**I. An excerpt from the chapter: "The Jewish Neighborhood"**

**The physical characteristics of the Jewish neighborhood**

As mentioned, the Jewish neighborhood was part of the center of Warsaw and one can anticipate that its character is that of an urban center: Large buildings containing many apartments, a relatively high number of small apartments and high residential density.

In the following table, we will detail the physical characteristics of the buildings in the Jewish neighborhood:

We find that indeed, the character of the Jewish neighborhood was clearly urban. The majority of the buildings were constructed with bricks, most of them were high-rise buildings and only a minority were one-story. On average, the city infrastructure (water, sewage, electricity) in the neighborhood was relatively high compared to the urban average, mainly due to lack of urban development in the new peripheral neighborhoods that had a rural character. However, many areas in the Jewish neighborhood were in a very poor condition.

**Socio-economic characteristics**

The urban nature of the Jewish neighborhood and its relatively high level of urban infrastructure did not cause its residents to live at a high or even medium economic level. In this respect, the residents of the neighborhood were characterized by a mid-to-low and low socio-economic level, as can be deduced from the data in the following table:

In addition to overcrowding, the housing shortage in the Jewish neighborhood was the cause of a situation where several households resided in a single apartment, a common phenomenon in one-third of the apartments in the neighborhood. About 10% of the apartments had three or more households living in them, while in about 20% had two households. In addition, it was the smaller apartments that contained the highest number of people. On average, four people lived together in one-room apartments, while apartments of four or more rooms had an average of six people living in them, that is, a density of 1.5 people or less per room. (Table N8 in the Appendix).

The Jewish neighborhood was also an important commercial and craft center in the city. More than 70% of the city's commercial businesses belonged to Jews. Industries such as watchmaking, wood, and textiles were almost all owned by Jews. Nearly 60% of those employed in commerce in Warsaw lived in the Jewish neighborhood, and close to 70% of all businesses in residential apartments were located in this neighborhood. There were no less than fifteen markets in the squares and courtyards of the Jewish neighborhood. Nalewki Street was a commercial street along its entire length, as were the streets adjacent to it. Economic-commercial activity was concentrated in several areas according to specific trade industries: The iron business was centered in Grzybow, the trade on Nalewki was clothing and haberdashery, businesses related to leather industry were located on Franciskanska Street, while the bookstores and antique shops of Warsaw could be found on Swietokrzyska Street. A good example of the multiplicity and variety of workshops and commerce in the Jewish neighborhood can be seen from perusing a list of businesses gathered in a single building at 33 Nalewki Street: Aronowicz's packing house, Joel Bajch's bone products, Apelblat's wholesale glassware, Borensztejn's cotton store, four delivery offices belonging to the fasmilies Borsowch, Gelblum, Glazin and the Jastrząb Brothers, three stationery stores owned by Glaszmit, Szyia Cukier i Kornblum, the Rabinowicz Confectionery Supply Store, Rotanberg Copper Sales, Silman’s Leather and Metal Products Store, Pantelek’s Leather Warehouse, Chaskiel Lipa Ostroga shoe factory, Zenit socks factory, Wandel and Wutcela’s crates and boxes, Moszek Kornblum’s butcher shop and the Wainberg café. These are just those whose names have been preserved in telephone books from that period. In addition, other small shoemakers' workshops and a variety of tiny workshops crammed into residential apartments were found in this building.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Crowded Housing in the Jewish neighborhood**

The average housing density in the Jewish neighborhood in 1931 was 2.4 persons per room, higher than the municipal average of 2.2 persons per room.

41% of the apartments in the Jewish neighborhood were one-room apartments, and 13% were 4+ room apartments. This is compared to 43% of one-room apartments and 16% of 4+ room apartments in the entire city.

A more detailed examination of the data by subdistrict indicates a variation in housing density between Poles and Jews in the Jewish neighborhood. In areas where Jews made up the majority, the proportion of small apartments was much lower than in areas where Jews constituted a minority. The opposite is true, as well. The proportion of large apartments was much higher in areas where Jews constituted a majority and their proportion in areas populated mainly by Poles was much lower.

The housing situation of the Jews in the Jewish neighborhood was better than that of the Poles who lived in this neighborhood. As noted above, the proportion of Jews was lower in the western areas of the Jewish neighborhood, which was one of the poorest areas of Warsaw.

1. <http://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/1,54420,12395364,Nalewki_najbardziej_Handlowa_ulica_w_dziejach_Warszawy.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)