

The Synagogue in Poland

During the period of the Kingdom.

A study of a phase of the social
life of the Jew in Poland.

Chp 1. Art and Architecture of the Synagogue

Chp 2. Kinds of Synagogues and their Contents

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Introductory Essay to "The Synagogue in Poland 1500 - 1800"

new para.

A description of any institution during a certain time and within a certain place was all we have purposed in the study undertaken here. But certain questions inevitably suggest themselves in connection with any institution. These we propose to consider in the introductory essay. Every human institution must fulfill certain human demands; and the particular form of any one is the result of the pressure of a time during which and place within which it exists. The questions that suggest themselves then are: what demands did the synagogue in Poland fulfill, why did it assume a certain form, why did it, and, in these respects, how did it differ from the synagogue in general. There is a further consideration. Just as an institution is influenced by existing static and dynamic forces, it, in turn, influences, suggests and makes possible a further scheme, and creates new dynamic forces. For further gratification may be suggested by the institution itself, giving rise to new machinery to satisfy an intenser demand; or changing circumstances creating new needs, may send people to the institution, if at all proven satisfactory in the past, for further fulfilment. In either case it must influence and determine to a marked degree the new forces or movements equated by needs plus the striving to fulfill them. These general principles will prove to be admirably illustrated by the institution we are going to describe.

What demands in general does the synagogue fulfill and what in particular did the one in Poland between the 16th and 18th centuries fulfill? At the outset some prejudices must be removed from the

modern mind in connection with a so-called 'religious' institution such as a synagogue. Vague religious needs or emotions are usually postulated and the church or synagogue becomes the place for their expression once a week. These religious needs appear to have but little to do with anything human. Justice, fraternity, learning are provinces apart. Human instincts, impulses, desires are not religious needs, as the modern mind understands it. For gratification of appetites one hardly goes to a modern synagogue. Not so the older synagogue. It afforded the possibility of and erected the agency for, the gratification of almost the whole gamut of human desires and impulses.

When a Jew had a grievance against his fellow Jew, he could gain redress in the synagogue, having the right to stop the service for the purpose. Pugnacity, self-assertiveness and the like as well as charity and humility found expression in the synagogue. There you went to learn to gain distinction and honor through Aliyoth or at the Armud, to meet and engage in social intercourse with your fellows. Joy and merry song as well as sorrow and weeping were to be found there. It was a field of battle (with scholars amongst others for combatants) a public House, a club, made harmless but uniting and solidifying its members. And it was, at the same time a place for festivity and saintliness.

This is true of the synagogue everywhere in all past ages and is especially true of the one in Poland. There its functions became more extensive, more people enjoying them, and more intensive as a result of certain peculiar demands the Polish synagogue had to meet. This we have to consider further.

At first blush such an assertion would appear to contradict facts. It seems, on the contrary, that the synagogue in Poland shrank in proportion. In other lands the synagogue was co-extensive with the community. In Poland it was but part of the community, constituting only one of the activities of Kahal, amongst many others which included, tax gathering, distributing monopoly rights - ³ ~~Kahal~~ - supervising business dealings, settling disputes, ^{al} charity, health, meting out justice and so forth. Jewish communities elsewhere, undertaking only part of these activities, could group them around the synagogue. ~~But~~ Here, however, few of these activities could be associated with the synagogue. And even when some of them were carried on in the synagogue edifice, such as the support of scholars who studied there, or the infliction of punishment in or near the synagogue, there were still the Kahal's rather than the synagogue's concern. In fact, we have evidence concerning one city - Cracow - that they looked upon the synagogue as part of ^{the} ~~their~~ charity activities. Among the functions to be discharged by the officers of charity - ^{קרן} ~~קרן~~ ^{הצדקה} - was also the ^{at} ~~care~~ of the synagogue. Very eloquent is the fact that the wardens of the synagogue ^{ב"ד} ~~ב"ד~~ ^{הקהל} ~~הקהל~~ were not the leaders of the community. They were minor executives appointed by the Parnassim, the real Kahal leaders.

Yet, although most of the community's business was done outside the synagogue, it served greater numbers and fulfilled more of their demands than ~~it did~~ elsewhere. In other words this institution became in Poland more democratic than it had ever been. The reason for this we have to seek in the field of economics.

Both during the centuries under review, when, except for Turkey, Europe, east of Poland, was but sparsely populated by Jews, and even during the preceding centuries when there were considerable numbers there - the Jewish occupation outside of Poland was money-lending. Not all Jews, however, could be rich and lend money. The rest were petty traders of second hand goods or retainers, ~~or~~ lay, ^{or} ecclesiastical, ^{al,} of the rich money lender. Most of them were, probably both. The well-to-do found, in the synagogue most of his instincts gratified. To the larger majority of poor however, the synagogue could only serve as a means of gratifying those cravings that require no wealth for their gratification. There he could pray, learn, gossip but not gain distinction for instance, nor act in any way that would flout the notions of the 'great'. A retainer, a flunkay, a petty trader, with every shread of independence gone, and therefore mean-spirited, would, without protest of an open and courageous nature, resign himself to his condition. One it might lead to saintliness and scholarship, the rest would slip into indifference. Not caring for honors or distinction, having but one concern, to collect a few crumbs off the tables of the rich, they did not even avail themselves of the synaogue as a "ouse of learning, by means of which they might have ~~become~~ ^{become} the equal of the wealthiest.

Far different, however, was the situation in Poland. Every Jew was independent. He was either a proprietor of a monopoly, a steward of an estate, or an honorable merchant engaged in importing and exporting. He felt himself useful and respected. (It is only necessary to read the memoirs of Ber of Selechow, who lived as late as the decline of Poland to be convinced of this)¹⁾ Even the lowest stratum was

1) See also what Solomon Maimon has to say on the difference of the Polish and German Jew - the independence and self-respect of the one and the degradation of the other.

composed of artisans and small farmers, in the occupation of neither of which is there anything degrading or damaging to self-respect. They all therefore, without exception, wanted to share fully in what the synagogue had to offer, and it had everything to offer. The official synagogues, however, although sufficient to house all for prayer could not cope with the greater demand. There were only half-a-dozen mitzwoth on a Sabbath, and these were bought up by the wealthy. Only one could pray before the 'Amud'. What they did then was simply to meet in synagogues outside the official one. This was not altogether an innovation. For in Germany the Rabbi would have his private minyan, the Polish Jew took full advantage of this precedent. The Beth Hamidrash, the minyan, the Klaus multiplied in every city and townlet. The Beth Hakneseth was a stately edifice and beautifully decorated, but empty, left to the wealthy. There strict decorum was enforced and individuality crushed, except for the few great men who had important and expensive seats. The rest would have to be decorous nobodies. The Polish Jew did not complain against the formal synagogue. He ignored it and prayed, and learned, and got all the honours and mitzwoth he wanted in his Beth Hamidrash. And when he prayed he did not have to subdue his prayers to the grandeur and solemnity of the Beth Hakneseth. He prayed and expressed his joy or lament. He learned, he quarreled, he disputed; he was charitable, or selfish or vain glorious or saintly: In short, he was what he was, in the synagogue. Because it was not a communal but his own affair, he availed himself fully of the Beth Hamidrash. Being ambitious, he used it for self-promotion through learning in which every Jew vigorously engaged.

With the synagogue in general he was connected through the Beth Hahneseth, except that it was less attended than elsewhere. But he deepened and widened the same institution through the Beth Hamidrash, which became the specifically Polish Jewish synagogue, meeting the peculiar demands of the time, and of the condition of the Jews.

This process went on. More gratification was sought in the same institution. The picture of the Jew's life was rather and scope; new joys of ecstasy, new hopes, a new dignity, a new power, were discovered until consummation was reached in the Hassidic Stübel. The Polish synagogue was gradually developing towards, and was ready for it.

But in addition to the self-suggested gratifications there were outside factors that hastened and decided this consummation. Poverty increased, perils to life multiplied. After 1848, the Jew of Poland, especially in the south east^{ern} part, was in constant danger. Every few years there were pogroms. He was ~~constantly~~ intimidated. Such a state of affairs might have two effects. It would give rise to a wild courage of despair alternating with the most cowardly fear. It would develop a character composed of traits of timidity and tenseness. Nerves would become taut, ready to snap any moment. Another possible effect is that the Jew would become, as a result of his condition, thoroughly cowed and crushed, ready and glad to give up life - witness the Frankist movement.

To continue living it was necessary for the Jew to find some compensation for his fear, danger and strenuous living. He needed relaxation, relief, forgetfulness. Somewhere he had to discover a source of power to counteract his state of utter dejection. He had to clothe

himself with a new dignity. Finally he had to find some way of 'letting loose', as it were, giving relief to his taut nerves. And all these vital needs were fulfilled in his synagogue which became the Hassidic Klaus or Stübel.

There every Jew felt himself a being superior to the world. - In the ecstasy of prayer, in the conviviality of social intercourse, helped by the Tikkun - a glassful of strong drink - he ~~laughed~~ forgot and gained new hope. One element, however, remained in the synagogue which tended to communicate to many that negative self-feeling which militates against self-preservation namely, learning. ~~But~~ The dignity coming therefrom can, in the nature of the case, be confined only to a few. Since, however, in every Jew a dignity or positive self feeling had to be developed to withstand his dejection, the citadel of learning had to be undermined. Its importance had to be damaged and its influence shaken. That was done. Learning became secondary. A contrite heart was greater than learning. An ignorant man's suffering was of more consequence in God's world than a Talmud Chacham. In fact, taught the Besht and his followers, it is wrong to be learning too much. ^{"Aish" "Le'Chayim"} and holy stories began to be told in the synagogue of learned men who inherited 'Gé Eimom' in the world to come.

After this the synagogue in Poland was/ripe to preserve the Galician and Ukrainian Jew from perishing. Where conditions were not so hard, where dangers were not so many, as for instance, in Lithuania the synagogues remained what it was and never became the Stübel.

In the body of my work I have attempted hardly more than a study of a cross section, as it were, of the synagogue in Poland. *There will*

~~There will~~ be set forth the details which, pieced together, forms the picture to be contemplated in itself and in the light of the principles enunciated here. Moreover the facts should illustrate the theories and constitute landmarks along the road of development. There is now left for me ~~the~~ the pleasant duty of acknowledging my vast indebtedness to Professor S. Baron, without whose suggestions, aid and encouragement the following piece of work would never have been done.

The Synagogue in Poland 16th - 18th Centuries.

An initial contribution towards a study of the social life of the
Jews in the Kingdom of Poland .

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Abbreviations and Comments.

1. Wherever the Orach Chayim is referred to R Joseph Caro, Sefad d 1575 is to be understood, usually abbreviated to "א"ק"

2. "א"ב"ר /א"ח - commentary on Shulchan Aruch by R Abraham Gombiner Kalicz c 1650

3. א"ת"ר commentary on Shulchan Aruch by R Judah Ashkenazi Tiktin c 1800

4. א"ג stands for the commentary "א"ג"א" commentary on Shulchan Aruch and Turim. by R David Halevi Lemberg c 1640

5. M z E J D stands for Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft zur Erforschung Jüdischer Kunstdenkmäler (Frankfurt a M) Issued first October 1900

6. Pinkas Lita refers to "פנקס ליטא" edited by S Dubnow (Berlin 1924)

CHAPTER I.

Architecture and art of the Synagogue in Poland.

Both the external and internal aspect of the Synagogue in Poland present interesting features peculiar to it. We'll have to speak of an architecture and an art not to be found elsewhere. ^{in Poland} Before ~~we do so~~, ^{except by deliberate imitation -} doing so, a few remarks as to the situation of the synagogue will be in place.

From the Talmud there has come down a tradition through the Shalchan Aruch (I) that a Synagogue is to occupy the most elevated position in a town or village, and that it must tower above every other building. For it is not seemly that the House of God, a "בית המקדש", a lesser Temple, be overshadowed by any other building. It can only occupy a position corresponding to that of the Temple in Jerusalem. That such a tradition would be scrupulously observed goes without saying. At times and in certain localities the tradition was carried out though not without protests from the church officials.^{2.)} But, most often and this fact speaks volumes for the condition of the Jew, it was permitted to fall into desuetude.^{3.)} The Synagogue in Poland is no exception to the almost universal rule. We have no records of any Synagogue that actually rose above all the other buildings. It is rather surprising then to find a writer in the 'Rimon' Vol I. No 3. wondering over the fact that the Synagogue in Druya Lithuania which he visited, was situated not on a high elevation but near the river down below. In fact the Polish Jewish Commentators to the Orach Chayim distinctly point out the fact that these laws are no longer regarded,^{4.)} neither the one about building on the highest elevation.

1) P. 12 57 H/C

2) Cmp I Abraham's Jewish Life in the Middle Ages Chapter 2. p 27

3) H. J. P. 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121

4) H. J. P. 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121 121

(Philadelphia 1896)

nor the one dealing with the fact that the building itself must be the tallest in the locality.(1)

No indeed, there is rather reason to believe that the Synagogue building tried to be as little conspicuous as possible, that like the Jew himself, it hid itself away and slunk into the obscure places, into out of the way corners and nooks so as not to be observed and rival, ~~over~~ ~~forbid~~, the church. This we have in the privileges granted by Jan Sobiński in 1635 and repeated later in 1694 through Archbishop Lipski, (2) to build or ~~rebuild~~ the synagogue in Zolkiew warning against building in too prominent a spot.(3) In fact it must even recede from the street sufficiently to build a house on the spot left vacant between the synagogue and the street. And this we find in fact, whenever we look at a picture of an old synagogue, low buildings attached here and there to it, which served often as the house of the ~~Shamash~~ or even the Rabbi. Not to arouse the envy or ire of the others has also been a determining factor.

Many synagogues in certain localities of the East have been found to be situated near streams of water. There is even reason to believe that in Babylonia that was the rule.(4) The position of the Synagogue in Druya alluded to above is rather arresting in this connection. This we believe, however, to be an isolated example, such a position being not at all the rule in Poland, and was, in all probability, not deliberate in the case of Druya, the only reason being, probably, that the Jewish

(1). Vid *לשקן* *קק* *פארה/ע* *לעמ* (2) Reprinted at the back of Baber's *קקלע* *קקיה* *לעמ* (3) Far from the church, near the Jewish gate.
(4) J Enc. art. Synagogue

(Brocos 1903)

section happened to be near the river.

So much value seems to have been attached to the tradition concerning the eminence of the synagogue that they would, at least, add a little to the height of the synagogue whenever a taller building was erected in the locality (1) They tried to preserve the tradition, symbolically, at least. And this, as we shall show later, influenced the style of building. Some stuck a pole onto the roof to express the yearning for loftiness. This was however decried by the authorities (2) as of no efficacy whatsoever.

Thus then the synagogue was, naturally built in the Jewish quarter, near the Jewish gate, as the privilege granted to Zolkiew reads, wherever the Jewish quarter happened to be, in the case of Lublin (3) for instance at the foot of the hill on which the castle stood. It was not in an eminent position, in fact, rather isolated withdrawn from view, although some of them were pretty large. On many, little additions to the roofs were noticeable. Others flaunted bare poles.

Of course this description is only applicable to the Beth Hakneseth, the formal synagogue. The Beth Hamidrash requires in this regard no treatment distinct from any ordinary house.

There is a notion on foot (4) that synagogues were built a little lower than the ground, a few steps leading down to ^{the} entrance in accordance with the well known verse in Psalms ^{ה' מן הַמָּוֶת יִקְרָא} "From the depths I call thee" etc. It ^{is}, however, extremely improbable that any synagogues were actually so built. I found no source for it. None of the codes, nor commentators make mention of it. If anywhere, surely

- (1) ^{ה' מן הַמָּוֶת יִקְרָא} (2) ^{ה' מן הַמָּוֶת יִקְרָא} (3) Die Judenstadt Lublin Balaban. (4) Found also in Asch's novel ^{דחלל} with Polish Jewry "Kiddish Hashan."

5) ^{Meisel in his History} claims this to be the rule. J. Meisel in Geschichte der Juden in Polen und Russland (Berlin 1921). p 289

surely the Pinkas of Dolkiew (I) when dealing with the building of its Synagogue would specify concerning so important a convention. The fact of its silence on this score appears to me to be proof positive of the non-existence of any such phenomenon.

~~In addition to the stone synagogues that are common everywhere, Poland has a synagogue built all of wood, confined entirely to this land. Not only is it peculiar in building material, but also in style of building. We shall come back to the wooden synagogue after saying a few words about the ordinary kind.~~

The stone synagogue seems to be characteristic of the large town. Such cities as Cracow, Lemberg, Lublin, have no wooden synagogues to show. We are dealing with the formal Beth Hakneseth, of course. These stone edifices are no different from similar edifices anywhere else. They are, on the whole large square buildings, with exteriors rather bare though not forbidding, but not very imposing or attractive. Round synagogues, the shape in certain localities, (2) or any other shape diverging much from the square or rectangle, seem to be found nowhere in Poland. The bare walls are relieved by windows having as a rule Roman arches. The Synagogue in Ostrog (3) Volynia, has a rather quaint front facade with something like a frieze of curious shape emerging above. From both ends it rises in concave waves towards the centre, where a sort of little chess piece sticks up, marking the highest point of the building and perhaps symbolising the old tradition. Perhaps for the same reason you get the strangely shaped roof on the synagogue in Wieniawa near Lublin, (4) where behind a triangular frieze there rises terraces ending up in a sort of chimney.

(1) Published at the back of Buber's *אבות וזוהר* (2) J.E. Synag.
(3) See picture in J.E. & in M 3 E.J. D. II. (4) Shown in Balaban's
Lublin pp 95 ~~אבות וזוהר~~

Every time a new building was built a piece of masonry was stuck on the roof forming a little ledge: on the top of this another and so on, until a series of steps were formed. This synagogue in Wieniawa is quite pleasant to look at. The synagogues in Zaragrod 1) is actually beautiful in its exterior. Again its not the actual walls of the building itself but the addition on top which here looks like a parapet or rather a ^ocornet running all round it which makes the edifice beautiful and striking. One can't stop looking at the tiny minarets, one at each corner delicately carved, or have enough of the intervening decorations in the centre of which there is a cupola shaped structure. It's all perfectly delightful. Here also we find those little shed-like structures attached to the opposite sides of the main edifice and somewhat marring its effect. Worthy of note also and presenting the same wreath-like structure around the top of the walls, is the synagogue in Zolkiew. 2) Finding so many synagogues with parapets running all around them at the top, one can't help wondering as to whether they actually did serve martial purposes, such as to ward off attacks which happened but too often also in Poland. We shall have to allude below to synagogues that served at the same time as fortresses. Here also you have, along the top of one wall, this time, little toy towers, as it were, sticking up., somewhat comically. The three large windows on each of the four walls, filling them almost entirely, with the Norman arches make the exterior of this synagogue also quite attractive.

None of the stone synagogues are unbeautiful and these few outstanding examples are positively beautiful. We certainly can't infer from any of them

1) M.3 ^{Vol} E.J.D. II pp 18.

2) M.2 ^{Vol} E.J.D. II pp 18

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a total insensitiveness to beauty, to line and form. Whatever evidence there is points rather the other way.

But it is the wooden synagogue of Poland that has attained to a certain fame, having been of late frequently visited and described by artists, both Jewish and non-Jewish. It is the inside, the painting on the walls and ceiling that has attracted wide attention. But also the outside is sufficiently curious to deserve full description.

Very quaint and curious they are, these wooden synagogues, with their pagoda-like roofs. The stone synagogues have usually straight roofs, with the exception of the old synagogue in Prague which has a sloping roof. The sloping roof coming up to a point like a pyramid, very often, is characteristic of every wooden synagogue even when they are not built roof on roof. The wooden synagogue seems to be characteristic of the smaller town or village. Those well known are in 1) Pogrebyszcze, Nasielsk, Druya, Zabudow, Jablonowa.

We have two synagogues one representing the simplest in that style and the other, the most elaborate and complex. The former, is at Czieszowa 2), the latter, at Narow 3). The first is a simple stable-like structure with a single gabled roof over the entire building. The latter is a perfectly beautiful building with layers of roof one within the other, with side cupolas. Almost all of them have these quaint pyramidal side structures with the centre or main building looking for all the world like a pagoda. An interesting feature of such synagogues as those of Pogrebyszcze and Nasielsk are the poles along the entire front and sides of the building, supporting balconies. They look as though they were standing on poles. This feature is quite striking

1) Found in Ostjudische Sakralkunst, - A Grotte and in M z E J D .

2) M z E J Kd VII/ VIII

3) ib.

*und ihre Ausstrahlungen auf Deutsche
Gebäude*

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Most of these wooden synagogues appear to have a couple of storeys, a staircase leading from the ground to the second story. The Synagogues at Jurborg Lithuania 1) seems to have a synagogue or chapel below and one above. It is not conceivable that the synagogue was underneath and rooms for living or even learning above. In the first place it was against the law to have anything on the top of the Beth Hakneseth. Secondly there was a tendency to have the ceiling very high, there being as many as thirty metres ²⁾ from floor to top of the ceiling. In the absence of any evidence then, visitors who described them strangely not alluding to this feature, I judge that the staircases we see in most pictures led up either to some sort of balcony, though not a woman's gallery, the tendency being to leave a part of the body of the synagogue for this purpose, or it led to rooms on the side, not actually above the synagogue space, used as a residence or as a Yeshivah. But this is all conjecture and it is a pity that none of those who were in the fortunate position of getting first hand information on the subject saw fit to allude to it and dispose of our uncertainty.

This same edifice of Jurborg alluded to above deserves a little more attention architecturally. Although undoubtedly belonging to the same style of architecture characterised by the pogoda-loke roof, it yet presents a marked difference from such a building as say at Pogrebyszcze. The latter, like so many other such synagogues, is all roof. It begins quite low down and rises truncated pyramid after truncated pyramid. The synagogue at Jurborg, however, has two storeys of perpendicular wall and only then begins to slope upwards, come to a stop and slope again, ending, high up above, in a sort of little Greek temple, made to appear so, by the series of arched niches that rise from the cornice of the sloping roof just below it. These arched

L.C. Topf 33.

1) Ostjudische Sakralkunst. A Grotte. 2) Ostjudische Sakralkunst A Grotte.

Handwritten: H. Rimon Vol. 3. Art. 1216
A. 1778

niches we already have met in the stone synagogues, where it was almost a common feature. Here seems to be combined both the respectable features of the stone building and the fantastic features of the wooden one. In this building also, it should be noted, the two side towers, so common a feature of the wooden synagogue are entirely missing, the outside balcony with gabled roof being the only vestigial remains.

That they built in wood is not surprising, this being a material with which the vast and many Polish forests abounded. The smaller communities were contiguous to the forests, from which the timber could, at little cost of energy or money, be hauled to the village or townlet. In fact as soon as a community became more populous and richer it craved for a stone edifice. Witness the case of Zolkiew which replaced its wooden for a stone synagogue. I) There, to be sure, protection of life and valuables was also born in mind. A stone building served such purposes much better.

Wood then was native to Poland. Is this true of the wooden style of building? Whence was this unique and beautiful architecture derived? Or was it original, as to all appearances it is. Well, A Grotte in his paper "Ostjüdische Sakralkunst und ihre Ausstrahlungen auf Deutchen Gebiet," asserts rather strangely like that, the Jargon spoken in Poland by the Jews, the architecture really comes from mediaval Germany, whence the Jewish refugees carried it in the earlier centuries to Poland. It is German-Romanesque, the sloping roof, so he claims, being characteristic of this style of architecture. Churches were so built in Germany. It is indeed strange, for if anything looks unGerman and very Oriental, it is these very wooden Synagogues. In the second place, their similarity to the

I) In privilege granted by Jan Sobieski - in Euber's

early work l. c p 122

houses of the Schlachta or Polish nobility ^{has occasionally been d.)} ~~remarked upon very often~~

However it be, it appears certain that Jews did not invent this kind of architecture. The Jew hardly had the leisure to think out a style of ~~an~~ architecture. He took what was ready at hand and used it. But to his credit, it must be said, that he did not spoil by imitating. As with so much else, he imparted to what he took a homely and lovable distinction of its own.

Unoriginal as the sloping roof may be (and it is not hard to imagine that this could be quite a common phenomena) the pegoda effect might well have developed as the result of necessity. Not being able to build the synagogue high up, they added from time to time roof after roof as was already shown above; and the pogoda-like roof is, after all, the main and most interesting feature.

However puzzling the architecture of the wooden synagogue may be, the stone one, however, presents no mystery. When it has an architecture to speak of, it is the art of the Renaissance that is noticeable. ^{A.)} It is a well known fact that during the 16th and 17th centuries there was a good deal of travelling back and forth between Poland and Italy on the part of Polish Jews. The renaissance style is noticeable in Ostrog, Zolkiew and others. Even the baroque is not quite absent. The Gothic, however, seems to predominate, in the ~~same's~~ 2^d Synagogue in Cracow, in the Maharshall's 3^d in Lublin ^{4.)} and in many another, especially inside the building where Gothic domes overarch the Almemor and the other portions of the building.

One other style of Synagogue building must be mentioned. Of unique and tragic interest are those synagogues built like fortresses to shelter the Jewish populace in times of danger, and to ward off attack by enemies. An outstanding example of such a synagogue is the one at Lutsk. ⁵⁾ The walls

^{1.)} See picture of R. Isaac's Synagogue in Cracow
M. 3 G. J. D. vol 7/8 p 65.

¹⁰⁾ ~~Such being the feeling, for instance, of the commentator~~

²⁾ Derived from Rabbi Moiss Isserles. Rabbi of Cracow. ³⁾ R Solomon Lubia of

Lublin ^{4.)} Balaban's Lublin L.C p. 75 ^{5.)} M. 3 G. J. D. L.C p 44

See Cracow in J.E.

10.

here are extraordinarily thick; and the regular military towers are the striking features. 1)

Of greatest importance and interest in connection with the wooden synagogues are the paintings on the walls and ceiling within. That artists and art critics should at the present time be making pilgrimages to the various outlying villages and townlets in far off Galicia or Lithuania, to come back full of enthusiasm for the old Polish Jewish art is certainly an amazing thing. Amazing especially in the light of the general notions concerning Polish Jews. ~~We take~~ it for granted that they were keen Talmudists. But this devotion to pilpul, it would appear, should have had just the opposite effect, stifling any feeling, any aspiration for art. No one would credit the Polish Jew with aesthetic sensibilities. But yet here are these synagogues.

The stone synagogues, with few exceptions such as the one at Husiatym 2) built however recently, do not appear to have been painted within. They seemed to have preserved something of a cloistral effect with their Gothic domes and interlacing arches. It is confined almost wholly to the wooden synagogue.

The codes have little to say on this question of painting the synagogue within. The *שולחן ערוך* and the *Sh"t* though, would not have the ornamentation reach all the way down. It must begin from a line just above the heads of the worshippers so that attention be not distracted 3). The fact that these Polish commentators felt themselves impelled to remark upon it, points to the frequency of the phenomenon. And it can't be said that they frowned

1) I have it on the evidence of an eye witness that also certain synagogues in Cracow, the Roma's and Popper's, are built with one exceptionally thick wall with holes in it for cannon to go through. 2) Vid. *Siolk* etc. *Siolk*

3) *שולחן ערוך* *Siolk* etc. *Aruch Chapin* 80. 23.

II.

upon it. Rather, it appears to me, they favoured it, since they do not discourage decoration but rather indicate where it should appear, leaving but a narrow strip of wall bare. In fact but for this strip and a comparatively small spot on the west wall, the whole synagogue within, walls and ceiling, was just one blaze of colour. The bare spot on the west wall was there in memory of the Destruction /עוֹלָם עוֹלָם I).

I shall follow the writer in No 3 of the Rimón - El.L.- who visited the old wooden synagogue on the outskirts of Mohilev and described it most minutely. This will afford a true index of the type of art.

The first thing that strikes one is the fact that the paintings appear on the bare timbers. There is no attempt at polishing them. The ceiling is like a veritable cone painted up to the very apex.

Let's look at the ceiling first. Starting with the decorations just on the side and above the ark, you have a series of towers, one above the other, with deep red-roofs, and green domes and minarets, all resting on a huge fish, apparently the Leviathan. Trees, palm and pomegranats, stand on either side and underneath the fish are large yellowish, with red splashes though, waves of an ocean. Going up higher a blue sky appears with innumerable stars. Looking round we see a ship in water. Just above the ark appear the inevitable lions in an harmonious confusion of decorative detail. There again are the twelve signs the Zodiac, with the lion having the features of a wistful man whom the writer believes to have been the Rab. Looking at one of the walls we see, trees and fields and animals. On another we find a sort of rolling tower, with birds flying all round it, one of them, a stork, having a serpent in its beak flying towards a tree on which there is a nest of birds. Here there are pictures of

I). J. E. art. synagogue.

trumpets with Biblical verses containing allusions to them, baskets of fruit, palms, lions, fish, doves in abundant profusion with entire prayers, such as the Kiddish, filling certain spaces. They are all painted in dominant colors, forming a most colorful harmony. It is rich, warm and melodious.

Archaeology is also drawn upon for motifs. The north wall, for instance, is almost entirely taken up with objects of the Temple, traditionally believed to have been there, such as the Menorah, the table of Show-bread and flowers again and foliage.

Not all the other synagogues have all these details. But the various motifs are constant, as are the general color schemes. The lion, of course, goes, without saying. There the stork is an oft repeated motif, because of the righteousness traditionally associated with this bird. This is also true of the dove. Palms are repeated because of their connection with the Lulab: trumpets or Shofaroth because of their use on the Solemn Days. The colors favoured seem to be purple, violet, red, green blue.

The group of towers in the synagogues of Hobilier repeated very often, is according to the artists' inscription, Worms, made holy by Rashi's birth or residence there. The city of Jerusalem also is an oft repeated motif. The rolling tower alluded to above may be Noah's ark as it floats on water. Anyhow Noah's ark appears often, so also does the Garden of Eden; all the furniture, that finds a place in the holy books will appear somewhere in one synagogue or another.

The synagogue in Hobilier does not happen to be very large, but as a rule the wooden synagogues are quite spacious and lofty, a height of 30

Rashi in commenting on the Hebrew name נחיה, says she is so called because she acts righteously with her companions.

frank

to 50 meters, being quite a common phenomenon.

Looked at microscopically, the drawing is poor. The details are very crude, reminding one of the crude drawing and painting of the middle ages. But as a whole you find yourself yielding to it, entirely absorbed by all this strangely harmonious color. There is no classic simplicity and serenity. There is a barbaric profusion but it is an extremely pleasing one. It is an abundance of strength and emotions, of wealth of feeling and sentiment full of deep and rich song.

Who now were the artists who so worked as to amaze their modern colleagues! In many cases we can not even trace their names. Somewhere on the walls, in amongst the decorative details appears the name of the artist, and that is all we know of him and sometimes the year in which he worked on that building. From similarity we judge that also other synagogues were painted by the same man. It is believed, for instance, that the synagogues at Horb and Kirchheim^{hoff} were built and decorated by the same man who built or painted the one at Jablonowa. 1) The artists seem to have been plain folk, everyday Jews, with a turn for carving or painting. The builder was actually a carpenter with occasionally a capacity for drawing or painting.

On the west side of the synagogue at Mobilev, there is an inscription of the artist's, between two lions which reads; "By the hands of the worker engaged in holy work, Chaim son of R Isaac Segal of Slutzk" 2). The date is the earlier part of the eighteenth century. This man is responsible for two more synagogues, one at Kapasta, and the other at Donhilev. There is a legend attached^{ing} to him that after he finished these three synagogues, he fell from the ladder and died, as if with the completion of his work, there was no ^{further} ^{living} reason for life 3). We know the name of another artist, the name

1). ^{aut.} No 35. ^{א"ת} 1710. ^{ה'תק"ע} 1710. 2). ^{ה'תק"ע} 1710. ^{ה'תק"ע} 1710. 3). ib

page 14.

appearing in the synagogue at Jablonowa, I) Susman of Brodie. Around him no legend has been woven.

The fact that some of the artists were remembered by the people and remembered with awe is indicative of the impression left by the art and therefore by the artist. In other cases the art and the artist seem to have been too much a matter of course, to have left any impression.

I) Ib.

CHAPTER 2.

Kinds of Synagogues. *and their Contents*

When we, thus far, discussed the architecture and art of the synagogue, it was only, as already indicated, the formal or official synagogue known as the Beth Hakneseth, that we had in mind. This was not, however, the most popular place of worship. A smaller town such as Zolkiew had only one of this kind while of other kinds there were a great many. And that one was usually empty. 1) A much more frequented institution was the Beth Hamidrash, literally to be translated a House of Learning or Academy, but really serving many purposes besides learning. This and every kind of synagogue have no business whatsoever with architecture or art except for a few of their contents that might be beautiful and artistic, such as the Torah mantle, the ark curtain, and some other objects that will be described later. But what they lacked in beauty they gained in the atmosphere of intimacy, good fellowship and cosiness found there.

A mere House of Prayer was never popular with Jews, as perhaps it was never very popular with anyone. They adorned it and beautified it and left it severely alone. In the formal synagogue the code 2) tells us, we must conduct ourselves with the greatest reverence. There we may neither eat nor gossip, sleep nor loiter. In the House of Study, the Beth Hamidrash, on the other hand, we may do all these things, 3) and full advantage was taken of these privileges. But also learning was vigorously and often violently pursued in this kind of synagogue.

1) Thus complains the Pinkas of Zolkiew:-

in Euber's *פנקס זולקיע* pp. 116

2) Vid "אורח חיים" by Ephraim Zalman Margolis the Polish commentator to *Sh"t* of the 18th Century.

The Beth Hakneseth was always a communal affair. Every member of the community had to contribute towards the outlay expended upon it's building and to ^{its} upkeep. Very often the Beth Hamidrash was communal, 1) but just as often it was also private, belonging to an individual who made it the headquarters for his scholarly activities, or who had a joy in throwing it open to all who may wish to come in and pray, learn or engage in social intercourse with his fellow Jews. When the 'Sema' ²⁾ Loshua Folk Cohen, *c. 1600* took ^{young lady from} ~~a daughter~~ of Lemberg, his father - in- law built him a Beth Hamidrash and supported disciples who flocked to him and studied in it. 3) Since this institution was a place of learning it was characterised by its numerous shelves of books containing the lore of the Jew. 4)

~~The Yeshiva is almost an interchangeable term for Beth Hamidrash.~~

~~The Sema says: "built up a Beth Hamidrash."~~ he might have said Yeshiva. 5)
The Beth Hamidrash was less exclusive. Anyone could come in and do almost
whatever he wanted. The Yeshiva^h was confined almost exclusively to the
Bachurim, the formal disciples, youths, who were to be found in every place
where there was a conspicuously learned man, 6) as was the case with the Sema
who was not yet a Rab then. The scholars did not trouble to travel elsewhere
to pray. All the paraphernalia of **prayer** and ritual were there and they
recited their public prayers in the same spot whenever the hour arrived for

L.C p. 71

1) Such as the Communal Beth Hamidrash in Lublin mentioned in Balaban's 'Die Judenstadt von Lublin'. And we know of such institutions in almost every town alluded to in articles under names of various towns in any Jewish Encyclopedia. 2) *8'10 (P. 118 M. 111 220)* 3) Vid Buber's *see sample* under Joshua Falk Cohen. 4) See picture, for instance, of Beth Hamidrash in Lublin in Balaban's 'Die Judenstadt von Lublin'. 5) In Ostrog the Yeshivah was in the Klaus, *1716 off 1172 126* and this was a communal institution. 6) Pinkas of Lithuania 354 etc.

161f Pinkas of Lithuania etc.
 161f Pinkas of Lithuania etc. edited by
 unknown (Berlin 1924)

✓ *Anthea* *them*
by S. Bober (Bracon 1895)

10060/k 1887/4 m. Baker (Verdicts 1907)

their recitation. I) The author of the *נאמא וול* ^{1.)} *an authority who* quotes *A* refuses to pray in the synagogue where he would be disturbed, as he says.

There were chapels even more private in nature, also called sometimes Beth Hamidrash or just Minyanim 3). The *Taz* 4) says 5) he had a private Beth Hamidrash on the top of the formal Synagogue. Beer of Bolechow in his memoirs tells us he set apart the top room of his house as a Beth Hamidrash for his father who was too old to walk to the regular Beth Hamidrash morning and evening. Every Rab had his Minyan ' 6) to save him the trouble of going to any other synagogues

The Beth Hamidrash was sometimes also known as 'Klaus'. Some of these 'Klausen' became famous, as the one at Brody, 7) which was the favourite resort of a few generations of scholars known as the *גאון, רב, חכם* 8) When the Hassidic Rabbi Jacob Isaac settled in Lublin 9) he kept himself in a private Beth Hamidrash that became famous as his Klaus. It became a favourite term of the Hassidim. Perhaps a Klaus came to be considered the gathering place of distinct little clique. Another term made popular by the Hassidim was 'Stubel'. Since they could not carry on their different ritual and prayers in the ordinary synagogue, they used any kind of a room - Stub - to do as they wished. Here prayer became a highly emotional performance 10) and there was drinking and dancing. It was a regular club *room*.

By Hayim Mordecai Margulioth Dubno 18th century
L.C. n. 283.

- I) Cp Maisel's Geschichte der Juden in Polen "Die Jeschiva diente als Synagogue" p. 175. See *Shasnei Teschubot* to *Sh"t* *ע"פ חכמי פראג* 1) *אין פראג*
Cp also I Abraham's - Middle Ages. 3) Every house almost was a little conventicle says Pinkas of Zolkiew: *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.*
pp 116 *Minyan is a quorum of ten.* 4) *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.*

R David. *Halber* 5) *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.* 6) Vid Pinkas Zolkiew in *Babers*

I Abrahams reports the same of the German Rabbis in his Middle Ages' 7) Also the Klaus known as the Great in Ostrog. Vid *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.*
by M. Biber (Biber) 8) Gelber's "aus zweijahrhunderte" pp 26. 9) Vid Balaban's Die Judenstadt von Lublin 10) Vid *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.* of Cracow in *Wetstein's* *ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.*

ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.
ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.
ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.

ל"ב. פל. י"ב. של"ו. י"ב. י"ב. י"ב.
n. 63.

Interesting it is that though the formal synagogue was to be more revered than any other, nothing except praying and leaning being permitted, yet it was deemed inferior in respect of holiness. The code -ה"ה/10

פ"ה - says so distinctly 1) Further we may turn a Beth Hakeneseth into a Beth Hamidrash but not vice versa, 2) showing that the latter where also sleeping and even gossiping is permitted is superior to the former.

Occasionally it appears the various guilds of artisans had their own synagogues. Balaban alludes to a synagogue of פ"ה/10
~~and~~ servitors -- and a synagogue "von Kürschner 3) a synagogue of tailors 4) is mentioned in the Pinkas of Zolkiew. 5)

The last synagogues mentioned were actually thus named. As often synagogues were built by private individuals and donated to the city, these were often named after the donor. Thus we have Popper's synagogue in Cracow. 6) The formal synagogue was known often simply as the old or the New 7) In Cracow the New Synagogue is also called

- 1) א"ה 90.18 ק"ה ק"ה א"ה א"ה although not even a Beth Hamidrash could be built on the top of a Beth Hakeneseth פ"ה ק"ה א"ה
- 2) 10. ע"ה א"ה 3) Lublin l.c. p. 89. He found several Sunf-synagogen p 94. Professor Baron remarked that פ"ה/10 was only a name it went by and does not indicate the type of worshipper.
- 4) In recent years almost every town in Russia and Poland had it's workmen's synagogue. Hase of Moscow tells us in his memoirs which appeared in "The Morgen Journal" published in New York, that the Kelmer Maggid preached in the tailors' synagoge at Minsk. I myself visited a tailors' synagogue in Husiatyn etc. 5) pp II5 ק"ה ק"ה א"ה
- 6) Vid P.H. Metstein's א"ה/10 l.c. pp 199 5. The Kwartalnik No 2. has an article concerning one Berec Smulowitz who donated such a synagogue 7) In Pinkas of Zolkiew - ppII5 ק"ה ק"ה א"ה l.c

the Rama's 1) after one of its greatest Rabbis, Rabbi Moses Isserles, in whose time it was built. Very often would a synagogue be thus named. This is true of the Maharshah's 2) synagogue in Lublin. Sometimes it would bear the rather strange name of High - *גבוה* 3) Another curious appellation is *קופה* - Kuppa - which has reference to a fund used for charity. A synagogue in Cracow was thus named. 4) In Lublin there is a 'Parnas Schul' 5)

The Private Beth Hamidrash would naturally be known, by the name of its proprietor, such as the Taz's or the Sema's 6) Jacob Isaac of Lublin known as the 'Choze' - Seer - was to be found in his Klaus, as already mentioned above, known as the Choze's Klaus 7) In the Pinkas of Cracow we come across synagogues known as Rabbi Yekyl's and Rabbi Eisik's 8) This would lead us to believe that a synagogue was almost a second habitation. If you want to see R Yekyl, you go to his Beth Hamidrash. There you find him or your cronies. You snatch a Borchu, a chapter of Mishna, or you discuss business, communal or private. A synagogue was an intimate affair, a club, sometimes a certain individual's private home minus wife or other females. No wonder this kind of synagogue was frequented and the formal kind deserted.

1) In *שו"ת מהר"ם* 1.c. pp 199 2) R Solomon Luria, 1.c. p 12.
 Rab of Lublin 1510 - 1573. 3) *שו"ת מהר"ם* 1.c. pp 66.
 4) ib. 5) Balaban's Lublin 1.c. pp 66. 6) See above
 7) Balaban's Lublin pp 89. 8) See *שו"ת מהר"ם* 1.c. p 199 In Ostrog
 P.H. Metstein printed with *שו"ת מהר"ם* 1.c. p 199 In Ostrog
 there were the synagogues of R Samuel, of R Joseph. Vid *מנחת חינוך* 1.c. p 199
 by M.M. Biber (Berditchew 1907) pp 27 S.

Apart from the painting on the walls inside some of the synagogues, internally they all looked more or less alike. They were all as unchurch-like as possible. On the whole they presented an unpolished, disorderly appearance, with their rough wooden benches 1) movable reading desks, known as "Shtenders" 2), and in the Beth Hamidrash tables littered with old tomes, 3) and rough wooden shelves 4) with books. At night with candles before each learner, it must have looked even grotesque. And yet judging from the fact that human beings felt free in it to do as they liked, and from the very disorder of the place it must have been very cosy and homelike.

In the centre was the Bema or Almemor 5). In the larger synagogue it was quite an elaborate affair, with curiously wrought gates and carved pillars, loomed above 6). The ark also was occasionally a work of art. There are some famous arks described in the "Mitteilungen zur Erforschung Jüdischer Denkmäler" and elsewhere. The ark curtain was sometimes beautifully embroidered in many colours. 7) The curtain was occasionally the work of pious women 8) who often used their shabbos aprons or cloaks for this purpose. 9) Other art objects of the synagogue were the spice

1) Pinkas of Zolkiew l.c. p 69. 2) Ib. 3) Picture of Beth Hamidrash in Balaban's Lublin. l.c. p 66. 4) Ib. 5) Picture in M.Z. R.J.L. 7:46 pp 35. 45. Picture in Balaban's Lublin l.c. p 71 and author's description p 94. R Moses Isserles (known as Ramah) famous Rabbi of Cracow died 1573 insists on Bema in centre (Orach Chayim 109:5). 6) See pictures of Cracow synagogues in Jewish Encyclopedia. Also of Maharashall's synagogue in Lublin in Balaban's Lublin l.c. p 78. 7) Vid Kaufman in Jewish quarterly Review Vol IX. and S Kraus in Bloch's Wochenschrift 1896 pp 91. 8) Chavoth Jair paragraph 161. Teshuvah HaBach. paragraph 17 whose author is R Joel Sirkis, Rab in Cracow. Died 1640. 9) Ib.

box, the Torah mantle 1), the crowns on the Torah, the Yad or pointer and breastplate for the Torah. Menorahs, candelabras, are often represented in description of Synagogues 2).

Even the Beth Hakneseth, which was purely a House of Prayer had books - Bibles, Humashim and Gemaras or Mishnayot 3) - books whose aspect was quite in keeping with the general appearance of the synagogue. Sometimes the prayer books - had their tilte page decorated. An injunction against it on the score of distracting the worshipper was necessary 4)

For the Chazan or reader, there was a special desk or 'Shtender' near the ark called Amud - 3/10 . 5) and many of the worshippers had their own "Shtenders" 6) or for those who had seats near the wall there were wooden boards attached to it on which the prayer book or book for study was placed.

Everyone except the very poorest had his own seat or place - in the synagogue in accordance with the injunction of the codes that a man acquire a permanent seat for prayer or learning 7) Between the seats, just places on the wooden benches of about one cubit 8) there were thin partitions known as 9/10 . 9) These seats were paid for. 10)

1) Beautiful reproductions to be found in the Mit z. E.J.D. 7, 8.

2) See Balaban's - Lublin l.c. pp 80, 81, 86. Also in Mit, z. E.J.D. Vols 7, 8. 3) Vid. 4) R Moses (Ramah)

Erqcow died 1571 says For the same reason you are not to come too gaudily garbed. Ib.

5) Pinkas Zolkiew - 1.c. p112. He did not stand on the Bemah, where the Torah was read and proclamations made, see below. See also - Quartalnik - Picture of synagogue in

Sandomer - No I. 1912 - 1913

6) Ib pp 115. 8) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. pp 90

7) Vid Crach Chyim 90 19

9) Ib

10) Ib.

seats were sold and the money collected by four Gabaim 1) appointed for the purpose. That no man could buy more than one seat for himself 2), deserves to be mentioned as indicative either of the democratic principles that reigned or of their concern for the law that required "That each individual have a seat 3)

The appearance of the last wall deserves somewhat closer attention. The ark was usually approached by ascending a couple of steps 4). It was flanked on either side by candelabras suspended from above 5) From the pinaks of Zolkiew, it would appear that they stood on the floor 6) On the other side of one of the menorahs was the readers desk. Then came the seats of the Rab and important members of the community facing the rest of the congregation. According to the Ramah 7) the rest of the congregation should be seated on benches running parallel to the east wall, facing the easterners. In Poland, however, this arrangement was not by any means universal. The writer in the Ramon No 3 who visited the synagogue at Druya and Mohilic found benches only along the walls, the space in the middle remaining empty 8).

The situation of the women's quarters now claims our attention. We read of the women's quarters as above the synagogue, probably in a sort

1) Communal officials who had to do with money mainly.

2) pp 90 Pinkas of Zolkiew l.c.

3)

61 3 .11

it appears

though from the Cracow pinkas in Weinstein's *Shulchan* l.c. 15 that one man had two or three places.

4)

See picture of syn in Sandomir in

Quartalnik No I.

5) Ib

6)

Also from Balaban's

Lublin shops of menorah shown pp 79 l.c.

7)

R Moses Isserles famous

Rabbi of Cracow died 1571 Orach Chayim 150.5 This arrangement was true of

the synagogue in Lemberg Picture in M.Z.E.J.D. Vol 7, 6, Page 41.

8) See also pictures of synagogues in Balaban's Lublin l.c. pp 66, 71

The same appears from the description of the synagogue in Zolkiew in the Pinkas l.c. although perhaps later the more modern arrangement which follows the Ramah's prescription was introduced.

of gallery. 1) The writer in the Rimmon alluded to above found in Mohilev one wing of the synagogue set apart for women. There was a wooden partition between this portion and the main body of the synagogue, with a slit in it where the 2) stood. None of the wooden synagogues described had galleries for women. In the instructions for the form of the new synagogue at Zolkiew in the pinkas, there is no mention of a gallery. The women's quarters are referred to as if it was part of the synagogue partitioned off 3) We doubt if there were many synagogues with balconies for women.

One object to be found in certain of the synagogues must be mentioned. This is the "Chair of Elijah", 4) on which the 'Sandek' 5) sat during the rite of circumcision, which, in the period we are describing, used to be performed in the synagogue 6). From the reproduction of one such chair in the *Quartalnik* 7) belonging to the synagogue in Pinczowie, it appears that much artistic ingenuity was expended upon it to make it perhaps the most beautiful piece of furniture, at least in the synagogue alluded to. This 'chair' has two cushioned seats, one presumably for the invisible Elijah. The back is elaborately carved, two curtains chiselled out at the top, drawn back, leaving exposed a circular space bearing an inscription, the only words of which I could decipher were " *לכבוד ה' אלהינו* A Crown appears at the apex of the chair

1) The author of *לחברת ה' אלהינו* l.c. describes the women's quarters in the large synagogue of Ustrog in the following words:-

מלפני הכניסה אל בית המדרש היו שם חדרים רבים ובהם יושבו הנשים וילדיהם ובהם היו חלונות רבים ובהם היו יושבים הנשים וילדיהם
From this it appears there were a series of balconies not only on the west wall but also on the south wall too.

2) A sort of a woman reader - compare Israel Abrahams Middle ages pp 25. 3) Balaban refers to the women's part in Lublin l.c. p 94 as occupying one third of the main body of the 'Maharansschule' 4)

5) The one who holds the child during circumcision. 6) See *לחברת ה' אלהינו*

7) No 2.

265.11.11
note by R. H. S. S. S.

supported by gilded eagles.

On entering the synagogue one found oneself first in a sort of vestibule known as the "Pulish". Here public prayer would often go on at the same time, occasionally, that it went on in the main synagogue. 1) Probably late arrivals would form a 'minyan' there.

The reader so far got a notion, more or less adequate, of the appearance of the synagogue bare of humanity. The picture can not be complete unless he can also visualise it with its dwellers. I say 'dwellers' advisedly for it can not be too often emphasised that Jews were not merely worshippers in their synagogues, except it be at the Beth Hakneseth, where as already shown above, few would be found and then on Saturdays and Holidays in their best clothes of course. But being in one or another of his "Tents of Jacob". 2) also every day in the week, he could be seen there in his ordinary workaday clothes.

A picture in the Quartalnik of a Polish Jew in the eighteenth century, 3) also the pictures taken from life and reproduced in Hollanderski's "Les Isrealites en Pologne" gives us a pretty good idea of what Jews in those centuries looked like.

For headgear they wore tall, straight fur hats, 4) often made of very expensive sable 5). They were garbed in long upper coats reaching down to the ground almost, which were taken in by a girdle. 6) Sometimes

1) The pinkas of kolkiew L.C. complains against it pp II3. Even to day on a Shabbath they would read the Torah in the *6/12* to permit certain individuals to enjoy an *an* (as calling to the Torah)

2) From the Biblical verse interpreted as referring to the House of Prayer or Home of Learning. 3) PPIOS. 4) Called by Jews 'Spodik'

5) Vid *16618* *השיח* *0740* (Pinkas Lita) Edited by S.Dubnow (Berlin 1925)

6) quartalnik pp 105. These were and still are known as Kaftans.

the uppermost coat would hang loose like a long cape and sleeveless, the girdle appearing on another long coat worn just underneath. 1) The upper coats were often made of silk, 2) Coats also of fur are alluded to 3) probably for the winter. The girdle or sash was, it appears, a very colorful article of clothing, woven of gold and silver thread. 4) In most of the pictures the 'fringed garment' - *שׂריון צפוף* - is not visible, appearing only in the portrait of the Hassid reproduced by Hollanderski. 5) Breeches, stockings and low shoes, the first two visible only when the corners of the long upper garments would fall back, complete the picture.

Polish Jews during the period under discussion could hardly have made a shabby, slovenly, appearance, as they did in our own times garbed as we have described them, and imitating the Polish Nobility. For what we have described is also true of the 'Schlactziz'. Even the 'Yarmulka' worn underneath the tall fur hat, was originally fashionable amongst the nobility. 6) After the Poles had long discarded their original costumes, the Jews still were loyal to them.

So addicted were the Polish Jews of our period to rich garments that 'Takanoth' 7) had to be published repeatedly, without much apparent effect, against donning too expensive and rich looking clothes. Beginning with the Lithuanian Word of 8) there were injunctions against the wearing of Samet. 9) the weaving of pearls into women's garments, against

1) L. Hollaenderski 'Les Israelites de Pologne' (Paris 1845) p 211.
 2) Pinkas Lita par. 339. S. 3) ib. 4) ib 5) In Les Israelites de Pologne l.c. p. 2 and I. 6) J. E. Costume. 7) Pinkas Lita.
 8) Ib. item 179 s. 9) ib

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damask and against anything gaudy or too rich. This refrain keeps on throughout similar and more specific 'Takanoth' being published every few years I). Especially favoured was a sort of ornament used on certain articles of clothes called by the Lithuanian Pinkas 'Gildenstick, 2) something that has to do with gold. Of a similar nature are the gold bands or girdles which were prohibited. 3) In addition to the 'Spodik, the tall fur hat, the 'Streimal' was worn, a cone like affair with a brim composed of 2 pieces of fur. 4) It appears to have been usually made of then the very costly sabel. This also is prohibited. 5) Their repeated prohibitions only confirm our assertion made above that the Polish Jew must have affected grandeur even in his costume.

There is a Takanah also against dressing like a $\frac{1}{2}$ - Goy 6). This is very forcibly prohibited, the Takanah using the terms This would seem to conflict with the fact that the costume of the Jew was really copied from the Schlacjiz. The term 'Goy' is however technically used for peasant. 7) No Jew was to look like a peasant. His clothes were to be utterly eschewed. This 'Takanah' is published very few times, which would lead us to believe that the Jews were not addicted to the costume of the peasant and the synagogue would hardly offer the sight of a peasant looking Jew.

The above prohibition against costly garments did not, however, apply to all indiscriminately. Members of the community possessing above a certain amount of wealth and contributing a certain minimum to the communal fund

I) Pinkas Lita. 179, 187, 339, 779, 511, 1035. One of the reasons occasionally given is that it is not seemly during times of trouble for Jews to appear too jocosely garbed. This reason is stated especially after the Hanelnitski massacres.

2) $\frac{1}{2}$ 339. 3) $\frac{1}{2}$ 309. 4) mentioned $\frac{1}{2}$ 309. 5) $\frac{1}{2}$ 397

7) From personal information received from Professor S Baron.

fundI)were permitted to ear something more costly garments. 2) A little more leniency was given bridegrooms and chief rabbis. Very costly and gaudy garments however were prohibitedeven to them.

It seems th t in those days Polish Jews also affected Jewellery. A Takanah reads that not more than two rings were permitted on weekdays, three on Saturdays and five on Hoildays. 3)

On Saturdays and Holidays especially the Jew would appear in his best *הוא יצא* 4) and slo the Jewess in her best. There are good reasons for believing that special garments were worn for synagogue. On a Holiday a coat of marten seems to have been worn only in the synagogue according to the Lithuanian Pinkas. 5) In Cracow according to the author of the Responsa *הנהגת אבותינו* a special 'Mantel' very longwas worn in the synagogue during prayer. 6) This 'mantel' the afore-mentioned author expressly states was worn neither in the house nor in the market places. He describes it as open in front sleeveless, apparently somesort of a cape. The streimal alluded to above was the special head gear worn.

Juding from the Takanath in the Luthmanian Pinkas, the women's part of the synagogue, on Sabbath or Hiliday, must have been perfectly resplendent with gems, pearls and garments of dazzling andgolden brightness. On the

1)From this we might conclude that the reasons for the prohibition were ecen- nical. Usually paying more than theri share of the head- tax, called *קצו* In Lithuanian Pinkas 313 ir says that anyone contributing 400 gilders may wear satin or damask - 2) Jaad 5389 3) Pinkas Lita L.C. 343.

4) Vid Takanah 128 ib.

5) Ib 315

6) *ביום און זמא אדם אהקביל פני קדוהו בשלישין אל מקדש כי אם יחלה אביו* 7) quoted by B.Z.Katz in *אורחות חיים* (Berlin 1899) pp34

→ *אמר וצוהו ובה"ט אביו אביו אביו*

head a cap was worn with rows of pearls running longitudinally all round the head. 1) This was known as a 'Sterntuch'. Above the forehead it looked like a coronet. Ben of Bolichon tells us 2) he bought a pearl headdress for his wife. A silk bodice, embroidered, showed over the bust. Below that was a richly embroidered apron. On the bodice would appear a gold chain. Gold thread was highly favoured. The picture in the *quartalnik* 3) shows us the woman wearing a lace ruff around the neck. Laces, ruffles, furbelongs, gold and silver bands, stripes or girdles seem to have been affected 4). Prohibited by the *Moad* it was still permitted to the bride and her companion. 5) Gems and precious stones ~~alone~~ from various parts of the body. 6) From the picture in the *Jahrbuch der Judischen Volkeskunde* it appears that the womenfolk, as ever, went in for bright colours. Against this there is no *Takanah*. The material was again silk and expensive fur. There is a distinct prohibition against putting silk on a girl whose father has recourse to charity, 7) which would seem to show that even daughters of beggars would dress in silk, perhaps to please the possible groom or the match-maker. 8)

The *Takanah* of this nature were established not because the *Moad* was opposed to rich clothes per se. They were prohibited so as not to excite the envy of the others 9).

Rabbis and scholars wore garments somewhat different and more costly than that of the generality. Solomon Maimon tells us in his Autobiography 10) of a special rabbinic suit put on by his father as a scholar. The stuff,

1) Vid pictures in *Jahrbuch der Volkeskunde* 1925 and in *quartalnik* 1912 & 1913 pp 115. 2) In *Memoirs* translated by M. Visknitzer into English (Oxford University Press 1922) 3) pp 115. 4) Vid *Einkas Lita* l.c. 309 S. 5) *Ib* par 316. 6) *Ib* par 310. 7) *Ib* par 314. 8) The words *hibel* *up* *lap* *ik* are used in the *Takanah* referred to. 9) See *l.c.* *quartalnik* 1912. 10) pp 13 in Eng translation by J. C. Murray (London 1888.)

he tells us was finer than that in common use. He wore leather hose with buttons and "ein Kalamankenes Leibserdak". Both articles are rather puzzling. The last article mentioned has reference to the fringed garment worn underneath the upper garments and 'Kalamankenes' according to the English translator means striped woolen cloth. I¹ Probably laymen wore a 'Leibserdak' of a material cheaper and coarser than wool. The leather hose may have been affected by the particular gentleman alluded to. Although we don't know ~~XXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ from Maimon what the Rabbinical suit was like, we do know there was such a thing.

In the same autobiography Maimon describes the white garments worn on the Sabbath by the Hassidic Tsodik - R Beer of Misitch - with the white Streimel. White with garments were, however, confined exclusively to the Hassidic Tsadikim. 2)

With the above description of the dress of Polish Jew we complete the picture of the synagogue internally. A few remarks might now be in place concerning the conduct of synagogue. It had to have certain officials to keep the moneys that came in from the selling of the 'Mitzwoth', to be described in another chapter, and from the sums vowed every Saturday - *פדיון* - when called to the Torah. *אליה* There were expenditures to be made, Mitzwoth and 'Aliyoth' to be distributed and so forth.

These officers or wardens were known as Gabaim and were chosen by the board of electors that appointed the officers of the general community 3)

1) Vid note of Eng translator .pp 13 in Maimon's Autobiography.

2) An oft-met-with picture of Rabbi Mendel of Lubawitz depicts the same white Streimel and white robes. White is symbolic, according to the Kabbalah, of joy. - *from*

3) Zolkiew Pinkas in pp 107, *אשר* l.c.

more often it seems than the prayers. The gab-im would assign this latter function to various private individuals 1) Only on very solemn or festive occasions would the official reader lead in prayer. His duty it was to call up to the Torah 2) In Zolkiew the pinkas tells us 3) he uttered aloud imprecations against individuals who would bring the name of Jew into disrepute. Musically we shall have to consider him in a different context.

The Gabaim that were appointed by the board of electors - קה"מ of the Kahal were in charge only of the formal Beth Hakneseth. In Zolkiew for instance, we find that only five were appointed for the synagogue and they were called גבאים /גבא קה"מ 4) For the numerous other synagogues, no such provision was made. This is not unnatural, as they were more or less of a private nature. They elected therefore their own Gabaim, Hazzanim and Shamashim. Smaller synagogues would not need as many as five Gabaim. What the usual number was we can not tell, but it's of no consequence.

On the whole we can not but conclude that the synagogue organisation was of very minor importance. The synagogue was either a private affair entirely ruled by the individual to whom it belonged - either a wealthy man or a scholar - גבאי קה"מ or as a public institution was in charge of minor officials appointed by the Kahal. It was not an autonomous institution, but formed part of the activities of the Kahal.

1) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. pp. 112. 2) The formula as still retained is 'Let so and so the son of so and so arise. The Hazzan still calls up in some congregations, more usual it is for the Shamash to do it. 3) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. pp. 83. 4) Vid Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. pp. 89.

CHAPTER 3.

Prayer and Learning in the Polish Jewish Synagogue. - 16th - 18th C.

The codes demand two things: that everyone should pray in the formal synagogue or Beth Hakneseth, otherwise he is called a bad neighbour - יר 100 I) and that no one pray by himself but with his fellows - 71292 The first request, as we have already seen in a former chapter was ignored. The second was readily and gladly complied with. Morning and ~~every~~ evening every Beth Hamidrash, Klaus, Yeshivah and Minyan, every synagogue except the official one, was full of praying individuals 2) The official synagogue was for the Jew too stiff, cold, formal and official. Prayer was for him too intimate a matter to be enjoyed in, in too stately too awesome, too aristocratic an edifice. For I judge that the Gabaim there had too much of a say and the average man too little. The latter also desired a say and an 'Aliyah', and the feeling that he is a somebody in the House of God. The scholars and 'bachurim' - youths, disciples - did not want to waste time going elsewhere, and every Head of an Academy - 22161 612 prayed with his bachurim at the academy. Rabbis in general rarely went to the Beth Hakneseth 3). But praying went on almost in every house 4). No man the Yeven Metzulah - 2 1131 / 11 5) tells us kept away from congregational prayer.

1) Orach Chayim 90 II 2) In Lublin a Herem was published against minyanim. Again the complaint is that the synagogue is entirely empty. Vid 512/15
10. 11 1131/2 219/10, 11 By S.E. Nisenbaum (Lublin 1890) p 91. 3) Vid 1131/15
Comp Abrahams 'Middle Ages Chapter on Synagogue'. Ber of Bolecho. also confirms the fact that very few went to the formal synagogue to pray
4) Some complain the Kahal of Zolkiew in their pinkas l.c. pp 114. See Heran of Lublin in Nisenbaum's Lublin l.c. under Saul Margoloth. 5) By Nathan Nata Hanover. Written in the time of Hamelnitski

But this alone was not enough for many. We find that in addition to the set prayers during the hours assigned for them, considerable numbers would be found in the various places of worship, especially at dawn, performing devotions either privately or in conjunction with others. Groups or associations known as Hebroth would be formed for this purpose. At dawn the aforementioned Yeven Metsulah, tells us in every synagogue there would gather Hebroth to recite the Psalms together 1) or to learn Mishnah, which really was to the Jew a form of devotion. This is not exaggerated, for we find other sources confirming it. Says R Meir of Lublin 2) 'In that you have taken upon yourselves to give thanks and praise every morning.'

Later on, towards the eighteenth century the devotion of the Hassidim would express itself in a different fashion. They would begin their prayers later, to give them a chance to take their ritual bath ^{ק/ק} 3) first and indulge in meditations of a Kabbalistic nature 4). Solomon Maimon tells us that most of them would walk around doing nothing with a pipe in their mouth and when asked what they were doing would answer: 'meditating on God' . 5) But the superiors and the learned amongst them, in the Kabbala, naturally, would undoubtedly engage in sincere devotions of the nature of ablutions and meditations. After prayer the glassful of strong drink taken in the Klaus

1) Here are his words: ^{הנהל הוא חב"ד למעשהו לומר וזאת הנהל}
^{למעשהו לזכרון ולקיום על חשבון הנהל וזאת הנהל}
^{הנהל חב"ד הנהל חב"ד הנהל חב"ד}
 2) Known as Maharam of Lublin. In his responsa par 34

quoted by E.Z.Katz in "L'Koroth Hayehudim" l.c. p 34 3) S. A. Horodetski
 l.c. p 20. 4) See ^{הנהל חב"ד הנהל חב"ד} by S. A. Horodetski Vol I
 (Berlin 1923) p 95 & p 41 also F 49. 5) Maimon's Autobiography L.C. PI62

was likewise in the nature of devotion, called Tikkun 1) meaning perfection or preparation, to put them in the proper frame of mind for whatever the day has to offer 2). Often they would remain in their conventicles to relate and listen to stories of the Tsadikim, which was a great Mitzvah and deemed a form of devotion. 3)

Thus far we talked about devotions outside the set prayers, before or after it, and engaged in by special groups. How about devotions Kavanah- during the set and public prayer? The authorities are so concerned about it that they prohibited decorations on the front page of the prayer book, so as not to injure 'Kavanah' 4). From the glowing account given by the author of the "Yeven Metsulah" of the learning and piety of the Polish Jew you would imagine that there would be no lack of devotion. Considering the fact that there were Yeshivoth in every community almost 5) that even the poorest child had to be provided with a teacher, you would expect a knowledge of Hebrew at least, to be universal. From what R Ephraim of Lezycza 6) however, says, 7) this, strangely enough was not the case. Most of them he complains, do not understand Hebrew 8). Furthermore even those who do understand the medium of prayer, our author further complains, 9) pray without any devotion. They think of business and gossip during prayer.

1) Horodesky l.c. Vol 4 P II.

2) Ib.

3) פירוש ופירוש

by S... Horodesky (Berlin 1923) Vol 4 P 15.

4) "פירוש ופירוש" 131 וכו'

5) See Yeven Metsulah, Pinkas Lita l.c. par 141 Zolkiew Pinkas l.c.p 106 already mentioned above how the paintings on the walls of the Synagogue had to start above the heads of the worshippers for the same reason.

6) Famous Polish Jewish preacher and Rabbi of Prague Died 1619.

7). In his 24 17/11 quoted by M Guderman in Quellenchriften zur Geschichte des Unterrichts und Erziehung bei den Deutschen Juden (Berlin 1891) p 57

8) He explains the phenomenon as due to the fact that children learn only meaning of individual words without the connections ib.

9) Ib.

According to this description a Hassidic House of Prayer must have been a veritable pandemonium. S Maimon confirms it 1) He tells us they conceived of prayer as a wrestling with the devil who would do his utmost to distract them. By yelling and throwing themselves about they conquered the devil. It would be interesting to quote him fully in this connection. They laboured, by all sorts of mechanical operations, such as movements and cries to bring themselves into a state of elevation above the body. It was amusing to observe how they often interrupted their prayers by all sorts of extraordinary tones and comical gestures, which were meant as threats and reproaches against their adversary, the Evil Spirit, who tried to disturb their devotion; and by this means they wore themselves out to such an extent, that, on finishing their prayers, they commonly fell down in complete exhaustion.

This is more than devotion - Kawanah. It is ecstasy, it is madness. We know not what name to give it. When the Besht 2) prayed all the trees in the forest prayed and swayed with him 3). From the heat generated by the ecstasy of his prayer the water in the vessels of the synagogue boiled out 4)

This is not the kind of Kawanah demanded by the Rabbinical authorities. They insist on silent prayer 5) and reverence. But most Polish Jewish synagogues, with the exception of the formal synagogues, very soon became Hassidic.

Since the Herem alluded to considers Hassidic behaviour an innovation we can infer therefore that in the centuries proceeding, prayer was unaccompanied by the strange and violent motions peculiar to Hassidim. Except for

1) Autobiography l.c. p.161. 2) Baal Shem Tab- the common designation of R Israel the founder of Hassidism 18th century. 3) R David Parkes a disciple of Besht himself witnessed it. In *Alon* 4) Ib
5) Orach Chayim 101. 2.

The prescription against changes in melody is even more surprising in the light of the fact that R Joel Sirkis had already permitted the adoption of Church tunes. 1) This is in itself a rather surprising fact. Such tolerance is hardly to be expected in Poland in the year 1600, although, probably R Joel bases himself on some former authority. That Hazanim at that time should have adopted church tunes or chants is in itself incredible. The fact however remains that this kind of assimilationism was practised.

Hazanim, like modern cantors, were undoubtedly given to long drawn out performances, of a musical, or at least vocal character. Our moralist, whose acquaintance we have already made, R Ephraim let himself be heard here too. He complains bitterly of the vocal exhibitions. 2) He says "they cantors themselves admit that they chant the prayers with no genuine feeling of devotion. They merely desire to gain the applause of the multitude and do not as much as pronounce the words distinctly" This was around 1600 and it was not unlike our own days.

He complains also 3) about the long Piyyutim that would be interpolated on certain Sabbaths 4) and Holidays. Many, he alleges, do not come to Synagogue because of long Piyyutim and those who come do not know what they are talking about; because they are based on the Midrash and few know it. They contain neither thanks nor praise.

1) Responsa Bach par 167

The Author R Joel lived around 1610 and was Rab of Cracow.

2) Quoted by M Gudermann in his Quellenschriften l.c. p 85. 3) Ib

4) Such as the Sabbaths before Passover when pieces of doggerel would be recited no worse but much better than bynus. These were called Piyyutim empathic poetry.

הנהגת חזנים
הנהגת חזנים
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הנהגת חזנים

It ~~seems~~ seems that often the assigning of the duties (or privileges) of public reading to members of the congregation led to a good deal of abuse.

I) This is evident from any Pinkas one looks into. 2) Gudermann's Quellenschriften p 86. 3) 1870-1871

4) A possession or right which can not be taken away from the owner.

5) L.c. p. 84

5) L.c. p.84

Wealthy men desired this privilege and it was granted them because of their wealth and influence and not because of their worth. 1) R Ephraim condemns it, and his reasons are obvious. In our own time it would be good news to learn that influential and wealthy members of the community were fighting to get the privilege of reading the prayers. According to the same authority even non-Jewish noblemen were called in to distribute the function of reading and blowing the Shofar. 2) Some would even take possession of the Amud by violence 3)

But strange to say, unlike to-day if the Hazan did not perform his own function, he, and no one else could read the Torah. Saysthe Zolkiew Pinkas 4) "The Shatz and no one else may read the Torah". Perhaps the main function of the Hazan in those days was not considered to be that of reading the prayers. It seems to be taken for granted however that the Hazan is the official reader 5) Hazan is used interchangeably with the term Shatz 6) which means nothing else but a preacher.

Another of the many synagogue abuses enumerated by R Ephraim is the fact that many left the synagogue during the Torah reading. This is not quite compatible with the enormous value attached to the Aliyoth - calling up to the Torah, a value that expressed itself in terms of money even.

1) So states R Ephraim quoted in Godesman's Quellenschriften l.c. p 86

2) Ibid 3) Ibid.

4) l.c.

5) This would be the implication of the following words in the Zolkiew Pinkas l.c.

6) Ibid.

The fact has already been mentioned that one of the reasons for so many Minyanim 1) was that there were not enough 'aliyoth' to go round. It appears that special permission was given to carry on the Torah reading in the Pulish and other places outside the formal synagogue, to give certain people a chance to get an 'Aliyah' 2) Special groups were formed designated "associations of the seven called " 3) for the express purpose of getting 'Aliyoth frequently.

Associations of this nature and such practise as leaving the synagogue for Torah reading and the increase of Minyanim were necessitated by the fact that wealthy men bought up all the Aliyoth. The Mitswoth as the Aliyoth together with privilege of taking the Torah out of the ark, raising it aloft - Hagbuhah - and rolling it together - Gelilah - were called, were sold to the highest bidders. In the Cracow Pinkas 4) we get a list of the sums collected from the various synagogues for the mitswoth. From one of the largest synagogues called the 'Old' 2000 Polish florins were collected, a few years later the mitswoth rose in price and they sold for 3000 florins. Let the reader bear in mind that a decent income amounted to about 300 florins per annum. Ten times this amount then was paid for the Mitswoth.

Certain Aliyoth could not, however, be sold, belonging as an inalienable right to others. The third Aliyah - (ע - belonged to the Rab. 5)

- 1) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p 109 where it says that he who is not a tax payer should go to the Beth Hamidrash where he must be called up to the Torah gratis.
 2) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p 113. 3) Ibid. also Nissenbaum Lublin l.c.
 4) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p 61 Seven because this is the smallest number that can be called to the Torah on Saturdays.
 5) Yeven Metzulah Lemberg 1651

על כל אדם שיש לו חלק בתורה

לעפ. 119

appropriated by even the most important - *2/16* 3) this probably came to be considered the most precious. Anyone who purchased - had it for good, and he could not be deprived of it 4). The same would be true of the last aliyah - *1256* - and Galilah, which likewise belonged not to the groom but to the purchasers.

In the ^{book}prayer, there is the ^{formula} for a blessing, recited on behalf of the one called up, in which certain individuals are mentioned as beneficiaries thereof. The groom ^{for} instance would include the name of his bride among others; the father of his wife and new born. Some would include the names of various members of the congregation, especially the Parnassim, perhaps to ^ucarry favour with them. The Pinkas of Zolkiew 3) frowns upon the practise of mentioning the names of the parnassim. More than two blessings - "*Prab*" - were not permitted. A guest may have the names of all the leaders of the community mentioned. A native, however, may mention none except the names of the month 4) When the was pronounced it was the custom then, as in many orthodox congregations now, to make offering for the benefit of the synagogue or Kahal 5)

It was only in the formal Beth Hakeneseth that the mitzwoth were sold every Saturday to the highest bidders. In the other places of worship they were

1) Most important because whereas every ^{plus 2/16} could command only one mitzwan, the groom had them all. 2) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. p 83

3) l.c. p. 109 4) Ib 109 and it adds

הוא היה מוכרם ונחבם ונחבם ונחבם
The strict wording would indicate that the practise was common of including many names probably of the parnassim. Each month a different parnass was in charge of affairs. He was known as the *לוי*.
5) Ib 110 I judge it was for the benefit of the Kahal, since it was incumbent on the Kahal heads to have the moneys donated, collected;

in all probability distributed gratis. 1) Hence perhaps another reason for their popularity.

Judged by present day standards there was not much decorum, even in the official Beth Hakeneseth. In the Hamidrash, where, while one group was worshipping, there were others doing different things, learning or gossiping or what not, there certainly could have been no decorum. The learning must often have occasioned serious disturbance. R Abraham Sabbatai H. Levi Horowitz (16th century) speaks of it thus in his "Ezek Beracha": - "they dispute with one another concerning matters of Halacha. They use violent and angry language and make much noise. Their cries reach up to God. This is a sin not only because they stupefy themselves but also because they disturb the worshipper in the synagogue at his devotion. 2) We have already referred to the talking during worship and the leaving of the synagogue during Torah reading. This happened in the official synagogue and on the Sabbath. In addition to these disturbances, there was another which must have been still worse - quarreling women. The Pinkas of Zolkiew contains a special allusion to it. 3) "Women must not quarrel" reads one of its Takanoth, "and if they did they were to be fined". In connection with

this question

1) This appears from the fact that non-tax payers, the poor, were asked to go to the Beth Hamidrash for Aliyoth Zolkiew Pinkas l.c/ 109.

2) quoted by Gudermann in Quellenschriften l.c. p. 105 3) l.c. p. 82

of decorum, one must also mention again the stopping of the prayers - due to a grievance that one member of the congregation nursed against another, alluded to above, which would lead to violent quarrels between the individual litigants and their respective sympathisers. R Ephraim Solomon pleads with his contemporaries to suppress this custom, giving as one of his reasons the fact that gentiles usually come to the synagogue to observe 1) and they, seeing the rowdyism prevailing there, make fun and talk in disrespectful terms of the Jewish place of worship.

The sermon - derashah - must have been first a feature of the prayer service in the synagogues of Poland. A 'tekanah' was found necessary to be published against preaching during the morning service on the Sabbath 2) It was moved on later to the afternoon - mincha - service when it was not quite a part of it. We can safely say that the 'Derashah' never stopped being a feature of synagogue life even though eliminated from the service if not always a major, at least, a minor one. L Zunz in his "Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge" 3) quotes several writers who lived around the 17th century and 18th century 4) to the effect that there would be delivered only two or three sermons a year, by the Rab of the community. This may have been true of Germany during these centuries. But there is every reason to believe that it was not true of Poland during the same centuries.

1) Gedermann Quellenchriften l.v. 2) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p II2, II9. Because it kept the people too long at the services without food. Of course from this source alone we would have no right to say the derashah was a feature of the service. 3) (Berlin 1832) p 444. 4) Person, Mathai, C Anton Ibid.

The discourses of the Rab which he delivered the first Sabbath after he received the appointment 1) and henceforth several times a year on special occasions, 2) we shall not consider here. In some communities even ^{he} preached once every month 3) But you come across ~~ub~~ every generation during our period not ~~at~~ all an inconsiderable number who bore the title of 'Darshai' or Maggid', 4) and who were known as Maggid of such and such a city or synagogue 5) It is quite a common thing to find after a man's name on his gravestone the letters *מגיד* 6) which stands for 'maggid' Mesharim. After some names we find besides *מגיד* also *ש"ס* which means that the individual was also a Dayan (court assessor). Often we find *מגיד* alone. If there were special 'Maggidim', it goes without saying that they must have preached more than two or three times a year, especially when they received salaries 6). Maimon distinctly lists 6) the preacher as one of the ecclesiastical officials of his town. In fact, it appears that, during our period, Poland was just infested with wandering preachers. The Lithuanian Pinkas found it necessary to publish a 'Tekumah' against them 9) Many of the first Hassidic superiors were 'Maggidim' and were called 'Maggid' as the 'Mizritcher maggid' the 'Koznitzer' etc. Some of the preachers of this period have become quite famous, such as

1) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p II9. 2) They were the Sabbaths during the Days of Penitence - *שבעה עשר* - and the Sabbath before Passover. Gottesdienstlichen Vorträge l.c. p 444. 3) Vid Hagoren Vol 4 1903 p 104.
4) See *שם* l.c. by S Bober (Cracow 1895) etc
5) For instance R Joshua Falk. died 1700 known as Maggid in his Beth Hamidrash (in Lemberg). Bober's 'Insche Schem' p 85. The above description was found on his gravestone. He was known both as Darshan and Maggid.
6) See Nissenbaum's *שם* or Bober, or any other book of lives of Polish Rabbis. 7) Maimon's Autobiography l.c. p 98.
8) Ibid and p 4. 9) Pinkas Lit. l.c. article 144.

R Abraham Rappoport known also as Sbrenzel the author of 'Ethan Hacshrachi' 1), who lived around 1640; R Joseph Ben Meir author of "Peri Maggadim" died 1792. R Chaim Krochmal of Cracow about 1700, R David Darshan 2) and R Moshe Darshan'. In fact they were legion. The outstanding ones were authors of books which contained their precepts or their philosophy such as the 'Kab Hayasher' by Z.H. Kaidonower around 1700 or R N Spira, Maggid in Cracow, author of 'Megaleh Amukoth' died 1633. All of which merely shows that there must have been no lack of preachers. Of course in enumerating preachers of the period we must not omit the greatest of the all; R Ephraim Solomon from whom we already have extensively quoted. Undoubtedly the synagogue - the Beth Hakeneseth or the Beth Hamidrash - must very often have been the scene of a congregation listening to a preacher, and in many communities this scene must have been not at all an uncommon one.

We have already seen above that ~~xxx~~ no one was allowed to preach during the morning service on the Sabbath 3) It was postponed to the afternoon. Heretofore then, that is before about 1670, there were sermons delivered at the morning service. It was eliminated because of the inconvenience to the people who had not yet eaten. An observer confirms the above fact. 4) He tells us that the Rabbi preached before taking the Torah out of the ark.

1) Buber's 'Anshe Shem' l.c. p 7.

See Nissenbaum's 'Lublin' l.c. p 39.

2) It says that they instituted this innovation of postponing the service to the afternoon ~~xxxxxxxx~~ in imitation of other communities.

3) 'Bodenschatz Kirchlichen Gebrauchen' quoted by L. Zunz in 'Gottesdienstlichen Vortragen' l.c. p 444.

4) He wrote a famous apology for preachers

3) 'Zolkies Pinkas' l.c. p II9 & p IIa.

After about 1700 or so as about 18, in Poland, discourses were delivered in the morning. But on Sabbath afternoon every Sabbath there was a discourse. 1) Very often we find it stated either by a preacher himself 2) or by someone who alludes to him, that the preacher in question preached every Sabbath, 3) and these are not isolated cases by any means. Sometimes even it happened during the week on week-days. We know of a R Loo ben Joseph of Pinsk 4) who was a preacher at various academies and who preached on week-days too. Of week-days Sunday and Wednesday were customary days for preaching, and it seems that in some places every morning someone would preach Halachah or a homily 5) This was not a common phenomenon in Poland. Otherwise we should have had more sources confirming it. But yet we know that R Chaim Krochmal c. 1700 preached on every day before Rosh Chodesh 6)

Besides every Sabbath, discourses were delivered also on the three festivals and certainly on the Solemn days 7) From the sermons or subjectmatter of the *פירוש מלבי"ם* by R Ephraim the famous preacher also for Purim and Hanukkah, and the Sefinah days. Since, as he says in his preface, he

- 1) The fact that in the books containing sermons of preachers such as the Keli Yakar by R Ephraim etc there is a sermon for each 'Sidrah' would prove that they delivered each Sabbath a Sermon. 2) Zunz l.c. p444 foot note.
- 3) In the 'Haskamah' given about 1700 to the author of the book of sermons "Zera Berach" occurs the phrase *הכלל של כל ימי השבוע* Also R Ephraim of **Seczyza** in his Preface to the 'Keli Yakar' alluded to the fact that he preached every Sabbath and many others to too. 4) Zunz l.c. P 444. note
- 5) See Hagoren Vol 4 l.c. p 104 note 19. 6) Ibid p 105 note 21 and R Ephraim in his *פירוש מלבי"ם* has sermons for every day.
- 7) Buber's Anshe Shem p 10. Look through the *פירוש מלבי"ם* by R Ephraim.

wrote it for preachers, he must have believed that they would preach on all these occasions on which they preached not so much to the people at large as to those who participated in an occasion, during such ceremonies for instance, as Weddings, or Circumcisions or funerals. 1)

There was preaching then and many preachers. Who were they? The Rab or Ab Beth Din as he was usually designated, the real chief religious official and Head of the Jewish Court, did not it appears preach often. He was too busy with other duties. The Maggid or Darshan and the Rab, were two different individuals with distinct offices. The title "Maggid Meshari" we hardly ever find attached to a Rab. Yet the Rab did preach occasionally it appears. He always preached when first appointed 2) and probably twice a year thereafter 3) Some Rabs did preach more frequently 4) The Rab of Brest who was a contemporary of R Yom Tob Lipman Heller c 1648. preached even every Sabbath it appears. 5) For when the latter visited him, he let him take his place on the pulpit that Sabbath. R Ephraim of Leczyza, himself a Rab (of Prague) preached every Sabbath. So did others. But this was not a common phenomenon. The office of preacher was, however, very often held by one of the assistants to the Rab, Ab Beth Din, called 'moreh Zedek' - *Shel* - Very Often we come across the title *Shel* 6) often even the Rosh Beth Din was also a preacher. This official was just one degree lower than the Ab Beth

- 1) See *p 172/c* *Shel* By R Ephraim Amsterdam 1779.
 2) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p II9. 3) Zinz l.c. p.444. & Hagoren Vol 4 p.104.
 4) Comp for instance Hagoren Vol 4 l.c. p 104 ante 12 where the Rab preached
 once a month. 5) Hagoren Vol 4 l.c. p 104 note 15. 6) See Anshe Shem. l.c.

Din. And we find many such who bore the title of Darshan or Maggid I). Beneath him, the dayanim, also acted often as 'darshanim'. But besides these officials who combined the office of preacher with some Rabbinical office, there were very many who held the office of preacher alone. These are, with a few exceptions usually designated 'Maggidim' whereas the others are more often called "Darchanim". Many of these were engaged as ~~steady~~ *permanent* officials. S Mimon alluded to such an official 2) On many gravestones we find just the title "Maggid Mesharim" and nothing else 3) We also find just the title "Darshan" 4) R Joshua Falk (no the Sema) c1700, was regular preacher of the Beth Hamidrash in Lemberg 5). T Joseph author of Peri Megadim was preacher of Zamocz and Lemberg 6) R Ezekiel Feivel was known as Maggid of Velna c 1770. Famous as Maggidim are Jacob Issac of Kremnitz, c 1700, the Debner Maggid - Jacob Kranz - called by Mendlesohn the Jewish Aesop. But besides these maggidim who had steady posts there were hosts of wandering preachers. The Teknah published against them by the council of Lithuanian has already been alluded to. Also the council of the Four Lands had to frown upon these wandering preachers whom it couples with beggars. 7) These appear to have become very abundant after the Hmelnitski massacres of 1648. The Teknah of the Lithuanian Council was published in 1667 nineteen years

- I) See "Kiryan Neemanah" by S.J. Finn (Vilna 1915) p 106 alluding there to a famous preacher R Moshe Farshan. Many such elsewhere in Finn or Buber l.c.
 2) Autbiography l.c. p 98. 3) See Nissenbaum's Lublin l.c. or Finn l.c. etc
 4) Nissenbaum's Lublin l.c. p 39 5) Anshe Sheva l.c. p 65. 6) Finn l.c. p 24.
 7) Hagoren Vol 4 l.c. p 100 note 34.

charity. He supported disciples and distributed much wealth, according to the description of the minutes of one of the synagogues in Lemberg. 1) He was also a Gabbai of Palestine Charity.

Many preachers that we know of were also famous halachists. Every Maggid that was also a - *Shin* - a Rosh Beth Din - decided cases and acted as guide in ritualistic practises, and was therefore an Halachist. But some were actually famous as halachists while being preachers at the same time. This is true of the above mentioned R Abraham Rappoport Shrenzel, ^{Lemberg c. 1600} the author of a book of Repsona called Ethan Haezrachi - *אֶתָּן הַעֲזָרָחִי*. In the same book are to be found his prechments, and they are not few, for numerous occasions, especially in memorian sermons for individuals and communities massacred during the Hmelnitski period. R Joseph ben Meier Teamim c 1770 the author of the "Peri Megadim" ^{2.)} was another preacher - halachist who also published his ermons together with responsa. R Meier of Lublin another famous halachist of the 17th century was equally famous as a preacher.

Others there were who were not known as halachist. R Ephraim Solomon of Leczyz, who although Rab of Prague, was not an Halachist of note. This is true of all the preachers who were known merely as "Maggig Mesherim". Thos is true later of many of the first founders of Hassidism who were known as maggidim as already mentioned above. We have no record of an halachist who w s a wandering preacher or mochiach ^{is 16th century} 3) R Moses of Pryemla complains in his 'Mateh

1) Bober's Ansche Schem l.c. p 12.

3) Hagoren Vol 4 l.c. p 106 note 25

2.) Bober's p c. 1611 l.c. p 95

'Moshe' that preachers are not scholars, merely knowing a little Agadah.

An amazing number of preachers we meet with in Poland were Kabbalists.

R Samuel Edels famous author of "Maharsha" complains of this 1). Famous preacher Kabbalists were Nathan Spira of Cracow died 1633, who wrote a Kabbalistic work "Megaleh Amukoth", Joseph Dubno c 1700 author of "Jesod". Joseph, Meir ben Isaac of Tarnopol c 1700 author of "Moor Katon" and others 2). Many of these Kabbalist -preachers were called just "darshan" as R Samuel Darshan of Lublin c 1660 3). The Hassidic Maggidim were of course Kabbalists and not Halachists. That there was this inclination towards the "ab halah among preachers in general is seen from what Maimon 4) has to say about the preacher of his town. Maimon found him alone engaged in the Kabbalah and from him he began to learn its doctrine.

The "Peth Hamidrash would be more often scenes of a discourse than the more official Peth Hakneseth. About R Joshua Falk, R Joseph Ben Meier Teumim already mentioned and many others it is remarked that they preached in the or their Peth Hamidrash 4). The preachers who were appointed to preach to the youths of the academy 6) preached there of course. Since sermons were delivered on various important moments of life such as marriage, death, birth, they were delivered outside the synagogue in the private homes of the proto-doxists. The Lithuanian Pinkas 7) implies that wandering preachers preached

1) Zunz Gottesdienstliche Vorträge l.c. p 446.

2) Comp Geschichte

der Juden in Polen und Russland by Dr J Meisl Vol 2 (Berlin 1942) p 151

3) Nissenbaum's Lublin l.c. p 84.

4) Autobiography l.c. p 98.

5) Anshe Shen l.c. p 85 p 81.

6) Zunz Gottesdienstliche Vorträge l.c. p 444

7) l.c. art 596

also outside the synagoge. The words used are "other places". Are we to understand by this private homes or perhaps the street. We know that in Italy people ^{could} sometimes gather in the street to listen to a preacher 1) Would the same thing happen in Poland? We have another source for the fact that an unroofed spot would sometimes be the scene of a crowd listening to a preacher. An author of the seventeenth century writes as follows; "This derashah" my son preached in the courtyard - Hazer - of Kosova." 2) ^{In this case then} The preaching went on in the open air. On the title page of the "Keli Yakar" published in Amsterdam 1767 there is a picture of a preacher, apparently, haranguing an audience outside the synagoge.

When the preacher spoke on a special occasion, the subject matter of his sermon would naturally be the occasion. He talked about ^{marriage, or circumcision or the} significance of a departed individual. Memorial sermons were very often delivered either in the home of the relatives, since the synagoge could not be used for 'Hespedim', or in the synagoge if the departed one was a sufficiently great scholar 3) The cemetery was also as such, of course, the place of funeral sermons 4). R Abraham Rappoport, already alluded to, spoke often on the cemetery 5) But he made quite a speciality of memorial sermons, which he published in his "Ethan Halzrachi". This ^{voluntary preacher} bewailed - maspid' - every great man of his time. He delivered a number of sermons on the occasion of the destruction of the various Ukrainian cities at the hands of the Cossacks, in 1648. One of his sermons

1) Hagoren Vol 1.c. P102 note 2.
in the past called ¹⁰⁷ 202 p. 203.
4) Anshe Shem 1.c. p 10.

5) Ibid

2) Wetstein's ^{hulap} 1.c.
3) Orach Chayim 151. I

was delivered on another ^mournful occasion 1), when the Jesuits of Lemberg appropriated a newly built synagogue for their use. When it was returned to the Jews, he delivered a joyful sermon.

A text from the portion of the week - Sidrah - would be the topic or at least the starting point of most sermons in the synagogue. Most books of sermons published at that time have sermons for every parashah. Yet R Ephraim Solomon complains that the preachers of his time would not use a Biblical verse but rather a text or texts from the Midrash 2) On the Festivals the subject matter would be these Festivalism naturally or it would be repentance on the "^{em} ~~Solemn~~ Days". R Ephraim, we find used to preach make the vices such as calumny, enmity, pride of the rich and learned and such like abuses his subjects matter, by which he claimed he gained the enmity of many important individuals 3)

The usual sermon seems to have been a learned discourse or a subtle discussion. They would discover contradictions in the Midrash or Talmud, which they would most ingeniously reconcile. These are the words of R Ephraim's charge 4) "The custom should be established that to preach on a Sabbath on the subject of morality and the injunctions of the Torah not to engage in hair splitting discussions of the Midrash which is of no concern to the people".

1) Ibid 2) Gudermann Quellenschrift l.c. p 86.

3) Zunz l.c. p 447 note 1

4) Gudermann's Quellenschriften l.c.86

A personan observer of the seventeenth century tells us that the preacher would not deliver an edifying sermon but would merely explain dark passages in the Talmud 1) As so many of the preachers were halachists, they used the method of Halacha also in preaching. The Rab when he preached, probably, delivered a 'pilpul'. In the olden times the term, 'darash' actually meant to deduce a law from a verse. That 'darashim' in Poland were not merely halachists is obvious from the books many of them published which contained no law. But the method was pilpulistic, even when they preached on texts of the parasha or on matters of life. Even R Ephraim himself who preached for edification used the method of pilpul. When he wants to tell us 2) that man in power should consider himself a servant of those who elected him rather than the lord, he works it out by the method of pilpul. His thought is beautiful when he says that if this leader carry the burdon of his community he is to be revered, but if they carry him he is a 'asha' - evil man. But this he deduces in the most devious fashion from various conflicting statements in the Talmud which are finally reconciled by the division of the concept 'office' into two kinds. This is Chilluk - division or analysis - or pilpul. Still R Ephraim's preachments were of ethical import. This was not the case, we judge from his complaints and other sources, with most other preachers. When R Joseph ben Meier Teumim 3) visited Lublin and preached there one Sabbath, he was interrupted

1) Zunz l.c. p 444 note b.
part 3 article on Ordination.

2) Eliezer Ephraim (Amsterdam 1779)
3) Anshe Shem l.c. p 97.

25/10

by individuals who found his reasoning fallacious, although he had especially asked them not to. The fact that he had to make a request of this nature points to the frequency of such occurrences and to the fact that the discourses were such as lent themselves to interruptions of this nature. They were that is to say pieces of reasoning. They received a certain definite form which was almost universally followed. The following little sermon I) is typical of the whole class and gives one a very good idea of what Polish Jews enjoyed if they did. For a text a midrash is used - a lengthy citation in which difficulties are implicit. Then comes the problem. (They had the most remarkable faculty of discovering problems. Finally comes the solution, in which the contradictions are reconciled and the difficulties explained.

,Text: In the Midrash we have the following: the pupils of Rabbi asked him: What verse supports the sentence in the Midrash at thirteen years the boy becomes Bar Mitzwah? He answered: the verse, "fourty stripes shall ye give no more" supports it. How then, asked the disciples, could you change an injunction of the Torah? The teacher answered: The words of a sage are weightier than the words of the Torah - (A very dark text.)

The problem is I. Did not the pupils of Rabbi know, and could he not direct them to the incident of Simeon and Levi where it says "Each took his sword", although Levi was only thirteen

I) Taken from Mitteilungen zur Jüdischen Volkskunde 16 J. & H. Wien 1913 p. 27 Delivered by a Bar Mitzwah.

years at the time? 2. Where is the answer of Rabbi's answer to the first question of the pupils? 3. What connection is there between the first and second question? Three problems. Now comes the solution. The words of the text: at thirteen years is to be taken to mean on the day in which he turns thirteen. It is this the disciple wanted to know. How we know that thirteen means not a day before thirteen. To this Rabbi's reply is proper saying that when it says 'fourty stripes' it means one short offourty; which really would be opposed to the law that on the day on which he is thirteen he is Bar Mitzvah. To this he replies that the words of the sages are more to be considered than the Torah and so it goes on and on - some more questions and problems and further answers and solutions. For the vain pilpul and false interpretations of preachers they were quite sharply criticised at the time. 1) Some halachists would discover according to which conflicting opinion of the Talmudic sages concerning certain matters of ritual or civil law, Haman acted or Antiochus or Ester 2) Some would explain a puzzling verse in 450 ways or 345 ways the latter number being the sum of the numbers corresponding to the letters in Moses 3). Or they would distort a sentence explaining for instance the verse. "He placed his hands on the head of the burnt offering" to mean on Amalek. Books defending the preacher and his preachings had to appear. 4)

1) Hagoren l.c. p 108. 2) Ibid
3) Ibid p 106 and Nissenbau, 's Lublin l.c. p 39. 4) David Darshan c 1580 composed an Apologetic for preaching in his "Masgil L David."

We have already alluded to the many preachers who were kabbalists. It appears that many delivered discourses of a Kabbalistic nature. They would interpret a verse or Talmudic statement kabbalistically, or actually preach on the Zohar. This kind of preaching already, the beginning of the 17th century, aroused the antagonism of R. Samuel Edels the famous commentator of the Talmud says he is. "Preachers in our time preach concerning the mystery of the Name (of God), matters utterly fantastic." A Nathan Spira of Cracow died 1633. mentioned above introduced the pilpul method in his kabbalistic sermons. 2) Whether Talmudic or Kabbalistic the preachments were Chaddushim - novellae. Each preacher tried to discover something new in the way of interpretation or distortion. When, however, we come to consider a group of preachers that flourished during the 17th century, we will have to conclude that they did not have as ~~their~~ purpose congregation. We know them as Chaddushim, but rather the stirring of the authors of a terror literature. They delighted in describing the fires of the lower regions, ^{the innumerable demons that} at a moments' notice will pounce upon any sinner. 3) Meir ben Isaac of Tarnopol, author of Maor Katan and Naphtoli Herz of Pinsk author of Netch Hayashar 4) both of the seventeenth century are outstanding examples of this school. They preached to edify, taking from the Kabbalah their machinery for punishment or means of reward.

From the very name they bore - Mochichim - the wandering preachers

מכילים כהנים כהנים כהנים כהנים

- 1) Zunz l.c. p 445 Note d. " כהנים כהנים כהנים כהנים "
- 2) Compare S Dubnow's History of the Jews in Russia and Poland (Philadelphia 1916) Vol I P 135. 3) As for instance the Kab Hayashar by Z.H. Kaidanower c 1700. 4) Compare J Merisl Geschichte l.c. Vol 2 Pp 144 ss.

likewise appear to have preached sermons whose purpose was not to exhibit their ingenuity in discovering new interpretations but rather in stirring the people by exhortation 1) and rebuke. It is perhaps a little strange that just these ethical preachers were held in disrepute, the reason given being that they speak "superfluous words" 2) and the Tekamah goes on to say: they do it for their own glory and just to collect money 3). They must have been something like our present-day revivalist preachers, striking terror into people by their threats of dire punishment in after life.

Yowards the end of our period around the middle of the 18th century arose preachers whose fame have come down to our days, and who again preached sermons of ethical import; men like E' Jacob Kranz known as the Dabner Maggid whose fables were translated into Yiddish or R Ezekiel Feivel of Vilna 4) who received the applause of the very great men of his time such as the Gaon of Vilna, R Joseph ben Meier Teurnin.

With the rise of Hassidism a new form of preaching arose. As already said many of the founders of this movement were preachers and Kabbalists. They likewise indulged in ingenious interpretations but, not for its sake alone. They had a purpose which suffused their preachments and made them very appealing. I am reproducing from Malomon's autobiography an example of their preaching 5)

"Sing unto God a new song; His praise is in the congregation. (Psalm 154I)

I) Pinkas Lita art 596 uses the words

2) Ibid/sic. (p. 103) 241 2002 3) Ibid

4) Finn's Kiryah Niemanah l.c. p. 64.

5) l.c. o I6I.

Our superiors explain this verse in the following way. The attribute of God as the most perfect being must surpass by far the attributes of every finite being; and consequently His praise, as the expression of His attributes, must likewise surpass the praise of any such being. Till the present time the praise of God consisted in ascribing to him supernatural operations, such as the discovery of what is concealed, the foreseeing of the future and the production of effects immediately by His mere will. Now, however the saints, that is, the superiors, are able to perform such supernatural actions themselves. Accordingly in this respect God has no longer preeminence over them; and it is therefore necessary to find some new praise, which is proper to God alone. Here the purpose is obvious to show the greatness of the Tsaddik.

That the preacher was not held in the highest esteem is evident from the fact that he was below the Rab in importance. Mimon calls the preacher of his town, the under - Rabbi. 1) We have already seen above how books had to be written defending preaching against attacks on the score of its vain pilpulism. On the part of scholars preaching was despised because it was merely Agadah. 2) We also find an objection because of the gestures and behaviour of preachers while preaching. They skip about and clap their hands. 3) This would on the contrary show that preachers become emotional and did not always display pilpul. But they were objected to on this score.

About the wandering preachers we already have learnt in what disesteem they were held. I have only to add that the minutes of the Council of the

1) l.c. p 98 2) Hagoren l.c. p 106 note 25 3) Ib p 108 Note 34.

Four Lands or mountebanks. 1) At best they were looked upon as beggars. The fact that ~~there~~ were preachers who were held in very great esteem as men like R Ephraim Soloman would be does not contradict the fact that as a whole not the highest value was attached to preaching.

The method used may have had something to do with it. It must have been very tedious to listen to the intricate and subtle discussions of ~~unearthly~~ problems to which the most unearthly solutions were discovered. 2) Perhaps they would flock to listen to the wandering ethical preachers. But they were a disreputable lot. It appears ~~lengthy~~ also that the sermons were rather lengthy. They had to be postponed to the afternoon 3) because of their length 4). Yet some preachers must have been listened to with great interest and joy. Crods flocked to hear R ~~Ephraim~~ Ezekiel Feivel. All enjoyed him and praised him. Such is the comment upon his preaching made by various contemporaries of his 5) He delivered purely 'Mussar' sermons. So did R Jacob Kranz and he had a large following and many others. An occasion would, in all probability lend effectiveness to a sermon. When R Abraham Rappoport delivered a 'hesped' over the martyrs of Krotoshim or Nemierov, 6) the hearers must have been deeply moved. Otherwise the enjoyment the hearers derived from a discourse must have been due to the success of following its intricacies.

Nathan Nata Hanover, author of the Yeven Mitsulah, speaks in glowing terms of the state of learning in his time, that is around 1648. The following

1) Hagoren l.c. p 108 Note 36 using the words. "p / k / 17" 2) R Aryeh of Bielsk speaks to this effect quoted by Hagoren l.c. p 106. 3) Zolkiew Pinkas l.c. p 119 4) Compare also the words of Leon de Modena as to length of sermon quoted in Hagoren l.c. page 107 note 31. 5) Finn l.c. p 242. 6) Anshe Shem l.c. pp 7 ss.

is what he says: "There is no proof needed of the fact that there never was so much Torah anywhere in Israel as in Poland. Every community would support Academies, the heads of which would receive high salaries, so that they might be enabled to support academies without worry, and that the Torah might be their exclusive occupation. There was hardly a house in all the land without scholars. A community of fifty individuals could show twenty scholars who were called 'morenu'. Again the same author rhapsodises: "No man left ~~xxxx~~ the House of Worship without hearing words of Torah from the mouth of some scholar or **engaging in Midrash Mishneh** or Bible or Halachah. For there was no synagogue without many groups of scholars who taught others in the synagogue immediately after prayer evening and morning." Undoubtedly the Beth Hamidrash hummed with the busy learners who were more often than not, not professional scholars but ordinary laymen. Ber of Bolechow 2) tells us that after he was already married, he "devoted a fixed time every day to studying the Talmud and its commentaries in the Beth Hamidrash." Sometimes even learners - lomdim - would be paid to sit in the synagogue and learn. Some rich patron might leave in his will money for the purpose of maintaining such 'lomdim'. 3) Learning must have been widespread if, towards the end of the 16th century, the fact is attested to that the butchers of Cracow were famous for their scholarship. 4)

Yet inspite of all this we have R Solomon Luria c 1580 complaining

1) Outstanding scholars were **thurs** called meaning, our teacher, and these had the right of rendering decisions. 2) Memoirs of Ber of Bolichow edited by M Vishnitzer (Oxford Press 1922) p 82. Ber lived around 1770

3) Nissenbaum's Lublin l.c. p 100

This will was made out in 1770. 4) R Israel Surazina is quoted to this effect in Kutz

l.c. p 25.

והנה אנו רואים כי ישנו שיעור חסידים
אשר נקראו חסידים ואלו הם חסידים
אשר נקראו חסידים ואלו הם חסידים

bitterly of the state of learning in his time 1) "The ordained", says he, are many, but scholars few. And as soon as he is ordained he gathers round him youths upon whom he expends vast sums of money, like the lords who hire retainers. There are old men who can follow no discussion in the Talmud and are only old in years, who ordain pupils for reward. This detracts somewhat from the praise indulged in by Yeven Metsulah. It does not, however, destroy the fact that the synagogues, with the exception of the official one, ^{as we have already pointed out} was not a place for learning, presented almost all the time scenes made alive by the occupation of learning. 2) Even during prayer there would be individuals engaged in heated discussions of some most point in the Talmud and disturb the worshippers at prayer. 3)

The greatest part of the day while the older people and heads of families - ba'alei batim - had to absent themselves from the Beth Hamidrash in order to make an living, the youths filled it. A Beth Hamidrash with large numbers of youths swaying over the Talmud was a common sight in every community of Poland. A community of only fifty members would support thirty youths with their proteges, the Yeven Metsulah tells us. To each 'bacher' ^U was assigned two boys whom he had to teach. It has already been remarked in a former chapter that such a Beth Hamidrash would be called a Yeshivah. It was the ambition of scholars to conduct such a Yeshivah. 4) We already had occasion in this paper to note how Rabbi

1) Ibid. 2) Ephraim of Leczyza tells us that in Prague, in every synagogue classes in Midrash were instituted in which every Jew had to participate morning and evening. quoted in Guedermann's Quellenschriften l.c. p 82.
3) Guedermann's Quellenschriften l.c. p 105 4) Yeven Metsulah.

Joshuah Falk HaCohen - Sema - c 1600 received together with his bride a Beth Hamidrash where he conducted his Yeshivah and supported the young scholars 1). As the Yeven Metsulah quoted above, tells us, there were special heads of academies, 2) who were not Rabbis at the same time and received dine salaries, not for themselves though but to support the disciples. But where there were nonspecial functionaries or independent scholars, like R Joshuah Falk, to conduct an academy, the Rab - Ab Beth Din, president of the court, - had to conduct it. 3) The smallest community according to the Lithuanian Pinkas had to have, at least, eighteen bachurim. 4) No community says the Pinkas may decrease the Rab's salary by refusing to support his scholars. 5) which shows that part of this official's salary went for the upkeep of youths. Says the Yeven Metsulah, further; "When youngsters come from a distance they were immediately set to learning under a teacher that was hired for them. If they were fit for scholarship they were supported all the time finally being taken into the house of some well to-do member of the community, as the husband of his daughter. If he be not fit for scholarship, he was apprenticed to some trade. Sons of the rich and sons of the poor all, apparently attended the Yeshivah, if they were at all receptive of Talmudic learning. The Lithuanian Pinkas makes constant provisions for the poor and denounces any community that is lax in this duty. 6)

1) Anshe Shem l.c. p 80. 2) Usually designated *Sham* standing for *Sham*. 3) The Takanoth to this effect in the Pinkas Lita are legion. See paragraphs 49, 141, 354, 513, 588, 589, 590, 962. 4) Pinkas Lita l.c. par. 588. 5) ibid 141. 6) Pinkas Lita l.c. 587 The pinkas of Zolkiew l.c. p 9 publishes articles in which the necessity of establishing a Yeshivah and supporting its inmates is most solemnly declared.

In addition to being supported by the community, individual members would consider it a duty to have usually, at least, one youth with his two proteges dine at his table, some very generous souls keeping them throughout the year. 1) The Pinkas of Zolkiew makes it compulsory for each Rosh, of whom there were four in the town. (they were the leading executives of the community) to support at least, one 'bachur' during the entire term; the 'tubim' - another kind of executive - must support two bachurim, and the remaining executives must support between them all the bachurim left over. 2) According to the 'even Metsulah, the bachurim would actually, receive a definite sum of money every week. The Yeven Metsulah is joyful over the fact that it is every scholar's desire to become a Rosh Yeshivah - Head of Academy. R Ephraim of Leczyca confirms this enthusiasm for learning among the Jews of Poland but condemns it in the following terms; "Most of our scholars are very proud of their achievements and exhibit no trace of that modesty they themselves exalt in speech and writing. On the contrary, in their hearts they despise anyone whom they believe to be not so great a scholar, and think to themselves; None but I." 3)

It is no wonder that everyone in Poland was after scholarship and the scholarastic profession. The Rosh Yeshivah was a most respected and important official. In Lublin he received the title of Rektor, was free from all taxation and was subject to only one court - the king's. He had complete jurisdiction over all the Yeshivah fellows. 4). In general

1) Yeven Metsulah. 2) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. p 106.

3) Quoted by Gedermann's Quellenschriften l.c. p 84.
l.c. p 24.

4) Balaban's Lublin

scholars who made learning their exclusive occupation were freed by the Kahal from paying the communal tax. 1) Any scholar that came to any community in the course of his journey, says the Yevan, was not obliged to have recourse, if he was penniless, to the communal charity chest, but could knock at the door of any Parnas, who was compelled to throw his home open to him. The Rosh Yeshivah, he says further, was showered with gifts and honours. No one left the synagogue on Sabbath before him and his ~~synagogue~~ scholars. The whole congregation then met them up to the house of the Rosh Yeshivah as a sign of respect. He received the most important aliyah Shelishi. Scholars received special titles - Reb was common to all Jews. by which they were called up to the Torah. The highest 'Morenu', the next in rank 'Haver'. 2) Only one who occupies himself exclusively with scholarship up to, at least, eleven years after his marriage and who is not under thirty may receive the title 'Morenu'. The 'Haver' must have made the Torah his occupation for at least, two years after his marriage and whose conduct is unimpeachable. 3) Apparently these titles were not bestowed so much for actual present knowledge as for a type of behaviour. According to Maimon scholars would even be distinguished by their special garments. 4) Books had to be distributed free of charge to scholars of the Beth Hamidrash who could not afford ~~themselves~~ to buy them themselves, decrees in the Lithuanian Pinkas. 5) We wonder whether that

1) Pinkas Lita l.c. Para 532, 607.

2) Pinkas Lita l.c. 592, 593.

3) Ibid.

4) Autobiography l.c. p 13.

5) Pinkas Lita par 589

בא קהלה וקהלה מחלוקים ארביא
דאגאטא דאגאטא דאגאטא
חלל חלל

means that over and above what the syngogue shelves contained, scholars had to be supplied with books for their own exclusive use. This certainly would be a privilege. The Rosh Yeshivah, that is he who devoted himself exclusively to study and teaching was considered of greatest importance than the Rab sayas the Yeven Metsulah. 1) Scholarship undoubtedly stood very high, when a young lady would be recommended to the possible groom or his family by the fact that her brothers were scholars 2)

Whether in the Beth Hamidrash or in the Yeshivah, old or young, all engaged in but one subject of study; the Talmud and its commentaries or less frequently, the later codes such as the Yod Hachazakah or the Turim, and later the ~~schulchen aruch~~ schulchen aruch. The most frequently met with term indicating the subjects studied is *גמרא* standing for Gemarah, Rashi *פירוש* and Tosafot 3). The bachur trained his proteges in *גמרא* At the Yeshivah, the head delivered a discourse on *גמרא*, which the scholars would diligently pursue, varied by the Turim or the like in the laxer season of the year. The Yeven Metsulah, from which the above information is taken also gives us the particulars of the method pursued at the academy. Says he "They - the bacharim - studied under the Rosh Yeshivah in the summer from the month of Iyar up to Ab, and in the ~~winter~~ from Heshvan to Shevat. After Shevat or Ab they could go ~~wherever~~ they want to study. From Iyar to the Festival of Shevot and from Heshvan to Chanukah, all the members of the academy would learn Gemarah, Rashi and

1) Comp Meisl's Meschichte l.c. Vol I p 271. Also Balaban's Lublin l.c. p 43
2) Memoirs of Ber of Bolechow l.c. p 80 3) See Yeven Metsulah l.c. Pinkas Lit. l.c. para 143 etc.

Tosafoth, every day an Halachah, that is one page of Gemarah with the Rashi and Tosafoth. Before the Head arrived the students would gather to discuss the ~~subject~~ Halachah among themselves. When he arrived each would present his difficulty to him which he cleared up. Then, all remaining silent, the Head presented his novelle - Chiddushim - on the Halachah in question. After which he 'sadd Chilluk', that is, he pointed out all the contradictions in the Gemarah, Rashi or Tosafoth. Upon reconciling them, he would discover further contradictions in the solutions he offered, which he again reconciled until the Halachah remained established beyond question or doubt. For the rest of the academic year, they would engage in either the Rab Alfes or the Turim.

Teachers - melamedim - were engaged to have their pupils study also Mishnah and the portion of the week in the Pentateuch I) But Yeshivah do youths not seem to have gone beyond the Talmud and its commentaries and some of the later codes. These subjects, especially the Talmud, studied according to the method of Chilluk, explained above by the author of the Yeven Metsulah must have created a good deal of commotion in the synagogue. We have already alluded to the disturbance of prayers due to it.

From no less a Talmudic authority, than R Samuel Edels, a pilpulist himself, - Maharasha c 1600 - do we have the following criticism of the prevailing method of learning. "He who is especially skilled in this vain pilpul. ³⁾ receives approbation. Every one tries to refute his fellow and therefore they can never arrive at the Halachah. For such casuistry merely leads one away from the truth, and does not bring him to the desired end ³⁾. R Ephraim of Leczyca terms it 'lying pilpul'. ⁴⁾

1) Pinkas Lithuania l.c. Para 352.

2) *See the first*
3) quoted by Toledoth Haposkim by S M Chones (Warsaw 1922) P 283.

4) Gudermann's Quellenschriften l.c. P 83.

Chapter IV.

Other uses and Customs of the Synagogue in Poland.

Prayer and learning were the main uses, of course, to which the synagogue was put. But it served also many other purposes of a social nature. Of course all the traditional and codified customs still followed to-day in the orthodox synagogue, were followed then during the centuries we are revealing. This chapter will only deal with some of the peculiar uses and customs of the synagogue in those centuries, that, due to change of external circumstances or minor reform have disappeared to-day, or at least, are not so frequent. The "Beth Hamidrash", as has been already pointed out, may be looked upon as a general club room. If R Ephraim Zalman Margolioth¹⁾ (Brody 18th century) finds it necessary to say that in our Beth Hamidrash we may eat, drink, talk or sleep, we can take it for granted that these things were actually done there. There were scholars who belonged to a particular Beth Hamidrash and were supported by it, either from the funds of some rich individuals as was shown above, or of a special organisation founded for this purpose. 2) These scholars, probably, had their meals in the Beth Hamidrash. The above mentioned remark of R Ephraim's would allude then to them. In the past the ~~xxxxxxx~~ Sabbath meals would be served in the synagogue for wayfarers. 3) Of these we find no record in Poland. 4) Later on when the Hassidim established their own synagogues, they became more like club rooms than ever before.

Then everyone, scholar or layman, would partake of the Tikkun daily. 5)

1) In Yad Ephraim to Orach Chayim 104. 3. 2) In the Pinkas Lita l.c. Par 619 we have a full description of such an organisation. Money for the support of the 'lomidim' was voted by the Waad. 3) I Abraham's Middle Ages l.c p 33 4) In recent years the almost famous Jewish "Meshuganer", one of which was in every town, it seems of Russia and Poland (See Reshumoth Vol I 1925) p 358 used to have his lodgings in the Beth Hamidrash. I found no record of a similar nature in former centuries. Nor of anyone who would use the synagogue as sleeping quarters. 5) See above.

Also the third Sabbath meal - the Shalosh Se^udoth - was instituted to take place in the synagogue, as is well known. The Hassidic stubel may be considered a place of entertainment, since dancing and story telling went on to a considerable extent. 1)

Collections of money for charitable purposes were made in the synagogue. Every Sabbath donations were offered by the persons called up to the Torah, for the support of the synagogues 2) In Cracow donations for the Talmud Torah were made in the synagogues 3). A tekanah published by the Maad of Lithuania 4) orders that money be collected in all synagogues on New Moon, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for the poor of the Holy Land. In Zolkiew donations would be made on each of the festivals for the building of the new synagogue. 5) All other charities did not belong to the synagogue. The care of the poor, the orphan, brides wayfarers - orechim - were functions of the Kahal and its parnassim or gabaim. In Cracow, we find that the Gabai Zedakah - officers of charity - were also the wardens of the synagogue. 6) Otherwise the two - charity and the synagogue - were distinct provinces. Only on rare occasions would they overlap.

Where contact had to be made with the mass of Jews, the synagogue was the most likely place. In the case of announcements, tikanoth and bans

1) That wayfarers or other poor lodged at the Beth Hamidrash as they did in the east; in Abraham's life of the Middle Ages p. 23. is very doubtful to me, I found no record of it. 2) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. p 109
3) Meisl's Geschichte l.c. Vol p 484 which quotes a Gemeindeordnung.
4) Pinkas Lita l.c. para 53. 5) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. p 101.
6) F.H. Metstein's *Meinung* l.c. p 13 Nowhere else are two offices identified.

of excommunication. We find also that the synagogue "pulish" or vestibule was used for the sittings of one of the Jewish courts. 1) I found no source for it, but, in all probability, the synagogue was used for public assemblies and the elections for Kahal officers were held there. 2)

The announcements made in the synagogue would deal not only with matters of ritual but also sometimes with economic affairs. The Kahal of Lemberg 3) passes great public warning be given in the synagogue against tailors who give in pledge for loans contracted, the material left with them for the making of garments. When a butcher was discovered to have in his premises meat that is not 'kosher', the public in the synagogue would be informed of the fact and that the culprit has been punished by having the right of selling meat taken away from him. 4) Other announcements semi-ritualistic and semi-economic, were made in the synagogue, such as, that Jews are not to deal in tereifah meat or chickens not slaughtered legally - nevelah - not even to sell them to non-Jews, 5)

All the Takanoth decreed by the Council were both read in the synagogue 6) and inscribed upon a tablet which hung against one of its walls. 7)

The takanoth embraced practically the entire life of the Jew. Many were economic in nature. No one, for instance, could get a monopoly already held by any Jew for the dispensing of liquors or the like, by paying the overlord a higher price for it. 8) Certain taxes were not to be leased 9)

1) In Przemyśl there were two one met in the house of the Rab, the other in the pulish such is the ruling written down in Pinkas Hadayarim of that city quoted by S. Asaf in *Shema* 10701/10702 (Jerusalem 1924) p 120
4) Msisl in the *eschichte* l.c. Vol 1 p 284 asserts this to be the case authoritatively, though I confess I do not know for what purpose public assemblies would be held. 3) *Anshe Shem* l.c. p 225. 4) *Shaaloth U'tishboth* Reshal by R. Solomon Luria. Responsa 20. 5) *Pinkas Lita* l.c. paragraph 136. 6) *Ibid* para 120 and 287. 7) *Ibid* Para 325. 8) *Ibid* 9) *ibid* Para 324 etc

other takanah purposed to eliminate envy on the part of the non-Jew. Hence the decrees against expensive clothes or Jewels. On another occasion non-Jewish servants were prohibited as a result of pressure brought to bear by the non-Jewish element. 1) Our yakanah 2) deals with the marrying off of poor girls. Mates had to be found for them and funds were, apparently needed for this purpose. But a poor girl could not apply before a certain age, fifteen, devrees the takanah in question. The clothes she is to wear is also legislated; and all this was announced in the synagogue.

They were very free with the Herem in those days as is evidenced by the fact that almost every article of a Pankas . 3) ends up with the threat of a Herem against anyone disregarding the particular takanah. When a Herem was decided upon it was first announced in the synagogue and in the event of disobedience, it would be executed there 4)

The Herem was posted up against the door of the synagogue 5) if the individual who was given warning of excommunication did not retract. Anyone who did not enter the synagogue 6) so long as the ban was not removed from the door.

Very often we meet with the case of individuals who refused to appear before the Jewish court when demanded to do so by the creditor. Such a one was given a public warning first in the synagogue, then was excommunicated. 7) In this case, it appears the plaintiff himself 8) drew up the 'herem' and

1) Ibid par 261 2) Ibid Par. 128. 3) See for instance Pankas Lita l.c. 4) Pankas Lita L.c. par graph 389. 5) Ibid paragraph 374 6) Ibid paragraph 374. 7) Pankas Zolkiew l.c. p. 116. 8) Ibid.

posted it against the synagogue. It does not appear that all the rites and forms associated with the 'herem' was gone through. 1) It simply meant being excluded from participating in public worship. Threat of Herem was pronounced against the officers of the Kehal - parnassim etc- if they should prove not to be acting impartially 2) in imposing the head tax and the like. A herem with all its paraphernalia for extermination was pronounced by the Maad of Lithuania against those who would form groups to rebel against any Kehal. On every day before the new moon *ליל החדש* the formula of excommunication was read in all the synagogues. 3) Whereas in other cases the herem merely meant that the one so penalised could not come into the synagogue 4), in this case, it read: "Such rebellious conspirators against the leaders of Kehal are to be rejected from the entire Jewish congregation, are to be considered perverters, leading to people away from the right path (which was punishable with death in the Bible- *לפי חוקי התורה*) and to be punished accordingly, with fearful punishments (we wonder what they were) for all to see." This was published in the Maad of 1691. Equally violent were the bans of excommunication published against the Hassidim both in Cracow 5) and in Brody. During the Emden Eibeschutz affair a "herem was pronounced in the synagogue of Lublin against anyone speaking ill of R Jonathan Eibeschutz. 6)

- 1) Ibid and many places in Pinkas Lita l.c. 2) Pinkas Lita l.c. par 389
3) Ibid 830 4) The Pinkas of Zolkiew l.c. p III says that the Shanas has to pronounce the Herem against him who refuses to appear before the Dayanim to expose him- *לפי חוקי התורה* - There seems to have been nothing more terrible about it. 5) P.H. Wetstein's *ליל החדש* l.c. p 112
6) Nissenbaum's Lublin l.c. p 100

The Herem was a form of punishment and probably very effective. There were other forms of punishment which likewise took place within or near the synagogue.- First of all there was the infliction of symbolic punishment. On the day of Yom Kippur evening the Jew would come into the synagogue and receive stripes symbolic of the - malkoth - the 39 lashes as the penalty of certain sins. Maimon tells us that every Jew laid himself on his face in the synagogue ~~while~~ another with narrow strip of leather gave him thirty -nine lashes. 1) But often actual culprits would be punished by the infliction of lashes. R Solomon Luria ordered that a certain butcher, referred to above, who sold meat unfit ritualistically was to be lashed in the synagogue and then declared in loud voice I have been lashed in ~~xxxxsynagogue~~ for committing such and such a sin? 2) It is doubtful however whether the legal thirty -nine lashes were inflicted. From R Solomon's responsa we have another interesting case of a brother and sister being columniated, and R Solomon decides that the calumniator is to receive 'Malkoth', in the synagogue between afternoon - Mincha - and evening - Maarib - prayer. And since now he adds we can not inflict 'malkoth', we do so only as a symbol, 3) giving him just four stripes. Anyone desiring malkoth could redeem himself by paying a fine which was to go for the poor, except in the case ~~where~~

1) Autobiography l.c. p 135.

2) Shaaloth U'teshivoth Reshal Responsa 20

3) Ibid Responsa 20

אדם המכה את חברו
במכה אחת או שתי
או יותר מאלו
אין צורך במלכות
אין צורך במלכות
אין צורך במלכות

one calls into question the purity of family 1). On another occasion R Solomon ordered that an individual, who calumniated a certain man and woman was to be punished as follows 2) "He is to take two candles light them before the ark and beg forgiveness of the man and woman on whom he cast a reflection. After begging forgiveness he is to sit like a mourner behind the door of the synagogue for four weeks." This decision had to be read out loud by the precentor of the synagogue. 3) In dealing with the way in which the sense of justice expressed itself in the synagogue, we must not fail to mention again the fact that the service could be interrupted by an injured party, until redress of some sort would be gained. In spite of some objection to it, it was, nevertheless, a frequent phenomena, which must have lent great significance to the synagogue. 3)

Even great figures in Israel were occasionally punished, the procedure taking place in the synagogue. A German Rabbi had dared to withstand R Meir of Lublin c 1600 by opposing a decision of his. When all the parnassim and Polish Rabbis were assembled in Lublin during the fair to attend the Council of the Four Lands, R Meir condemned and exposed him in the synagogue before all these notables who were gathered there for the purpose. 4)

We find the courtyard of the synagogue used 5) for the infliction of corporal punishment on thieves. We find it used for similar purposes.

1) Ibid. *אם כן, אולי* are the words he uses and further he says *אולי*

2) Ibid Responsa 59 3) Ibid 4) quoted by B Katz in his Lekorothe l.c. p 36 from Responsa of Maharam Lublin

אולי קאמו רבנים ורבוים הימים
היה דין דק"ק אלאין הימים קראו דין אלאין הימים
5) Metestein - *קראו אלאין* l.c. p 36

אולי הימים בן אלאין

The pinkas of Lemberg 1) tells of what was done to a certain Benjamin who visited the city and was discovered to have turned in to a woman of ill repute. When people approached to break in the door of the house where the two were together, they confessed. Benjamin was dragged to the courtyard of the synagogue. His sin was publicly announced before a crowd and he was ordered never to be seen again in this community. A fine was laid upon him to give to the poor, a strimel, a coat and a florin. As for the woman, it was announced, "not knowing whence she cometh ow whither she goeth" it is forbidden for any Jew to give her a night's shelter and the announcement concludes, "thou shalt destroy evil from thy midst."

An oath of a serious nature was taken in the synagogue. When a Rab was appointed in Zolkiew all those who were to appoint him had to take an oath on the Torah that he is altogether impartial in the matter and will subject himself to the Rab of his own free will 2)

On the day before Yom Kippur the ceremony of setting free from vows was performed. Maimon 3) gives the following description of it: "Three men are seated while another appears before them, and addresses to them a certain form, the general drift of which is as follows:- "Sirs, I know what a heinous sin it is, not to fulfil vows; and inasmuch as I have doubtless this year made some vows which I have not fulfilled, and which I can no longer recollect, I beg of you that you will set me free from the same. I do not indeed repent

1) Anshe Shem p 431

2) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. II4.

3) Autobiography l.c. 135.

of the good resolutions to which I have bound myself by these vows: I repent merely of the fact, that in making these resolutions, I did not add that they were not to have the force of a vow." etc" There upon, "our author continues", he withdraws from the judgement-seat, pulls off his shoes, and sits down on the bare floor, by which he is supposed to banish himself till his vows are dissolved. After he has sat for some time, and said a prayer by himself, the judges begin to call aloud, "Thou art our brother! There is no vow, no oath, no banishment any longer, after thou hast submitted thyself to the judgement Rise from the ground and come to me!" This they repeat three times, and with that the man is at once set free from his vows. It ~~seems~~ that in every synagogue. 1) there were individuals acting as judges before whom each Jew would come to perform this rite.

When was the synagogue opened and closed? We can take it for granted, that since the Beth Hakneseth was only used for prayer it was closed the greater part of the day. Any house or Beth Hamidrash used as a Yeshivah on other hands, must have been open all day. We would judge that the ordinary Beth Hamidrash which contained scholars who were supported in order that they may do nothing but learn therein 2) was likewise open all day and the greater part of the night even. Yet Meimon 3) tells us that the synagogue was closed after a certain hour in the day, and since he studied in it - the Kabbalah- it must have been the Beth Hamidrash. However it be, the synagogues must have been opened

1) Ibid (Mimon's Autobiography l.c. p 136) He tried to get out of it by saying he is going to another synagogue. 2) Pinkas Lite l.c. par 619
3) Autobiography l.c.

very early in the morning even before dawn, to admit the various Hebroth who performed their devotions in the synagogue before the hour set for public prayer.

The shamash was the functionary of the synagogue, and we must say a few words about him in addition to what has **already** been said in a former chapter. The term 'shamah' but rarely referred to the synag~~gue~~ flunkey merely. We find such terms as 'shamasei hair' - 1) city shamashim, 'shamasei hakahal, 2) And each "eth Din had its shamah 3). We do not find that a special shamash for the synagogue was appointed by the parnassim. The city or Kahal Shamash also performed functions in the synagogue. 4) The 'Shulklopper might have been a special functionary. According to Bar of Bolochow he had a big Kettledrum with which he would announce the hour of prayer, or the hour at which work must cease for the sabbath. Especially impressive was this ceremony on Selichoth days - the **Ten** Days of Penitence. 5) When he would parade through the **still** dark ways c~~rying~~ing out in weird tones the advent of selichoth. The Shamash would be the one to call out the 'Takanoth' published by the 'council' or by the Kahal and the Herem would be read by him 6) In fact any announcement or public warning was made by him. 7) The shamash had to inform the individual concerned of any ruling of Kahal's. 8) The ~~oath~~ oath that in

1) Pinkas Lita l.c. par 128 2) Ibid par 416 3) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. pIII
4) Memoirs of Bar l.c. p 94 5) 6) Ibid l.c. p 107
8) Pinkas Lita 3I9 7) Pinkas Zolkiew l.c. p 108

Affirmation of the correct statement of one's wealth for purposes of taxation was taken before the shamash who acted as secretary of the Kahal and wrote down the minutes. I) R Ephraim of Leczyca does allude specifically to a synagggae Shamash who would announce the prices of estates during prayers. 2)

those
Marriage ceremonies were performed ~~in~~ days in the courtyard of the synagogue where a 'hupah' - canopy - was erected for the occasion. 3) That the bridegroom had special privileges in the synagogue ~~xxx~~ we have already seen. Circumcision seems likewise to have been performed there as has already been discussed in a former chapter. 4) The ceremony of Halizah - the form of annulling levirate marriage - was performed in or near the synagogue. 5)

1) S Asaf l.c. p. 134 2) quoted by Gudemann Quellenschriften l.c. p. 34
3) Picture in J.E. under Betrothal and synagogue. 4) See also Pinaks
Zolkies l.c. p. 115 when it says that the mother with the circumcised child
must rise before the prayer *Shema Yisroel* 5) Weisl in his Geschichte
l.c. Vol I p. 323 states that R Solomon Luria rendered a decision to such an
effect.