

**Elżbieta Surma-Jończyk, Ewa Dubaj:**

**SOURCES, IN THE STATE ARCHIVE IN CZĘSTOCHOWA,  
FOR RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF  
THE CZĘSTOCHOWA JEWISH COMMUNITY TO 1939**

The State Archive in Częstochowa is an institution which was established by order of the Minister of Education on 21st July 1950. One of its main tasks is to collect, protect and make available archival material from the former Częstochowa Province which existed between 1975 and 1998. Material stored in the Archive derives from the 19th and 20th centuries, with a few documents originating from the 17th and 18th centuries. The most important archives include state and local government records – general and specific, amongst which, deserving of special attention, are the records of the City of Częstochowa from the years 1759-1948, records of judicial institutions (the courts and prosecutor's offices), notaries records, records of industrial plants, craft guilds, banks, cooperatives and registries of different religions.

Despite the fact that there are a good many gaps in the stored collections (a lack of records from 19th century provincial and gubernatorial institutions and records from the periods of both World Wars), the materials of the State Archive in Częstochowa constitutes an invaluable, cultural resource for researching the history of Częstochowa and the region.

Our institution contains resources for the research of the Jews in Poland, dating up to 1939, as can be found in almost every archival complex. Some of these resources have been explored in detail. However, others still await further discovery.

In 2001, the Managing Authority of State Archives (*Naczelna Dyrekcja Archiwów Państwowych*) circulated a book entitled “*Źródła archiwalne do badań dziejów Żydów w Polsce*” (“Archival Sources for Researching the History of Jews in Poland”), a collective work under the academic editorship of Bolesław Woszczyński and Violetta Urbaniak., It contained the preliminary results of research conducted, within all State Archives in Poland, of archival sources contained therein on the subject of Judaica. The book contained an article by Przemysław Snoch entitled “*Materiały do dziejów Żydów w zasobie Archiwum Państwowego w Częstochowie*” (“Materials on the History of the Jews in the Sources of the

State Archives in Częstochowa”)<sup>1</sup>, being the results of preliminary research, conducted at that time, by the author.

In 2004, further research was conducted by Archive Director Elżbieta Surma-Jończyk, the results of which were presented in the exhibition “The Jews of Częstochowa”, and published in the book of papers presented at the academic conference, “The Jewish of Częstochowa – Co-existence, Holocaust, Memory”, held in Częstochowa on 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> April 2004<sup>2</sup>. The exhibition was displayed in Częstochowa and Warsaw in 2004. It travelled to the United States, where it went on show in, among other places, New York, New Jersey and Cincinnati, before returning to Częstochowa. The exhibition’s return to Częstochowa and the idea to provide a permanent home for an exhibition on the history of Częstochowa Jews became a monograph for motivating the broadening of further research after 2004. That task was undertaken by Ewa Dubaj, Department I Manager of the State Archives in Częstochowa, who systemised documents discovered earlier, and broadened research by including material which had been included into the archive inventory after 2004.

Preliminary archival research conducted at the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 encompassed archival resources, but also the Archives library collection. This occurred because, in this rich library, they are legal documents regulating the functioning of the Jewish community within the Duchy of Warsaw and within the Congress Kingdom of Poland. Especially valuable top historians are the almost complete of orders by the authorities contained within the Kalisz Registers Department<sup>3</sup>, from the years 1809-1844 and within the Congress Kingdom of Poland Registers<sup>4</sup> from 1818-1870. Amongst those documents are:

- A decree by King Fryderyk August, dated 17th October 1808, suspending, for a period of ten years, the political rights of the Jewish population<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Archival resources for researching the history of Jews in Poland, Warsaw 2001, pp. 109-114.

<sup>2</sup> The Jews of Częstochowa – Co-existence, Holocaust, Memory, an academic conference. Częstochowa 22nd-23rd April 2004, edited by J. Mizgalski with a foreward by S. Rolat, Częstochowa, 2006, pp.233-249

<sup>3</sup> *The Kalisz Registers Department* began in 1807 after the creation of the Duchy of Warsaw. Later, in 1817, it changed its name to the *Kalisz Provincial Official Register* and, from 1845, to the *Official Register of the Province of Warsaw*.

<sup>4</sup> *The Congress Kingdom of Poland Laws Register* appeared in the years 1815 - 1871

<sup>4</sup> The Kalisz Registers Department No. 2 dated 8th January 1809 – Inventory No.: 1, p. 14: (...)

Art. 1: For the next ten years, we suspend the political rights of the Jewish residents of Our Duchy in the hope that, during that time, they will remove those hallmarks which distinguish them from other residents.

Art. 2: The above regulation will not, however, prevent Us from permitting specific persons of this faith, prior to the passage of the time mentioned above, from enjoying political rights when, on Our high favour, they have discharged those conditions which, in a separate device, we will order concerning people of the Jewish faith. (...)

- A decree by Tsar Aleksander I, dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 1821, on the matter of surnames for Jews<sup>6</sup>
- A decree by Tsar Aleksander I, dated 1st January 1822, on the termination of Jewish *kahals*<sup>7</sup>
- A decree by Tsar Aleksander I, dated 20<sup>th</sup> June 1822, on the organisation of homes for Jews throughout cities<sup>8</sup>,
- A decision by Tsar Nikolas I, dated 9<sup>th</sup> November 1853, forbidding Jewish women, who were about to get married, from shaving their heads<sup>9</sup>.

The Archive library also contains, at least in a fragmentary quantity, copies of Jewish newspapers published in Częstochowa, among them being *Das Naje Wort, Unser Czenstochower Express* and *Częstochower Cajtung*. There is almost a complete collection of *Goniec Częstochowski*<sup>10</sup>, a daily newspaper published in Częstochowa between 1906 and 1939. Reading this last collection provides rich material for research on the relations between the Jewish and Polish communities.

The State Archive in Częstochowa currently contains 1,132 archival sets, comprising 251,938 archival units, the length of shelf-space occupied by records exceeding three kilometres. The oldest documents in the archive depository are dominated by local government records. Within this group is the largest collection of documents preserved within the State Archive in Częstochowa – namely, *The Records of the City of Częstochowa*, comprising more than 14,000 individual archives from the years 1759-1948 and containing the most diverse information on the activity of the Jewish community in Częstochowa.

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<sup>6</sup> Congress Kingdom of Poland Laws Register No. 28 of 1821 (...) “Every Jew residing in the Congress Kingdom of Poland, should, within six months of the declaration date of this Act, declare and confirm, with the census of the public offices, the first name and surname which he has used to that time and that which he will use, invariably, in the future (...) Whereas, if any one of them does not have a first name and permanent surname or cannot prove this, he should declare that which he will accept and will continue to use”.

<sup>7</sup> Congress Kingdom of Poland Laws Register No. 28 of 1824., p. 275: “(...) Wishing to prevent constant complaints from all sides of Orthodox Jewry, regarding, to this time, the pressuring and oppressing of the poor by *kahals*, We have decided:

Art. 1: From the declaration date of this order, all so-called *kahals* in Orthodox Jewish communities operating within Our cities will be terminated.”

<sup>8</sup> Congress Kingdom of Poland Laws Register, Vol. 7 of 1822, p. 384

<sup>9</sup> Congress Kingdom of Poland Laws Register , Vol. 47, p. 29

<sup>10</sup> *Goniec Częstochowski* (Częstochowa Courier) – a social-cultural daily newspaper published by Franciszek Dionizy Wilkoszewski, originally under the name *Wiadomości Częstochowskie* (Częstochowa News), later *Dziennik Częstochowski* (Częstochowa Daily Newspaper) and from 01/01/1907, *Goniec Częstochowski* (Częstochowa Courier).

Following the abolition order dated 20/10/1821 (01/01/1822), on the order of the Kingdom's Viceroy, from 20/11/1822, all *kahals* within the Congress Kingdom of Poland were replaced by Jewish community councils, initially linked to parishes and, later, linked to synagogue circles managed by synagogue supervisors.

These councils performed many functions, linked to the religious life of the community, as well as with the establishment and running of hospitals, poorhouses, and care for orphans, the elderly and the maintenance of cemeteries and primary schools. They were also able to distribute and collect membership dues. Moreover, the councils represented their communities to state and municipal authorities, issued "Certificates of Poverty", certifications for the obtaining of a passport, etc.

The oldest, individual records, from the Old Polish period, concerning the Jewish community in Częstochowa, can be found in the Registers of the Częstochowa City Council<sup>11</sup>. Moreover, in this section, a large number of archival documents can be found from the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which include correspondence on the matter of granting Orthodox Jews permission to live in the city, leasing income matters, inventories following the death of Orthodox Jews and the care of children following the death of their parents. Amongst the most significant are "A List of Orthodox Jews Who Have Illegally Insinuated Themselves Into the City", dated 10th August 1826, containing the names of ninety individuals<sup>12</sup>, as well as "*A List of Names of Registered Orthodox Jews Aged From 20 to 30, Including Those Counted by City Mayors in 1865*", encompassing 178 surnames<sup>13</sup>.

Within "*Evidence of Cash Fund Accounts of Synagogues in the City of Częstochowa*" for 1841, one can find, among other things, bills for medicines for the Jewish Hospital from the pharmacy of F.Kamieński, bills for the renovation of the baths, for the renovation of the school, for accompanying the cantor, a list of costs pertaining to the treatment of Orthodox Jew Josef Wolf in the Częstochowa Municipal Hospital, a list of poor Jews to whom Pesach

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<sup>11</sup> AP Czwa, Records of the City of Częstochowa, Ref. 1, Register of the City of Częstochowa 1759-1765 and Ref. 14346, Register of the City Council of Częstochowa 1766-1774

<sup>12</sup> AP Czwa, City of Częstochowa Record, Ref. 33,

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., Ref. 224

flour had been distributed, as well as information drawn up by the Synagogue Supervisor showing that income from weddings was used to pay a salary to the rabbi.

In *“A Listing of Real Estate and Paraphernalia Owned, in 1830, by the Kahal of the City of Częstochowa”*, it shows that the Jewish Community Council, at the time, owned:

- *“a brick synagogue comprising a section for men and a section for women”*
- *“a brick public school”*
- *“a brick public baths”*
- *“a brick public hospital”*
- *“a cemetery encircled by a wall”*
- *“a vaulted archive”*.

Individual items were included in a detailed listing of equipment owned. For example, in the hospital there was *“a large pan and two smaller, copper ones, a bed with bedding, i.e. a feather quilt, pillows and a sheet, three black mattresses, two spades with metal fittings, two without fittings, stretchers, a hearse with a coffin stand painted black”*.

*“Synagogue Business Records”*, from 1834-1846, are made up of *“synagogue cash accounts”* from 1843-1847, receipts for accounts as well as registers of income and expenditure of synagogue funds from 1835-1847. From the Russian period, namely records generated after 1867, there are quite a lot of similar records, i.e. expenses incurred on behalf of the community, taxation arrears, Council budgets and records relating to *cheders*. For example:

- *“Synagogue, synagogue caretaking and other synagogue fees” – 1883-1884<sup>14</sup>*
- *“Rabbinic and synagogue, synagogue caretaking and other synagogue fees” – 1883-1884<sup>15</sup>*
- *“Fees regarding the synagogue and cheders” – 1887-1888<sup>16</sup>*.

An important group of material for researching the history of Częstochowa Jews includes the *Registers of Permanent Residents of the City of Częstochowa* which take in the years 1870-1930. These Registers, indexed alphabetically, include a great deal of valuable information

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Ref. 734

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., Ref. 759

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., Ref. 825

about individuals and also entire families, such as date and place of birth, date and place of death, marital status, social origins and religion.

Thanks to these very Registers, we can establish when and where Rabbi Nachum Asz and his wife Sura Asz (nee Arensztajn) were born. She died on 24th January 1928 in Częstochowa<sup>17</sup>.

In *The Records of the City of Częstochowa* material can also be found concerning:

- education in the Jewish community of Częstochowa, including records concerning *cheders* from 1887-1894 and 1902-1903<sup>18</sup>, records of the Towarzystwa Opieki Szkolnej (The Society for the Care of Schools)<sup>19</sup>, Związku Szerzenia Oświaty wśród Żydów (The Union for Spreading Education Amongst Jews)<sup>20</sup>, Szkoły Przemysłowej Rzemieślniczej dla Żydów w Częstochowie (The Industrial Trade School for Jews in Częstochowa)<sup>21</sup>, Szkoły Doksztalającej Zawodowej dla Terminatorów Żydowskich (The Trade School for Jewish Apprentices)<sup>22</sup>, the “Talmud Torah” elementary school from 1915-1918<sup>23</sup>, the comprehensive school, together with schedules and timetables of school activities<sup>24</sup>, courses for the illiterate<sup>25</sup>, the payment of wages for teachers of religion in the city’s Jewish schools from 1916<sup>26</sup>,
- health and social welfare, among others, including the Jewish Hospital in Zawodzie from the years 1907-1913 (providing details about the land upon which the hospital was built, a map of the area, lists of patients<sup>27</sup>), Towarzystwa Dobroczynności dla Żydów (Charitable Society for Jews)<sup>28</sup>, Robotniczej Strzechy Dziecięcej (Workers Children’s Shelter)<sup>29</sup>, Towarzystwa Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej (The

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<sup>17</sup> In a remark in the Register, there is also a death record number, i.e. 21/1928.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Ref. 836, 856, 906, 970, 995, 1019, 1218, 1243

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Ref. 4921, 7121

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., Ref. 4929, 7433, 7434

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7474, 8138

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7474

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7408

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., Ref. 4907, 4912, 4913, 4918, 4919, 4922, 4931, 4939, 7410

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., Ref. 4922, 4939, 7456

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7087

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Ref. 2717, 7525, 7630

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7393

<sup>29</sup> tamże, sygn. 7528

Society for Health Care of the Jewish Population)<sup>30</sup> (correspondences, articles of association), the Kremski brothers' baths<sup>31</sup>

- commercial life. Among others, including lists of workers in Częstochowa enterprises, for example “*Wykaz handli i przedsiębiorstw ulicami*” (*A List of Traders and Enterprises by Street*) from 1879<sup>32</sup>, including “A list of workers in the Printing House of A.Kohn and A.Oderfeld”, a list of companies from 1914<sup>33</sup> and a list of Jewish craftsmen from, for example, 1928<sup>34</sup>. Of that list, 1,197 registered craftsmen ran independent workshops within the city of Częstochowa
- daily life, including the participation of the Jewish community in the city's important events, for example the visit of President Mościcki to Częstochowa in 1932<sup>35</sup>, the visit of Marshal Foch in 1923<sup>36</sup> and the celebration of the anniversary of Polish independence (correspondence regarding a celebration service in the Synagogue)<sup>37</sup>.

In addition, the *Records of the City of Częstochowa* contains more than 3,000 individual sets of archival records concerning investment construction, i.e. technical plans, cost estimates, rough plans and maps of sites, etc. That documentation, held in the Technical Department, constitutes valuable supplementary information to the records. Apart from plans of houses and small industrial plants, plans for Jewish institutions, organisations and associations can also be found here. These include a design for a vinegar factory for S. Częstochowski and J. Nussbaum in 1926<sup>38</sup>, a plan for Kenigsberg's premises for the manufacture of chemical-galvanised-technical products from 1934<sup>39</sup>, a plan to construct a single-storey building on real estate belonging to a gardening firm at ul. Rolnicza 89 in Częstochowa in 1935<sup>40</sup>, a building plan for the Craft School for Jews at ulica Nadrzeczna 7 in 1938<sup>41</sup>, a plan for the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., Ref. 7923

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., Ref. 360, 8363

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., Ref. 3331

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., Ref. 4934

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., Ref. 8680

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., Ref. 8038

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., Ref. 5258

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., Ref. 5287, 7874

<sup>38</sup> AP Czwa, Records of the City of Częstochowa, Technical Department, Ref. 9 859

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., Ref. 12199

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., Ref. 12531

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., Ref. 13527

reconstruction of a laundry and boiler room for the Jewish hospital in Zawodzie in 1933<sup>42</sup>, a plan for the reconstruction of a boiler room on property at ul. Garibaldiego 18 in 1933<sup>43</sup> and plans for the addition of showers to the existing Kremiski Brothers Baths at ul. Strażackiej 4 in 1931<sup>44</sup>.

Register records from the beginning of the 19th century form an important archival resource. Civil registries and registers were introduced, together with the Napoleonic Code, into the Congress Kingdom of Poland. In 1808, a decree of Fryderyk August, Saxon king and prince of Warsaw, introduced registry office records. In principle, secular registrars were to maintain registers but, due to a lack of appropriately educated individuals, clergymen performed the task. That situation continued until 1825 when civil registry records were merged with church registers. By a decision of the viceroy on 3rd November 1825, local mayors were appointed to create records for non-Christians, including Jews. Additionally, by a decision of the Administrative Council on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1830, rabbis were obliged to create a record following the conduct of religious rites.

Civil registers contain many items of valuable personal information, i.e. age, marital status, profession, parents' address, baptised children, newly-weds, surnames and marital status of witnesses to individual events or even, in some instances, the cause of death.

The State Archives in Częstochowa stores the *Akta Stanu Cywilnego Okręgu Bóżniczego w Częstochowie z lat 1826-1915 (Civil Register of Local Synagogues in Częstochowa 1826-1915)*, which is comprised of 391 individual archives. These are registers containing records of births, marriages and deaths. Among them, there are also a certain number of records containing proofs and annexes to marriage records. Amongst this material, there are birth records of individuals coming from outside the council area, death records of spouses where widows and widowers remarrying and divorce documents, etc. which confirm the eligibility of both parties to remarry.

Records of Jews, prior to 1826, can be found within *Akta Stanu Cywilnego Parafii Rzymskokatolickiej św. Zygmunta w Częstochowie (The Civil Register of the Roman*

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., Ref. 11632, 11762

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., Ref. 11857 - the Mikveh was located on this site.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Ref.10992



*Catholic Parish of St. Zygmunt in Częstochowa*), in which the oldest notations date back to 1808.

In “*Księżce urodzeń Parafii Częstochowskiej w powiecie częstochowskim departamencie kaliskim z lat 1808/1809*” (*Births Register of the Parish of Częstochowa in the Częstochowa District of the Kalisz Department 1808-1809*)<sup>45</sup> there are fifteen records of Jewish births. The first record relates to a resident of Częstochowa – Record No.2 of 1809.

This valuable information concerning the beginnings of Jewish settlement in Częstochowa is completed by annexes to marriage records from 1809 to 1826. Information included in these documents, in the main, concern events from the end of the 18th century and served the needs of the Jewish Częstochowa Council of Elders in ascertaining the eligibility of two people to get married. Today, it represents a valuable research resource for, among others, genealogists.

An important historical source, unfairly undervalued and hence relatively used by researchers, are the notary records. The legacy left by Częstochowa’s notaries is extremely rich. The twenty three notary’s offices, which operated in Częstochowa between 1809 and 1945, left a rich amount of material for research. These include sale-purchase contracts<sup>46</sup>, leases and commercial contracts, prenuptial agreements, wills, testimonies, donations, etc. There is a particularly large amount of material from the range of commercial and social life, as well as wills to which lists of the assets of the deceased are often attached, along with instructions on how to distribute them. For quite a few years, Dr hab. Dariusz Złotkowski researched, as historical sources, wills stored in the State Archive in Częstochowa. He published the results of his research in three publications entitled “*Knowing well it is the decree of Almighty God as to who is born and who dies... Wills from the first half of the 19th century in the records of Częstochowa notaries*”, published in 2005, 2006 and 2011. In the light of the above research, and even though, in 1808, Jews constituted a mere 26% of the population of Old Częstochowa, their participation in economic life and, consequently, social life, was significant.

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<sup>45</sup> AP Czwa, Akta stanu cywilnego Parafii Rzymskokatolickiej św. Zygmunta w Częstochowie, Ref. 1

<sup>46</sup> An example of a commercial transaction would not be just for real estate or raw materials, but also for benches for the synagogue, e.g. Notary Record No. 253/ 1821, *The notary office of Antoni Truszkowski in Częstochowa*.

Also amongst the special civil service records are those produced by the *Urząd Skarbowy w Częstochowie (Censtochovskoe Kazennoe Upravlenije – Taxation Office in Częstochowa) between 1829 and 1873*<sup>47</sup>. They contain interesting material concerning regulations connected with the collection of the Kosher Tax, records concerning rental income and regarding matters of “abuse” (e.g. “records of defrauding Bavarian beer”). “Records concerning the propination income of Orthodox Jews in both towns and villages” from the years 1829-1865 or “Records concerning Kosher Tax regulations in the Congress Kingdom of Poland” from the years 1843-1859 are examples of material which serve research into socio-economic relations, within Poland, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the records of the *Towarzystwo Kredytowe Miasta Częstochowy (Loan Society of the City of Częstochowa)* from the years 1899 to 1950 include records concerning loans for the purchase of real estate which can be used to reconstruct the topography of Jewish ownership in the city. The Society was established in 1898 and, until 1918, operated under the name *Čenstochovskoe Gorodskoe Kreditnoe Obščestvo*. However, during World War II, it was known as the *Tschenstochauer Städtische Kreditverein*.

The largest and most diverse number of sources for researching the history of the Jewish community of Częstochowa comes from the inter-War period. Only the most important of these will be discussed here. Amongst those are, above all, the general and special civil service records. The general administration to 1945 within the reserves of the State Archive in Częstochowa is represented by institutions at the district level. The oldest and the most diverse sources can be found within the materials from the *Starostwo Powiatowe Częstochowskie z lat 1919-1939 (District Office of the Częstochowa District from 1919-1939)*.

This collection contains records arising from the activities of the District Office (Starostwo), taking in the area of the city of Częstochowa (disconnected as the *Starostwo Grodzkie*), Janów, Krzepice, Mstów, Olsztyn and Przyrów, as well as twenty two village communities. Amongst the 1,145 individual archives in this collection one can find material relating to Jewish organisations and associations which were active in Częstochowa. These include:

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<sup>47</sup> The Tax Office probably already existed in Częstochowa from the time of the Duchy of Warsaw. It ceased activity in 1873. A residual collection remains comprising fifty five individual archives.

- Związku Żydowskich Inwalidów Wojennych, Wdów i Sierot Wojennych (The Union of Jewish War Invalids, Widows and Orphans)<sup>48</sup>
- Żydowskiego Związku Zawodowego Majstrów Piekarskich (The Jewish Trade Union of Master Bakers)<sup>49</sup>
- Stowarzyszenia “Strzecha Robotnicza” (The Workers’ Thatch Association)<sup>50</sup>
- Komitetu Pomocy Studentom Żydom „Auxilium Academicum Judaicum” Oddział w Częstochowie (The Częstochowa branch of the “Auxilium Academicum Judaicum” Committee to Help Jewish Students)<sup>51</sup>
- Stowarzyszenia Specjalnej Nauki Biblii (Special Bible Study Society)<sup>52</sup>
- Stowarzyszenia „Ahawaj Toratr” (“Ahavat Torah” Association)<sup>53</sup>
- Żydowskiego Towarzystwo Gimnastyczno-Sportowego (Jewish Gymnastic-Sports Association)<sup>54</sup>
- Towarzystwa Pomocy przeciw Nędzy Wyjątkowej “Bajs-Lachem” - Dom Chleba Oddział w Częstochowie (The Częstochowa branch of the “Beis Lechem” Aid Society Against Extreme Poverty)<sup>55</sup>
- Żydowskiego Towarzystwa Krajoznawczego (Jewish Tourism Society)<sup>56</sup>
- Stowarzyszenia “Szomraj Szabos W’hadas” – Przestrzeganie Soboty i Głównych Zasad Religii (“Shomrei Shabbos Ve Hadas” Association for the Keeping of Saturdays and the Main Principles of the Religion)<sup>57</sup>
- Stowarzyszenia Kobiet Żydowskich „Wizo” Oddział w Częstochowie The Częstochowa branch of “WIZO, a Jewish women’s organisation)<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> State Archive in Częstochowa, District Office in Częstochowa, Ref. 43, 49 contains, among other material, correspondence regarding the registration of the union and its constitution

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. Ref. 47, contains, among other material, regarding the registration of the union and confirmation of its constitution, a comparison of its constitution with pre-War constitution of that union, the make-up of its board

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, information of the organisation’s founding members, its constitution and the make-up of its board

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, correspondence on the matter of fair organisation, make-up of its committee

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, its constitution and information about its founding members

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, correspondence on the registration of the organisation

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, correspondence concerning its registration, constitution and the make-up of its board

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, correspondence from the Central Board of the organisation regarding the registration of the local branch, confirmation of the constitution, a list of members, a list of members of the organisation’s board

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., contains, among other materials, the constitution.

- Towarzystwa Ochrony Zdrowia Ludności Żydowskiej Oddział w Częstochowie (The Częstochowa branch of the Society for the Protection of the Health of the Jewish Population)<sup>59</sup>
- Żydowskiego Związku Handlu Starzyzną (Jewish Union of Junk Traders)<sup>60</sup>.

Moreover, in this section, one can also find a large amount of material concerning prayer-houses located in various parts of the city, some with sketches or plans of the buildings, minutes of the District Office's Sanitary Committee, correspondence concerning permission to conduct prayer services and various certifications issued by the Jewish Community Council<sup>61</sup>. In one file, entitled "*Sprawy Gminy Wyznaniowej Żydowskiej*" ("*Jewish Community Council Matters*") from 1922-1929, one can find the registration cards of Jewish temples, among them the Community Synagogue (the "Old Synagogue") at ul. Nadrzeczna 32 and the Nowa Synagoga (the "New Synagogue") at ul. Wilsona 11 and of the clergy, including Chief Rabbi Nachum Asz and Rabbis J. Prokosz, N. Grynfield and J. Klajnplatz. There is also the registration card for the Jewish Community Council in Częstochowa which includes details such as offices, date of formation, address, number of prayer-houses, information regarding the Council's assets, the number of members, its annual budget, the composition of the Council's Board and the composition of the Council itself<sup>62</sup>.

In another archival file there are the records of elections to the Board and Committee of the Jewish Community Council of Częstochowa from the years 1930-1932<sup>63</sup>.

Among items within "*Zmiany wyznań*" ("*Change of Faith*") from 1922-1934, one can find correspondence, including several applications, to the District Administrator for the registration of a change of religion (from Jewish to Catholic, or vice-versa), as well as the renouncing of the Jewish faith so as to register as a non-believer<sup>64</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., ref. 65

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., ref. 364, 365, 366

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., ref. 366

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., ref. 367

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., ref. 368

This section also contains documents for researching the economic life of Częstochowa during the inter-War period, including Jewish entrepreneurs. For example, there is correspondence with the District Administrator on various commercial matters, plans for factories and small industrial plants and industrial certifications<sup>65</sup>. Although in a much smaller quantity, there is material for researching cultural issues such as the history of the Jewish Workers Library (correspondence from the years 1928-1930 regarding the library, a list of books) and plans for Wolberg's cinema-theatre on al. Marii Panny 12, from 1923<sup>66</sup>.

The administration records also include the *Wydział Powiatowy w Częstochowie z lat 1919-1939 (Częstochowa District Department 1919-1939)*. Here one can find material which includes Jews such as, lists of the unemployed, lists of city and town councillors, merchants, doctors and farmers.

Another group of records encompasses the *Starostwo Grodzkie Częstochowskie z lat 1933-1939 (Częstochowa District Town Office 1933-1939)*, in which can be found material concerning religious councils such as council budgets from specific years, members of boards and committees, council registration cards, lists of clergy and places of worship, as well as correspondence on matters such as the creation of prayer-houses<sup>67</sup>.

The minutes of meetings of the Jewish Community Council deserve special attention. They include drafts of budgets as well as material regarding Jewish guilds such as the Guild of Jewish Tinsmiths and Roofers<sup>68</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Hairdressers and Wigmakers<sup>69</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Tailors<sup>70</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Furriers and Milliners<sup>71</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Metalworkers<sup>72</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Bakers and Pastry Cooks<sup>73</sup>, the Guild of Jewish

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, Ref. 537, 542.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., Ref. 76; "Teatr u Wolbergów" – the colloquial name used by city residents. Its first official name was the "Apollo Theatre", later, from 1915, the "Teatr Nowości" and, finally, from 1919 "Teatr Polonia"

<sup>67</sup> APCzwa, Starostwo Grodzkie Częstochowskie, Ref. 56-64

<sup>68</sup> APCzwa, Starostwo Grodzkie Częstochowskie, Ref. 215

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, Ref. 216

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, Ref. 217

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, Ref. 219

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, Ref. 220

Butchers and Smallgoods Makers<sup>74</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Leather Workers<sup>75</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Carpenters and Turners<sup>76</sup>, the Guild of Jewish Upholsterers and Brush-makers<sup>77</sup>.

The above material also contains the minutes of guild meetings, constitutions, budget balance sheets, lists of members and amounts of fees paid.

Other files worth attention are those entitled “*Personel sanitarny: lekarze, dentyści, farmaceuci, felczerzy*” (“*Sanitary Personnel: Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, Paramedics*”) from the years 1935-1937. These records contain correspondence, including applications for registration in the liberal professions and for the conducting of practices. These applications were directed to the Health Department of the Kielce Provincial Office.

Within the section of the Częstochowa District Department one can also find monthly reports by the municipal District Administrator on the socio-economic situation within the District Office’s area. These also include matters relating to ethnic minorities, political parties, trade unions and anti-Jewish excesses as recorded by the police<sup>78</sup>.

Amongst the records produced by the special civil service in the section *Powiatowy Urząd Ziemi w Częstochowie (District Territorial Office in Częstochowa)*<sup>79</sup> from the years 1920-1933 can be found material concerning parcels of state and private assets, the distribution of bonds, the merging and exchanging of real estate and the lending of money. The District Territorial Office in Częstochowa reach encompassed the Częstochowa and Będziń Districts, and reported to the Regional Territorial Office in Kielce. After this office was abolished in 1933, its functions were taken over by the District Administrator’s Office in Częstochowa.

*Urząd Rozjemczy do Spraw Najmu w Częstochowie (Częstochowa Leasing Mediation Office)* is another organisation worthy of attention. The Office was established in 1919 as the result of an Act dated 28<sup>th</sup> June 1919 and was intended to safeguard the interests of tenants.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., Ref. 221, 222

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., Ref. 223

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., Ref. 288-294

<sup>79</sup> Territorial Offices were established under an Act dated 6th July 1920. Their task was to introduce and strengthen a new agrarian system in accordance with principles approved by the Sejm on 10<sup>th</sup> July 1919.

This archive is incomplete, containing documents from 1921-1935 in sixty six files. The majority of its records relate to matters of setting rentals and other benefits concerning the leasing of premises, as well as records regarding evictions, e.g. “*records in the matter of Chana Gąsiorowicz and Fajgel Cymerman against Herszl Kohn regarding the setting of rental*”<sup>80</sup> or, 1934, “*records in the matter of the Mizrachi Association against C. Potasiewicz and others regarding the setting of rental*”<sup>81</sup>.

Among the court records preserved in the Archives are those deserving of special attention, such as the *Sąd Okręgowy w Piotrkowie Wydział Zamiejscowy w Częstochowie (Piotrków Circuit Court – Non-Residential Department in Częstochowa)* from 1928-1939 as well as the *Sąd Grodzki w Częstochowie (Częstochowa Municipal Court)* from 1929-1939.

The *Sąd Okręgowy w Piotrkowie Wydział Zamiejscowy w Częstochowie* was created on 24th December 1928 by a decision of the Minister of Justice. Until then, all matters were decided by the Piotrków Circuit Court.

The Non-Residential Department was divided into three sections: Civil, Criminal and Commercial Registrations. For some of these matters, this court was the “Court of First Instance”, while for matters commenced in the Municipal Court, it was the “Court of Second Instance”. For matters commenced in the Non-Residential Court, the “Court of Second Instance” was the Appeals Court in Warsaw.

Of particular interest here are records concerning commercial registrations and registration records of firms operating in Częstochowa between 1917 and 1939<sup>82</sup>.

In accordance with the regulations of the Companies Register, dated 7th November 1919, and regulations issued later by the Justice Minister, information can be found relating to companies which were required to register. This information includes:

- Entry No.u
- Company name and head office

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<sup>80</sup> AP Czwa, Urząd Rozjemczy do Spraw Najmu w Częstochowie, sygn. 31

<sup>81</sup> tamże, sygn. 59

<sup>82</sup> Zespół zawiera anterioria, którymi są akta rejestru handlowego założonego w Cesarsko-Niemieckim Sądzie Okręgowym w Częstochowie

- Name of sole trader or names of partners
- Description of business
- individual legal conditions of trading
- Legal relationship of partners
- File reference number, date of registration, signature.

For example, Business registration Vol.1, Section A, page no. 467<sup>83</sup> shows the basic information about a company called “W. Kon i Oderfeld Częstochowa”, whose owners at the time were Jakub Kon, Dawid Oderfeld, Henryk Oderfeld and Stanisław Oderfeld. The company operated as a partnership which “*exists from 1st July 1869*”. (However, its founders were Wilhelm Kohn and Adolf Oderfeld in 1869.)

Supplementary information about the company is included within “*Akta Sądu Okręgowego jako rejestrowego w Piotrkowie dotyczące firmy ‘Zakłady graficzno-papiernicze w Częstochowie Kon i Oderfeld’*” (“*Records of the Circuit Court in Piotrków Relating to the Registration of the ‘Kohn and Oderfeld Częstochowa Graphics-Paper Plant’*”)<sup>84</sup>, in which is included:

- An announcement of the company’s registration dated 22nd May 1917
- Company details at the time of registration – printing and lithography, coloured paper factory
- Location: Częstochowa, ul. Teatralna 30
- Details of prenutial agreements
- Notarised changes of company name, such as, in 1925, following the deaths of the company’s founders Wilhelm Kohn and Adolf Oderfeld, the name was changed to “Zakłady Graficzno-papiernicze w Częstochowie” (“Czestochowa Graphics-Paper Plant”)
- Original signatures of the partners.

Moreover, within the records of both the abovementioned courts, there exists a rich amount of material for researching the communal-traditional life of the Jewish population during the inter-War period of the 20th century. Within this section, there is material concerning

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<sup>83</sup> j.w. dopływ do zespołu, Ref.23/1

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Ref. 1610



corrections to civil register records (corrections to first names<sup>85</sup>, dates of birth), confirmations of death<sup>86</sup>, divorce matters<sup>87</sup>, divisions of inheritances<sup>88</sup>, as well as criminal matters, e.g. smuggling across borders, the illegal sale of currency, using another person's identification, the illegal slaughter of cattle, the defacing of sacred images, the incitement of Christians against Jews, the ownership of trademarks, etc.<sup>89</sup>.

Worthy of recommendation, especially for the research of relationships in the areas of social issues, economic issues, working conditions and apprenticeships, which also indirectly contribute to researching work conditions within the city, including the Jewish community, is the section containing records of the *Sąd Pracy w Częstochowie (Częstochowa Labour Court) from the years 1929-1939*, which include more than 3,000 individual archives.

In accordance with an order by the Polish President, dated 22nd March 1928, the Labour Court was established to *settle civil disputes, arising from labour and vocational training, between employers and employees or trainees, as well as between employees within the same enterprise, and to settle criminal matters such as the non-compliance with legal regulations concerning the hiring of employees*. And so this court had the task of settling two types of matters – civil disputes arising from work conditions, as well as criminal matters regarding non-compliance with employment regulation – work times, workers' leave, health and safety at work, etc.

The largest group of records in this section concerns payments for work done. Complainants included workers, craftsmen, caretakers, housemaids, as well as clerical workers. These records often had attached to them amounts due, workers accounts books and certificates of different kinds. Quite often, these records concern the eviction of workers from factory houses. The next group of attachments to these records are often numerous dismissals, explanations or witness statements informing the court of workers' living conditions. The majority of records emanate from between 1929 and 1933, i.e. a period of economic crisis.

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<sup>85</sup> APCzwa, Sąd Grodzki w Częstochowie, Ref. 205

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., Ref. 214 – Gerszon Chorzewski, death reported four years later due to enlistment in armed forces, Ref. 202 – Aron Najman reported three years later as being born a twin, Ref. 203 – Gryna Zysła Kajzer

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., Ref. 88, 87, 86, 80, 79, 387, 388

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., Ref. 13, 6, 7, 44, 46, 157, 163, 196, 376, 385

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., Ref. 346, 340, 389, 317, 256, 355, 359,

For example, of few of them concern:

- *Stefania Dzierzkowska v. Szpitalowi Towarzystwa Dobroczynności dla Żydów (Jewish Charitable Hospital) regarding the payment of 33zł.*<sup>90</sup>
- *Dawid Minc v. Towarzystwu Doroczynności przy gminie Żydowskiej (Jewish Community Charitable Associatio) regarding the payment of 100 zł.*<sup>91</sup>
- *Moszek Borensztajn v. Migros sp. z.o.o. regarding the payment of 1,050 zł.*<sup>92</sup>
- *Icek Mendel Moszkowicz v. Roman Staszczyk regarding eviction*<sup>93</sup>.

The State Archive in Częstochowa also contains school records, including report cards from various Jewish schools such as the Berek Joselewicz Private Co-educational Comprehensive School, Dr F Axer's High School, Comprehensive Schools 15, 13 and 5, the seven class Zofia Wainszok Co-educational Comprehensive School, as well as matriculation certificates of Jewish students<sup>94</sup>.

One of the numerous comprehensive schools active in Częstochowa, which was attended by Jewish youth, was the **No.13 Częstochowa Comprehensive School**. The Archive contains this school's records within sixty individual archives.

That school was located in Częstochowa, at ul. Narutowicza 19/23. It was established in 1921 and existed until 1939. School Principal was Nacha Szacherówna, born 6th October 1888. The archive contains records concerning organisational matters, correspondence with the Schools Inspectorate, school inventory registers, Pedagogical Council minutes books, evaluation books and duplicates of school report cards. Some of the school library's documents have also been preserved, among them three volumes of the school's pupil library inventory, the school's teacher library inventory, as well as an inventory of educational resources. A great deal of valuable information can be obtained from the reports preserved within the Archive. For example, the number of children enrolled as at 1<sup>st</sup> December 1926 was in total 547. The number in the third department was 355 children. The library at the school was established from contributions by the children, donations from the Towarzystwa

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<sup>90</sup>APCzwa, Częstochowa Labour Court, Ref. 62

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. Ref. 69

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. Ref. 139

<sup>93</sup> Częstochowa Labour Court, Ref. 923

<sup>94</sup> APCzwa, The Tadeusz Kościuszki State Male Teachers Seminary in Częstochowa, Ref. 34, 40,

Szerzenia Oświaty wśród Żydów (Association for the Promotion of Education Amongst Jews), donations from teachers and the school principal. (It was established on 12th January 1923. It held a total of 1,065 books, all in the Polish language.)

The Archive's resources also contain records of the *Sekcji Wsparcia Niezamożnej Młodzieży Szkolnej w Częstochowie przy Towarzystwie Szerzenia Oświaty wśród Żydów (Section for Supporting the Poorest School Children in Częstochowa Through the Society for the Promotion of Education Amongst Jews) from 1918 to 1924*. It is not a large archive, containing only six files. It contains material which includes information on the Section's activities such as minutes of meetings, activity reports, membership registers, etc.

The Częstochowa Archive contains a large number of records of enterprises operating in Częstochowa to 1939. Among them are also records regarding such large plants and enterprises such *A.Kohn & J.Markusfeld's Paper Factory and Mill for the years 1899-1944* or the *Częstochowa "Warta" Jute and Flax Mill S.A. for the years 1906-1945*. Jewish entrepreneurs were the founders and owners of many enterprises which were important to our city - Kohn, Sigman, Markusfeld, Oderfeld and Ginsberg are only some of these.

The above reviews takes in only the most important records created up to 1939 and which are of Jewish interest. What have been presented here are sources concerning the city of Częstochowa. But it should be remembered that there were also Jewish communities in municipalities around Częstochowa, such as in Mstów, Kłobuck, Lelów, Żarki and Janów, and even further away in Pławno, Praszka, Pajęczno and Koniecpol. And even though their history is not as richly documented through as many preserved register records, administrative records and remnants of guild records, they still deserve to be remembered as residents of the Częstochowa region.