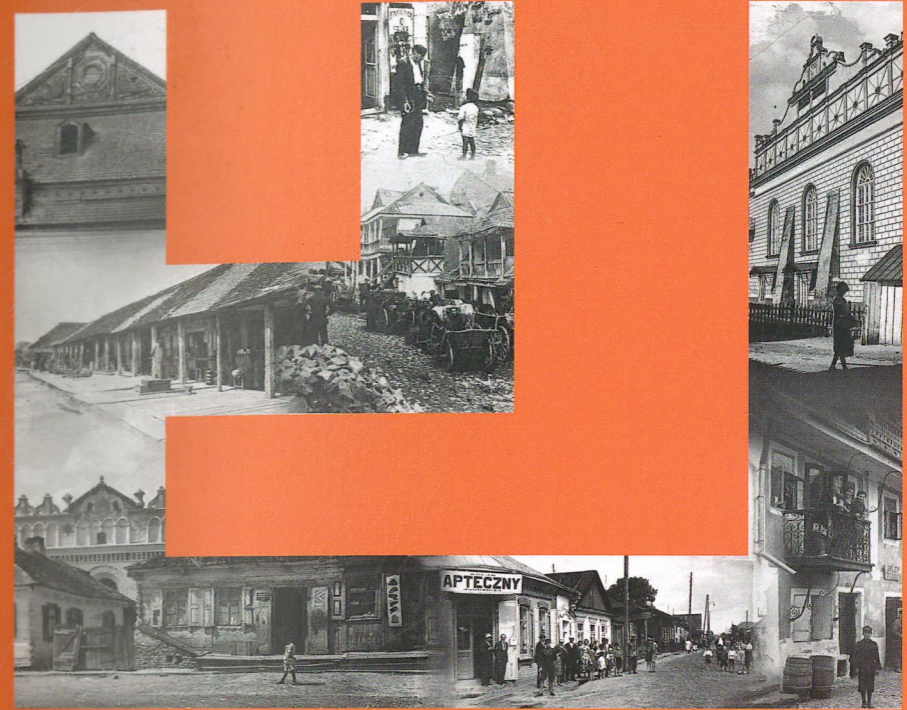


SHTETL ROUTES
Travels Through the Forgotten Continent



SHTETL ROUTES

Travels Through the Forgotten Continent



In the guidebook, *Shtetl Routes: Travels Through the Forgotten Continent*, we tell the stories of 62 towns located in the region encompassing the borderland of Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine, focusing on the stories of the Jewish communities that once lived there.

Sejny, Krynki, Knyszyn, Tykocin, Orla, Siemiatycze, Międzyrzec Podlaski, Włodawa, Kock, Kazimierz Dolny, Izbica, Wojślawice, Szczepleszyn, Biłgoraj, Józefów, Wielkie Oczy, Łańcut, Dukla, Rymanów, Lesko, Belz, Zhovkva, Busk, Rohatyn, Halych, Drohobych, Bolekhiv, Khust, Delatyn, Kosiv, Chortkiv, Buchach, Pidhaitsi, Brody, Kremenets, Dubno, Ostroh, Korets, Berezne, Kovel, Volodymyr-Volynskiy, Luboml, Pinsk, Davyd-Haradok, Stolin, Motol, Kobryn, Pruzhany, Slonim, Ruzhany, Haradzishcha, Mir, Valozhyn, Ashmyany, Ivye, Navahrudak, Dzyatlava, Radun, Zhaludok, Astryna, Lunna, Indura

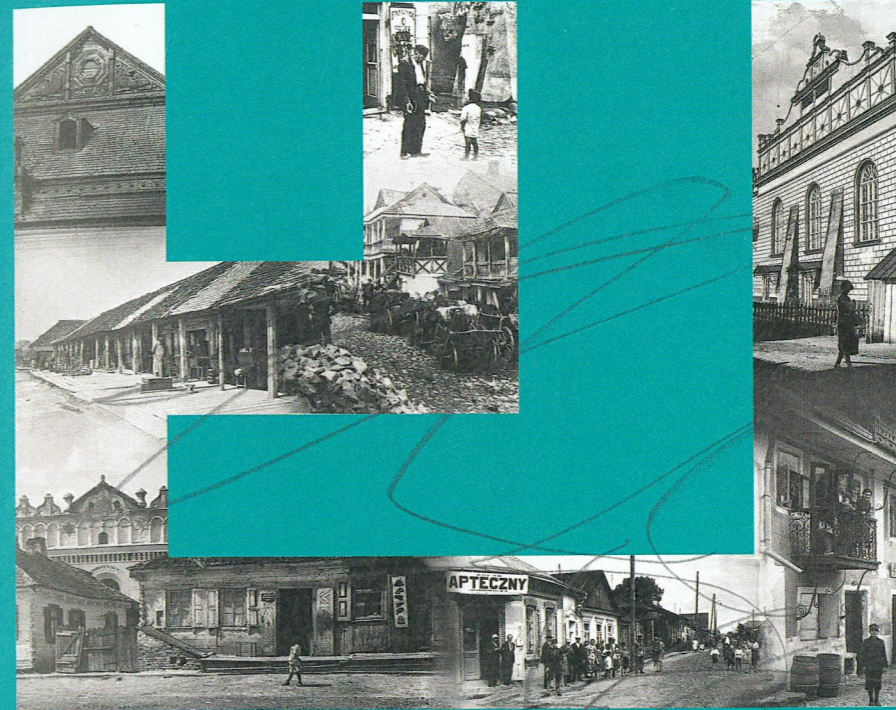
This publication was prepared as part of the project "Shtetl routes: Vestiges of Jewish cultural heritage in cross-border tourism," co-financed by the European Union through the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument, Cross-Border Cooperation Program Poland – Belarus – Ukraine 2007–2013.

Publisher and leading partner of the project
The "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre
ul. Grodzka 21, 20-112 Lublin, Poland

On the website:

www.shtetlroutes.eu

- Proposals for thematic trips
 - Following Isaac Bashevis Singer's Footsteps
 - Following S. An-ski's Footsteps
 - The Painters and Photographers Route
 - The Famous Rabbis Route
 - The Yeshivot Routes
 - The Jewish Resistance Route
- Virtual models of wooden synagogues
- Virtual models of historic towns
- Archival and contemporary photos
- Maps
- Memories
- Quotations from literature
- Stories from Memorial Books
- Cultural Heritage Cards
- Tourism infrastructure info
- Bibliographies

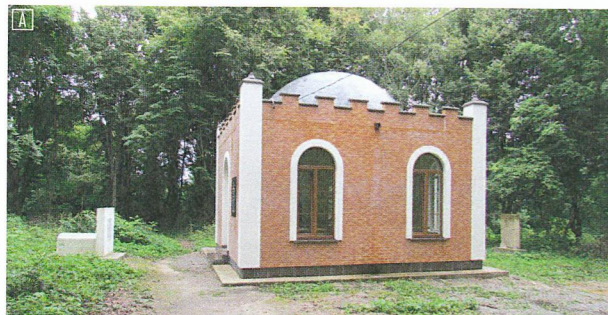


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A Mausoleum of Rabbi Samuel Edels at the Jewish cemetery in Ostroh, 2014. Photo by Boris Bertash, digital collection of the "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre (www.teatrn.pl)

B Market square in Ostroh, 1900, digital collection of the "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre (www.teatrn.pl)

and about 1,000 – taken captives and sold at the slave markets in Istanbul.

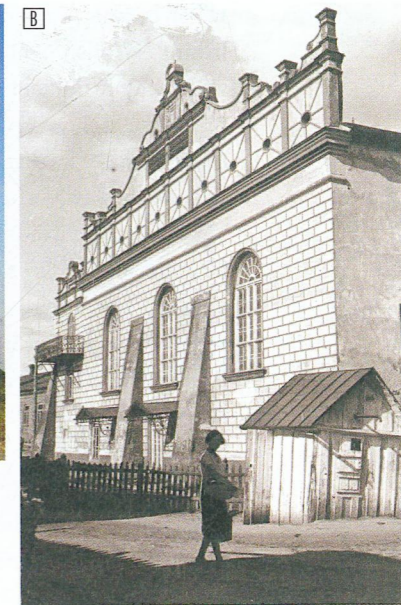
In 1687, there were 390 houses in Ostroh, of which at least 135 belonged to Jews. The town was destroyed again during the Great Northern War in the early 18th century. According to the 1708 partial inventory, there were 58 Christian and 40 Jewish houses, nine unoccupied houses, and 14 mansions; 188 houses were vacant. ¶ According to a legend circulating among Ostroh Jews, in 1734 during the Cossack and peasant uprising remembered as the Haidamachchyna, the local Tatars defended the Jewish community. For many years, this event was commemorated annually in the Great Synagogue in Ostroh.

The synagogue ¶ The preserved building of the former main synagogue can be found in the northern part of Ostroh. It was erected on the site of an

Ostroh, 44 belonged to Jews. In 1666, the Jews of Ostroh sent their own delegate to the Council of Four Lands again, which means their community re-established its significance and reputation.

Massacres during the Khmelnytsky Uprising were a great tragedy for the Jews living in Ukraine, but the number of victims reported by 17th-century chroniclers tends to be overstated and should be treated with caution. According to Prof. Shaul Stampfer from the Hebrew University, around 40,000 Jews lived in the Ukrainian lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 1640s. During the Khmelnytsky Uprising, about 14,000–18,000 were killed, about 1,000–2,000 – converted under duress to Christianity,

older prayer house, probably after 1627. ¶ Reportedly, the foundation stone for the synagogue in Ostroh was laid by Rabbi Maharsha himself. Its similarity to the Great Suburb Synagogue in Lwów, erected at the same period, suggests that it may have been designed by the same architect, Giacomo Medleni from Lwów. Its main hall (11 metres high at its highest point) is a rectangle with thick walls of stone and brick. Each of the four walls has three large windows, together symbolizing the 12 tribes of Israel. The vault is supported by four octagonal pillars with Doric capitals. In the past, vestibules and women's galleries adjoined the main hall from the west and south. Nothing has been left of the rich synagogue interior; its original appearance can be recreated only from old photos and descriptions. The



synagogue fell victim to many raids and fires, but it served as a prayer house until World War II. Turned into a chemicals warehouse in the Soviet times, it was left abandoned and in ruin until recently, when a group of Ostroh residents under

the guidance of the enthusiastic Gregory Arshinov, made extraordinary efforts to preserve and reconstruct this unique monument.

Among the traditional elements typical for synagogue interior, there was also one unique item: a cannonball suspended on a long rope from the ceiling. According to a legend, the Russian troops tried to storm the Ostroh synagogue in 1792, believing that it was a hiding place for Poles. Luckily, the cannonballs that fell into the building did no harm to the Jews gathered inside. After a three-day siege, a Jew by the name of Eliezer left the synagogue and swam across the river to the invaders' camp. He convinced them that there were no more Polish troops in the town and showed them a ford they could use to cross the river. The Russians lifted the siege and left Ostroh. To commemorate this extraordinary event, the Jews decided to have one of the cannonballs suspended from the ceiling. Several other cannonballs from that time are exhibited in the Ostroh Museum of Local History. Additionally, to mark the day on which the Jewish community was saved from the Russian attack, the 7th day of Tamuz (June–July) was celebrated in Ostroh as a Purim-like holiday, and a text written specially for this occasion called *Megilat Ester Tamuz* (Heb.: *The Scroll of ester for the Month of Tamuz*) was recited in the synagogue.

Printing houses ¶ At the end of the 18th century, Ostroh became one of the most important centres of Jewish printing in the Russian Empire. Between 1794 and 1832, seven printing presses were

established there, the first one around 1792, by Avraham ben Yitzhak Azyk of Korets. Avraham ben Yitzhak Azyk's partner was Aaron ben Yona, who opened another Hebrew printing house,

A Ostroh Castle – the round tower, 2015. Photo by Boris Bertash, digital collection of the "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre (www.teatrn.pl)

B Synagogue in Ostroh, 1933. Photo by Jerzy Łuczynski, collection of the National Digital Archives, Poland

Shtetl Routes. Travels Through the Forgotten Continent

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Cover design, graphic design and typesetting Studio Format – studioformat.pl

This publication was prepared as part of the project "SHTETL ROUTES: VESTIGES OF JEWISH CULTURAL HERITAGE IN CROSS-BORDER TOURISM," co-financed by the European Union through the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument, Cross-Border Cooperation Program Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2007–2013



Publisher and leading partner of the project

The "Grodzka Gate – NN Theatre" Centre (Lublin, Poland)

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This edition was prepared with the support of the European Union. The contents of this edition are the publisher's exclusive responsibility and should not be regarded as reflecting the stance of the European Union.


























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



Lublin 2018

ISBN 978-83-61064-94-7

Objects of cultural heritage:

-  preserved  not preserved
-   Catholic church
-   Orthodox church
-   mosque
-   synagogue or prayer house
-   castle, fortification
-   monument, memorial site
-   monument, memorial site associated with Jewish culture
-   other architectural monument
-   other monument of Jewish heritage
-  museum or culture centre
-  museum or culture centre associated with Jewish culture
-  tourist information point



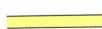


Cemeteries:

-  Christian  Muslim
-  Jewish  not preserved



Buildings and built-up areas:

-  before 1939  after 1939

Road and rail network:

-  expressways
-  national roads
-  regional roads
-  other roads
-  railway lines

Other:

-  lakes and rivers
-  green areas; sport facilities