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The Early History of Israel in the Częstochowa Region

The Częstochowa region¹, its borders and traditions not being very clearly defined, began to develop relatively late, the term only coming into usage during the inter-War period. Its centre is Częstochowa which, during the “long 20th century”, developed into a large urban centre (prior to World War I – around 80,000 residents) and one of the largest industrial centres of the Congress Kingdom of Poland². The current Częstochowa region, which for a quarter of a century functioned as the independent Częstochowa Province (*Województwo*), comprises the northern part of the current Śląsk Province (the Districts of Myszków, Częstochowa and Kłobuck). However, during the First Polish Republic, a greater part of it was included within the District of Lelów in the Krakowskie Province. The north-western section (the Krzepice district office, including the towns of Krzepice and Kłobuck) belonged to the city of Wieluń, while Koniecpol was part of the Sieradzkie Province. It is therefore no surprise that, at the time, Lelów became the region’s administrative centre and where the earliest Jewish settlement developed.

1. In the Middle Ages, important trade routes ran through the region, however there is no evidence of the presence of any Jews³. At the very least, some would have moved there for reasons of trade. They first began settling permanently in Lelów, the centre of the district. Prior to the fire in 1547, a dozen or so Jewish families lived here, the first of them perhaps arriving at the end of the 15th century. Later, their number grew to several dozen. Following another fire in 1564, only six families remained. They paid the king one złoty for each home they occupied and a certain amount at the time animals were slaughtered⁴.

¹ This article is an abridged and corrected version of *Żydzi na ziemi częstochowskiej* which was published in 2016 in the *Elektronicznej Encyklopedii Województwa Śląskiego* see: http://ibrbs.pl/mediawiki/index.php/%C5%BBydzi_na_ziemi_cz%C4%99stochowskiej

² The last monograph of the history of the city *Częstochowa. Dzieje miasta i klasztoru jasnogórskiego*. Vol. 1-3, ed. Marcei Antoniewicz and others., Częstochowa 2002-2006, For further literature, see Marcei Antoniewicz, *Struktury administracyjne na ziemiach zespolonych w województwie częstochowskim (from 10th century to 1975)*, in: *20 lat województwa częstochowskiego*, Częstochowa 1995, pp. 5-23.

³ From a 1507 listing, there is a lack of communities about which we are interested here (Maurycy Horn, *Najstarszy rejestr osiedli żydowskich w Polsce z 1507 r.*, BŻIH 1974, No. 3, pp. 11-15). Por. Zenon Guldon, Jacek Wijaczka, *Skupiska i gminy żydowskie w Polsce do końca XVI wieku*, „Czasy Nowożytne” 21, 2008, pp. 149-191, especially p. 160.

⁴ F. Kiryk, F. Leśniak, *Skupiska żydowskie w miastach małopolskich do końca XVI wieku*, (in) *Żydzi w Małopolsce Studia z dziejów osadnictwa i życia społecznego*, ed. F. Kiryk, Przemysł 1991, ed. F. Kiryk, Przemysł 1991, p. 25; *Lustracja województwa krakowskiego 1564*, part 2,

In the following century also, Lelów was a centre of significant Jewish settlement, the local Jews earning their living mainly from trade. From the end of the 16th century, usually five or six would travel annually to Kraków, taking with them small batches of wax, honey, skins and feathers, as well as scythes. In return, they brought back, among other things, glass⁵. They became an organised Jewish community with a cemetery, a synagogue and a rabbi. On the occasion of the coronations of Henryk Walezy and Stefan Batory, they paid a tribute of eight złoty to the royal treasury⁶. The legal situation of the Jews of Lelów was regulated by a privilege granted, in 1612, by the Lelów and Chęciń district administrator Stanisław Branicki. This privilege gave Jews equal rights with other residents and guaranteed them the right to free trade and a licence to deal in alcohol⁷. Władysław IV ratified the privilege in 1633 which, among other things, confirmed Jews the right to use a synagogue and a cemetery. The king ratified it again 1646, as did subsequent rulers of Poland (in 1649, 1669, 1695 and 1766)⁸. In spite of this, there were constant conflicts amongst the inhabitants. The greatest conflict took place in 1651-1652. Among other things, Jews were accused of employing Christian servants, buying out Christian real estate and avoiding municipal charges, despite the fact that they influenced quite a large percentage of the income of both the city and the district. (In 1718, Jews paid 741 zł. in taxes, while in 1733-1737, 1,050 zł.) Ultimately, in 1778, the city came to an agreement with the Jewish community by which the number of homes owned by Jews was limited to twenty. With certain restrictions, they were permitted to engage in trade and leasing. In return, they were required to carry a burden, equal with other residents, of the city's expenses⁹.

2. In the 16th and 17th centuries, along with the development of the agricultural economy, Jews settled ever more willingly on the estates of the nobility, paying for their leases in agricultural produce and in the production and

wyd. J. Małecki, Warsaw 1964, p. 43 („Przed pogorzeniem było ich kilkadziesiąt, a teraz ich jeno 6”).

⁵ *Handel żydowski w Krakowie w końcu XVI i w XVII wieku. Wypisy z krakowskich rejestrów celnych z lat 1593-1683*, by Jan M. Małecki, Kraków 1995, from p. 60. (according to the index).

⁶ Przemysław Zarubin, *Żydzi lelowscy w dobie staropolskiej*, w: *Żydzi lelowscy. Obecność i ślady*, ed. Michał Galas i Mirosław Skrzypczyk, Kraków 2006, pp.13-25.

⁷ Jakub Goldberg, *Jewish Privileges in the Polish commonwealth. Charters of rights granted to Jewish communities in Poland-Lithuania in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Critical edition of original Latin, Polish and German documents with English introductions and notes*, Vol. 1, Jerusalem 1985, p. 146.

⁸ M. Horn, *Regesty dokumentów i ekscerpty z Metryki Koronnej do historii Żydów w Polsce (1697 – 1795)*, T. II: Rządy Stanisława Augusta (1764 - 1795). Part 1, 1764 – 1779, Wrocław etc, 1984, poz. 34.

⁹ M. Horn, *Regesty*, T. II/1 poz. 122, 299. P. Zarubin, *Żydzi lelowscy*, pp. 16-20.

sale of alcohol. Larger groups of Jews were registered in some towns privately owned by the nobility. Others resided temporarily in certain locations, working as innkeepers for feudal lords. In Koniecpol, the first Jews appeared at the beginning of the 17th century when the owner, at that time, Hetman Stanisław Koniecpolski, wanting to speed up development, gave them a privilege by which they were able to operate within the town. In 1675, Jewish traders from Koniecpol were present at the Lipski fair. At that time, the Jewish community owned a synagogue, a Jewish community council building, as well as a cemetery¹⁰. In Janów, established in 1696 at the initiative of Jan Stanisław Koniecpolski, Jews certainly lived there from the town's beginning. Jews settled even earlier in Żarki where, in 1676, there were five Jewish taxpayers¹¹. By 1741, there were already 113 adult Jews. They were obliged to pay 150 zł, annually, to the parish church, but they had their own synagogue. In the 18th century, they had a second house of prayer which also served as a *cheder*. In 1607, even Mstów had a synagogue. By 1633, there is mention of Jews already being in Krzepice but, for a long time, they numbered very few. In 1720, there were four families. By 1765, their number had grown to 116 individuals. At that time, outside the city's walls, a Jewish district arose which was called the "Krzepice New Town". By 1730, the local Jews had already set about building a synagogue, although permission for it was not obtained until 1749¹².

Krzepice Jews were subject to the *Działoszyn kahal*. However, from the first half of the 17th century, the Jewish community council in Lelów was the supervising body for the district *kahals* of the Jewish communities in Janów, Szczekociny, Żarki, Nakło and Pilica¹³. However, following the destruction of the war in the mid-17th century, the number of Jews in Lelów, itself, reduced to only eighteen individuals. That number grew later but, by then, they had lost their role as agents for trade with Kraków.

Not only feudal lords, but also a number of church institutions permitted Jews to settle on their territory on the expectation of resultant economic benefits. Others forbade it, some up to the mid-19th century. Among other places, this was the situation in Kozięłowy, owned by the Kraków bishops, in Kłobuck, belonging to the Pauline order and Nowa Częstochowa, created by the Pauline Fathers as a *jurydyka* (autonomous area) near Jasna Góra¹⁴. Similarly, the townsfolk of Stara Częstochowa strived not to allow Jews from settling in the city, citing the exceptional status of being the city of Jasna Góra, as well as the *De non tolerandis Judaeis* privilege which, in reality, they did not have. It was

¹⁰ O Żydach w Koniecpolu artykuł Adriana Musiała w niniejszej publikacji.

¹¹ Z. Guldon, *Ludność żydowska w miastach małopolskich w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku*, w: *Żydzi w Małopolsce*, s. 93.

¹² Stanisław Muznerowski, *Krzepice w przeszłości*, Włocławek 1914, pp. 58-59.

¹³ P. Zarubin, *Lelów Jews*, p. 15 (Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 10, Jerusalem 1978, p. 100).

¹⁴ Maurycy Horn, *Regesty*, Vol. II/2 (1780-1794), poz. 46.

only in 1706 that Jews were permitted permanent residency in exchange for money lent for the purpose of rebuilding the city following the disasters at the beginning of the century. In 1747, thirty Jews lived near Jasna Góra, operating leased inns and breweries in the local lordly *jurydykas*¹⁵.

3. During the reign of King Stanisław August Poniatowski, there were attempts to reform the Republic, which would also have included the Jewish population. In 1764, the *Sejm* removed judicial and administrative-taxation powers from Jewish community councils. For taxation purposes, it ordered an accurate census of Jews. From that preserved list, we know that, at the beginning of 1765, the “synagogue” in Koniecpol, in the Sieradzkie Province, numbered 733 followers of Judaism. However, six *kahals* were operating in the Lelów District (in Lelów, Janów, Żarki, Nakło, Pilica and Szczekociny)¹⁶. The oldest Lelów *kahal* numbered 544 Jews, of whom 231 lived in Lelów, with 105 Kromolów which comprised a sub-*kahal*. The *kahal* in Janów numbered 683 individuals living in 45 locations. Of those, 285 Jews lived in Janów and 73 in Częstochowa. The most numerous *kahal* was in Żarki with 1,011 Jews in 14 localities, the majority living in the Jewish community council’s location (814). The *kahal* in Nakło numbered 105 Jews, in Pilica 696 and in Szczekociny 582¹⁷. Overall, this totalled a few thousand individuals¹⁸. A significant majority of these Jews lived in the towns where the Jewish community councils were located¹⁹.

In the following decades, the situation for Jews in Poland did not improve which resulted in, among other things, increased debts amongst the Jewish community councils and a demographic stagnation. In the territory of interest to us, a 1791 list, unfortunately incomplete²⁰, only shows that 1,605 Jews were

¹⁵ *Częstochowa. Dzieje miasta i klasztoru jasnogórskiego*. T. 1, Częstochowa 2002, p. 380 - Olga Gregorczyk’s article about Jews in Kłobuck in this publication.

¹⁶ Aleksander Czuczyński, *Spis Żydów Województwa Krakowskiego z roku 1765*, Archiwum Komisji Historycznej Akademii Umiejętności, 8, 1898, pp. 408-427. Mainly Józef Kleczyński, Franciszek Kłuczycki, *Liczba głów żydowskich w Koronie z Taryf roku 1765*, tamże, s. 388-407, zwłaszcza s. 393. Por. Shaul Stampfer, *The 1764 Census of Polish Jewry*, „Bar-Ilan” 24–25 (1989), p. 62, 67-70.

¹⁷ Numerical data for individual localities is not quite accurate. The list omits about about 10% of all individuals.

¹⁸ A collective summary (A. Czuczyński, *Spis Żydów*, s. 411; S. Stampfer, *The 1764 Census*, s. 72) which, for the six *kahals* in the Lelów District, there were 3,415 Jews, of whom there were 3,208 adults and 207 children under the age of one.

¹⁹ 116 Jews lived in Krzepice, 394 (110 families) in Koniecpolu, who owned 69 private homes. A slightly different count for 1765 is provided by Z. Guldon, *Ludność żydowska*, p. 138: Lelów 215; Żarki 767.

²⁰ This list does not include Koniecpol, even though on page 522, it states that Lewek Rabinowicz went to Koniecpol as rabbi; the majority of the data was derived from February and March 1791. (Kamila Follprecht, *Ludność żydowska województwa krakowskiego w czasie*

spread out evenly throughout the entire region. Most of the Jews lived in Żarki (348), Lelów (192), Krzepice (101) and Częstochowa (100). In traditional places of dense settlement, Jews were also owners of a significant section of the real estate²¹. The remainder were dispersed, earning a livelihood in several dozen locations as innkeepers or brewery tenants – namely as producers and vendors of alcohol on behalf of the nobility-owners or church institutions. Apart from Lelów, Jewish communities with rabbis were active in Janów²², Potok (where a rabbi, cantor and *kahal* elders are mentioned) and in Koniecpol. Assistant rabbis were active in other places such as in Krzepice. Jews supported smaller or larger synagogues or prayerhouses, as well as cemeteries, in an endeavour to comply with their religion's requirements.

The influence of Hassidism appeared in the second half of the 18th century. Dawid Bidermann (1746–1814), a student of Elimelech of Leżajsk, settled in Lelów. Bidermann gathered a significant hassidic circle around himself and began a dynasty of Lelów *tzadikim*. Following his death, he was succeeded by his son Mosze (1776/77-1851) who, in 1850, left for Jerusalem. His descendants continued the Lelów tradition in Israel and, later, in the USA.²³ In the years 1760-1773, Jakub Frank was held prisoner within Jasna Góra. He was the leader of a messianic Jewish sect which arose in Podole. His followers maintained contact with him while he was in prison. Many of them had settled, long-term, in nearby towns²⁴.

4. In 1793, the western part of the region, which included Częstochowa, fell to Prussia, becoming the so-called “South Prussia”. Part of the Lelów district became a new Częstochowa district which was included within the Kalisz department. The Prussians applied a diverse policy when it came to its Jewish subjects, regarding as so-called “recommended” (tolerated) Jews those who could bring economic benefit to the state, who knew the official language and who did not stand out by wearing Jewish attire. The plan to move the rest elsewhere became impossible following the annexation of more-distant sections of Polish territory in 1795, which included a large number of Jews. Any inflow of Jews from outside was limited and they were subjected to state supervision. The number of self-governing Jewish community councils was also limited.

Sejmu Czteroletniego. Spisy z powiatów krakowskiego, ksiąskiego, lelowskiego i proszowskiego z lat 1790-1792 (ze zbiorów Archiwum Państwowego w Krakowie), Kraków 2008, p. 61 i nast.

²¹ In 1787, Jews owned 29 of the 129 homes in Lelów; in Żarki, 76 of 347.

²² In 1789, 70 Jews lived in Janów, being 25% of all residents.

²³ However, the grave of Dawid Biderman in Lelów became a site of pilgrimage for Hassidic Jews from all over Poland. Por. M. Wodziński, *Groby cadyków w Polsce. O chasydzkiej literaturze nagrobnej i jej kontekstach*, Wrocław 1998, pp. 16-18, 202-203.

²⁴ Aleksander Kraushar, *Frank i frankiści polscy, 1726-1816. Monografia historyczna osnuta na źródłach archiwalnych*, Kraków 1895, pp. 223-239, 249, 282-298.

These principles were written into the General Statutes for Jews (*General-Judenreglement*) on 17th April 1797. The principle of being of benefit to the state was intended to combat petty trade which was difficult to tax, but it also contained sections banning Jews. Under certain conditions, Jews could become innkeepers, traders, craftsmen, farmers, cattle breeders and carriage drivers.

In 1802, guild privileges and the *De non tolerandis Judeis* privilege were abolished. With the consent of the authorities, Jews could settle in cities and purchase real estate. The authority of church institutions was also limited²⁵. This facilitated the activity of Jews and resulted in a significant rise in their number, especially in Częstochowa. In 1795 and 1796, several richer innkeepers purchased homes in the city, despite opposition from local residents and the Catholic clergy. In 1796, Joachim Berkowicz (Berl Bermann Nachmann) became the first Jews to reside in the town in Częstochowa²⁶. By 1798, there were already 67 Jewish families living in the city, which included 32 traders, 13 craftsmen and two innkeepers.

Political changes were significant for Jewish communal organisations, as in 1793, several *kahals* still remained within the Republic, e.g. Janów. So the Prussian authorities decided that Jews in Częstochowa and the district would create a separate Jewish community council. That decision carried with it consent for the building of its own synagogue and cemetery. This was prompted by a misunderstanding about the fees for burying the dead in Janów. The cemetery was established in 1799. Construction of the synagogue began in 1805, next to which a ritual bathhouse was established²⁷. That was the time when the first group of Hassidim began to be active in the city beneath Jasna Góra.

5. The period of the Duchy of Warsaw was difficult for Jews, above all, on account of the rolling wars which resulted in damage (e.g. in Krzepice and Częstochowa), as well as constant charges being paid to support the army. The city authorities endeavoured to offload those charges onto the Jews, arguing that Jews did not incur costs of housing²⁸. Payments to the municipal authorities, especially the larger ones, were significant. For example, contributions to the

²⁵ Jan Wąsicki, *Ziemie polskie pod zaborem pruskim: Prusy Południowe 1793-1806 . Studium historycznoprawne*, Wrocław 1957, p. 108, 292-294.

²⁶ AGAD, Generalne Dyrektorium Prus Południowych, sygn. VI 377, pp. 62-67 and 197. For more, J.Spyra, *Najstarsze żydowskie rodziny w Częstochowie*, in this publication.

²⁷ Later attempts by the Jewish community council in Janów (which, in 1795, also found itself within the borders of Prussia, but in the Śląsk Province) to again unite with Częstochowa Jews, were rejected.

²⁸ Dariusz Złotkowski, *Miasta departamentu kaliskiego w okresie Księstwa Warszawskiego (Studium gospodarcze)*, Częstochowa 2001, p.50, 62, 170, 190. In 1807, the annual collection from Jews in the council's cities and villages, in the districts of Lelów and Siewierskie, totalled 7,534 zł. In June-August 1809, an extraordinary payment of 8.208 zł. was demanded, while in Lelów it was 9,054 zł.

budget of Old Częstochowa in the year 1809/1810 came in the form of 600 zł for permission to build the synagogue, 140 from Jewish bakers, 144 from Jewish butchers, 86 from Jewish merchants – altogether totalling 974 zł. This constituted 61.4% of taxes raised on fixed incomes, not including amounts included in shared accounts relating to all residents. Jewish innkeepers paid a considerable portion of the 5,180 zł that they earned from the production of alcoholic beverages²⁹.

The Duchy of Warsaw authorities and the newly established Kalisz office also demanded various extraordinary payments from the Jews, most often in connection with the ongoing wars. What is of interest to us here is the Częstochowa district and the Lelów section. However, the constant need to supply the army saw the establishment of a small, but influential group of suppliers (*liweranty*), a significant portion of whom were richer Jews who had, at their disposal, credit and the necessary contacts. They also dealt in the supply of salt which was a state monopoly³⁰. A process began whereby a new Jewish elite was created, within a Christian environment, and which accumulated considerable wealth. In the Duchy of Warsaw, Jews, nominally, were given civil rights from 22nd July 1807. However, this was quickly suspended for ten years. It was argued that they should first assimilate into the Christian environment. Life was made easier for them with the introduction, into the Duchy, of the French Civil Code (Napoleonic). It acknowledged equality for everyone under the law, irrespective of religion. Against this were the policies of the central authorities which, among other things, planned to remove from them the rights to produce, trade in and hold a licence for alcohol, both in the towns and the villages. Reluctantly, they remained with the Jewish townspeople which, at that time in Częstochowa, caused long-standing disputes³¹. In the following years, disputes continued as to who should reap the profits from alcohol licences.

According to a census conducted in 1808, during the Duchy of Warsaw period, 1,006 Jews lived in the seven towns of the Częstochowa District, which represented 13.5% of the population³². Most lived in Stara Częstochowa with 495 (29.5%). However, in terms of percentage, the most lived in Nowy Krzepice (256), which represented 49.3% of the total residents. Apart from Przyrowa

²⁹ D. Złotkowski, *Miasta departamentu kaliskiego*, pp. 152-153. A small amount was received from the Jews of Krzepice, Kłobuck and Mstów (pp. 155-157).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 71, 115, 119, 169, 258.

³¹ D. Złotkowski, *Spór o dochody z propinacji w Starej Częstochowie w ostatnich latach Księstwa Warszawskiego*, „*Studia Historyczne*” 41, 1998, z. 4, pp. 509-530. The decree by King Fryderyk August on 30th October 1812, banning Jews from monopolies did not come into effect due to war and the fall of the Duchy of Warsaw.

³² Henryk Grossmann, *Struktura społeczna i gospodarcza Księstwa Warszawskiego na podstawie spisów ludności 1808-1810*, Warszawa 1925, p. 20.

(102, 11.3%), the number of Jews in the remaining towns did not exceed 10%³³. There were no Jews in Nowa Częstochowa, under the jurisdiction of the Pauline monks of Jasna Góra, but they did do business there, especially in religious items. In the Lelów District towns (belonging to the Kraków section), there were 1,527 Jews, which represented 18.6% of all residents - in Lelów 263 (28.9%), Szczekociny 225 (24.0%), and Janów 152 (22.4%). The largest concentration of Jews was in Żarki (778 individuals)³⁴. In 1808, 440 Jews out of 1,857 individuals lived in Koniecpol (23.7%). According to the 1810 census, 2,062 (5.2%) Jews lived in the Częstochowa District, while in Lelów there were 2,075 (5.4 %) ³⁵. It is estimated that around 4,500 Jews lived in the Częstochowa region.

6. The constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw, dated 27th November 1815, granted political rights only to Christians. Its administrative authorities, being in the hands of the aristocracy and officials, conducted a policy of encouraging Jews to either assimilate or move away. They were weeded out of villages, from trade as well as from the production and trade, under licence, of alcohol. Regulations were introduced with the intention of separating Jewish places of residence from those of Christians through designating separate areas for Jews. Such attempts took place in towns such as Lelów where, in 1823-1862, Jews were required to live in a specifically allocated section of the city. This also occurred in Częstochowa in the years 1828-33³⁶ which, in 1826, was associated with the uniting of Stara and Nowa Częstochowa into one municipal centre. The activities of Jewish innkeepers and petty traders were resisted and they were also banned from settling in the towns. They remained in the jurisdictions of the nobility where they were required to make payments to the owners³⁷.

In the first half of the 19th century, the number of Jews in the region continued to grow. In some towns, they made up the majority of the residents. In Lelów, their number had grown from 339 in 1827 to 480 (53%) in 1857, Przyrów, from 102 in 1808 to 552 in 1827 and then to 954 (43%) in 1857. In Krzepice, in 1827, there were 816 Jews which, by 1860, had grown to 1,069,

³³ In Stary Krzepiec 6.7%, Kłobuck 6.4%, Mstów 3.6%. The Częstochowa District belonged to the Kaliskie Province. Lelów, Radomsk and Koniecpol belonged to the Kkrakowskie Province.

³⁴ H. Grossmann, *Struktura społeczna i gospodarcza*, p. 20, 93-94. Grossmann's calculations do not provide a count for Żarki, but the overall number of Jews in the towns amounted to 1,527, with the remainder numbering 749..

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 47, 103.

³⁶ Stanisław Szymański, *Do dziejów Żydów w Częstochowie w okresie konstytucyjnym Królestwa*, „Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego” 1961, No. 39, pp. 17-38.

³⁷ Tomasz Opas, *Własność w miastach i jurydykach prywatnych w dawnej Polsce*, Lublin 1990. Por. Artur Eisenbach, *W dobie Królestwa Kongresowego*, in: tegoż, *Z dziejów ludności żydowskiej w Polsce w XVIII i XIX wieku*. Studia i szkice, Warszawa 1983, pp. 137-215.

which was almost half the total number of residents (49.5%). In 1827, 183 Jews lived in Janów, which grew to 448 by 1861, 46.7% of all residents³⁸. In 1800, Kłobuck had only 10 Jews, in 1820, 18 Jews, in 1827, 255 and by 1851, 545.³⁹ The number of Jews in Żarki grew from 702 in 1827, to 2,291 in 1865, which was a majority of residents (61 %) ⁴⁰. The Żarki *kahal* also included the Jews of Myszków, where Jewish settlement had begun at the beginning of the 19th century. However, even more Jews lived in Częstochowa, where the number had gradually risen to 1,141 in 1827 (18.5%) and 2,976 (34.5%) in 1857.

In small towns, where Jews had lived for ages, Jews continued to produce and sell alcohol, and trade in, among other things, agricultural products and small craft. For example, in Lelów, in the years 1812-16, there were 10 alcohol producers, 11 innkeepers and 2 tenant farmers. In Kłobuck, in 1826, there were 26 small craftsmen and 18 tradesmen, while in 1857, there were 43 craftsmen out of a total of 132. Jews were decidedly dominant amongst tradesmen and stallholders. Orthodox Jewish craftsmen in the town paid higher (usually double) the taxes of Christian craftsmen⁴¹.

The basis for cooperation with the Polish nobility was that they employed Jews as their tenants and their factotums. Together with the beginnings of industrialisation in the region which abounded in non-ferrous metal ore, that cooperation spread into joint industrial ventures. Most often, however, this was limited to leasing, to Jewish entrepreneurs, the rights to extract ore and to the felling of forests for the wood required for the process. In exchange, the nobility received cash which they, most often, allocated for consumer goals. That was probably after 1848⁴². Żarek Jews, sometimes as workers, sometimes as suppliers or tenants, cooperated with Piotr Steinkeller who, in 1832-35, built a large mechanical engineering factory, which bankrupted in 1842⁴³.

Due to the Congress Kingdom of Poland's support of industrial development, some Jewish merchants, especially in Częstochowa⁴⁴, began

³⁸ Franciszek Rodecki, *Obraz jeograficzno-statystyczny Królestwa Polskiego*, Warszawa 1830, tab. IV; S. Muznerowski, *Krzepice w przeszłości*, p. 59; E. Gawron, *Lelowscy Żydzi w XIX i XX wieku*, in: *Żydzi lelowscy Kraków 2006*, p. 30.

³⁹ *Kłobuck. Dzieje miasta i gminy (do roku 1939)*, ed. F. Kiryk, Kraków 1998, pp. 261-263.

⁴⁰ Danuta Rosińska, *Żydowskie Gminy wyznaniowe w Zawierciu (Kromolowie) i Żarkach*, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, Warszawa 1998/1999, No. 24/25, p. 6.

⁴¹ Edyta Gawron, *Lelowscy Żydzi w XIX i XX wieku*, s. 31. *Kłobuck. Dzieje miasta i gminy*, pp. 270-272.

⁴² D. Złotkowski, *Židé a šlechta na pomezí Slezska, Velkopolska a Malopolska v letech 1837-1874*, in: *Šlechticův žid – žid šlechticem. Židovské elity a židovská šlechta v novověku a moderní době*, ed. J. Spyra, A. Zářický, J. Županič, Ostrava 2014, pp. 115-133.

⁴³ Ryszard Kołodziejczyk, *Piotr Steinkeller. Kupiec i przemysłowiec 1799 – 1854*, Warsaw 1963, pp. 68-96.

⁴⁴ Żydzi stanowili zdecydowaną większość w gronie miejscowych kupców (Franciszek Patrzyk, *Studia nad rozwojem stosunków ludnościowych Częstochowy w wieku XIX i I-szej*

investing industrial production. In Częstochowa, during the 1920's and 1930's, many textile factories were established by Jews. The first was set up in 1822 by Dawid Gutenberg. In 1841, there were 32 Jewish textile workshops in Częstochowa, which employed around 200 journeymen⁴⁵. This activity was profitable for the Częstochowa region up until the development of a rival textile centre in Łódź. Other industries which set up included a spoon factory, the Sperber match factory, metalwork and hosiery, as well as mechanical miller.

In 1816, there several Jewish *kahals* in the Częstochowa region, namely in the Częstochowa District in Nowy Krzepice and Częstochowa (including Mstów), in the Lelów District in Lelów, Janów and Żarki, in the Radomsk District in Koniecpol, most often without an officially appointed, but with unofficial rabbis or rabbi's assistants⁴⁶. With the introduction of new regulations, the Congress Kingdom of Poland authorities limited the self-government of Jewish communities. In 1822, *kahals* were abolished and were replaced by synagogue board, which had to be approved by the administrative authorities. Their activities were limited to worship and charitable matters. Jews from nearby locations belonged to them, such that every Jew was assigned to a specific Jewish community. This had all to do with ensuring that the completeness of Registry books⁴⁷. Following the completion of the preliminary research in the area, the Provincial authorities compiled a list of Jewish community councils which, in 1827, was approved by the Government Commission of Religious Faiths and Public Enlightenment. From then onwards, officially approved community councils operated in Krzepice, Częstochowa, Przyrówie, Lelów, Janów, Żarki and Koniecpol. The Community Councils performed all their traditional tasks, organising and maintaining the necessary religious sites and personnel, even though they often had financial problems. The increase in the size of the Jewish community in Krzepice led to the building of a second synagogue, next to which was built a Jewish school, the rabbi's residence and a *mikvah*. In Kłobuck, which had earlier belonged to the community in Działoszyn, an independent synagogue supervisory board was later established. Among those belonging to it were Jews from the Kamyk community. This resulted in a long-standing dispute with the Jewish Community Council in Działoszyn. In 1851, in Kłobuck, the building began of a synagogue and a

połowie XX, Częstochowa 1955, pp. 30-32; Franciszek Sobalski, *Częstochowa w latach 1826-1905*, (in) *Dzieje Częstochowy od zarania...*, p. 85).

⁴⁵ „Jutrzenka” No. 7 of 16 VIII 1861, pp. 52-53. Por. D. Złotkowski, *Testamenty częstochowskich Żydów z lat 1834-1865 obrazem ich aktywności gospodarczej i społecznej*, in: *Żydzi częstochowianie*, pp. 170-191.

⁴⁶ AGAD, CWW KP, File No. 1429. Dokładnie o rozwoju sieci gmin żydowskich w omwianym regionie i czasie artykuł Mateusza Matuszczyka w niniejszej publikacji.

⁴⁷ In 1871, supervision changed to the Jewish Community Council headed by the rabbi.

cemetery began, and a rabbi was also employed.⁴⁸ Many disputes arose such as, for example, in Częstochowa⁴⁹, regarding the appointment to the position of rabbi. The main underlying reasons were the divergent interests between the wealthier and poorer members of the community who paid the religious taxes. Those who were wealthier were also active within the non-Jewish environment and had adopted a manner of behaviour which differed from Jewish tradition. Some openly aspired to a modernised version of Judaism, which was becoming ever more popular in neighbouring Prussia. Followers of Hassidism were also growing more numerous. In 1820, Hassidim entered into conflict with the traditional majority of the Częstochowa Jewish community council, demanding the right for men to also benefit from the *mikvah*⁵⁰. They were also active in other communities, for example in Koniecpol, and sometimes endeavoured to influence the appointment of rabbis. The Częstochowa *gmina* also established a hospital for Orthodox Jews and arranged for ongoing religious education⁵¹.

7. The development of the relationship between the Jews and the rest of the local community varied. They were treated as second-class residents. In addition, the local clergy and a considerable section of traditional Christians blamed them for the death of Christ. They suspected them of desecrating the Host and of other iniquities. They did, however, maintain regular contact with them, even though it was limited to economic matters.

As to the attitude of Jews to the November Uprising, that is unknown. The Polish government and the Uprising *Sejm* did not wish them to serve in the army, which could have become a gateway to the demanding of civil rights. Polish politicians preferred to raise extra taxes from them⁵². A quadruple recruiting tax was collected from the Jews of the Częstochowa, as well as an additional tax for equipping the army. Apart from that, the appointed commander for mobilising the armed forces in the Wieluń district, Julian

⁴⁸ The first mention of the community in Kłobuck dates back to 1831. (AGAD, CWW, File No.'s 1543 and 1547; *Kłobuck. Dzieje miasta i gminy*, pp. 261-263.

⁴⁹ Janusz Spyra, *Miejsce rabina w gminie żydowskiej w Królestwie Polskim w I połowie XIX wieku. Spór o Zachariasza Weingotta w Częstochowie*, „Studia Judaica” 19. 2016, No. 1 (37). pp. 157-186.

⁵⁰ Marcin Wodziński, *Chasydzi w Częstochowie. Źródła do dziejów chasydyzmu w centralnej Polsce*, Studia Judaica 8, Kraków 2005, No. 1/2, pp. 279-301.

⁵¹ Zbigniew Jakubowski, *Częstochowscy Żydzi. Charakterystyka problematyki i perspektywy badań*, w: *Z dziejów Żydów w Częstochowie*, ed. Z. Jakubowski, Częstochowa 2002, pp. 15-16; Kazimierz Rędziński, *Początki żydowskiej gminy wyznaniowej w Częstochowie (1808–1862)*, *ibid.*, pp. 127–136.

⁵² Robert W. Szwed, *Sejm powstańczy 1831 o opłacie rekrutowego od starozakonnych*, [w:] *Żydzi częstochowianie – Współistnienie, Holocaust, Pamięć*, ed. J. Mizgalski, Częstochowa 2006, pp. 133–142. A. Eisenbach, *Z dziejów ludności żydowskiej w Polsce w XVIII i XIX wieku*, Warszawa 1983, pp. 172-175,

Masłowski, took several thousand złotych from the coffers of synagogues in Częstochowa, Krzepice and Kłobuck. Attempts to regain them lasted for a dozen or so years⁵³.

After 1831, the authorities agreed to purchase landed goods from wealthy Jewish merchants and entrepreneurs. On the basis of the 1842 concession by the Administrative Council, Herz Kohn of Częstochowa became one of the owners of the village of Lipicze. However, requests for the granting of citizenship or a town charter were, as a rule, refused – as was the case, in 1835, of Dawid Landau Kronenberg, the owner of a cotton factory in Częstochowa⁵⁴. Prior to the next uprising, Margrave Aleksander Wielopolski introduced reforms which abolished some anti-Jewish restrictions. These reforms also permitted wealthier Jews to enter into public life, to a limited extent at least. For the first time, Jews were chosen to represent local residents. For example, in Częstochowa, Berek (Bernard) Kohn was elected to the City Council⁵⁵. Jews now began to settle in locations where, until that time, they had been forbidden, e.g. in Koziegłowy⁵⁶.

Prior to the outbreak of the January Uprising in 1863, there was also a moment of “brotherhood” between Poles and Jews, especially in Częstochowa, where, in patriotic parades such as occurred on 8th September 1862, many Jews took part together with other local residents. When Colonel Alenicz ordered that the city be set on fire, several Jewish homes were also burnt. Local Jews protested against Tsarist repressions at a gathering which was chaired by Dr Daniel Neufeld. A motion of string protest was passed which was directed at the authorities in Warsaw⁵⁷. A dozen or so local Jews took part in the Uprising, while others suffered the consequences. Following Chmieleński’s troops’ victory over the Russians near Janów (Balsom, a Jewish tailor from Żarki, died in the battle) on 6th July 1863, Russian soldiers set fire to the city and to the village of Ponik. In Janów, in the more than one hundred homes, the majority of which were occupied by Jews, only five remained⁵⁸.

⁵³ J. Spyra, *Pieniądze Masłowskiego. Przyczynek do kwestii żydowskiej w powstaniu styczniowym*, w: *Powstanie styczniowe w regionie częstochowskim i w województwie kaliskim (1863-1864)*, ed. M. Trąbski, N. Morawiec, R. W. Szwed, Częstochowa 2014, pp. 113-122

⁵⁴ A. Eisenbach, *Dobra ziemskie w posiadaniu Żydów*, w: *Spółeczeństwo Królestwa Polskiego*, Vol.3, ed. W. Kula, Warszawa 1968, p. 288; also, *Z dziejów ludności żydowskiej*, p. 176.

⁵⁵ Do wieluńskiej rady powiatowej wybrano Józefa Kempnera („Jutrzenka” No.14 of 4 IV 1862, pp. 107-108).

⁵⁶ Already by 1867, 43 Jews lived in Koziegłowy.

⁵⁷ Henryk Rola, *Powstanie styczniowe na ziemi częstochowskiej*, Katowice 1965, p. 13; Janusz Fałowski, *Czenstochoviana na łamach „Jutrzenki” Daniela Neufelda*, (in:) *Żydzi częstochowianie...*, pp. 198-212, especially pp. 209-210.

⁵⁸ H. Rola, *Powstanie styczniowe*, p. 20, 56; J. Spyra, *Pieniądze Masłowskiego*, pp. 115-120.

8. Following the January Uprising, Poles were removed from the running of the country and the Russian authorities dissolved the Congress Kingdom of Poland. Issues relating to the Jewish population were also dependant upon the direct decisions of the central or local Russian authorities. After the establishment, in 1866, of administrative reforms, the majority of the region now belonged to the Częstochowa District of the Piotrków Trybunalski Province. The northern part, including Żarki, ended up in the Będziń District, while Koniecpol was part of the Noworadomsko Province. The western part (Lelów and Szczekociny, Kromołów, Ogrodzieniec and Pilica to the Olkusk District) belonged to the Kielce Province. City councils were also reformed. In 1870, a town charter was denied to those centres which could not afford to support paid municipal authorities. This affected the majority of traditional, small towns with large numbers of Jews, among them, Kłobuck, Krzepice, Przyrów, Janów, Koniecpol and Żarki.

To some extent, Jews benefitted from the reforms introduced in Russia by Aleksander II. But, after his assassination in 1881, the Russian authorities issued further anti-Jewish regulations aimed at further removing Jews from villages. It was only in the towns where they could undertake trade and craft. Firstly, this led to Jews accumulating in their traditional places of settlement, which sometimes transformed small towns into places with a Jewish majority – for example Lelów (in 1885 - 891 Jews, i.e 75.3%⁵⁹; Przyrów (in 1880 – 1,260 Jews, 51.8%); Krzepice (in 1875 – 1,057 Jews, 49%). It ultimately hastened the process of movement into the large, industrial centres such as Łódź, Warsaw, Zagłębie Dąbrowskie and the constantly developing Częstochowa. In the second half of the 19th century, that a regional industrial centre was formed here thanks to the Warsaw-Vienna railway line which, after its opening in 1851, access to the Russian market.

The paper-making industry developed strongly, with the majority of printing houses being in the hands of Jews, among them being Wilhelm Kohn and Adolf Oderfeld⁶⁰. Jews established factories producing various products such as buttons, combs and jewellery. In 1901, Stanisław Grossman and Henryk Markusfeld opened a hat factory which employed around 450 workers, the majority of whom were women. They also became important in the production of toys.

At the end of the 19th century, large industrial plants were established which were owned by Jews or which were set up with their participation. In

⁵⁹ Stanisław Wiech, *Miasteczka guberni kieleckiej w latach 1870-1914. Zabudowa - rozwój – społeczeństwo*, Kielce 1995, p. 133, 139. In 1885, in Lelów there were 891 Jews (75.3%), Szczekociny 3,080 (72.9%) and Pilica 3,144 (63.3%).

⁶⁰ M. Mielczarek, *Pierwsze zakłady drukarskie i zakłady poligraficzne w Częstochowie*, „Ziemia Częstochowska” 11, 1976, pp. 221-284; Z. Jakubowski, *Częstochowscy Żydzi*, p. 23, p. 31

1883, Kronenberg opened the *Częstochowska* textile factory. In 1884, the *Stradom* cord factory was opened by Goldman, Oderfeld and Oppenheim (in which, after 1902, around 2,000 workers were employed). In 1888, Seweryn Lando's cellulose factory began production, employing several hundred workers. In 1896, Ginsberg, Kohn, Grossman, Markusfeld and Neuman set up the *Varta* textile factory (1,500 workers). The owner of the city's largest metal plant, *Handtke*, was Fritz Friedländer from Gliwice. Częstochowa was transformed into a major industrial centre, with a large working class, a significant proportion of which was comprised of Jewish workers⁶¹. The effect was that more and more of the region's Jewish population moved to Częstochowa.

According to the 1897 census, 19,306 Jews lived in the Częstochowa District, being 12.2% of the total residents. In Częstochowa, itself, there were 11,980 (26.6%). The decided majority were Orthodox Jews, living according to traditional customs, which is supported by the fact that as many as 97.5% of Jews spoke Yiddish⁶². Over the following decade, the number of Jews in Częstochowa almost doubled. In 1909, as many as 22,024 Jews lived here. By 1914, that number was 28,748 (31%). Other centres of Jewish residence included Krzepice (1,769), Przyrów (1,953), Kamyk (2,506, including Kłobuck, 2,200), Wancerzów 1,345 (including Mstów) and Złoty Potok (including Janów). In 1909, the number of Jews living in the Częstochowa District was 32,898, which represented 14.9% of the total population. Koniecpol had 601 Jews (8.6%)⁶³.

Jewish community councils corresponded with traditional locations - in 1902, the Częstochowa District had the following synagogue supervisors: in Częstochowa (Rabbi Nachum Asz), in Kłobuck (Lejzor Aba Zelinger), in Krzepice (Wolf Chaim Bomac), in Przyrów (Icek-Dawid Przysużer) and in Janówie (Izrael Lejbuś Berlinger). Up to the outbreak of war, this situation remained unchanged⁶⁴. In the part of the region which fell within the Kielce Province, in 1889, synagogue supervision was conducted in Lelów (Rabbi

⁶¹ Brenner L., *The Rise of the Jewish Settlement in Czestochowa 1700–1939*, (in:) *The Jews of Czestochowa* (Częstochowa, Poland), Translation of *Tshenstokhover Yidn*, ed. R. Mahler, New York 1947

[online] <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/Czestochowa/cze005.html#4> [15.04.2014]; *The Jews of Częstochowa. Coexistence – Holocaust – Memory*, pp. 123-127.

⁶² *Pierwaja Wsieobszczaja pieriepis nasielienija Rossijskoj Impieri 1897 goda. T.56: Pietrokowskaja gubernija*, ed. N. A. Trojnickij, St. Petersburg 1903, p. 3, 90-91, 94.

⁶³ *Rocznik statystyczny Królestwa Polskiego. Rok 1914*, ed. W. Grabski, Warsaw 1915, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁴ *Pamiatnaja kniżka petrokowskoj gubernii na 1902 god*, Petrokow 1902, p. 212; *Pamiatnaja kniżka petrokowskoj gubernii na 1914 god*, Petrokow 1914, p. 170. Zelinger w Kłobucku zastąpił Icek Henoch Goldberg, Przysużera w Przyrowie Gersz Szilewicz.

Moszek Josed Janowski), in Pilica (Pinkus Rotenberg), in Szczekociny (Fiszel Froim Halemner), as well as in Konicopol⁶⁵.

Apart from the official community rabbis, active within Częstochowa and its nearby localities, there were the leaders of the various groups of Hassidim, for example, Dawid Aaron, son of Yakob Arie of Turzysk, of the Chernobyl dynasty. He was active, during the years 1906-1926 in Żarki, then later in Częstochowa. Prior to World War I, in Częstochowa alone, there were *shtiebels* of followers of almost all Hassidic dynasties, beginning with the most influential, being the *tzaddiks* of Ger (Góra Kalwaria, near Warsaw), or Aleksander (Aleksandrów), Radomsk, Kromolów and others⁶⁶.

From 1893, when the latter began building their monumental synagogue in Częstochowa (the so-called *New Synagogue*), there were disputes between the Orthodox and Hassidic majority and the, as a rule, wealthier families, the so-called “progressives”, who wanted changes in Jewish life and cultures. In 1900, the *Zgromadzenie Postępowej Synagogi* (Progressive Synagogue Congregation) was established in Częstochowa⁶⁷. Thanks to support from the wealthiest local Jews, among them Henryk Markusfeld, the New Synagogue boasted a school for cantors (*chazanim*) headed, from 1906 to 1913, by Abraham Ber Birnbojm⁶⁸. There were also traditional fraternal organisations such as the *Chevra Kadisha* burial society, the association caring for the sick *Bikur Cholim*, the *Beis Lechem* society (which provided kitchens which fed the poor) and others which provided lodgings for visiting Jews or helped provide dowries for girls from poor families.

9. From the end of the 19th century, and especially following the 1905 revolution, Jews became more and more active in public life, be it in Polish or Russian secular organisations or in establishing their own. Częstochowa saw the development of the liveliest social and political activity, which went beyond the traditional framework of Jewish communal activity. Due to the bans imposed by the Russian authorities, Jews, mainly coming from the wealthier, assimilated families, initially began being involved in charitable organisations which benefitted the population as a whole, such as branches of the Volunteer Fire Service which, apart from Poles, also had Evangelical and Jewish members. Together, they also belonged to the Polish Esperanto Society, as well as loan

⁶⁵ S. Wiech, *Miasteczka guberni kieleckiej*, p. 192.

⁶⁶ W. Paszkowski, *Na częstochowskim Cmentarzu Żydowskim*, pp. 291-295; J. Mizgalski, *Życie codzienne Żydów w Częstochowie w II Rzeczpospolitej*, w: *Życie codzienne w Częstochowie w XIX i XX wieku*, ed. R. Szwed, W. Palus, Częstochowa 1999, pp. 144-145.

⁶⁷ AP Kielce, Urząd Wojewódzki Kielecki, File No. 3886. Por. W. Paszkowski, *Na częstochowskim Cmentarzu*, pp. 285-288.

⁶⁸ Juliusz Sętowski, *Markusfeldowie. Wizerunek rodu częstochowskich przemysłowców, filantropów i społeczników*, w: *Żydzi częstochowianie*, pp. 226-232; J. Mizgalski, *Tożsamość polityczna polskich Żydów*, p. 263.

organisations and societies which, for example, were registered in Częstochowa in 1901. In 1902, Jews comprised almost half the membership (204 out of 417)⁶⁹. Apart from these, there were mutual loan funds, such as the one established in Częstochowa in 1900, the membership of which also included Catholics and Orthodox Christians. In 1904, the registration of a mutual loan fund was refused because its founders were mostly Jews⁷⁰. The Częstochowa Medical Society was established even before the 1905 revolution, its membership being, in large part, Jewish. In 1907, Poles, with the support of a few assimilated, pro-Polish Jews, registered the Polish Medical Society in Częstochowa.

As the first independent Jewish association, the *Żydowskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynne* (Jewish Charitable Society) was registered in 1899 in Częstochowa. Among other activities, it ran an orphanage for children, a home for the elderly and, later, built a hospital which opened in 1913.⁷¹ It operated alongside exclusively Christian organisations. In 1906, Poles and Jews, together, founded the *Stowarzyszenie Wzajemnej Pomocy Pracowników Przedsiębiorstw Handlowych i Przemysłowych* (Mutual Aid Society for Commercial and Industrial Enterprises Employees), the membership of which, in 1912, grew from 83 to 241. In 1909, the *Towarzystwo Pomocy Biednym Uczącym się Dzieciom Żydowskim* (Aid Society for Poor Teachers of Jewish Children) was established. In 1910, the “*Gemilas Chasodim*” *Stowarzyszenie Wzajemnej Pomocy Handlarzy i Rzemieślników Żydów* (Society for the Support of Poor Tradesmen and Craftsmen) began in Częstochowa⁷². In smaller localities, communal life developed more slowly.

The “*Lira*” *Żydowskie Towarzystwo Muzyczno-Literackie* (Jewish Music-Literary Society) was founded in 1908, its long-serving president being Henryk Markusfeld. In the main, its membership was drawn from liberal professionals and industrialists, aspiring towards assimilation. Its aim was to support activities which promoted a universal Polish culture and, sometimes, also Jewish. It had a drama section, although the first Jewish productions, coming from a Purim tradition, had already taken place by 1905. Another group of amateurs formed the *Miłośnicy Żydowskiej Sztuki Teatralnej* (Friends of Jewish Theatrical Plays) society, which, until 1918, organised performances with the help of a hired director, Hersz Gotajner. Many performances took place in the home of the

⁶⁹ Wojciech Jaworski, *Przemiany legalnego życia społecznego w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1864 – 1914*, Sosnowiec 2006, p. 124.

⁷⁰ It was similar in Żarki in 1900 and 1905. (ibidem, pp. 73-74, 131).

⁷¹ Mieczysław Wyględowski, *Historia Szpitala im. L. Rydygiera*, in: *Jubileusz 75-lecia Szpitala Chirurgicznego im. dr Ludwika Rydygiera w Częstochowie*, ed. Lesław Rudziński i in., Częstochowa 1988.

⁷² W. Jaworski, *Przemiany legalnego życia*. p. 172, 184, 207.

Wolberg family on the city's central avenue. A permanent summer theatre was established in 1915⁷³.

The development of community life was associated with transformations in education. In accordance with the traditional model, every male Jew, after a period in a *cheder* (a religious elementary school), sooner or later, studied at a higher level school (a *yeshivah*). *Cheders*, run by private teachers (*melameds*), existed in every notable Jewish centre. Teachers were often employed by the Jewish Community Council, which also ran schools for poorer Jewish children (*Talmud Torah*), as well as rooms for the study of Jewish holy books (*Beit Ha-Midrash*). In 1905, in Częstochowa itself, there were about 50 *cheders*, attended by around 4,000 students. In 1912, there were 32 *cheders*⁷⁴.

Education, based solely on religion, ceased being sufficient by the 19th century. Therefore, wealthier families sent their children to state schools and, in the second half of the 19th century, due to the large number wishing to attend, they began establishing their own elementary schools, with modern programs taught in Polish or Russian. Up to the outbreak of World War I, a dozen or so Jewish elementary schools had been successfully started, which were attended by almost one thousand Jewish children. By 1912, there were also seven private kindergartens⁷⁵. In 1897, the *Szkoła Rzemiosł dla Żydów* (Trade School for Jews) was established which educated mechanics, locksmiths, carpenters and electricians. In other places within the region, there were only religious schools. Children from wealthier families attended state schools.

With the progress in education came a greater readership of books and the press. In the second half of the 19th century, Częstochowa residents read, among others, Polish-language magazines published in Warsaw (*Jutrzenka*, *Izraelita*). By the end of the 19th century, Yiddish-language, Jewish newspapers were also available (*Hajnt*, *Moment*). Both intellectual and worker organisations established libraries, with books in both the Polish and Yiddish languages. By 1914, Częstochowa had its own, local, Jewish newspapers - *Czenstochower Reklamenblatt* (in 1912), the workers' *Unzer Cajtung* as well as *Czenstochower Wochenblatt* (in 1913) and, later, *Czenstochower Tagblatt*⁷⁶. One could subscribe to a press published in other centres by political parties, especially by the Zionists from the end of the 19th century, as well as the Bund, whose activities intensified during the period of the 1905 revolution.

⁷³ Marta Meducka, *Udział Żydów częstochowian w kulturze miasta*, w: *Żydzi częstochowianie*, pp. 189-191. Szerzej Agnieszka Pobratyn, *Kultura teatralna częstochowskich Żydów. Stan i perspektywy badań*, w niniejszej publikacji.

⁷⁴ Z. Jakubowski, *Częstochowscy Żydzi*, p. 16; Zbigniew Grządzielski, *Z problemów opieki i kształcenia młodzieży żydowskiej w Częstochowie w latach 1912-1939*, w: *Z dziejów Żydów w Częstochowie*, p. 45.

⁷⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 46-62.

⁷⁶ J. Mizgalski, *Życie społeczne częstochowskich Żydów w XX wieku przed holocaustem*, (in:) *Z dziejów Żydów w Częstochowie*, pp. 252-253.

Following the outbreak of war, and especially the occupation of the Congress Kingdom of Poland by the Germans and Austro-Hungarians, the situation of both Poles and Jews underwent major changes, among which were attempts by the occupiers to recruit locals for their own political purposes. This took place, in particular, after the so-called *Declaration of Two Emperors*, dated 5th November 1916, which announced a Kingdom of Poland, controlled by the Central Powers.

The scope of local government was to be broadened. In the spring of 1917, a City Council in Częstochowa was appointed pursuant to an agreement between Polish and Jewish parties – 23 of its members were Poles, with 13 being Jewish⁷⁷. Societies were free to operate, especially the charitable and educational. The *Stowarzyszenie Żydowskiej Młodzieży* (Jewish Youth Association) was set up in Krzepice. In Częstochowa, the *Strzecha Dziecięca im. I. L. Pereca* (I.L.Perec Children's Thatch) began, aimed at improving the living conditions of pre-school children. Others to begin included the *Towarzystwo Żydowskich Szkół Średnich i Powszechnych* (Association of Jewish Middle and Comprehensive Schools), which established separate male and female junior high schools, under a common directorship.

Groups, willing to integrate into Polish culture and with the support of the municipal authorities, conducted courses for illiterate Jews⁷⁸. The private *Szkoła Sztuk Pięknych* (School of Fine Arts) was opened in 1916. It was run by Perec Willenberg, a student of Repin and Gerson. Also in 1916, the *Syjonistyczne Stowarzyszenie Gimnastyczne* (Zionist Gymnastics Association) was established, but was rapidly renamed the *Żydowskie Towarzystwo-Gimnastyczno-Sportowe* (Jewish Gymnastics-Sports Association)⁷⁹. In May 1916, on the anniversary of the 3rd May Constitution, a celebration took place in the synagogue, led by Rabbi Nachum Asz. During the event, the military standards, stored by the Jews, were displayed for the first time. They were given to the Jews, to hide for safekeeping, by Polish soldiers retreating from Moscow in 1813⁸⁰.

⁷⁷ F. Sobalski, *Materiały do stosunków społeczno-gospodarczych Częstochowy w latach pierwszej wojny światowej*, „Ziemia Częstochowska” 1991, Vol. 17, pp. 172-197.

⁷⁸ This should be interpreted as not having knowledge of the Polish language, and not as an inability to read and write.

⁷⁹ J. Sętowski, *Z dziejów Żydowskiego Towarzystwa Gimnastyczno-Sportowego w Częstochowie (1915-1933)*, in: *Tożsamość a stereotypy. Żydzi i Polacy*, ed. J. Mizgalski, M. Soja, Częstochowa 2014, p. 255.

⁸⁰ *Goniec Częstochowski* No 103 dated 7th May 1916; *The Jews of Częstochowa. Coexistence – Holocaust – Memory / Żydzi – Częstochowianie. Współistnienie – Holocaust – Pamięć*, ed. J. Mizgalski, Częstochowa 2005, pp. 195-196.