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Iza Biežuńska–Małowist 1917–1995

The life of Iza Biežuńska–Małowist constitutes a very interesting case study in the research on the history of the Polish Jews and of the Polish intelligentsia. Yet it would be difficult to research this case reliably on the basis of surviving documents, because — after the Holocaust, the obliteration of the entire family and the loss of all possessions kept in a house that had been destroyed to its foundations — the war left her without any family archives whatsoever. Neither did she write any memoirs, even though in conversations she would sometimes return to the happy period of her youth. She would always omit the dark years of the Nazi occupation and her life in the ghetto; only shortly before her death, out of the sense of duty, so to speak, did she begin to mention that period of her life. It was then that she decided to write a short account intended to be lodged with the institutions gathering the Holocaust documentation. Yet many of her recollections are now stored solely in the memories of the writer of these words and of the author of her to–date largest biographical sketch, who had held many long conversations with her in the last years of her life.¹ The history of her family, however, was researched with a truly noble passion of a dilettante by her relatively distant but much loved cousin, a well–known American scholar Jacob Rubin (1919–2007), a specialist in soil and water science and a professor at Stanford University, who was in possession of some family papers and old photographs transferred to the United States before the war. The genealogical tree he had made, even though partly on the basis of oral tradition only, now constitutes practically the sole source of information about the family’s most distant past.²

Iza Biežuńska–Małowist belonged to the sphere of the relatively affluent Jewish middle class (in the personal questionnaires she had to fill in during the entire period of the People’s Republic of Poland, in the column ‘social background’ she would write: ‘small–merchant class’, in Polish *drobnomieszczaństwo*), a group

¹ K. Stebnička, ‘Iza Biežuńska–Małowist 1917–1995’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* [*Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute*], 3/95–2/96 [175–178] (1996), pp. 176–184.

² Manuscript in the author’s possession.

that was quite thoroughly Polonised, but to a large extent isolated from the Christian community. According to her birth certificate (which survives because just before the closing of the ghetto she deposited her most important personal papers, like her school-leaving certificate, university grade transcript, graduation diploma and the birth certificate in question, to her friends on the 'Aryan' side) she was born in 'the house no. 7/2406 at Nowolipki Street'. Her subsequent address was no. 21 Nowolipki Street, where her father's company was also registered. She was given the name Idess — she would later proudly say it was a variant of the name Jehudit, i.e. Jewess — but this name was not used even by her family; to her relatives she was Iza, reportedly because her parents had been hoping for a boy, who was to be called Isaac in honour of one of the grandfathers. In the year 1947 she officially changed her name to Izabela, but she did not like the full form and so she signed most of her publications with the name Iza.

Her father, Elijahu (Eliasz) Bieżuński (1885–1943?) was a businessman, as we would say today, which then meant that he simply continued the family's traditional involvement in commerce. The family came from the vicinity of Włocławek; Elijahu's father, Moshe Bieżyński (1857–1935; some members of the family used this version of the surname, most probably arising from an error in its transcription from Russian) and his wife had a haberdashery there. Both father and son married women from the same local family, surnamed Prawda. According to a family story known to Jacob Rubin, the Bieżuńskis came from the town of Kowal, and the Prawdas from the neighbouring Lipno, and the two families had been interrelated for a long time. Many of their members lived in either town, and then in Włocławek, where Jacob Rubin was born. Jakub Bieżuński, who in the year 1820 was an ironmonger in Kowal, is believed to be their earliest known relative. The ancestor of the family may have arrived to the Dobrzyń Land and Kuyavia from the town of Bieżuń, located some hundred kilometres from Kowal (then in the Płock governorate, today in the Mazovian voivodship); it was believed that the surname assigned to the family by the Russian authorities in the early period of the Congress Kingdom was derived from the name of that locality.

In 1919, Eliasz Bieżuński entered into partnership with Jakub Groner (then spelt *Cafał* Jakób Groner). In 1922, the partners registered a business venture involved in wholesale trade in coffee and tea.³ According to the surviving documentation of the Commercial Register (signature 13/298), the partnership was in operation in the period 1922–1936;⁴ afterwards, both partners entered into tenement house construction and lived from rents. Tea and coffee were Iza Bieżuńska's favourite beverages throughout all her life. She recalled how, being ill with typhus in the

³ *Tygodnik Handlowy. Organ poświęcony sprawom gospodarczym: organ Stowarzyszenia Kupców Polskich* [The Trade Weekly. A Periodical Devoted to Economic Issues: the Organ of the Polish Merchant Association], R[ocznik] 4 (1922), no. 21–22, p. 253.

⁴ <<https://warszawa.ap.gov.pl>> (accessed 20 March 2016).

ghetto, she was almost happy to be so sick, because she was given real tea which her father extracted for her from his secret hoard.

Idess began her education at home, because she was a sickly child due to an innate heart condition and spent much of her time in bed. She went to secondary school (the gymnasium) only at the age of ten. She always recalled that she owed very much to her mother Dyna (née Prawda, 1888–1943?), a well-educated woman who herself had attended a finishing school for girls and was entirely Polonised (although Iza's parents sometimes spoke Yiddish to each other when at home). From an early age Idess Bieżuńska read a lot and enjoyed studying; her favourite subjects at school were mathematics and Latin. Fascination with the latter remained with her until the end of her life. She would read Latin authors — occasionally Cicero, most often Tacitus or Pliny the Younger — before sleep or in various waiting-rooms and queues; her elegant briefcase or her rather large handbag would usually contain some volume or other by one of these authors. After her death, the writer of these words discovered her handwritten notes on one of Pliny's letters in one of her handbags.

The school to which she was sent, and to which she owed, first of all, her interest in history, would certainly deserve a separate monograph. Its founder was Ewa Strauch-Szlezyngerowa (vel Szlezyngerowa); the subsequent headmistress was Janina Świącicka. From 1930, the school's official name was 'Janina Świącicka's Private Gymnasium for Girls founded by Ewa Strauch-Szlezyngerowa'⁵ (this is the name written on Idess Bieżuńska's school-leaving certificate, dated 1934, which contains no other grade than 'excellent'). The school was not officially attached to the Jewish commune, but the Mosaic religion was one of the subjects. Latin was taught, of course, but Greek was not.

Two teachers in particular influenced the interests of the teenaged schoolgirl: her Polish teacher Henryk Wolpe (1899–1966) and her history teacher Stefan Rudniański (1887–1941). Especially the latter greatly contributed to the formation of her intellect and perhaps her entire personality. Born Szloma (Salomon) Rubinroth, he was associated with the Left from his teenage years; expelled from school for his participation in the school strike in 1905, he then became a member of the Polish Socialist Party — Left (PPS-Lewica), and possibly also of the Socialist Democratic Party of the Polish Kingdom and Lithuania (SDKPiL), and thus entered the revolutionary circles. A philosopher and a historian by education, he was a convinced Marxist — he translated Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* into Polish⁶ — and he passed on to his young protégée both an intellectual fascination with Marxism (which she would never deny she had) and leftist social

⁵ *Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Sprawiedliwości [The Official Journal of the Ministry of Justice]*, no. 21, 15 November 1930, p. 460.

⁶ Polish biographical dictionary online <<http://ipsb.nina.gov.pl/index.php/a/stefan-rudnianski>> and S. Dziamski, *Z dziejów myśli marksistowskiej w Polsce [From the History of Marxist Thought*

and political views. Henryk Wolpe, in turn, a graduate of the departments of Law and the Polish Studies of the Warsaw University, was additionally interested in classical literature (his doctoral dissertation, supervised by Józef Ujejski, focused on the role of Horace in Jan Kochanowski's poetry). To him she owed her excellent Polish and enormous linguistic culture (to the end of her life, her final argument in all debates concerning language correctness was: 'This is how Wolpe taught me'). He also contributed to the strengthening of her Marxist and Leftist views. He was one of the founder of the Communist League of Polish Youth, and later was an activist of the underground Communist Party of Poland. He spent the war years in the Soviet Union, where he was, among others, a lecturer in Polish Literature at the University of Moscow. After the war, from 1955 until his death, he was the deputy director of the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw.⁷

Idess Bieżuńska selected history as her university subject (quite against the desires of her father, who envisaged her as a medical doctor), and from the very beginning decided to specialise in the history of classical Antiquity. Generally speaking, the then-current system of university education (she studied in the period 1934–1938) did not involve attending a fixed curriculum; Bieżuńska was enrolled at the Faculty of the Humanities, which meant she was obliged to attend a specified number of hours of lectures, workshop classes and seminars to be selected from the entire Faculty's curriculum, whereas the particular field of the degree, to be confirmed by the diploma and the university degree, was determined by the seminar selected for the preparation of the Master's thesis and the passing of specific examinations. With regard to obligatory courses, she seems to have been a student of Classical Philology, because almost the entire number of her prescribed lecture and workshop class hours involved philological subjects. She attended lectures by Tadeusz Zieliński, Gustaw Przychocki and Aleksander Turyn, and she studied papyrology with Jerzy Mantuffel. From the first year onwards she was a diligent student of Greek; she passed the examination entitling her to attend the philological seminar (after having successfully attended Aleksander Turyn's 'Greek pro-seminar'), but ultimately she came to focus on ancient history, which she studied with two outstanding scholars, Tadeusz Wałek-Czernecki (1889–1949) and Zdzisław Zmigrzyder-Konopka (1897–1939).

Wałek-Czernecki was the first *ordinarius* of Ancient History at the University of Warsaw. He began his university education with philology and archeology in Cracow, which was usual at the time, but his subsequent studies, supervised by

in Poland], Poznań 1979, pp. 236–237 and 249–255, website: <<http://instytut-brzozowskiego.pl/?p=363> (accessed 20 March 2016).

⁷ *Biuletyn Polonistyczny [Polish Studies Bulletin]* no. 9/26/27 (1966), pp. 151–152, and K. Wyka, 'Henryk Wolpe (22 czerwca 1899 — 27 kwietnia 1966)', *Pamiętnik Literacki [The Literary Journal]* 57/4 (1966), pp. 709–712.

Edward Meyer in Berlin,⁸ concerned purely historical research. During Bieżuńska's period of study, his research interests focused on the Hellenistic world in the period of the Roman conquest; this, coupled with the papyrology classes conducted by Jerzy Manteuffel (1900–1954), contributed to the young historian's decision to focus on Egypt in the Ptolemaic era.

Yet it was Zdzisław Zmigryder–Konopka that she would always consider to have been her true mentor. He was at the time a young 'Privatdozent' at the University of Warsaw, where he conducted a course known as the 'pro-seminar' in order to retain the *venia legendi* to which he was entitled after having obtained the habilitation; in addition, he taught Latin at various secondary schools of Warsaw and lectured at the Free Polish University (Wszecznica Polska), sometimes travelling to its subdivision in Łódź. His interests concerned mostly the political system of the Roman Republic; as a disciple of Gustaw Przychocki and Tadeusz Zieliński, by education he was more of a philologist, but he had a firm interest in history and hence he collaborated closely with Tadeusz Wałek–Czernecki, considering himself, at least in part, the latter's disciple as well.⁹

During her studies, Bieżuńska developed research interests to which she would remain faithful all her life. The fundamental direction of her investigations had certainly been defined by the Marxist views of her teachers Rudniański and Wolpe — she focused on social history, with a special interest in the lower, exploited strata of the societies she researched. But perhaps it would be more appropriate to describe her interests in a different way: she wished to understand social mechanisms that lead to the exploitation and oppression of certain groups. For this reason the topic of her Master's thesis was the situation of women, which she researched on sources derived from Egyptian papyri. Just before the outbreak of the war, it was published in a slightly revised and expanded French language version.¹⁰

After graduation, Bieżuńska acquired the status of a postgraduate student; this involved solely the right to attend selected seminars and to use the University's library. In addition, she became Zmigryder–Konopka's voluntary assistant at the Free Polish University. Thus, she continued her university studies without the need to earn her livelihood (a situation facilitated by her father's financial circumstances), but she completed the year-long teaching practice required to obtain a teacher's diploma. The practice supervisor was her future husband, Marian Małowist (1909–1988), then already a doctor (his Ph.D. dissertation had been supervised by Marcei Handelsman), a medievalist, who taught at several secondary schools in Warsaw. It is beyond doubt that Bieżuńska's clearly Marxist methodological

⁸ W. Lengauer, 'Tadeusz Wałek–Czernecki', [in:] *Antichisti dell' Università di Varsavia nel Novecento*. A cura di Iza Bieżuńska–Małowist, Napoli 1992, pp. 121–139.

⁹ I. Bieżuńska–Małowist, 'Zdzisław Zmigryder–Konopka', [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 141–155.

¹⁰ *Études sur la condition juridique et sociale de la femme grecque en Égypte gréco-romaine*, Leopoli 1939. Cf. a review by P. Ciapessoni, *Athenaeum* 18 (1940), pp. 206–207.

approach was reinforced by her contacts with the young scholar, who was not only a convinced Marxist, but also an inspired, charismatic teacher and a man of a wide-ranging intellect and great personal charm. She would later relate that it was then that she discovered she enjoyed teaching and decided to choose this profession.

The war years are a chapter of her biography which she later attempted to close forever. In November 1940 the tenement house where the Biezuński family lived was incorporated into the enclosed Jewish district. Even before the ghetto was closed, a German officer came to their flat (she did not recognise his uniform at the time) and meticulously examined the books in her library. He selected a good pile, and then turned to their owner and said: 'Machen Sie sich keine Sorgen, sie gehen in die guten Hände'. After the war, she recognised him at a conference in East Germany. He was indeed her *Fachkollege* — Werner Hartke, a renowned scholar, member of the Academy of Sciences of the German Democratic Republic (Akademie der Wissenschaften der DDR) and an activist of the Socialist Unity Party (he became the member of the German Communist Party already in 1945). After the reunification of Germany, it turned out that he had also collaborated with Stasi, the security police.¹¹

She stayed in the ghetto until July 1942. Cut off from scholarly pursuits, the academic circles and the library resources, she tried to busy herself with normal activities amidst the nightmarish reality of ghetto life. She attempted to learn watchmaking; she also became a teacher at clandestine classes. She kept in touch with Marian Małowist, who was also involved in the clandestine education in the ghetto and cooperated with Emanuel Ringelblum's famous team. She worked as a private tutor (at the clandestine classes, she taught history and Greek).¹² She managed to leave the ghetto thanks to the help of her pre-war university colleagues and close friends, Aleksander Gieysztor and Witold Kula.¹³ She came to live at 7 Towiański Street in the Żoliborz district, renting a room in the apartment of the pre-war ministry counsellor Stanisław Sendorowski. She had very reliable 'Aryan' papers, secured through Gieysztor's contacts with the underground; she had a *Kennkarte*, identity card, bearing the name of Janina Truszczyńska, a professional embroideress. Years later, she recollected that the one requirement of clandestine life which she had found the most tiring was the need to carefully conceal that she was well-educated (even though after the war it turned out that her landlord, Mr Sendorowski, and his partner Mrs Regina Czerwińska had been very well aware that they sheltered an escapee from the ghetto in their house); in addition, she did not know how to embroider and throughout the remaining period of the Nazi occupation she could not lay her hands on any Greek or Latin texts.

¹¹ <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Werner_Hartke> (accessed 24 March 2016).

¹² Stebnicka, 'Iza Biezuńska-Małowist', p. 179.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 180.

She left Warsaw after the Warsaw Uprising, together with all of the city's surviving civilian population, and stayed in the village of Jeżów near Skierniewice. She returned to Warsaw in February 1945 (her first Warsaw address at that time was 29 Wileńska Street; then she lived in Żoliborz, again at Towiański Street). She found employment as a clerk in the Ministry of Education, at the Department of Science and Higher Education, even though already in the autumn of the same year she also began to teach at the university, encouraged to do so by Tadeusz Manteuffel, who re-organised the system of historical studies and restored the pre-war Institute of History to life. The Chair of Ancient History stood vacant; the philologist Jerzy Manteuffel was its temporary curator. The only member of the pre-war staff to be present was Father Franciszek Sokółowski, but, ill and weakened by his time in the concentration camp, he was unable to begin teaching; in any case, he soon received a grant from the French government and left Poland, most probably to remain in emigration for the rest of his life (although it has been reported that he returned to Poland just before his death and died at a monastery). Iza Biežuńska ceased to work as a clerk in 1947, when she was employed as senior assistant at the Institute of History of the Warsaw University. She had obtained her doctorate by then, and this meant for her a return to scholarship.

A French government grant, which she received for a few months in 1947, certainly facilitated her return to scholarly research after a six-year interval. It was then that she decided to focus on the issue of slavery in Antiquity. She once told the writer of these words that her interest in slavery evolved under the influence of her war experiences. She wanted to understand how it was possible for a person to disregard a fellow human being's humanity and treat him or her as a thing or, worse, as a dispensable item. She was particularly interested in the combination of this attitude to other people with elevated humanistic culture, characteristic of both the elites of the ancient societies and of the Germans, who had been capable of genocide.

Her doctoral dissertation appeared in print in 1949.¹⁴ From then on, she published her works under the double surname (she had married Marian Małowist on 11th November 1947).¹⁵ She had other clear interests in this period as well; she was fascinated by Cicero and Seneca, she was drawn to the topic of the decline of the Roman Republic. She later acknowledged that these interests arose from her sense of the total loss of the pre-war world and her perception of a radical change

¹⁴ I. Biežuńska–Małowist, *Z zagadnień niewolnictwa w okresie hellenistycznym* [*On the Issue of Slavery in the Hellenistic Period*], Wrocław 1949 (a summary in French on pp. 65–69).

¹⁵ A full bibliography of works by I. Biežuńska–Małowist: B. Bravo, J. Kolendo, W. Lengauer (eds.), *Świat antyczny. Stosunki społeczne, ideologia i polityka, religia. Studia ofiarowane Izie Biežuńskiej–Małowist w pięćdziesięciolecie pracy naukowej przez Jej uczniów* [*The Ancient World. Social Relations, Ideology and Politics, Religion. Studies Presented to Iza Biežuńska–Małowist by Her Disciples in the 50th Year of Her Scholarly Work*], Warszawa 1988, pp. 5–16, and *Przegląd Historyczny* 87 (1996), pp. 151–153.

— not only of the political system, but the entire system of social relationships; yet the influence of Zmigryder–Konopka’s pre-war seminars and his views on the evolution of the Roman political system may also be discerned. The fruit of these studies was her post-doctoral dissertation *Poglądy nobilitas okresu Nerona i ich podłoże gospodarczo–społeczne*¹⁶ (the habilitation colloquium took place in December 1951); later she gradually abandoned this area of research.

Afterwards, she was the head of the Chair of Ancient History at the Institute of History of the University of Warsaw, from 1952 as a deputy professor and from 1954 as *professor extraordinarius*. She held this position until her retirement in 1987; by then, the Chair had been transformed into a Department, and she was *professor ordinarius* from 1973.

She often recalled that her return to the issues of slavery and the research in papyrology was prompted mostly by her conversations with the outstanding French scholar Louis Robert, whom she to a certain extent regarded as a mentor she needed (Zmigryder–Konopka was dead by then, whereas Wałek–Czernecki, who had left Poland in September 1939, never returned from emigration; he died in 1949).

In 1959 she published the first study in this field after her doctorate.¹⁷ It was the text of a lecture she had given in Paris, where she was invited by Louis Robert; at the same time, it constituted a return to the area of her earlier research, initiated by her doctorate. Thus she entered a research field that had not been particularly popular or well-regarded in Western scholarship; she took up a set of issues which were often considered self-evident and sufficiently researched by the classical works of 19th-century scholarship.¹⁸ In addition, in those days this area of study was certainly considered to have a particularly strong ideological flavour; it was practically considered to be characteristic to a very specific political faction. Schematically perceived Marxism, vigorously promoted in Russian scholarship by the political authorities, launched the conception of the ‘slavery formation’, which accorded with Vladimir I. Lenin’s famous theory of social formations. An interest in slavery may therefore have been perceived as a declaration in favour of the theory of dialectic and historical materialism, and also as an expression of pro-Soviet or pro-Communist political sympathies.¹⁹

¹⁶ [*The Views of the Nobilitas in the Time of Nero and their Socio–Economic Foundation*], Warsaw 1952 (an extensive summary in French on pp. 111–136). Reviews: S.J. De Laet, *Latomus* 13 (1954), pp. 268–269; J.P.V.D. Balson, *Classical Review* 4 (1954), p. 175.

¹⁷ ‘Recherches sur l’esclavage dans l’Égypte romaine’, *Comptes Rendus de l’Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* 1959, pp. 203–209.

¹⁸ H. Wallon, *Histoire de l’esclavage dans l’Antiquité*, vol. I–III, Paris 1879 (2nd edition), and E. Meyer, *Die Sklaverei im Altertum. Vortrag gehalten in der Gehe–Stiftung zu Dresden am 15. Januar 1898*, Dresden 1898.

¹⁹ Cf. M.I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York 1980, and I. Biężuńska–Malowist, ‘Ancient Slavery Reconsidered’, *Review* 1 (1982), pp. 111–126.

Iza Biežuńska–Małowist approached her research with a conviction that the significance of slave labour and the place of slaves in ancient societies needed comprehensive source research rather than theoretical assumptions adopted *a priori* (she was always sceptical about all theoretical approaches). She was interested in the place of slavery in ancient economy and the scale to which slave labour had been used, considering the fact that an overwhelmingly greater part of production was in the hands of small-scale farmers and artisans working independently on their own small farms or in workshops. At the same time, she did not deny that slavery had been a widespread phenomenon, familiar also among the less prosperous free citizens. The other point of her interest was the sources and supply of slave workforce, bearing in mind that even the moderately affluent people would frequently own slaves.

She decided that her fundamental research would be based on document sources, which, in her opinion, were more indicative of actual social phenomena than the literary image or the statements of thinkers and creators of culture. However, she once said that while reading Seneca (whose works were the main basis for her post-doctoral dissertation), she had been struck and dismayed by the fact that although he was a decided advocate of a humanitarian treatment of slaves, he never considered the actual institution of slavery to be inhuman. He also clearly considered slaves to be a threat to their owners and he feared a slave rebellion; yet they were to him a natural and absolutely indispensable element of the world as he knew it.

Papyri from the Graeco–Roman Egypt attracted her the most as sources that brought information about authentic issues and problems of actual living people. Although she naturally analysed all documents — including, first and foremost, the set known as the Zeno archive — with equally great care, personal letters preserved in papyri were her favourites. As her research progressed, she increasingly powerfully formulated her two fundamental assumptions, which are equally noticeable in her work on slavery in Egypt in the Hellenistic and Roman eras²⁰ and in her brief synthesis of slavery in the entire ancient world,²¹ with which she concluded her explorations. First of all, she argued that production-related slavery was a chronologically and territorially limited phenomenon: it occurred mostly in the Roman state in the 1st century BC — 2nd century AD; additionally, Athens in the 4th century BC and some other urban centres of the Hellenistic era may be assumed to have had slavery-based economies, albeit to a limited extent. At the same time, she emphasised — more strongly than many other scholars — the extremely great importance of household slavery and the role of slaves as

²⁰ *L'esclavage dans l'Égypte gréco-romaine. Première partie: Période ptolémaïque*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1974; *L'esclavage dans l'Égypte gréco-romaine. Seconde partie: Période romaine*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk 1977.

²¹ *La schiavitù nel mondo antico*, Napoli 1989.

indispensable household servants, who nevertheless did not constitute a separate and self-aware social class. In connection with this, she devoted much attention to the relationships between the owners and the slaves, who often felt a strong attachment to their owners' households, while the position of the householder determined their own social standing. In private conversations on professional matters, she liked to jokingly compare the situation of ancient slaves she described with the position and behaviour of the pre-war household servants, with which she was well acquainted. Her second fundamental thesis concerned the origin of slaves: she considered intentional breeding as the chief source of slave workforce; slaves were often bred for the express purpose of selling their offspring.

At some point, she decided that her investigation of the issue of slavery was completed and that it was time to turn to other topics. She renewed her interest in the position of women in Antiquity, with the result that three years before her death she published a popular-science book on this subject.²² She did not intend to continue this thread in her research; nevertheless, she was interested in Gender Studies, which were already *en vogue* then, and she carefully followed the latest literature, including feminist studies, where she perceived many assumptions as correct. Herself, she was considering taking a closer look at legal cases in Athens in the 4th century BC; hence she began to read court speeches. She also began to sketch her memoirs, even though the perspective of having to write about the war years was a traumatic experience for her. But none of these plans came to fruition; she died suddenly at Nieborów on 27th July 1995. In her private papers she left a note, prepared far in advance, in which she asked for her obituary to state that she had been a Polish Jewess.

(translated by Klaudyna Michałowicz)

²² *Kobiety antyku: talenty, ambicje, namiętności* [*Women of the Antiquity. Talents, Ambitions, Passions*], Warszawa 1992.

