



SUN LAND

Jewish culture and memory in Šiauliai region

600



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The whole history is the human life

The history of the land of Šiauliai is the history of its people – the history of all people of the region. We follow in the footsteps of the lives of Lithuanians, Latvians, Germans, Russians, Jews in the 21st century as well. Some of them are more distinct, others have sunk in oblivion, and still others retained only their contours. Here are merchants offering beignets and herring, a Rabbi passing by, a boy running to the Talmud Torah school, filling all places with life and hubbub – that was a daily sight of our country's cities and towns. Eighty years ago, almost 40% of the population of cities and towns in Šiauliai land were our countrymen of the Jewish origin. Peculiar and special, sometimes mysterious and incomprehensible but still a community of all of us. The tragedy of the Holocaust has almost destroyed the large Jewish community of Lithuania, but as Horace said 2000 years ago, *Non omnis moriar* – not all of me will die. Not all of me will die because there are people who remember and there is material heritage that has survived. Finally, we all together with the small Jewish community of the land of Šiauliai are able to accept and get to know the extremely peculiar heritage of Jewish communities in the city of Šiauliai, towns of Radviliškis, Pakruojis, Joniškis, Akmenė, and Kelmė and their people's stories. Thus, we invite you to travel. We invite you to travel through the stories of people, which have also acquired a material form, through stories that can be touched with hands, seen with eyes, that can be tasted and heard with the heart.

In this publication, we present the legacy of Jewish communities in the city of Šiauliai, towns of Radviliškis, Pakruojis, Joniškis, Akmenė, and Kelmė. Famous people of Jewish descent, architectural and culinary heritage, sites and routes, an abundance of photographs, and an attractive design make this publication a special travel guide. Let us open first pages, the stories of the Jews of Šiauliai region and immerse ourselves in a special journey!



Chaim Frenkel – the Lithuanian Rothschild

Have you heard the most successful business story in Lithuania? Let us move 130 years into the past. Between 1887-1889, Chaim Frenkel born in the town of Ukmergė begins constructing brick buildings of the future factory by the dammed Kulpė stream. The factory that will quickly grow into one



of the largest leather and footwear factories in the Russian Empire. The factory that produced leather insoles for the entire army of the Russian Empire. Let us count in the current money. Chaim Frenkel started business by investing 200 thousand euros. After 25 years, the Chaim Frenkel's leather factory had an annual turnover of 560 million euros. At the beginning of business, Frenkel's leather workshop employed 10 people; after 25 years, 800! In 1914, the value of all the assets owned by Chaim Frenkel was about 1 billion euros.

Chaim Frenkel was not only a brilliant businessman but also a sociable man and a patron. He founded a fire brigade of Šiauliai, built a Talmud Torah school, a nursing home, a synagogue, and a Jewish hospital. Chaim Frenkel was a modern man. In 1908, he built a modern villa with water supply, central heating, electricity, and a telephone. In 1894, Frenkel's leather factory was equipped with telephones, a steam boiler and later, with electric motors. Chaim Frenkel raised the city of Šiauliai as a world-class industrial centre. World War I interrupted Chaim Frenkel's dizzying success but did not destroy his legend and memory. Come to the city of Šiauliai, stop at the Frenkel's sculpture and see the man-legend looking at his own factories. See the resident of Šiauliai, who found the key to success!

” DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The Yiddish language spoken by the majority of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe is one of the Germanic languages. The Yiddish language was formed on the basis of the medieval (the 10th-14th centuries) High German dialect. The language is written in Hebrew characters and contains 10%-15% of Hebrew and Aramaic words. Before the Holocaust, the Yiddish language was spoken by about 11 to 13 million Jews; currently, there are about 1,5 million Yiddish speakers.

1. Chaim Frenkel's villa and park

We invite you to visit the most beautiful building in the city of Šiauliai – Chaim Frenkel's villa. It is a house of amazing beauty, built in the Art Nouveau style in 1908. The composition of the building is peculiar because at first glance it looks like twin houses joined together. There is a partially surviving park in the inner part of the territory, the centre of which is decorated with an ornate fountain-pool. After World War I, the house, like the factory, was inherited by Chaim's son Jacob Frankel. In 1920, he gave part of the residential house to the Jewish gymnasium that operated until the war. After World War II, in 1944, the building that remained undamaged housed the Soviet Army's Military Hospital, which operated until August of 1993. Currently, the building houses the Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum.

In addition to the museum's numerous expositions, there is an exposition dedicated to the Frenkeliai family: "Jewish Heritage in Šiauliai: Merchants the Frenkeliai". The museum hosts a popular and well-attended educational program: "Secrets of Kosher Food". The participants of this workshop are introduced to the peculiarities of kosher food and the specificity of its preparation, are treated to traditional Jewish dishes: chicken broth with a matzah ball (Macakneidl), sweet beef stew with prunes (Floimentsimmes), confections from carrots (Imberlach), and chicken liver pate (Gehakteleber).

Vilniaus St. 74, Šiauliai
55.925489, 23.327959
+370 41 524389
ausrosmuziejus.lt



2. Frenkel's factory synagogue in Šiauliai

In 1907, Chaim Frenkel replaced a wooden synagogue near the factory with a two-storey brick synagogue. Men's prayer rooms were on the first floor of the building; while women's, on the second. In the basement, there was an apartment for the synagogue's servant who tidied, looked after the building, and invited Jews to worship. The synagogue was intended for the factory workers but during the festivities, Jews from the neighbouring areas, even from Šimšė area, congregated here. After nationalization in 1941, adapting the synagogue to the gym, the plan of the premises was changed, part of the windows were walled up, the aron kodesh was destroyed, and household premises were equipped on the basement floor. Only the exterior of the building remained almost unchanged. This is the only remaining synagogue in the city of Šiauliai with the forms typical of synagogue architecture.



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Vilniaus St. 68, Šiauliai
55.925104, 23.332622

3. The Talmud Torah elementary school and the house of prayer

The Talmud Torah School was opened in the city of Šiauliai in 1899 to provide Jewish children with knowledge of religious and primary education. The spacious two-storey brick school building was built with the funds of the big industrialist of Šiauliai city Chaim Frenkel. At school children were taught religious and secular subjects, the Hebrew language and script. The Talmud Torah school was maintained with an annual subsidy, donations, and income from the public bath as well as Ch. Frenkel's business. In 1902, the school employed 4 full-time teachers and had 116 pupils. After World War I, the name of the Talmud Torah school was changed to the Jewish School. Its director Rabbi Pinkus Hofenberger maintained the spirit of Judaism at school. The Talmud-Torah was a symbol of Jewish nationalism, and most of the teachers who worked here belonged to Zionist organizations.



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Stoties St. 11, Šiauliai
55.926856, 23.311147
+370 41 595850

4. The pharmacy of Nurok-Cemachas Volpė (currently, the “Valerijonas” pharmacy)

Can you imagine that the pharmacy has been operating in this place for as many as 150 years?! In 1870, the pharmacist Nurok obtained the permission to establish the third pharmacy in the city of Šiauliai, which he sold to the pharmacist Limberg as soon as he founded it. In 1900, it was already C.Volpė's pharmacy employing a pharmacist, a pharmacy manager, and three disciples. In 1934, after Cemachas' death, the pharmacy was owned and managed by his son Ilja Volpė. Ilja was a particularly intelligent and educated person: a Doctor of Natural Sciences, who had the qualifications of a chemist, pharmacist, bacteriologist, and food analyst and spoke Russian, German, Lithuanian, Yiddish, French, and Hebrew languages. In 1948, the former C. Volpė's pharmacy was replaced with the pharmacy No.123, which in 1992 was given the name “Valerijonas” that has survived to the present day. We invite you to visit Cemachas Volpė's pharmacy for a cup of fragrant tea, touch and experience the old stories of the city of Šiauliai.



Vilniaus St. 173, Šiauliai
55.930350, 23.316563

+370 41 432646
valerijonas.lt

5. The house of the physician Simon Volpert

This is an architectural monument of local significance. Since 1988, it has housed the Jewish community of Šiauliai region, which perceives this building as an inseparable symbol of its history and culture. The house was built between 1930 and 1934 to the physician of skin and STDs diseases Semion Volpert. On the second floor of this house, he founded a clinic where in 1931 one of the first X-ray machines in the Baltics appeared. Now, it is the house of the Šiauliai Jewish community. The community members actively communicate with each other, celebrate Jewish holidays, commemorate dates significant for the Jewish nation, implement cultural programs, cooperate with Šiauliai University, and provide and distribute social assistance.

P. Višinskio St. 24, Šiauliai
55.927846, 23.314317
+370 41 426796



6. The Venclauskiai house

The Venclauskiai house was built between 1925 and 1927 as a residential house designed by one of the most famous architects of interwar modernism Karolis Reisonas (1894-1981). The house belonged to the family of Stanislava (1874-1958) and Kazimieras (1880-1940) Venclauskiai, famous figures of the



Lithuanian national movement and Lithuanian state-building, prominent public and cultural figures, guardians to numerous abandoned children and orphans, and rescuers of Jews. The Venclauskiai lived in the house until the end of World War II. In the interwar period, the magnificent and spacious building was used not only for the needs of the Venclauskiai family, who lived on the first and basement floors of the building. The remaining two floors of the building were rented. The family of a merchant, the Danish consul Vlasas Masiulis lived on the second floor of the building for some time, and between 1929 and 1935, the Danish consulate operated there. The third attic floor was also rented to tenants, mostly of Jewish nationality. During World War II, the owners had to vacate part of the premises for the security structures of occupation regimes, located here. After the war, the house belonged to the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs for some time, and in the middle of the 6th decade, the house was assigned to the Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum.

Just as it is impossible to deny the importance of the Venclauskiai family in creating and strength-

ening the independent Lithuania, so their contribution to rescuing Jews during the Holocaust cannot go unnoticed. According to the data of the Yad Vashem Institute (Israel), 8 persons of the Jewish nationality were rescued with the efforts of Stanislava Venclauskienė and her daughters Gražbylė and Danutė. However, the number of those looked after by the Venclauskiai, who cherished the hope of survival, was much larger. Jews often slipped into the Venclauskiai house through the basement floor window just to wash themselves or to get a bite to eat, some of them were hidden here for a shorter or longer period of time. About 70 Jewish women from the Šiauliai ghetto found shelter and work in the sewing workshops established by Danutė Venclauskaitė on Varpo street. In order to ensure the operation of the workshops and jobs for the Jewish women, D. Venclauskaitė falsified the reports of the workshops, indicating that they operated really profitably, and covered all profit taxes from her family budget. As D. Venclauskaitė had a permission to enter the ghetto, she often went there significantly "fuller" and returned "slimmer", which meant that every time she was risking her life by carrying food hidden un-



der the clothes to the ghetto residents. In 1995, for courage and dedication in saving Jews during World War II, Stanislava Venclauskienė (after death) and her daughters Gražbylė and Danutė were given the names of the Righteous among the Nations. In 2000, all three (Stanislava and Danutė after death) were

awarded the state prize of the Republic of Lithuania – Life Saving Crosses.

Vytauto St. 89, Šiauliai
55.927719, 23.315667
+370 41 524391
ausrosmuziejus.lt

7. The former Jewish hospital in Šiauliai

In 1843, the Šiauliai Jewish community established a hospital in a wooden house and later, moved it to a newly built building at Pagyžių street No.1. The whole hospital complex consisted of a two-storey brick building with a volume of 3700 m² and two more wooden buildings housing a pharmacy, a chemical laboratory, a laundry, and premises for keeping inventory. All buildings are built on a plot of 5903 m². In 1915, Germans established a city hospital in a Jewish hospital. During the interwar period, the Jewish community decided not to use this hospital solely for the treatment of Jews and provided opportunities for Lithuanians to receive treatment in it by renting the building to the city municipality. Currently, the building houses the dental centre.

Vytauto St. 101, Šiauliai
55.928419, 23.313394



8. Milshtein's confectionery (currently, Presto coffee and tea house)

The house was built in 1910, at that time its address was the corner of Kalėjimo and Bažnyčios streets. Before the outbreak of World War I, a huge three-story building owned by Kopelis Zivas stood in this place. The first floor of this building housed a very large Karolis Savičius' trade company with



many departments, ranging from wines to books. In 1921, in the place of the ruins of the former Zivas' house, Stasys Pocius built a three-storey brick house with an attic and basements. Ten years later, the businessman Boleslavas Stankus acquired the house for 250 thousand litas. During the interwar period, the first floor of the building housed small shops, a hairdresser's salon, and a shop owned by jewellers Shapiro brothers. Milshtein's confectionery popular among Šiauliai residents was also located on this floor. The confectionery was famous in the city for its lift that served for taking dishes from the kitchen located in the basement to the top. There was a

Citizen's Club on the second floor of the building and a hotel on the third. The building suffered during World War II. During its reconstruction in the Soviet period, its volume was reduced. The building housed apartments and commercial premises. In 1992, the ownership right to the house was restored to B. Stankus' granddaughter. Since 2001, the city's residents and guests are invited to visit the Presto cafe and shop located on the first floor of the building.

Vilniaus St. 134, Šiauliai
55.930956, 23.316348
+370 615 10316

Kopel Simelowitz – Chagall of Šeduva

The chief curator of the museum "The Lost Shtetl" Milda Jakulytė-Vasil tells that Kopel Simelowitz (1900–1943) was born in Šeduva, in the then Kaunas province. His parents were ordinary townspeople: his mother traditionally took care of the house and family, his father tried to make both



ends meet – was the town's water carrier. During World War I, in 1915, the Jews of Kaunas province were forced by the Russian tsar to retreat into the depths of the empire. The young Kopel moved to Vitebsk, the birthplace of Marc Chagall, where in 1916–1919, he was a student of the painter Yehuda Pen. The latter was also a teacher of Chagall. After the end of World War I, Kopel Simelowitz returned to Šeduva. Upon his return, he found a job in a newly established Tarbut network elementary school (with Hebrew as the language of instruction). He mainly worked as an art teacher but often, in the absence of teachers, he taught gymnastics to pupils. He did not refuse to train the youth of Šeduva Makabi club either. In 1924, after the death of his mother, Kopel emigrated to Palestine where he practiced the craft of a photographer for some time. However, the Palestinian climate was unbearable for him. He was

offered a job in Europe by his uncle Shmuel Ber, who had an egg business in London and Shanghai. After a short training, Kopel started working as a finance manager of his uncle's subsidiary in Ghent, Belgium. In 1931, after the closure of this office, Kopel Simelowitz returned to the passion of his youth – art and in 1932–1937 studied at the Ghent Academy of Fine Arts. He organized his first exhibition in 1935 and opened an art studio in the town of Sint-Martens-Latem. Not many Kopel Simelowitz' works have survived, but in those we can see, it is easy to see the Chagallian style – it is no coincidence that they both went to the same school. In 1939, just before the outbreak of World War II, Kopel acquired Belgian citizenship. In 1943, he was arrested and sent to the Cazerne Dossin concentration camp; and from the latter, to Auschwitz, where he was killed.

9. Lencen's house-shop

Although there are no exact data, it is believed that this building was owned by Jews. During World War I, the current Vasario 16-osios street was called Stoties street. *Raudonasis Restoranas* (The Red Restaurant) still stands on it. The interior of the restaurant was characteristic to those times: large



wooden tables, chairs and benches, kerosene lamps for lighting. The restaurant's cuisine was famous for its particularly delicious dishes. Later, this building housed a shop of fabrics and a computer games room.

Vasario 16-osios St. 17,
Radviliškis

55.806463, 23.539214

10. The wool carding mill in Šeduva

The only knowledge of the first owner of the carding-spinning mill of Šeduva town is that he was a Jew. It is believed that it was namely him who brought wool carding and spinning machines from England more than a hundred years ago. The wool carding mill of the town of Šeduva is protected by the state



as a cultural property. The object consists of a spinning mill building and spinning technological equipment.

Panevėžio St. 19,
Šeduva,
Radviliškis dist.

55.755861,
23.760626

11. The Jewish cemetery in Šeduva

During the implementation of the project “The Lost Shtetl” in 2013-2014, the old Jewish cemetery of Šeduva town in Žvejų street, occupying the area of 1,3 hectares, was restored. Šeduva residents of Jewish descent were buried in this cemetery until World War II – about 1,3 thousand monuments or their parts were found in its territory. After the restoration of monumental stones from 800 graves, 400 were identified, the oldest of which dates back to 1812; the latest, to 1936. Unrecoverable and unrecognizable fragments of tombstones and their parts were placed in a sculptural composition in the shape of the Star of David – a lapidarium.

Žvejų St., Šeduva,
Radviliškis dist.
55.74779, 23.77158



12. The monument to Jews of Šeduva

On October 9, 2015, the monument dedicated to all Jews of Šeduva, created by the sculptor Romas Kvintas, was unveiled in the centre of the town of Šeduva. The sculpture of the young girl stands in front of a high stela with the inscription in three languages “To the Jews of Šeduva”. The town quickly accepted the girl's sculpture. The abstract number of local deaths acquires a human face.

Laisvės Sq., Šeduva, Radviliškis dist.



13. The Lost Shtetl – the Jewish Museum in Šeduva

The museum “The Lost Shtetl” is being built next to the renovated old Jewish cemetery of the town of Šeduva. Here, town life of once the largest Jewish diaspora in Europe will be restored. Based on the example of real life stories of Jews who lived in the town of Šeduva, the museum will present life and



traditions of a typical Lithuanian Jewish family, the significance of Litvaks' science, cultural, social, and political movements, their developed businesses and activities. Visitors of the museum will also get acquainted with the tragic part of the history of Lithuania and Šeduva town, when during World War II, the lives of the people of the shtetl were interrupted in three nearby places of the Holocaust. The grandparents of the former Israeli President Chaim Herzog and the grandmother of the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also come from Šeduva.



DID YOU KNOW THAT?

The future museum of Jews of Šeduva “The Lost Shtetl” has already been included in the prestigious list of European memorial sites, which is filled in by the Holocaust Memorial Information Centre in Berlin.

14. Places of Jewish massacres in the vicinities of Šeduva

There are three identified places in Pakuteniai and Liaudiškės forests where Jews were killed in the vicinities of Šeduva town. In August of 1941, the entire Jewish community of the town of Šeduva was killed – almost 700 people. During 2014-2015, after a closed competition, the environment of three



sites of the mass killing of Jews of Šeduva town was tidied up and new monuments of the sculptor Romas Kvintas were erected: *Šviesos žvaigždės buveinė* (The home of the Star of Light), *Durys* (The Door), and *Spindulys žvaigždė* (The Beam Star).

Coordinates of the sites of the massacres:
Pakuteniai vlg., Šeduva town eldership,
Radviliškis dist. (55.692267, 23.780883),

Liaudiškiai forest, Gimbogala forestry
(146 sq.m.), Baisogala eldership,
Radviliškis dist. (55.695617, 23.653833),

Liaudiškiai forest, Gimbogala forestry
(140 sq. m.), Baisogala eldership,
Radviliškis dist. (55.692100, 23.660750)

Mark Schreiber – the good doctor

All of us have heard about doctor Aiskauda, who was a real person – Zemach Shabad, a doctor and humanist from Vilnius city. An amazingly beautiful sculpture dedicated to him stands in the city of Vilnius. The town of Pakruojis also had its doctor Aiskauda, or the good doctor, as the locals called him. This was Mark Schreiber, who treated people and worked miracles that were ahead of his time. About 1935, Emilia was five years old when she went with her brother to the pasture to move goats. Her brother had taken a small axe to drive goats' stakes into the ground and was chopping grass with it. This way chopping, he accidentally chopped down Emilia's finger. The finger chopped with the axe was holding only on a small piece of skin. At first, Emilia's father wanted to cut off that skin, but her mother bound up the wounded finger, and the father brought Emilia to the physician Mark Schreiber in the town of Pakruojis. Emilia remembers how her father kept her sitting on his knees and the doctor sewed on her finger. When he finished the operation, the father asked how much he would have to pay, but the doctor said, "Such a little girl has suffered so badly – you don't have to pay anything". This is just one of many stories about the good doctor Mark Schreiber, whose life together with his family's life was interrupted in 1941 during the Holocaust tragedy. After 80 years, almost every inhabitant of the town of Pakruojis remembers the good doctor Mark. His residential house and the dispensary have survived, and the street on which he lived is named after him.



15. The synagogue of Pakruojis

When Jews began to settle in Pakruojis town in the 18th century, they made up about 70 percent of the local population. In 1801, a monumental wooden synagogue was erected here, which today is one of the most visited objects in the town of Pakruojis. The oldest wooden surviving synagogue in Lithuania (also called "shul") stands on the bank of the Kruoja river, in the depth of the plot, at a distance from the main street. The building faces Kranto street and the stream with its northern façade. The synagogue was an unheated summer building. An aron kodesh and a bima, which stood in the main room, were exceptionally ornate, carved from wood and painted. Unfortunately, both of these structures have not survived. In 1885, the synagogue was renovated: on the initiative of the local Jewish community, the interior of the building was repaint-

ed and pasted with paper wallpaper. The interior of the synagogue after the renovation can be seen in the photographs taken by the linguist Chackel Lemchen in 1938, during his visit to the Jewish house of prayer still in operation at that time. The negatives of Lemchen's photographs were found in the Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum. After World War II, when no Jewish community of Pakruojis was left, the purpose of the synagogue changed. For a certain time, it housed a cinema theatre; later, a gym and warehouses of the education department. In 2009, a large fire broke out in the building. The idea to resurrect the synagogue was initiated by the Pakruojis district municipality. Money for the restoration of the building was allocated from the International EEA Grants Fund and the Lithuanian state budget. In 2017, the Pakruojis Synagogue was renovated



and opened to the whole world. This is the only wooden synagogue of such splendour and size in Eastern Europe. Wonderfully recreated sky blue wallpapers, colourful beasts painted on the ceiling, and, even more, a mystical animal Leviathan mentioned in the Bible – a serpent eating its own tail. Raise your eyes to the ceiling so as not to miss the

train running towards the sky! The second floor of the synagogue houses an exposition of history and culture of Jewish communities of Pakruojis land.

Kranto St. 8, Pakruojis
55.979236, 23.849819
+370 675 27613

16. A roofed structure of the old fire station in Pakruojis

At the beginning of the 20th century, a fire brigade was formed in the town of Pakruojis. Because more fire-fighting equipment was procured, in 1928, a roofed structure for firefighters to keep the available inventory and premises for the guard were built. A hall was also equipped. At that time, the hall of the fire



fighters' building was also used for the townspeople's needs – dances, performances were held here because the members of other religious communities did not go to the parish house, while here Lithuanians, Jews and people of other nationalities could congregate. The guard of the fire station had a telephone. In the event of a fire, the guard used to blow a special copper trumpet. Before the war, a hand-operated siren was already installed. The layout of the fire station was changing over the years. The old fire station was demolished, only the roofed structure remained, and the hall was converted into a garage. The uniqueness of the building is illustrated by the fact that a replica of the Pakruojis fire station is exhibited in the Rumšiškės Folk Museum. The building is currently being renovated and the people of the town of Pakruojis will soon be able to boast of another restored object.

Laisvės St. 10, Pakruojis
55.977984, 23.850229

17. The shtetl in Pakruojis

The Jewish part of the town of Pakruojis (shtetl) was divided into the residential quarters of the poor and the rich. Poor Jews who were engaged in a wide range of activities related to trade and crafts lived in Darius ir Girėno street, along the entire bank of the river. Today, the street is unique



for its surviving Jewish heritage: it is narrow and most houses have little changed. The residential quarter of poor Jews ends at the former shtetl hospital and the first cemetery (the burial site of Jews until 1800). The second Jewish cemetery is located in Linksmučiai, a couple of kilometers from Pakruojis town. The famous physician Mark Shreiber, who was killed together with his family during the Holocaust, the founder of the Jewish Peoples Bank Rabbi Icak-Cvi Cheshnowski (Osher Chekovsky), and the auxiliary animal slaughterer Feivel Kremer lived on the street of poor residents of the shtetl. The pharmacy of Liekė

Burmonienė, a vodka monopoly, a mikvah (a ritual pool), a Jewish kosher butcher's shop, and a school also operated on the street.

The current Vytauto Didžiojo street is a space of the shtetl where markets took place, expensive shops were located, and rich Jews lived. The street used to be very noisy. The shtetl continued all the way to the Catholic Church. There were many specialized shops selling iron, clothing, and footwear. Both locally produced and imported goods could be purchased.

Kranto St., Darius ir Girėno St.,
Vytauto St., Pakruojis

” DID YOU KNOW THAT?

In 1921, the inhabitants of the town of Žeimelis voted to which state they should belong: to Lithuania or Latvia, and the decision that the town must belong to Lithuania was determined by the votes of Jews of Žeimelis town. Abraham Kook who worked as a Rabbi in the town of Žeimelis later became the Chief Rabbi of all Jerusalem. Abraham Kook's first wife is buried in the Jewish cemetery of Žeimelis town, where her tombstone has survived.

18. A synagogue and mikvah of Likuva

It is believed that Jews in the town of Linkuva began to settle as far back as the beginning of the 18th century. The description of the Linkuva parish, dated 1752, says that there were 29 Catholic and 27 Jewish yards in Linkuva that year. At the end of the 18th century, the number of Jews increased. A syn-



agogue and a mikvah (a ritual pool) were built in the town. In 1883, during the fire in Linkuva town, the synagogue burned down. In 1890, Jews of

Linkuva built a new synagogue in its place, which in 1959 was reconstructed. Year 5650 according to the Jewish calendar, perpetuated at the top of the west façade panel, has survived. The synagogue itself is built of bricks and plastered, rectangular in shape, and of continuous volume. The roof is two-sided. The building has survived to this day; however, the interior has completely decayed. Up to now, only a few unplastered elements have been left: corrugated cornices adorning segmental windows, a frieze, fragments of pilasters, and architraves of former openings. The mikvah of Linkuva town has survived to the present day; currently, it is a residential building.

Ugniagesių St. 2 (synagogue) and
Pašvitinio St. 5 (mikvah), Linkuva
56.085725, 23.970197 and 56.086112,
23.969061



Israel Salanter – a teacher of moral improvement from Žagarė

The famous Rabbi Israel Salanter Lipkin (1810-1883), the initiator of the religious movement Mussar, was born in the town of Žagarė. The Mussar movement sought to combine traditional, religious life, and modern *haskalah* ideas. He stated that progress, knowledge deepening, and learning from self-knowledge did not contradict or endanger faith and the laws of the Torah but helped to better understand the world and become conscious Jews. According to the Jewish Cultural Heritage Road Association, the Musar movement, though partially reformed, still has followers – mostly among Jews living in North America. According to the Israeli Salanter's teaching, only a strong personality that perceives its real desires and intentions and is able to discipline oneself will be able to influence others and solve social problems.



19. The complex of synagogues in Joniškis

In 1823, near the town square, the Jewish community of Joniškis town built a White Synagogue, the so-called summer synagogue. Its external shapes contain intertwined features of late Classicism and Romanticism styles. It is believed that it has arisen in the place of the former town hall. The exterior of the



synagogue does not contain any obvious symbols of Judaism except for small semi-circular arch windows paired in the pediments of the rear facades, reminding of the tablets of the Decalogue. There was a spacious men's hall in the east side of the building, and a porch with stairs to the women's gallery on the second floor in the west side. It is said that this synagogue was intended for solemn

occasions and its interior was decorated with painted musical instruments. In 2001-2011, with the funds of Joniškis district municipality and the Department of Cultural Heritage, the White Synagogue's emergency repair works were carried out.

About 1842, the brick-built Red Synagogue (the winter synagogue) arose. Its architecture is characterized by Neo-Gothic elements but unli-



ke the White Synagogue, it has more signs of Judaism. There is a protrusion of the aron kodesh (in Hebrew, a sacred chest) on the eastern wall of the building. Small windows grouped on the pediment of the western façade symbolize the tablets of the Decalogue, and the Star of David is highlighted in its centre. In the western part of the synagogue, there is a porch with stairs leading to the women's gallery on the second floor. There is a restored aron kodesh (storage place for the Torah scrolls) with the tablets of the Decalogue on its both sides in the hall of the synagogue. The walls of the hall are decorated with painted columns, and the ceiling is decorated with embossed ornaments and painted garlands of flowers.

The White and Red Synagogues are subdivisions of the Joniškis History and Culture Museum as well as the town's important representative objects and tourist attraction centres. Every year, they host many different events, concerts of classical and popular music, presentations of artists' works, celebrations and festivals.

Miesto Sq., 4A and 4B, Joniškis

56.240385, 23.616966

+370 426 52492

joniskiomuziejus.lt

20. The Shapochnikai family house



In the town of Joniškis, Jewish merchants had so-called colonial (imported) goods shops, where they traded not only food but also household goods. Small Jewish bakeries neighboured by tea-rooms or confectioner's shops, where fresh buns and bagels could be enjoyed, provided the residents of the town of Joniškis with bread and pastry products. According to archival data, from 1932 to 1937, in the building at the address Upytės St. 7, Icik Shapochnik was engaged in the sale of colonial goods. From 1938, this building also housed his daughter Chiena Shapochnikaitė's bakery and confectionery, an off-licence, and a pub. These shops and catering establishments were located on the first floor of the building, and the Jewish family lived on the second floor.

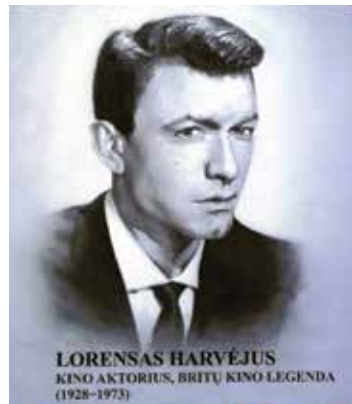
Upytės St. 7, Joniškis

56.240732, 23.617173

21. The portrait of the actor Laurence Harvey

The fresco perpetuates Laurence Harvey, a world-famous actor and a British film legend born in the town of Joniškis. His real name was Zvi (Hirsch) Mosheh Skikne. In 1934, he emigrated with his parents to the Republic of South Africa. During World War II, he served in the Artists' Brigade of the South African Army. After the war, he settled in England and studied at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. Started acting in films in 1948. Urged by the producer and agent, he chose a stage name – Lawrence Harvey. His first roles were in low-budget films. Harvey's success came in 1959, when he was nominated for a prestigious Oscar award for the best male performance in the film "Room at the Top". L. Harvey has won honorary film awards and received recognition from viewers and film critics. Performed in popular films with the brightest film stars Elizabeth Taylor, Julie Christie, and Jane Fonda.

Vilniaus St. 14A, Joniškis
56.238134, 23.612905



22. The complex of synagogues of Naujoji Žagarė

The complex of two brick white-plastered synagogues was built very close to the market square in the town of Naujoji Žagarė at the turn of the 19th century. The summer synagogue (P. Avižonio St. 7A) was larger and more ornate, while the smaller one (P. Avižonio St. 5A), although equipped with the heating system, was used for praying in the cold period of the year. During the Soviet period, both synagogues of the town of Naujoji Žagarė were rebuilt, their functions were also changed: a gym and craftsmen's workshops were equipped and still operate in the winter synagogue, while the summer synagogue houses the Žagarė Fire Protection Service.

P. Avižonio St. 5A and 7A,
Naujoji Žagarė,
Joniškis dist.
56.358087, 23.255231



Chackel Lemchen – the great Lithuanian linguist

The future scientist was born in the town of Papilė in 1904. Following the outbreak of World War I, the Lemchenai found themselves in Penza where Ch. Lemchen started attending a gymnasium, which he finished already in Lithuania in 1923. In the same year, he entered the Faculty of Humanities of Kaunas University. Studied in the same year with future Lithuanian linguists A. Salys and P. Skardžius.

Ch. Lemchen prepared the first anthology of Jewish literature in Lithuanian, containing works by Sholom

Aleichem and I. Perek, translated by Lemchen himself. In his free time, he was preparing a research paper on the influence of the Lithuanian language on the local Jewish language. This scientific study has not lost its significance so far because the researcher presented many Lithuanian and Jewish words written in his native town of Papilė and the surrounding areas of Samogitia in it. Teaching in the city of Šiauliai, he participated in an ethnographic expedition, during which he described and photographed the synagogues of the town of Pakruojis and other cities and towns. Now, this is a work of great scientific value because many of the buildings have not survived. After the war, Ch. Lemchen worked in publishing houses, edited dictionaries of various branches of science until the end of his life. The largest Ch. Lemchen's work is a 4-volume Russian-Lithuanian dictionary issued in 1982-1985 – as much as two and a half volumes of the dictionary were prepared by Ch. Lemchen himself. He edited the academic three-volume Grammar of the Lithuanian Language. In 1970, Ch. Lemchen's scientific work on the influence of the Lithuanian language on the local Jewish language was issued. Chackel Lemchen died in the city of Vilnius in 2001.



23. The monumental stone to mark the destroyed synagogues of Akmenė

The author of the monumental stone is the sculptor Antanas Adomaitis. A symbolic wall reminding of a former synagogue that burned down during the war and became a women's and children's ghet-



to in the summer of 1941. Two wooden buildings of one temple had become a place of detention and restriction, just like the men's ghetto in the Rosh's bakery in the then Žagarės street, currently, K. Kasakauskas' street.

Stoties St., Akmenė

56.243171, 22.74853

24. The archaeological complex of the synagogue of Vegeriai

The brick synagogue in Vegeriai village was built in 1890. In July of 1941, the synagogue was closed, and from 1945, it housed a bakery. There is no more data about the synagogue; probably, after the war, the synagogue was demolished, and the plot was used for agricultural activities. According to the plan dated 1866, before the construction of the synagogue, there was a Jewish school in this place. The village of Vegeriai has been known since as far as 1602. In 1738, there were 15 yards here, and in 1745, the town of Vegeriai is mentioned. In 1897, Vegeriai had a population of 617, a school, library, fire brigade; a state monopoly vodka shop and several more shops operated. The Russian Orthodox believers who lived in the village of Vegeriai had their own church; the Jews, a synagogue; and the Roman Catholics, St. George's Church that was built as far back as the 18th century. In 2017, archaeological excavations uncovered the remains of the synagogue, mikvah and school.

Vegeriai village, Akmenė dist.

56.399777, 22.951278

+370 425 55075

akmenesmuziejus.lt



25. Augustaičiai water mill

The mill stood in this place as early as the late 19th century. The current building was bricked in 1932. For a long time it was owned by Jews Ševelis Vilkas and Leiba Kushman, who were engaged in the trade in grains, linseeds, and flour. About 1938, after the death of Š. Vilkas, the mill went to his son who was shot by the Germans in Šiaudinė forest in the autumn of 1941. The mill that withstood the decades of hardships has retained its authentic equipment and can grind using water. Swedish rolls produced in 1927 and a groats machine are still operating in it.

Augustaičių St. 1, Papilė, Akmenė dist.

56.140197, 22.800606



” DID YOU KNOW THAT?

We still use Hebrew and Yiddish words that came via the Jewish community in our everyday speech. Here are some well-known words: bachuras [a guy], chaliava [an item for free], blatas [receiving products through acquaintances], chana [that is the end], chebra [a company, a group of friends], frajeris [an arrogant, proud guy], kipišas [a conflict], šacher-macher [trading operations], štiš [shoo].

İcchok Mer – a Lithuanian writer

The writer İcchok Mer (born on October 8th, 1934 in Kelmė town, died on March 14, 2014, in Tel Aviv), is one of the most famous Lithuanian prose writers and screenwriters. His father, Yehuda Mer, was a banker in the interwar Lithuania and worked as a cashier when the Soviets came. Mother Miriam was a housewife. İ. Mer lost his parents early: Yehuda and Miriam Mers were killed during the Holocaust



in the summer of 1941. İcchok and his sister Janina were taken by the maid Michalina Legantienė. For some time, the boy herded animals at the farmer Sankienė's farm, then, again at Legantienė's. His sister went into hiding at the Urbeliai. İcchok used to be accepted and quickly passed on to others until he found himself on the street. One evening, when İcchok, who no longer knew where to go, was sitting crying at the doorstep of some house, Juozas Dainauskas was passing by. After learning

that İcchok was a Jewish boy whom no one wanted to keep at their place and already was about to be given to the authorities, Juozas Dainauskas took İcchok to his house and gave him to the hands of his wife Bronislava Dainauskienė. İcchok was named Algirdas Dainauskas.

Mer's first books (*Geltonas lopas* [The yellow patch] (1960), *Lygiosios trunka akimirką* [Draws last a moment] (1963), *Žemė visada gyva* [The Earth is always alive] (1963), *Ant ko laikosi pasaulis* [What does the world hold on] (1965)) were received in Lithuania quite reservedly. In 1965, for the novel *Lygiosios trunka akimirką*, Mer was nominated for the Republican Prize, which he did not receive at that time. Mer wrote screenplays according to which films such as *Kai aš mažas buvau* [When I was little], film director Algirdas Araminas, 1968; *Birželis, vasaros pradžia* [June, the beginning of summer], film director Raimondas Vabalas, 1969; and *Maža išpažintis* [Little Confession], film director Algirdas Araminas, 1971, were produced.

In 1972, İ. Mer went to live in Israel. The writer maintained a close contact with Lithuania, constantly communicated with Lithuanian writers in exile. In 1989-1995, he was an unofficial representative of Lithuania in Israel. In 1995, was awarded the Cross of Commander of the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas; in 2010, the Lithuanian National Culture and Art Premium. İ. Mer gained increasingly more popularity and recognition abroad, received several premiums, his books were translated into many languages: Estonian, German, Yiddish, English, Russian, French, Portuguese, Italian, and etc. All the time, İ. Mer wrote in Lithuanian.

” DID YOU KNOW THAT?

Gefilte fish – stuffed fish (a pike or a carp) so popular in our country – is one of the Jewish cult dishes that has stood the tests of time and has remained almost unchanged to this day. Litvaks prepare stuffed fish as follows: they disembowel a carp or a pike, mix the fish fillet with spices, stuff it into the skin of the disembowelled fish or its strips, and cook in a pot together with carrots. The stuffed fish is cooled in the fish broth, which solidifies into a jelly, garnished with carrot slices, and served cold with horseradish. Cooking “Gefilte fish”, Jewish housewives of Vilnius city would add pieces of beetroot to give the broth a pink tint and a more interesting taste.

26. The monument to Icchok Mer in Kelmė

In 2019, commemorating the 5th anniversary of I. Mer's death, on the initiative of the Lithuanian Jewish Support Society, a memorial stone commemorating the famous writer was erected in front of Jonas Graičiūnas Gymnasium in the town of Kelmė. In the same year, the Kelmė district municipality gave Icchok Mer's name to the square where this memorial monument stands.

Raseinių St. 1, Kelmė
55.629823, 22.937416



27. Tytuvėnai – a Jewish resort

Pre-war Tytuvėnai was famous as a resort town. In summers, a number of Jews would come here for a holiday. They used to come from Kelmė, Šiauliai, Kaunas, and other cities. Quite many Jews stayed on Pušyno street. Here they would rent rooms or even entire houses. They liked to walk in the pine forest, swim in lake Gilius, orga-

nized various evening entertainments. At that time, Jews would not work. Lithuanians would serve them: sell food products, prepare recreational facilities, and etc. Jews would generously reward them for the provided services.

Pušyno street, Tytuvėnai, Kelmė dist.
55.594444, 23.202778

28. Celkienė's house-shop

There is a surviving building in Kražiai town, where the household goods shop owned by a Jew Celkienė operated until the beginning of the Holocaust. Currently, this building houses the shop and cafe "Kražita".

M. Valančiaus St. 42, Kražiai,
Kelmė dist.
55.604584, 22.689899





The monumental stone marking the gate of the ghetto in Šiauliai



The Jewish cemetery in Linkuva (Pagulianka)



The synagogue of Rozalimas

The memorial plaque to Victor David Brenner

Tilžės St. 149, Šiauliai

The monumental stone marking the gate of the ghetto in Šiauliai

Corner of Trakų and Ežero streets, Šiauliai

The Jewish cemetery in Radviliškis

Dariaus ir Girėno St., Radviliškis
55.82534, 23.51076

Goda Bardonienė's pharmacy

Panevėžio St. 3, Šeduva, Radviliškis dist.

The Maizeliai mill

Prof. S. Ušinsko St. 10, Pakruojis

The Maizeliai house

Vytauto Didžiojo St. 25, Pakruojis

The Jewish cemetery in Linkuva (Pagulianka)

Plentas village, Pakruojis dist.
56.10711, 23.98247

The synagogue of Rozalimas

S. Neries St. 2, Rozalimas, Pakruojis dist.
55.891028, 23.882489

The Jewish cemetery in Joniškis

Bariūnai vlg., Satkūnai eldership, Joniškis dist.
56.259851, 23.644567

The monument to Rabbi Israel Salanter in Žagare

Miesto Sq. 37, Žagare, Joniškis dist.



The memorial plaque to Victor David Brenner

Glossary

An aron kodesh – a niche housing the Torah scrolls on the eastern wall of the synagogue.

A mikvah – an artificial body of water for ritual purification; an essential institution of the traditional Jewish community.

A shtetl – a Jewish town in Eastern Europe.

A yeshiva – a traditional high-level Jewish school of religious studies for young people and adults

Kosher – ritual purity of things or food; principles of maintaining the ritual purity of things or food; kosher – meeting the requirements of kashrut.

Haskalah – a Jewish Enlightenment movement that sought a synthesis of traditional Jewish erudition and secular knowledge.

Mussar – Israel Salanter's conception of human spiritual development, which developed into a special trend of religiosity of Lithuanian Jews with characteristic literature, type of studies, and meditation practice.

Litvaks – Jews with roots in the historical lands of Lithuania.

The Talmud Torah school – a religious school attended after graduation from a cheder.

The Torah – the Five Books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).

The Talmud – a multi-volume collection of Jewish religious texts, a code of the rabbinic discourse of Late Antiquity on Jewish laws and customs, morality, history, and etc.

Zionism – a political movement that seeks to re-establish the state of Israel.

Eretz-Israel – the Land of Israel; the country or state.

A cheder – an elementary Jewish school teaching the Hebrew language and the basics of religion.

Yad Vashem – an Israeli institute founded in 1953. It operates in Jerusalem. Investigates the Holocaust, takes care of commemorating its victims.

A menorah – a seven-branched candelabra, a symbol of Israel.

A shochet – a ritual slaughterer.

A shul – a synagogue.

Useful information

Šiauliai Regional State Archive

Vilniaus St. 160, 76298 Šiauliai,
+370 41 524 505
archyvai.lt

The Jewish community of Šiauliai County

P. Višinskio St. 24, Šiauliai
+370 41 426 796

Restaurant "Žemaitis" Tasting of Jewish foods

Draugystės Ave. 25, Šiauliai
+370 686 21 030
restoranaszemaitis.lt

ŠIAULIAI CITY

1. Chaim Frenkel's villa and park
2. Frenkel's factory synagogue in Šiauliai
3. The Talmud Torah elementary school and the house of prayer
4. The pharmacy of Nurok-Cemachas Volpė (currently, the "Valerijonas" pharmacy)
5. The house of the physician Semion Volpert
6. The Vencauskiai house
7. The former Jewish hospital in Šiauliai
8. Milshtein's confectionery (currently, Presto coffee and tea house)

RADVILIŠKIS DISTRICT

9. Lencen's house-shop
10. The wool carding mill in Šeduva
11. The Jewish cemetery in Šeduva
12. The monument to Jews of Šeduva
13. The Lost Shtetl – the Jewish Museum in Šeduva
14. Places of Jewish massacres in the vicinities of Šeduva

PAKRUOJIS DISTRICT

15. The synagogue of Pakruojis
16. A roofed structure of the old fire station in Pakruojis
17. The shtetl in Pakruojis
18. A synagogue and mikvah of Likuva

JONIŠKIS DISTRICT

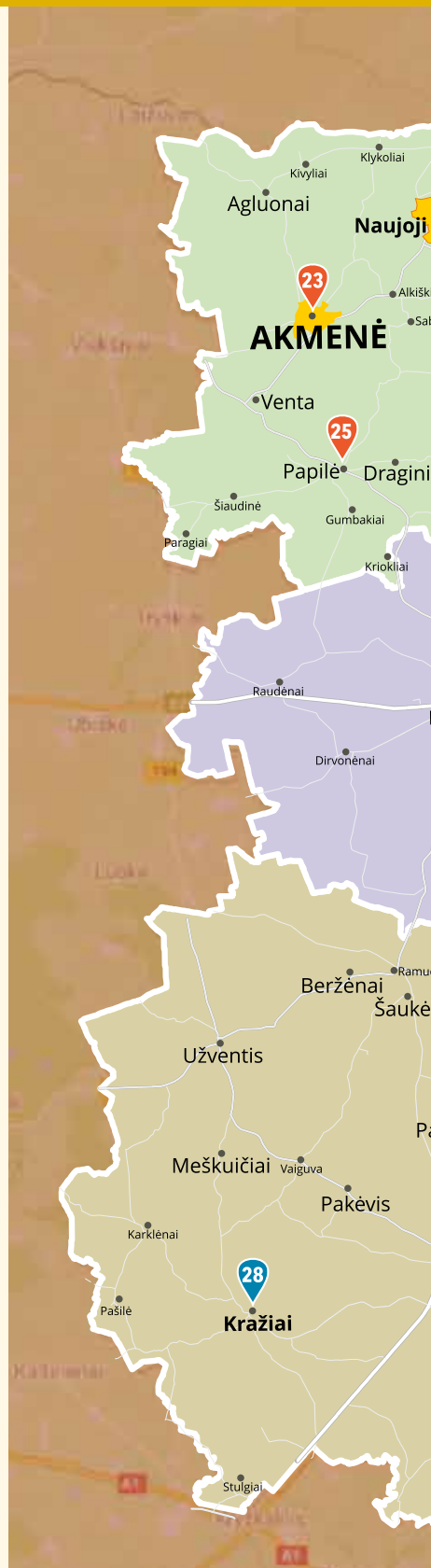
19. The complex of synagogues in Joniškis
20. The Shapochnikai family house
21. The portrait of the actor Laurence Harvey
22. The complex of synagogues of Naujoji Žagarė

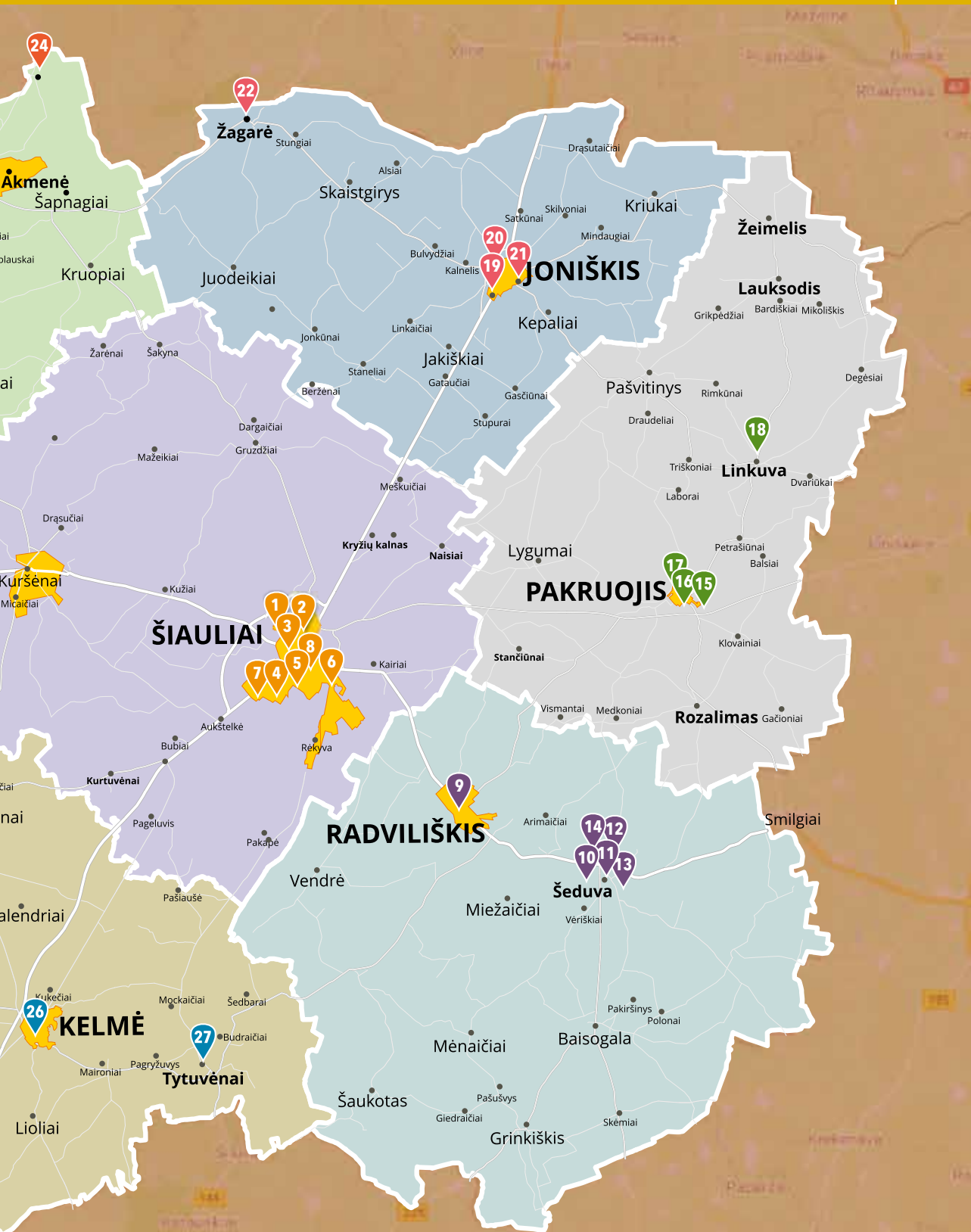
AKMENĖ DISTRICT

23. The monumental stone to mark the destroyed synagogues of Akmenė
24. The archaeological complex of the synagogue of Vegeriai
25. Augustaičiai water mill

KELMĖ DISTRICT

26. The monument to Icchok Mer in Kelmė
27. Tytuvėnai – a Jewish resort
28. Celkienė's house-shop





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visitsiauliai.lt



Šiauliai "Aušra" Museum
Vilniaus St. 74, Šiauliai
+370 41 433680ausros
muziejus.lt



Joniškis History and Culture Museum
Vilniaus St. 6, Joniškis
+370 426 52492, joniskiomuziejus.lt
pakruojis.rvb.lt



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