

Located on the crossroads of trade routes leading to both Hungary and Russia, this Galician town emerged as a significant commercial center between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. Jews are mentioned in records dating from the fifteenth century. Beginning in 1581, the Polish nobles who owned the town offered Jews attractive charters of privileges to settle there. Wars, fires and epidemics caused Tarnów's decline in the second half of the seventeenth century.

After Poland's first partition, Tarnów began to recover under Austrian rule; Jews came to play an important role in its revival, establishing factories that produced agricultural equipment and glass. While most Tarnów Jews were Hasidim, Haskalah became increasingly influential in the nineteenth century, as did Zionism by the end of the century. Expanding cloth and hat industries employed many Jews, and concurrently a strong workers' movement also developed. The greatest Jewish historian of the twentieth century, Salo Wittmayer Baron, was a native of Tarnów.

Shortly after the Germans occupied Tarnów on September 8, 1939, they began to deport Jewish leaders to Auschwitz. In March 1941, a ghetto was imposed. During the summer and fall of 1942, some 23,000 Jews were deported to the Bełżec death camp; most of the remaining Jews were sent to Auschwitz and Płaszów in September 1943. In December, the town was declared Judenrein (free of Jews). After the war, over 700 Jews settled in Tarnów, but most soon left.

Location

86 km E of Kraków
50°02' / 21°00'
Voivodship: Tarnów

General Population, 1939

55,000 (40% Jewish)

General Population, 1994

122,211

TARNA, TARNOV, TARNUV, TORNE



SYNAGOGUES

ul. Żydowska (Jewish Street)

Old Synagogue dating from 1630, situated in a park. All that remains is the Bimah and a segment of iron fence surrounding the Old Synagogue.

ul. Goldhammera 1

Formerly a prayer house, now a private apartment.

ul. Nowa

Site of New Synagogue dating from 1908. Destroyed by Nazis in 1939. There is a memorial plaque on the building occupying the site today.



■ Synagogue, ul. Nowa, destroyed in 1939

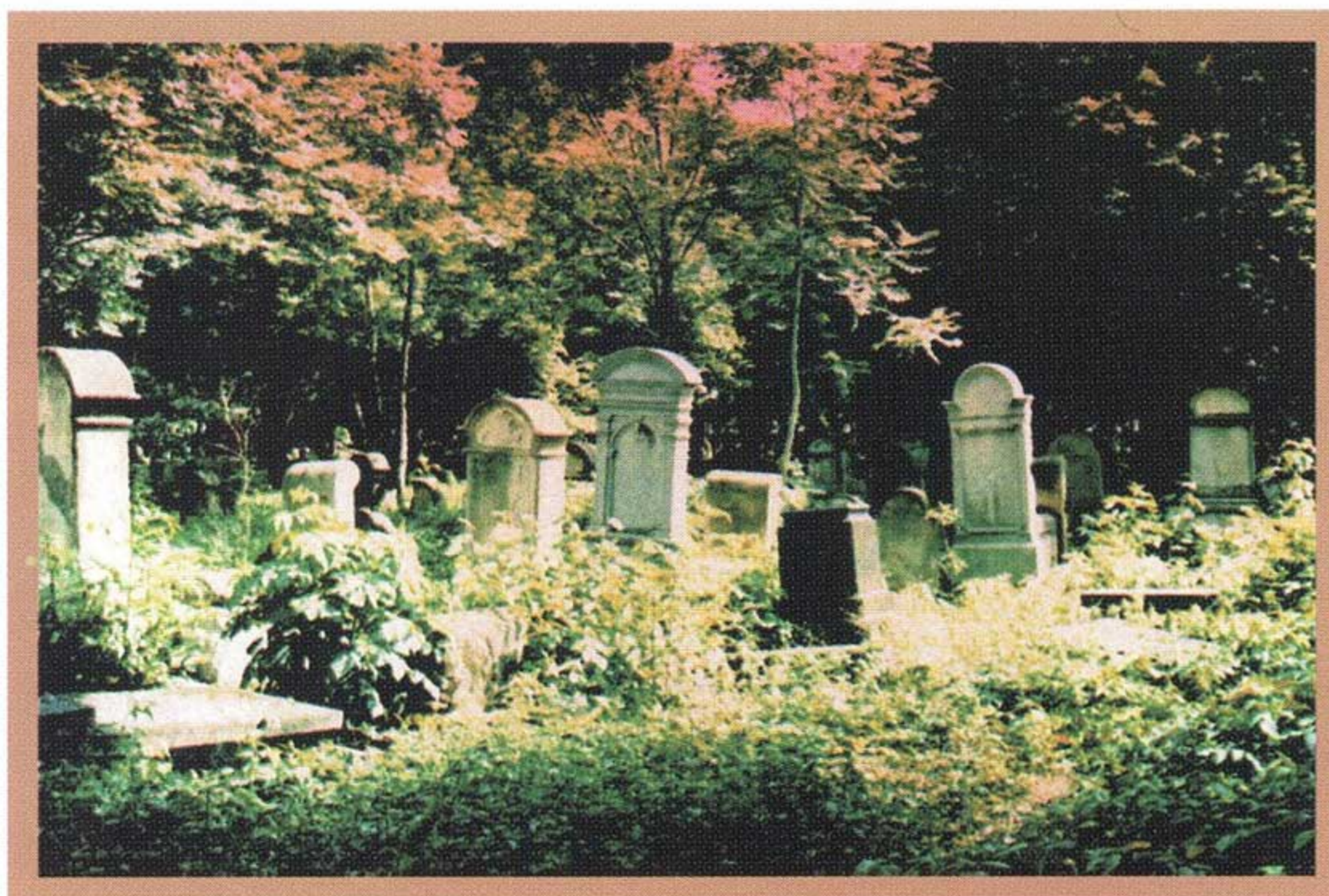


■ Plaque at synagogue ruins (inside Bimah), ul. Żydowska, 1992

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JEWISH CEMETERY

ul. Szpitalna (between ul. Słoneczna and ul. Nowodąbrowska)
Cemetery dates from 1734.
Remaining tombstones: 3,000.



■ Jewish cemetery, 1993

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OTHER JEWISH SITES

ul. Goldhammera 5
Former home of local Jewish Credit Company.
Memorial tablets commemorating Herman Merz, former head of the Jewish community, and Elias Goldhammer, deputy mayor.

ul. Kółqataja 14
Former Jewish orphanage from 1913.
Current use: preschool.

Rynek 20
Regional Museum with Judaica exhibition.

Pl. Więźniow Oświęcimia (formerly ul. Bóźnicza)
Mikvah, constructed in 1904.
Current use: under renovation.

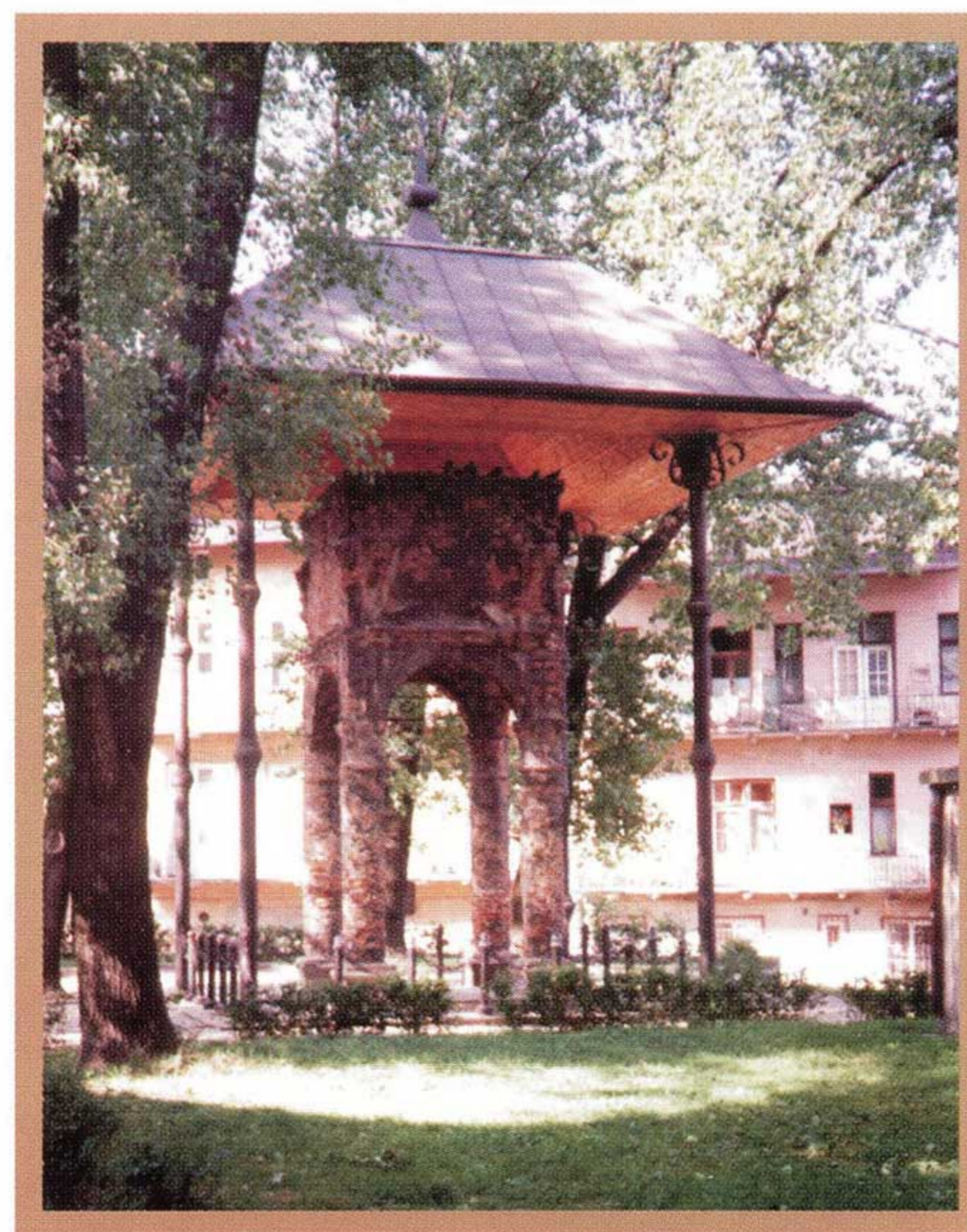
ul. Szpitalna
Jewish hospital, founded in 1842.
Current use: hospital.

ul. Nowodąbrowska 25
Jewish Home for the Aged, founded in 1913.
Current use: hospital.

ul. Baluta 6 (formerly ul. Topolowa)
Hebrew High School, founded in 1899.
Current use: boarding house for students.

ul. Św. Anny 1
Hebrew School, founded in 1923.
Current use: boarding house.

ul. Sienna 5
Talmud Tora for poor families, constructed prior to World War I.
Current use: medical school.



■ Surviving Bimah from old synagogue at ul. Żydowska, 1992

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DEPORTATIONS

Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bełżec, Płaszów, Szeged.



■ Plac Więźniów Oświęcimia (Auschwitz Prisoners' Square), 1993

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HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS

ul. Szpitalna (Jewish cemetery)

Memorial to 20,000 Jewish victims incorporating column from devastated New Synagogue.

Plac Więźniów Oświęcimia

Memorial to local residents of Tarnów, including Jews, transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, June 14, 1940.

Zbylitowska Góra (forest near Tarnów)

A memorial commemorating 800 Jewish children from Tarnów murdered in June 1942.

A second memorial commemorating 10,000 victims of Nazi terror erected by Tarnów government officials.



■ City hall, c. 1917

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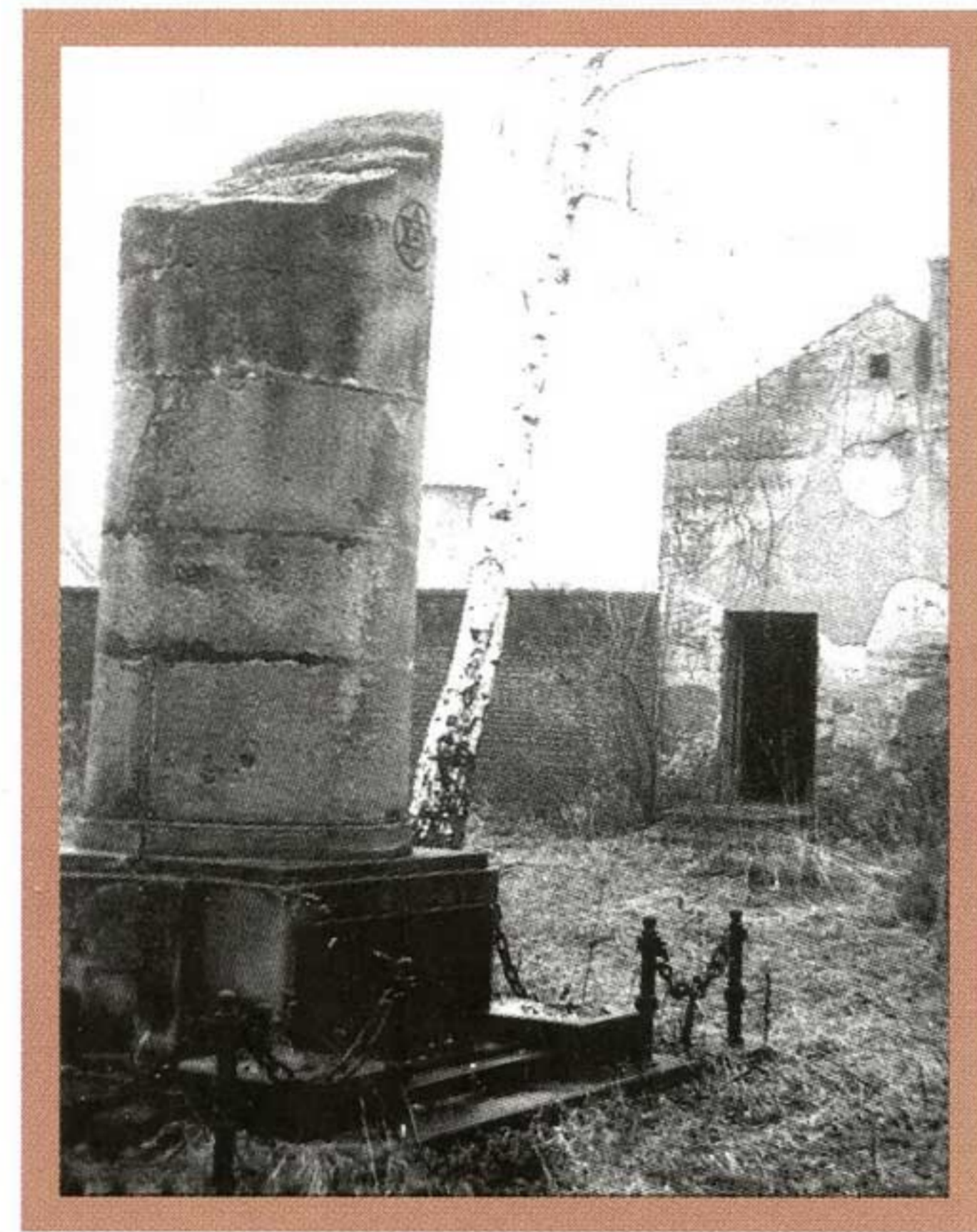
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■ Holocaust memorial, Jewish cemetery, ul. Szpitalna, 1995

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ul. Krakowska, c. 1917

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ul. Krakowska, c. 1994

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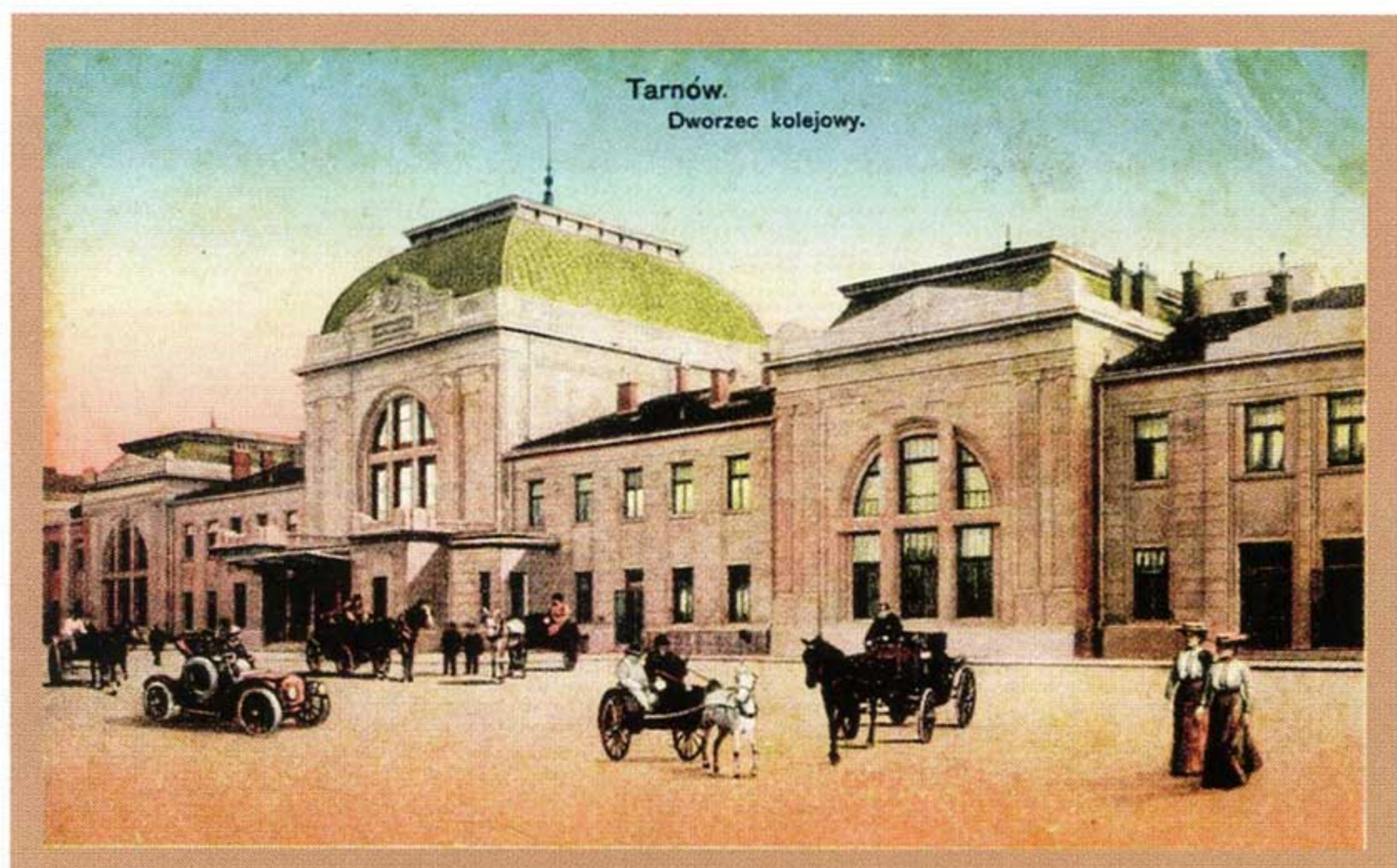
Interior of New Synagogue, 1916

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Town square, today, view toward "Jewish Street" (ul. Żydowska)

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Tarnów railway station, 1914

10



Plaque at base of Holocaust memorial in cemetery (see fig. 7), 1993

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