

Homeworker

Categories: Phenomena

Workers, almost only female inhabitants (there were several male homeworkers, especially invalids) who regularly got to do some parts of their work, usually once a week, at home. As a reward, they received their daily soup (without bonus) and piece-work pay. They were regarded as having a standard employment relationship. Among these women are the “anonymous heroines” of the ghetto. Apart from their paid occupation, they are responsible for the entire household, not only for their family members, but also for outsiders who live together in one house. In this way, they helped to save the last remnants of family life and, in many cases, also the lives of the sick and weak, threatened by extremely difficult circumstances. However, there is a distinction between the latter heroines of everyday life and those female “homeworkers” who were registered as having employment relationship, whereas the work was done by other – usually real – homeworkers for a reward consisting only of partial payment and a portion of soup.

Such distortion of the work done at home was a common practice. What is more, many middlemen were involved who took over the work from false homeworkers and transferred it, without having produced anything, to be carried out for a lower reward.

After the Stamping operation (vide Stemplowanie), relatives of many prominent inhabitants of the ghetto also applied for work at home, which, needless to say, belonged to the latter category of homeworkers.

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Resources

Encyclopedia, p. 92.

Project of the Łódź Ghetto Archivists, ed. Adam Sitarek and Ewa Wiatr, Łódź 2016, p. 90.

Tags

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