

MIĘDZYRZEC PODLASKI

Międzyrzec, the property of some of the most celebrated noble families in Poland, was incorporated as a town in the fifteenth century. There are records of Jews living in the town in the sixteenth century; an official Jewish community existed by the mid-seventeenth century. The town's owners, particularly the Czartoryskis in the eighteenth century, encouraged Jewish settlement. Międzyrzec developed as a commercial center and became known for its biannual fairs, in which local Jews played a prominent role. By the mid-nineteenth century, Hasidism had won many adherents in the town. In 1863, local Jewish craftsmen assisted Polish rebels in their doomed uprising against the Russians. By the end of the nineteenth century, Jewish workers employed in sawmills, tanneries, clothing manufacture and transport began to organize into unions. In the interwar period, most Jewish political parties were represented here; there was a range of educational institutions, including Orthodox, Hebrew and Yiddish schools; there was also a local Yiddish weekly. On the eve of the Holocaust, the 12,000 Jews in Międzyrzec comprised approximately 75 percent of the town's population.

During the first year of the German occupation, Jews from other cities and towns both near and far (including several thousand Czech and Slovak Jews) were forced to settle in Międzyrzec. During the second half of 1942, more than 11,000 Jews were deported to various camps, primarily Treblinka, where they were murdered. During this period, a ghetto was briefly established. A second ghetto was created at the end of 1942; it was liquidated in mid-1943, with the deportation of its inmates to Treblinka and Majdanek. After the war, about 100 Jewish survivors tried briefly to re-establish a Jewish community.

Location

99 km N of Lublin
 51°59' / 22°48'
 Vovoidship: Biała Podlaska

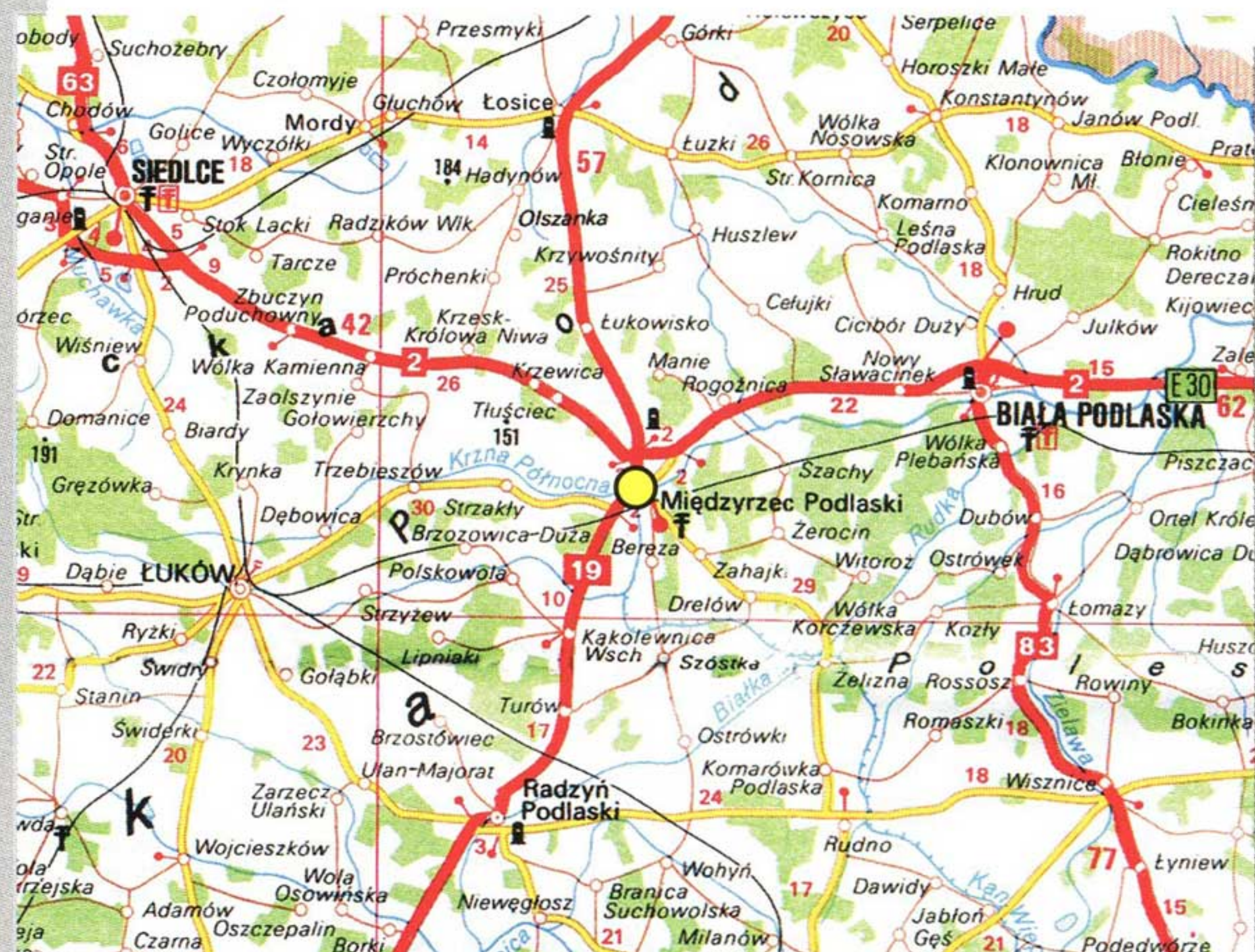
General Population, 1939

16,000 (75% Jewish)

General Population, 1994

55,889

MEZERITZ



SYNAGOGUE

ul. Nassuta, Poprzeczna and Nadbrzezna
 Synagogue destroyed during the Holocaust.
 Current site use: apartment complex.



Synagogue, c. 1919

1



Former Jewish region, now part of town square, 1997

2



ul. Brzeska 60, Jewish cemetery, 1997

3

JEWISH CEMETERY

ul. Brzeska 60

Founded in the nineteenth century next to the old cemetery. Tombstones are from both the old and new cemeteries, with the oldest dating from 1708.

Remaining tombstones: 200.

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

ul. Brzeska 60 (Jewish cemetery)

Monument to Jewish victims from Międzyrzec and surrounding towns.



ul. Brzeska 60, Jewish cemetery, 1997;
Holocaust monument

4

SELECTED READING

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Heller, Binem, and Yitzhak Ronkin, eds. *Sefer Mezritsh; lezeykher di kdoyshim fun undzer shtot* (Mezritsh Book, in Memory of the Martyrs of Our City). Tel Aviv: Mezritsh Societies in Israel and the Diaspora, 1978. (H, Y)



ul. Brzeska 60, Jewish cemetery, 1997;
portion of wall made from tombstone fragments

5

Hendl, M. "Mezritsher pinkeysim" (Międzyrzec Record Books). *YIVO Bleter* 8, no. 1 (Jan. 1935): 61–67. (Y)

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Rylski, H. "Mezritsh in period fun der hitlerisher okupatsye" (Międzyrzec in the Period of Hitler's Occupation). *Bleter far geshikhte* 8, no. 3/4 (July–Dec. 1955): 34–50. (Y)

BIBLIOGRAPHIC SOURCES

CAHJP; CTD; EDRD; EJ; FRG; GA; GUM3; GUM4; GUM5; GUM6; GYLA; HSL; JGFF; JHT; KH; LDL; LDS; LYV; PJH; RJHS; SF

DEPORTATIONS

Treblinka, Trawniki, Majdanek.