

The authors proved to have a wonderful determination because they encountered substantial obstacles along their way. Mrs. Malinová (Morgensternová) was reluctant to let herself be photographed. Also, the active support of the mayor was unrivaled and the changes it made possible in Loštice are exceptional. The town of Loštice founded an endowment fund, The Synagogue, and asked benevolent donors for financial contribution in favor of this cultural monument. The foundation announced publicly that when the synagogue would be repaired, it would host an exhibition entitled "The Jewish Community In Loštice."

The town of Loštice is in the Southern part of the district of Šumperk, and shares the border with the Olomouc region. There are 3000 residents there, a peaceful square, several commemorative plaques on the walls of houses where famous compatriots were born. The synagogue in Ztracená ulice (Lost street) is a remote memory of the Holocaust, awaiting our coming into knowledge. We, too, had compatriots in the Holocaust and all we know about them is that there were 59 people who had to leave. They were on the transport AAF. Out of these 59 people carried off, only three returned.

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NEIGHBOURS WHO DISAPPEARED

Last Fates of the Jewish Community in Loštice



František Kuba - teacher at Loštice Basic School
 Among plenty of offers arriving at our school this one was different. Three girls in the highest class responded to it quite spontaneously. It made me very happy, as if myself would not dare to take part.

- We worked on the project together. Our goal was to find out as much information as possible about the fate of the Jewish community in our town. When we were carrying out the survey many people did not want to respond.
- Most of all I thank you for the facts we were able to bring along history lessons, with experience of people who went through a concentration camp.
- I have listened to the Jewish history before but I have learned about people's fates while doing my work.
- When speaking to the people who were there it gave me shivers.

Veronika Náplavová, Nina Koudelková, Terezie Taťounová



The original appointments of the synagogue before its abolition by the Nazis.

The Jews had been living in Loštice since 1554. The cemetery, today partly overgrown with bushes, is among the oldest ones in the Czech Republic. "Originally there might have been about 800-1400 Jews here," says Miroslav Divný. "The oldest monuments are from the 17th century. There is a detached house standing just inside the gate, the original lease dated 1685, the oldest records in some graves. The synagogue destroyed by the Nazis had a similar fate after 1948. The Jewish community in Olomouc had to sell it because of a shortage of money. After 1968 the town of Loštice offered us to buy the synagogue. We did not have the resources to do it. After the government foundation, which attended to abolished synagogues, was established, Loštice was chosen as a town with Jewish memorials. There is a hope that the synagogue will be restored one day. The town of Loštice has established the Foundation "Synagogue" and raised voluntary donations for financial contributions to save this historic building. The Mayor of Loštice, Ing. Ladislav Škoda, adds: "The Federation of Jewish Communities of the Czech Republic writes to us that its president had decided to transfer the synagogue in Loštice to its property free of charge. They notified us that they will welcome using the synagogue as a cultural place for exhibitions, concerts and similar events. ... If we bring it to a successful conclusion, it will at least symbolically pay the debt that Loštice owes to its Jewish fellow citizens. Unfortunately we do not know if at least some relatives have remained in the world. That is the other side of our work and of the same importance. The citizens who had their home in Loštice have disappeared. How to revive their faith is long process? Only through an act of humanity that together we have to attempt."



In the publication of the History of Loštice published by the municipal authority in 2009 the report on the Morgensterns is missing. The Morgenstern children and their father Richard Morgenstern belong to the saved Egonstein family, but the children are alive and they are the only first-hand witnesses to the Loštice Holocaust.

Copy of the report of the Jewish community in Prague for Mrs. Alžběta Morgensternová (Morgensternová) and her children in Olomouc.
 We notify you that Mrs. Alžběta Morgensternová, b. 16.12.1865 and Mrs. Lucie Morgensternová, b. 10.11.1888, but their names are missing in the list of Jews from the town of Loštice 1941. Reported with deportation number 147-142 in Terezín. Mrs. Morgensternová was deported on 20th April 1942, under number 147-142 from Terezín to Warsaw. Mrs. Morgensternová was deported on 18th April 1942, under number 147-142 from Terezín to Oswiecim. Both of them did not come back from Oswiecim 1942 but had to leave in Auschwitz.
 Mr. Richard Morgenstern, b. 21.11.1891 from Olomouc, was deported to Loštice, was arrested on the 15th April 1941 in Prague at the end of 1944. He was deported to Terezín under number 147-142 from Terezín 1941, after the end of the war he came back. From the October 1941 he had to wear a Jewish badge.
 Mr. Richard Morgenstern, b. 21.11.1891, arrested in Loštice, was in Terezín 1941. Reported with deportation number 147-142 from Terezín 1941, after the end of the war he came back.
 Mr. Richard Morgenstern, b. 21.11.1891, arrested in Loštice, was in Terezín 1941. Reported with deportation number 147-142 from Terezín 1941, after the end of the war he came back.

"... Nobody wanted to be present so as not to be taken by mistake as well. One young Jewish woman asked me some time before to take a step to her boyfriend in Olomouc. He was a child and I did not get entangled much with the Jewish. I knew that nothing else was awaiting them. I was speaking to his teacher before the deportation transport. She was the only one together with her mother and her husband who returned from the concentration camp. She never wanted to speak about what she had experienced. When she happened to speak to me, she always told me: 'Anna, you don't want to know it.'"
 ... Anna Fiedorová

Alžběta Morgensternová was the eldest daughter of Morgenstern, a teacher. He married a Christian woman from Litovel and then they had one daughter and three boys.
... When the Germans arrived and father's family were taken into the deportation transports, we moved to Víceň. There they burned our house to ashes around Easter of 1943. They took out my two-month brother wearing only a child's shirt from the burning house. I know who did this...
... We went to Loštice where they gave us only one room for seven people. There we remained till the autumn of 1944. One morning three men arrived and took away our father and five of us children separated from our mother as well. 'It will be better for them there' they told our mother who was speechless. I know that one of the men was from Zádovice. He was sitting in a car as a driver. In Prague they separated us from our father and we probably went through some orphans' homes. Suddenly we found ourselves in the deportation transport. I had Pavel, who was slightly over one year, in my arms. Mary was leading our three-year-old brother, after him the others were following. They brought us to Terezín and snatched Pavel from my grip and separated us. I remained with Marie in a Kindertransport. ... Then I had a girlfriend of my age called Běla there. She went mad as she was forced to observe her father's execution.
The end of Terezín was, for me and my sister, the most mysterious of all. It was 5 May and tanks were driving below the windows. The German women took to their heels and left us without food for two days. Mary and I escaped ... Our father, who was coming back from Germany then, found us. I still think it was a miracle. ... We reached Roudnice with a fever ... typhoid ... We arrived in Loštice in July. Our father started searching for our brothers. Three months later he found Petr in Česká Kamenice, then Jarek who was staying with some people in Olomouc. We did not see the youngest - Pavel - until 1947. That year our father also asked to change our surname. The Morgensterns, who had suffered so much, became the Malinas and they moved to Mohelnice.



The map of Loštice from 1727. Emperor Charles VI ordered in the so-called reconstruction register of 1728 to move the Jewish dwelling houses to specific appointed areas. As the new houses were too expensive and the suggestion to build a new parish church somewhere else was rejected, the municipal nobility managed to exchange houses. The Jews exchanged the houses around the church for similar Christian ones of the opposite side of the town. On the map the exchange of the Christian and Jewish houses is marked.

Jews were settled in Loštice since 1554. A synopsis of their life and its impact on the city was published by the municipal office (Loštice, the City and Its Residents, 1999). The oldest Jewish monuments are listed in a chapter written by the architect J. Klenovský. The cemetery, now covered with shrubs, belongs to the most ancient ones in Czech Republic.



“There must have been around 300 – 400 graves,” Miloš Dobrý says. “The oldest monuments come from the seventeenth century. There is a house standing now where the entrance used to be, the morgue had been torn down, and there are fruit trees almost touching some of the graves. At the beginning of the nineties, the Jewish community intended to build a fence around the cemetery, but the Heritage Board in Olomouc did not allow it.”

There was another Jewish cemetery intended to be built in Loštice, situated on a lot designated for the purpose in Žadlovická street. This intention, however, was called off on the onset of the Second World War. Instead of a graveyard, the lot became an orchard.



Questions:

- Is there a synagogue in Loštice today?
- Why did the Morgenstern family change their name after the war?
- What important public buildings can you identify on the historical map of Loštice?
- What were the circumstances under which this map was made?
- Why do we sometimes encounter a reluctance to discuss the holocaust in the Czech society?

Testimonies of the Witnesses

The Holocaust that took place in the Olomouc region was just a fragment of the larger design to annihilate the entire Jewish population in Europe. “We had almost 4000 members,” said the secretary of the Jewish community in Olomouc, Miloš Dobrý, a former camp detainee. “After the war, about 350 people returned, among them emigrants, soldiers and individuals who were in hiding. As for myself, I can say that I survived thanks to coincidence. My own contribution was hardly that which, in a camp, would be called a success. Success never held for longer than a week or even just a single day.”

No statistics can ever express the extent of harm inflicted on the disappeared families, their nearest relatives and acquaintances. What do we know about them? Does anyone remember that they waited for their transports even in Loštice?

“Yes, I do remember,” says Ctibor Lolek (80), who was forced to move his Social press (Společenská tiskárna) from Zábřeh to Loštice. “I saw a group of people with bags and suitcases. They walked on foot to the Moravičanská train station. I recognized three or four faces but I do not remember whether the transport was accompanied by armed forces. I reckon that there were about 50 people forced to board the train.”

Anna Pazderová, born Doubravská (75), commuted from Loštice to Litovel during the war to do her apprenticeship at a hair dresser’s. This is what she told us about the transport: “No one wanted to be there and be snatched away mistakenly. A young Jewish woman asked me some time before that to carry her ring to her beloved in Ostrava. He was a rabbi but I didn’t want to become too strongly embroiled with the Jews. I knew nothing good was awaiting them. Before the transport, I spoke with Mrs. Fischer who alone with her mother and her mother’s husband returned from the concentration camp. She never wanted to talk about what she went through. And when she accidentally broached the subject she always told me: „Anička, you would not want to know.”

There were 59 Jewish citizens from Loštice and some from Litovel on the transport on June 22, 1942. “It was the transport AAF,” explains Mr. Dobrý. “It departed from Olomouc in the direction of Terezín four days later. Out of the 909 people from the Šumperk and Přerov areas who were deported in this day, 865 died. Only Gertruda Eckstein (born 1914) returned to Loštice with her mother Olga and her father Vítězslav.”

Beside the Ecksteins, who made a specific local cheese, the syreček, and traded in eggs in the building of the present post office, and later in house no. XIX, there were many more who were deported to the concentration camps.



Plán Loštice z r. 1727
Císař Karel VI. přikázal tzv. translokačním reskriptem z roku 1726 přeložení židovských obydlí do zvláštních separovaných čtvrtí. Protože novostavby přišly draho a návrh postavit nový farní kostel na jiném místě byl zamítnut, došlo k vrchnost výměnu domů. Domy kolem kostela si Židé vyměnili za podobné, křesťanské na opačném konci města. Na plánu je vyznačena výměna křesťanských a židovských domů.

The Story of Alžběta Morgensternová

“When I worked as an insurance agent, I visited people in their flats and wrote contracts. One must be watchful under such circumstances. Several times, I saw that people showed off things taken from the Jews. I thought that they might have been asked to keep them in custody out of acquaintance. But how could they have appropriated them when none of the local Jews returned?”

Alžběta Morgensternová was the oldest daughter of the teacher Morgenstern. He married a Christian woman from Litovel and they had two daughters and three sons.

“We lived in Horní Studénky. Dad had the education but he never taught. When the Germans came and part of the family was driven into a transport, we moved to Vlčice. There, our house was set on fire in 1943 around Easter. My brother was carried out in no more than a shirt. I know who did it but do not want to do anything about it. The person lives in Germany and suffers from some disease. It was harder to take when I came to Vlčice to show to my



brother where he was born. A woman guessed that I was Morgensternová, and showed us in. We were there talking about the fire when, suddenly, a male voice rose behind me telling her: “Why do you care to tell her? Don’t you see it’s the Jewess!”

The parents of Alžběta Morgensternová’s father lived in Loštice. “Grandmother was a midwife after the Second World War. They had a house right next to the synagogue. Over there, upon the little hill, was a Jewish school, where my father used to go. For me, it was more complicated. The first year, I walked from Vlčice to Loštice, to headmaster Pokorný. He was so kind that he carried books home to us so that we wouldn’t fall behind. But after the fire, we couldn’t stay in Vlčice any longer. We went to Loštice where they gave us one single room for seven people. We stayed there until Autumn 1944. On a morning one day, three men came and took father away, and with him us, the five children, away from our mother. They told mom: “They’ll be better off this way.” I know that one of them was from Žadlovice. He was sitting in the car as a driver.

In Prague, they tore us away from mom and discussed what to do with us because we were registered under Olomouc. And so they moved us ceaselessly between orphanages. This was against the Nurmberg treaty since children younger than ten years old were not allowed to be left parentless. Suddenly, we found ourselves on a transport. I held Pavel, not much older than a year, in my arms, Marie accompanied our three-year-old brother and the others followed. They took us to Terezín, where they separated us. I remained with Marie in the Kinderhaus. A room there accommodated thirty to forty children, triple bunk-beds stood along every wall. They fed us something between hulled grain and peas and it was richly salted. One serving barely sufficed to survive. In the morning, a cup of black coffee, sometimes milk, bread, sometimes jam. I weighed twenty one kilograms.

Miss Hela was our governess, she came from Prague, in the Kinderhaus. She taught us to count, read texts with us and insisted that we learn to write at least the basics. Once they brought us out of the house and shot her right in front of us. Then I had a friend, Běla, who was of my age. She became insane because she was forced to watch the execution of her father.

But I also had good times there. One of these was personified by a doctor from Bouzov, a Jew, who knew my father. He brought him news of where we went and he always told me that my brothers are alive.

By that time, the end of Terezín was approaching; for me and my sister it was the strangest of all. It was May 5 and tanks passed beneath the windows. The German women ran away and left us without food for two days. Marie and I ran away, too. We opened the gate and wanted to go to Loštice. We went directly through the town of Terezín, walked through the park all the way to the street where Vlasov's soldiers threw down canned meat from their tanks. We didn't know what to do with them and so we picked up only cookies and sweets into our skirts. We slept through the night on a bench and nobody noticed us in the confusion. And so we did, for three whole days, whatever we wanted to. Then our father, who was on his way back from Germany, found us. I still believe that it was a miracle. He brought us back on the camp court where he procured a wheelcart and we started for home immediately, still at night. I remember that he threw about Terezín money in the air out of pure joy. When we came to Roudnice, we already had a high fever. Dad had to find the doctor who told him that we are probably sick with the typhoid fever. They brought us into a school and washed us in a small bath tub. The illness kept us bedridden for six weeks. At that time they hung three Germans in Roudnice and dad took us to watch.

We returned to Loštice no sooner than in July. By then, we traveled by train, on the roof, because there was no space inside the wagons. The train didn't move faster than a person walks. One lady there gave us a sewn doll. When we returned home with my sister, we didn't know where we were. We only found out later when we met our mommie. Meanwhile in Terezín, we were searched for by the Swedish and Swiss Red Cross.

Father now faced a new Calvary. He began to search for our siblings. I accompanied him on one of his journeys to Prague. After a three-month's time he found Petr in Česká Kamenice, then Jarek who was in Olešnice. We did not find Pavel, the youngest, until 1947. That year, father also demanded the authorities to have our name changed. The Morgensterns who suffered so much became the Malinas and moved to Mohelnice. But even there, my daughter often heard her boyfriend being called upon by other teenagers saying: "Don't go out with that Jewess!"

Copy of the notice of the Jewish Community in Prague for Mrs. Alžběta Dostálová (born Morgensternová, later Malinová) in Mohelnice:

We notify that Mr. Julius Morgenstern, born December 16, 1865, and Mrs. Laura Morgenstern, born July 10, 1880, as of last both living in Brno □ Král. Pole, Purkyňova 86, have been deported on April 25, 1942 under the number An □ 302 from Terezín to Warsaw, Mrs. Morgensternová was deported on April 18, 1942, under the number AG □ 261 from Terezín to Ostrow. Neither returned. They had to wear the yellow star since October 1, 1941. Mr. Richard Morgenstern, born July 21, 1910, before deportation living in Loštice, was interned by the end of year 1944 in the labour camp Hagibor in Prague. On January 31, 1945, he was deported under the number AE □ 1955 to Terezín.

After the war he returned. He had to wear the yellow star since October 1, 1941.

His children: Alžběta, born Oct. 11, 1936, Jaroslav, born Apr. 25, 1940, Marie, born Aug. 1938, Pavel, born Aug 5, 1943, Petr, born Feb. 7, all as of last living in Loštice, were deported on March 7, 1945 deported on the transport no. AE - 7 □ 31/31/33/34/35 to Terezín. After the war, they all returned.

The Synagogue in Loštice

The synagogue that was destroyed by the Nazis during the war met the same end as the cemetery. Miloš Dobrý told us that the Jewish community in Olomouc was forced to sell it.

“The house was bought by Mr. and Mrs. Jílek, for 91 thousand crowns. In 1957 they sold the house to the Municipal committee in Loštice. Shortly thereafter, the house was rebuilt to accommodate Havelka’s museum and a People’s school of art. A professional company fortified the foundations,



the underground and the vaults but the task was not accomplished. The synagogue is now deteriorating. After 1989, the town of Loštice offered us to buy the synagogue back from the town. We did not have the means. I know that our building in Loštice was offered to both the Prague Jewish Community and the Federation of Jewish Communities. Then, a national foundation for the repair of decaying Jewish monuments was set up and Loštice have been designated as a town with Jewish monuments. Therefore we embrace the idea that the synagogue will be repaired one day. The houses that belonged to local Jews before the war have been plundered and occupied by the Germans as soon as their former owners disappeared in the transport. After 1945, they were received by the Czech authorities and sold them to people from the Jewish Community.”

In the meantime the Holocaust is commemorated by The Memorial of Adolf Kašpar where photographs and basic information about local Jewish citizens are provided. The synagogue is falling into decay and its repair will not be easy. The mayor of Loštice, Mr. Ladislav Škoda, gave us more information.

“It is not an easy task. From our point of view, the reconstruction will cost some CZK 14 million. The town alone could never put together such a large sum. This year, the situation is taking an interesting turn. At the beginning of May, the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic sent us a letter informing that its presidium is offering to take possession of the synagogue in Loštice into its property. We were asked to prepare the formal agreement. Our activities, such as cultural happenings, exhibitions, etc., in the synagogue are welcome. Moreover, according to this letter, the Federation will have the right to use funds from the newly constituted National Fund for the Victims of Holocaust where a given sum is deposited precisely for purposes such as ours. It follows from the letter that all is ready to begin this Autumn. If everything goes well, the synagogue could be under construction during the year 2001.

If we accomplish our project, we will, at least in a symbolical way, redeem the debt Loštice owes to its Jewish citizens. We are sorry that we do not know whether there are any relatives left in the whole world. This is the second, equally important part of our work. There were people who had their home in Loštice and who have disappeared. How can we restore it after so many years? Only through an act of humility that we must attempt together.”