

RABBI DR. JECHESKIEL LEWIN COLLECTION, 1922-2005
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United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
Washington, DC 20024-2126
Tel. (202) 479-9717
e-mail: reference@ushmm.org

I. Supplementary Materials

The following was found within the donor files at the United State Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Let us carry the torch!

Celebrating 70th birthday, for whomever has behind him his whole life. At the most will spend some given time in his surroundings. The celebration for this occasion is only an assembling of pleasant, but in most cases, unpleasant, memories.

Association of Jewish Academic Youth in Lwow sadly reminds under many circumstances, today at its 70th year of existence of such a celebrant. Comes in a series of aged men, involved in Jewish Academic Youth in Lwow, crowned with the most honorable deeds and rarely glorious past.

This happens during rarely difficult conditions, if we would take under consideration today's misery of a Jewish academic.

If we would for a minute want to enter (live) in the psyche of such an old man on the day of his 70th birthday, which is not a difficult thing, we would have in the first place to think what can still make him rejoice on such a festive day. The past? Is only a memory. The present is almost non-existent. Future? Only a prolongation of life, success and happiness at the children, eventually at the grandchildren.

When the children's and family's conditions is fine or announces itself well, it is without a doubt a bright sunbeam of a sunset sun before a final twilight. Who would want to put himself in to the situation of an elderly 70 year old on the day of his birthday when he suddenly sees around him his children, sad, gloomy, unhappy, and diminished by the weight of the day? What would it do to such an elderly from his jubilee even if the children would try to artificially smile to cover their poverty. Feeling heart of a father or mother would immediately recognized such a fake happiness.

In such a situation we can imagine the feelings of the Association of Jewish Academic Youth at the occasion of its 70th creation.

The association sees around it children, even grandchildren of its founders, of course they are not overseas or are not driven from country to country in order at the end to find themselves in a “nothing” country. These are the last remnants of the Jewish academic youth of southern Poland, victims of a terrible martyrdom about which is became known lately, completely by accident, culturally and truly is Polish thinking part of the population; living in the soul of old traditional Polish tolerance, based on the talks of an exceptional representative of learning in the Senate. How can one rejoice in such environment and conditions? How to force oneself to smile to even in part make pleasant a festive occasion, a moment of such dear and heartfelt Jubilee? How to cover what fells a hurt heart, by comparing what is happening today and what had once a place during the creation of the association, full 70 years ago, that means during the whole time of considerable accomplishment.

The association was founded in 1869, in the dawn of the Jewish emancipation, which came together with a great era of liberalism in Europe.

On the terrain of former Galicia, accompanied this liberalism, although in the saddest time for the Polish nation, the Polonization of primary schools, middle and academic. Jewish youth, which, until them, sat together with Polish youth on the benches of schools with German language started to frequent Polish schools. Though Lwow’s academic schools moved through these years 70, thousands of Jewish youth.

These youth were education in calm conditions, normal, to go after finishing studies to practical professions.

It would be worth under any condition to make an investigation and with prove of certain materials related to former members of judiciary association of Jewish Academic Youth to assert how many members during that time got doctorates. How many interrupted the studies and how many finished, where and in which profession they worked and until today work. Because all of these people, entering once to the university made depositions that they will never tarnish the academic honor. By getting a diploma they swore again that they will not tarnish educational honor and the name of Polish plurality. Maybe it will be possible to learn how many broke their promise, how many kept their faithfulness through their entire life until death—I dare say that those breaking the study honor will be found in one thousand of one percent. On the other hand, thousand will be found who covered with fame their promise as scholars. They served faithfully humanity without difference of faith and nationality on that position on which they stood at their professional position Honorably they served the Jewish nation and how many devoted themselves to the Polish nation as independent or served Polish cause through culture and Polish language. So it was 70 years ago.

Today's celebration among sad horoscopes for Jewish academic youth closes this wonderful period of emancipation and liberation. Maybe one should doubt for this reason in the future of culture and worth of mankind? At least! One has to believe in the soon return of all these banners for which people from the previous century went with this hope, that they will push humanity on new roads of true freedom.

Today, in the day of these celebration we need to remember the despair of Jewish academic youth in certain events in old times when Judea was still an independent country. During known celebrations during Succot it was habit to throw high a lit torch

and a known song was sung: "Our youth should not shame our old age." With this song one wanted to document a harmonious continuation.

The same opinion we could paraphrase today toward the celebrant association of Jewish Academic Youth in Lwow. That the future in development of association should never be ashamed of such a beautiful and glorious past. This depends only on our youth, in which we do not doubt a minute that although of difficult and tragic conditions will continue to stand ground.

Will not fall in spirit end with honor will carry the burning torch of learning and culture as long as will not get lighter the world horizon and humanity.