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The Gebethner & Wolff company relations with Łódź at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries

Abstract: The purpose of the study is to describe relations connecting the Gebethner & Wolff editing bookshop with Łódź at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. The company established in 1857 in Warsaw opened in Łódź, in 1890, the warehouse of grand pianos, pianos and harmoniums, as well as a storehouse of notes. In further years, agencies selling periodicals – “Kurier Codzienny” (1893) and “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” (1896) published by Gebethner & Wolff also commenced their activities. Both the shop and the agencies played a significant role in the integration of the music and the journalistic environment in Łódź. In 1898 a bookshop was opened; however, it was sold to Rychliński & Wegner company in 1901. The next Gebethner & Wolff bookshop, established in 1912, conducted its activity until the beginning of the World War II. It offered mainly literature from a native publishing house, as well as quality foreign-language publications. During World War I, the bookshop organised special exhibits, the purpose of which was to promote Polish educational books.

The Gebethner & Wolff company has also undertaken activities that contributed to the popularisation of Łódź. It was the special number of “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” devoted to Łódź (1911 no. 19), as well as the information diary for 1914 called “Rocznik Łódzki Gebethnera & Wolffa” [Łódź Yearbook of the Gebethner & Wolff]. However, it was W. Reymont’s “Ziemia Obiecana” [The Promised Land], which had the greatest impact on shaping the image of the city upon the Łódka river. The initiative of appearance and publishing of the book was the effect of activity of Gebethner & Wolff.

The achievement of the above-mentioned, as well as other activities, became possible thanks to the participation of numerous persons connected with Łódź. They were, among others, booksellers: Robert Schwartzchultz, Juliusz Goźlinski, Stanislaw Miszewski, journalists: Wladyslaw Rowiński and Zenon Pietkiewicz, as well as the son of the company’s co-owner, Gustaw Wojciech Gebethner.

Keywords: Gebethner & Wolff bookshop and editing company, Łódź – bookshops of the 19th–20th century, Gebethner & Wolff – publications – image of Łódź in the 19th–20th century

Słowa kluczowe: Gebethner & Wolff firma księgarsko-wydawnicza, Łódź – księgarnie XIX/XX w., Gebethner i Wolff – publikacje – obraz Łodzi XIX/XX w.

Established in Warsaw in 1857, by Gustaw Adolf Gebethner together with Józef Wolff, the bookshop developed so successfully that in 1874 its branch was opened in Kraków, and the acquisition of its own printing house there a year later created the opportunity of an intensive development of the publishing activity beyond the borders of the Russian partition¹. The city next after Kraków, in which the Gebethner & Wolff company operated from 1890 onwards, became Łódź. However, here, the initial presence was not in the form of a bookshop and publishing house², but in the form of a shop with musical instruments and music scores. A bookshop was not opened in Łódź until a few years later (1898). However, it was quickly sold and it was not until 1912 that the then already powerful Warsaw publishing company established itself permanently on the Łódź book market.

Gebethner & Wolff's relations with Łódź at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries were not limited to book and sheet music trade and musical instruments. In addition to these two well-known (although without many important details) facts, there were other events organised or inspired by Gebethner & Wolff. Presenting these should help answer several questions. Among others, whether and to what extent the firm of Gebethner & Wolff influenced the development of book and music culture in Łódź society and whether its presence in Łódź contributed to the popularisation of the "cotton town" or the "bad town", as Łódź was then called. The aim of the study will therefore be to show all possible connections of the Gebethner & Wolff company with Łódź that took place over a period of more than thirty years, i.e., from the mid-1880s to 1918, while indicating the social, political, cultural, and personal conditions that accompanied or influenced these events and phenomena. The main sources of information used in the study were the Łódź press of the time and some periodicals outside Łódź, other published materials (e.g. published writers' letters), and archival documents.

1 J. Muszkowski, *Z dziejów firmy Gebethner i Wolff*, Warszawa 1938, p. 15.

2 By 1918, only two items had been published that had Łódź in the publishing address. These were: [Minchejmer] Adam, *Mazepa. Tragedia muzyczna w 4 aktach. Według tragedii Juliusza Słowackiego, muzyka Adama Munchheimera. Partycja fortepianowa z tekstem układu kompozytora*, Łódź: Nakł. Gebethner & Wolff, Filia w Łodzi, Tip. P. Jurgenson, Moscow, [1900]; Łętowski Julian [pseud.] *Książek Władysław [name], Z dramatów dziecięcych. "Imieniny Marcinka"*. *Opowieść z życia rzemieślników warszawskich*, Łódź-Warszawa: Nakł. Gebethner & Wolff; Printed by K. Brzozowski i Sp., 1903. description cited after: J. Jaworska, *Bibliografia łódzkiej produkcji wydawniczej (do 1918 r.)*, Łódź 1975, pos. 1893, 697.

Information in “Dziennik Łódzki” daily

Before there was a signboard with the name Gebethner & Wolff on Piotrkowska Street, information about the Warsaw publishing company could be found by the citizens of Łódź in the Warsaw press that reached Łódź, but mainly in the “Dziennik Łódzki” [Łódź Daily]³, the first Polish newspaper in Łódź published in 1884. Among other things, in the editorial sections devoted to publishing news, there were sporadic mentions of books published by Gebethner & Wolff. This was bibliographical information, usually limited to the author, title, and publisher, sometimes extended by one or two sentences of annotations. Only at the end of December, when Christmas publications for children were recommended, the annotations were sometimes longer and referred to more books⁴. On the other hand, in the literary columns entitled “Listy z Warszawy” [Letters from Warsaw], which systematically discussed current publishing news, the name of the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop appeared only a few times in the years 1884–1888, even though the publications of the Warsaw publisher were often evaluated in these columns⁵.

In addition to the editorial material mentioned above, in the “Dziennik Łódzki”, as in other periodicals, an important place was occupied by messages independent of the editorial office, that is, advertisements, and this also applied to books and magazines. Gebethner & Wolff’s bookshop did not appear among the publishers advertising in the “Dziennik” until 1887⁶, following the purchase of the newspaper “Kurier Codzienny” [Everyday Courier] in May of that year (from Hipolit and Mieczysław Orgelbrand). The first advertisement, which took up almost a quarter of a page, appeared as early as June and informed in the headline that the “Kurier Codzienny” had become the property

3 Previously, probably in Łódź only a few readers of the “Kurier Warszawski” [Warsaw Courier], published by Gebethner & Wolff (unfortunately, there is no precise data on the number of subscribers to the “Kurier”), could find the company’s publishing advertisements in the newspaper.

4 E.g. “Dziennik Łódzki” 1885, no. 264, pp. 1–2; 1889, no. 290, pp. 1–2; 1889, no. 289, p. 3; 1889, no. 290, p. 2; 1890, no. 288, p. 3. In the Christmas reviews published in these issues, only books by Gebethner & Wolff were recommended.

5 Among the publishers most often mentioned by the author of these columns, Waleria Marrene-Morzowska, were the bookshops of T. Paprocki and S. Leventhal as well as the editorial offices of “Wędrowiec” [The Wanderer] and “Przegląd Pedagogiczny” [Pedagogical Review]. For more on the popularisation of literature on the pages of “Dziennik Łódzki” see J. Konieczna, *Zasługi «Dziennika Łódzkiego» dla upowszechniania polskiej książki w Łodzi w latach 1884–1892*, “Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Librorum” 1997, no. 7, pp. 3–25.

6 Previously, the company had only advertised itself as the main typesetting house of other publishers, e.g. J. Zawadzki’s Bookshop in Vilnius – “Dziennik Łódzki” 1884, no. 188, p. 4 or the German, English and French textbooks published by Plato von Reussen and his authorship – “Dziennik Łódzki” 1884, no. 58, p. 4 and several other issues of the newspaper.

of the Gebethner & Wolff publishing house⁷. The entire composition of the new editorial board was presented, and the programme and planned content of the newspaper was discussed in detail, with an emphasis on the fact that the weekly chronicles of Bolesław Prus would be systematically published in it. Advertisements of similar content, although not as extensive, appeared in the “Dziennik” several more times⁸. The format and graphic form of the advertisements (varying font size and thickness) made it difficult not to notice them, even on a page full of other inserts. This relatively high activity of Gebethner & Wolff in popularising their newspaper in Łódź (the previously published “Kurier Warszawski” [Warsaw Courier] was not advertised in the “Dziennik Łódzki” at all) was probably due to the fact that the former owner of the “Kurier Codzienny” often advertised in the “Dziennik”, and probably thanks to this the “Kurier Codzienny” had regular readers in Łódź. However, much less frequently than the “Kurier”, Gebethner & Wolff advertised their other, more popular periodical, i.e. the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” [Illustrated Weekly], although it should be emphasised that these advertisements were of a larger size and contained a lot of details about the journal⁹. On the other hand, no separate advertisements for book publications by the Warsaw bookshop appeared in the “Dziennik Łódzki” in the 1880s. The publishers were probably aware of the low demand for Polish books in a city with a population of over 100,000 in the 1880s, but with a clear majority of illiterate people (over 70%), while Poles constituted only slightly over 30% of the city’s population¹⁰. Moreover, the bookshop network in Łódź was still very poor in that time¹¹.

7 See J. Muszkowski, op. cit., p. 21; L. Fiszer, *Wspomnienia starego księgarza*, Warszawa 1959, pp. 142–143.

8 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1887, no. 131, p. 4; no. 209, p. 4; no. 214, p. 3; no. 276, p. 4; no. 287, p. 5. The last three notices appeared as early as December and, encouraging subscribers to pay, informed them that a new novel by B. Prus, *Lalka*, was being published in episodes from September. The next “Kurier Codzienny” advertisements appeared in the early 1990s, usually in December. See “Dziennik Łódzki” 1890, no. 286, p. 5; 1891, no. 282, p. 5; 1892, no. 6, p. 4; no. 28, p. 4; no. 271, p. 4.

9 One of the first advertisements, with the headline “Najbardziej rozpowszechniona ilustracja polska” [The most widespread Polish illustration], appeared in “Dziennik Łódzki” 1890, no. 128, p. 3. However, an advertisement from 1891, no. 284, p. 4, stood out. In a decorative frame, it took up more than half a page of the newspaper and, apart from data on the content and editorial board, informed in detail about premium publications intended for regular subscribers. These were exclusively Gebethner & Wolff publications.

10 For population data see J. Janczak, *Ludność Łodzi przemysłowej 1820–1914*, Łódź 1982, pp. 39, 108, 176.

11 See J. Konieczna, *Kultura książki polskiej w Łodzi przemysłowej (1820–1918)*, Łódź 2005, pp. 64–85.

The storehouse of grand pianos, pianos, and melodicons together with the store of music scores. Press agencies

In August 1890, the “Dziennik Łódzki”, in the column “Z miasta i okolicy” [From the city and the surroundings], contained information that the Warsaw company Gebethner & Wolff would soon open a “Storehouse of pianos and music scores” on Piotrkowska Street. According to the newspaper, in addition to sales, it was also planned to rent grand pianos and pianos for home use and tune these instruments at home. It was also emphasised that the company owned an excellent concert grand piano, also intended for rental. The editors praised the initiative of the Warsaw booksellers, writing that “Potrzeba takiego przedsiębiorstwa racjonalnie prowadzonego, od dawna już daje się zauważać w naszym mieście”¹² [The need for such a rationally run enterprise has long been noticeable in our city]. This appeal may be surprising in the context of the statement of an expert on the musical culture of nineteenth-century Łódź, Alfons Pellowski, that at the end of the nineteenth century, a whole range of well-stocked music shops were opened in the city, which often had representative offices of well-known piano factories¹³. However, it should be stressed that the establishments mentioned by Pellowski were typically commercial ventures, by no means involved in the musical life of the city. On the other hand, it is not unlikely that the author of the above-quoted announcement of the opening of the new shop was familiar with the history and activities of the Gebethner & Wolff Piano Storehouse, which had existed in Warsaw since 1875. This is because it hosted excellent chamber music concerts, which were allegedly attended in large numbers by Warsaw music lovers¹⁴. So it was expected that the Łódź Piano Storehouse would play a similar role in the city on the river Łódka to that of its Warsaw counterpart.

The opening of the shop took place at the beginning of September and was announced by the owners of the shop in an appropriate announcement in “Dziennik Łódzki”. An advertisement in an ornamental frame, occupying

12 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1890, no. 184, p. 2.

13 A. Pellowski, *Kultura muzyczna Łodzi do roku 1918*, Łódź 1994, p. 113.

14 F. Gebethner (1832–1887) was a musician and initially also a music teacher. In addition to running the piano storehouse, he was also active in the Musical Society and the Lutnia Singing Society. He was also an art connoisseur, lover and collector. See J. Muszkowski, *Gebethner Feliks Jan (1832–1887)*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*. T. 7: *Firlej Jan – Girdwoyń Kazimierz*, Kraków 1948, p. 363; M. Kwiatkowski, *Salę koncertowe Warszawy drugiej połowy XIX w.*, [in:] *Kultura muzyczna Warszawy drugiej połowy XIX wieku*, scientific ed. A. Spóz, Warsaw 1980, p. 101; Z. Kozak-Wawrzyńska, *Kultura muzyczna Warszawy jako tło działalności Instytutu Muzycznego w latach 1879–1901*, Warsaw 1969, pp. 104–107. In the light of the above-mentioned studies, it is difficult to establish unambiguously whether concerts were held in the piano storehouse or in F. Gebethner’s private salon.

1/3 of the newspaper's page, informed that "otworzyliśmy przy Piotrkowskiej Nr 18, dom Salomonowicza I piętro Filię naszego składu fortepianów, pianin i melodykonów w połączeniu ze składem nut"¹⁵ [we have opened a branch of our store of grand pianos, pianos and melodicas in combination with a store of music scores at 18 Piotrkowska Street, Salomonowicz's house, 1st floor]. Alongside the storehouse there was to be an "zakład reperacji instrumentów prowadzony przez specjalistę" [instrument repair shop run by a specialist], while in the case of music scores publishing it was assured that both classical and "modern composers' works" could be purchased¹⁶.

Another member of the Gebethner family (Feliks was no longer alive), namely Gustav Adolf's eldest son Gustaw Wojciech (1859–1909), played a significant role in the organisation of the Łódź branch. A musician and composer, he headed the music scores and musicals department at his father's firm. Connected to the Warsaw musical milieu, Gustaw Wojciech was, among other things, one of the founders of the capital's "Lutnia" singing society and was active on its board¹⁷. In Łódź, he quickly became involved in the development of the city's musical life, which was visibly reviving in the late 1880s and early 1890s, not least thanks to the opening of the concert hall¹⁸ in January 1887. The numerous choirs – both ecclesiastical and secular – that were being formed at the time also played an important role. However, these were amateur associations without official validation. Therefore, there were more and more voices in the public space about the need to establish a professional choir in Łódź, following the example of the Warsaw "Lutnia" founded in 1887¹⁹. The Gebethner & Wolff piano storehouse and Gustaw Gebethner himself played an important role in the establishment of such a society.

Shortly after the opening of the piano storehouse, the "Dziennik Łódzki" informed about the possibility of enrolling for collective lessons in "nauki śpiewu chórowego i potrzebnych do niej zasad muzyki" [the study of choral singing and the principles of music necessary for it], which were to be conducted by Stefan Krzyszkowski, a composer, teacher, and music reporter well known in Łódź²⁰. Enrolments were accepted at the G&W piano store at 18 Piotrkowska

15 "Dziennik Łódzki" 1890, no. 199, p. 4. However, the location of 34 Piotrkowska Street given by A. Pellowski, op. cit., p. 111, is mistaken.

16 "Dziennik Łódzki" 1890, no. 199, p. 4.

17 K. Konarska, *Gebethner Gustaw Adolf*, [in:] *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej*, [ed. by I. Treichel], Warszawa-Łódź 1972, p. 250; J. Gebethner, *Młodość wydawcy*, Wrocław 1989, p. 22; Z. Kozak-Wawrzyńska, op. cit., p. 84; "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1909, no. 5, p. 96; "Rozwój" 1909, no. 16, pp. 4–5. These two periodicals contained short obituaries about G.W. Gebethner.

18 A. Pellowski, op. cit., pp. 104–107.

19 Ibidem, p. 167.

20 S. Krzyszkowski graduated from the conservatory in Paris, was a composer and music teacher. From 1884, he was active in Łódź, also as a music reporter for the "Dziennik Łódzki", see

Street, where the above-mentioned lessons were soon to begin²¹. As a result, a male choir of more than thirty members was organised, with G. Gebethner is probably taking over the musical direction. From the very beginning, the choir was regarded as the nucleus of “Lutnia”, which was called for in 1891. On the application to the Russian authorities, G. Gebethner was listed among the 18 founding members, and during the constitutional meeting in June 1892, he was elected vice-president of the Lutnia Society. At that time, he assured that until a conductor for the new choir was chosen, he would temporarily and quite disinterestedly, as before, exercise its artistic direction²². G. Gebethner’s participation in Łódź musical life also had a more personal dimension, e.g., he occasionally performed as a soloist in one of the church choirs²³.

An indirect form of participation of the Piano Storehouse in the musical life of Łódź was the sale of tickets for occasional musical events held in the city, while the “excellent concert grand piano” advertised as available for hire was used by some virtuosos performing in the city. One of the first was the then well-known German pianist Alfred Reisenauer (1863–1907), who gave an enthusiastically received concert in Łódź in December 1890. The press coverage of the event also included a flattering opinion of the instrument used: “Fortepian ze składu pp. Gebethnera i Wolffa, który z tak stoicznym spokojem znosił szalone ataki Reisenauera i wyszedł bez szwanku, bezsprzecznie na medal zasługuje” [The piano from the Gebethner & Wolff store, which with such stoic calm endured Reisenauer’s frenzied attacks and came out unscathed, unquestionably deserves a medal] wrote the “Dziennik Łódzki”²⁴.

At the time, Gebethner & Wolff’s activity on the Łódź market was not limited to participation in musical life, but, as is obvious in the case of a commercial company, numerous attempts were also made to attract customers, using, among other things, press advertising. Shortly after the store opened, advertisements announcing the existence of the store and its commercial activities began to appear in “Dziennik Łódzki”. Regardless of their size, the advertisements always

“Rozwój” 1905, no. 12, p. 4. It also mentions that in 1890. “zapadł na chorobę piersiową” [he fell ill with chest disease]. He worked, but was losing strength. It is therefore difficult to assess how long his lessons lasted.

21 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1890, no. 222, p. 2; no. 227, p. 2; no. 228, p. 4.

22 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1892, no. 128, p. 1; no. 124, p. 2. Even before the meeting, it was emphasised that the choir had so far been “wcale umiejętnie, a nader gorliwie prowadzony przez obecnego kierownika” [quite skilfully, and very eagerly, led by the present manager].

23 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1891, no. 65, p. 2. There is information here about a concert planned for Good Friday at St Joseph’s Church, during which G. Gebethner was to perform Stanisław Moniuszko’s song *Tobie Boże na sławę*.

24 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1890, no. 268, p. 4; no. 271, p. 2; no. 273, p. 2; no. 274, p. 4; no. 275, p. 6; 1892, no. 254, p. 3. It should be noted, however, that the author of the above-quoted report was S. Krzyszkowski, who, as mentioned earlier, gave singing lessons at the piano store.

contained the same graphic element, i.e. a small piano placed in the lower left-hand corner, which clearly distinguished them from other inserts of this type and influenced the association of the company's name with its product range. From September to the end of 1890, more than a dozen such advertisements appeared, with no other music-shop advertising so frequently at the time. In 1891, however, the promotional campaign for the store was exceptionally intensive. Two or even three times a week advertisements appeared in the "Dziennik Łódzki" with the same content as in 1890. At the same time, advertising was also carried out in the "Lodzer Zeitung". The inserts published in German contained an exact translation of the Polish version of the advertisement, with the difference that the graphic element was a drawing of a piano²⁵. Promotion in the German press probably provided greater opportunities for customer acquisition, both because of the higher circulation of the "Lodzer Zeitung" and because of the more intensive musical life in German circles²⁶. Independently of the promotion of the store, music scores published by Gebethner & Wolff were also advertised, while advertisements for new book items were still absent.

The number of advertisements decreased noticeably in 1892, but at the end of that year there were significant changes in the functioning of the storehouse, which were announced to the "Honourable Public" on the pages of "Dziennik Łódzki". The extensive announcement informed of a "complete reorganisation of the branch" now located at 46 Piotrkowska Street, in a house built back in the 1860s. In addition to instruments "z najlepszych i najlepszych fabryk krajowych i zagranicznych" [from the first and best domestic and foreign factories], it recommended mainly music score publications divided into five subject groups, noting that especially the company's own publications were at very affordable prices²⁷. At the same time, the company underwent significant personnel changes, which, however, were no longer announced in the advertisements. As G. Gebethner left Łódź for good (after his departure, his relations with "Lutnia" cooled considerably)²⁸, two new employees were hired.

25 E.g. "Lodzer Zeitung" 1891, no. 121, p. 6; no. 145, p. 7; no. 266, p. 5 and others.

26 "Lodzer Zeitung" was published in the 1890s with a circulation of about 5,000 copies, while "Dziennik Łódzki" was printed in less than a thousand copies, see J. Chańko, *Gazeta «Rozwój» (1897–1915). Studium źródłoznawcze*, Łódź 1982, tab. 2, p. 96.

27 "Dziennik Łódzki" 1892, no. 266, p. 3; also "Tydzień" 1892, no. 50, p. 43. The wide range of music scores listed included pedagogical works, all the works of the classics, the latest salon and dance music, works for various solo and piano instruments, as well as works for singing and exceptions from operas.

28 "Dziennik Łódzki" 1892, no. 269, p. 2. There is mention here of a general meeting of the "Lutnia" at which a new vice-president will be elected to replace "pana Gustawa Gebethnera, który opuścił nasze miasto" [Mr Gustaw Gebethner, who has left our city]. In turn, evidence of the disappearance of mutual contacts was provided by the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the "Lutnia", to which Gebethner was most probably not invited, and sent only the following dispatch: "W dniu uroczystym dla Towarzystwa zasyła życzenia pomyślnego dalszego prosperowania **zapomniany**

These were Adolf Robert Schwartzschultz (also spelt Szwarcszulec in a polonised version) and Marian Mrozowski, who was given responsibility for the music scores department. At the time he took up his post, Mrozowski was 20 years old, with a commercial and musical background (he had studied at the Warsaw Conservatory) and had been working at the Gebethner & Wolff piano and music scores store in Warsaw since the beginning of 1892, from where, at the end of that year, he was seconded to the Łódź branch of²⁹. Independently of his professional work, like G. Gebethner, he was an active member of the Łódź (also Warsaw) “Lutnia”, and at the same time conducted secret Polish language lessons for the children of Łódź workers. In December 1894 he was called up for military service³⁰ and a new employee was sent from the “head-quarters” to take his place.

Schwartzschultz, on the other hand, was a man of various professions. He worked for a number of years in the book trade (among other things, he was a friend of Władysław Anczyc and helped to publish his books), then he was co-manager of a weaving factory in Zgierz and a representative of several industrial companies in Łódź. At the same time, he had numerous contacts with the journalistic community and other representatives of the Łódź intelligentsia (his friends included the well-known poet Artur Głiszczyński), and he was an ordinary member of the Łódź “Lutnia”. Schwartzschultz served as administrator of the Łódź branch of the Gebethner & Wolff company for six years. When he died, in August 1898 (at the age of 51), the “Goniec Łódzki” [Łódź Courier] newspaper dedicated a very warm memoir to him, writing that “znany był całemu miastu, cieszył się niezwykłą sympatią, a wszystko to pozyskał dzięki swej uczynności i poczciwości” [he was known to the entire city, he enjoyed unusual sympathy, and all this he gained thanks to his helpfulness and honesty], while “w jego orszaku pogrzebowym brali liczny udział przedstawiciele inteligencji tutejszej, kupiectwa i przemysłu”³¹ [his funeral procession was attended by numerous representatives of the local intelligentsia, merchants and industry].

Gustaw Gebethner [emphasis mine J. K.] [On a festive day for the Society, he sends his wishes for further prosperity to the forgotten Gustaw Gebethner], see “Rozwój” 1902, no. 246, p. 3.

29 I. Treichel, *Mrozowski Marian*, [in:] *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej. Supplement*, ed. I. Treichel, Warszawa-Łódź 1986, pp. 147–148.

30 *Ibidem*. He returned from the army in 1896 and took up the post of director of the music and publishing department at Gebethner & Wolff in Warsaw. It seems that Mrozowski was highly regarded in the bookselling circles, especially during the 20th century, as mentioned among others by S. Dippel in his book *O księgarzach, którzy przeminęli*, Wrocław 1976.

31 “Goniec Łódzki” 1898, no. 150, p. 3; 1898, no. 151, p. 2. There is also information here that the farewell speech over Schwartzschultz’s coffin was given by Głiszczyński. Brief mentions of the bookshop manager’s death were also given in “Rozwój” 1898, no. 186, p. 3; 1898, no. 187, p. 3 and “Przewodnik Bibliograficzny” 1898, no. 9, p. 138.

Both the earlier activities and the aforementioned changes introduced in 1892 were probably the company's intended strategy from the start. Since music scores, as Jan Muszkowski writes, was "bardzo ważny artykuł sortymentów księgarskich firmy i jej działu komisowo-hurtowego" [a very important article of the company's bookshop assortment and its commission and wholesale department], the piano store was to serve, among other things, "do nawiązania stosunków w świecie muzycznym"³² [to establish relations in the musical world]. It seems that G. Gebethner established such relations during his two years in Łódź, and M. Mrozowski and A.R. Schwartzschultz were able to continue and develop them.

As a result, after 1892, Gebethner & Wolff not only reorganised their existing business, but also expanded their offer to the people of Łódź. Alongside the signboard "Piano storehouse..." a new sign appeared in early 1893, at 46 Piotrkowska Street: "Kurier Codzienny", which signified the opening in Łódź of an agency of a newspaper still published by Gebethner & Wolff. At the "kantor" [agency], as this was also the name used, it was possible to pay for subscriptions and buy advertisements³³. The launch of Gebethner & Wolff's own newspaper distribution point came a few days after the tsarist authorities closed down (on 1 January 1893) the "Dziennik Łódzki", with a column entitled "Łódź" appearing in the second issue of the "Kurier Codzienny" from that year. It had the character of a chronicle of current events in the life of the city, although there were occasionally longer texts devoted to selected issues. Although the correspondences were not signed, it has been established that their author in the first year of publication was first the journalist Zygmunt Naimski, and later the actor, theatre director and journalist Alfons Łucjan Kościelecki³⁴. Both the column and the aforementioned agency were intended to attract readers of the liquidated "Dziennik Łódzki", especially since other Warsaw periodicals – "Wiek" [Century] and "Kurier Warszawski" [Warsaw Courier] – had opened their offices as late as the end of 1891³⁵.

In 1894, there were further staff changes in the outlets run by Gebethner & Wolff in Łódź. The place of M. Mrozowski, who had been called up to the

32 J. Muszkowski, op. cit., p. 56.

33 "Kurier Codzienny" 1893, no. 9 (and following), p. 1. Subscriptions, as indicated in the advertisements, could also be paid in all bookshops in Łódź, and the advertisements were also accepted by Koliński's bookshop.

34 "Tydzień" 1898, no. 28, p. 3; A. Kempa, *Sylwetki łódzkich dziennikarzy i publicystów*, Łódź 1991, pp. 30, 23.

35 "Dziennik Łódzki" 1891, no. 282, p. 5; 1892, no. 1, p. 4. Both newspapers devoted a lot of space to Łódź issues at the time. The columns published in "Wiek" entitled *Łódź – miasto i ludzie* went down in literary history. Their authors were A. Mieszkowski and A. Gliszczyński, who had earlier collaborated with the "Dziennik Łódzki". In 1894, on the basis of these texts, the publication *Łódź – miasto i ludzie* was published under the codename XYZ.

army, was taken by Juliusz Goźliński, and the Łódź correspondence in the “Kurier Codzienny” was taken up by Władysław Rowiński³⁶, who closely cooperated with Antoni Mieszkowski, who then became the editorial secretary of the “Kurier”³⁷.

J. Goźliński completed several gymnasium classes in Lublin, but, unlike Mrozowski, he most probably had no formal musical education. Transferred from the Warsaw branch of the company to Łódź, he was employed as an assistant³⁸. However, during the few years he spent in the Łódź branch, he and A.R. Schwartzschultz were able to establish lively contacts with representatives of the artistic and cultural circles in Łódź at that time, as a result of which the “Kurier Codzienny” agency and the piano storehouse became a place for contacts and meetings of journalists and writers active in Łódź³⁹. In addition to those mentioned above, A. Gliszczyński⁴⁰ and Władysław Reymont visited the place. The former’s friendship with Schwartzschultz has already been mentioned earlier, and Goźliński, in turn, at Gliszczyński’s request, received Reymont at his flat and hosted him for half a year, when the latter was collecting material for *Ziemia obiecana* in 1896 in Łódź. Goźliński also contributed significantly to the organisation of Ignacy Paderewski’s first concert in Łódź in 1896. It took place at the initiative of the Warsaw piano factory Kerntopf, on whose instrument the great pianist was performing at the time. As a reward for the excellent preparation for the performance, Goźliński received from Paderewski a golden cigarette case with a dedication⁴¹.

During this period, the functions carried out by the agency also expanded. It took over the acceptance of prepayments for another periodical published

36 From 1888 onwards, W. Rowiński was a co-worker of the “Dziennik Łódzki”, and after this newspaper was closed, he wrote correspondence from Łódź to the “Kurier Warszawski”. Independently of the cooperation with the “Kurier Codzienny”, which he started in 1894, he also published monographic articles about Łódź in other periodicals. See T. Górczyca, *Debiut sceniczny Tadeusza Jaroszyńskiego w świetle listów Reymonta*, “Prace Polonistyczne” 1968, vol. 24, p. 219.

37 “Tydzień” 1898, no. 28, p. 3; A. Kempa, op. cit., pp. 34, 27–28.

38 In a letter to W. Pfeiffer written in 1937, Goźliński gave the exact date when he started working at the Łódź branch – 15 X 1894, see State Archives in Łódź (APL), Pfeiffer Archive 4.

39 Goźliński seems to have had great skill in establishing contacts with people from the literary circles. According to T. Męczyński (*Moje lata z książką. Wspomnienia księgarza 1907–1957*, Łódź 1962, p. 49), even during his work in the Warsaw bookshop of Gebethner & Wolff, Goźliński had very good relations with Henryk Sienkiewicz and Prus, among others. To the latter, when he was still a poor writer, he allegedly provided accommodation and material assistance.

40 On the life and work of Gliszczyński see H. Karwacka, *Artur Gliszczyński pieśniarz fabrycznej Łodzi*, Łódź 1975, 349 p.

41 Information on Goźliński’s relationship with Reymont and Paderewski based on an obituary published in: “Księgarz” 1961, no. 5/6, p. 24. Unfortunately the author of the text is not given. This is the only mention of Paderewski’s performance in Łódź in 1896. The previously quoted A. Pelowski gives as dates of Paderewski’s concerts in Łódź only the years 1899, 1904, 1913, op. cit., pp. 256–257.

by Gebethner & Wolff, namely “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”. The “Kurier” agency thus also became the agency of the “Tygodnik”⁴².

Reymont and *Ziemia obiecana*

The genesis of the most important Polish novel devoted to the nineteenth-century Łódź is seen by researchers of Reymont’s works both in his personal experiences of observation of metropolitan environments and in the persuasions of his friends⁴³ appreciating the writer’s talent for observation and his ability to grasp truly significant issues in the surrounding reality⁴⁴. The decisive factor, however, was the acceptance and support of Reymont’s intentions by J. Wolff in 1895, about which the future author of *Ziemia obiecana* wrote to his brother Franciszek in the following way:

zrobiłem ze swoimi wydawcami Wolffami umowę świeżą na powieść z życia Łodzi. Płacą dobrze i dają grubsze a conto, ale muszę na kilka miesięcy wyprowadzić się do Łodzi, aby na miejscu tam porobić studia odpowiednie, poznać tamten świat i interesa⁴⁵.

[I have signed a new deal with my publishers Wolff for a novel on the life of Łódź. They pay well and give a lot of money in advance, but I have to move to Łódź for a few months to do proper studies there, to get to know that world and business.]

According to this announcement, Reymont did indeed spend several months in Łódź in the first half of 1896. He got to know the city, but also the journalistic milieu, especially that grouped around the “Kurier Codzienny”, as evidenced, among other things, by the letters he wrote to W. Rowiński who was working on *Ziemia obiecana* in France asking him for a range of statistical information on the Łódź industry. He also became friends with the employees of the Piano Storehouse and the “Kurier” agency – A.R. Schwartzschultz and J. Goźliński, who, as mentioned earlier, made his flat available to him for some time⁴⁶.

42 “Tydzień” 1896, no. 2, p. 4; “Kurier Codzienny” 1896, no. 62, p. 4. From the advertisement placed there, it appeared that the agency also accepted prepayments for other Polish magazines; however, their titles were not given. The existence of an agency of the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” at 46 Piotrkowska Street alongside the “Kurier Codzienny” is confirmed by an advertisement in the “Lodzer Zeitung” 1899, no. 167.

43 Probably important were also the contacts with the environment of the “Kurier Codzienny”, with which the writer became associated at the beginning of 1894. The editor of the newspaper at that time was A. Mieszkowski, who had previously worked for the “Dziennik Łódzki” and – as mentioned – wrote correspondence from Łódź to Warsaw periodicals.

44 See, among others, B. Koc, *O Ziemi obiecanej Reymonta*, Wrocław 1990, pp. 15–23; J. Rurawski, *Władysław Reymont*, ed. 2, Warszawa 1988, pp. 187–192.

45 W.S. Reymont, *Listy do rodziny*, ed. T. Jodelka-Burzecki, B. Kocówna, Warsaw 1976, p. 69.

46 W.S. Reymont, *Korespondencja 1890–1925*, ed. and introduction by B. Koc, Warszawa [2002], pp. 496–501. There are four letters addressed to W. Rowiński, in which the writer, in ad-

Ziemia obiecana began to appear on the pages of the “Kurier Codzienny” at the beginning of January 1897 (no. 2) and quickly gained a huge readership. According to R. Wolff himself, during the printing of the novel (in 1897 and in the first half of 1898), the newspaper received more than 2000 subscribers⁴⁷, half of them (1000) in Łódź, only during the first three months of 1897. Thus, the publishers on their own initiative raised the writer’s fee from five kopecks per line to seven⁴⁸. The manifestations of interest in the novel in Łódź, however, were sometimes quite specific. These included letters addressed to Reymont that, in addition to invectives, contained threats. The authors of this correspondence believed that *Ziemia obiecana* contained portraits of some famous Łódź industrialists, although Reymont strongly denied such insinuations. In his letters to friends, he emphasised that his aim was not to present a reportage-like picture of Łódź reality, but to make certain generalisations about the social, psychological or moral aspects of⁴⁹.

The publication of *Ziemia obiecana* in the “Kurier Codzienny”, and especially its edition (at the beginning of 1899) by Gebethner & Wolff in book form, triggered numerous reviews and commentaries in the periodicals of the time⁵⁰. In most of these studies, apart from an assessment of the novel itself (usually favourable), more or less space was devoted to the image of Łódź contained in the work, which further contributed to the popularisation of the city.

In the Łódź press, however, not only was there a discussion between the “Łodzer Zeitung” and the Polish newspapers – “Goniec Łódzki” and “Rozwój”⁵¹, but in the latter there was a polemic between two Łódź social activists and doctors – Mieczysław Kauffman and Ludwik Przedborski – about the real image of Łódź⁵². In one of his letters, Reymont summed up all these discussions

dition to requesting information about the economic and social life in Łódź, conveyed greetings to the staff of the “Kurier Codzienny” agent. Among the addressees of these courtesies, a certain Garliński is mentioned. Since nowhere in the sources does an employee with this name appear, it can be assumed that there was a misreading of Goźliński’s name. The fact that the editors of the *Korespondencja* used only a photocopy of the original letter provided by the descendants of W. Rowiński leads to this supposition.

47 Władysław St. Reymont *pod znakiem panteizmu druku. Fragmenty korespondencji z firmą Gebethner i Wolff (1894–1926)*, ed. B. Koc, Warsaw 2000, p. 25.

48 W.S. Reymont, *Listy...*, p. 89. This information comes from the writer’s letter to his brother Franciszek, dated 4 March 1897.

49 J. Rurawski, op. cit., pp. 192–193.

50 These included: R. Dmowski, *Nowa powieść społeczna*, “Przegląd Wszechpolski” 1899, no. 2; I. Matuszewski, *Przemysł w powieści*, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1899, nos. 48–49; W. Jabłonowski, *Ziemia obiecana*, “Głos” 1899, nos. 11–12; T. Jeske-Choiński, “Kurier Warszawski” 1899, no. 150; J. Flach, *Ziemia obiecana Reymonta*, “Przegląd Polski” 1899, vol. 132; M. Badior, *O Ziemi obiecanej*, “Prawda” 1899, nos. 5, 6, 7, 8.

51 W.S. Reymont, *Listy...*, pp. 91–92.

52 “Rozwój” 1899, nos. 54; 55; 63, 67, 69, 70.

as follows: “Podobno najlepiej wyjdzie na tym mój wydawca”⁵³ [Apparently my publisher will do far better for it].

The bookshop 1898–1901

On the 29th of January 1898, the Police-Mayor of Łódź received from the Office of the Governor of Piotrków a decision to allow the

warszawskim kupcom G. Gebethnerowi i J. Wolffowi, właścicielom księgarni w Warszawie, dostrzegając solidność tej firmy, otworzyć w Łodzi przy Piotrkowskiej 46 oddział swej księgarni pod odpowiedzialnością Roberta Szwarczulanca.

[the Warsaw merchants G. Gebethner and J. Wolff, owners of a bookshop in Warsaw, noticing the reliability of this company, open a branch of their bookshop in Łódź at 46 Piotrkowska Street under the responsibility of Robert Szwarczulanec.]

At the same time, it was recommended that the police-Mayor exercise close supervision over the new establishment⁵⁴. Thus, in the premises at 46 Piotrkowska Street, in addition to the piano warehouse and the agency of the “Kurier Łódzki” [Courier Łódzki] and “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”, a bookshop also began to function⁵⁵. As A.R. Schwartzschultz died in August 1898, as mentioned earlier, J. Goźliński became the manager of the Łódź branch, although the official licence for his right to run the bookshop is dated of 10 I 1901⁵⁶.

The establishment of the bookshop and the associated expansion of the assortment probably required a change of premises. On 1 July 1899, the whole company was moved to 74 Piotrkowska Street, at the corner of Meyer Passage (now Moniuszki Street), to the house of Ludwik Geyer’s Joint Stock Society, commonly referred to as Geyer’s Palace⁵⁷. Built in 1886 to the design of the chief architect of Łódź, Hilary Majewski, the imposing Geyer’s Palace was a more prestigious location for a bookshop than the previous premises, at 46 Piotrkowska St. First of all, the section of Piotrkowska between Dzielną and Nawrot had already become a kind of promenade of elegant Łódź, and there were two popular establishments in the vicinity of the bookshop. These were:

53 W.S. Reymont, *Listy...*, p. 92.

54 APŁ, Police foreman of the City of Łódź 1854. For the original permit, see APŁ, Kancelaria Gubernatora Piotrkowskiego (KGP) [Chancellery of Piotrków’s Governor] 1228, p. 0237.

55 This may suggest that the licence issued at the beginning of the year was merely a sanctioning of the status quo, i.e. trading in the company’s own publications already.

56 APŁ, KGP 1228, p. 0237. With considerable delay, the bookshop community was also informed about the opening of the bookshop and the entrusting of the management to Goźliński. See “Przewodnik Bibliograficzny” 1899, no. 11, p. 192.

57 “Rozwój” 1899, no. 131, p. 8; “Łodzer Zeitung” 1899, no. 162 and several subsequent issues. These were advertisements in German.

at number 76, Aleksander Roszkowski's patisserie, the largest in Łódź and always overcrowded, and Antoni Stepkowski's popular restaurant (on the first floor of the Geyer's Palace). Previously, at number 72, there was the impressive Grand Hotel building⁵⁸.

Together with the bookshop, the agents of both ("Tygodnik Ilustrowany" and "Kurier Codzienny") magazines published by Gebethner & Wolff were also relocated. However, the "Kurier Codzienny" agency at the new address functioned for a short time. At the end of September 1899, it was moved to the other side of Piotrkowska Street, to "Mr Wiślicki's house at number 83 (left annex)"⁵⁹. In December, the newspaper's editors reported that the Łódź advertisements published in its pages were also posted daily on the city's streets⁶⁰. Another change of location of the agency took place in October 1901. At that time, it found its seat at 108 Piotrkowska Street, in Księgarnia Łódzka⁶¹ owned at that time by Franciszek Starczewski⁶², while the agency of "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" remained in the premises of Gebethner & Wolff's bookshop.

However, what is not entirely clear is how long the Storehouse for Grand Pianos and Pianos operated together with the bookshop. In announcements about a change of premises in 1899, it is listed next to the bookshop and the magazine agency, but at the same time (June 1899) in the "Lodzer Zeitung" there appeared, repeated several times, an announcement signed by Gebethner & Wolff about the final sale of grand pianos and pianos⁶³. On the other hand, in the announcements published by these publishers in the early 1900s, the Piano Depot is still mentioned alongside the bookshop and music scores store.

With the official opening of the bookshop, advertisements recommending mainly Gebethner & Wolff's own publications began to appear in the Łódź press, both Polish and German. In addition to magazines ("Tygodnik Ilustrowany" and "Kurier Codzienny") and bonus book attached to them⁶⁴, in the first year of the bookshop's existence there were relatively frequent advertisements for "książki i słowniki do nauki języków obcych" [books and dictionaries for

58 A. Rynkowska, *Ulica Piotrkowska*, Łódź 1970, pp. 121, 156, 161.

59 "Kurier Codzienny" 1899, no. 262, p. 2. At the same time, it was reported that, apart from the agents, subscriptions to the "Kurier" were accepted by all bookshops in Łódź.

60 "Goniec Łódzki" 1899, no. 143, p. 4; no. 150, p. 4.

61 "Kurier Codzienny" 1901, no. 274, p. 2.

62 At the time, the Łódź Bookshop was managed by Władysław Kaczmarek, who acquired it the following year, still leaving the agent of the "Kurier Codzienny", see J. Konieczna, *Kultura książki polskiej...*, p. 75.

63 "Lodzer Zeitung" 1899, no. 160 ff. Advertisement in German.

64 For example, for 1899, both periodicals provided their subscribers with: *Wybór pism Słowackiego* in four volumes ("Kurier Codzienny") and twelve volumes of *Dzieła Sienkiewicza* ("Tygodnik Ilustrowany"), see "Rozwój" 1898, no. 221, p. 8; no. 289, p. 6; no. 294, pp. 6, 7; "Łodzer Tageblatt" 1898, no. 268, no. 289.

learning foreign languages] – English, French and German⁶⁵. A more varied offer appeared each year in December, when “Nowości książkowe dla dzieci, młodzieży i dorosłych na gwiazdkę w oprawach ozdobnych i mniej ozdobnych” [Book novelties for children, young people and adults for Christmas in decorative and less decorative bindings] were recommended, as well as “Nakłady własne dzieł różnych autorów polskich w zakresie beletrystyki, wiedzy i nauki”⁶⁶ [Own editions of works by various Polish authors in the field of fiction, knowledge and science]. Among the in-house publications recommended by the bookshop were classics of Polish literature offered at very affordable prices. These included *Pan Tadeusz* for 15 kopecks (in a binding it cost 30 kopecks) and a four-volume edition of *Poezje* by Adam Mickiewicz for 60 kopecks⁶⁷. Such low prices for Mickiewicz’s works – at the end of the 1980s *Poezje* cost 80 kopecks, but four months after their appearance in Łódź bookshops, as “Dziennik Łódzki” wrote, “nie wiadomo czy się 200 egzemplarzy rozeszło”⁶⁸ [it is not known whether 200 copies have been distributed] – were certainly meant to create an increased demand for the works of the Bard, so far not very popular on the Łódź book market. The same advertisement recommended, also at low prices, other publications important for popular patriotic education. These were *Dzieje Polski w 24 obrazkach* [History of Poland in 24 pictures] by Kazimierz Góralczyk (or Władysław Anczyc), reissued many times since 1863, Henryk Sienkiewicz’s short story *Obrona Częstochowy* [The Defence of Częstochowa], and the album *Pamiątka z Jasnej Góry w Częstochowie* [A souvenir from Jasna Góra in Częstochowa]. All of the above-mentioned items, as can be seen from an advertisement placed in August 1900, were most likely on continuous sale at Gebethner & Wolff’s bookshop and still at the same price. Also recommended as cheap publications at the time were, among others, Juliusz Słowacki’s *Pisma* (four bound volumes cost one rouble)⁶⁹.

In addition to literary books, the bookshop also offered a number of educational publications, which were not always its own editions and were only accepted for the main stock. These included, for example, the publications

65 The largest number of advertisements of this type was in the “Goniec Łódzki” 1898, see nos. 48, 51, 53, 57, 59, 63 and a dozen more.

66 Among others, “Rozwój” 1898, no. 286, p. 1; nos. 289, 292; “Goniec Łódzki” 1898, no. 262, p. 1; “Lodzer Zeitung” 1899, no. 342 et seq. – advertisement in German.

67 “Goniec Łódzki” 1898, no. 54, p. 4; no. 57, p. 4; no. 63, p. 4. The announcement did not specify the date of publication of Mickiewicz’s works, so it is not possible to establish whether *Pan Tadeusz*, annotated as a separately published third volume of *Poezje*, came from the Gebethner & Wolff edition of 1888 or 1897. See M. Rowicka, *O neurotycznym cenzorze, przebiegłym wydawcy i manipulowanym czytelniku czyli Pan Tadeusz w Warszawie w okresie zaborów*, Warszawa 2004, pp. 21, 80–82.

68 “Dziennik Łódzki” 1888, no. 146, p. 2; no. 264, p. 3.

69 “Rozwój” 1900, no. 194, p. 8.

of the scientific and technical publishing house Hipolit Wawelberg recommended in one of the advertisements in “Rozwój”⁷⁰. Of great value from the field of educational information was probably an advertisement placed in the “Rozwój” on 1 September 1900 under the title *Księgarnia Gebethnera i Wolffa poleca podręczniki szkolne i wykładowe* [Gebethner & Wolff Bookshop recommends school and academic textbooks]. The advertisement listed 40 items for various subjects and for different levels of education – from primary through secondary education to academic⁷¹. An advertisement of this content and of this magnitude was unusual in Łódź at the time. Relatively rarely, however, did the bookshop advertise its own music score publications. Apart from general announcements about its assortment (including music scores), only sporadic inserts recommending specific items, usually novelties, could be found⁷².

In November 1901 there was another, the third, change of location of the bookshop. It was moved to 51 Piotrkowska Street, and the announcements informing about this fact mentioned only the bookshop, the notes shop and the administration of the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”⁷³. This was the last announcement of the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop in Łódź at the time. The move was probably agreed with the new owners of the magazine, i.e., the company Z. Rychliński and R. Wegner⁷⁴, since on 1 December, as the “Goniec Łódzki” reported: “ksiądz Bakalarski dopełnił poświęcenia nowego lokalu księgarni pod firmą Gebethner i Wolff nabytej przez panów Rychlińskiego i Wegnera”⁷⁵ [rev. Bakalarski consecrated the new premises of the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop acquired by Messrs Rychliński and Wegner]. “Goniec Łódzki” welcomed the change with great enthusiasm, writing that “księgarnia postawiona została przez nowonabywców na wielką skalę, gdyż zaopatrzone ją w olbrzymi wybór dzieł we wszystkich kierunkach literatury, nie tylko krajowej, ale i zagranicznej” [the bookshop has been put on a grand scale by the new purchasers, as it has been stocked with a huge selection of works in all types of literature, not only domestic, but also foreign]. He wrote of the young book sellers that they were “energiczni i świetnie obeznani ze swoim fachem” [energetic and highly skilled in their trade]. All this, according to the editors, made it possible to expect “że

70 “Rozwój” 1900, no. 24, p. 7. The advertisement listed 12 items. These included textbooks on various areas of technical knowledge and guide books.

71 “Rozwój” 1900, no. 200, p. 8.

72 E.g. “Rozwój” 1900, no. 188, p. 6; no. 191, p. 7. The subject of the advertisement were compositions by Piotr Moszyński to words of poems by Maria Konopnicka from the volume *Nowe latko*.

73 “Rozwój” 1901, no. 255, p. 1; “Goniec Łódzki” 1901, no. 262, p. 1. Only Polish and German book and music scores novelties are listed as the offered assortment.

74 The supposition is based on the fact that efforts to obtain permission to carry out the transaction had been going on since 10 October, and the purchase authorisation bears the date 12.11.1901. See APL, KGP 1287, pp. 340–351.

75 “Goniec Łódzki” 1901, no. 277, p. 4.

przyczynią się do wzrostu ruchu księgarskiego w naszym mieście” [that they would contribute to the growth of the book-selling movement in our city]. In an additional circular, the new owners informed that they had entrusted their commission stores to Gebethner & Wolff in Warsaw and Gebethner and Co. in Kraków⁷⁶.

One may wonder why, after less than four years of operation⁷⁷, a large and successful company sold one of its bookshops. In the available sources, we do not find an answer to this question. Only J. Gebethner (the founder’s grandson), mentioning the opening of a bookshop in Łódź, writes that “Widocznie jednak nie było dobrym posunięciem, a może kłopoty z «Kurierem Codziennym» spowodowały, iż po dwóch latach [!] sprzedano ją Rudolfowi Wegnerowi i Zygmuntowi Rychlińskiemu”⁷⁸ [Apparently, however, it was not a good move, and maybe the problems with the “Kurier Codzienny” caused it to be sold after two years [!] to Rudolf Wegner and Zygmunt Rychliński]. It is possible that there were other reasons as well. One of them may have been the low demand for the valuable literature offered by the bookshop, as in a city with a population of around 300,000 almost half of the population was still illiterate, with the majority of the Polish population at 46%. Possible reasons for the sale could also be found in the new family situation of the Gebethners. For on 18 September 1901, G.A. Gebethner died and there are many indications that the family divided the estate. Evidence of this is, among other things, the change in the name of the publisher of the “Kurier Codzienny”. Since October 1901, the newspaper’s editorial footer has been signed by “G. Gebethner’s heirs” as publishers. Therefore, it is possible that the sale of the Łódź bookshop was also the result of family property divisions.

Łódź on the pages of “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”

In contrast to the “Kurier Codzienny”, which from 1893 published a regular column devoted to Łódź, materials or information on the city upon the river Łódka rarely appeared in the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”. The first longer article on the then 40,000-strong city by Oskar Flatt (author of the monograph *Opis miasta Łodzi*, Warsaw 1853) appeared in 1866, when the magazine was still

76 Ibidem. The apparent enthusiasm contained in the information about the new bookshop and the hopes attached to its opening seem to suggest that the activities of the previous owners were not so well appreciated by the editorial board of the “Goniec Łódzki”.

77 The bookshop, as indicated in the article, operated from January 1898 to November 1901. The information given in: J. Muszkowski, op. cit., p. 25 and in: J. Gebethner, op. cit., p. 44, that the Łódź bookshop was sold after two years.

78 J. Gebethner, op. cit., p. 44.

edited and published by Józef Ungier⁷⁹. In 1883 the magazine was bought back by Gebethner & Wolff, and although “Tygodnik” had its own agent in Łódź from the mid-1890s, there was little significant material about the city upon the river Łódka⁸⁰. This was probably due to the sociocultural profile of the magazine, and the manifestations of cultural life in Łódź were hardly noticed by the Warsaw weekly of the time. It was also difficult to write about Łódź as a city of monuments or interesting architectural objects. However, an attempt to do so was made in 1896 by W. Rowiński, the aforementioned author of the “Łódź” column in the “Kurier Codzienny”. In two consecutive issues (numbers 8 and 9) of the “Tygodnik”, he published a text devoted to the Łagiewniki sanctuary, as one of the two best known places of worship of St. Anthony in Poland. He mentioned several times that the shrine was located near Łódź (Łagiewniki did not belong to Łódź at that time), and that the inhabitants of Łódź willingly visited the place⁸¹.

The publication of *Ziemia obiecana*, as mentioned above, triggered a number of reviews, in which Łódź necessarily appeared. Ignacy Matuszewski, the author of a critical study in “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” (nos. 48 and 49), focused mainly on the industrial city issue, treating Łódź, however, mainly as a background to this theme⁸².

A more complete picture of Łódź did not appear in the “Tygodnik” until 1911. At that time, the periodical already had more than 11,000 subscribers⁸³, which guaranteed a considerable social reach for the materials published on its pages. The preparation of a special issue devoted to Łódź, as “Rozwój” had already announced, was to be handled by “bawiący w Łodzi literat pan Zenon Pietkiewicz, przy współudziale innych naszych dziennikarzy”⁸⁴ [the writer

79 “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1866, no. 330, pp. 28–29. In addition to a brief history of the city, the article contained a number of data on Łódź’s industry and a report of the construction of a new railway line that was to connect Łódź with the Warsaw–Vienna line.

80 Occasionally, Łódź also appeared as the place of publication of books that had just been reviewed in the magazine.

81 W. Rowiński, *Łagiewniki*, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1896, No. 8, p. 146; No. 9, p. 167–168. The author presented the history of the village, the circumstances of the erection of the shrines, and later the church and monastery. He also devoted part of the study to the figure of Rafał Chyliński (his remains are in Łagiewniki) and the story of his beatification.

82 I. Matuszewski, op. cit.

83 *Słownik literatury polskiej XIX wieku*, ed. by J. Bachórz, A. Kowalczykowa, Wrocław 1991, pp. 963–965.

84 “Rozwój” 1911, no. 78, p. 4. Z. Pietkiewicz was a well-known Warsaw journalist who collaborated with many periodicals, not only Warsaw ones. Shortly before the World War I, he settled in Łódź, where he held the post of director of the Towarzystwo Popierania Pomocy Społecznej [Society for the Promotion of Social Work], at the same time acting as a representative and correspondent of the “Kurier Warszawski”. From 1913, he ran an independent supplement to the Warsaw magazine “Złoty Róg”, entitled *Łódź*, see A. Kempa, op. cit., p. 32.

Mr Zenon Pietkiewicz, who was staying in Łódź, with the participation of our other journalists]. The announced issue (no. 19) was published in May 1911, and contained diverse material, both in content and form. These included three articles⁸⁵, a list of publications that had so far appeared in Łódź; information on a dozen or so industrial and commercial companies (27 pages in total) and numerous photographs that not only illustrate the advertising part, but also present the more interesting buildings in the city. The text also includes reproductions of paintings by Leopold Pilichowski, a well-known painter from Łódź.

The three authors mentioned above presented various aspects of Łódź's reality in their studies. Their aim as Z. Pietkiewicz wrote in his article was probably trying to answer the question "Do we know Łódź?" The author himself stated that:

Niestety znamy ją i traktujemy powierzchownie. Wszakże ta Łódź to olbrzymi splot różnorodnych interesów ekonomicznych, to główna część produkcji Królestwa Polskiego, to zetknięcie się różnych kultur, utarczka różnorodnych żywiołów, dążeń, to jest największy nasz rynek pracy⁸⁶.

[Unfortunately, we know it and treat it superficially. After all, this Łódź is a huge tangle of various economic interests, it is the main part of the production of the Polish Kingdom, it is a meeting place of various cultures, a melee of various elements, aspirations, it is our largest labour market.]

Pietkiewicz therefore focused mainly on the problems of industrial Łódź. Although he included the historical aspect, the bulk of the article deals with contemporary issues. In his opinion, despite various turbulences, Łódź's industry is developing very successfully. Ignacy Grabowski, on the other hand, paid more attention to the role that German immigrants played in the development of Łódź. He appreciated their contribution to the development of industry, but at the same time stressed that "Stanowisko prusko-państwowe części milionerów łódzkich i rozpierających się pod ich zachętą faustmajstrów opóźnia rozwój kultury Łodzi"⁸⁷ [The Prussian-state attitude of some of the Łódź millionaires and the faustmeisters who spread themselves under their encouragement delayed the development of Łódź's culture]. On the other hand, Zygmunt Bartkiewicz, a writer and author of the recently published novel *Złe miasto*, depicted in literary form the working day of various social and professional groups in Łódź. As in the book cited above, the result was a bleak and depressing image, further

85 Łódź was the subject of the following articles in issue 19 of the "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" of 1911: I. Grabowski, *Miasto robotnika polskiego*; Z. Pietkiewicz, *Przemysł łódzki*; Z. Bartkiewicz, *Dzień roboczy*.

86 Z. Pietkiewicz, op. cit., p. 363.

87 I. Grabowski, op. cit., p. 362.

enhanced by reproductions of two paintings by L. Pilichowski, *Nędza łódzka* and *Koło rozpędowe*.

The presentation of Łódź's publishing output takes up only one page. This modest list is preceded by the following justification:

Nic to dziwnego; Łódź siedlisko humbugu i drobnomieszczaństwa, miasto pozbawione wszelkiej przeszłości kulturalnej, nie posiadające ani wyższych zakładów, ani pracowni, ani licznych instytucji naukowych, niewiele mogła dotąd dać nauce i literaturze polskiej⁸⁸.

[This is not surprising; Łódź, the habitat of the humbug and the petty bourgeoisie, a city devoid of any cultural past, which has neither higher establishments nor studios, nor numerous scientific institutions, has so far been able to give little to Polish science and literature.]

On the other hand, the list of industrial and commercial enterprises that existed in Łódź and its immediate vicinity is much more impressive. In addition to photographs, each of the twenty-odd enterprises presented is accompanied by a shorter or longer informative note on the nature of their business, type of services provided, etc.

At the end of the current issue there is an announcement of the introduction of a permanent illustrated column entitled *Życie Łódzkie* [Łódź's Life] to be edited by Z. Pietkiewicz from the next issue. The explanatory note emphasised that Łódź was one of "najważniejszych naszych placówek życia przemysłowego i ekonomicznego" [our most important outposts of industrial and economic life], and the planned section was created to inform "nie tylko mieszkańców Łodzi, lecz cały ogół publiczności naszej o wszelkich wybitniejszych wydarzeniach życia społecznego miasta zwanego «Manchesterem polskim»"⁸⁹ [not only the inhabitants of Łódź, but the whole of our public about all the most prominent events in the social life of the city called the "Polish Manchester"].

These wide-ranging plans to promote Łódź on the pages of "Tygodnik" were soon curtailed. Only in the next three issues (nos. 20, 21 and 22), there was a small column entitled *Nasz kącik łódzki* [Our piece of Łódź]. It recalled, among other things, the beginnings of Polish theatre in Łódź, a posthumous memoir about a well-known doctor from Łódź, L. Przedborski, and a note on a doctors' convention held in Łódź, accompanied by a photograph. Meanwhile, in the regular section of *Mieszaniiny literacko-artystyczne* [Literary and Artistic Mixtures], there was a review of Z. Bartkiewicz's book *Złe miasto*, which characterised Łódź not very encouragingly: "to miasto nielogiczne w swej genezie i bezsensowne w swym istnieniu znalazło w Zygmuncie Bartkiewiczzu

88 *Mieszaniiny literacko-artystyczne*, "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1911, no. 19, p. 374.

89 *Ibidem*, p. XXVIII.

utalentowanego malarza”⁹⁰ [this city illogical in its genesis and senseless in its existence has found in Zygmunt Bartkiewicz a talented painter].

Shorter or longer texts on Łódź appeared in five more issues of the periodic (nos. 26, 27, 32, 34, 38), and these were all mentions of the “cotton town” that were published in 1911. “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”. In 1912, however, more extensive material on Łódź could be found in the periodic only in the second half of the year (e.g., nos. 29, 30, 42), after Gebethner & Wolff had acquired Miszewski’s bookshop, of which readers were also informed in issue 39.

“Rocznik Łódzki Gebethnera i Wolffa”.
Kalendarz encyklopedyczno-praktyczny na rok 1914
[Gebethner & Wolff’s Łódź Yearbook.
Encyclopedic and Practical Calendar for 1914]

In October 1913, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” published information about the publication of the fourth volume of “Rocznik Gebethnera i Wolffa”, that is, *an encyclopedic and practical calendar for the year 1914*. The content of the new publication was discussed, adding at the end that “Wkrótce wyjdzie z druku specjalne wydanie ‘Rocznika’ przeznaczone dla Łodzi i okręgu fabrycznego łódzkiego”⁹¹ [a special edition of ‘Rocznik’ intended for Łódź and the Łódź factory district will soon go out of print].

Detailed information on the contents of the “Rocznik Łódzki Gebethnera i Wolffa” was published by all three Polish dailies that were already published in Łódź at that time⁹². At the same time, the publisher himself published extensive advertisements on the front pages of these newspapers about the forthcoming *Calendar*. The advertisements ended with the popular suggestion that this publication “should be in every home”⁹³.

According to “Nowy Kurier Łódzki” [New Łódź Courier], the publication of a special version of the *Calendar* devoted to Łódź was to be the initiative of Stanisław Miszewski, who had been the manager of the new Gebethner & Wolff bookshop in Łódź for over a year. It is possible that Z. Pietkiewicz, editor of the special issue of the “Tygodnik” discussed above, also had some involvement in this venture.

“Rocznik Łódzki” was an expanded version of “Rocznik Gebethnera i Wolffa na rok 1914” with content concerning Łódź and surrounding towns. The part

90 *Mieszaniiny literacko-artystyczne*, “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1911, no. 21, p. 414.

91 “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1913, no. 41, p. 814. The calendar, as highlighted in the text, was compiled under the guidance of “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”.

92 “Rozwój” 1913, no. 242, p. 4; no. 261, pp. 1–2; “Nowa Gazeta Łódzka” 1913, no. 69, p. 2; “Nowy Kurier Łódzki” 1913, no. 243, p. 3.

93 “Rozwój” 1913, no. 262, p. 1; “Nowa Gazeta Łódzka” 1913, no. 69, p. 1.

devoted to Łódź and the nearest industrial cities comprises 30 pages of text (together with some 200 photographs and diagrams)⁹⁴ and, distributed in various parts of the publication, advertisements of some Łódź companies, including a full-page advertisement of the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop in Łódź. The plan, as noted in the introduction, was to further expand the Łódź section in subsequent volumes. Unfortunately, history was to completely derail these plans.

The picture of Łódź presented in the “Yearbook” differs from that published two years earlier in the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”. The *Calendar is* dominated by factography, there are a lot of numbers, drawings, and diagrams, and no literary depictions of the topic. In addition to detailed figures on the state of Łódź industry by Z. Pietkiewicz (767 industrial establishments employing 89,887 workers and having an annual turnover of nearly 218 million roubles), there is also an article entitled *Przywóz i wywóz* [Imports and Exports]. Based on the figures for these two processes, the author (unsigned) drew the conclusion that industrial production in Łódź was declining. Completing the picture of the industrial Łódź is a text about financial institutions in the city. According to the author (unsigned), in the last 30 years not only numerous banks and their branches, but also credit societies and various types of credit unions were established and developed in Łódź, which indirectly proves the intensive development of the industry of Łódź.

However, the description of Łódź was not limited to the presentation of the city’s industrial potential. Unlike in the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”, part of the study was devoted to the social life of Łódź including such areas as: “Education”, “Hygiene and Health of the Population”, “Associations”, “Asylum of Science”, and “Moral State of Łódź”. Within the individual sections, only basic information was included. For example, within the section on education, several educational associations active in Łódź were listed (“Wiedza” [Knowledge], Towarzystwo Wiedzy Handlowej [Commercial Knowledge Society], Towarzystwo “Uczelnia” [Academy Society]), but Towarzystwo Krzewienia Oświaty [Society for the Promotion of Education] received most attention. Similarly, in the “Hygiene” section, Towarzystwo Lekarskie [Medical Society], while emphasising that the work of doctors in Łódź was extremely thankless. In turn, the chapter on associations lists a wide range of organisations active in Łódź. The least optimistic section, although in line with reality, is that devoted to science. It begins with the words: “Najniewdzięczniejszym i najbardziej jałowym gruntem jest Łódź dla pracy naukowej. Nad całym życiem rozpostarł szerokie skrzydła interes”⁹⁵ [The most ungrateful and barren ground is Łódź for scientific work, and over all life has spread wide wings of interest]. Among

94 “Rocznik Łódzki Gebethnera i Wolffa na rok 1914”, pp. 177–197.

95 *Ibidem*, p. 194.

the few establishments conducting scientific research, the laboratory of the Łódź Gasworks was considered one of the most important. The final chapter entitled “Stan moralny” [The moral state] is even more pessimistic. This depressing picture is formed both by data on numerous thefts, robberies, prostitution, and information on human trafficking or banditry.

The next dozen or so pages of “Rocznik Łódzki” (197–208) are occupied with information on the textile industry centres around Łódź. The situation in three cities is discussed: Zgierz, Pabianice and Tomaszów, and the county of Łódź is also included.

As the circulation of “Rocznik Łódzki” is unfortunately unknown, it is difficult to assess what the social reach of this publication was. It was probably smaller than that of the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” devoted to Łódź, but the fact that the materials on Łódź were part of an already well-established publication such as “Rocznik Gebethnera i Wolffa” was probably significant. This in turn had the form of a codex of several hundred pages, which in the general perception made it a permanent publication and more prestigious than a journal issue.

Gebethner & Wolff Bookshop 1912–1918

The second half of the first decade of the twentieth century and the years before World War I were a highly successful period for Gebethner & Wolff. The publishing offer was growing, and consequently the book trade was also developing. The company’s new headquarters, built in 1905 in Warsaw, housed all the company’s departments, and a second bookshop was opened in the capital. Another sign of Gebethner’s expansion was the opening of a branch in Lublin in 1910 (purchased from Franciszek Raczkowski). At the same time, an intensive campaign to advertise the publisher’s publications was developing in the press.

In Łódź, this became evident starting in 1910. Gebethner & Wolff advertised mainly in the “Kurier Łódzki”, which at the same time contained various types of editorial annotations concerning most of the books currently being advertised⁹⁶. Number of advertisements increased significantly in the middle and end of 1911, and they were published both in the “Kurier Łódzki” (by the end of the year it was already published as the “Nowy Kurier Łódzki”) and in the “Rozwój”. Both newspapers usually recommended the same items, but the ads appeared at intervals of several days. In the first half of the following year, the number of advertisements increased significantly, and their diversity

96 E.g. “Kurier Łódzki” 1911, no. 75, p. 5. There was a large advertisement entitled *Ostatnie wydawnictwa Gebethnera i Wolffa*. It listed more than 20 titles by 16 authors, most of these items having been previously discussed by the newspaper’s editors.

is also visible. In addition to the typical ones, listing several or more book titles, there was such advertising for a single item, but annotated as to its content or external form⁹⁷. Such an increase in the publication of advertisements was probably part of a marketing campaign preceding the opening of the publishing house's new bookshop, which also took place on 1 July 1912⁹⁸.

The bookshop was bought from Stanisław Miszewski, and there are many indications that this was not an accidental purchase. Miszewski, in 1904, after ten years of practising in Warsaw bookshops, settled in Łódź and began working at the Rychliński and Wegner bookshop, acquired, as mentioned earlier, from Gebethner & Wolff in 1901. This bookshop went into liquidation in mid-1905, and advertisements for a book sale appeared in the press⁹⁹. However, according to Irena Rybotycka, R. Wegner's daughter, the closure of the bookshop was the result of the sudden departure of her father, who, warned of his impending arrest (for selling illegal publications), went to Lviv¹⁰⁰. Miszewski, on the other hand, in November 1905 applied to the Piotrków Governor's Office for permission to open his own bookshop. He received the relevant permission after only a month and soon opened his shop¹⁰¹. This unusual pace for the conditions of the time seems to suggest that Miszewski probably took over/purchased the bookshop of Rychliński and Wegner. Over a period of six years, Miszewski's bookshop gained considerable popularity in Łódź circles. In addition to its sorting business, it also carried out a varied publishing activity (fiction, popular science books, children's books, and pamphlets, over 20 items in total)¹⁰².

The reasons why Miszewski decided to sell his prosperous bookshop to Gebethner & Wolff are not known. Some conjectures are suggested by statements made by people connected with the bookshop buyer's circle. All of them, talking about the sale of the former bookshop to the Rychliński and Wegner company in 1901, add that in 1912 the bookshop was "odkupiona" [emphasis mine J.K.; bought back] from Miszewski¹⁰³. It is difficult to judge whether these repeated

97 E.g. "Nowy Kurier Łódzki" 1912, no. 41, p. 8. The advertisement concerned *Dziela Szekspira* published in 12 volumes. In addition to bibliographical details, a whole range of information on the poet's life, his reception in Poland and the content of the first two volumes was included. For an identical announcement see "Rozwój" 1912, no. 39, p. 13.

98 "Tygodnik Ilustrowany" 1912, no. 39; "Przegląd Księgarski" 1912, no. 15/16, p. 96. On the other hand, no information about this fact was published by newspapers in Łódź.

99 "Rozwój" 1905, no. 94, p. 8; "Przewodnik Bibliograficzny" 1905, no. 10, p. 208.

100 *Nagroda literacka im. Rudolfa Wegnera. Laureat pierwszej nagrody Czesław Bednarczyk wręczonej 21 października 1988 r. w POSKu, w Londynie*, London 1989, pp. 5–6.

101 APŁ, KGP 1525, pp. 506–514; "Development" 1906, no. 4, p. 3.

102 J. Jaworska, op. cit., pp. 330–331.

103 Letter dated 12 May 1937 on the letterhead of the Gebethner & Wolff Bookshop to the bookseller W. Pfeiffer in Łódź (in private collection); J. Muszkowski, op. cit., p. 25; J. Gebethner, op. cit., p. 44.

formulations are just pure rhetoric, or whether Gebethner & Wolff really had some kind of share in the bookshop in Łódź for these several years?

From the information in the Book Review on the transaction, it appears that the purchasers bought only the bookshop and the music score store. However, there is no mention of the library, which was also run by Miszewski. The “new” bookshop (together with the agency of “Tygodnik Ilustrowany”), now called a branch of the Warsaw bookshop of Gebethner & Wolff, remained in its previous premises at 87 Piotrkowska Street, and Miszewski, now acting as manager, also remained there. The bookshop continued to employ Bolesław Gromczyński and Kazimierz Kosiński, who were employed by him as apprentices, but now as assistants¹⁰⁴. At the same time, as part of the reorganisation of the branch, a new employee was sent from the head office, namely Stefan Szpinger. His task was to supervise the foreign literature department and in the first instance to expand the German and French assortment. In his memoirs published years later, Szpinger was quite critical of the previous management and the state of the bookshop: “Kierownik filii łódzkiej, Stanisław Miszewski, znany działacz społeczny, sympatyczny starszy pan [...], ale niezbyt sprężysty organizator” [The manager of the Łódź branch, Stanisław Miszewski, a well-known social activist, an amiable older gentleman [...] but not a very resilient organiser], while about the premises he wrote:

Księgarnia [...] posiadała ładny lokal, ale była zdewastowana i zaniedbana; szczególnie szafy i lady znajdowały się w opłakanym stanie. [...] prowadziła obok sortymentu polskiego, dobieganego dość przypadkowo, dział nut i nieco przestarzałej literatury w językach niemieckim i francuskim. Jednym słowem – stan rzeczy nie odpowiadał poziomowi reprezentacyjnej firmy polskiej¹⁰⁵.

[The bookshop [...] had nice premises, but was derelict and neglected; especially the cabinets and counters were in a deplorable state. The bookshop [...] had a music section and a somewhat outdated literature section in German and French, in addition to a Polish selection that was chosen rather randomly. In a word, the state of affairs did not correspond to the level of a representative Polish firm.]

Szpinger, as he recalls in his book, quickly began to import publications, and it is likely that the external image of the bookshop gradually changed. A year and a half after the purchase of the shop, in December 1913, the “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” devoted a full-page text to the Łódź establishment, illustrated with

104 APL, Archive of W. Pfeiffer 6, pp. 144–147; 203–206. K. Kosiński worked in the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop until 1931, and after Miszewski left, he was its manager in the years 1928–1931. Kosiński’s further professional fate is unknown. Gromczyński’s fate is also unknown.

105 S. Szpinger, *Na szerokiej drodze (pamiętnik księgarza)*, Łódź 1974, pp. 85–88. The book describes Szpinger’s entire professional path.

two photographs showing the front of the shop and a fragment of the interior¹⁰⁶. However, the presentation of the bookshop's offer began with the following justification of the reasons for its purchase:

Życie umysłowe i kulturalne Łodzi i okolic od dawna domagało się wielkiej, dobrze zorganizowanej księgarni. Ze względu, iż mieszkańcy tego osobliwego «Manchesteru polskiego» potrzebują tak polskich, jak i niemieckich książek, księgarnie miejscowe nie mogąc dostatecznie zaopatrzyć się w jedne i drugie, dzieliły się na specjalności, co było niewygodnym dla mieszkańców tego już dziś wielkiego miasta¹⁰⁷.

[The intellectual and cultural life of Łódź and its surroundings has long called for a large, well-organised bookshop. Because the inhabitants of this peculiar “Polish Manchester” need both Polish and German books, the local bookshops, unable to stock both, divided themselves into specialities, which was inconvenient for the inhabitants of this now great city.]

This diagnosis of book trade in Łódź did not fully reflect the reality of the time. For nearly thirty years, Ludwik Fiszer's bookshop had existed in Łódź, and it was reputed to be one of the largest establishments in the Russian partition. It had much more spacious premises (three large trading rooms and separate rooms for lenders and distributors), employed about twenty people, nine of whom were in charge of front sale, and in addition to its wide range of products it also acted as a wholesaler for smaller shops in Łódź and the surrounding area¹⁰⁸. Well organised were also the bookshops of Strauch, Mitler, Richter and Słomnicki, among others.

The description of the bookshop in the “Tygodnik” presented it as an almost exemplary establishment: aesthetically pleasing inside and outside, efficient and courteous service, and professional staff speaking foreign languages. It was also emphasised that the clientele included not only representatives of the more or less affluent intelligentsia, but also knowledge-hungry workers, and in this way the bookshop “spełnia swe zadanie placówki kulturalnej szerzącej wiedzę i oświatę”¹⁰⁹ [fulfils its task as a cultural institution spreading knowledge and education]. It should be noted, however, that it was not the only institution of this type in Łódź at that time, as there were already many more institutions involved in the dissemination of knowledge and education in the city. Vibrant

106 “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1913, no. 50, p. 1006. There were three display windows next to the entrance. The two smaller ones were filled to the full height with books laid flat, while the third was only half full. One can see elements of Christmas decoration on it (it was mid-December). The photo of the interior shows a spacious room cluttered with bookcases full of books and aesthetically pleasing counters, behind which three employees can be seen.

107 Ibidem.

108 L. Fiszer, op. cit., pp. 7–10.

109 “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1913, no. 50, p. 1006.

cultural and educational activities were carried out in wide circles of society by educational societies¹¹⁰, there were a dozen or so secondary schools with Polish as the language of instruction, and there were also three Polish newspapers that, apart from their typically informative function, disseminated cultural values.

These, and social conditions other than eleven years ago, as well as the changing number and structure of the population of Łódź (Poles already constituted more than half of the city's four hundred thousand inhabitants) meant that demand for Polish books was increasing. Gebethner & Wolff's bookshop offered mostly its own publications, mainly fiction, the circulation of which in the years 1911–1913 was the highest in the entire period of the company's activity so far. The circulation of books for children and young people was also high. Also significant was the demand for music scores, of which Gebethner was the largest Polish publisher. His excellent pedagogical serial music scores publications, in particular, were very popular. As Szpinger recalls, thanks to the marketing strategy he adopted, there was a growing interest in foreign-language books, especially among representatives of the industrialist community of Łódź¹¹¹.

Not insignificant to the growing demand was the ongoing large-scale promotional campaign. This was carried out mainly through advertisements not only in all three of the newspapers mentioned in Łódź, but also in the "Neue Lodzer Zeitung". The advertisements appeared 3–4 times a week and usually recommended several titles.

The outbreak of war in July 1914 fundamentally changed the situation of all bookshops in Łódź. Even at the turn of July and August, Gebethner & Wolff's shop was still very busy. According to the already quoted Szpinger, customers were buying more valuable publication, thinking that it would be a good investment for their money, which was losing its value; it was also feared that there might be a hunger for Polish books. Soon, however, the author of these notes, as a German subject, was deported deep into Russia. The first two years of the war brought the assortment and circulation book trade to a standstill. Gebethner & Wolff's publishing output fell from 131 titles in 1913 to 56 in 1915, and the promotional campaign in the press came to a complete halt. However, from the very beginning of the war, with the manager Miszewski's consent, the bookshop was stocked with independence "samizdat" publications, military regulations were brought in, and members of the Polska Organizacja Wojskowa [Polish Military Organisation] were allowed to make contact in the shop. B.

110 These were: Towarzystwo Krzewienia Oświaty [Society for the Propagation of Education], Towarzystwo Oświatowe "Wiedza" ["Knowledge" Educational Society], Towarzystwo Szerzenia Oświaty im. Henryka Sienkiewicza w Chojnach [Henryk Sienkiewicz Society for the Propagation of Education in Chojny], Towarzystwo Kultury Polskiej [Polish Culture Society].

111 S. Szpinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 88–90.

Gromczyński, who was still working in the bookshop, belonged to this organisation. As recalled years later, Miszewski facilitated this activity, often dismissing him from work. Gromczyński was not hindered in his conspiratorial activities on the premises of the bookshop by either K. Kosiński, who was still working with him. Kosiński, also a sympathiser of the independence aspirations¹¹².

The situation at Gebethner & Wolff's bookshop, like that of the industry as a whole, began to improve from 1916 onwards, partly as a result of the changing political climate and the spectacular concessions made by the Germans to the Poles in order to gain their share in the continuing war effort. Taking advantage of the new situation, the Polish education system was built up, and various forms of further training were created for those in the workforce, particularly teachers. The Gebethner & Wolff bookshop became actively involved in various forms of supporting the educational process, not only by selling the company's steadily increasing publishing offer and resuming the publication of advertisements in the local press. One such action became the organisation of a major pedagogical exhibition at the end of August 1916. The preparation for this event was a stand of pedagogical books that had been included in an exhibition organised by the accounts section of the national fundraising committee "Ratujcie Dzieci" [Save the Children] in June that year. The exhibition, which opened on the first of September, was located "w obszernej, przybranej barwami narodowymi sali przy księgarni" [in a spacious hall next to the bookshop, decorated with national colours] and, according to the organisers' announcements, was permanent. The creator of the concept of the exhibition was Miszewski. The collected publications were organised according to the levels of education, creating sections for primary and secondary schools, and within these sections, a division was made according to the appropriate subjects for each level of education. Extensive information about the exhibition appeared in all Łódź dailies of the time. The great importance of the exhibition for the teaching community, but also for parents, was emphasised, and high attendance was ensured¹¹³.

The popularity of the exhibition and the growing development of Polish education following the promulgation of the "Act of 5 November" in 1916 led the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop to organise another exhibition as late as December of that year. Called the "Wystawa Polonistyczna" [Polish Studies Exhibition], it did not, however, include only publications on the history of Polish literature, although these dominated there, with special sections devoted

112 APL, W. Pfeiffer Archive 6, pp. 144–147.

113 For information on the exhibition, as well as press announcements by its organisers, see "Gazeta Łódzka" 1916, no. 179, p. 2; no. 236, p. 3; no. 241, p. 1; no. 252, p. 2; "Nowy Kurier Łódzki" 1916, no. 231, p. 2; no. 239, p. 1; no. 252, p. 2; "Godzina Polski" 1916, no. 238, p. 4; no. 243, p. 7.

to Mickiewicz and Słowacki. Literature on the methodology of teaching the Polish language was also included. In addition to Polish literature, publications on Polish history (arranged according to the chronology of history), the geography of Polish lands, and Polish art and architecture were also presented. The exhibition was addressed not only to the teaching community but also to the general public. “Gazeta Łódzka” encouraged people to visit the exhibition, stressing that “wejście na nią jest bezpłatne, a zwiedzenie jej korzyść każdemu przyniesie, zapoznając go z wszechstronną polską twórczością piśmienniczą”¹¹⁴ [entry is free and visiting it will benefit everyone by introducing them to comprehensive Polish writing].

The increased external activity of the bookshop required the hiring of new staff. In September 1916, sixteen-year-old Henryk Cuchrowski was taken on as an apprentice¹¹⁵. On the other hand, in December 1917, Julian Truchliński began working as an assistant. He was not a novice, as he had previously completed a four-year apprenticeship at Fiszer’s bookshop in Łódź. He left the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop in September 1918¹¹⁶.

Another pedagogical exhibition was organised by the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop in August 1917. This time, as the press wrote and company advertisements informed, more than 1,500 “dzieł pedagogicznych i podręczników szkolnych, map, tablic poglądowych itp.” [pedagogical works and school books, maps, reference charts, etc.] were presented. The special importance of the exposition for those preparing for the teaching profession was also emphasized¹¹⁷. For it should be noted that from the beginning of 1917 the Polish Teachers’ Seminary had already functioned in Łódź, and for those wishing to improve their qualifications as teachers there were the Polish Pedagogical Courses and the Pedagogical and Educational Section of the Łódź Miejska Rada Opiekuńcza [Municipal Welfare Council].

It is difficult to establish whether an exhibition similar to the two previous ones was also organised at the beginning of the following school year,

114 “Gazeta Łódzka” 1916, no. 338, p. 3; no. 334, p. 4; “Nowy Kurier Łódzki” 1916, no. 332, p. 1.

115 APL, Archive of W. Pfeiffer 8. Cuchrowski remained at the Gebethner & Wolff bookshop until January 1920. In the following years, he worked in the following bookshops in Łódź: 1922–1928 in a branch of the Arct’s publishing house, 1929–1936 in Karol Neumiller’s bookshop, from 1936 in Szarlota Seipelt’s bookshop (formerly L. Fiszer’s), see J. Krakowiak, *Od Fiszera do «Pegaza». 123 lata łódzkiej księgarni. Księgarnie łódzkie okresu międzywojennego*, Łódź 2005, p. 74, p. 76, p. 86. He died in 1945 in the Friedhof Schorzingen concentration camp in Germany, see KZ Friedhof Schörzingen, [online] <https://www.polskiegroby.pl/cmentarz.php?cmentarzok=1371&miejscok=1270&landok=1> [accessed 02.11.2023].

116 APL, Archive of W. Pfeiffer 7; M. Pękalska, *Truchliński Julian*, [in:] *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej. Suplement III*, ed. by H. Tadeusiewicz, Warszawa 2010, p. 282. After leaving Gebethner & Wolff, Truchliński opened his own bookshop in Pabianice and ran it until 1927. Until the end of his professional career, he was associated with bookselling.

117 “Gazeta Łódzka” 1917, no. 234, p. 2; no. 235, p. 1.

i.e. in September 1918. At that time, the press and social life were dominated by topics related to the war, which was clearly coming to an end and the chance of independence looming. There were discussions and disputes, but there were also protests resulting from the increasingly difficult material situation of large social groups. In February 1918, workers of the L. Fiszer and Gebethner & Wolff bookshops in Łódź presented wage demands, demanding a 50% increase in their previous salaries. According to the “Godzina Polski” [Hour of Poland] (other newspapers did not publish any information on the subject), as a result of the negotiations, an increase of 45% was agreed¹¹⁸.

In addition to its commercial and exhibition activities, the bookshop continued to participate in the cultural life of the city. It acted as an intermediary in the organisation of cultural and artistic events and assisted, through the placement of paid publishing advertisements in the “One-Day Notes” published by various organisations¹¹⁹. The bookshop also donated books to selected libraries, including the Public Library opened in 1917. In the first year of the bookshop’s existence alone, 133 works in 140 volumes were donated to the library, and these were mainly publications of a scientific nature¹²⁰.

The year 1918 and the regaining of independence did not, of course, mark the end of Gebethner & Wolff’s presence in Łódź. The bookshop existed and was active throughout the interwar period, but these were already different forms of book dissemination and different political, social, and cultural conditions than at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Conclusions

The Gebethner & Wolff company, which rendered great service to Polish culture, had also had a certain “episode” in Łódź in its almost one hundred years of activity, although the company’s connection with Łódź never extended to publishing. It is worth noting, however, the various forms of popularising Łódź in the periodicals published by Gebethner & Wolff. In the case of the “Kurier Codzienny” and the Łódź column, launched in 1893, this was the realisation of an important informative function for the city, which at the time lacked its own daily newspaper. The “Tygodnik Ilustrowany” joined the dissemination of knowledge about Łódź as late as 1911. The activities of the

118 “Nowy Kurier Łódzki” 1918, no. 55, p. 2; “Godzina Polski” 1918, no. 60-A, p. 6.

119 Such announcements were published, among others, in the “Jednodniówka weteranów na rzecz Towarzystwa Uczestników Powstania 1863 roku”, Łódź 1917, and the “Ratujcie Dzieci” One-Day paper, Łódź 1916.

120 “Nowy Kurier Łódzki” 1918, no. 3, p. 2; no. 13, p. 2; J. Augustyniak, *Biblioteka Publiczna w Łodzi w okresie lat od 1917 do 1927*, [in:] *Księga pamiątkowa Miejskiej Biblioteki Publicznej w Łodzi 1917–1927*, ed. by J. Augustyniak, Łódź 1928, p. 12.

most popular Polish periodical at that time were of a more action-orientated nature, but due to its high circulation (11,000 copies), the published texts gained considerable social coverage. On the other hand, the most factual information on Łódź was provided by “Rocznik Łódzki Gebethnera i Wolffa” for 1914. It must be emphasised that people associated with the Łódź journalistic, or more broadly cultural, community, W. Rowiński, Z. Pietkiewicz and S. Miszewski played a significant role in the implementation of the above initiatives. On the other hand, the greatest contribution to the popularisation of Łódź was made by W. Reymont and his *Ziemia obiecana*, in the creation and dissemination of which the Gebethner & Wolff company had, as is well known, a large share.

Other were the forms of influence of institutions opened in Łódź under the Gebethner & Wolff banner. Significant, although it seems relatively little recognised so far, was the role of the Storehouse of Musical Instruments and the agencies of the periodicals published by the company located in this shop. The Storehouse played an important role in activating Polish musical circles in Łódź, and well-known journalists and writers, not only local ones, grouped around the agencies. The bookshops (especially the one opened in 1912) offered mainly their own publications and valuable foreign language books. They were also active in disseminating Polish classics among broad sections of society, and during the war they supported the nascent Polish educational system.

The image of Łódź presented in publications under the auspices of the Gebethner & Wolff company depicted the city upon the river Łódka mainly as an industrial molecule, having neither cultural traditions nor current cultural achievements. However, unlike other entities representing similar views, Gebethner & Wolff undertook or (more often) stimulated the undertaking of activities that would change the image of a city without culture.

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