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The Jewish minority in the Second Polish Republic: the activities of the Board of the Jewish Community in Lvov during the years 1919-1924**

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SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: kwestia narodowa, Żydzi, II Rzeczypospolita Polska

Introduction

In the history of Polish-Jewish coexistence, we can indicate both good and bad moments. This does not change the fact that for centuries the Polish lands became home to thousands of Jews who were expelled from other European countries. It would be so on, were it not for the tragic World War II, which led to the death of millions of Poles and Jews¹. The Jewish people in Europe of this time was only shaping their sense of national identity (the Zionist movement), till this time Jewishness had been identified primarily on religion basis. In addition, one can point to the examples of quite a large group of Jews who assimilated with other nations (Germans, Poles, Russians, Hungarians or Czechs). The concept of this article was born during the query in the State Archives of Lvov Region (DALO). The found folder with documentation of activities of the Jewish Religious Community made me realize the need to „dust off the forgotten history” and indicate the political dimension of the activities of the Community.

The fundamental aim of this article is to analyze the data concerning the activities of the Jewish Religious Community in Lvov in the early years of the Second Polish

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¹ See: J. Honigsman, *Zagłada Żydów lwowskich (1941-1944)*, Warszawa 2007.

Republic. The indicated problems will allow showing the functioning of the Jewish minority during the time of reviving Polish state, both in socio-political conditions and organizational aspect. It is particularly important to show the attitude of Jewish minority towards Poland and the policy of the government. This analysis provides a unique opportunity to present the rebirth of the institutional activities of the national minority in the conditions of a multinational state. The article will also enable to restore the memory of the individual members and activities of the Jewish community in Lvov. The selected issue is a part of the research conducted on a wider scale, the aim of which is to enrich the knowledge and overcoming the deficit of research in political science on the concept of ethnic policy in the period 1939-1947 presented by the Polish Government in Exile. For fundamental research hypothesis I consider the statement that the activities of the Board of the Jewish Community were based on the principles of conciliation, i.e. on the one hand, the recognition of the sovereignty of the Polish authorities and, on the other hand, the implementation of cross-party interests of the Jewish environment. The indicated subject concerns the detailed problem in unusually rich in sources the issue of Jewish minority in the Second Polish Republic. For obvious reasons, it was difficult to identify all the phenomena. Focusing on the subject of research, I widen the signaled threads in footnotes or I show the sources that deepen the analyzed topic.

The Jewish minority in Lvov

Jewish settlement in Lvov dates back to the founding of the city, ie. 13th-14th century². In the literature you can find the data that two Jewish communities existed in the fourteenth century in Lvov³. So the analyzed thread is only a short period in the long history of the Jews of Lvov, however, it shows a significant aspect of this community.

During World War I, about 400 000 Jews left Lvov and Eastern Galicia⁴, fleeing before the upcoming fights. The remaining population suffered biological and material losses in hostilities. After the end of World War Lvov became a place of the Polish-Ukrainian fighting. The Jews tried to keep a neutral position, not wanting to take part in the conflict. For this reason, they formed police consisting of former soldiers of the

² See: A. Krachkovska, *Wspólnota żydowska Lwowa między XVI a XVIII w. – obszar osiedleń i status prawny*, (in:) *Żydzi w Lublinie – Żydzi we Lwowie. Miejsca – Pamięć – Współczesność*, J. Zętar, E. Żurek, S. J. Żurek (edit.), Lublin 2006, pp. 33-37.

³ E. Jones, *Żydzi Lwowa w okresie okupacji 1939-1945*, Łódź 1999, p. 9.

⁴ See: M. Bałaban, *Dzieje Żydów w Galicyi i w Rzeczypospolitej krakowskiej 1772-1868*, Lwów 1914.

Austrian army, who had to keep order and observance of this neutrality⁵. The authorities of proclaimed in November 1918 the West Ukrainian People's Republic initially treated the Jews kindly, among others, they issued a statement equating the Jews in all the citizenship rights. However, after a few months the Jewish militia was disbanded and the population itself became the object of looting and assaults⁶.

An independent Polish state was created after the military defeat of Russia and Germany in World War I and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire⁷. Its borders were established eventually after the winning the wars with the Ukrainians⁸ and Bolsheviks. The arrangements of the Treaty of Riga in 1921 and the approval of the Council of Ambassadors of the Entente were the final confirmation of that. Eastern Galicia, including Lvov, was incorporated into the reborn Polish Republic. Noteworthy is the fact that the Jewish community of Galicia (along with the Prussian partition, where the Jewish population was also marked by a high level of enlightenment) distinguished by modernity and enlightenment from the rest of the country⁹. Local Jews took the experience of freedom and cultural autonomy from the reign of Austro-Hungary. In other words, except the traditional Jew in a black capote and hat trimmed with fur, you could meet an elegant Jew with higher education and working in the liberal professions. At the same time the vast majority of Jews in the region engaged in trade¹⁰ (in 1921 74.1%), working¹¹ in such industries as sewing clothes, metalworking and print-

⁵ See: A. Rajs, *Jehudei Lwow be jemei haMilchama haPolanit-Ukrajnit, Pirkei Galicija*, Sefer Zikaron leDoktor Awraham Zilbersztein, pp. 303-331.

⁶ See: J. Grinboim, *Chamisim haSzanim haAcharonot szel Jahadut Polin*, (in:) *Encyklopedija szel Galujot*, Jerusalem 1973 vol. XII, pp. 78-81.

⁷ See: *Traktat zawarty między Głównymi Mocarstwami Sprzymierzonymi i Stowarzyszonymi z jednej strony i Polską z drugiej, podpisany w Wersalu dn. 28 VI 1919 r.*, „Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland,” 1920, No. 110, item 728, pp. 1936-1940.

⁸ Many works both scientific and popular were written on the causes, course and consequences of Polish-Ukrainian conflict, a number of studies, e.g. M. Kozłowski, *Zapomniana wojna: walki o Lwów i Galicję Wschodnią 1918-1919*, Bydgoszcz 1999; R. Galuba, *Niech nas rozsądzi miecz i krew... Konflikt polsko-ukraiński o Galicję Wschodnią w latach 1918-1919*, Poznań 2004; M. Kli-mecki, *Polsko-ukraińska wojna o Lwów i Wschodnią Galicję 1918-1919 r.: aspekty polityczne i woj-skowe*, Warszawa 1997.

⁹ Centralnyj Derżawnyj Istorycznyj Archiw Ukrainy u Lwowi (CDIA), *Jewriejska religijna hromada, m. Lwiv*, fond 701, opys 3, yed. khr. 1639, 2066.

¹⁰ J. Gliksmann, *Struktura zawodowa i społeczna ludności żydowskiej w Polsce*, Warszawa 1933, pp. 50-51. The publication appeared as a part of the series Biblioteka „Spraw Narodowościowych”, vol. 10.

¹¹ The economic successes of Jewish projects in the nineteenth century were not confirmed in the interwar period. New great fortunes did not appear, and the old ones experienced the crisis (e.g. regarding the Lodz textile industry). On the other hand, small businesses, despite the apparent increase in their numbers, had difficulties because of the economic crisis. In addition pauperization of the Jewish society caused that the growing Jewish groups were condemned to seek charity aid. R. Żebrowski, *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce: wybór tekstów źródłowych 1918-1939*, Warszawa 1993, p. 65.

ing¹². Due to the Act of 3 December 1920, the territory of the former Austrian partition was divided into four provinces: Krakow, Lvov, Stanisławów and Tarnopol. 28 counties belonged to the province of Lvov including the city of Lvov as a urban district¹³.

In order to indicate a specific number of Jews in Lvov we should use the data from the censuses of years 1921 and 1931¹⁴. The criteria used in them (in 1921 the question of nationality, and in 1931 of mother tongue) were vague and aroused objections already during the Second Republic¹⁵. Most of all respondents confused nationality with citizenship or they preferred state loyalty (by pointing to the Polish language). For the above reasons, the researchers of the Jewish issue usually rely on a religious structure, which was basically identical with the structure of nationalities in the case of Jews. Waclaw Wierzbieniec says: „Although this approach is a significant simplification and to some extent can distort the statistics, because the religious bond was not always identical to the national one, however, the imperfections do not cause significant deformation of the main conclusions (...). Religion is the main criterion that you can use, particularly with regard to the Jewish population”¹⁶. The province, and especially the city of Lvov with nearby districts was one of the largest Jewish communities in Poland at that time – smaller than in Warsaw and Lodz provinces as well as being on a similar level as Lublin and Bialystok ones. The highest level of concentration of the Jewish population occurred in Lvov and Lvov district. Now we can point out that just in the city between 57 387 and 99 595 Jews lived at that time, 76 854 in the culminating for this article 1921 year, which accounted for 35% of the population of the city¹⁷. Due to military activities migrations led to reduction in the number of Jews in

¹² E. Jones, *op.cit.*, p. 15.

¹³ W. Wierzbieniec, *Żydzi w województwie lwowskim w okresie międzywojennym*, Rzeszów 2003, pp. 21-22.

¹⁴ During the Second Polish Republic authorities conducted ethnic policy in the conditions of a multinational state. The contemporary situation forced dealing with the growing sense of separateness of individual ethnic minorities (mainly Ukrainians) and the desire to connect with their homeland (Germany). To deepen signaled phenomenon I refer to the publications on this phenomenon. See: A. Chojnowski, *Koncepcje polityki narodowościowej rządów polskich w latach 1921-1939*, Wrocław 1979; B. Koziański, *Koncepcje rozwiązania kwestii ukraińskiej w II Rzeczypospolitej*, Jastrzębie-Zdrój 2013.

¹⁵ In the census of 1921 there are 2 110 448 people of Jewish origin, and 2 732 571 people reported Hebrew or Yiddish as their mother tongue – 3 113 000 people pointed religion of Moses in 1931.

¹⁶ W. Wierzbieniec, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹⁷ Scientists' dispute about the number of Jews in Lvov clearly shows the statistical discrepancy in the period before the outbreak of World War II. According to estimates, the population of Lvov was about 105 000 people of Jewish origin. The data comes generally from censuses and statistical publications (eg. „Lwów w cyfrach”, 1939 No. 5, p. 1). For example, W. Kubijowicz estimates that 102 002 Jews lived in Lvov in 1939, E. Jones indicates the number 106 000, and J. Chonigsmann says that there were 110 000 ones. W. Wierzbieniec, *op. cit.*, p. 67; See: W. Kubijowicz, *Etniczni hrupy piwdennozachidnoji Ukrajiny (Hałyczyny) na 1.I. 1939. Nacionalna statystyka Hałyczyny*

most of the districts in Lvov province. Only in Lvov and the Rzeszów and Sambor districts there was an increase in the number of Jews in the years 1910-1921. The largest increase took place in Lvov, where in the indicated period 19 467 people of Jewish origin came (see Table 1). The fundamental reason for this was to find refuge from the ongoing fighting and the need to find a job or receive assistance from Jewish charities. Thus, in Lvov we had to do with an apparent increase in the percentage of Jews among the general population of the city of 7.2%. In subsequent years, the migration processes in the Lvov province had similar characteristics¹⁸, although it remained longer in conditions of peace. The key was the phenomenon of migration from rural areas and small towns to major economic centers – is concerned, above all, Lvov. Moreover, the increase of the Jewish population in Lvov was associated with the development and expansion of the city administrative boundaries¹⁹.

Table 1. Population of the Jewish faith in Lvov based on censuses of years 1910, 1921 and 1931

| District | Population of the Jewish faith | | 1921 | | | 1931 | | |
|--|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------|
| | | | the entire population | Population of the Jewish faith | | The entire population | Population of the Jewish faith | |
| | Absolute number | % | | Absolute number | % | | Absolute number | % |
| Lvov | 14 047 | 8,7 | 149 551 | 11 567 | 7,7 | 142 800 | 5087 | 3,6 |
| Lvov – city | 57 387 | 27,8 | 219 388 | 76 854 | 35,0 | 312 231 | 99 595 | 31,9 |
| The increase or decrease of the Jewish population in Lvov (in%) | | | | | | | | |
| District | Rate of changes in the years | | | | | | | |
| | 1910-1921 | | 1921-1931 | | | 1910-1931 | | |
| Lvov | -17,7% | | -56,0% | | | -63,8% | | |
| Lvov – city | 33,9% | | 29,6% | | | 73,5% | | |
| Lvov Province | -7,3% | | 9,3% | | | 1,4% | | |

Source: own study based on: W. Wierzbieniec, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50; K. Zamorski, *Informator statystyczny do dziejów społeczno-gospodarczych Galicji. Ludność Galicji w latach 1857-1910*, Kraków-Warszawa 1989, pp. 62-64.

ny, Wiesbaden 1983, p. 47; E. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 21; J. Chonigsman, *Katastrofa jewiejstwa Zapadnoj Ukrainy. Jewriej Wostocznoj Galicji, Zapadnoj Wołyni, Bukowiny i Zakarpattia w 1933-1943 gg.*, Lwow 1998, p. 325.

¹⁸ A. Bonusiak, *Lwów w latach 1918-1938. Ludność – przestrzeń – samorząd*, Rzeszów 2000, pp. 275-276.

¹⁹ See: „Statystyka Polski”, vol. XXVII, Warszawa 1927, pp. 3-89; W. Wierzbieniec, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-53. In 1921, the number of people of the Jewish faith per km² in Lvov amounted to 2401.4 – which was an absolute record among other cities and counties, *ibidem*.

The functioning of the Jewish Community in Lvov

The Management Board of the Community comprised of various members²⁰, which at that period was based on several main forms of administration²¹. First, the bureau, in which the government commissioner was a councilor of the city of Lvov, Dr. Jakub Diamand²² and his deputies were Dr. Rubin Sokal, Maurycy Rapoport and Dr. Józef Parnas (they were councilors too). The heads of five departments created the superi-

²⁰ From the perspective of the community the Decree of the Head of State was of crucial importance. It concerned the organization of Jewish communities. The validity of this decree was later extended (With minor changes) into the entire state. Moreover, this decree was an amendment to a regulation issued in 1916 by the German occupiers about the organization of the Jewish Religious Association and religious communities. The form of the decree proved it clearly, which was just publishing the changes in the above Regulation in „The Journal of Laws of the Polish State” (1919, No 14, item 175, pp. 252-255), and then notice the Minister of Justice about the correction of errors in it on 27/03/1919 – “The Journal of Laws of the Polish State”(1919, No. 30, item. 259, p. 422) and twice because of mistakes in the first edition, in the „Official Journal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs” of 08/04/1919 and 31/07/1919. For important for the rest of this article the elements of this Decree it is worth quoting Article 3: „The Jewish community must ensure its members the opportunity to fulfill their religious needs. The Competences of the community are therefore: (a) organizing and maintaining the rabbinate, (b) the establishment and maintenance of synagogues, prayer houses, ritual baths and cemeteries, (c) watching over the religious education of young people, (d) caring for kosher meat for the Jewish population, (e) management of municipal assets and foundations, to the municipality established and all equipment and plants belonging to the municipality. In addition, the religious community has the right, on a general basis, subject to the rights and obligations of the state and its organs of local government, to provide charity assistance to the poor Jews and establish charitable institutions for this purpose. (...)“ R. Żebrowski, *Dzieje Żydów w Polsce...*, p. 29; See: *Dekret Naczelnika Państwa o organizacji Towarzystwa Religijnego i gmin wyznaniowych żydowskich na terenie b. Królestwa Kongresowego* on. 7/02/1919, „Official Journal of the Ministry of Internal Affairs” 1919, No. 40, item. 541, pp. 7-12.

²¹ The report on the result of the activity of the Board of the Community was sent on 9 September 1924, and received at the office of the Lvov Province on 12 September 1924. The case was registered with the number L. 3893/1924. Derżawnyj Archiw Lwiwskoj Obłasti (DALO), *Otcziot o diejatielnosti prawnienija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny wo Lwowie za 1919-1924 g.g.*, fond 1, opys 14, yed. khr. 1448.

²² Diamand Jacob Isaac (1856 Lvov – 1935 Lvov) – „attorney; son of David D., attorney, a board member of the Progressive Synagogue in Lvov. He studied law and graduated in Vienna and in 1887 opened his own law firm in Lvov. He was a supporter of assimilation. A member of the Agudat Achim association and the board of the Progressive Synagogue (in the years 1898-1907 its chairman). He did a lot for its final polonization, including contributing to obtaining Polish preacher (cf. Gutman Samuel Wolf). Member of the municipal council Lvov. (since 1907), then of the board (deputy and head of the office of school issues). As a member of the School Board of the city of Lvov, he has contributed to the development of education and municipal order of teaching the Jewish religion in public schools. During the Russian occupation (1915), he served as a chairman of the board of the community (he was arrested three times), with a huge effort, sustained the life of community institutions. In 1915, he was deported by the Russians as a hostage to Kiev and then to Nizhny Novgorod. He was released in an exchange in 1916. On the way back again he was imprisoned for several months. Going via Sweden, he returned to Lvov in 1917. As an appointed manager he led the municipality (until 1924) and was a councilor and a member of the School Council of Lvov.“ R. Żebrowski, *Diamand Jakub Izaak*, (in:) *Polski Słownik Judaistyczny*, http://www.jhi.pl/psj/Diamand_Jakub_Izaak [21.05.2015].

ority: (1). Leon Wahl (religious department); (2). Dr. Adolf Menkes (school department); (3). Samuel Nebenzahl (charity department); (4). Dawid Maschler (department of finance); (5). Joseph Münz (organizational department). Members of the religious privy council were: Leon Appel, Karol Buber, Wiktor Chajes, Karol Eisenstein, Mojżesz Frostig, Maks Glaserman, Saul Grünberg, Jakub Herman, Ignacy Jäger, Pinkas Klüger, Dr. Aleksander Mayer, dr. Samuel Meisels, Maurycy Mund, Szymon Oranż, Dr. Herman Rabner, Dr. Michał Ringel, Adolf Rosner, Dawid Salamander, Dr. Dawid Schreiber, dir. Gabrjel Steigelfest and Ulam Jakób. The deputies were: Abraham Juda Alter, dr Eleazar Byk, Hersch Nagelberg, Herman Rubel and Jakub Schlechter²³. The management of the Israelite Hospital: Dr. Samuel Meisels (The Chairman of the Hospital Board and Director) and deputies: Dr. Jonasz Reinhold and Karol Stand. The members of the Hospital Board were: Kalman Atlas, Rachela Baruchinowa, Ignacy Bendel, Adolf Braunstein, Szymon Feller, Maks Finkelstein, inż. Ferd. Kassler, Szymon Hay, Marek Raps, Markus Rohatyn, Adolf Rosner, Józef Schönblum, Lazar Wechsler. Members of The Inspection of the Department of the Hospital were: Samuel Nebenzahl (chairman), Betty Parnesowa (deputy) and R. Berggrünowa, Józef Blauer, Rabin Dr. Samuel Guttman, Róża Kimmelmanowa, Dr. Jakób Münzer, Szymon Oranż, Leon Seelig, Maks Wiesenberg, Jakub Rochmis²⁴.

Preparing a summary of its activities the Board of the Community based on two premises. On the one hand, it was the desire to summarize several years of managing the community²⁵, and on the other hand, perceiving that period as the time „(...) immediately after the First World War and the creation of our State [emphasis – B.K.], is the time of Polish-Ukrainian fights, the time of Bolshevik war, the time of liquidation of ravages of war, time of inflation and caused by it the devaluation of currency. Our tenure falls on so highly abnormal time is, the time imprinted its mark on all private and public matters²⁶. The organization of the religious community consisted of five departments: religious, school, charity, financial and organizational. The analysis will be carried out in the framework of this administrative division²⁷.

Religious. Havoc in religious institutions in Lvov in 1919 is underlined in the activity of the first department. Due to the warfare, especially street fights, synagogues were burnt down or damaged – a significant part of the equipment of synagogues was destroyed or stolen. Moreover, most positions of rabbis and rabbinical assessors were vacant (the reason was mainly the death of the previous ones). “The board of the re-

²³ Karol Eisenstein, Mojżesz Frostig, Szymon Oranż, dr Michał Ringel, Dawid Salamander, dr Dawid Schreiber, Hersch Nagelberg, Markus Rohatyn, did not accept a mandate, or quit.

²⁴ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, pp. 1-2.

²⁵ CDIA, *Jewriejska religijna...*, yed. khr. 2224.

²⁶ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, p. 4.

²⁷ DALO, *Lwiwske Wojewodske Uprawlinnia*, fond 1, opys 1, yed. khr. 214.

ligious community, beginning their term in office, started immediately to remove the effects of the devastation. They completed the existing managements of synagogues, appointed the new ones, where it was necessary. They rebuilt either with the sole expenses of the community, or with prominent subsidies:

- 1) a large suburban synagogue,
- 2) Hasidic synagogues,
- 3) a small city synagogue,
- 4) suburban Beth Midrash,
- 5) the new cemetery synagogue,
- 6) the porters' synagogue,
- 7) melamdim's synagogue²⁸.

The next stages of religious activity was to organize accountancy and cash-books of synagogues, prayer houses and institutional reform – by creating departments for Religious Affairs (in Zniesień and Winniki) and the Department for strictly ritual matters in Lvov. Subsequently they filled vacant posts of rabbis and rabbinical assessors, established three new ritual circumcisers (mohel) and created the post of „Rosh-beth din”. The board also reactivated the ritual baths (mikvahs) – primarily they decided to build a new mikvah (Rzeźnicka Street), which corresponded to the latest hygienic and technical standards, while maintaining the principles of the tradition of the ritual. Another goal was to restore the Jewish cemetery on Pilichowska Street to the pre-war state. They arranged there a separate place for the Jewish heroes killed in World War I²⁹. At their own expense, they exhumed the Jewish victims buried in different places of the city and built a separate cemetery for them³⁰.

Education. Effects of the war were also evident in the Jewish education. It is primarily about teachers' vacancies and the destruction of the infrastructure. In this matter the Board of the Community tried not only to remove the existing shortcomings, but sought to the development of education. The taken measures included the following aspects: supplementing the teaching staff in the Abraham Kohn community school³¹,

²⁸ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, pp. 4-5.

²⁹ In the documents, the Board used the words „world war”, which is natural, due to years of described activity. In this article, I decided to adjust the recording to historical events.

³⁰ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, p. 5.

³¹ Abraham Kohn (1807 Załużany – 1848 Lvov) – „a progressive rabbi, father of Gotthilf K. He received rabbinical diploma (see: Semikhah) from Samuel Landau (1832) in Prague, and the certificate of a religion teacher from H. Homberg (1830). He was a rabbi in the town of Hohenems in the Austrian Tyrol (1833), where he introduced a number of changes in the spirit of the Judaism reform. In 1844 the progressives in Lvov managed to appoint him to the post of religious teacher and preacher in the Progressive Synagogue in Lvov, and later to a district rabbi. Kohn., being the spiritual leader of Lvov progressives, from the beginning was surrounded by hatred of the Orthodox and Hasidims. He devoted much attention to elementary school, for which he wrote several textbooks. He introduced the Polish language in it, though he was linked himself to the German cul-

implementing the *ibrith b'ibrith* method in teaching the Hebrew language, the reorganization of school into developing 7-class one and adaptation of the level of education to the best state schools in Lvov. Besides, they took over the Bardach school for the deaf. In Poland at that time, it was the only Jewish institution of this kind. Then it was incorporated on the basis of a separate branch to the Kohn school and the community took over the teachers. They also started a number of additional efforts, including creating a learning plan of the Jewish religion in public primary and secondary schools. They managed to cause that the Jewish religion was taught in all the schools of Lvov and outside urban areas. The community also decided to prepare and publish a schoolbook for the Hebrew language. Additional efforts were made to complement the library collection for the Judaist knowledge. However, they indicated objective difficulties in the functioning of this institution in winter, i.e. abnormal high prices and budgetary difficulties (e.g. in terms of the cost of fuel, lights, etc.). In the indicated period, the library consisted of 4 550 volumes, mainly due to the incorporation of school textbooks, 2 500 of which poor Jewish youth could lend free³².

Charity. the currency turmoil affected the department in a special way. The pre-war philanthropic foundations that supported the poor (in a permanent or long-term) as a result of the devaluation of money became a dead asset without any income. They had to suspend competitions for scholarships of the largest organizations, including Ignacy Lewkowicz Foundation and Symcha and Sara Menkes Reischer Foundation. They sought the solutions of the stalemate in the conversion of securities by subsidizing smaller foundation with allowances from the community fund and persuading wealthy relatives of the founders to expand the venture capital, as well as more profitable investment of foundation equities and attracting new foundations. In this latter field, the Community enjoyed exceptional success, as the new foundations exceeded the size of pre-existing ones. Samuel Horowitz³³ and Jacob Stroh are distinguished es-

ture (in 1847 he was a supporter of changing the Jewish costume for the German one). In 1848 (the Spring of Nations) he signed an address to the emperor and was a member of the delegation sent to Vienna. He became a member of the National Council in Lvov, where he appeared as a spokesman for the Polish-Jewish rapprochement. On the anniversary of executing Polish independence activists Teofil Wiśniowski and Józef Kapusciniński by the Austrians, he celebrated the solemn service in Lvov temple. After the crowd had thrown stones at his house, he resigned from the post of district rabbinat. He died poisoned by one of the Orthodox³⁴. R. Żebrowski, *Kohn Abraham*, (in:) *Polski Słownik Judaistyczny*, http://www.jhi.pl/psj/Kohn_Abraham [21.05.2015]. See: M. Stanislawski, *A Murder in Lemberg: Politics, Religion, and Violence in Modern Jewish History*, Princeton 2007.

³² DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, pp. 6-7.

³³ Horowitz Edler von Samuel (1836-1925 Lvov) – „Galician financier, industrialist and politician, landowner, a supporter of Jewish assimilation, co-founder of the Lvov movement Shomer Israel. He came from a family, rich in traditions associated with *misnagdas*. His great-grandfather, Hirsh H., was a rabbi in Frankfurt on the Main, and his father – Szyja Leib H. was one of the leading opponents of Hassidism in Lvov. H. in some time was considered the richest man in Galicia. Since 1875 he led one of the largest banks in Lvov; was active in the local Chamber of Commerce

pecially. The first of them made a significant donation to the nascent rabbinical seminary, and the second one bequeathed half of his estate at 1 Hetmańska Street for the impoverished merchants, industrialists and artisans. There were new charitable foundations of: Bishop Leon Rosenfeld, Joseph David Kurzweil, Amalji Garten, Efroim and Leib Schnapik, Józef Eskreis, Fradla Ettinger née Weiler, Henryk Poster, J. J. Phillipp, Herman and Berta Axelbrad. Those foundations were approved by the Administration of the Lvov Region³⁴. Moreover, the community received a whole series of inheritances (eg. from Bishop Prof. Gustaw Bikeles who bequeathed to the orphanage all his property). In the analyzed period, other forms of assistance functioned as well. Especially, it was the Rescue Committee, formed in November 1918. Working initially through the work of the Community Board, later it became an independent entity, which was strongly supported by American Jews and implemented some of the tasks in the context of local charity. However, a hospital and a retirement home held the first place in the community charity. Requisitions of Austrian and Russian troops, and later the Polish-Ukrainian fights for Lvov led to considerable destruction of these buildings. The first years of independent Poland were marked by the restoration of the building and replenishment of equipment, while they were gaining new medical equipment, opening new hospital wards (eg. a branch of dentistry and the X-ray ward), and introduced electric lighting along with the gas one. The need for these actions is the fact that in the analyzed period many more the sick and elderly people were taken than before the war. Additionally, the House of Foundlings was established within the extensive charity work, where, in the audited period, 35 children stayed. The children did not know their parents and often did not even have names – as indicated by the municipal authorities, many of the orphans came from the pogroms in Ukraine³⁵.

Financial. In budgetary terms the appointed board had to face, not only from the lack of financial resources, but above all with its obligations in 1919. The first step of

and Industry (from 1906 until 1918 was the president) and on the board of the Lvov branch of the Foundation of Baron Maurice Hirsch (such as the treasurer of the Executive Committee). He founded a loan fund, which was to help Jewish merchants. Since 1883 he served on the City Council of Lvov. He was a member of the Lvov Jewish community; in the years 1888-1903 – its president and later vice-president (until 1914). He served in the presidencies of numerous cultural institutions and charities. Generously supported various Jewish institutions, among others (...) he donated his collection of books created in 1901 to the Library of the Jewish community in Lvov. He was a co-founder of the Humanitarian Association B'nei B'rith „Leopolis”. In 1896 he received the Austrian nobility. After World War I he withdrew from active political life (...)“. *Horowitz Edler von Samuel*, [in:] *Pol-ski Słownik Judaistyczny*, http://www.jhi.pl/psj/Horowitz_Edler_von_Samuel [21.05.2015].

³⁴ Por. DALO, *Lwowskie Wojewodske...*, fond 1, opys 52, yed. khr. 142.

³⁵ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravlenija ievriejskoj rieligioznoj obszcziny...*, pp. 7-8. An additional element of the charity of the Jewish community in Lvov were subsidies to charitable and cultural organizations, for example Jewish Music Society, the Polish youth studying in Prague, the agricultural school „Kirjath Sefer” in Jaffa, etc. *Ibidem*, pp. 8-12.

the community authorities was incurring promissory note debt at a local financial institution (apart from this enigmatic statement, there are not any the data about the institution). Subsequently they launched three trends: 1) introduction of savings; 2) multiplying the income and align them with current expenditure; 3) efforts to obtain state aid. The Board managed to accomplish all of the above actions. In 1919, they started for the first time since 1914 to create estimates of the revenues and expenditures and the closure of accounts for the Previous period. In the same year, they obtained a state interest-free loan from the central government (0.5 million crowns), repayable in annual installments. Subsequently they carried out the conversion of the Austrian war loans (made by previous boards), they purchased the pawned valuable papers, set up an estimate committee for the religious tax, and paid off debts and wrote off the debts which had been incurred by the various synagogues during the war. Devaluation caused a sharp increase in community expenditures (e.g. they had to raise the salaries of clerks and retired community workers). Attempts to heal the community economic relations can be seen in the following statistical study (see. Table 2)³⁶.

Organizational. Work in this department was based on a sense of responsibility for the fate of members of the community. The organizational activity concerned a few specific phenomena. First, there were interventions to the authorities of the university on the admission to the study of the Jewish population. Second, the intervention to the official bodies of the Polish state after articles in the press damaging to the Jewish minority. Thirdly, the moral support and active action of repatriation of Jews POW who came from Poland. Fourth, issuing the proclamations (pro-plebiscite in Upper Silesia) to the Jewish. Fifth, the interventions to the government in religious matters, for example, conducting hearings for Jewish cases on Jewish holidays or restrictions affecting Jewish restaurants and beaneries. Sixth, taken initiative convening a conference of representatives of synagogues and cemeteries with the association of engineers, in order to organize the protection of monuments of Jewish art and regulations concerning the maintenance of private houses of prayer. Seventh, the community in Lvov put forward a draft of electoral reform. The project was submitted to the office of the Lvov Region – the regional authorities stated that this was the competence of the Szym and that this body should decide. Eighth, work on opening the school for rabbis – exclusively on the orthodox and traditional principles. Ninth, community accountancy was centralized and functioning of the community administration was improved. Tenth, the nationwide actions that involved cooperation as the Representation of the Jewish population on fixing the borders of the Republic of Poland (they organized a thanksgiving service after determining the state borders), participation in issues of Silesia

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

Table 2. Activity of the religious community in the field of revenue services

| Year | Community incomes: | | | | Community exoenditures: | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------------|------------|
| | 1914 | 459 477 | Crown (K) | 84 | heller (h) | 582 914 | Crown (K) | 69 | heller (h) |
| 1919 | 2 476 944 | K | 61 | h | 3 109 839 | K | 57 | h | |
| 1920 | 3 254 449 | Polish Mark (Mp.) | 04 | pfennig (fen.) | 4 117 951 | Polish Mark (Mp.) | 14 | pfennig fen. | |
| 1921 | 18 985 385 | Mp. | 66 | fen. | 24 650 549 | Mp. | 10 | fen. | |
| 1922 | 117 215 270 | Mp. | 71 | fen. | 248 741 709 | Mp. | 51 | fen. | |
| 1923 | 9 192 270 736 | Mp. | 28 | fen. | 12 338 684 602 | Mp. | 93 | fen. | |
| Real deficit was: | | | | | | | | | |
| 1914 | 123 436 | K | 85 | h | equals | 22% | general | expenditures | |
| 1919 | 632 894 | K | 96 | h | equals | 20% | general | expenditures | |
| 1920 | 1 163 502 | Mp. | 10 | fen. | equals | 28% | general | expenditures | |
| 1921 | 5 665 163 | Mp. | 44 | fen. | equals | 23% | general | expenditures | |
| 1922 | 31 526 438 | Mp. | 80 | fen. | equals | 21% | general | expenditures | |
| 1923 | 3 146 413 866 | Mp. | 65 | fen. | equals | 25% | general | expenditures | |
| Incomes of the hospital fund: | | | | | Expenditures of the hospital fund: | | | | |
| 1914 | 258 262 | K | 54 | h | 250 425 | K | 27 | h | |
| 1919 | 1 585 138 | K | 33 | h | 1 575 618 | K | 48 | h | |
| 1920 | 4 454 399 | Mp. | 58 | fen. | 4 461 424 | Mp. | 94 | fen. | |
| 1921 | 22 994 290 | Mp. | 26 | fen. | 21 935 343 | Mp. | 55 | fen. | |
| 1922 | 100 196 353 | Mp. | 24 | fen. | 100 569 413 | Mp. | 73 | fen. | |
| 1923 | 4 940 936 384 | Mp. | 05 | fen. | 5 603 254 266 | Mp. | 52 | fen. | |
| Total incomes and expenditures of Community and hospital funds: | | | | | | | | | |
| | Incomes | Expenditures | | | Deficit | | | % of total expenditures | |
| 1914 | 717 740 K 38 h | 833 339 | K | 96 h | 115 599 | K 58 | h | 14% | |
| 1919 | 4062 082 K 94 h | 4685 458 | K | 05 h | 623 375 | K 11 | h | 13% | |
| 1920 | 7708 848 Mp.62 fen. | 8879 376 | Mp. | 08 fen. | 1170 527 | Mp. 46 | fen. | 13% | |
| 1921 | 41979 675 Mp.92 fen. | 46 585 892 | Mp. | 65 fen. | 4606 216 | Mp. 73 | fen. | 10% | |
| 1922 | 217 411 623 Mp. 95 fen. | 249 311 123 | Mp. | 24 fen. | 31 899 499 | Mp. 29 | fen. | 12% | |
| 1923 | 14 133 207 120 Mp. 33 fen. | 17 941 938 869 | Mp. | 45 fen. | 3808 731 749 | Mp.12 | fen. | 11% | |

Source: My own analysis based on: DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravenija ievriejskoj religioznoj obszcziny...*, p. 12.

and the local plebiscite, supporting the state loan for the development of the country and so on³⁷.

³⁷ DALO, *Otcziot o diejatielnosti pravenija ievriejskoj religioznoj obszcziny...*, pp. 14-16. See: *Sprawozdanie z wyniku działalności Zarządu Gminy Wyznaniowej Izraelickiej we Lwowie za czas od stycznia 1919 do roku 1924*, Lwów 1924, pp. 1-17.

This analytical approach to activities of the Jewish community in Lvov shows a number of important projects and ideas on the peaceful coexistence of the Jewish minority in the multinational Republic of Poland. As the members of the Board emphasized, their goal was to focus the general life of the Jewish community, across the party lines and worldview divisions³⁸.

Summary

Unlike other minorities, in the case of the Jewish community it is difficult to point to one particular area of residence of the Second Republic. Members of the Jewish minority lived in a great number in the largest Polish cities (Warsaw, Lodz, Vilnius, Krakow and Lvov). They made up rather small percentage of the population in the countryside. The case of one of these large cities, which Lvov was, became the object of analysis in this article. The representatives of this minority were characterized by significant cultural distinction, often used the Yiddish or Hebrew languages. They also run their own schools. There were two key differentiators of the Jewish minority. The first was the religion that was the foundation of their identity. Great majority declared the religion of Moses, whereas the other was their socio-economic status. They had a significant share in trade and they made a part of the intelligentsia of the state.

The research hypothesis³⁹ indicated in the introduction concerning the political dimension of the activities of the authorities of the Community, was proved in the indicated phenomena. In that context, you can attempt to identify the three phenomena. First, the primary goal of the Board was to support and integrate Jewish district of Lvov and nationwide cooperation with other communities. The purpose is very clear, although the repeatedly stressing of cross-party interests and objectivity in its operations that appear in the preserved documents is worth emphasizing. Secondly, the Board of the community accepted the Polish state and the dominant role of the Polish nation in the system of democratic political power. Thirdly, the people managing the community engaged in specific pro-state actions whose obvious aim was to strengthen the independence of the Polish Republic (It is enough to recall here the previously mentioned action on fixing the Polish borders). To conclude, in the reporting documentation there are not any negative expressions for the Polish state and indications of problems in interethnic relations. The attitude of the Community in Lvov towards

³⁸ See: W. Chajes, *Sześć lat Gminy Wyznaniowej we Lwowie 1929-1934*, Lwów 1935.

³⁹ The research hypothesis was as follows: The activities of the Board of the Jewish community were based on the principles of conciliation, ie. on the one hand, the recognition of the sovereignty of the Polish authorities and, secondly, the implementation of cross-party interests of the Jewish community.

the then Poland and Poles should be assessed in the category of the unity of the Jewish community with the State. This allows for the conclusion that to set peacefully Jewish minority – wanting to cultivate their own traditions, while assimilating with majority of the country – the Polish authorities could pursue policies based on ethnic loyalty of this group, which was a factor distinguishing the policy towards other minorities which were aimed antagonistic to the state.

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The Jewish minority in the Second Polish Republic: the activities of the Board of the Jewish Community in Lvov during the years 1919-1924

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to analyze data on the functioning of the Jewish Community in Lvov during the years 1919-1924. The indicated problems will enable to show the functioning of the Jewish minority in the conditions of the reviving Polish state – both in socio-political terms, and in the organizational aspect. It is particularly important to show the Jewish minority opinion about the conditions of Second Polish Republic. Additionally, this article will help restore the memory of the individual members of the Jewish community in Lvov. The selected issue is a part of the research conducted on a larger scale, whose aim is to enrich knowledge and overcome the deficit of research in the science of politics on the concept of ethnic policy – proposed in the years 1939-1947 by the Polish government in exile. The fundamental finding of the analysis is the fact, that the Board accepted the Polish state and the dominant role of the Polish nation in the system of democratic political power.

Mniejszość żydowska w II Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej: działalność Zarządu Gminy Wyznaniowej Żydowskiej we Lwowie w latach 1919-1924

STRESZCZENIE

Celem niniejszego artykułu jest analiza danych na temat funkcjonowania społeczności żydowskiej we Lwowie w latach 1919-1924. Wskazane problemy pozwolą pokazać funkcjonowanie mniejszości żydowskiej w warunkach ożywienia państwa polskiego – zarówno pod względem społeczno-politycznym, a także w aspekcie organizacyjnym. Szczególnie ważne jest, aby pokazać opinię żydowskiej mniejszości o warunkach życia w II Rzeczypospolitej. Dodatkowo, artykuł pomoże przywrócić pamięć o poszczególnych członkach społeczności żydowskiej we Lwowie. Wybrane zagadnienie jest częścią badań prowadzonych w większej skali, których celem jest wzbogacenie wiedzy i zmniejszenie deficytu badań w nauce o polityce w sprawie koncepcji polityki etnicznej – zaproponowanej w latach 1939-1947 przez polski rząd na uchodźstwie. Podstawowym wnioskiem z analizy jest fakt, że Zarząd zaakceptował państwo polskie i dominującą rolę narodu polskiego w systemie demokratycznej władzy politycznej.