876, made of sandstone, dimensions 82x56x11. Condition: covered with moss, damp.

Section III

26. Gravestone of Mrs. Sarah, daughter of Jakob Michel, died 1907, made of sandstone, dimensions 93x51x9. Condition: tombstone tilted backwards, covered with moss, broken edges.
27. Gravestone of Devora, daughter of Szel, died 1902, made of sandstone, dimensions 65x47x9?, Condition: façade is damp, covered with moss, broken edges.
28. Gravestone of Menachem Liubel, son of Tsvi Hirsz, died 1899, sandstone, concrete, basic dimensions 166x76x11; 147x55x9. Condition: covered with moss, matzevah edges broken.
29. Gravestone of Yitzhak Brisker, son of Avraham, died 1909, sandstone, dimensions 90x53x10, condition: façade covered with moss.
30. Gravestone of Bejla Sopockowski, daughter of Josef, died 1908, sandstone, dimensions 101x54x13. Condition: tombstone tilted backwards, covered with moss and lichen, damp.
31. Gravestone of Naszy? Perets, daughter of Gaon Eli, 1900, sandstone, dimensions 48x44x10, Condition: stone leaning, in the upper part covered with moss.
32. Gravestone of Rachel? Bendit, daughter of Baruch, died 1894, sandstone, dimensions 78x48x10, condition: covered with moss.
33. Gravestone of Lea Racki, daughter of Avrahm, died 1891 [5670], made of sandstone and concrete, dimensions 130x62x11, Condition: matzevah inclined, between the sarcophagus and façade a tree is growing.

34. Gravestone of Chaim Rowinski, son of Gecil, died 1905, sandstone, dimensions 105x53x11, condition: façade covered with moss, surface and edges covered broken.
35. Gravestone of Murki Wigodski, daughter of Avraham Asher from the family Gincburg? From Huron, died 1901, sandstone, dimensions 98x53x10. Stone damp, edges broken.
36. Gravestone Helki Sztajn, daughter of Gershon, died 1914, sandstone, concrete, dimension 139x49x10, Condition: stone damp, broken edges,
37. Gravestone of Avraham Boris, son of Israel, died 1898, sandstone, dimensions 70x53x10, Condition: good, parts of façade covered with moss.
38. Gravestone of Chaim Lublin, son of Benjamin Zeew Wolf, died 1905, sandstone, dimensions 67x48x9, condition: covered in moss, damp.
39. Gravestone of Chalawne? Sztajn, son of Yitzhak Markel, died 1898, sandstone, dimensions 90x47x10, Condition: leaning, Covered with moss at the bottom.
40. Gravestone of Devora, daughter of Yitzhak Goldberg, died 1906, sandstone, dimensions 106x53x9, Condition: leaning, covered with moss.
41. Gravestone of Ari Lejb Ginsburg, son of Tsvi Hacoheh, died 1902, sandstone, dimensions 111x52x9, Condition: matzevah leaning backwards, covered with moss.
42. Gravestone of Szlomo Sztufler, son of Szmuel, died 1908, sandstone, dimensions 67x47x8, Condition: good, places covered with moss.
43. Gravestone of Handel Ljubuwski, daughter of Szalom Marian, died 1907, sandstone, dimension 90x47x10, Condition: matzevah fallen, edges broken, damp, covered with moss.
44. Gravestone of Israel Rafalowski, died 1899, sandstone, dimensions 48x62x11, Condition: matzevah broken at height of 48 cm., damp.
45. Gravestone of Zisel, daughter of Jakob Morants, died 1908, made of sandstone, dimensions 110x58x8; Condition: matzevah inclined, covered with moss, damp, broken

47. Gravestone of Tsvi Ginzberg, son of Ari Lejb Hacoheh, died 1909, made of sandstone, dimensions 86x55x11, Condition: matzevah inclined backwards, damp.
48. Gravestone of Avraham Citron, son of Szneur Zalman, died 1904, made of sandstone, concrete, dimensions 126x47x7, condition: sarcophagus covered moss.

49. Gravestone of Jakob Solowiejczyk, son of Yitzhak, chairman of the gmina of Huron (?), died 1894, made of sandstone, dimensions, 54x51x11, condition: stone broken at 54cm, damp, covered in moss.
50. Gravestone of Ari Lejb Farber, son of Chaim, died 1905, made of sandstone and concrete, dimensions 121x51x10; base: 10x76x166, condition: covered with moss.
51. Gravestone of Tsvi Hirsz Smagler, son of Jehoshua, died 1906, made of sandstone, dimensions 80x53x10. Condition: good, façade covered with moss, inclined.
52. Gravestone of Yitzhak Lajwinzohn, son of Mordechai, died 1901, made of sandstone, dimensions 99x50x9, Condition: inclined, covered with moss.
53. Gravestone of Sara Frisz, daughter of Gawiriel, died 1900, made of sandstone, dimensions 85x50x9; Condition: inclined, covered with moss.
54. Gravestone of Zlaty Zibelman, daughter of Mosze Chaim Halewi, died 1907, made of sandstone, dimensions 144x51x11; Condition: gravestone covered with moss.

Section IV

55. Gravestone of David Naftali, died 1894, made of sandstone, dimensions, 46x48x8, condition: inclined backwards, covered with moss.
56. Gravestone of Yitzhak Rubinstein, son of Abraham, died 1903, made of sandstone, dimensions: 112x55x10, condition: the stone lies on the ground, covered with lichen and moss, damp, grass-covered.
57. Gravestone of Mosze Lejb Miszandznika, son of Yitshak Eliezer, died 1902, sandstone, Condition: matseva lies on the ground, covered with lichen and moss.
58. Gravestone of Sarah, daughter of Jehuda Hacoheh, died 1894, sandstone, dimensions 83x47x10, condition: façade covered with moss, edges broken'
59. Gravestone of Lea, died 1905, sandstone, dimensions 50x43x10, Condition: stone lying on the ground, broken at the bottom, parts covered with moss.
60. Gravestone of Jakob Zelig, son of Jehoshua, died 1903, sandstone, dimensions 74x48x9, Condition: good, parts covered with moss.

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61. Gravestone of Meira Zaka, son of Tuwi Hacoheh, died 1914, sandstone, dimensions 79x52x9, Condition: stone inclined, covered with moss.
62. Gravestone of Israel Litwak, son of Jakob Zeew, died 1907, sandstone, dimensions 74x49x9, stone inclined backwards, covered with moss.

63. Gravestone of Fajgel Meir, daughter of Szlomo, died 1904/5, sandstone, dimensions 88x58x12, Condition: stone inclined, parts covered in moss.
64. Gravestone of Ester Rejzel, daughter of Jakob Halewi, died 1896, sandstone, dimensions 98x49x9. Condition: stone covered with moss.
65. Gravestone of Mohera Abba Melammeda, son of Eliezer, died 1901, sandstone, dimensions 100x45x9, condition: stone inclined, covered with moss.
66. Gravestone of Jakob Szajmy, son of Zeew, died 1904, sandstone, dimensions 101x58x10, condition: stone broken at 101 cm, covered with moss.
67. Gravestone of David Wilenski, son of Szmuel, died 1899/1900, sandstone, dimensions 90x56x11, Condition: matzevah inclined backwards, damp, covered with moss. /photo 47/
68. Gravestone of David Sidoronski, /photo 46/ son of Isaiah Josef, died 1910, sandstone, dimensions 71x41x8, condition: covered with moss, edges broken.
69. Gravestone of Zeew Selikes, son of Ari Lejba, died 1897, sandstone, dimensions 50x43x10, condition: matzevah inclined, covered with moss.
70. Gravestone of Fejgel Molojes, daughter of Natan Nota Hacoheh from Szeriszowa, died 1902, sandstone, dimensions 89x46x8. Condition: the stone lies on the ground, covered with moss and lichen, edges broken.
71. Gravestone of Chaim Budzicki, son of "... Budzicki from Minsk, died 1896/1897, sandstone, dimensions 70x47x8, condition: stone inclined, covered with moss, and in the grass.
72. Gravestone of Mosze Kawler, son of Avraham, died 1913, sandstone, dimensions 65x49x9, Condition: stone inclined backwards, covered with grass and moss.

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73. Gravestone of Basze Lazars, daughter of Tsvi Gass, died 1902, sandstone, dimension 94x53x9, condition, stone inclined backwards, covered with moss.
74. Gravestone of Nachum Ulinski, son of Wasman, died 1902, sandstone, dimensions 57x46x10, condition: stone inclined, covered with moss.
75. Gravestone of Eliezer son of Benjamin, died 1894, sandstone, dimension 84x46x8, condition: good, parts covered in moss.
76. Gravestone of Fruma Stein, daughter of Natan, died 1901, sandstone, dimensions 69x47x7. Condition: in many parts covered with moss.

Section 23

77. Gravestone of Etil/Atil Edelstein, daughter of Hertz, died 1919, made of sandstone and concrete, dimensions 83x44x10, condition: base sank into the ground, edges broken.

78. Gravestone of Jakob Szlomo Goldberg, son of Eli Chaim from Janow, died 1921, made of sandstone, dimensions 93x48x8, condition: façade broken, covered with moss at the bottom, damp.

79. Gravestone of NN, from around 1920, made of stone, dimensions 35x45x8, condition: stone broken at 35cm, destroyed sarcophagus, covered with moss.

80. Gravestone of Pesze Bejla Gutman, daughter of Tsvi, died 1920, made of sandstone, concrete, dimensions 126x33x13; 7x82x164, condition: sarcophagus covered with moss, edges are broken.

81. Gravestone of NN, made of sandstone, dimensions 34x41x8, condition: matzevah broken at 34cm., broken surface.

82. Gravestone of Menachem Zaka, son of Jehuda Lejb, died 1918, sandstone and concrete, dimensions 111x5x9, condition: the edges of the plate are broken, at the bottom covered with moss.

83. Gravestone of Meira Sturman, son of Tudrus, died 1920, sandstone and concrete, dimension 137x58x11; condition: broken edges, cracked sarcophagus.

84. Gravestone of Dina Jagody, daughter of Jonasz, died 1929, made of sandstone, dimension 68x44x10, condition: damaged surface, covered with moss. /photo 49'

Attention: Tombstone registration cards were made in triplicate – copies in BB & DZ [?????]

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VIII. Conservator's Conclusions

The entire cemetery is under the care of a conservator as the only surviving Jewish monument in Białystok. People of the Jewish (Mosaic) religion in Białystok at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the twentieth century were the vast majority in the city.

The Jewish cemetery in Białystok is the largest and best-preserved Jewish cemetery in the Białystok province, others are smaller, more neglected, more modest. The second largest cemetery in the voivodship is the cemetery in Krynki, 3000 gravestones have survived, and 6000 in Białystok.

In the northwestern part of the cemetery, a special conservation zone should be established, which should include the sections that contain the oldest matzevot. / see the chart /.

The cemetery should be fenced on the north, west and south with a brick wall / the openings can be repaired /, on the east, chain-link fence set into a concrete foundation, **to emphasize that the current eastern border is not original.**

A hill between single-family houses, once part of the cemetery, made of tombstones taken from other Białystok cemeteries, should be surrounded with a chain-link fence on a concrete foundation.

Make gates to the **north, west** and east of the walls. It is possible to use openings in other parts of the wall.

The cemetery should be designated for *passive* use.

It is necessary to make a design for tidying up the cemetery, taking into account the **building volume(?)** / intended for sanitary facilities tools / made according to an individual project.

Small architecture limited to seating places.

Earthworks are not allowed in the cemetery, except for planting.

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It is necessary to appoint a permanent brigade to take care of the cemetery, clean up the greenery, and preserve tombstones.

Remove self-seeding and undergrowth from the whole cemetery area *up to 10 cm*, as well as those that threaten tombstones.

Tombstones should be put in order, i.e. put in their former place / often it is possible, because steles, obelisks, *matzevot* lie next to the plinths.

If it is not possible to find out where the gravestone stood, it should be moved to the area around the fence at Wschodnia St. to the *lapidarium* created there. Matzevot fragments can also be attached onto a fence. Predict the place where the tombstones will be buried in consultation with the Mosaic Religious Union. It is necessary to protect *ohel* from further devastation by replacing the door.

Keep recording the tombstones / it is about establishing registration cards / located in the cemetery. One copy should be given to the **user(?)**.

Monument to the victims of the 1905-1906 pogrom should be transferred from the municipal cemetery to the Jewish cemetery. Because that area **was damaged** (ze zmniejszona została), it is impossible and pointless to set it in its original place. In the original place, a plaque should be placed commemorating this fact. The new location should be located near the gate at ul. Wschodnia. When setting up the monument, guided by a person who fully knows Hebrew, so as not to set it upside down.

All projects related to the cemetery should be in consultation with the Voivodship Conservator of Monuments both at the concept stage and at the stage of the implementation project.

All stone work should be carried out under the supervision of a stone conservator.

