

2013-09-09

## Ostrów 2013



Michael Negele was happy to combine a business trip to Warsaw with a chess event, the latter took place in Ostrów Wielkopolski on 1st of September (official promotion event of Paweł Dudziński's new book [Szachy wojenne 1939-1945 - War chess](#)). Here is his pictorial report.

[Updated 2013-09-25: YouTube videos, see page 4 of the report]

At about 9 o'clock on Saturday morning Tomasz Lissowski met me at the Warsaw airport, and we went to his home. After having attended to some duties at the weekly farmer's market (Here I learned quite a lot about the Italian origin of Polish vegetables, and also the photo of Tomasz at the "New Archive" was taken on this occasion.) we met Jerzy Moras (Penelopa Publishing House) and went to Łódź. There we strolled to the alleged chess places along the main street ulica Piotrkowska, in 1906 it was No. 111 – today the German Honorary Consulate is located there.

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Tomasz

Lissowski in front of the "New Archive"



Łódź,

Piotrkowska Street (No. 111, seat of the first Łódź chess club)



Tomasz Lissowski and Michael Negele in Łódź' first chess café. [Jerzy Moras,](#)

But also the café of the Grand Hotel was a playing venue and at the very beginning the today's Retro Café Czekolada in the side street Stanisława Moniuszki (at that time called Pasaz Meyera [Meyer's Passage]; originally the street was privately owned, being the only private street in Łódź. Its elegant 19th century neo-Renaissance villas were inhabited by the elite of that time.)

We enjoyed a coffee there and tried to inhale the left "molecules" of Salwe, Rotlewi and Rubinstein.

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Sculpture of the famous pianist Artur Rubinstein on Piotrkowska Street.



In the Café



Tomasz

Lissowski with Jerzy Moras



The House of Sendrowicz

(Piotrkowska Street No. 12)





The Gutenberg House (No. 86)



Here a page which describes quite well the atmosphere in "Woodge" (= pronunciation of Łódź) – the city was not destroyed in the war, but 40 years of socialism have left deep scars: [www.exploration-online.co.uk/...](http://www.exploration-online.co.uk/)

About the history:

[http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geschichte\\_der\\_Stadt...](http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geschichte_der_Stadt...) (only in German)

and

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/...>

Moreover a virtual tour of Łódź worth seeing: [The Piotrkowska Trail](#) by Piotr Machlański (PDF, ca. 14 MB).

Unfortunately there was no time left to see the impressive industrial buildings and other memorial places. The long tour to the Polish province (the former "Wartheland") even went via Łask [Wask], the alleged eponym of the Lasker clan. The fire station there is housed in the old synagogue, a somewhat macabre "reallocation".



Łask has turned into a fire station.

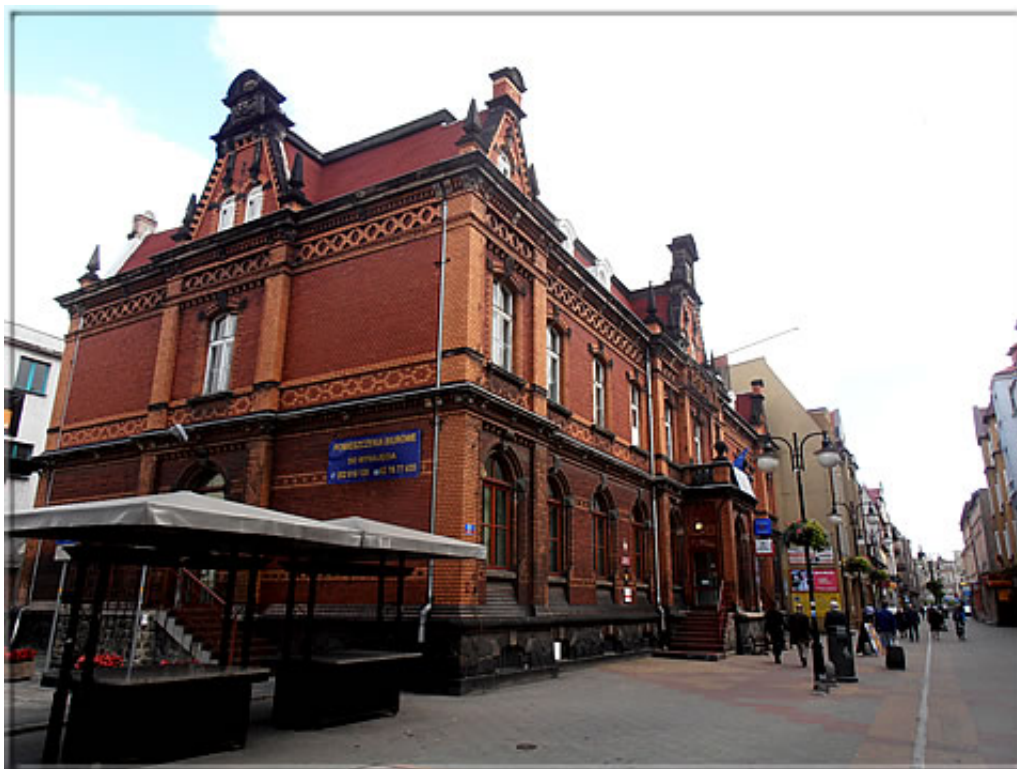
The old synagogue of





The plaque shows a strange name creation ("Lasker Jews"). As far as we know, Emanuel Lasker has never been in Łask.

Having arrived in Ostrów, our hosts wouldn't miss the chance of giving a short guided tour of the city, all reminded me of the towns in the Prussian province. Particularly the official buildings appear in the same style, see the post office or the schoolhouse where the tournament took place:







Old school, the tournament venue, see [pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...). According to Paweł Dudziński, Arthur Rhode, Heinrich von Hennig, Stefan Rowiński (you find his statue on the market place) and the former honorary president of the Polish Chess Federation gen. Kazimierz Głabisz have attended this school.



Ostrów city hall

For the evening meal we, the committee of the Polish chess historians and myself, were guests of Paweł Dudziński who lives directly at the market place (Rynek). There was also my nice room in the Hotel Polonia, generously provided by the city of Ostrów. We still talked shop for a long time, however I was really tired, moreover I still had to illustrate my lecture.



• The committee of chess historians, (from left) Andrzej Olszowski (Opole/Oppeln), Tomasz Lissowski, Henryk Konaszcuk (Zabrze/Hindenburg), Jerzy Moras, Paweł Dudziński and Wojciech Zawadzki (Wrocław/Breslau). In the background you can spot the Hotel Polonia (with the flower-boxes).

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The Dudziński family. Kinga

Dudzińska effectively supports the work of her husband.

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Tomasz and

Michael at the Stefan Rowiński memorial.

See also this [photograph](#) of the monument (without any people around).  
Rowiński was the first mayor of Ostrów in the Second Polish Republic

(1919-1920). The incorporated chess board indicates that he was also a chess player.



Inscription on the table

Next morning we met in the hotel for breakfast, afterwards we walked to the public library "im. Stefana Rowińskiego" (the magnificently restored synagogue is en route too), nowadays used as a conference center.







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Paweł Dudziński

signing his book

As to the lectures, see also Paweł's summary (in Polish) with additional photographs: Promocja książki "Szachy wojenne 1939-1945. War chess" ... - [PDF file](#) (1.5 MB).



In preparation for the meeting. The big Lasker monograph (on the table) is omnipresent.



From left: Andrzej Olszowski (Opole), Arleta Magnucka (vice president of the Wielkopolska Chess Federation) and Tomasz Lissowski.





Henryk Konaszczyk (above photo on the left) was the first speaker, he gave a lecture on Paul Frost aka Paul Mross. See also his ChessBase articles (in German) on Paul Mross and Bad Salzbrunn 1933:

- [Mróz oder Mross? Eine vergessene Gestalt des schlesischen Schachs](#)
- [Ein vergessenes Turnier – Bad Salzbrunn 1933.](#)



The second lecture by Andrzej Olszowski (above photo on the right) dealt with the situation of prisoners in prison camps supervised by the Deutsche Reich and the Soviet Union as well as with the chess activities in these camps.

I was surprised by the well attended auditorium. Naturally I was deeply grateful for Tomasz' successful simultaneous translation, so we even managed to inspire a little an audience unfamiliar with chess.

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A view of the audience.



Michael Negele with his lecture

You will find my presentation "CHESS HAS NO INFLUENCE ON HISTORY, BUT THERE ARE MANY HISTORICAL INFLUENCES ON CHESS" (Powerpoint sheets) linked in our [member section](#). (I should add that Michael's audience-grabbing talk, spiced up with interposed questions to the listeners, was most notably appreciated by the latter. - R.B., according to Tomasz Lissowski.)



Włodzimierz Grabowski, director of the library im. Stefana Rowińskiego, with the "Festschriften" bibliography *Obligated to Tradition ...* (by Ralf Binnewirtz and Hans-Jürgen Fresen). Michael Negele presented Paweł Dudziński as well as the public library with a copy of the book (signed by both authors).



Tomasz Lissowski gives his presentation. Fred van der Vliet (on the screen) couldn't attend the meeting for private reasons.

The fourth and last speaker was our friend Tomasz Lissowski. In his lecture he explored the question how Paweł Dudziński managed it to write such a fine book. He arrived at the conclusion that Paweł was extraordinarily industrious, having browsed through tons of books and hundreds of pages from old



newspapers. That way he collected an enormous number of hitherto unknown facts, games, photos and problems, so from the three classical sayings "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants." (Isaac Newton), "The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources." (Albert Einstein) and "It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer." (again Einstein), only the latter seems to be appropriate in Paweł's case.

Nevertheless Paweł (as he claims himself) has been inspired by works of other authors, too. Tomasz mentioned that a trio of chess authors – Fred van der Vliet, Prof. Tadeusz Wolsza and Prof. Andrzej Kwilecki, all absent in Ostrów – may have inspired Paweł more or less. He gave a short introduction of those authors and explained their contributions to the history of chess.

About the chess tournament I can only say that 10 minutes games are really hard to play, that Tomasz Lissowski definitely met his reputation, and that the Dudziński brothers turned out to be "too superior" to the only non-Polish participant.

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The attractive

tournament hall ...

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... with  
wonderful decorations at the ceiling



From left: Paweł  
Dudziński, Przemysław Dudek and Kamil Szadkowski (both Konin) ...





... as well as  
Tomasz Lissowski at the board.



FM Piotr  
Dudziński (on the left) playing against FM Dawid Janaszak



Michael vs

Paweł







Award

ceremony - the players with their certificates ("diplomas")

For the tournament results see this [PDF file](#), I add a photo of my memorial plaque (IV meeting of the committee of Polish chess historians):



In the end all were satisfied with the felicitous course of the day, and I was grateful to Tomasz and Paweł that they both had made my participation possible. The next day I could proudly hand on Paweł's great book to my Warsaw colleagues.

PS (25-09-2013): Paweł Dudziński has sent us the following links to the YouTube videos about the event:

I conclude by giving a few photographs of Ostrów sights:

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2010

The New Synagogue, fully restored in



Synagogue.

The New



The Co-Cathedral [pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...)

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The Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland (18<sup>th</sup> century). This half-timbered church is the oldest preserved building in the whole city. [pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/...)

Tomasz Lissowski has still contributed 4 photos taken in Łódź, 2006 when Toni Preziuso paid a visit to Poland:



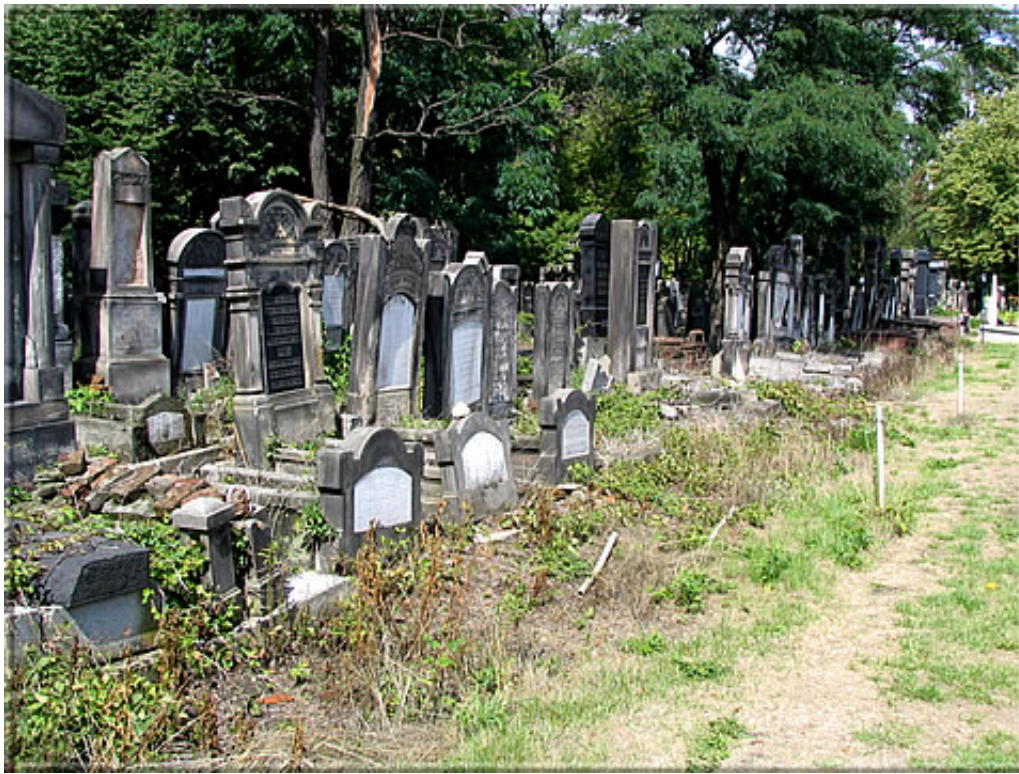


Ulica Moniuszki (Moniuszki street), before WWI called The Meyer's Passage. In the building behind Toni the first Łódź chess club was located (before 1910). Certainly the young Rubinstein was a daily visitor.



The Jewish Cemetery





Grave of Hirsz

(Henryk) Salwe. The name and dates are hardly readable.

**Georg Henryk Solomonowicz Salwe**

\* 24-10-1862 Warsaw

† 15-12-1920 Łódź