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# EUROPEAN SPATIAL RESEARCH and POLICY

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## PART I

### THE HOLOCAUST AND ITS CONSEQUENCES IN THE SPATIAL PERSPECTIVE

Guest editors: Piotr KENDZIOREK <sup>\*</sup>, Andrzej RYKAŁA <sup>\*\*</sup>

#### FOREWORD: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND SPATIAL CONTEXT OF HOLOCAUST RESEARCH

Since the 1980s, the significance of the Holocaust has become clear to the intellectual elite in the West. It has become apparent that despite the passage of many decades since the end of the Second World War, the issue of Nazism and its crimes has continued to arouse lively public interest. At the same time, scholars and part of public opinion have realised that the Holocaust did not only involve Jews as the victims and Germans/Nazis as the perpetrators. Firstly, it was a part of an unprecedented plan to completely change demographic and socio-economic relations in the European continent in accordance with a racist ideology and the needs of German imperialism. Part of this plan was the systematic

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extermination of huge masses of people (Jews, Roma, mentally ill, Soviet prisoners of war, etc.), and these plans (which Nazis only partially succeeded in implementing as a result of their defeat in the war) particularly affected Central and Eastern Europe.

However, the extermination of Jews was of exceptional importance in the context of the overall Nazi extermination policy, as it was Jews who were assigned a unique role within the framework of the National Socialist ideology, which became the state ideology in the Third Reich. This was a radically negative role within its logic; Jews were supposed to be not only a racially inferior group to Germans, but also their eternal enemy. And even more than that, an alleged enemy of all nations, since they expressed in their racially determined action the anti-national principle as such. In other words, they were to seek the destruction of nations as separate groups, using the political instruments of democracy/liberalism, and the workers' movement/Marxism and the economic instruments of finance capital. Within the framework of the apocalyptic forecast formulated by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, they supposedly acted in a covert manner, accumulating power and ultimately leading Europe and the world to civilisational and biological destruction.

These outlandish ideas, which whole groups of German scientists in the Third Reich tried to rationalise to a supposedly scientific level, found resonance in the tradition of European anti-Semitism. This was especially true of its political dimension, which became popular especially among the impoverished petty bourgeoisie during economic crises. The events of the First World War, workers' radicalism, and the revolution in Russia, followed by the Great Depression of the late 1920s and the early 1930s, brought anti-Semitism into the political mainstream, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. The anti-Semitic character of the political programme of the nationalist right had the effect of spreading and legitimising in the consciousness of a large part of the public opinion of these countries the conviction that Jews were a threat to national communities and constituted a harmful factor. As a result, within the process of the Nazi-organised Holocaust, the fate of Jews was often treated with indifference, and in many cases with hostility, which facilitated acts of collaboration and complicity in the crime on the part of hard-to-quantify minorities in these societies (certainly not marginal cases, regardless of how strongly the representatives of the nationalist right in Poland, Ukraine and other countries of our region might argue otherwise). Moreover, Nazis deliberately conducted intensive anti-Semitic propaganda throughout occupied Europe, positioning themselves as defenders of European culture against Communist Asian barbarism, which was supposedly the instrument of Jewish domination. Such ideas (commonly referred to in Polish as the so-called "Judeo-Communism") coincided with the propaganda of influential catholic-nationalist right-wing groups and entered the popular consciousness of a large part of national communities (especially in Central and Eastern Europe).



Fig. 1. Liquidation of the ghetto in Pabianice (May 1942)

Source: State Archives in Łódź.

As this historical outline shows, the pan-European dimension of the Holocaust means that spatial issues play an important role in most empirical research on the subject. In this volume we show only a small selection of the themes that emerge in this context, but, we believe, they offer an overview of the comprehensiveness of the issues and of the research that emerges here. In addition to texts dealing directly with the war period, the spatial dimension also appears here in relation to the consequences of the Holocaust in the post-war period in terms of migration, science, and culture, and the forms of commemorating the locations of past atrocities and the traces of destroyed Jewish communities. Moreover, two texts devoted to the interwar period in the context of migration on the level of detailed studies show the situation of European Jews on the eve of the Second World War. Finally, the text on the situation in the Jewish autonomous district of Birobidzhan refers indirectly to the debates on the territorial solution of the so-called Jewish question among Jewish Zionist and Marxist intellectuals in the 1930s.





Zofia TRĘBACZ \*

## ‘JEWS TO MADAGASCAR’: POLAND IN THE FACE OF ETHNICAL PROBLEMS IN THE 1930S

**Abstract.** The idea of deporting the Jewish population of Europe was part of a modern anti-Semitism. Poland was no exception in this regard. Under the influence of other countries implementing anti-Jewish laws, also Polish anti-Semitism became more radical. After 1935, such postulates were openly expressed as the policy of the Polish government has changed its character – from state to national. Additionally, due to the global economic crisis the idea began to be taken far more seriously not just in national Catholic circles. The resettlement of Jews was seen as the way to reduce unemployment and to ‘Polonise’ Polish cities, as masses of poor peasants could replaced the Jewish workers as far as trade and craftsmanship were concerned.

The authors of immigration plans for European Jews suggested evacuating them most willingly to uncivilised countries – including Madagascar (a French colony) – due to the fact that their lands were either not used at all or only used to an insufficient and inadequate extent. In Poland, the idea was first adopted in 1926 as a solution to the problem of overpopulation in rural areas. However, the conditions on the island did not allow settlement and soon the idea fell through. Yet it came back a decade later as a proposal of deporting exclusively Polish Jews. At the time, the project was taken much more seriously and in 1937 the Polish government commissioned a task force to examine the possibility of settling in Madagascar and to evaluate the island’s potential, in particular its climate and labour conditions. But the reports of the commission members were full of contradictions and the French were showing growing caution on the matter.

**Key words:** anti-Semitism, emigration, France, Jews, Madagascar.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of deporting the Jewish population of Europe was part of a modern anti-Semitism. Poland was no exception in this regard. Under the influence of other countries implementing anti-Jewish laws, also Polish anti-Semitism became more radical. After 1935 the Polish government replaced Józef Piłsudski's 'state assimilation' (citizens were judged not by their ethnicity but by their loyalty to the state) with a policy of 'ethnic assimilation', which caused the rise of hostility towards Jews and people voicing anti-Jewish opinions<sup>1</sup>.

It created a sense of threat and an intimidating atmosphere among Jews, which was additionally intensified by anti-Semitic incidents, pogroms<sup>2</sup>, acts of violence against Jewish students every few months, and terror acts at universities<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, one should notice that in the mid-1930s voices supporting Jewish emigration as a solution of economic and social problems of The Second Polish Republic gained support not only among the circles of democratic parties, but also socialist groups (Rudnicki, 2008, p. 208).

Categorical demands that Jews should leave Poland appeared in the second half of the 1930s. It is true that since the beginning the National Democrats had ideologically promoted the idea of a Polish-speaking Catholic Poland with no Jews or any other minority, but the Nazi rise to power only strengthened their attitude on the matter. Articles in the national press, since 1930 the number of periodicals gradually increased, positively evaluated Hitler's anti-Jewish policies and praised them as a role model for Poland. The growing number of refugees from Germany, who sought shelter in Poland after 1933, also had a great impact on anti-Semitic attitudes and demands to deport Jews.

<sup>1</sup> The article uses materials dispersed from the publications *Czas*, *La Tribune de Madagascar et Dépendences*, *Le Petit Parisien*, *Polska Informacja Polityczna*, *Przewodnik Katolicki*, *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy* obtained from the Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw, the Consulate of the Republic of Poland in Marseille, the Archives of the Hoover Institute and the Polish Embassy in United Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> In the second half of the 1930s, a number of anti-Jewish incidents occurred throughout the country; particularly large pogroms occurred in Grodno (7 June 1935), Sokoły (25 August 1935), Odrzywół (20 and 27 November 1935), Rawa Mazowiecka (28 November 1935), Mińsk Mazowiecki (1–4 June 1936), and Zambrów (27 October 1936). The incidents in Przytyk, near Radom, (9 March 1936) became trademark. See Żyndul, 1994, pp. 18–26; Laskowska-Gielo, 2000, pp. 485–495; Michlic-Coren, 2000, pp. 34–61; Kijek, 2018, pp. 45–79; Kijek, Markowski, Zieliński (eds.), 2019, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Szymon Rudnicki has distinguished three stages of the struggle against "excessive – according to National Democrats – influx of Jewish youth at universities". The first stage, when the young nationalists attempted to establish dominance as influence at universities during the 1920s. The second stage, when the *numerus clausus* slogan became a call for *numerus nullus* in the mid-1930s, accompanied by a demand for the introduction of 'ghetto benches' and a transition from propaganda to active battle. The third and final stage meant amplifying tactics and the national youths' serious successes in this field, specific for the second half of the 1930s. More on the subject: Rudnicki, 1987, pp. 246–247.

As Anna Landau-Czajka wrote: "On the one hand, it was caused by fear that the number of Jews would grow instead of decreasing. On the other, it seemed that only then the supporters of mass emigration gained certainty that there was a real possibility to force Jews to leave Poland" (Landau-Czajka, 1993, p. 10). It was likely that the assumption was that by using similar methods this aim could have been also fulfilled in Poland.

However, due to the global economic crisis, the idea was being taken ever so seriously, and not just in national Catholic circles: "Difficult situations sometimes pushed the representatives of the Polish government to search for desperate solutions. The suggestion that Poland should receive colonial territories for its Jews belonged to this category" (Modras, 2004, p. 280). The resettlement of Jews was viewed as a way to reduce unemployment and to 'Polonise' Polish cities, as masses of poor peasants could replace Jewish workers as far as trade and craftsmanship were concerned. Emphasis was placed on migration from rural areas and small towns (Miedziński, 2010, pp. 416–417; Modras, 2004, pp. 278–279; Tomaszewski, 1994–1995, p. 100). Many opinion journalists and politicians spoke about this subject. "No objective person (...) can demand from us that we abandon the reformation of abnormal relations and deny the Polish countryside and growing agricultural population its place in cities and towns, in craftsmanship and trade," Bogusław Miedziński, one of the leaders of Camp of the National Unity (*Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego*), wrote in 1936 (Miedziński, 2010, p. 416). What is interesting, few people were aware of, at least one can thus infer, the very limited possibility of Jewish emigration.

## 2. THE MADAGASCAR PLAN

Wiktor Ormicki, Polish geographer and lecturer of the Jagiellonian University, distinguished three types of countries which Jewish emigrants could choose from that time: highly developed countries (e.g. the United States), emerging countries (e.g. Argentina, Brazil, and Palestine) and uncivilised countries (e.g. Australia, Guyana, Cuba, Madagascar, New Caledonia, and New Zealand). In his opinion, countries from the first group did not create chances for temporary or organised emigration, however, they played an important role when it came to individual emigrations (trips to relatives). The second group countries allowed mass emigration, but defended themselves against organised emigration because of increasing sentiments of national identity and a sense of state, and the desire for a proper formation of the occupational structure. The biggest chance for Jewish emigration was the last group, i.e. uncivilised countries, and among them Madagascar. Their terrain was either unexploited at all or only exploited to an insufficient extent (Ormicki, 1937, p. 290).

So what were the directions of Jewish emigration in reality? At first, Palestine seemed the most obvious destination for emigrating Jews. First of all, it was the only direction which could gain the acceptance of Jews. Secondly, it did not involve obtaining colonial terrains. Thirdly, it did not raise objection either on the international stage or in the country – even Polish national and nationalist parties in most cases did not express any opposition in this matter. The revival of historical Jewish national home in Palestine also allowed avoiding the accusations of anti-Semitic policies and discrimination of a specific group of citizens. State plans were no longer targeted at Jews; on the contrary, they became a helping hand given to those who needed help. Of course, provided that nobody actually studied the reasons behind such concepts. The only group which protested, in a more or less distinct manner, against this direction of emigration, was Polish clergy and catholic opinion journalists speaking personally. Over time, more voices expressed dissatisfaction and dislike or even objection to Jewish emigration to Palestine. The fear of a possible desecration of Christian places of worship, due to Jewish presence, was the standard argument (Trębacz, 2017, pp. 281–302). “I know very well that there is not enough space for all the Jews in Palestine, except for a small group. I also know well that a Catholic believer looks at the flood of Jews covering the Holy Land and sacred places unwillingly. But there is much more space elsewhere in the world: in Abyssinia, America and Siberia, and elsewhere” (Wuj z Baranowa, ..., p. 775), a journalist of the *Przewodnik Katolicki* (or The Catholic Guide in English) stated in 1935.

Palestine’s small territory was not able to accept all the Jews who wanted to settle there. Over time, due to the limits imposed by the British government, among other things, all those involved started to realise the necessity of finding new territories which could accommodate such a large number of Jews. The Polish government circulated internally new ideas for possible alternate locations for colonisation. The most popular direction was Africa – Kenya, Rhodesia, Angola, Belgian Congo, and Madagascar.

The Madagascar Project or the Madagascar Plan was not a new concept – the idea was born in the mid-19th century<sup>4</sup> and it was an attempt to find a solution

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<sup>4</sup> In 1885, Paul de Lagarde (born as Paul Anton Bötticher), a German philosopher of culture, formulated an idea of settling Jews in Madagascar. Later, in the 1920s, the location was indicated as a direction for the Jewish emigration. Such ideas appeared in France, the Netherlands, and Germany. In 1931, Egon van Winghene defined this concept extensively in his publication *Arische Rasse, Christliche Kultur und Judenproblem*. He proposed the resettlement of European Jews to some island, e.g. Madagascar, because of “the greatest possibility of control and the slightest risk of infection”. The French colony was supposed to fulfill this condition, and even more – it would allow the gathering of all Jewish people from Europe in its territories. Winghene also postulated the creation of a reservation on the island, which would be controlled by Aryans, and a separation of Jews from the rest of the society. Moreover, at the time, the authorities of different countries were interested in this territory, bearing in mind their necessity to find new settling terrains and solve growing social

to demographic, national, and social problems related to the so-called 'Jewish question'. The Polish authorities first became interested in Madagascar – an island located in the Indian Ocean off the eastern coast of Africa, and a French colony at the time (from 1896)<sup>5</sup> in 1926. It was supposed to bring a solution to the problem of overpopulation in rural areas. However, the conditions on the island did not allow settlement and soon the idea fell through. France and Japan which also considered the colonisation of Madagascar at this time, expressed similar opinion (Hevesi, 1941, p. 22; Korzec, 1980, p. 315; Yahil, 1974, p. 316). However, Polish politicians returned to this project a decade later, but this time as a proposal of deporting exclusively Polish Jews. At the time, the project was taken much more seriously.

It was related to the previously mentioned plans to introduce changes in the social policy of the country (a 'Polonisation' of Polish cities, where landless peasants would replace Jewish workers). The turn of 1936 is considered as a crucial point in government policy. The new prime minister Felicjan Sławoj Składkowski's first parliamentary address, or *Exposé*, was considered a mark of the coming change. While he did condemn pogroms in June 1936, his words contained an approval for other anti-Semitic actions: "My government is convinced that nobody «should be wronged» in Poland. (...) Economic struggle, yes! But no harm" (Mendelsohn, 1987, p. 71; Tomaszewski, 1985, p. 164). His 'yes' sounded ambiguous to say the least and was later interpreted as a call to boycott Jews, and later even as an acceptance of economic nationalism and a silent consent to many other anti-Semitic acts. This was reinforced by the government's introduction of a range of (formal and informal) restrictions targeting ethnic minorities, such as the limitation of the practices of the Jewish shechita from 27 March 1936<sup>6</sup>. Many years later, Prime Minister Składkowski wrote that his real aim had been to object to the incidents and pogroms. However, his wording proved clumsy and tactless, and the policy towards Jews was called the 'yes policy' ('polityka owszemowa') (Tomaszewski, 1998, pp. 47–48).

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and demographic problems of Europe. More on the subject: Mathieu, 2011, pp. 164–166. It is also worth adding that in Germany, the idea of having Jews emigrate to Madagascar was still alive during the Second World War. In July 1940, Hans Frank proposed the project, and Franz Rademacher was responsible for its development. At the same time, Adolf Eichmann's associates from the RSHA were working on a similar plan. See more in: Browning, 2012, pp. 80–88.

<sup>5</sup> On 20 June 1960, Madagascar declared independence.

<sup>6</sup> This act limited the ritual slaughter to a rigorously calculated amount of meat consumed by Jews, Muslims, and Karaites – proportionally to the percentage of a minority living in a particular province. It was a clear, legal interference with the sphere of religion. It was being justified by humanitarian concerns but the real purpose of this resolution was to undermine the economic position of Jews in the meat processing trade and especially to eliminate Jewish merchants and craftsmen from the cattle market. The introduction of the act reduced meat consumption by Jews. In the following year, a proposal to ban shechita was reintroduced in the parliament. However, the act did not come into force due to the outbreak of the Second World War.

Furthermore, the unsolved issue of settling in Palestine together with the indecision of the British government had an unquestioned influence on the reappearance of the idea of the colonisation of Madagascar. It might have become evident that even concrete promises would not completely solve the problem with which the Polish government was struggling<sup>7</sup>. Poles also tried to obtain consent from Great Britain to settle Jews in its colonies, especially in South Africa – they were unsuccessful. In that situation, France seemed a natural ally.

This country became the centre of attention for the Polish authorities when emigration/colonial politics of the Second Polish Republic took a specific shape. The idea of settling Polish citizens, mostly Jews, in Madagascar was a part of the plan aimed at finding the solution to the so-called ‘Jewish question in Poland and developed by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At the time, the relations between Warsaw and Paris were largely determined by the activities of Léon Noël, the French ambassador in Poland<sup>8</sup>.

The project was taken much more seriously than the first time, although since the beginning the French had been indicating that the possibility of settling in Madagascar was very limited. They underlined that there was little terrain where the climate would let Europeans work, and the attempt of mass colonisation would cause political problems – just as it happened in Palestine. Moreover, they had never agreed that future immigrants should be exclusively Jews. France made its position dependent mostly on the support of important organisations for this concept and financial help for the future colonists.

Yet in autumn 1936, the issue of making Madagascar available for emigration from Poland became a topic of discussions between Józef Beck, Polish minister of foreign affairs, and Léon Blum, Prime Minister of France (‘Madagaskar’, pp. 38, 79); Marius Moutet, minister of colonies, proved favourably disposed to the idea. Also, at that time, in October 1936, at the session of the Political Commission of the League of Nations, which dealt with mandates problem, the emigration issue was raised by Tytus Komarnicki, permanent delegate of Poland to the League of the Nations, and Adam Rose, undersecretary of state and vice minister of industry and trade. They both justified it by overpopulation in the country, and the economic structure and high number of Jews in Poland.

Further, the information about the necessity of increasing Jewish emigration (to at least 100,000 per year), released in the early August 1936 in the *Polska*

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<sup>7</sup> The emigration topic and the so-called Jewish issue connected with it were touched on quite unexpectedly on the session of budget commission in January 1937. Minister Józef Beck said then: We know very well, in fact, we had the possibility to investigate this issue diplomatically with the British government, that both the capacity of Palestine and the conditions existing there, do not solve the enormous problem of Jews in Eastern Europe. See *Problem Żydów w Europie ...*, p. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Already in January 1936, in the report to Yvon Delbos, the minister of foreign affairs, Noël wrote about Polish colonial demands. A few months later, on 30 September 1936, details were provided – Poles wanted two colonies: one for Jews and one for “their own sons” (Watt, 2008, p. 72).

*Informacja Polityczna*, an official journal of the Polish ministry of foreign affairs, could somehow have influenced the decision of the French side to enter to dialogue. In the article, the priority was admittedly given to Palestine, but it was firmly underlined that its capacity was very limited, also due to numerous Jewish refugees from Germany it was necessary to seek other places. "The road to new areas should be opened for Jewish emigration primarily by those countries that are interested in finding at least a partial solution to the Jewish problem, and which due to their role in world politics and on the basis of their territorial possessions could effectively contribute to working out a practical solution to the issue," the *Polska Informacja Polityczna* read, leaving no doubt as to which countries it referred ('Emigracja żydowska', pp. 1–3). The publication was noticed in French circles immediately. The main focus fell on its official character and the fact that it was organised in a way that it was impossible for France not to notice it.

The negotiations lasted until the beginning of 1937. Feliks Frankowski, special envoy of Józef Beck and *chargé d'affaires* of Poland, represented the Polish side. Both Delbos and Moutet basically accepted the plan and suggested conducting a study which could deliver more details. Moutet even offered help of French specialists. It is worth mentioning that Léon Noël expressed a different attitude. He was doubtful and warned the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs against this idea<sup>9</sup>.

On 16 January 1937, Marius Moutet, French minister of colonies, was interviewed by the Parisian journal *Le Petit Parisien*. Many newspapers reprinted its fragments, and articles published in a daily pro-government *Gazeta Polska* were particularly enthusiastic. The declaration expressed a carefully formulated consent for settling some Jews in French colonies – Madagascar, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, and French Guyana. Of course, the French proposal did not mean that Madagascar would become a Polish colony, it was only about making settling easier. Moutet saw it as a chance for the victims of political, religious and racial persecution, but he warned against mass and sudden colonisation. Moreover, he made his attitude dependent on receiving financial help and support from important organisations, precise examination of the proposed territories, and a careful selection of potential settlers ('À propos d'un projet...', p. 2).

Moutet's declaration caused an tidal wave of comments – from critical to fully enthusiastic. Those voices previously raised against raising too high hopes became silent. Journalists mainly concentrated on the French acceptance of Polish plans. Nobody had actually analysed the real sense of the words being spoken. National Democratic press accepted the minister of colonies' statement particularly eagerly. By selectively using it, the ND announced the French consent to Jews settling in Madagascar. It did mention, however, that for the time being

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<sup>9</sup> See Brechtken, 1997, p. 81; Caron, 1999, p. 149; Korzec, 1980, pp. 250–251; Paruch, 1997, pp. 304–315; Pawłowski, 1937, p. 36; Yahil, 1974, p. 330; 'À propos d'un projet...', p. 2; 'Kolonie, emigracja i...', p. 1; 'Obyź jak najprędzej!...', p. 2; 'Projekt osadzenia Żydów...', p. 2.

it was impossible to speak about large numbers, but it emphatically stated that it was only a matter of time: “The point is not an immediate departure of a few million Jews to Madagascar; the point is to start releasing that Madagascar stream of Jewish emigrants” (*‘Żydzi na Madagaskar’*, p. 3). The opinion journalists of the *Warszawski Dziennik Narodowy* felt particularly triumphant, recalling how the idea of colonisation was mocked and ridiculed until very recently while they supported it from the very beginning. The project which no one once considered with any seriousness became a real solution to the so-called ‘Jewish question’, the newspaper wrote. It emphasised its role in the dissemination of this idea with real satisfaction. Even the headlines showed an euphoric mood and slogans such as ‘Jews to Madagascar’ or ‘Let it happen as soon as possible!’ became very popular.

### 3. SPECIAL MISSION OF THE POLISH GOVERNMENT

A few months later, in May 1937, the French government finally allowed the Polish side to conduct the study and a special Commission was sent to Madagascar. It was composed of the following persons: major Mieczysław Bohdan Lepecki (famous traveller and chief of the commission who represented the Polish government) and two representatives of the Jewish side: Leon Alter (director of the Warsaw office of HICEM<sup>10</sup>) and Salomon Dyk (former worker of German colonisation associations and agricultural engineer from Tel Aviv). Despite appearances, both Alter and Dyk came as private persons and in fact they did not represent any Jewish organisation, as one could mistakenly assume<sup>11</sup>. It was a clear message for the international public opinion that the Polish government’s plan lacked any official Jewish support<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society): international social non-profit organisation established in 1909 in New York, aimed at providing material and legal aid to Jewish emigrants coming to America from East-Central Europe. In the years 1917–1926, HIAS established offices in Eastern Europe which organised emigration efforts to the countries of North and South America, and to Australia. In an agreement with the Jewish Agency, they also helped with the emigration of European Jews to Palestine. In 1927, after the merger of HIAS and the Jewish Colonization Association, the two formed a European organisation called HICEM. In the 1930s, HICEM focused on transporting Jews – refugees from Nazi Germany to South American countries. In 1945, HIAS became an independent organisation again. In March 1946, it was allowed to open its offices in Poland. It was intended to mediate legal matters related to the emigration of Jews from Poland, conduct information activities and facilitate contacts with relatives abroad; it also provided financial support, covering some of the travel costs. Since 1924, Leon Alter managed the Polish branch of HIAS, until its dissolution in 1950. The organisation has remained active in the United States under the name of United HIAS Service.

<sup>11</sup> Among others, Marius Moutet, the French minister of colonies, was convinced about it.

<sup>12</sup> Although Leon Alter was the director of the Jewish Emigration Society JEAS, he participated as a private person in the study expedition to Madagascar, not being connected with any Jewish organisation or association.



Formally, the task of the experts was to examine the 'objective' possibility of settling on an island for 'white man', in particular climate and working conditions. Just before their departure to Madagascar, the members of the commission visited Paris. The French minister of colonies stressed again that settling Jews on the island could not have a mass character. Moreover, he stated that financial help from Jewish circles interested in this idea was necessary because France would not be able to finance these plans. He also excluded merchants and traders from possible emigration – it was intended only for 'colonists'.

The government's mission on Madagascar caused anxiety among Polish Jews. That was why on 21 May 1937 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published an announcement titled 'Palestyna–Madagaskar', where the Polish government's position was presented. Above all, it aimed to calm the Jewish population. The authors of the announcement assured everyone about the positive attitude of the authorities of the Second Polish Republic towards creating a Jewish national home in Palestine, which had already been 'one of the traditional factors of Polish foreign policy' since 1926. They also tried to prove that the Polish administration continued to support this settlement direction and simply wanted to divert emigration flows to other places. At that moment, Palestine could satisfy the needs of the Jewish population only to a small extent.

Also, Józef Beck, minister of foreign affairs, in an interview of 30 January 1937 by the *New York Times* mentioned this difficulty and the need to search for others emigration directions. He insisted on the emigration of about 50,000 Jews per year. At the same time, Beck tried to refute the charges of any anti-Semitic character of these plans, presenting them as an element of demographic and economic policies. He argued: "Polish government did not raise an emigration issue on the international forum in anti-Semitic spirit. The problem of the emigration expressed by Poland at the General Assembly of the League of Nations in September concerns both Jews and Poles". At the same time he admitted that due to Palestine's limited absorption capabilities, attempts had been made at finding new emigration directions. However, he did not question its basic meaning for Jewish population. However, since European countries immigration opportunities, it became necessary to search for new settling areas overseas.

The Commission spent about thirteen weeks on Madagascar, during which its members visited different parts of the island (Hevesi, 1941, p. 16; Yahil, 1974, p. 317; Drymmer, 1968, pp. 66–67; 'Mission étrangère...', p. 1). The results seemed interesting. Wiktor Tomir Drymmer, head of the Consular Department in the ministry of foreign affairs, who was responsible for colonial policy, recalled that the commission "judged Madagascar as a future settlement area very positively". However, having remembered his earlier, not very successful experiences and not trusting this opinion entirely, he sent Arkady Fiedler, naturalist, reporter and traveller, who as a correspondent of the *Gazeta Polska* was to make notes and send his remarks about the weather changes occurring on the island

throughout a year. According to Drymmer: “Fiedler wrote an enthusiastic article which, once the press announced that there appeared a possibility of emigrating to Madagascar, made national circles invent a new slogan: «Madagascar only for Poles» – «Jews to Palestine»” (Drymmer, 1968, pp. 67–68).

What is interesting, Drymmer completely ignored the issue of the very controversial results of the commission’s activities. No official report from this expedition was published, and the commission members had opposing opinions<sup>13</sup>. Lepecki relied on the testimonies of several French experts in the following disciplines: geology, climatology, agriculture, and demography, supplemented with his own observations. Having agreed with the general opinion that only areas with low population density and climatically suitable zones in the northern part of this high plateau could be considered, the traveller reported that French colonial experts indicated three parts in this region: Betroka, Itasy, and Ankaizina (the last one – in the northern part of the high central plateau) as noteworthy. In his opinion, the first two districts could be considered in a distant future, but the colonisation should start from already developed Ankaizina. Lepecki’s statement that Ankaizina could become a shelter for white workers was based on the French experts’ opinions about its rich soil and the beneficial influence of Madagascar’s climate on human health. However, none of them drew a conclusion on the basis of their own observations. They discussed this issue quite often, but much less frequently recommended that white workers should settle in that area. Moreover, it should be noted that while the conditions in Madagascar would allow the settlement of farmers accustomed to hard labour, they were an insurmountable obstacle for office workers, merchants, artisans, let alone large business owners (Hevesi, 1941, pp. 16–19).

It seems that Lepecki chose to overlook the problem of the typically agriculture character of the island when he suggested that Jews could settle there and forgot about the fact that only a few percent of the Jewish community in Poland made their living as farmers. In his opinion, there was a chance to settle from 5,000 to 7,000 families capable of physical labour in Madagascar, while Alter in his anticipations estimated that possible only for 500 families, and Dyk mentioned even smaller numbers. Lepecki predicted similar numbers for merchants and small traders as he wanted to increase the number of European immigrants to about 40,000–70,000 people. Additionally, Alter indicated that there was a strong opposition among the local population, in his opinion it was probably stronger than in Palestine. One might infer that this factor was underestimated during the colonisation debates. In fact, the Malagasy people were afraid of losing jobs and feared the privileged position of the future immigrants.

What is more, apart from problems with transportation in mountainous terrains nearly impossible to overcome, Alter stated that white people would not be able

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<sup>13</sup> Only Lepecki submitted an official report to the Polish government, while two other members of the commission sent separate memoranda.

to work physically under the climate conditions and he described the danger of tropical diseases as horrible. In contrast, Lepecki spoke about a temperate climate with winter similar to early autumn in Europe and a lack of tropical diseases except the inevitable malaria (Hevesi, 1941, p. 19; Yahil, 1974, pp. 317–318; *Mission étrangère...*, p. 1). Foreign press outlets also noticed those differences in the opinions of the commission members.

#### 4. FAILURE OF THE MADAGASCAR PROJECT

Initially, the Polish government tried to see Lepecki's opinion and interpret the results of the commission's exploration exclusively as positive; but the commission's official report had not been published. In December 1937, only an announcement advising caution in forming opinions and promising the cooperation between Polish and French governments on the project of settling in Madagascar was released.

It also paid tribute to France as the first of colonial powers to show real understanding for Polish demands in this matter and enabled the building of the so-called 'mutual understanding bridge' between the two countries, which effectively resulted in a reduction of the disproportions existing in the international life. It is possible that it was related to the visit of Yvon Delbos, the French minister of foreign affairs, in Warsaw. From that moment on no further steps had been taken.

Such a restraint of the Polish government was probably caused by the attitude of the French side, which started to show increasing caution. Although Marius Moutet confirmed in public his participation in the study of settlement possibilities in four colonial territories – Madagascar, French Guyana, New Caledonia, and New Hebrides – he nonetheless increasingly warned against excessive hopes. Also he consequently talked about a lack of a connection between the commission's activities and the plan of forced Jewish emigration, supported in some circles of the Polish government. Moreover, considering the climate conditions in Madagascar and serious difficulties related to the adaptation of white people on the island, Moutet did not see emigration to African countries as a solution to the so-called Jewish question. He also firmly excluded the idea of mass emigration, due to, among other things, predictable political problems.

Marcel Olivier, former governor of Madagascar, also joined the debate. In his articles and during public lectures he expressed serious doubts and strongly advised against taking such an initiative. He underlined that good weather only occurred on the high plateau and pointed at numerous endemic diseases such as malaria, dysentery or malignant anaemia, as well as insufficiently explored possible results of solar and soil radiation. Consequently, Olivier precluded any possibility

of white people's physical labour in Madagascar, except from the area on the furthest north. The native population inhabited a few fertile valleys and removing them from there for the benefit of new settlers would be impossible – the French government would never sanction such gross injustice. The former governor referred to the history of general Joseph Gallieni, the French conqueror of the island. Having conquered Madagascar, he distributed well located lands amongst young participants of the campaign. Within a few years, most of them died whereas those who came back to France were emaciated and suffered from anaemia. "If Poland does not take steps to stop white people's large-scale emigration to Madagascar," Olivier wrote, "it will be responsible for making sacrifices in the name of acceptance of the practices which are nothing else like mass murder." (Hevesi, 1941, pp. 19–23; Yahil, 1974, p. 318; 'À propos d'un projet...', p. 2).

Ambassador Léon Noël shared similar thoughts. He saw the Polish plans for Jews settling in Madagascar as 'disastrously ill-considered'. He justified his opinion with several arguments such as an unhealthy climate, a lack of sufficient capital, and the aversion of both Jews and the local people to governmental projects. "For these reasons, he regarded these ideas as «chimerical» and unsuitable for serious consideration" (Pasztor, 1998, p. 13)<sup>14</sup>.

Additionally, there had started an intense press campaign in France severely criticising the Polish project of the colonisation of Madagascar (e.g. the socialist *Le Populaire*, the radical *La République*, the *L'Œuvre*, and the communist *L'Humanité*, but also right-wing press like the monarchist *L'Action Française*). Most of the periodicals, even those more or less anti-Semitic (e.g. the *Je suis partout*, the *Le Réveil du peuple*, and the *La France Extérieure et Coloniale*), had seen Jewish mass emigration to Madagascar as an invasion on a French territory. The arguments about abandoning the idea of colonial power were most pronounced in right-wing press, but other newspapers also utilised them.

Moreover, the new French government, which came to power in April 1938<sup>15</sup>, lost interest in these plans and started to withdraw its support. The problem of the refugees from Austria, annexed to The Third Reich just a month prior, could

<sup>14</sup> However, the author indicated that "Noël's critical attitude on this matter resulted primarily from inappropriate, in his opinion, choice of the place for the possible emigration for Jews, and not from rejection of the very idea (...)". What is interesting, the French ambassador regarded Jewish emigration to some countries in South America differently, considering it as the necessity in the face of the worsening situation in Eastern Europe and increasing anti-Semitism. Yet, he omitted this opinion expressed at the beginning of 1939 in his memoirs published after the war. More on the subject in: Pasztor, 1998, pp. 13–14.

<sup>15</sup> On 10 April 1938, Édouard Daladier replaced Léon Blum as Prime Minister (he then held the office until 21 March 1940), and Georges Mandel replaced Marius Moutet as the Minister of Colonies (he held the office until 18 May 1940). A bit earlier, from 18 January to 13 March 1938, for a short time, Théodore Steeg took over the position in the ministry, and later Moutet returned for a month (holding the office from 13 March to 10 April 1938).

have influenced that decision. The rapidly changing situation in the old continent occupied the seats of power in all countries which were not inclined to draw any other changes on the world's map.

The increasing aversion of the French government influenced by the attitudes of its own society, as well as unfavourable opinions of Jewish communities and the tense situation in Europe caused a gradual fading of such a programme of Jewish emigration. However, it did not mean complete abandonment of the ideas of intensifying the Jewish emigration from Poland. As early as December 1938, in the Sejm, deputy Stanisław Skwarczyński and 116 other deputies, the representatives of the governing party, filed an interpellation on the measures aimed at introducing steps for the preparation and implementation of mass Jewish emigration (Tomaszewski, 1994–1995, pp. 102–104). In February 1939, deputy Juliusz Dudziński put forward a far-reaching project of forced Jewish emigration (Walicki *et al.*, 2012, p. LX).

Finally, over the last few months before the outbreak of the Second World War, the issue of Jews settling in Madagascar would echo in the French-Polish conversations, and from time to time not only Polish, but also Jewish press would highlight the whole matter. Jewish journalists showed a growing disquietude about the situation in East and Central Europe and the plans of Polish authorities, so detached from the increasingly complicated reality.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This exotic island clearly stirred the collective imagination in the years before the Second World War. A thought cannot be easily removed if it manages to take root. What was the intention behind the efforts of the special commission? Did the representatives of the Polish government indeed see in Madagascar a chance to acquire an overseas colony? Did they believe that it was possible to gain their own settling territory? Or were they drawn by an unbridled desire to expel Jews from the country? Or maybe Madagascar could really become a new Promised Land for escapees persecuted in their current homelands? The history of the project of mass settling of the Jewish population in Madagascar enables one to pose many, not always easy questions, and that is why it is so meaningful and can be a contribution not only to the research on the history of Jews or Polish colonial plans, but also to the evolution of the opinions about the so-called Jewish question in 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe and ethnic minorities in general. Questions about the mechanisms of creating and functioning of the similar projects are still valid.

It is difficult to assume that the authors of the emigration concepts placed so high hopes in the French colony that they actually believed that starting a settlement

action on its terrain could considerably contribute to solving Poland's economic and demographic problems, including, above all, the issue of overpopulation in rural areas. The statement of Marius Moutet from January 1937 admittedly gave hope, but, in fact, it was not very precise and later French activities revealed a rather cautious attitude to the whole idea. A moderate interest in the Polish plans and a consent for organising the research expedition could be thought of as a sign of restrained sympathy for the colonial ambitions of the Second Polish Republic. The Jewish thread, which played such an important role for Poles, was rather an obstacle for France and caused a certain cooling of its attitude towards emigration projects. It should be remembered that at the time France itself struggled with different social or national problems. Although no one can say with certainty that "The attempts to gain the interest of France, in the person of minister Delbos, in the issue of settling Polish Jews in its colonial properties (Madagascar), turned out to be entirely utopian", as Andrzej Skrzypek wrote (Skrzypek, 1995, p. 522). For a long time, the conversations were held between the highest actors in the authorities of both countries, a special research commission was sent to the island and its members reported the results of their work also to Paris. It definitely was not evidence that the conceived plan was unrealistic. Even Lepecki's team's return to the country and divergent results offered by the members of the expedition did not eliminate the topic of the colonisation of Madagascar. Of course, the supporters of this solution came from Polish groups, but without any doubts the attitude of the French ally, if not positive then at least not overtly negative, reassured them that the project could be fulfilled.

The issue of overpopulation and the concept of Jewish emigration related to it was not only a Polish problem. Many European countries, struggling with similar difficulties, considered the colonies and overseas territories of their neighbours. French territories seemed especially attractive. In the late 1930s, the international aspect of the matter did not raise any doubts, but the possibility of finding a solution to this issue remained unclear. Politicians from different countries began to understand that the problem could not be solved partially, but they probably did not fully realise what it meant.

Surely, Polish internal policy of that time could be concerning and was, among other things, a source of conflicts between Poles and the Jewish community. It was not free from anti-Semitic accents, resulting from a concept by the Polish government and the politicians connected with it – a concept of the 'ethnic assimilation' policy, in which Jews did not and could not fit. But, it seems, the authorities lacked the ideas to solve the problems of citizens who were not indigenous Poles. Alina Cała indicated acutely that: "In the interwar period, minority policy was incoherent and inconsistent, more often irritating than favourable to consolidation, regardless of the political parties in charge" (Cała, 2012, p. 325). In the second half of the 1930s, nationalist concepts received much more attention and enjoyed popularity in the government camp whereas anti-Semitism had replaced any real political and economic program.

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## TWO GERMAN-JEWISH RESCUE PROGRAMMES LAUNCHED IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1933–1939

**Abstract.** Between 1933 and 1939 many British organisations, as well as individuals, who witnessed the rise of Nazi Germany, the implementation of anti-Jewish laws, and growing anti-Semitism, decided to take action. There were numerous attempts aimed at supporting Jews living in the Third Reich, either by providing them with money or by helping them emigrate. This article describes two largest such programmes, i.e. the Kindertransports, and an unnamed action focused on intellectuals, scientists, and artists. The article first discusses the character of both, and then proceeds to explore the question of the character of the migrations presented, as well as the differences between migration and refuge seeking. It concludes with the issue of post-war mobility of the participants of both programmes.

**Key words:** Jews, Germany, Great Britain, migrants, migrations, forced migrations, forced displacement, voluntary migrations, refuge, Kindertransports, intellectuals, Holocaust, internment.

### 1. INTRODUCTION: THE HISTORY OF JEWS IN GREAT BRITAIN AS A BACKGROUND FOR 20TH CENTURY BRITISH-JEWISH RELATIONS

After the creation of the Third Reich, as the political situation of Jews deteriorated, many became more interested in the possibility of emigration. This option, however tempting, was inaccessible to many due to high costs of travel itself, but also because of the ongoing implementation of legislative changes including new limits on the value of the belongings one could carry out of the state. After

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the outburst of migrations before the Great War, numerous countries introduced immigration regulations which had complicated things even more. Some, like the United States, had limits assigned to each country, others requested documents proving clean criminal records, financial means of support for a specified limit of time, or medical certificates proving immigrants to be free of contagious diseases.

Among the European countries promising safety and protection, Great Britain took a specific place as it had very little experience in Jewish presence and coexistence. Jews first came to England following the forces of William the Conqueror in the 11th century. They supported his army with necessary items such as weapons or cloth, together with services like tailoring, shoemaking, and even blacksmithing. After King William's victory they settled in the largest cities of the Isles, and their numbers, as estimated these days, were fairly small. Their presence was stopped in 1290, when King Edward I of England issued his *Edict of Expulsion*. Jews were ordered to either leave the kingdom or undergo conversion by All Saints' Day (1<sup>st</sup> November) the same year. The vast majority of the Jewish population decided to flee and settle in continental Europe. The few who stayed could not simply make an oath and undergo their baptism; their conversion was a long-lasting and very restrictive process organised and controlled by *Domus Conversorum*<sup>1</sup>. They also remained under strict control of state officials whose responsibility was to file reports on their devotion, piety, and worship. Their houses were subject to frequent inspections; denunciation by their neighbours, like claims of having seen them cultivating foreign traditions, were enough for them to be arrested and tried (Endelman, 2002, pp. 15–16).

Jews were prohibited from inhabiting England until 1655, though it remains clear that they visited the Isles, and in some cases even settled there. Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell started a process which resulted in slowly bringing Jews back to England<sup>2</sup>. Until the 19th century the Jewish population (both Ashkenazim and Sephardim) was fairly small. It increased rapidly after the 1881 assassination of Tsar Alexander II, the rise of anti-Jewish sentiment, and pogroms in the Pale of Settlement which followed. It is estimated that the Jewish population in Britain

<sup>1</sup> *Eng.* House of the Converts, the name of an institution and the building it owned in London dedicated to Jews willing to convert to Christianity. All residents were required to pass all their belongings over to the Crown; in the *Domus* they were regularly granted small sums of money to cover their basic needs. The process of conversion took several years and was supposed to end with a baptism, being given a new name, and financial support covering the expenses of the beginning of a new life. Jews who underwent the process were called New Christians.

<sup>2</sup> The process started with a request from a couple of London merchants who were to be expelled as *Enemies of the State* during the Franco-Spanish War (1654–1660), as Spanish subjects. Realising the fate awaiting them in Spain, they admitted to being Jewish, not Spanish, and asked for refuge on the basis of the long-lasting English tradition of granting safety to all people persecuted in their country of origin. Sir Oliver Cromwell responded favourably to their plea. Despite the existing regulations, Cromwell commonly used contacts with Jewish merchants in the Netherlands; he was also a follower of Millennialism and recognised Jews as an important factor in the theory. For more see Endelman, 2002, pp. 15–38.

was close to 300,000<sup>3</sup> on the eve of the Great War (Endelman, 2002, pp. 127–130). During it, when British patriotic spirit and reluctance towards aliens rose considerably, many Jewish men and boys joined the ranks of British Troops (both voluntarily and as conscripts), and formerly traditional families frequently underwent assimilation. Since then a vast majority of the British-Jewish community kept religion in the private sphere of life, rarely used Yiddish, and spoke English; they also participated in the political and cultural life of Britain.

As a result of this Anglo-Jewish history, most stereotypes about Jews popular elsewhere were uncommon, or even unknown, in the Isles. The very last pogrom in England occurred before the expulsion of 1290. Jews gained fully equal legal rights to those of non-Jewish origins in the late 19th century. They gained free access to all professions, had the right to vote in elections and to be voted for, they sat in the House of Commons, and held important positions in the state.

Between 1933 and 1939 two large programmes aiming at helping German Jews launched in Great Britain. In both cases the government cooperated with Jewish organisations, and in both cases this cooperation led to a special approach towards Jewish immigrants. That is especially visible when investigating requirements which applied to entering the Isles, which were lowered for Jews.

The first of the programmes focused on intellectuals, scholars, artists, and people whose specific skills or knowledge were considered useful by the authorities. It was never given a name and was based on Winston Churchill's speech in which he said: "Since the Germans have thrown out their best scientists we have made whole benefit of it."<sup>4</sup>

The second is known as *the Kindertransports* and it was aimed at helping Jewish children under the age of seventeen. It is estimated that around 10,000 of them, mostly originating from large cities, travelled to Great Britain thanks to such organisations as the World Movement for the Care of Children from Germany and the Jewish Board of Refugees.

While *the Kindertransports* seem reasonably well researched in the United Kingdom, the subject is rarely discussed and analysed in Poland. The migrations of German-Jewish intellectuals and artists, as well as the organisation of the programme itself seems to be rarely investigated by Britain-based scholars, and the subject is nearly never researched in Poland. In both cases it may be debatable whether the people aided by the programmes could be recognised as refugees or as immigrants. *The Kindertransports* also elude easy classification as voluntary or forced migrations.

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<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to give precise numbers of Jews living in Great Britain at that time. Many migrants treated London and other large cities as transit points on their transatlantic route. Some had to stay for a shorter or longer time, some settled for good. The censuses conducted every ten years did not show this population movements in sufficient detail, and there are no border records providing accurate information on the matter of the number of immigrants before 1905.

<sup>4</sup> 'Britain and the Refugee Crisis 1933–1947', Sir Ludwig Guttman, Accession No. 004596/03, Parkes Institute Archive, Hartley Library.

## 2. PROCESS OF CREATION AND THE COURSE OF THE PROGRAMME FOCUSED ON ADULT INTELLECTUALS, ARTISTS, AND SCHOLARS

After the 1933 elections and the introduction of the first anti-Jewish laws (such as the Third Reich Citizenship Act of September 1935), the topic of a possible migration became more pronounced in the community of assimilated Jews. For many it was clear that the sooner they made the decision, the easier it would be to leave the Reich. The time proved them right as in the early stage of the migrations many could have used passports issued prior to the inclusion of a reference to the Jewishness of their bearers, could have carried more belongings with them, and often needed to fulfil fewer requirements in the destination country.

One of the fortunate emigrants was Hans Krebs, a professor in biochemistry and a Nobel Prize laureate, born to a Jewish family in Hildesheim in 1900. He decided to leave the country as early as in 1933, wishing to settle in Great Britain (he was later employed at the Oxford University). In the 1960s he agreed to participate in a project launched by the Imperial War Museum which aimed at recording as many interviews with Jewish pre-war immigrants who became important figures in science as possible<sup>5</sup>. When asked about the difficulties related to leaving the Reich, he replied:

There were no restrictions, I had of course to have a passport. The restrictions were of a financial kind I couldn't take any money out of Germany. I could take my personal belongings and my books but technically I would only be allowed to take a sum of ten marks which was less than a pound. But by hiding some money in the form of notes I took enough to keep me going for two or three weeks. And the real worry was that at any time that the frontier would be possibly expected to be stopped. But the Nazi machinery was not as efficient as it became later and there was in fact no difficulty in free travelling for anybody. Not anybody who was not yet in a concentration camp. I had not been politically active in any way and therefore I was not on the early lists but students or other people who had been connected with communism in particular had already been arrested and sent to concentration camps. So I had no difficulties in leaving (Accession No. 004498/05, p. 20).

While British research facilities and educational centres were relatively open to researchers from Nazi Germany, they had set some requirements for them themselves. In the first years following the Nazi rise to power a scholar wishing to arrive to one of the British facilities had to prove that it was possible for them to continue their research, and discuss why their work would be of any benefit to the hosting unit. In the second half of the 1930s, it was already required for them to show that in the event of failure to obtain a full-time job, they would be able to support themselves with their private funds.

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<sup>5</sup> This collection, now held in the Parkes Archive at the University of Southampton, is the most complex primary source for research on this migration movement.

The second of the restrictions mentioned might have seemed fair to the authorities of the facilities or research units, however, it was for aspiring immigrants nearly impossible to meet due to Nazi regulations. This issue was shortly answered by the employees of the universities and other hosting scholar units.

Some universities offered special scholarships, but the application process was challenging. The applicants were expected to prove they faced danger from the Nazi regime and needed letters of recommendation from their tutors and co-workers. Any contacts made earlier, for example during conferences, proved extremely valuable at this point as applicants were expected to name scholars who would support their application and testify about their professionalism and the importance of their research.

As early as 1933, the Academic Assistance Council was established at the Westminster College in Cambridge. It was to cooperate with other similar bodies in other countries while gathering money to support displaced university teachers and researchers. In its appeal for funds the Council stated that “all who are concerned for academic freedom and the security of learning” could support the cause. The Council was apolitical and its goal was to “relieve suffering, prevent waste of valuable talents, and defend learning.” Sir William Beveridge and Prof. C. S. Gibson were honorary secretaries of the Council (*‘Academic Assistance Council’*, p. 793). In 1936 the Academic Assistance Council transformed into the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning and after it merged with the *Notgemeinschaft Deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland* it was renamed to the Emergency Association of German Scientists in Foreign Countries. Throughout its existence the Council had just one goal: to support all scholars born in German territories who had suffered from the recently introduced racially-based laws, had lost their jobs or sought new employment outside of Nazi-ruled locations. Throughout its operations the Council was financially supported and utilised private donations only. The gathered funds were later offered to arriving scholars if they were required to show they could support themselves. The loans were non-returnable but it was obvious to the beneficiaries to, at some point, donate money in return (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 78). The financial aid the immigrants could expect both during their travel and after the arrival was absolutely crucial. A vast majority of them had already lost their jobs and lived on their savings for extensive periods of time. Being settled in Great Britain was for them the beginning of a new life, but it was by no means the end of the struggle. Though some researchers had positions waiting for them, especially those who arrived at the early stage of the programme as well as the most prominent ones, many did not and had to apply for a job. Understandably they wished to work in the field they knew from before. The positions, even if available, had high requirements set by future employers. Their ability to work, often write and teach in English, was the most important and troublesome.

The Emergency Association of German Scientists in Foreign Countries organised competitions to select the most promising and most experienced scientists needing help. The winners of the competitions were awarded grants and scholarships, as well as long-term contracts at British universities. Those who were not fortunate enough to gain one were helped in a different way. The Association made various attempts to distribute information on such people, as well as on their abilities, to units not cooperating with the Association. It was clear that if an applicant specialised in a specific field of science, certain facilities could have been interested in working with them. Due to a limited number of positions that could be offered by universities (scientists with modest or no communication skills in English were unlikely to receive any posts) in the second half of the 1930s, the Association opened a new programme. Using the same source of funding, it invited researchers and intellectuals to 'lecture tours' throughout selected academic centres in Great Britain and the United States (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 78). This was a unique chance for the scholars to present their skills, knowledge, and achievements in front of many powerful academics, who could decide to offer them a position.

Professor Ludwig Guttmann, a neurologist and the initiator of the first Paralympic Games, left for Oxford in 1939. In his interview he spoke on emigration and claimed it would not have happened if not for the support of his former superior who had gained an extraordinary reputation in Great Britain:

And my teacher, Professor Foester, was very well thought of. In fact in 1937 or, 38 the whole British Neurosurgical Society paid a visit to him. And he is one of the very few foreigners who has been made an honorary of the Medical Association of Great Britain (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 25).

Professor Carsten, who became a lecturer at Wadham College, recalled how through 'lecture tours' he managed to visit Great Britain. He had received a scholarship to extend his stay by dint of semi-private conversations during coffee breaks between the lectures:

(...) And I only got permission to stay for a very limited period. But when I got the scholarship to Oxford this was then extended. (...) I went around the colleges in Oxford and Cambridge trying to find out what I could apply for and there were only a small number which were open to people without a British university degree and for those I applied and I finally got one of them (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 25).

The official goal of 'lecture tours' was to spread knowledge and exchange research techniques among the participants. In reality many of the people participating in this programme got the chance to enter the United States – not as refugees, but as academic guests, which made a huge difference. Owing to the favourable treatment by the British government they travelled using not German

passports, but temporary British travel documents. They gained the opportunity to establish contacts, find interesting employment opportunities, and apply for a residence permit in America.

The Society for the Protection of Science and Learning operated from 1933 to 1945 and arranged placements for 2,541 people. According to the fifth annual report published by the association in 1946, there were 601 scientists participating in the programme in Great Britain. The rest found employment in their professions elsewhere, mainly in the United States. About 40% of those remaining on the British Isles worked at universities and research facilities, and 36% in industry and government-related institutions. Among those, most of the arrivals from the Netherlands, France, and Scandinavia returned to their home countries as soon as the war was over. Those coming from Poland and Czechoslovakia were covered by another special programme, the purpose of which was to protect them against expulsion to their country of origin and to allow them to remain permanently on the territory of Great Britain. In 1946, similar programmes were planned to be launched for Jews from Germany and Austria. From the 1930s until the end of the 1950s, the Jewish population from the Rome–Berlin–Tokyo Axis countries was subject to surveillance by the police and the MI5 counter-intelligence agency. Those who showed loyalty to their new homeland could undergo the process of naturalisation. Afterwards, if they had wished to, they could be allowed to join the British army or work in enterprises cooperating with the military or government institutions. If after the war they wished to return to continental Europe, they were offered the option of settling in the western occupation zone (Rutherford, 1936, p. 607).

It seems important to mention that some of the refugees never gained the trust of the British authorities. That applied especially to people deeply associated with the traditions and culture of the country of their origin, reluctant to learn English, not looking for a permanent job in Great Britain, or openly admitting their willingness to return to their home countries after the end of the war. They, as well as the British Nazi sympathisers (including Oswald Mosley, the members of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) founded by Mosley, and the members of the Black Shirt movement (Endelman, 2002, pp. 202–203)), were under constant surveillance by the MI5. In accordance with British traditions, citizens of countries against which Great Britain conducted hostile operations were treated as enemies of the state. During the Second World War, immigrants and refugees from the Rome–Berlin–Tokyo Axis countries – both political refugees and others – were referred to as ‘the enemy aliens’. In the event of prolonged doubts regarding political beliefs, sympathies, or even a suspicion of espionage, the suspects were arrested and interrogated on the basis of Paragraph 18B of the Emergency Power Acts, abbreviated as Defence Regulation 18B (Goldman, 1973, pp. 120–136). This law was a clear continuation of First World War inner-state legislation, when it was agreed to limit the freedom of citizens and

immigrants only if this could contribute to the improvement of internal security. Research shows that the police and the MI5 employees were exempt from the requirement to present any charges to a detained person. The internment was for an indefinite period of time, but according to Defence Regulation 18B it should end with the resolution of a political crisis or the conclusion of peace if war was already declared. The exact number of the interned and their related records have not been fully available since 1958 when the British parliament voted to keep this data classified for one hundred years.

A person arrested under the Defence Regulation 18B law first underwent interrogations at police stations. Usually, after a few days, the arrestees were transferred to a camp or prison. Those facilities were usually located on small, isolated islands or in the countryside. Later, when the number of the interned grew, old and decommissioned prisons, or even factory halls, were adapted to hold them. One of the most famous camps for German Jews was located on the Isle of Man in an abandoned factory and the surrounding territory. In 1940, the number of internees in this camp alone reached 14,000, including people in a separate space for men and women (children stayed with the women)<sup>6</sup>. It is estimated that this number accounted for about a third of all prisoners of Jewish origin.

Earlier, in September 1939, there were approximately 70,000 enemy aliens in Britain<sup>7</sup>, of which approximately 65,000 were refugees who had not lived in the country for more than five years; approximately 50,000 of them spoke openly about their Jewish origins (Kapp and Mynatt, 1997, p. 75).

In 1939 special courts were established with one aim only – to decide the further fate of the interned. During the first year of their existence they ruled in over 60,000 cases, releasing the vast majority of the defendants and granting them the status of ‘friendly aliens’. At the same time the British public opinion was for the first time faced with the reports on the conditions in the camps. In some cases they did not even follow the norms described in the Geneva Convention (Goldman, 1973, pp. 120–136).

Professor Carsten, arrested and interned in the Wharf Mill camp, surrounded with barbed wire and guarded by the British military, recalled:

Well, it was a disused cotton factory with bits of machinery still lying about or falling down from the ceilings and in a derelict state. And the camp commandant called all the prisoners together on and off and gave them lectures on British virtues and politics which nobody wanted to hear and otherwise collected razor blades and similar items from the suitcases of the internees. (...) And also confiscated all books because they might contain codes for communicating with Germany (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 19).

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<sup>6</sup> <http://timewitnesses.org/english/IsleOfMan.html> [accessed on: 28.01.2021].

<sup>7</sup> That included immigrants from all the enemy countries including Germans, Austrians, and Italians, regardless of their religion or declared ethnic backgrounds.



It was common for the refugees to speak of the hardships and distress they had to face while in Great Britain, and about the British citizens recognising them not as Jews seeking refuge but as representatives of the Third Reich.

Professor Carsten recalled the difficulties related to the refugee status. In addition to his identification as an enemy alien, there were extra restrictions imposed on him and other refugees. If they broke them they could be arrested, interned or they could face espionage charges.

...there was a curfew, one had to be home if I remember rightly by 10 pm and was not allowed at night and wasn't allowed change one's residence without a police permit and had to register immediately with the police wherever one went to. (...) And there were protected areas into which one was not allowed to go as an enemy alien; along the coast et cetera (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 17).

Adult refugees faces hostilities coming mostly from ordinary British people, among which Germanophobia, heavily present during the First World War, rose once again. These hostilities included difficulties in finding accommodations, being mistreated in shops, and refusal of service in places such as the barbers, the tailors, the shoemakers, and even pubs, the foci of local community life. They were often given signs of being unwelcome at private meetings of various kinds. Similar instances occurred also at universities and research facilities hosting the refugees, but they were not as common as in the outside world. The identification of non-British neighbours or co-workers in the vast majority of cases was based on their foreign, German-sounding accents and poor English language skills. The anti-alien sentiment was somewhat fuelled by some of the media, both radio and the press, who before Mosley's arrest frequently spread the ideology he promoted.

Sir Hans Krebs spoke about it:

Well in Cambridge, and later in Sheffield and Oxford, I personally found always very much friendliness. But there were of course expressions in the press, especially on the part of Sir Oswald Mosley and his fascist party, of anti-foreigner feelings (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 17).

Even though Great Britain had not welcomed the participants of this programme warmly, it was the possibility of migration itself that mattered the most for them. Many testimonies left by them show one more struggle they had to face: helping their families out of Nazi Germany. In the early days the option for entire families to travel together was rather common, but later the organisers asked the scientists to arrive on their own; they themselves had to help their relatives leave their countries of origin.

After the outbreak of the Second World War many of the scholars who could in any way add to the general effort, did so. Professor Ludwig Guttmann, for example, worked with wounded soldiers and planned their rehabilitation. His innovative methods are still being used in post-trauma medicine.

### 3. THE KINDERTRANSPORTS: THE PROCESS OF CREATION AND ITS COURSE

Less than a week after the events of Kristallnacht, British organisations aiming at helping German Jews understood the need of a rapid extension of their activities to cover more than just intellectuals or artists. It was then decided that the primary focus should be on children – innocent, defenceless, exposed to violence no less than adults, and often unaware even of the reasons for the persecution. It remains the subject of a dispute who the originator of the project was. It is, however, obvious that the Children Refugee Movement and Bloomsbury House were involved at the early stage planning, similarly to several other organisations, and even British Quakers.

Jewish communities and associations sent a delegation consisting of their most influential members to Neville Chamberlain, British Prime Minister, to discuss the matter. One of the postulates presented was the consent to the creation of a special programme to help Jewish children from areas under the Nazi regime. According to its assumptions, the children were to arrive without their parents or any guardians, and return to them as soon as it would be possible – with the end of the Nazi rule or the end of the anti-Jewish incidents. That period of time was estimated to be a couple of weeks.

During the meeting of the British Cabinet, a decision was made to temporarily agree to organise transports for children and adolescents aged between three months and seventeen years. The decision was largely influenced by the fact that similar programmes were discussed in the United States during the same period. British organisers of the transports were required to ensure that adequate funding, i.e. £50, was secured for every child. The money was to be later used to cover the expenses of their return trips<sup>8</sup>.

The children were expected to arrive alone and the lack of the guardians was justified by the restrictive immigrant British law. There was also a popular belief that even though the Jewish population in Germany was being persecuted, the scale of such events would not suddenly increase and the situation of Jews in Nazi-ruled lands would not worsen. In addition, there were fears of a mass migration of a population who would be forced to use social welfare and financial assistance in the first stage after their arrival, only to flood the labour market later; the British economy could not afford such an expense. Concerns about lowering labour standards and significant reductions in wages in such cases were common and strong among nearly all classes of the British society. The authorities believed that the arrival of children, even in large numbers, would not be associated with similar threats, especially since they were expected to only spend a short period of time on the British Isles.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.kindertransport.org/history.htm> [accessed on: 28.01.2021].

The arrival of unaccompanied children was also perceived as being safer by the MI5 officials who continuously feared Nazi spies among adult immigrants. This, however, did not mean that the *Kindertransport* children were not watched by the counter-intelligence. There were rare but known cases of surveillance being undertaken in case of older children, as well as cases of internment.

The *Kindertransports*<sup>9</sup> started in the late 1938, and the first group, consisting of 200 children, arrived at Harwich Harbor on 2 December 1938. The very last group left Germany on 1 September 1939. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, approximately 10,000 children, mainly from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and even the Free City of Gdańsk<sup>10</sup>, arrived on the British Isles. The main organisers of this initiative on the German side were synagogues, local Jewish communities, and related organisations. Information on the possibility of having a child sent to Great Britain was distributed mainly in synagogues<sup>11</sup>; lists of applicants and information about the pre-requisites were also available there.

There is a vast number of publications containing the memories of *Kindertransport* children after they became adults. They frequently recalled the moment when the information about the possibility of departure first reached their families. Most often it was associated with a service in synagogue or a meeting of the members of the local community; in several cases the news spread among relatives and friends. Orphanages – both for Jewish and Christian children – need to be considered as a separate case. Such facilities, seen as institutions giving shelter to already-traumatised children, were granted a higher priority, and so it was easier for such children to be enrolled. Also in the late 1930s orphanages in the Third Reich faced a considerable increase in the numbers of Jewish children requiring their help, mostly due to the poor financial situation of their families (worsening with the implementation of laws banning Jews from certain professions), but also due to the internment of some of their parents. Sending orphanage pupils away was a convenient solution, offering not only a chance to ensure the safety of those children, but also allowing the facilities themselves to reduce the already high numbers of children in their care.

On the British side, these transports were mainly organised by charitable organisations such as the World Movement for the Care of Children from Germany or The British Committee for the Jews of Germany<sup>12</sup>, supported by numerous volunteers and donors. The Jewish Board of Refugees and the Jewish Refugee Committees<sup>13</sup> also played a significant role as they were responsible for commu-

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<sup>9</sup> Also known in British historiography as *the Refugee Children Movement*.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.kindertransport.org/history.htm> [accessed on: 28.01.2021].

<sup>11</sup> Not all synagogues or communities participated in the programme. The limitation was imposed by the British side.

<sup>12</sup> <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/kindertransport-1938-40> [accessed on: 28.01.2021]

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.worldjewishrelief.org/about-us/kindertransport> [accessed on: 28.01.2021]

nication with the government and ministries whose approval was necessary when placing children in boarding schools, orphanages, or with foster families. Their staffs were also responsible for checking in with the families hosting the children, and in the post-war period for finding those children whose parents had survived the Holocaust and managed to make contact.

Since the age range of the rescued children varied from toddlers to near-adults, their recollections contained different level of detail. The older the children were, the more of what was happening around them they understood and, no less importantly, the more of the background they considered worth recording in their letters or memoirs. The younger ones were less aware and their documents have little or no information on the departure or farewells.

Lee Edwards, five years old on the day of the departure from Frankfurt, recalled:

It's March 1939 and a whole group of children are huddled together under the watchful eyes of the Nazi police. The children are wearing numbered labels around their necks – no names, just numbers – and their mothers and fathers are bidding them a tearful goodbye. We are off to England, without our parents, to a strange land, strange people who offered to take us into their homes; thus saving our very lives. But we don't realize this on this grey March morning, we are leaving our loved ones behind; we don't know it, but most of us will never see our parents again. My mother is wiping her eyes with a little dainty handkerchief, and I help her smooth the wool blanket on top of the suitcase after the police have searched it and allowed it to be closed (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 79).

While many documents written by these children are available to researchers these days, there are almost no testimonies of their parents, the vast majority of whom had perished in the Holocaust. Still, the difficulty of deciding to send a child away, into the unknown, cannot be questioned, as much as the desperation behind this decision. As mentioned earlier, the organisers of the programme assumed that the children would be reunited with their families in just a few weeks' time, and *the Kindertransports* were planned to be a moment of relief, a brief time spent in a safer place. Although the parents, as well as the children, had no reason to assume their farewells were final, some memoirs prove it otherwise.

There are few known cases of children who travelled to Great Britain with the *Kindertransport* and were taken home by their relatives on arrival<sup>14</sup>. Most of the children were either picked up straight from the train station by families willing to accommodate them, or sent to orphanages or boarding schools. The organisers of the transports tried to make the stay of the distressed children more pleasurable and for as long as it was possible encouraged British families to host the children in their homes. The response of the British society was strong and many families of different social backgrounds and status offered shelter. Collections of letters written by the children, published years after the war had

<sup>14</sup> One such case was Arno Penzias, who joined the *Kindertransport* in Gdańsk. His family, previously deported from the Third Reich, hosted him and his brother (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 240).

ended, show that most such families granted a second home filled with love and a great atmosphere. Some abused the situation and instead of taking care of the adolescents they had treated them as domestic servants or unpaid labour force. It was the responsibility of the organisations behind the *Kindertransports* to check on the welfare of the children, however, due to the insufficient numbers of employees and the number of children being higher than expected, it quickly proved an impossible task.

During the early stage of their stay most of the children could exchange letters with their parents. News from the family and home helped the youngest cope with traumatic experiences, while letters written by the children proved to the parents they had made the right decision. Irene Liron, who arrived in London in May 1939, recalled:

Eventually I was a bit of a tomboy, and after few days of settling down in my new home, started climbing trees. My foster mother wrote of this to my parents, and straight away I got an urgent letter from my mother. ‘You mustn’t climb trees’, she wrote, ‘You must not add worries to your new family. You must not be wild. You must be obedient. You must be quiet. You must be grateful that they took you. You must be very good. You must do all you are asked, and even read their wishes from their lips before they are said’.

Actually all her letters were somewhat similar. Always reminding me to be good and grateful, and always complaining that I wrote so little in my letters to them. But looking back now, I don’t see how a ten year old child could be expected to write long letters every week, but I do understand my mother’s worries about my possible bad behaviour (and the possibility of being send back). I should hate to be in her situation where she had to send her youngest daughter to unknown people in a foreign country (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 197).

The children’s situation became more complicated with the outbreak of the war. Many caregivers who agreed to take a child in for a short time began to fear that the war might last much longer than it was commonly believed and they would be left with an additional burden for years to come. Older children, especially those staying in orphanages, were often considered fit for work. This happened with Gideon Behrendt, a boy born in Berlin, whose father was arrested and deported to the Buchenwald camp in June 1938. Gideon was sent to an orphanage and, owing to the efforts of its employees, came to Great Britain in December. He was then sent to Leeds, where he lived in a centre for Jewish orphans in Stainbeck Lane. Initially, the children were looked after by a special committee composed of representatives of the local Jewish community who covered the costs of the essential needs, and expected the children to learn English well enough to start attending school.

All too soon the war started. Priorities changed and instead of learning how to be gentleman we went to work in the factories. Model, our father figure, was taken away from us and replaced by Mr Meier and, shortly after, by Mr S and his wife who made the once so happy hostel in Stainbeck Lane into a place that can best be compared to the orphanage described by Dickens in *Oliver Twist* (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 31).

With the outbreak of the war it became clear that the older of the *Kindertransport* children no longer perceived Germany as their homeland. They felt connected with their biological families, with places where they grew up, with their communities, but in the autumn of 1939 they opposed the state which had persecuted their loved ones and themselves. Many memoirs bear information on their willingness and attempts to join the British army or enrol to help essential civil institutions.

Albert Eisner (Edwards, after he accepted the surname of his adoptive family), born in Vienna and settled in Manchester, wrote:

When I reached military age I fought my way into the British Army, not the usual Pioneer Corps background, but straight into the Royal North Lancashire Infantry Regiment.

Eventually I landed in Normandy on D+6 and joined 2<sup>nd</sup> Army HQ Intelligence Section. The war went on, we broke out of Normandy and eventually reached and liberated Belgium

(...)

Our postal address ended with ,BLA'. This stood for British Liberation Army.

On that day, more than any other day, I felt that this is indeed what we were (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 81).

Many tried to enlist, but for various reasons only some were accepted into the army. The refusal was usually based on insufficient language skills or a lack of physical fitness. Some who were considered unfit to fight were assigned to work in institutions related to intelligence or in civil support. Among the memoirs there are several written by translators who used their German language skills to decipher messages and translate intercepted orders. Others, especially those too weak or too young to enlist, sought opportunities to work in train stations, military hospitals, or factories sewing uniforms. Some volunteered to units essential to city safety where their duty was to guide people to shelters during air raids or to remove debris. Such positions usually paid little or nothing at all, but it was the act itself, the feeling of being able to help at the time of war, that mattered to the *Kindertransport* children.

#### 4. MIGRATION OR REFUGE? FINDING A PLACE TO SETTLE

Ernest Georg Ravenstein, one of the first to ever have focused on the subject and described the characteristics of migrations, identified two basic kinds of massive human population movements in terms of decision-making: forced and voluntary (Lee, 1972, pp. 9–28).

All migrations, as Ravenstein has argued, require push and pull factors, where the former are responsible for the reason and the impulse to leave a place of residence, and the latter for choosing the destination. When focusing on the German-Jewish migrations the push factors are clear, yet the pull factors differ.

In the case of the migration of the intellectuals, scholars, and researchers the pull factors were, e.g. safety, but also the employment and work possibilities, and in some cases knowledge of the English language. The familiarity of the local research society was not a key factor, but played a role as well. One could wonder to what extent the migration of the intellectuals was voluntary, yet what is certain is that these people made their choice themselves. The push factors were of an extreme kind, and it was not the economy, nor the possibility of further work that played the biggest role for them. Some interviews with the intellectuals contain clear statements on how the persecutions and growing anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany made them understand that their lives would be in danger should they remain. Looking from today's perspective, we know that the situation of Jews in the early years of the migration was not as bad as in the last period when leaving Nazi Germany was still possible. However, we need to remember that back in the 1930s each instance of the deterioration of the conditions was a surprise and a majority of people believed it would not get worse over time.

When discussing the *Kindertransports*, the pull factors are different and only the matter of safety could be considered. In fact this and the origin of the organisations conducting the programme are the only existing factors. Ravenstein wrote about forced migrations assuming population movements not in any way chosen by the migrants but imposed onto them. Such subjects are pushed away from their homeland or deported, deprived of free will and the ability to choose. That can be definitely said about the *Kindertransport* children who (apart from only a few known cases) had no influence over their fates. It was their parents or caretakers who made the decision, and the organisers allocated them to a family or in a facility without asking them whether they would prefer one over the other. There was also no possibility of changing one's mind or returning if the child felt homesick.

It seems that by looking at the push factors for both of the programmes described it can be easily agreed that they fulfilled the definition of refugee programmes, and the Jewish-German immigrants to Great Britain were in fact not immigrants but refugees. Accordingly to the United Nations Refugee Agency, a refugee is "a person who is outside his or her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail him- or herself of the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution"<sup>15</sup>. Today's definition was, however, non-existent in the period discussed and, therefore, while we define the movements as seeking refuge, it's also possible to call them migrations.

Apart from that the migrations mentioned in the article fulfilled the requirements of other laws specified by Ravenstein, even if they could be mostly related

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<sup>15</sup> The 1951 Convention Relating To The Status of Refugees and Its 1967 Protocol, The United Nations Refugee Agency (<https://www.unhcr.org/4ec262df9.pdf>) [accessed on: 28.01.2021].

to the migration of intellectuals and artists. Clearly few of the laws refer to internal migrations only, and those should not be considered.

What also seems interesting is the fact that the early stage migrations of the adult German Jews, who became subject to the mentioned project, had unintentionally created a migratory network. This phenomena should be understood as a set of connections linking migrants, ex-migrants and non-migrants, both in the country of departure and the destination through exclusive social bonds. Migratory networks provide certain helpful features: they protect migrants from the risks related of the migration; organise the migration process (with such issues as travel document obtainability, travel itself, settling possibilities included, etc.); share information on the benefits and drawbacks related to the a destination; aid in the labour market; and they also create an ‘immigrant community’. The last of the mentioned is considerably easier when immigrants share a background and/or professional field.

German-Jewish refugees were faced with one extremely difficult question relevant to their post-migration identity. They were usually assimilated Jews who did not feel a strong connection with Zionist ideology and, therefore, prior to their refuge they would rather call themselves Germans or Austrians than Jews. Yet they had been forced to leave the country in which they were born, grew up, learned, worked, and had close connections to its culture. Then they settled in a place often not of their own choosing – a country which in 1939 found itself at war with their homeland. The laws introduced in the Third Reich made them question whether they could still consider themselves German, while the British authorities identified them as German until naturalisation or adoption. The matter of the lost identity was more than common among adult migrants while it was less of an issue for the children who frequently never even asked themselves this question.

The infants and youngest children adapted to the situation naturally and underwent acculturation unconsciously. Having no contact with other *Kindertransport* children, they fully switched to English and forgot their previously acquired skills. The loss of contact with their families often resulted in a quick assimilation and acceptance of the British national identity as something natural.

The feeling of belonging proved important in the post-war era when travel to continental Europe became possible again. Most of the Jewish-German refugees did not wish to go back to Germany, and those who did were offered to settle in the western occupation zone. Some decided to move to Palestine (later the state of Israel), and this was mostly motivated by the possibility of finding any remaining relatives or showing their ties to their Jewish roots. Many of the youngest participants of the project stayed in Great Britain until adulthood and later had shown high migrative mobility throughout their lives. When choosing a place of residence, they were rarely guided by any patriotic feelings, instead the decisive factor was pragmatism/acquaintances or adoptive families to whom they managed to become attached, the knowledge of culture, education or finding a satisfactory job.



Larry Mandon, who changed his place of residence several times, wrote on his identification:

I have lived in England since 1938 although I have travelled extensively throughout the world (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 206).

A considerably large number of the *Kindertransport* children emigrated to the US and Australia. While migration to Israel was mainly driven by the Jewish community and culture, those who travelled across the Atlantic most often did so in search of work, education, or – as they said – to get away from places that connected them with suffering. An equally important factor was political awareness, which was extremely strongly developed in the children included in the *Kindertransport* programme.

Eddie Nassbaum, born in Hamburg, left England in 1949. He shared the reason for his decision:

In my case, winning a post-graduate Fellowship brought me to the United States in 1949. On returning to the UK I was not happy with the policies of the newly elected Labour Government, and, with my new bride, I decided to settle in New York. We now have two married children and three grandchildren (Leverton and Lowensohn, 1990, p. 235).

While the *Kindertransport* children showed high mobility, adults were much more likely to stay in Great Britain. In their case naturalisation, necessary to obtain citizenship, was a key factor. Knowing that without a British passport they would risk being interned or even expelled from the Isles, they decided to accept the citizenship of a country to which they did not always feel attached. Attempts to find a job and settle elsewhere in their case would entail the necessity to undergo similar procedures, not to mention adapting to the new place and learning customs and culture from scratch.

Professor Carsten, when answering the question about his children, probably best answered both the question about his cultural identity and about how his children identified themselves:

They understand a lot but when they try to talk German it's not very good  
(...)

They have been born in London, they have been to school in London, I think if they think of themselves at all, they would think of themselves as English. I honestly don't know what I am. You know in a way I think of myself as being German but after such a long time and having lived here so long my ties with Germany have naturally become fairly loose – although I go there several times every year to work in archive and go to conferences and meetings or give lectures in Germany (Accession No. 004596/03, p. 35).

The common feature of the authors of the memoirs is the constant questioning of one's place in the world. Some have found it either by returning to their

birthplaces or by deepening their ties with Jewish culture and religion – sometimes also by moving to Israel. Some did not feel the need to find one place for themselves and moved easily following their jobs or loved ones. Still most of them struggled with the issue of identity throughout their lives.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Both of the programmes described were exceptional on a global scale. The first was unprecedented and although it remains impossible to offer a full list of the people who benefited from it, its significance and influence to the British science and education is unquestionable. Also, apart from Great Britain, no other country organised an action under the government's patronage that would lead to the departure of such a large group of Jewish children from the areas affected by Nazi ideology.

Focusing on their uniqueness one needs to remember that both of these actions had some issues and flaws. In the case of the former one can not only discuss whether more people could have been saved (including scholars denied scholarships or the families of refugees), but also how those who came to Great Britain were perceived by the society. Defence Regulation 18B had been definitely over-used, and the possibility of internment without any charges being cited for an unknown period became one of the biggest threats to all refugees and immigrants of German, Austrian, or Italian origin.

In the case of *Kindertransports*, as mentioned earlier, there was no sufficient oversight over the caregivers. There were cases of abuse and mistreatment both in the institutions and foster families. After the war the families hosting the children whose parents were known to have died or who did not make any contact and were therefore assumed dead could apply for a full adoption. In a vast majority of the cases the process was swift, benefiting both sides as it granted legal approval of the relations developed during the war. There are known cases of adopted Jewish children who were too young to remember their lives before the extraction. The insufficient system of oversight and the fact that such children developed very deep bonds with their caregivers and frequently treated them as their parents had led to a new issue: the denial of information about the child's identity.

However different the organisation and the fulfilment of these migrations have been, there was one thing that remained in common for both adults and the children who sought refuge in Great Britain. It was the feeling of gratitude and understanding that they had survived the Second World War and escaped the biggest threat possible, unimaginable at the time of their departure.

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Stefania ZEZZA \*

## WITHOUT A COMPASS: SALONIKAN JEWS IN NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND LATER

**Abstract.** During the Holocaust, the largest Sephardi community in the world located in Saloniki was almost completely destroyed. Despite their limited number in comparison with that of Ashkenazi Jews, the Salonikan Jews, initially deported to Auschwitz Birkenau and Bergen Belsen, went through all the hardest experiences and were sent to many camps in occupied Poland, and in Germany. This article explores, using archival documents and the testimonies, the geographical directions of their deportations. It also analyses historical coordinates and the Salonikan Jews' characteristics which affected their destinations and the itinerary with which they were forced to cope.

**Key words:** Holocaust, deportations, Sephardim, Saloniki, concentration and extermination camps, slave labour, language, testimonies, displaced persons' camps.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Community in Saloniki was the largest Sephardi community in the world before 1943. About 60,000 Jews used to live in the city, commonly known as *the Jerusalem of the Balkans*: their ancestors at the end of the 15th century had moved there, then part of the Ottoman Empire, as a consequence of the expulsion of Jews from Spain (*Sepharad*).

For five centuries the Jewish presence had been shaping the features of the city, where it constituted the majority of the population until the first two decades of

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the 20th century. The Sephardi Jews of Saloniki always remembered their bond with Spain and kept it alive through the use of Ladino, or Judeo Spanish, which was commonly spoken as their mother tongue. When Saloniki became part of Greece, in 1912, the youngest began learning Greek at school, as well as French and Italian in many cases. The fact that these languages were spoken and taught is quite telling: they represented and helped the geographical connections between the Sephardic Jews from Saloniki and other countries in the Mediterranean area.

Their command of French enabled many Salonikan Jews to move to France in the first three decades of the 20th century; the same, on a smaller scale, happened with Italy, with which the links were old and tight.

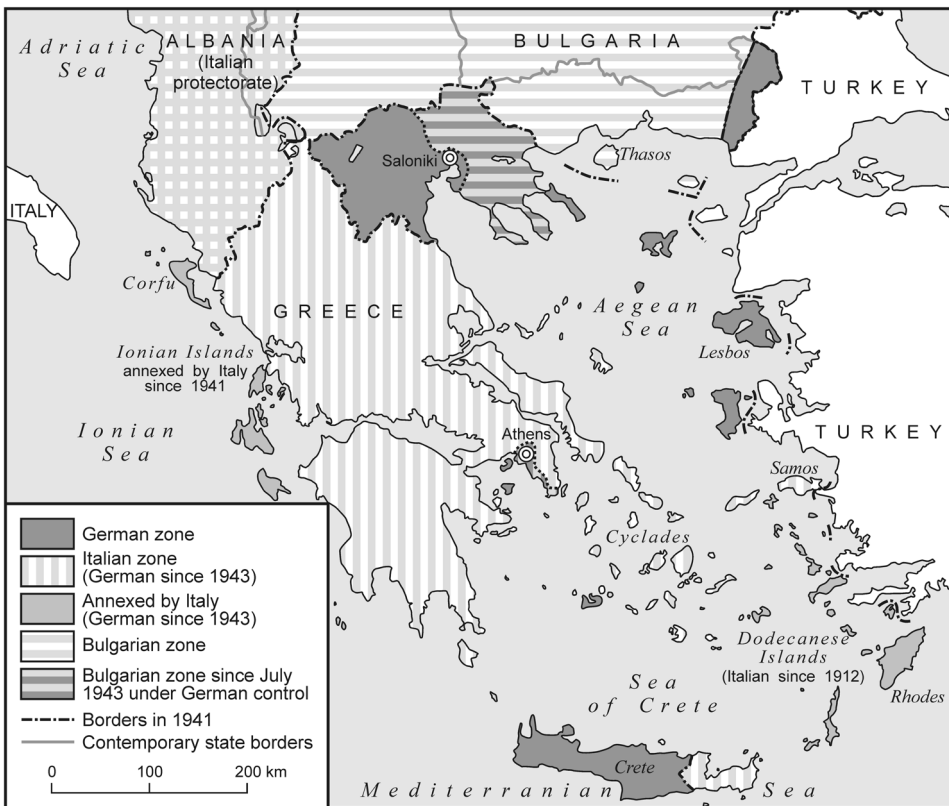


Fig. 1. Occupated areas in Greece

Source: own work based on Hillberg, 1985; Mazower, 1995; Bowman, 2009.

One of the peculiarities of the situation of Salonikan Jews during the Holocaust lied with the different treatment of resident Jews with foreign citizenships. According to German sources, there were 852 (511 Spanish, 281 Italian, 39 Turkish,

and some Portuguese, Argentinian, etc.) such persons in Saloniki at the time of the first transport to Auschwitz, on 15 March 1943. They were exempted from the anti-Jewish measures and initially avoided deportation. Guelfo Zamboni, Italian consul in the city until June 1943, provided Jews with papers indicating their Italian citizenship, so the number of 'Italian citizens' and of those who were allowed to flee to the Italian occupation zone increased. Yet previously many problems had arisen between Germans and Italians about the implementation of the anti-Jewish measures also in the area under the Italian rule.

Italians had often refused to implement the same policy as Germans against the Jews who lived in the Italian zone or with Italian citizenship in Greece. Many documents show this attitude, which involved providing Italian papers on a relatively broad scale. In fact Guelfo Zamboni, and Giuseppe Castruccio, his successor, managed to avoid or at least delay a deportation to Auschwitz of 350 Italian Jews who arrived in Athens on 19 July 1943.

Also Spanish nationals who used to live in Saloniki were mostly protected from immediate deportation. As a consequence of a previous agreement with Franco's government, they were allowed to enter Spain temporarily: 367 of them were deported to Bergen Belsen, established originally as an exchange camp, on 2 August 1943, and were later freed and sent to Camp Fedallah in Morocco via Spain.

## 2. OCCUPATION AND PERSECUTION

Germans occupied Saloniki in April 1941 but they did not begin implementing their anti-Jewish policy until 11 July 1942, when they gathered all Jews, aged 18 to 45, in Plateia Elephtheria. About 8,500 men were kept standing in direct sunlight, and forced to do calysthénics while they were being registered for forced labour. At the end of January 1943, Dieter Wisliceny and Alois Brunner were sent by Adolf Eichmann to Saloniki in order to organise a deportation from the city. The usual anti-Jewish decrees, which followed the same pattern as in other countries, were issued quite quickly: since 26 February all Jews aged over 5 were forced to wear the yellow star, and ghettos, or specific areas for Jews, were established. In particular, many Jews were transferred to the Baron Hirsch neighborhood, which was next to the railway station. When deportations began, on 15 March, the ghetto was emptied and filled again with other Jews coming from other areas of the city, like Regi Vardar.

The deportations of Salonikan Jews followed different paths; despite their limited number in comparison to that of Polish or Hungarian Jews, they eventually arrived at the main extermination and concentration camps. If one follows small groups and individual stories, studying the available testimonies and documents,

one can understand the complexity and the extension of most of these movements. Despite its common lines, the Nazi global plan of persecution, deportation and extermination was conducted in many different ways according to places, time, and people involved. In particular, the special characteristics of Salonikan Jews played a significant role and affected their fate mostly in a negative and, rarely, in a positive way: their being Sephardi, their place of origin, i.e. a Mediterranean country, the language they spoke or they could not speak (Yiddish, for instance), their tendency to constitute, when possible, strong support groups, also due to the fact that they felt that incommunicability, which was also experienced by Primo Levi<sup>1</sup>.

The first wave of deportations from Saloniki occurred between March and August 1943 and was directed to Auschwitz Birkenau, the 19th transport<sup>2</sup> which included 441 Jews (367 Spanish nationals and 74 members of the Jewish community administration) left on 2 August and was sent to Bergen Belsen, which at that time was the destination for Jews with the citizenship of a neutral country or for the so-called 'exchange Jews'. In July, 350 Jews with Italian citizenship had already gone to Athens, which was under the Italian rule until 8 September 1943. In fact, the last transport which included Salonikan Jews left from Athens on 2 April 1944. They had found refuge in Athens at the time of the deportations from Saloniki: the majority of them were sent to Auschwitz, where they arrived on 11 April, others, holding the citizenships of neutral states (Spain, Portugal, and Turkey), were deported to Bergen Belsen. In Vienna five cars were detached from the train directed to Auschwitz and sent north. The convoy arrived to Celle on 14 April 1944.<sup>3</sup>

For reasons of clarity the analysis of the deportations I shall conduct separately: in the first part I shall examine the deportation to Auschwitz and from there to other camps in 1943/44, in the second part I will explain the situation of the deportees to Bergen Belsen, and in the third part the geographic directions of the evacuations and the liberation.

Many Jews of Salonikan origin were deported from France already in November 1942. They were immigrants who had moved mainly to Paris in the 1920s and 1930s and were living mostly in the 11 Arondissement. The round up, which occurred after that of the Velodrome d'Hiver (July 1942), was called *la Rafle des Grecs*. They were mainly deported to Auschwitz Birkenau with the 44th transport from Drancy, only 15 of the 1000 deportees survived. Others were deported later from Paris and other cities (Karatzoglou, 2014).

<sup>1</sup> About the special characteristics of Salonikan Jews, see Primo Levi, *If this is a Man*; Giorgos Antoniou, A. Dirk Moses (2018) (eds.), *The Holocaust in Greece*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>2</sup> According to Yad Vashem's deportations database. <https://deportation.yadvashem.org> [accessed on: 01.02.2019].

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



### 3. AUSCHWITZ BIRKENAU

Between 15 March and 11 August, about 45,000 Jews were deported from Saloniki to Auschwitz Birkenau and the majority of them were murdered almost immediately upon arrival.



Fig. 2. From Saloniki to Auschwitz

Source: own work based on Molho, 1973; Bowman, 2009; Yad Vashem Deportation Database: <https://deportation.yadvashem.org/index.html?language=en&itemId=5603288> [accessed on: 01.02.2019].

A small percentage was registered and given a registration number, among them only a few managed to survive. According to Rudolph Vrba's testimony:

Early in March 1943, 45,000 Jews arrived from Saloniki. Ten thousand men and a much smaller number of women were sent to the camp. The remainder, at least 30,000 people, were sent to the crematoria. Of the 10,000 men in the camp, nearly everyone, perhaps all, died shortly afterwards. Most of them fell victims to an epidemic disease similar to malaria, many died of typhus, and others could not stand the hard conditions in the camp (Vrba and Wetzler, 1944).

The reason for this huge number of losses was also an outcome of the time of the arrival of the transports, that is the spring of 1943, when a new crematorium was put in operation, and of a high number of deportees arriving to Auschwitz Birkenau from all over Europe. Their numbers were more than enough to be exploited as forced labourers by Nazis. The Salonikan Jews who were admitted to the camp actually suffered much because of the climate, harsh living conditions, and communication difficulties as they could not speak German, Polish or Yiddish. The death toll was very high especially among women and girls. Rudolph Vrba recollected:

In view of the great mortality among the Greek Jews, resulting from malaria and typhus, selections were temporarily halted. Sick Greek Jews were told to report. We warned them not to do so, but many reported nevertheless. All were killed by intercordial injections of phenol. Such injections were administered by a medical noncommissioned officer who was assisted by two Czech doctors, Cespira Honza and Zdenek Stich, both of Prague. These doctors are at present in the Buchenwald reception center. Both doctors did everything they could to help the unfortunates, and when they could do nothing else, eased their pain (Vrba and Wetzler, 1944).

Inside Auschwitz and Birkenau the Jews from Saloniki constituted a small group, and yet they faced all the possible experiences there: many girls and young men were used as test subjects in block 10 and 21 for sterilisation experiments (see also Photini, 2009), others worked as slave labourers in the Sonderkommando, and a few young women worked in the Union Fabrik and in the Kanada Kommando. Those who survived were mostly evacuated to camps in Germany in the late 1944 and in January 1945.

#### 4. IN SUBCAMPS

Despite their limited number, many Salonikans had already been transferred from the Auschwitz Birkenau main camp to its subcamps or to other camps in Poland, Germany or Austria. Their fate and their geographical destinations depended upon their condition in the camp, at the camp where they had been transferred and were being exploited. Greeks were mainly sent to Buna Monowitz, Budy, Harmense, Fürstengrube, and Jaworzno.

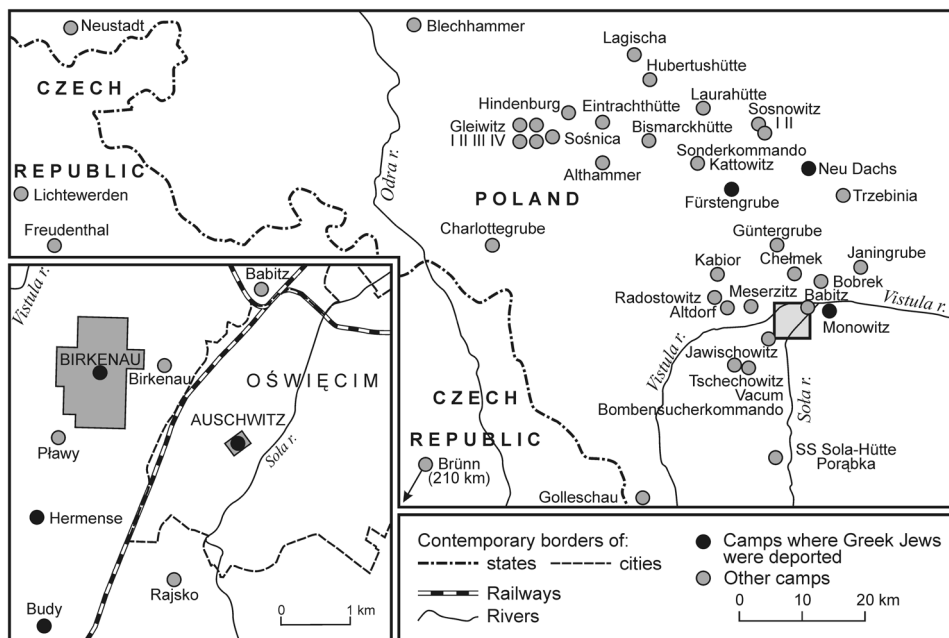


Fig. 3. The Auschwitz Complex

Source: own work based on Molho, 1973; Bowman, 2009; <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/gallery/auschwitz-maps> [accessed on: 01.02.2019]; <http://auschwitz.org/en/history/auschwitz-sub-camps> [accessed on: 01.02.2019].

On 2 May 1943, the first group of 200 Salonikans was transferred to Buna Monowitz. This number increased later on as many others were added in the following transports. They were among the first prisoners taken there to build the factories. In Budy they were exploited for farming and the work was extremely hard.

Several men were sent to Jaworzno, at the recently established satellite camp Neu Dachs, in June 1943. The living and working conditions there were particularly harsh. A transport of 80 prisoners, mostly Salonikans, was recorded on 2 July 1943. Their number reached 1,500 in the following months. The slave labourers were forced to work in coal mines without any protection, food was inadequate, especially considering the hard work demanded of them. In his testimony, Henry Bulawko, one of the prisoners, talked about three Greek Jews who chased a dog and stole some bones from it (Langbein, 2004, p. 112).

Despite their difficulties with communication and their limited number, Greek Jews were visible and active inside the camp. Martin Shlanger, a former prisoner, talked about them in an interview for the Voice Vision Holocaust Survivors Oral History Archive on 4 March 1983. When discussing the sanitary conditions inside Neu Dachs, he stated:

There was no running water. There were wells but the water was terrible (...) Because the area was full of coal mines, probably for that reason. I think it was full of sulfur. That's what I think. Many people were getting uh, dysentery from it but we were drinking it. At night we had um, big drums at the door and during the daytime there were latrines, not inside the barracks, we had to walk out. But at night, we were not allowed to walk out. On the construction project there was a Scheissmeister and prisoners were not allowed to be in the, on the, in the latrine for more than uh, five minutes. After five minutes, the Scheissmeister came with a stick and chased the prisoner out of the latrine...the Scheissmeister on the construction project was a Greek. And he tried to help the prisoners as much as he could. A Greek prisoner...Greek Jew.<sup>4</sup>

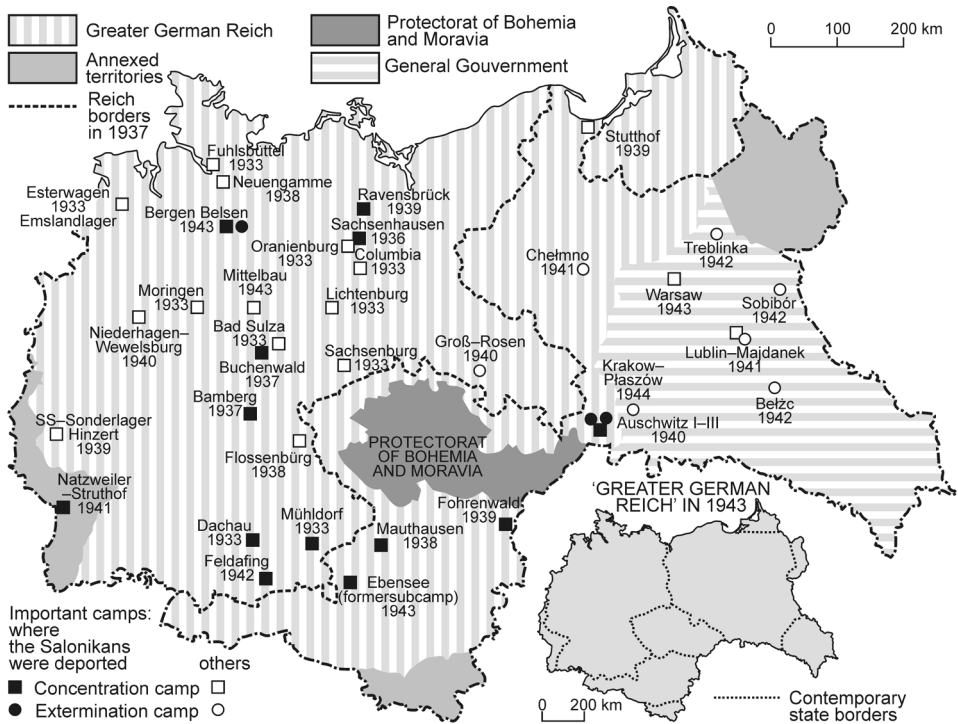


Fig. 4. Camps to which Salonikan Jews were deported

Source: own work based on Molho, 1972; Novitch, 1977; Pinhas, 2006; Bowman, 2009; <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org> [accessed on: 01.03.2019]; <https://voices.iit.edu/> [accessed on: 09.03.2019].

Michael Molho wrote that Jaworzno was the cemetery of Greek Jews: they died from starvation, exhaustion, and many were shot by the SS. At the end of October 1943 about 1,000 were sent to the crematoria, fifteen days later another group of 250 shared the same fate. The few who survived, 12 according to Molho, were evacuated from Jaworzno to Gross Rosen and then to Buchenwald on 17 January 1945 (Molho, 1972).

<sup>4</sup> <http://holocaust.umd.umich.edu/shlanger/> [accessed on: 10.01.2019].

At the end of July 1943, many Salonikan Jews were sent to Fürstengrube, another subcamp active from September 1943 to 19 January 1945, where the prisoners were forced to work in coal mines. Benjamin Jacobs recalled in his memoir, *The Dentist of Auschwitz*: “By the end of July Greek Jews from Saloniki were delivered to Fürstengrube. None of them understood German, but they proved themselves to be tougher than any of us” (Jacobs, 1995, p. 189).

Hermann Langbein in his *People in Auschwitz* wrote that Dr. Miklos Udvardi stated: “(...) in late July or August 1944 five or six inmates were publicly hanged in Fürstengrube. (...) those hanged were Poles and Jews from Greece and Italy.” (Langbein, 2004, p. 279).

## 5. FROM AUSCHWITZ TO MAJDANEK

On 27 May 1943, an order was issued to transfer about 800 prisoners suffering from malaria, aged 16 to 20 years, from Auschwitz to Lublin Majdanek. They left on 3 June and arrived there two days later. “At the beginning of June, over 800 Greek Jews, men and women, arrived at the camp from KL Auschwitz ...” (Kranz, 2007, p. 25).

They were to become the test subjects for a new malaria medicine in the experiments conducted by SS doctor Heinrich Rindfleisch (Weindling, 2014). According to Vrba’s testimony:

Four hundred Greeks suffering from malaria were sent to Lublin for “further treatment”, following the suppression of the phenol injections. We received news of their arrival in Lublin, but we know nothing about their fate (Vrba and Wetzler, 1944).

Many Greek women were actually suffering from typhus, not just malaria, nevertheless they were given a new medicine which did not treat them at all. These women, placed in a separate barrack, all died by September 1943.<sup>5</sup> Testimonies, among them Dr. Alina Brewda’s account, confirm the fact that all the women died there.<sup>6</sup> Brewda

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<sup>5</sup> “The transport of Greek Jews from KL Auschwitz, who according to notes were suffering from malaria, arrived at Majdanek on 5 June 1943. It contained 542 men and 302 women aged 16 through to 20. Most likely these prisoners were transferred for the purpose of testing a new malaria medicine. The infectious disease treatment tests were carried out by SS Doctor, Heinrich Rindfleisch, who placed the Greek women in a separate barrack and ordered them to be administered an unknown preparation. In fact, many of them suffered from typhoid fever, which decimated their group in a short period of time. Cf. *I Shall Fear No Evil. The story of Dr. Alina Brewda*. ed Robert J. Minney (London), pp. 91–92” (Kranz, 2007, p. 25).

<sup>6</sup> “The Majdanek camp doctor Heinrich Rindfleisch conducted unofficial experiments on treatment of infectious diseases. He carried out therapeutic experiments on 300 female Jews (originally from

was captured in the Warsaw ghetto on 22 April 1943, during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and she was sent to Majdanek.

“I got to the Majdanek camp, where I stayed until September 22, 1943. At that time, I ran a block of malaria patients - Greek - and I was a gynecologist surgeon at the entire Majdanek district.”<sup>7</sup>

On 23 July 1943 a report about the countries of origin of male prisoners was made: out of the 4,710 Jewish prisoners inside the camp 449 came from Greece.<sup>8</sup> The *Communique of the Polish-Soviet extraordinary Commission for investigating the crimes committed by the Germans in the Majdanek extermination camp in Lublin*, includes another testimony about the presence of Greeks. Tadeusz Budzyn, M. Sc. Chem., a Pole, and formerly a prisoner at the camp, stated:

The Germans compelled a large group of professors, physicians, engineers and other specialists, numbering one thousand two hundred in all, who came from Greece, to carry heavy stones from one place to another, a task which was far beyond their strength. The scientists who dropped from exhaustion as a result of this heavy labour were beaten to death by the SS men. Owing to the system of starvation, exhausting labour, beating and murder, the entire group of Greek scientists was exterminated in the course of five weeks.<sup>9</sup>

Some Greeks were still in the camp in 1944, as a witness, Alina Paradowska, testified on 30 September 1947: “In 1944, I saw Muhsfeldt<sup>10</sup> on the road playing an active role in the selection of Jewish Greeks brought to the camp and destined for execution.”<sup>11</sup>

## 6. FROM AUSCHWITZ TO NATZWEILER

On 30 July 1943, 86 Auschwitz prisoners, 60 men and 26 women, were sent to Natzweiler-Struthof, where they were killed in gas chambers. They had been selected by two anthropologists, Bruno Beger and Hans Fleischhacker. According

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Saloniki), aged sixteen to twenty, transferred from Auschwitz to Majdanek, because they had malaria, in May 1943. They died by September.” Weindling, 2014, p. 236.

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.zapisyterroru.pl//Content/4070/Brewda\\_Alina\\_2\\_pl](https://www.zapisyterroru.pl//Content/4070/Brewda_Alina_2_pl). [accessed on: 01.04.2021].

<sup>8</sup> APMM, KL Lublin, I c 2, v. 1.

<sup>9</sup> *Communique of the Polish-Soviet extraordinary Commission for investigating the crimes committed by the Germans in the Majdanek extermination camp in Lublin* (1944), Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.

<sup>10</sup> Erich Muhsfeldt (1913–1948). He was in charge of the gas chambers in Majdanek until May 1944.

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.zapisyterroru.pl//Content/3614/Paradowska\\_Alina\\_en.html?hl=majdanek](https://www.zapisyterroru.pl//Content/3614/Paradowska_Alina_en.html?hl=majdanek) [accessed on: 01.04.2019]. ALINA PARADOWSKA. On 30 September 1947 in Łódź, Investigating Judge of the Third Region of the District Court in Łódź, S. Krzyżanowska, with the participation of court reporter Maria Adamczyk, heard the person named below as a witness. Having been advised of the criminal liability for making false declarations and of the wording of Article 107 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

to Paul Weidling, Beger aimed to demonstrate that the Jewish race was racially complex. He was fascinated by the wide range of Jewish types in Auschwitz and was particularly interested in Greek Sephardic Jews, whose presence was massive in Block 10.

Between 11 and 19 August 1943, 46 Salonikan men and women, among the prisoners previously selected, were murdered in a small gas chamber in Natzweiler-Struthof and their corpses were sent to the Anatomy Laboratory of the Strasbourg University Medical School in order to be collected for a Jewish skeleton collection. The laboratory was headed by Dr. Hirt, who was not a doctor, but taught at the university. He had asked Himmler for a permission to get some well preserved bodies for his work. That was the reason why 86 Auschwitz prisoners, whose biometric measures had been previously taken, were sent to Natzweiler-Struthof and murdered: their heads were removed, and their bodies were cut into pieces and preserved. This story was not completely known until a German researcher, Dr. Joachim Lang, investigated and identified the victims (Lang, 2004). Their names were recorded by Henry Pierre, Dr. Hirt's assistant and his notes helped in the identification process. An official ceremony occurred in December 2005, and eventually a memorial plaque with the names of the victims was placed on the site where their remains had been buried.<sup>12</sup>

Another transport which took several Salonikans from Auschwitz to Natzweiler-Struthof occurred on 28 October 1944; some, like Juda and Moise Akunis, were deported from Saloniki with the first transport to Auschwitz.<sup>13</sup>

## 7. FROM AUSCHWITZ TO WARSAW

A group of prisoners, among them many Salonikans and Greek Jews from the north, was transported from Auschwitz Birkenau to Warsaw (see also Zezza, 2020, p. 4)<sup>14</sup> in late August (501 according to Molho (Molho, 1973), among them 233 from the last transport from Saloniki), in October (200 according to Molho), and in November (850 according to Molho) 1943: all the testimonies confirmed the fact that the prisoners were chosen since they could not speak Polish. They were sent to KL Warsaw Gęsiówka, which Himmler had established inside the area of the former ghetto, in order to remove the debris after the end of the Ghetto

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<sup>12</sup> From Auschwitz to Natzweiler (Professor Pierre Biermann of Luxemburg testified at the Nuremberg Trial [NO-814] to experiments in Natzweiler (January–September 1943) and Buchenwald (September 1943–April 1945)).

<sup>13</sup> ITS Bad Arolsen Archives Incarceration Documents / 1.1 Camps and Ghettos / 1.1.41 Stutthof Concentration Camp / Personal Files – Stutthof Concentration Camp Reference Code 01014102 oS.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.sephardichorizons.org/Volume10/Issue3&4/Zezza.html>.

revolt and to collect all the building material which was to be sent to Germany. In fact, in July 1943 Himmler made the decision to erase any traces left of the former ghetto and of the Jewish presence in Warsaw, and to create a park in the area. “The transport was composed only for Greek people. The reason – because we don’t speak Polish and the job was in contact with the Polish civilians and they don’t want the Polish Jews.”<sup>15</sup>

Vrba remembered: “Approximately 1000 survivors of the 10,000 Greek Jews were sent with another 500 Jews to build fortifications in Warsaw. A few hundred of these returned several weeks later in a hopeless condition and were immediately gassed.”<sup>16</sup> The harsh conditions inside the camp were also recalled by Moshe Salmon:

We arrived in Poland, in Warsaw, we were transferred by train. ... there was another camp, some barracks. Just real, real primitive. No organized camp, no nothing. Just barracks. Everybody got a billet bag, for pillow, for blanket, for everything. ... The disease started to spread in camp. My brother-in-law and I, we fell with the typhoid. .... I don’t remember how long we stayed in the hospital. People they used to die by drinking water, not clear water.<sup>17</sup>

Germans thought that the inability to communicate could prevent the prisoners from escaping. Yet the Salonikans managed to have contacts and to trade with the Poles.

Every day a hundred or so Poles would enter the ghetto to work at clearing away the ruins, and they all did business with the slaves of the Warsaw camp. They brought in food and carried off riches. The biggest “merchants” were the Greek Jews, most of whom came from Saloniki. They were specially talented at “organizing”, what they called ‘klepsi-klepsi’ – that is articles from “nonkosher” sources such as thievery (Charmaz, 2003, p. 112).

In the Gęsiówka camp the Salonikans not only could see the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto but they also experienced the first ‘death march’ (Krakowski, 1989) at the end of July 1944: while the Red Army was approaching Warsaw, a major group of the prisoners was evacuated to Dachau and its subcamps. According to Steven Bowman (2014) only 280 Greek prisoners arrived at their destination alive. For the Greeks there was neither an opportunity nor a possibility to escape, as Yehiel Daniel recalled:

Where would you escape to? Do you know where to escape to? What escape? Who thought about escaping? You don’t know – Poland, not Poland, not Germany. Maybe you are between Poland and Germany. ... You don’t know the language, you don’t know a thing. Also, it’s better to be together. ... Exactly where I would go? (Blatman, 2014, p. 66).

<sup>15</sup> MOSHE, S., *Oral History Transcript*. <http://wisconsinhistory.org/HolocaustSurvivors/Moshe.asp> [accessed on: 05.05.2019].

<sup>16</sup> VRBA, R., *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup> MOSHE, S., *Oral History Transcript*. <http://wisconsinhistory.org/HolocaustSurvivors/Moshe.asp> [accessed on: 05.05.2019].



The prisoners had to walk to Kutno where they were evacuated to Dachau. “Now, the march from Warsaw, the worst part, was this, was in August – hot. It was July, August, I don’t remember exactly, but it was really warm. They wouldn’t give you water, no water.”<sup>18</sup>

David Lea, one of the Salonikan survivors interviewed by David Boder<sup>19</sup> in 1946, remembered the terrible trip:

On a transportation that came from Warsaw, in 1944, when the Russians were approaching Warsaw. The biggest transportation, and the biggest disaster in Jewish history was in Warsaw where they deported us on train for 18 days. On animal trains, locked day and night, guarded by four barbarians of the SS, with their machine guns, no water, no food, and under the sun ... And more than 8,000 people died. We were 8,726 people and 725 people returned to the Dachau camp. The 8,000 people were killed by starvation, or by the SS, or by the drought.<sup>20</sup>

Lea and the other prisoners from Warsaw were registered in Dachau on 6 August 1944<sup>21</sup> and were exploited as slave labourers in subcamps until their liberation.

Many were sent to Mühldorf, others to Landsberg Kaufering, and some to Karlsfeld. A few were deported to the Flossenburg subcamp Leitmeritz in January 1945. For instance, Lea remained in Kaufering until its liberation. Eleiezer and Isaac Sotto were transferred to Leitmeritz on 7 January 1945.

We stayed until 1944 in Warsaw. In 1944, they evacuate the camp because the Allies was pretty close, and they took us to Dachau. We march a whole week, and they put us in the train to go to Dachau. We arrive in Dachau, and we stay for a couple of weeks, and then we transfer to another camp: Number 4. They have different camps, Number 1, Number 4, Number 7. Then from Number 4, I went to Lager [German: camp] 7. I think that was in Landsberg, Germany. Then from Landsberg, Germany, we got transferred to Leitmeritz. That was in Czechoslovakia. We were working in a town over there.<sup>22</sup>

483 prisoners were left in Gęsiówka, 41 of them were Greeks and only 14 of them survived. They were freed by Polish partisans on 5 August 1944, and made the decision to fight with them against Germans during the Warsaw Uprising. When the revolt failed and Germans regained control of the city, the survivors hid in bunkers or in the woods near Warsaw. They were liberated later by the Red Army.

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<sup>18</sup> MOSHE, S., *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> On 4, 5, and 12 August 1946, David Boder interviewed in Paris seven Holocaust survivors from Saloniki. These interviews represent some of the few documents which provide direct information on the fate of Salonikan Jews and reveal much more than other testimonies in terms of historical details, perception of the events, and background information.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with David Lea. <http://www.voices.itt.edu> (now <https://voices.library.iit.edu/>) [accessed on: 09.02.2019].

<sup>21</sup> Copy of 1.1.6.1 /9956424 in conformity with the ITS Archives, Bad Arolsen. Namentliche Aufstellung über Häftlinge, die im Konzentrationlager Dachau inhaftiert waren.

<sup>22</sup> Interview with Eliezer Sotto. The William Breman Jewish Heritage Museum Esther and Herbert Taylor Jewish Oral History Project of Atlanta Legacy Project. <https://www.thebreman.org/Research/Southern-Jewish-Archives/Oral-Histories> [accessed on: 10.04.2019].

## 8. SALONIKAN JEWS IN BERGEN BELSEN

Salonikans were deported also to Bergen Belsen: those with Spanish citizenship got there in August 1943 together with members of the Jewish Council.



Fig. 5. From Greece to Bergen Belsen (April 1944)

Source: own work based on Molho, 1973; Novitch, 1977; Bowman, 2009; <http://buchenwald.de> [accessed on: 06.02.2019]; <http://voices.itt.edu> (now <https://voices.library.itt.edu/>) [accessed on: 09.02.2019]; <https://collections.arolsen-archives.org> [accessed on: 02.03.2019]; <https://deportation.yadvashem.org> [accessed on: 01.02.2019].

On August 2nd a certain number of so called ‘privileged’ were deported to Bergen Belsen, to these people were added the leaders (of the Jewish Council), some functionaires and artisans

who had been kept (in Saloniki) by the Germans for their purposes. With this same convoy and to the same destination 367 Jews with Spanish citizenship were deported. Spain had refused to let them enter... (Molho, 1973, p. 110).

These Spanish nationals left the camp in February 1944, passed through Spain and arrived in the Fadhala Camp in Morocco, from where they eventually went to Palestine. As Dieter Wisliceny stated in his affidavit:

... about 700 Jews of Spanish nationality were transported in August 1943 to Bergen-Belsen and in December to Spain. These Jews had obtained their Spanish nationality during the last century while Greece was still under Turkish rule.<sup>23</sup>

Jack Revah recollected:

Our group eventually left for Spain. The first convoy left on February 4, 1944, the second on 7. We travelled in third class wagons. A representative of the Joint, Dr. Sequerra, was waiting for us at the Spanish border. On February 14 we arrived to Barcelona. On June 15 we were sent to Madrid, on 21 we arrived to Casablanca; we were housed in a camp close to the city of Fedallah. This camp was directed by Mr. Backelman, we were treated well and stayed there until November 13, 1944. Passing through Port Said, where we arrived on November 27, we went to Palestine, where half of us made the decision to stay (Novitch, 1977, p. 32).

The second group was sent to Bergen Belsen from Athens in April 1944. Jacob Button, interviewed by David Boder, gave a detailed account of the trip: the train travelled through Serbia, Hungary, Austria, and Germany. He remembered that the train stopped at the central station in Budapest, where the deportees could see the stars worn by Hungarian Jews: to wear the star had become compulsory on 5 April 1944. He also remembered that the train was divided into two different convoys in Vienna: one went to Auschwitz, the other to Bergen Belsen.

Like other witnesses, Button said that the deportees had to walk from the station, in Celle, to the camp. They were considered exchange Jews and were kept in the camp in harsh living conditions, suffered from starvation, diseases like typhus, but they did not have to work and were not subjected to selections and extermination by gas. They remained in the camp until April 1945.

Others arrived there, as in many other camps and subcamps in Germany, after the evacuation of Auschwitz, when Bergen Belsen had lost its original function and had become the destination for thousands of prisoners after the death marches. People were left dying without housing facilities, food or water, since the camp, which had been originally planned to host a few thousand inmates, hosted about 60,000 at that time.

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<sup>23</sup> Affidavit of Dieter Wisliceny. Source: *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*. Volume VIII. USGPO, Washington, 1946, pp. 606–619. (This affidavit is substantially the same as the testimony given by Wisliceny on direct examination before the International Military Tribunal at Nurnberg, 3 January 1946).

## 9. EVACUATIONS

As the Red Army was nearing the Auschwitz complex, about 60,000 prisoners were forced to leave the camp and march to western camps inside Germany to be exploited as forced labourers in the armament industry. The death marches, as they are commonly known, began on 17/18 January and were so chaotic and disorganised that the prisoners often reached their final destinations after several weeks. Most of them were later transported to other subcamps, sometimes switched between two or three, where they were eventually liberated. Those Salonikan Jews who had managed to survive in the Auschwitz complex were among these prisoners. For some days after 18 January they marched out from Auschwitz and its subcamps. They were forced to walk in the snow for many kilometers before reaching a railway station from where they were transferred to camps in the west. Moshe Haelion<sup>24</sup>, aged 20 at that time, from Saloniki, remembered leaving with thousands of other prisoners on foot on 21 January, and four days later he arrived in Mauthausen. The living conditions inside the camp were extremely harsh and he volunteered to go to work in Melk where the situation was not better, though: when he arrived there, the camp had reached its maximum capacity: on 30 January 1945, there were 10,352 prisoners. The last group of prisoners was transported there on 29 January 1945. They worked inside caverns without any protection.

As the Allied Forces were approaching, the prisoners were evacuated in April mostly to Ebensee. They went to Linz by boat and, after two days, passing through Wels and Lambach on foot, they arrived at the camp. There they worked at the railway station until their liberation, on 6 May 1945. There were about 180 Greek Jews who survived there, among them Dario Gabbai, who had taken part in the Sonderkommando revolt in Birkenau, and Jacques Stroumsa.

Another group of prisoners, among them Henry Sochamy, one of David Boder's interviewees, were taken to Breslau Lissa and then to Buchenwald.

A month before the Russians' arrival, the camp was evacuated and we were sent to a camp in [unintelligible name].<sup>25</sup> In [unintelligible name], there were only forty Jews, and the rest of the prisoners were Christian.<sup>26</sup>

Breslau Lissa was the first subcamp of Gross Rosen. It was established in 1942 and in 1944 it hosted the FAMO plant. Henry Sochami said that in February 1945

<sup>24</sup> Oral history interview with Moshe Haelion. USHMM. Oral History | Accession Number: 2014.428.9 | RG Number: RG-50.822.0009.

<sup>25</sup> The interviewee says Breslau Lissa, but David Boder couldn't understand the name of the camp and transcribed it as *Breslaolita*.

<sup>26</sup> Interview with Henry Sochami/Suchami. www.voices.itt.edu (now: <https://voices.library.iit.edu/>) [accessed on: 09.02.2019].

he was evacuated to Buchenwald.<sup>27</sup> Most probably, Sochami was one of the 7,800 Jewish prisoners who were sent from Gross Rosen to Buchenwald between 10 February and 5 March 1945. Hundreds of them died in open freight cars, while those who reached Buchenwald alive were exhausted, starving, and seriously ill.<sup>28</sup>

He was housed in a block together with prisoners deported from many countries; those who were fit for work were sent to camps throughout Germany. He managed to hide, but eventually was sent to what he called *campo chico*, and quartered in an overcrowded barrack. It was the *Kleine Lager*, the *Little camp*, inside Buchenwald, which was a quarantine area and a transit camp, built in the northern zone of the Lager in 1942. Prisoners were sent from there on to subcamps after some weeks. At the time when Sochami arrived there, it was overcrowded due to mass transports from camps in the East.

When the American forces were approaching the camp, on 6 April, the camp commandant issued an order to evacuate. From the following day, about 28,000 prisoners were evacuated, the guards gathered all Jews and later killed them on the road. The interviewee, whose Jewish identity was not known by the other inmates because Jews were not recognisable there as they were in Auschwitz, managed to hide in an underground bunker with some Russians and emerged from it on 11 April, when the American forces liberated the camp.

Other Salonikans who had been evacuated from Auschwitz and taken to Buchenwald were evacuated and sent to Theresienstadt, where they were later liberated.

In particular it is interesting to follow the fortunes of a group of young women who arrived in Ravensbrück, whose experience is quite paradigmatic (see also: Zezza, 2018). Ravensbrück was the first camp for women established by the Nazis in 1939 and it operated until May 1945. The camp's history is complex and had to be divided into different phases, quite different from one another. Once a camp for political prisoners, it became, in its final phase, a transit camp as well as an extermination camp, provided with gas chambers. At that time, Jewish women, who had been absent from the camp for four years, after the Reich had been declared Judenfrei, returned and their numbers was impressive. In January 1945 Ravensbrück appeared much different from what it had used to be at the beginning and in its following phases: the number of arrivals drastically increased in 1944 and 1945, when approximately 100,000 prisoners were deported there from other camps or occupied countries. This number was almost ten times bigger than that of the deportees who arrived at the camp in the previous four years.

It is in this final phase, i.e. from late autumn of 1944 to April 1945, that most of the Greek women arrived at Ravensbrück. Eleven of them were registered in the list of the transport no. 42 from Auschwitz Birkenau. Some others, whose names

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<sup>27</sup> Once again the transcription of the interview shows a misunderstanding: the word 'Buchenwald', recognisable in the audio recording, was interpreted as 'empujando'.

<sup>28</sup> <http://buchenwald.de/en/463/#.dpuf> [accessed on: 06.02.2019].

are not in the few lists which were not destroyed, gave testimony about their deportation and imprisonment in the camp after the war.

Unlike the majority of Ravensbrück prisoners coming from other countries, Greek women were not deported to the camp directly from their country of origin. They were taken there after spending about 20 months in Auschwitz Birkenau, and for many of them Ravensbrück was only an intermediate step to subcamps like Rechlin/Retzow, Malchow or Neustadt Glewe. In fact, Ravensbrück was the centre of a system of 40 subcamps, which were established for female prisoners in different towns in Germany. Those closer to the main camp, about 20, stayed under Ravensbrück's jurisdiction until the liberation, while the other were assigned to geographically closer camps in the summer of 1944. During the last weeks of April, almost all the documents and papers regarding the camp were destroyed, yet some survived. One of these is the transport list no. 42 from Auschwitz-Birkenau to Ravensbrück<sup>29</sup> which includes 11 names of Greek young women (aged 17–22) who were deported to Auschwitz from Saloniki between March and April 1943 and arrived at the camp on 23 January 1945.

Most of the Salonikan girls who were later evacuated to Ravensbrück had been deported from Saloniki in the spring of 1943 and shared the same duties: some of them, like Rita Benmayor, worked outside for some weeks or months digging or working in the ponds. Those who survived the first months were later transferred to work at the Kanada Kommando in Birkenau, among these some ended up working at the Union Fabrik, from where they left on 18 January.

Another group of survivors, who were evacuated to Ravensbrück, were among those who had been selected to be used as test subjects in Block 10 in Auschwitz. From the testimonies given by some of these women it is possible to reconstruct their path. They left the Auschwitz complex on 18 January and they walked to Breslau, then were put onto open wagons and passed through Frankfurt am Oder and Berlin before arriving at their destination. From there, after some weeks, they were sent to the satellite camps. From 1944 on, the use of female labour in the Ravensbrück camp complex was increasing. At least fifty per cent of the new arrivals were sent to work elsewhere: Ravensbrück became a transit point for exploitation of forced labour in subcamps. Some of the Greek girls, like Palomba Allalouf, were transferred to Malchow by bus:

One morning after eight days they told us Zählapell, Zählapell... We all were outside and a German came: you out, you out. Frieda and I were among the ones he called out. They put us in a bus... (Lewkowicz, 2009)<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Überstellung Nr. 42 aus Auschwitz, APMO, MF nr 55, k. 2401-2419.

<sup>30</sup> See also Testimony of Palomba Alaluf, born in Saloniki, Greece, 1926, regarding her experiences in Saloniki, Auschwitz and Ravensbrück. Record Group 0.33 – Testimonies, Diaries and Memoirs Collection File Number 6564 Tape Number 0.33.C/5048. Language: Greek. Date of creation – 17/02/1989. <https://testimonies.yadvashem.org/index.html?search=&language=en> [accessed on: 20.06.2017].

Others, like Lisa Pinhas and Rita Benmayor<sup>31</sup>, were transferred to Rechlin/Retzow, an airfield close to the Lärz airport. Lisa Pinhas remembered that it was February and they used to work in the woods or in the airfield, digging and cutting tree branches to hide planes. The living conditions were extremely harsh due to overcrowding, the reduction of rations, and an epidemic caused by insufficient hygiene.

A devastating air raid destroyed the airfield on 10 April and the prisoners were forced to clear the ruins. A few days later some prisoners were taken back to Ravensbrück where Greeks stayed in the same block as the French.

After some weeks spent in Ravensbrück, Frieda Medina Kovo<sup>32</sup> was transported to Neustadt Glewe, Meklenburg, where women worked in the woods and in Dornier Works at the military airfield in the proximity of Neustadt-Glewe, district of Ludwigslust.

Kovo was assigned to camouflage airplanes. She remembered that on 23 April 1945 the airport was heavily bombed, and the girls hid in the woods which were burning as the airfield did. On 2 May, the guards locked the prisoners inside the barracks and left. In the afternoon Russian forces entered the camp.

On 27 April, the evacuation of Ravensbrück had begun. Pinhas remembered they marched to Malchow, which they reached on the night of 28 April.

Benmayor was sent to Malchow, directly from Retzow. There she stayed until Germans left the camp when, together with some other prisoners, she went to a village looking for food. When Russian forces arrived, they went back to the camp.

## 10. LIBERATION AND DISPLACED PERSONS (DP) CAMPS

The camps in the west were liberated on different days during the spring of 1945. For the survivors the liberation was the beginning of a new phase: on the one hand, they had to cope with their traumas and losses, but on the other, most of them lived in a sort of a limbo since they did not want to go back to their countries of origin nor could they immediately find a place to go to begin a new life. In the meanwhile, most were temporarily housed in the Displaced Persons camps set up by the liberators. From there, some returned to their homelands after a while, others chose a new path which took them to different places and eventually to their new countries.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Rita Benmayor. [www.voices.itt.edu](http://www.voices.itt.edu). The documents about Rita Benmayor were provided by the ITS Bad Arolsen: Copy of 6.3.3.2 / 98820205, Copy of 6.3.3.2 / 98820211, Copy of 6.3.3.2 / 98820213, Copy of 6.3.3.2 / 98820214 in conformity with the ITS Archives, Bad Arolsen.

<sup>32</sup> <https://collections.ushmm.org>. Oral History | Accession Number: 1995.A.1272.76 | RG Number: RG-50.120.0076 [accessed on: 09.02.2019].

According to the analysed testimonies and the documents, it is possible to identify some of the paths the survivors followed after the liberation. This topic, however, needs to be studied in more detail since there are many documents available in the JDC archives, in Bad Arolsen ITS and in other archives, as well as in the testimonies which can provide further information on it.

The first group of Salonikans with Spanish citizenship, deported to Bergen Belsen in August 1943, could leave the camp on 7 February 1944. From there they were sent to Spain, where Franco had accepted to let them stay only temporarily. They spent four months in Barcelona, until 14 June 1944, when they left for Casablanca and resided in Camp Fadallah. Eventually this group was sent to Palestine: after 9 August 1945, many of them returned to Greece, and 150 made the decision to remain in Tel Aviv (Molho, 1977).

The other group of Salonikans, who arrived in Bergen Belsen in April 1944, was evacuated in April 1945 while being sent to Theresienstadt as a result of Himmler's attempt to find an agreement with the Allies. The train, loaded with prisoners of Spanish, Turkish and Portuguese citizenship, left Bergen Belsen on 10 April. It was bombed and damaged while travelling, the Americans accidentally run into it on 13 April. Nino Barzilai, one of David Boder's interviewees, gave a very detailed account of this event:

... we were placed on a train and we were told we were to be taken to Spain, but we came to Börgermoor (Magdeburg). There, there were a number of bombings by Americans, that lasted for a whole night. In the morning, when we woke up, we noticed the Germans had left the train and we had been left on our own in the camp . . . completely abandoned. A number of us marched to some nearby German houses to see what was going on. We were looking for some food, because we did not cook, and we had eaten all the food we had been given for the journey. We found some potatoes and we came back to the train where we boiled them to eat something. Meanwhile, there was a rumor that the Americans had arrived. And some time later, we happily received the Americans who had come to [unintelligible]. Their first concern was to give us something hot to eat, and we were served a soup right there on the train. After a day, we were told we were going to be transported to another place. We were told to gather in the park of the town to march together to some houses they had prepared for us to stay in.<sup>33</sup>

Some of them, since they were suffering from typhus, were taken by American soldiers to Hillersleben. Manis Mizrachi,<sup>34</sup> interviewed by David Boder, provided interesting details on the events following the liberation, in particular he said that his parents died and he was hosted by German families, who had been forced by Americans to provide former prisoners with food and shelter. As his parents before him, Mizrachi became ill with typhus and was hospitalised in Hillersleben. When he recovered, he weighed 42 kg. A testimony on that event was given by Frank Towers, a soldier of the 30th Infantry Division, which ran into the train:

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<sup>33</sup> Interview with Nino Barzilai. [www.voices.itt.edu](http://www.voices.itt.edu). (now <https://voices.library.iit.edu/>) [accessed on: 20.03.2019].

<sup>34</sup> Interview with Manis Mizrachi. [www.voice.itt.edu](http://www.voice.itt.edu). (now <https://voices.library.iit.edu/>) [accessed on: 09.02.2019].



In between Brunswick and Magdeburg was the city of Hillersleben, where there was a large German Luftwaffe airbase with many two-story barracks buildings for the Nazi German personnel who had recently been evicted by the 30th Infantry Division during the capturing of Hillersleben.

At this point, a small task force, led by the 743rd Tank Battalion, with infantrymen of the 119th Regiment, was mounted on these tanks. As they were forging ahead towards Magdeburg, they entered the small town of Farsleben, about 10 km north of Magdeburg, with the mission of clearing out all of the German soldiers who may be waiting there for us, and may have set up an ambush.

...Upon entering and capturing the village, no German soldiers were found who may have been intent on setting up an ambush when we appeared. However, the lead elements of the 743rd Recon discovered a long freight train on the railroad track, which had been guarded by several Nazi guards. The engine was standing ready with a full head of steam and awaiting orders as to where to go. The guards and the train crew fled the area as soon as they realized that they were well outnumbered, although they were rounded up in a short time. As the train was sitting idly by, while the train crew was awaiting orders and making a decision as to where to go, many of the occupants of some of the passenger cars had dismounted and were relaxing on the ground near the train.

This train, where about 2,500 Jews were, had left the Bergen-Belsen death camp some days earlier. Men, women and children, were all loaded into a few available railway cars, some passenger and some freight, but mostly the typical antiquated freight cars, termed as „40 and 8”, a WWI terminology. This meant that these cars could accommodate 40 men or 8 horses.

They were crammed into all available space and the freight cars were packed with about 60–70 of the Jewish Holocaust victims, with standing room only for most of them, so that they were packed in like sardines....

Some of these prisoners had dismounted from the passenger cars and were milling about near the train and relaxing, as best they could, under the watchful eyes of their Nazi guards. Those in the freight cars were still locked in the cars when discovered, but shortly they were released.

The men of the 743rd Tank Battalion and the 119th Regiment, who discovered this train, could not believe what they were seeing, nor what they had upon their hands at this moment. Upon speaking to some of those victims, a few of whom could speak a little English, they began to learn what they had uncovered. Each one had a slightly different story to tell, so there is no way of accurately knowing what the real story was. Now after 60 plus years, and having heard the stories from their parents, there is a good possibility that there may be some inaccuracies or exaggerations.

They immediately unlocked all of the freight cars and allowed these pathetic victims to be released and dismount from the cars and enjoy their first taste of freedom. Many were hesitant at first because they had been advised by their Nazi guards that, if and when they ever became prisoners of the Americans, they would be executed immediately. Little did they know what to expect at the hands of these savage Americans.<sup>35</sup>

Some of the survivors from the train, like Manis Mizrachi, Eva Button, Jacob Button, and Nino Barzilai, arrived in Paris in the shelters provided by the Joint Distribution Committee, where they were interviewed by David Boder in the summer of 1946. They remained in Paris waiting for visas, while others returned to Greece in June 1945.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> <http://www.30thinfantry.org/holocaust.shtml> [accessed on: 02.05.2019].

<sup>36</sup> World Jewish Congress London (London no. 130). List of Greeks (Jews) who were arrested in Athens on 25 Mar 1944 by the SS and deported on 2 Apr 1944. Now repatriated and registered in Brussels and Paris (some cases with dates of death) List dated 25 Jun 1945.

Another group of Salonikan Jews was taken to Bergen Belsen during the evacuations. They were liberated by the British Army on 15 April 1945. Some of them returned to Greece passing through Bulgaria and stayed in a quarantine camp in Sidirokastro, close to the Bulgarian border, before returning to Saloniki. Others were taken to Sweden in July 1945 since 13 Greek names, five from Saloniki, can be found in the list of refugees sent there on 24 July.<sup>37</sup> S/S Kastelholm, one of the Swedish Red Cross' "White Ships", carried 400 survivors from Lübeck, Germany, to Stockholm's Frihamnen port. From there some of the refugees were transported to Ropsten sanitary facility and from there to the Epidemic Hospital at Roslagstull in Stockholm or the field hospital in Sigtuna.

Other Salonikans, who were liberated from Mauthausen or Ebensee, were kept there until 23 May 1945, when they were allowed by the Red Cross to leave; among them there was Isaak M. who was evacuated there on 25 January 1945.<sup>38</sup> 180 Greeks, among them Moshe H., survived Ebensee and decided to return to Greece through Italy on June 1945; they stayed for some months in the north where they met the Jewish Brigades. Moshe H. changed his mind and decided to go to Palestine. He spent one year in a camp in southern Italy, then left from Genoa by boat, stopped at Cyprus and arrived in Palestine. In the ITS archives there is a document dated 21 May 1945 which specifies the names of Greek prisoners liberated in Ebensee and the relatives for whom they searched: Shlomo Venezia and Dario Gabbai, former Sonderkommando, and Heinz Kounio were among them.<sup>39</sup>

Women liberated from Ravensbrück and its subcamps almost immediately left the Russian zone and went to Americans. From there some returned to Greece passing through Bulgaria, like Erika Kounio Amariglio; others, like Lisa Pinhas, passed through Romania and in August 1945 arrived back in Greece (Pinhas, 2006). Some went to France and remained in Paris, like Rita Benmayor, or went to Belgium.

One of the DP camps to which many Salonikan Jews were transferred after the liberation was Feldafing, 20 miles southwest of Munich, originally a summer camp and a school for Hitler youth. It was established as a DP camp by the US Army on 1 May 1945, and it became the first all-Jewish DP camp. Jewish survivors were taken there after the liberation of camps and subcamps in Germany,

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/0095\\_Bergen-Belsen-to-Sweden.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Holocaust/0095_Bergen-Belsen-to-Sweden.html) [accessed on: 02.05.2019]. The file is dated 14 July 1945. The collection contains information from records of the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) European Regional Office. The official citation: United Nations Archives S-0523-0646, UNRRA, European Regional Office. The files are also available at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC [USHMM Acc. 1997.A. 0235, Reel 5].

<sup>38</sup> ITS Archives: 1 Incarceration Documents / 1.1 Camps and Ghettos / 1.1.26 Mauthausen Concentration Camp / 1.1.26.3 Individual Documents Regarding Male Detainees Mauthausen / Personal Files (male) – Concentration Camp Mauthausen Reference Code 01012603 oS

<sup>39</sup> Its Archives: Incarceration Documents / 1.1 Camps and Ghettos / 1.1.26 Mauthausen Concentration Camp / Liberation lists for detachment Ebensee, CC Mauthausen – (postwar compilation) Reference Code 8120400 Creation Date 1945-05-21 - 1945-09-30. O.C.C. 15/93 b-IV A2(F4-5/A) 68.

initially mainly from the Dachau complex. The presence of Salonikans was recollected upon by Francesca Wilson, a British relief worker, who wrote about them in her work *Aftermath* (Wilson, 1947) and by Saul Sorrin, who worked for UNRRA and at the end of 1945 was sent to Neu Freimann Siedlung, a DP camp near Munich, Germany, to help Holocaust survivors.

We had also other groups which are less well-known. We had the Jews of Saloniki, who survived Dachau, Auschwitz, Dachau – Greek Jews that is. Very roughneck crowd, by the way. Saloniki was known for its roughneck community, they were stevedores, you know. I don't know whether it's a stereo[type]. That's what I heard. I haven't really studied the community. But, believe me, the people I saw were really tough. There was a lot of problems between them, by the way, and the Polish Jews. Violence between these two groups. So much so that Rabbi [David] de Sola Pool, the famous Sephardic rabbi from New York, had to fly over to try to deal with it. We had to move hundreds of Greek Jews out of one of the camps which was a Polish Jewish DP camp for their own safety, you know. They objected, and the major reason is that there was a good deal of business in that camp ... Competition frequently took a violent form. There was a camp in which they lived. It was called Feldafing. It was a large camp, three or four thousand people. And in that camp ... There was a very heavy black market.

#### After some accidents:

we decided that we would resettle – that's a term, by the way, which is a non-kosher term. It was in Yiddish or in German called umsiedlung, resettle these Greek Jews. We couldn't resettle five thousand Poles. So we tried to do it as nicely as possible to say, „Look, we're going to take you to this other place. Do your business there.” But apparently that was not as lucrative. So the next thing I knew I had a telegram, was either from the States or from the UNRRA headquarters, asking what was going on. They'd received this telegram from Rabbi Pool, de Sola Pool, who's a patriarch of the Sephardic congregations in New York, the grand old man of a congregation on Fifth Avenue, personal friend of Franklin Roosevelt and other greats, saying he was coming over. What is this he's hearing? He's receiving reports that the same things that Hitler did to them were now being done all over again. They were being umgesiedlungt, resettled. We met. He came, he flew over, and we met and tried to explain that this was really something which was done because an alternative would have been violence. We finally managed to quiet the whole thing down. But the black marketeering, the economics, was given the vitality of the Jews, their need to reestablish when everything had been taken from them, it was an important part of their life, the economics. That is, living in this economic system which was separate from the above board economic system in postwar Germany.<sup>40</sup>

Leon M., after being deported to Auschwitz and Warsaw, arrived in Dachau on 6 August 1944. He was transferred to a Waldlager in Müldorf where he remained for 5 months, from November 1944 to April 1945. After the liberation he was taken to Feldafing where he met his future wife, who had been transferred there from

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<sup>40</sup> About the situation of Greek Jews in Feldafing see also JDC archives: Letter from Charles Passman to AJDC Munich

Item ID: 2059654. Date: 9/28/1948. Author: Passman, Charles. Reference Code: G 45-54 / 4 / 8 / 49 / GER.794

In Folder: Germany (U.S. Zone): Feldafing Camp. 1948. Search in Collection: 1945–1954 Geneva Collection. <https://archives.jdc.org> [accessed on: 02.01.2020].

Bergen Belsen. They had their first son there in 1946, tried to go to Palestine but had to return to Feldafing where their second son was born in 1950. From the documents available at the ITS archives we can see that many Salonikan Jews followed the same path as Leon, i.e. of a transfer from Auschwitz to Warsaw, then Dachau (Müldorf) and Feldafing. Beppo and Moise, for instance, left from there for Haifa but returned to Germany in 1950 and remained in the Fohrenwald DP camp waiting for their visas for Canada.<sup>41</sup> One can find more information about Salonikan Jews in Feldafing and other DP camps from a letter written to the Central Committee of Jewish Communities in Greece by the Union des Juifs Sépharadiques Grecs en Allemagne from Feldafing on 15 December 1946.<sup>42</sup> The president of the Union provided the Central Committee with information about Greek Jews there. He wrote that their number was not as high as that of Jews from other countries and sent a list with their names. From August 1945 there were Salonikans in Feldafing, housed in Block 4/b. In December 1946 he wrote that there were also 37 Greeks, not specifying if from Saloniki, in Landsberg, at least 4 in Bamberg, 3 at the tuberculosis Sanatorium in Gauting, 1 in the hospital in St. Ottilien, 2 in Forenwald, in Munchen, and in Nuremberg. It is also interesting that Azriel summarised the possible destinations for emigration of the people he knew inside the camp: 10 of them had relatives in the USA, but could not leave because of a quota for Greeks; about 20 wished they could go to Palestine but did not have the permits; 15 wanted to return to Greece to search for their relatives; others did not know where to go.

The situation in other DP camps was similar. Many Greeks ended up in camps in Italy, such as Santa Cesarea Terme, before getting to Greece or Palestine in the following months and years. According to what Azriel wrote in 1946, they felt like a boat without a captain or a compass.

## 11. CONCLUSION

The fate of the Jews from Saloniki during the Holocaust may well represent the complexity of the event in terms of its extent and the diversity of experiences. Even though the persecution, deportation and extermination of Jews was planned and

<sup>41</sup> ITS Archives: Registrations and Files of Displaced Persons, Children and Missing Persons / 3.2 Relief Programs of Various Organizations / 3.2.1 IRO "Care and Maintenance" Program / CM/1 files from Germany, A-Z Reference Code Number of documents 916266. <https://arolsen-archives.org> [accessed on: 15.02.2020].

<sup>42</sup> 3 Registrations and Files of Displaced Persons, Children and Missing Persons / 3.1 Evidence of Abode and Emigration / 3.1.1 Registration and Care of DPs inside and outside of Camps / List of Greek Jews in the camp Feldafing 15.12.1946 in various locations. Reference Code 421000. Number of documents 11 – Immediate source of acquisition or transfer World Jewish Congress London (London n° 1038). <https://arolsen-archives.org> [accessed on: 15.02.2020].

organised by Nazis following a Europe-wide plan, this was implemented through different variables: time, place, the geographical origins of deportees and their language skills, and the phase of the war. The victims of the persecution dealt with difficult experiences of different type which represented the parts of an overall plan. The personal documents (interviews, testimonies, and accounts), studied together with official archival documents show that the fortunes of Salonikan Jews were paradigmatic. Microhistorical studies combined with macrohistorical ones contribute significantly to a better understanding of the Holocaust and its impact on groups as well as on individuals.

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## THE RESCUE OF JEWS FROM THE NAZI GENOCIDE BY THE INHABITANTS OF EASTERN GALICIA

**Abstract.** The rescue of Jews during the Second World War is one of the least studied issues in the historiography of the Holocaust. The Galicia Region, one of the areas where a total Nazi extermination of Jews occurred, became a region from where a large number of Righteous Among the Nations came – Ukrainians and Poles.

The article includes an analysis of the motivations that became the basis for people's decision to help Jews under the extreme conditions which threatened their lives and the lives of their close ones. It highlights the response of the occupation authorities to rescue actions taken by the non-Jewish population. Despite the unambiguity of the Nazi orders to punish severely those who helped Jews, the real implementation of such sanctions varied.

Finally, the article analyses the main determinants (of social, economic, and religious nature) that played an important role in making the decision whether to join the rescue process.

The article concludes that no political which could had saved Jews, did lead to any systematic rescue efforts directed at Western Ukrainian Jews, yet the survival of those Jews who were hunter was possible for the deeds of some Polish and Ukrainian people.

**Key words:** Righteous Among the Nations, Jew rescuers, the Holocaust, ghetto, auxiliary police, Andrey Sheptytsky.

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## **1. “RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS” AND “JEW RESCUERS”: PROBLEMS WITH DEFINITIONS**

The issue of the rescue of Jews from extermination by Nazis is the least explored topic among the various aspects of Holocaust history. One of the reasons is the complexity of the search for documents which could verify such rescue efforts. Another indication of the insufficient level of the study of the rescue of Jews is a definition problem. At present the following terms are used: “Righteous Among the Nations” (or “Righteous Gentile” being the arbitrary reduction of the official name); “Righteous Among Ukrainians”; and “Babi Yar Righteous”.

Yad Vashem uses the term “Righteous Among the Nations”: non-Jews who risked their lives and often the lives of their children and relatives to save Jews during the Holocaust (Pravedniki narodov mira, 2020). According to specific criteria (Pravedniki narodov mira, 2020), the Public Commission has awarded this distinguished title to people from 51 countries. Today, Ukraine ranks fourth globally in terms of the number of such heroes (behind Poland, the Netherlands, and France). As of 1 January 2020, data was collected about more than 2,659 Ukrainian Righteous Among the Nations (Names and Numbers of Righteous Among the Nations, 2020; Righteous Among the Nations Honored by Yad Vashem, 2020).

In Ukraine the title “Righteous Among Ukrainians” appeared as per a non-government initiative of the All-Ukrainian Jewish Council and the Remembrance of the Victims of Fascism in Ukraine Foundation in 1989. This title was given to those who were known as the rescuers of Jews from Nazi genocide in Ukraine, but the available evidence was not sufficient for the Yad Vashem Commission. According to the All-Ukrainian Jewish Council, more than 3,000 Ukrainian citizens received the “Righteous Among Ukrainians” title and 1,625 of them were “Righteous Among the Nations”. In those projects card and photograph catalogues of the killed and rescued Jews and their rescuers were created. The documents of “Righteous Among Ukrainians” are sent to the Yad Vashem Institute (Jerusalem) to award them the “Righteous Among the Nations” title (All-Ukrainian Jewish Council, 2018). Illia Levitas (1931–2014), a famous public figure, President of the Jewish Council of Ukraine, Chairman of Babi Yar Memorial Fund and the “Remembrance of the Victims of Fascism in Ukraine” Foundation, was the main proponent of establishing the “Righteous Among Ukrainians” title. He initiated the “Babi Yar Righteous” title, which was approved in April 1989. However, Vitalii Nakhmanovych, a researcher of the Babi Yar tragedy, Executive Secretary of the Public Committee for Babi Yar Victims Memory Honouring, stated that “since the criteria for bestowing Babi Yar Righteous title were not specified and the title was awarded, in fact, based on the final decision of Illia Levitas, even in Ukraine a lot of scholars and public figures do not recognise such a title and oppose the legitimacy of any official

perpetuation of those names” (Nakhmanovych, 2016, p. 327). The same is true for the “Righteous Among Ukrainians” title.

It is worth mentioning that solid research of the rescue of Jews by Ukrainians during the Holocaust started only after 1991 when there were fewer living witnesses and survivors than in the postwar years (Shchupak, 2016, pp. 9–11). Additionally, for a number of people some evidence of the rescue of Jews rescue was not approved by the Yad Vashem Commission for a certain reason, or materials on the rescue were not transferred to Yad Vashem at all. This category of people remains unknown to researchers.

Thus, to avoid ambiguity in definitions, we consider it necessary to introduce a broader concept of “Ukrainian Jews Rescuer during the Holocaust” into the academic discourse. This definition includes both “Righteous Among the Nations” and those who have solid evidence of rescuing Jews to be recognised by historical research.

## **2. THE ATTITUDE OF EASTERN GALICIA LOCALS TO “THE FINAL SOLUTION TO THE JEWISH QUESTION” AND THE PREREQUISITES FOR THE RESCUE OF JEWS**

The attitude of the locals to the Nazi genocide of Jews played a major role in Holocaust history. Based to the viewpoint of the locals on the Holocaust, they can be conditionally divided into several groups:

- Bystanders to Nazi crimes;
- Murderers and their accomplices; and
- Rescuers of Jews, the “Righteous Among the Nations”.

It seems clear that the deeds of the rescuers of Jews in Ukraine in general and in Eastern Galicia in particular should be analysed in this context.

This refers both to those European countries which were invaded or controlled by Nazi Germany, and the occupied territory of Ukraine with various peculiarities in different regions, in particular in Western Ukraine.

The differences in the Holocaust historical scenarios in European countries appeared due to the operation of Hitler’s ‘extermination machine’. By far, these differences depended on the established methods of administrative management of individual territories, social and cultural traditions, the level of the influence of Jewish communities on the society, the attitude of Nazis to the population of occupied countries, and, finally, on the level of threat faced by Jew rescuers. The mentioned factors as well as some other ones affected the attitudes of the locals to the genocide of Jews and the attempts to rescue them.

It is true that the prerequisites for rescuing Jews in Ukraine were a far cry from those in Western Europe. Nechama Tec, a researcher, wrote that in Denmark “Nazis

were tolerant to Danes even after the start of Jew rescue operations. Punitive measures resulted in arrests and were usually directed only against those who organised mass escapes of Jews” (Pravedniki narodov mira, 2008, pp. 490–491). Israel Gutman and Naama Galil noted that in the Netherlands and France a Jew rescuer “faced deportation to a concentration camp, while in Poland and the occupied territories of the USSR such a person was executed together with the Jews he or she was hiding” (Gutman, Galil’, [n.d.], p. 237). Many historians have advanced the idea that in Western Europe “neighbours usually did not report a person whom they had found to be hiding Jews. In Eastern Europe the situation was different” (Paldiel).

Obviously, the level of democracy in a society and the level of humanism in its basic values affects human relations and the willingness to help one another. The Ukrainian territory was under the rule of totalitarian regimes even during the Second World War. Tacit approval of violence could be based on the Soviet legacy of an ‘unanimous’ condemnation of “the enemies of the people”, as well as the “secondary” value assigned to human life.

Soviet troops invaded Eastern Galicia and annexed it for the USSR in 1939. Prior to the Nazi invasion the locals had less than two years of experience living under the Soviet totalitarian regime. However, the pace and forms of the disruption of social relations, the pervading “communist morality”, and accelerated “socialist transformations” in economics, education, and culture, as well as large-scale repressions during the ‘Sovietisation’ of Western Ukraine inflicted a major setback on the society. As a result, Polish-Ukrainian relations got complicated due to the Soviet policy of ‘Depolonisation’. Anti-Semitic sentiments grew stronger, even though ‘communist internationalism’, declared in the USSR and “supported” by the totalitarian regime, tried to conceal them. It was based on the fact that a large number of local Jews, as well as Galician Ukrainians, unlike most local Poles, welcomed the Soviet rule. Eventually, the Sovietisation of Western Ukraine changed the sentiment of the multinational society of Eastern Galicia considerably. Eastern Ukrainians, including some Jews, were relocated to ‘new Soviet territories’ and became important Soviet policy supporters there. Jews joined the Red Army and became political officials. This perpetuated the myth about the “Jewish nature” of the Soviet regime. After the German invasion of Western Ukraine and the decline of the Soviet rule on its territory, the anti-Semitic myths, as well as newly-formed false stereotypes and “old” biases among a certain part of Ukrainian locals, led to their participation in anti-Jewish pogroms and persecution initiated by the Nazi occupation authorities.

The Stalinist regime left a deep scar on the public consciousness of the citizens. The total demoralisation due to the defeat of the Red Army in the first stage of the war and the rapid advance and invasion of vast territories by Hitler’s troops deepened this scar even further.

Timothy D. Snyder, a renowned historian, has qualified the territory of Ukraine as “bloodlands” (Snyder, 2011). Here the killing of a huge number of people was

not a big deal since the “banality of evil” was common. The last term became known and was spread by the works of Hannah Arendt (Arendt, 2013). Under such conditions human feelings often yielded to pragmatic considerations. The atmosphere of violence and encouragement of killings enhanced by anti-Semitism, inherent for some locals, as well as other factors created the relevant public mood which enabled people to perceive the mass extermination of Jews as a “norm” under the Nazi “new order”.

The reasons behind the “bystander attitude” to killing neighbours varied: a passive stand, avoiding endangerment to one’s own life, a hope for benefiting financially from the property of the victims, etc. (Hon, 2010).

Under the inhumane conditions of war, human feelings often yield to pragmatic considerations. Shimon Redlich, a well-known historian and a Holocaust survivor, noted that “interethnic indifference and outright hostility increased during the German occupation” (Redlich, 2007, pp. 197–198). When the war started, the atmosphere of perceiving violence and killings as a “norm” became common. “The killings [...] were viewed by some Poles and Ukrainians with empathy. For others it was just a show. Nobody was able to understand Jewish helplessness. The motives for those who helped and rescued Jews were largely a mixture of greed and compassion. The unprecedented wartime circumstances and the brutality of life under both Soviets and Germans brought out the worst in human nature” (Redlich, 2007, p. 242). Redlich also recalled that “Ukrainians cursed Germans for murdering innocent people” (Redlich, 2007, pp. 197–198), but the number of rescued Jews was not and, probably, could not be high. To resist invaders one must pose courage and a readiness to sacrifice themselves confronting the repressive system. Heroism is an extraordinary phenomenon, it cannot be ‘common’.

According to some evidence, “apart from a small group of noble people, Christian residents took part in shameful German hunts for Jews, with zest” (Shchodennyk Lvivskoho hetto, 2009, p. 200). Professor M. Koval aptly noted that later on, Ukrainians changed their attitude while witnessing the horrific crimes of Nazi executioners – such as the shootings in Babi Yar in 1941 (Koval, 1992, p. 27).

At certain times, Nazi authorities encouraged locals to inform on Jewish “strangers” or those who had not been living in the locality on or before a certain date (for example, the date when a relevant order, instruction or announcement went into effect). Nazis delegated the responsibility of informing on Jews first and foremost to burgomasters and the heads (starostas) of villages. “Ordinary residents” were warned against hiding Jews under the penalty of death. The “Announcement” of Gebietskommissar, who headed Berdychiv, stated the following: “In any case, if it turns out that a Jewish person is staying without permission, the entire family hiding such a person will be executed” (Oholoshennia Hebitskomisar). Nazis also encouraged locals to report Jews hiding from the occupiers. An informer whose report would help catch a Jew was promised a reward, “at the rate defined by the SS and the Police Commander” (Oholoshennia Hubernatora Halytskoi Oblasti, 1943).

The documents regarding the extermination of the Jews from the village of Lenindorf, also inhabited by Ukrainians and Russians, state that before the war “Jews and non-Jews worked together. There were no «ethnic issues». So it was terrifying to find out that a German officer with some vodka treat managed to persuade several healthy young men to execute their yesterday’s teachers, friends and good neighbours with great pleasure... Everything went as planned: Jews dug ditches, Germans shot them in the back of their heads, their neighbours levelled the «contents» of those ditches in the most primitive way: they jumped in and trampled down these «contents»... The blood squished in the workers’ boots, splashed out of them, and got into boots back again...” (Iz svidetel’stva M. Burshtejn ob unichtozhenii evreev poselka Lenindorf, 2003, p. 227).

On the other extreme, according to Nazi racial policy, Ukrainian rescuers of Jews had to be punished in the most severe way: the extermination of rescuers themselves and their families. Even sheltering Jews was punished by death.

The announcement signed by Governor-General Frank and Stadthauptmann Höhler stated that even “instigators and help-mates are subject to the same punishment as those who acted. An intention will be punished as an act” (Oholoshennia heneral-hubernatora Franka ta shtadhauptmana Kholera, 1942). We know of Ukrainians executed for sheltering Jews in many towns and villages of the Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyiv, Lviv, and Kharkiv regions (Ubili odnosel’chan, prjativshih evreev, 1996, p. 55); and there were very many such cases in Western Ukraine.

The Attitude of Ukrainian nationalist organisations, the OUN and the UPA, to Nazi “Final Solution to the Jewish question” requires special analysis. It is best to start with the prerequisites of their attitude (Djukov, 2008; Kovba, 2009; Litopys UPA, 1992; Viatrovych, 2006; *et al.*). Unfortunately, the issue cannot be covered in this material, so let us briefly discuss only some important points.

In the early 1940s, the OUN ideology had an obvious hidden anti-Semitic agenda. The OUN(b)’s programme, written during the Second World War, contained anti-Moscow appeals. It also briefly discussed the issue of national revolution “in the Moscow Empire of the USSR along with the liberation war of the enslaved peoples” under the motto “Freedom to Peoples and Human Being.” At the same time, Jews were defined as the “supporters of the Moscow-Bolshevik regime” (Kasianov, 2004, p. 36). Instructions for OUN(b) members stated that “in times of chaos... liquidation of unwelcome Poles, Moscovites, and Jews may be permitted, especially the defenders of Bolshevik-Moscow imperialism” (Patryliak, 2004, p. 322); “National minorities are divided into several groups: a) friends, i.e. enslaved nations; b) enemies, Moscovites, Poles, Jews. [...] Assimilation of Jews is inadmissible” (Patryliak, 2004, pp. 322–323). Patryliak, a researcher of OUN history, aptly noted that such statements “can hardly be interpreted other than instructions to direct and reckless extermination of national minorities... With a great deal of confidence it can be said that some members of the OUN took part in the extermination operations, and also instigated ordinary people to do so” (Patryliak, 2004, pp. 323–324).



Fig. 1. Announcement of “Galicia Region Governor, SS and Police Commander” prohibiting people from hosting Jews in dwellings of the non-Jewish population and from protecting Jews.  
Lviv, 15 August 1942

Source: phot. by I. Shchupak.

In 1942–1944, the OUN’s attitude to the ‘Jewish question’ underwent some changes. In 1942, the initial definition of the Soviet regime as “Jewish Bolshevism” and “Moscow-Jewish Commune” transformed into the term “Moscow Bolshevism” (Viatrovych, 2006, pp. 70–71); the Instructions of the UPA Main Team to propaganda units dated 1 November 1943 stated that the OUN is tolerant to all ethnic groups, including “Jews, working for the benefit of the Ukrainian state” (Viatrovych, 2006, pp. 72–73). Even though in August 1943, the 3rd Congress of the OUN(b) defined future Ukraine as a state of all ethnic groups and it recognised the fact of the “solution to the Jewish question”, this tendency to stop anti-Semitic rhetoric in 1943–1944 did not appear so much as a manifestation of the movement’s liberalisation, but rather as a result of a pragmatic analysis of the situation. At that time, a vast majority of Ukrainian Jews were virtually exterminated, therefore, the ‘Jewish question’ was no longer on the table. Additionally, there is some evidence of OUN and UPA anti-Jewish actions that occurred after 1943.

Nonetheless, sometimes UPA squadrons took Jewish family camps in the woods under their protection (Viatrovych, 2006, pp 75–76). Many Jewish health care professionals served in UPA units. Ivan Flanga, a resident of Shybalyn (near Berezhany), testified that “numerous Jews served in the UPA as doctors, nurses,

and dentists. Many Jews were hiding even in our own village” (Redlikh, 2007, p. 198). Moysey Fishbeyn, Ukrainian poet and researcher of UPA history, wrote: “I knew Jews who served in the UPA [...] there was a doctor Abraham Shtertser, he lived in Israel after the war. Samuel Noiman, his code name was Maxymovych, Shai Varma (code name Skrypal (Violinist)), Roman Vynnytskyi, his code name was Sam...” (Poet M. Fishbein: *dlia mene UPA – tse sviate*).

The members of the OUN and UPA fighters issue counterfeit documents to help Jews. The Vinnytsia State Archive has a report of SD investigators on a printing house counterfeiting documents and printing the literature of Ukrainian Bandera nationalists. According to the report, “Ukrainian nationalists provided not only their members, but also Jews with fake passports” (Gogun and Ginda, 2011, p. 116).

As noted above, the attitude of the Ukrainian nationalist movement to Jews during the Second World War requires further research and impartial analysis. At the same time, we should underline once again that at the period when the most mass Nazi exterminations of Ukrainian Jews were conducted, the policy and practical actions of Ukrainian nationalist organisations regarding the ‘Jewish question’ were anti-Semitic. Ukrainians rescued Jews mainly for their own reasons, which are going to be analysed below.



Fig. 2. Lviv. Local guards escorting a Jewish convoy

Source: Yad Vashem the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, <https://www.yadvashem.org/education/other-languages/ukrainian/educational-materials/lvov.html> [accessed on: 17.11.2020].



### 3. SPECIAL ASPECTS OF THE RESCUE OF JEWS IN WESTERN UKRAINE AND OTHER UKRAINIAN REGIONS

Today, the data about the number of cases of Jews rescued in Ukraine is based mainly on Yad Vashem statistics regarding the Righteous Among the Nations. Below we will mention the other rescuers who have not been included in the Righteous group.

We have decided to analyse the regional aspect of the rescue efforts specifying the number of Ukrainian Righteous Among the Nations by territory and regions of Ukraine (according to the modern administrative and territorial division of the country). We have identified the Vinnytsia region to occupy a special place in the “regional representation” of rescue efforts. The following table was compiled according to our calculations.

Table 1. Number of Righteous Among the Nations from Ukraine by Area and Region. Calculations are based on the official Yad Vashem statistics as of 1 January 2020 (Righteous Among the Nations Honored by Yad Vashem, 2020)

Zakarpattia and Bukovyna	Western Ukraine	Northern and Central Ukraine	Vinnytsia Region	Southern Ukraine	Eastern Ukraine	Other territories	
Zakarpattia region: 24	Volyn region: 117	Dnipropetrovsk region: 70	520	AR of Crimea: 27	Donetsk region: 57	Belarus: 2	
Chernivtsi region: 9	Ivano-Frankivsk region: 76	Zhytomyr region: 221		Zaporizhzhia region: 22	Luhansk region: 9	Moldova: 2	
	Lviv region: 119	Kirovohrad region: 52		Mykolaiv region: 82	Kharkiv region: 93	Germany: 2	
	Rivne region: 217	Kyiv region and Kyiv city: 221		Odessa region: 167		Poland: 24	
	Ternopil region: 173	Poltava region: 36		Kherson region: 28		Russia 5	
	Khmelnyskyi region: 179	Sumy region: 21		Ukraine – undefined region: 5			
		Cherkasy region: 63					
	Chernihiv region: 16						
<b>Sub-Total</b>							
33	881	700	520	326	159	40	
<b>Total: 2659</b>							

Source: own work.

Based on the table, one can see that a significant number of cases of the rescue of Jews was registered in the territories with considerable numbers of Polish residents – both on the territory of modern Poland and in the Volyn, Lutsk, Khmelnytskyi, and Zhytomyr regions.

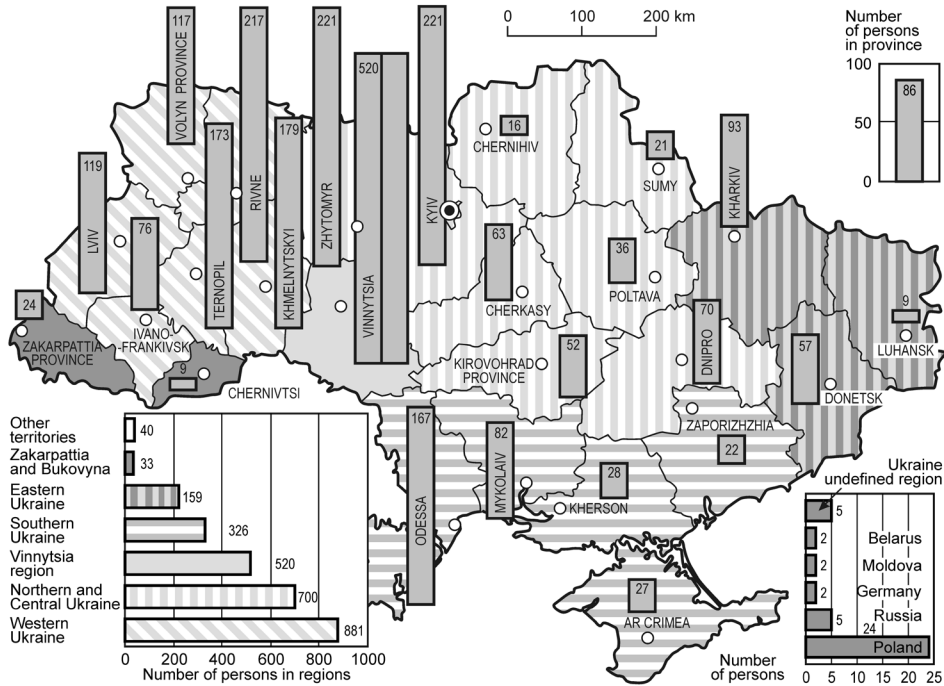


Fig. 3. Number of Righteous Among the Nations from Ukraine by Area and Region

Source: own work based on official Yad Your statistics as of 2020.

We can also see that, regardless of the region, the biggest number of the Righteous has been registered in those communities where the proportion of the Jewish population was relatively high (Vinnitsia and other western Ukrainian cities, towns and villages, as well as Kyiv, Zhytomyr, Odessa, etc.). Therefore, the help of neighbours who had the experience of pre-war coexistence played a significant role in rescuing Jews during the Holocaust.

The contemporary region of Vinnitsia is an absolute champion in the number of the Righteous Among the Nations of Ukraine. Here, their number constitutes almost one-fifth of all Ukrainian Righteous (19.6%). For example, in 8 contemporary regions of southern and eastern Ukraine (including the Odessa region) and the Crimea, the number of Righteous Among the Nations is 17.1% in total. This fact requires an explanation. In addition to the above factors, in the Vinnitsia region the transfer of Jews from the German to the Romanian zone of

occupation became a common method of helping. In the Romanian zone they had a higher chance for survival.

When researching Yad Vashem data (the locations of villages and other settlements, their administrative-territorial subordination, etc.), one can define the number of Righteous by territory according to an administrative-territorial division into zones of occupation. It is also important to do so in relation to the high proportion of Jews among the local population, while considering Jewish refugees from the Western territories, and indicating the period of the occupation of a certain region or city, etc.

The extent of the rescue of Jews by the residents of Ukraine who did not receive the “Righteous Among the Nations” title is even greater. Even the official Yad Vashem website says that “The number of Righteous is not necessarily an indication of the actual number of rescuers in each country, but it indicates the cases known to Yad Vashem” (Pravedniki narodov mira. Statistika).

An ample number of such cases, little known to Israeli and other historians, occurred in Western Ukraine where the specificity of the ‘mechanism’ of the extermination of Jews, as well as the conditions and opportunities enabled rescue efforts (Shchupak, 2018).

The State Archive of the Lviv Region (herein after referred to as DALO) provides a unique opportunity to research this issue since it stores materials of particular importance for the subject matter, i.e. the documents of the Special Court affiliated with Galicia District German Court in Lviv (Derzhavnyi arkhiv Lvivskoi oblasti, FR-77. Inventory 1<sup>1</sup>). It should be noted that to date Ukrainian historians have hardly conducted any special study of the materials regarding the Holocaust history in this region. One exception is V. Zilinskyi’s dissertation revealing peculiarities of the materials available for Holocaust research in the Galicia District (Zilinskyi, 2019).

While in the territory of Reichskommissariat Ukraine Ukrainian rescuers of Jews were often shot on the spot, in the Galicia District the cases of rescue operations were reviewed by the above-mentioned Nazi court.

Among the documents for 1941–1944 we found about 40 cases in which residents of the region were accused of “hiding Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 309; 366; 504; 592; 654; 661; 735; 758; 759; 791; 800, *et al.*), “sheltering them” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1111), or “helping Jews escape from the Lviv ghetto” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1358). Such a large volume of materials on people who rescued Jews (or who tried to do so), but were not awarded the “Righteous Among the Nations” title and were not even reviewed by the Yad Vashem Commission, is another argument for the need to study the phenomenon of the rescuers of Jews since this concept is broader than the “Righteous Among the Nations”.

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<sup>1</sup> Documents were in Polish and German, some pages were in Ukrainian.

These archival materials enable one to reconstruct the attitude of German occupational authorities not only towards Jews who were subject to registration, complete isolation, and later extermination, but also to Ukrainians, Poles and other locals of non-Jewish origin.

The story of Jan Petryszyn, a Pole, paints a detailed picture of the attitude of Nazis to Poles and Ukrainians, and even to the supporters of the Hitler regime (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 502, 574). According to the court materials: “On 28 May 1943, when he heard a conversation of three soldiers he did not know, he found out that the ghetto in Brody was allegedly liquidated and some of the ghetto dwellings were on fire in various places. When the soldiers agreed to go and watch the fire in the ghetto, he joined them. When they came to the ghetto, he and those soldiers got instructed by a police officer who was on duty there to search the houses that were not on fire to find hiding Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 1 back). In one of the apartments, they encountered a Jewish woman who was screaming in fear. Jan Petryszyn killed her with a dagger as he thought that “there was no punishment for killing Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 502: 7 back). “Two days later, the alleged offender was detained by a Wehrmacht squad” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 1 back).

The Nazi court document stated that “by killing a Jew, he apparently wanted to support the authorities and considered his actions as justified” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 2); “by all means he wanted to prevent her from avoiding Jewish actions carried out at that time, i.e. to support government efforts” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 2 back). Despite these and other “mitigating circumstances”, the German court also indicated aggravating circumstances, “the alleged offender had been convicted several times”. But the following court order is of particular interest: “...Aggravating circumstances here means that safety and security in the area requires no private individuals unauthorised messing with the state efforts, such as actions against Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 3). Finally, Jan Petryszyn was sentenced “to 7 years of hard labour in exile for the murder of a Jew” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 1).

Thus, the mass killings of Jews by Nazis were defined as “state efforts” that did not allow locals to commit “unauthorised messing” (the well-known practice of provocations by Nazis and the involvement of locals in anti-Jewish pogroms and the killings of Jews should be analysed separately).

The following statement from “The Case on Legality of Detention” regarding Jan Petryszyn is of interest as well: “The criminal and the murderer, maliciously and brutally killed a person out of a desire to kill” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 574: 1 back).

The hypocrisy of these “moral assessments” of the Nazi government is obvious. It arrogated the inhuman “right” to take lives of millions of people, and convicted, at its discretion, those who “interfered” with its “business”.

Hunted Jews sought refuge in various ways. Some “slept in the field, or in the buildings outside the town, or even in an old barn”, like Max Ringer (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1258: 8 back), others “stayed in Lviv, in the bombed outhouses on Teodora and Shpytalna streets, hiding from the police”, like Edel Zygmund (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1227: 3 back). But it is clear that without the help of non-Jewish locals there would have been no chance for their survival.

Below we will highlight the motivations for providing aid to Jews, an action which entailed much hazard. But it should be noted here that, in one form or another, the common interest was a part of almost every case of Jews rescue.

The intention of a rescuer to gain financial benefits for rescuing Jews during the Holocaust contradicts Yad Vashem’s principles when it comes awarding the “Righteous Among the Nations” title. Often rescuers did, of course, help hunted Jews expecting nothing in return. Yet it is important to note that hiding people for a long period, many months and sometimes years, always included an “economic component”, associated primarily with the need to buy food. Yaroslav Hrytsak noted: “As it became clear from the memoirs, only those Jews who had money could survive, because you need to have resources for yourself and to pay those who hid you” (Hrytsak, 2017).

Existing documents (herein we review the materials of the State Archive of the Lviv Region) provide information about the different conditions of material and financial “deals” between Jews and their Polish and Ukrainian rescuers.

“Tomruk Khved confessed that he was hiding a Jew for almost a whole week. . . , he gave her something to eat and she gave him 2 meters of [*illegible*] in exchange and made two shirts for the family of Tomruk Khved” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 759: 6 back). According to court records “Tomruk Khved with these 2 meters of [*illegible*] was taken to German Gendarmerie in Radekhiv” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 759: 6 back).

Ihnat Barabach and Mykola Lutii, both Ukrainian, were hiding Solomon Helfer in Zolochiv. During an interrogation Lutii said: “Helfer gave me 4 meters of fabric for making clothes, one big headrail, and 90 zlotys. In April 1944, this Jew gave me 500 zlotys. Given the fact that, as I have already confessed, I was very poor and had a family of my wife and 3 children, in April 1944, I had nothing to eat for my family or for this Jew. I told him that he had to do something. This Jew went to my neighbour Ihnat Barabash from Krasnoselets and brought 25 kilos of barley and 5 kilos of buckwheat from him. Later, in June 1944, this Jew went to Barabash again and brought 25 kilos of barley and 25 kilos of potatoes. Since at that time some houses were searched for partisans, I was afraid that the Jew might be caught in my house. So, I went to the gmina [commune office] myself and confessed that a Jew was staying with me. The army came and took the Jew, Solomon Helfer, from the cellar in my barn. I was left at home. Later I found out that the Jew fled. The next day the army arrested me and took to Zolochiv. A few days later

the Jew was caught again and he admitted the fact that I was hiding him” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 791: 20 back).

In addition to these extensive materials we should specify that they were compiled on 20–22 June 1944, only a month before Nazi troops left Lviv (on 27 July 1944).

Michalina Merska, a Polish woman, “was hiding 2 Jewish women and 3 Jewish men in her apartment in Lviv on 12 Paderevskoho street from 2 June 1943 till 3 Feb 1944, making them pay for shelter 3,000 zlotys per month. I would like to explain that I kept those Jews not in the apartment, but in my basement. I did this because I had nothing to live on” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 851: 26 back).

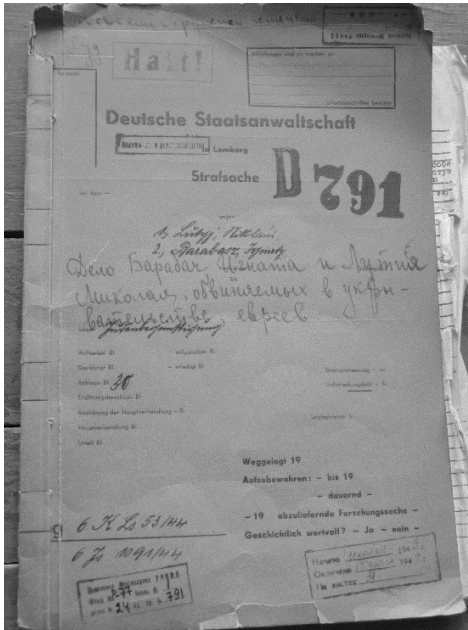


Fig. 4. Barabach Ihnat and Lutii Mykola who were accused of hiding Jews

Source: The State Archive of the Lviv Region, phot. by I. Shchupak.

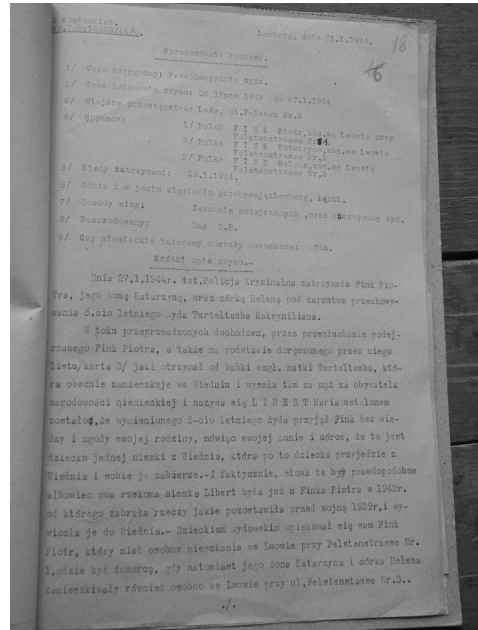


Fig. 5. Page from Piotr Fink's case who was accused of hiding Jews

Source: The State Archive of the Lviv Region, phot. by I. Shchupak.

Rosalia Surma (from the village of Verkhody, near Hrabiv, Kamianka Strumilova), an illiterate woman, confessed to “keeping four Jews in the backyard till 23 October 1943... These Jews promised to give me 50 zlotys if I provide them with shelter for two weeks. I agreed to do so, but I had the intention to report to the Ukrainian police in Hrabiv if more of them came to my place” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 735: 5 back). The German court found this intention ‘doubtful’, and the woman was convicted (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 735: 6).

Stefania Ciepik, Stanisława Biłyk and Zofia Pakiet, all Polish, were hiding a Jew, Zygmund Edel, in Lviv “for 400 zlotys per month” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1227: 13). It is clear that this money was needed to cover the cost of food.

It was often the case that rescuers did not demand any specific amount of money, but asked Jews how much they had. With this money people bought food for themselves and those they were hiding (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 504: 25–26).

Finally, the archival materials contain information about cases when Jews were rescued for nothing. On 16 June 1944, Alter Safro, a Jew, testified that “he, being a Jew, escaped from the Jewish ghetto in May 1943, and was hiding at Catholics until now” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 847: 14). “I... went to Roman Dąbrowski, in Lviv at 19 Lychakivska street. I knew him because we worked together in the oil mill. I was helping him during the famine, because I was richer than he. I used to give him food and money. I asked Dąbrowski to hide me and he graciously agreed, since I no longer had any funds. He gave me food and shelter” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 847: 14). Mania Hodzhin, Alter Safro’s daughter, who also found shelter at Dąbrowski’s residence, stated: “Leaving bunker we had no money. My husband and I did not pay Dąbrowski for shelter, because he already gave shelter to my father, so he hid us as well” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 847: 21 back).

German court documents include some cases when Poles and Ukrainians accused of hiding Jews were acquitted with the help of lawyers.

One argument was the “lack of information” about the Jewish origins of those who were being hidden. During the hearing of the case on M. Ringer, a Jew, who was found in the apartment of Irena Baryliak, a Pole, the court concluded that “Irena Baryliak did not really know that she had met a Jew and had no idea that Ringer was a Jew. Ringer deliberately deceived Baryliak, pretending to be Piotr Rohush, trying to get his own personal Jewish benefit” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 1258: 15).

In another case, Piotr Fink, a yard-keeper, was detained on 28 January 1944, for hiding a child, Maksymillian Turteltaub, the grandson of a Jewish woman from Vienna. Fink testified that he “had no doubt that there are no provisions in German law for the persecution of Jews of German origin. If I knew it was prohibited, I would have never taken a Jewish child into my apartment” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 904: 8). A German court convicted Piotr but stated that the “investigation failed to prove the guilt of his wife Katarzyna Fink and daughter Helena Fink and their involvement in hiding a Jew” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 904: 18).

Some of the lawyers’ pleas for mercy seem comical at first glance, but in fact, they contained rather derogatory characteristics of the accused. Thus, on 15 July 1944, Adolf Fida, a lawyer, wrote to Governor-General in Krakow: “On behalf of Ganczar Maria and Nahatsch Wasyl, sentenced to death. Notwithstanding the sinless life and guilty plea with deep regret expressed by all the possible means, I ask to take into account the very low educational level of the convicts. They were born and raised in a remote farm, unable to get any school education. They both are illiterate, Nahatsch learned how to put his signature during military service in

the World War. They have a very primitive worldview and way of thinking being typical Galician rural illiterates who have a limited spiritual life” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 366: 68). “Your Honor, they had no idea that it was prohibited to hide Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 366, pp. 68–69).

Of course, Ukrainians and Poles accused of hiding Jews were rarely acquitted. Both do-gooders, seeking no profit, and those seeking financial gains, paid with their lives for rescuing Jews. In one “Order of the Security Police and the SD court of the Galicia Region to counter the attacks on German reconstruction in the Governorate General dated 2 October 1943 (Visnyk rozporiadzhen dlia heneralhubernatorstva p. 82 p. 589)” ten people were sentenced to death “for hiding Jews, ... Maria Krushkovska, nee Bobekova, from Lemberg, Mikhal Piastun from Lemberg, Kazimezh Skompkyi from Lemberg, Zdislav Kovalchyk from Lemberg, Nastia Sush, nee Diachenko, from Rudanetsk, Yuliia Izhek from Lemberg, Halyna Sliadovska, nee Klymenievaska, from Lemberg, Viktoriia Maliavska, nee Vilchynska, from Lemberg, Bronislav Yozefek from Lemberd, Maria Yozefek, nee Sliovich, from Lemberg...” (Kovba, 2009, pp. 200–201).

Some stories were particularly tragic, which is clear even in German court documents. One such story is that of Wladimir Korbecki. From November 1942 to May 1943 he was hiding “Jewish women Rosa and Kraus as well as a three-year-old child of the latter in his house. Almost immediately after they found shelter in his house they gave him 1700 zlotys ...” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 504: 16 back). The court passed a terrible sentence: the “Alleged offender, who has never been convicted before, according to § 4 b of the specified resolution has to be punished by the only envisaged punishment – execution” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 504, p. 40). The sentence was enforced, “Wladimir Korbecki was shot on 7 March 1944...” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 504, p. 20).

Thus, the rescue of Jews for a fee (reimbursement, or “for profit”) had several consequences.

1) Sometimes when Jews exhausted their financial resources, “selfish rescuers” surrendered them to Nazis or the police for execution and certain death.

2) Sometimes when selfish motivations drove people to start “rescue operations”, but when later Jews exhausted their funds, the rescuers showed better human qualities and continued to help for free.

3) Even if a Jew (or a group of Jews) was rescued for money, it did not mean less risk for the rescuers, who were punished by Nazis in the same way as the selfless Righteous Among the Nations. For some people, hiding Jews became a kind of a business and they tried to make money in the difficult time of war. However, Nazis rewarded people for reports about Jews and their rescuers, so this “way of earning money” was much safer. Hrytsak noted that given the existence of these two opposite “ways of earning money off of Jews, human fear and envy played their roles, «she» hides the Jews and earns on it, but «we» may suffer if, God forbid, the Germans find out that we knew and did not report” (Hrytsak, 2017).



Another thing is also worth noting: the fact of reporting Jews became not only a “manifestation of loyalty” to the Nazi’s regime, but it was also required under Nazi laws and decrees, as well as praised by Goebbels propaganda, as a “virtue” for the society and a “moral duty” of its members. Under the conditions when public consciousness was distorted and morality was ruined by totalitarian systems, this factor made the rescue of Jews even more dangerous.

It is clear that joint analytical work of historians and psychologists is required to study the phenomenon of the rescue of Jews to determine the motivation for it that existed among various parts of the population, the followers of different religions and faiths, the supporters of different political views, living in various regions of Ukraine, and in various zones of occupation. Nechama Tec, Samuel and Pearl Oliner, well-known researchers, have made different conclusions about the social statuses and self-awareness of the Righteous Among the Nations in society, but they have been unanimous in their appreciation of the most important moral, universal component of the feat of the people who helped those doomed to total extermination (O Pravednikah, 2018).

#### **4. WHO AND WHY RESCUED JEWS: THE QUESTION OF MOTIVATION**

The various examples of the rescue of Jews in the occupied territory of Ukraine require clarification as to the motivations of those who risked not only their own lives, but also the lives of their relatives and their children, by helping the persecuted Jews.

Many people tried to rescue Jews – the members of their families or loved ones. For example, the Ukrainian wife of Isaak Shymovych, a Jew, (the woman’s name is not specified in the documents), who lived in the village of Mykhailivka, the Zaporizhzhia region, when Nazis began the occupation of their land in October 1941, said to policemen that “she did not hand over the child to be murdered”. She finally saved the child of a mixed marriage (Derzhavnyi arkhiv Zaporizkoi oblasti. FR-1849. Inventory 1. File 1). Antonia Chomczinska, a Polish woman, from Lviv “was hiding four Jews for several months” in the apartment where she lived (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 661, p. 3). When police caught three Jews in June 1943, “one of these Jews managed to escape from the apartment with the help of Chomczinska. She probably had an affair with one of them. This can be seen in the Chomczinska’s letter found earlier” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 661, p. 3). (NB, the investigation failed to “prove the guilt of the Polish woman Antonia Chomczinska for sheltering Jews” (DALO. FR-77. Inventory 1. File 661, p. 37).

More and more examples of the rescue of Jews by not only Ukrainian individuals but also by groups of people, sometimes quite large ones, have emerged recently.

Altman wrote about several Ukrainian villages where locals managed to shelter all Jews: in the village of Yaruga, Podillia, people managed to hide not only local Jews, but also refugees; in the village of Rakovets, the Lviv region, peasants were hiding 33 Jewish families; in the village of Blagodatne, the Dnipropetrovsk region, 30 Jews were rescued. The researcher emphasised that it was possible to rescue them only by dint of the joint support of the rest of the villagers (Altman, 2002).

It is worth mentioning that such examples were not uncommon. In his memoirs, Aharon Weiss wrote that Yulia Matchyshyn, a Ukrainian woman, a resident of the city of Boryslav in western Ukrainian, asked another neighbour, a Polish woman, Ms. Potenzhna, for support to organise the rescue of the Weiss family (author's personal archive).

In occupied Zaporizhzhia, Yevdokiia Kupa, a Ukrainian, was sheltering a girl, Maria Chapata, whose mother was shot dead by Nazis. To protect the child from arrest and extermination, neighbours petitioned the Nazi authorities to issue her a passport proving Ukrainian nationality; four people testified as official witnesses (two of them were interrogated) even though they knew what would happen to them if Nazis uncovered their plan. In general, almost all the residents of the street knew about the Jewish girl who was hiding from Nazis – it was a few dozen people. None of them betrayed Maria, and many helped (Shchupak, 1997, pp. 120–121).

In general, the issue of the social composition of the rescuers of Jews needs further clarification. Most of them were people who did not belong to the upper crust of the Ukrainian society, its intellectual elite. We know some cases when city officials, as well as German officers, Hungarian soldiers, and even German soldiers and local police officers who took part in the executions of Jews, helped others under critical conditions (Shchupak, 1997, p. 15). But, of course, such cases were unpopular. It is clear that any official orders or certain actions were implemented by certain people with their own life experience and personal sympathies, whether they were municipal employees, soldiers, Ukrainian policemen, or others. Of course, sometimes Jews were rescued based on emotional, human impulses, the urge to help the victims of the inhuman cruelty of Nazis. Spurred by their initial impulse, people often later felt forced to continue the dangerous practice.

In fact, the rescue of Jews by Ukrainians because one's religious beliefs, i.e. the Christian approach to the persecuted, were quite common. Berkhoff stated that among Ukrainians, Baptists and Evangelical Christians helped Jews the most. The historian wrote that "In Volyn they apparently rescued hundreds of people. Those Protestants thought that their Christian faith could not allow them to do otherwise." Additionally, using the bonds between Protestant communities, they "could quickly transfer Jews from one area to another" (Berkhof, 2011, p. 95).

The clergy of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) constituted a significant number of rescuers. In this article we should also mention the "ordinary" priests of the UGCC. Those included Saint Omelyan Kovch, who paid with his life for rescuing Jews; and, of course, the majestic figure of Metropolitan Archbishopop

Andrey Sheptytsky. He personally saved many Jews, including David Kahane, Lviv's rabbi, the sons of the deceased rabbis Levin Kurt (Isaac) and Natan (Budz, 2019; Skira, 2019). The role of Andrey Sheptytsky, the lead archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and Ukrainian Studite Monks in rescuing Lviv Jews during the Holocaust was analysed in the research papers by Voytuk (2019), O. Sikorska (2017), and Skira (2017, 2019). The latter, using a wide range of unpublished material from state, foreign and church archives (interviews and written testimonies of Ukrainian Studite Monks, memoirs by survivors, letters, orders, and documents), analysed the reasons and process of hiding Jews by monks and nuns in 1942–1944.

The Metropolitan Archbishop persuaded some Ukrainian priests to join the efforts, including Klymentiy Sheptytsky, his brother and archimandrite of the Order of Studite monks (Blazhennyi arkhimandryt Klymentiy, 2017; Matkovskiy, 2019), as well as Rev. Marco Steck, abbot of the St. Joseph Studite monastery, and others. Andrey Sheptytsky rescued anyone he could help, with a main focus on children. They were given false certificates of baptism, Ukrainian names, and then sent to convents, monasteries, and orphanages. Studite monks helped some children cross the Romanian or Hungarian borders. In total, about 200 Jews were rescued with the help of Metropolitan Archbishop Andrey Sheptytsky (Shchupak, 2012, p. 419).



Fig. 6. Counterfeit document made to rescue Kurt Lewin

Source: phot. by I. Shchupak.

It should be noted that Sheptytsky has not been awarded the “Righteous Among the Nations” title since he welcomed the Nazi army during the first days of the Nazi attack on the USSR, and also due to his contacts with Nazi high-ranking officials (this issue has been analysed in many studies, e.g. Bociurkiw, 1989; Mytropolyt Andrei Sheptytskyi, 2003; Redlikh, 2007. *Moralnye printsipy v povsednevnoy deystvitelnosti*, 2010, 2011; Marynovych, 2007; Shchupak, 2007; Chaika, 2007; Kovba, 2007, 2009. *Ostannii rabyn Lvova Yezeikiil Levin; Yeremieieva, Myropolskyi*, 2019). We believe that the greatness of the deeds of people like Andrey Sheptytsky does not require any confirmation or approval even by the most prominent and respected institution. The fact of organising a comprehensive system of help for the victims of the Nazi genocide through churches, as well as pastoral instructions to church hierarchs to rescue hundreds of Jews doomed to death, makes Andrey Sheptytsky the personification of humanism in the fight against the murderous Nazi policy. Skira’s research has emphasised that the lead archbishop of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was in constant contact with Lviv’s Jewish community since he became the Metropolitan Archbishop of Galicia. Skira has asserted that Andrey Sheptytsky was revered in various strata of the Jewish society and even in the interwar period the Archbishop promoted a tolerant attitude towards Jews. When pastoral messages as a form of protest against the extermination of the Jewish population were ignored by the Nazi “new order”, Andrey Sheptytsky started organising aid and rescue operations of Jews. Skira wrote that after the “August action” of 1942, when Jews from the Lviv ghetto asked Andrey Sheptytsky for help, he created a coordination group of proxies who collected and sent Jews to safe locations (Skira, 2019, pp. 31–61). Shevah Weiss, former Speaker of the Knesset (Parliament) of Israel and Ambassador of Israel to Poland, who was rescued with his family from the Shoah by Ukrainians and Poles, metaphorically called Sheptytsky a “Ukrainian Schindler” (Redlikh, 2011).

We understand that the information about the spiritual feat of Andrey Sheptytsky shall be made widespread. The permanent exhibition in the “Jewish Memory and Holocaust in Ukraine” Museum (Dnipro), dedicated to this great Ukrainian, helps reach that goal. The fact that such an exhibition was organised in the Jewish Museum for the first time in Ukraine proves the high level of spirituality and righteousness that Andrey Sheptytsky achieved during his lifetime and the impact on human and social consciousness after he passed.

In summary, people from different segments of the population and different communities guided by different motives helped Jews. Often the members of mixed families rescued Jews being their relatives. This group included Ukrainians, Poles and others who had romantic feelings and loved their chosen ones – who happened to be Jewish. Yet sometimes terrible things happened: mothers reported their “half-breed” children or spouses reported their Jewish husbands and wives. So here we have to discuss the moral virtues of the rescuers. Former

classmates or colleagues, as well as neighbours who lived and worked side by side with Jews before the Second World War, helped Jews because they had some relations with them. Some Ukrainians rescued those Jews who once helped them in difficult times. The members of the Ukrainian underground movement and partisans sometimes viewed helping Jews as one of the forms of resistance to the Nazi regime. Some people, who could be called non-conformists and who could not fit into society under the Nazi regime, tried to help the victims of this regime in order to resist violence and thus boost their own self-esteem. Christians rescued Jews because of their religious beliefs. There were also “incidental rescuers,” i.e. people who tried to rescue Jews as they were driven by an emotional impulse to help the persecuted ones. Some people had selfish motivations to help Jews – they tried to earn money and to gain material benefits from those whom they rescued.

In general, it should be emphasised that not a single Ukrainian political organisation or military organisation made a stand to defend Jews during the Holocaust in the occupied territory of Ukraine. The Soviet government, having information about the extermination of Jews by Nazis, did not warn the Jewish population. Neither Ukrainian or Polish undergrounds, nor the Soviet government and its subordinate Soviet partisan units and underground groups made any declarations, statements or calls to the Ukrainian people to help Jews. This tragically resulted in the huge death toll of Ukrainian Jews which amounted to one and a half million out of the six million of all Holocaust victims.

At the same time, the history of the Second World War includes not only terrible pages of mass killings, but also examples of resistance to genocide and stories about rescue. None of the Jews rescued during the Holocaust could have hoped for being saved without the help of Ukrainians and other nations of our country who also suffered from Nazi occupation.

The study of the phenomenon of the rescue of Ukrainian Jews during the Holocaust is an important scholarly and moral goal since it provides positive examples of human behaviour in the inhumane conditions of war. This is especially important for Ukraine today when our country has become the object of military and information aggression that includes the use of false historical myths and stereotypes in anti-Ukrainian propaganda.

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## EARLY WRITINGS ON THE HOLOCAUST: FRENCH-POLISH TRANSNATIONAL CIRCULATIONS

**Abstract.** This article analyses the differences and similarities between documentation centres active in the aftermath of the Holocaust both in France and in Poland. While in Poland the task was from 1945 assigned to the Central Jewish Historical Commission, in France, the Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation quickly overtook the lead on other minor centres established by Communist Jews or Bundists. The paper focuses on the links between those institutions, through contacts between members, exchanges of documentation, and parallel publications and exhibits. It shows that despite quite different political conditions, men and women working in these institutions shared a similar vision of transmission of history and memory of the Holocaust. They managed to implement their vision partly thanks to their transnational links that helped transcend political and material difficulties.

**Key words:** historiography, Holocaust Remembrance, France, Poland, Jewish History, aftermath of Second World War.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Until the 1990s, the main historiographical trends considered that the systematic study of the mass murder of European Jews had been neglected in the early post-war period and until the 1960s, when the “era of the witness” (Wieviorka, 2006) started with the Eichmann trial, bringing only then the Holocaust at the centre of studies on the Second World War and Nazism. New research has disputed this claim, putting an end to a “myth of silence” after the Holocaust (Diner, 2009; Cesarani and Sunquist, 2012; Azouvi, 2012) and shown that comprehensive research on the destruction of European Jewry had indeed started already in the very midst of it, during the war itself, for instance with Emanuel Ringelblum’s team *Oneg Shabbat* in the Warsaw ghetto (Kassow, 2007). It has been well established that those documentation projects actively involved the Jewish victims and survivors themselves, throughout Europe (Friedman, 1980; Krakowski, 1990; Jockusch, 2012). Historical commissions and Jewish documentation centres played a crucial role in the early post-war period for laying the ground for research activity and the dissemination of the very first knowledge on the Holocaust.

In this aspect, the Central Jewish Historical Commission (Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna; CŻKH) established by the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, the main Jewish umbrella organisation in post-war Poland played a founding role – since many of its members, including Rachel Auerbach, Nachman Blumenthal, Michał Borwicz, Philip Friedman, Moyshe Yosef Feigenbaum, Noe Gruss, Yosef Kermish, Genia Silkes, and Jozef Wulf, would be very active in various Jewish documentation centres in Europe and abroad, such as Yad Vashem in Israel, the YIVO in New York, the historical commission for DP camps in Munich, or the French Centre de Documentation juive contemporaine in Paris. As these key figures are slowly drawing interest of scholars (Berg, 2008; Cohen, 2008; Aleksiu, 2012; Schuller, 2013; Lyon-Caen, 2018), the aim of this article is to show the connections, through these pioneers, of the founding of Holocaust research centres. Despite dispersion, a lack of financial resources, and political contexts that did not plea in favour of their endeavours of history, memory and justice, I will show that those centres had, in fact, much in common in terms of their objectives, methods, and the initial dissemination of knowledge.

I chose to limit the comparison to that of France and Poland. In Poland, the major institution dedicated to the history and memory of the Holocaust – before this name was even given to the destruction of European Jewry (Fritz *et al.*, 2016) was the Central Jewish Historical Commission (CŻKH), from its beginnings in late 1944 until its transformation into the Jewish Historical Institute (Żydowski Instytut Historyczny – ŻIH) in October 1947. The ŻIH was shortly afterwards made into a scientific society in 1950, under the leadership of Bernard Mark, a Jewish communist. By then, most of the employees of the Institute, including Nachman Blumenthal, Jozef

Kermisz, Rachel Auerbach, and Isaiah Trunk, decided to emigrate to Israel or the USA, while Michal Borwicz, Jozef Wulf, and Noe Gruss moved to Paris, either for a temporary or permanent residence. I shall focus on the similarities and differences between the CŻKH and the French Centre de Documentation juive contemporaine (CDJC – Centre for Contemporary Jewish Documentation), the latter of which was created in 1943 in the Italy-occupied French zone by Podolia-born Isaac Schneer-son (1881–1969), and analyse hitherto neglected strong links established between those two centres in the aftermath of the Second World War.

## 2. FOUNDATIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

Comparative studies of the historical commissions and documentation centres have established a typology dividing “those whose main goal was to assemble documentary evidence for historical scholarship and those which aimed at using the data toward political ends such as the prosecution of war criminals, the fight for material compensation, and against anti-Semitism” (Jockusch, 2007, p. 444). In this regard, the cases of the CŻKH and CDJC would fall into those two categories. Indeed the very first aim of the CŻKH was to collect testimonies from the survivors who arrived at the newly founded Jewish committee established in the liberated areas of Poland (Aleksiu, 2007). In contrast, the CDJC’s initial goal was to prepare a “handbook for French Jews’ claims” for justice once the country would be liberated after the war (Poznanski, 1999, p. 51; Perego, 2012). Yet both centres, despite very different backgrounds of the contexts of their founding, had much in common.

First, both the CDJC and the CŻKH initiated still during the war, and they shared a certain urgency of documentation. In the Polish case, the CŻKH clearly continued the endeavours of Emanuel Ringelblum in creating a secret underground archive in the Warsaw ghetto, to tell the world about the nightmarish destruction of the Jewish world: survivors of Ringelblum’s Oneg Shabbat such as Rachel Auerbach, Hersz, and Bluma Wasser joined the CŻKH while several of its trained historians had been pre-war members of the YIVO Historical Commission under Ringelblum’s guidance, such as Jozef Kermisz or Isaiah Trunk (Stach, 2019, p. 213). And for the French CDJC, its beginnings occurred in the midst of the war, at a time of uncertainties: the committee was disbanded only a few months after its creation, when in September 1943 the Italian zone was taken over by the Nazis and anti-Jewish persecution increased. Many efforts were made to hide the collected documents, many members of the committee were killed or deported, in a strikingly parallel chronology to the fate of the Ringelblum archive.

Second, it is doubtless that seeking justice was indeed the major goal of the CDJC – as shown by the fact that the material gathered by the centre was sent to Nuremberg

trials where they served as evidence and two members of the CDJC, Leon Poliakov, as expert of French delegation, and Joseph Billig as representative of the CDJC, were indeed sent to the German city to attend the trials of the Military International Court in 1945–1946. Afterwards they returned with many documents that were to enrich the CDJC's collections. Rapidly, the CDJC became a major centre for historical research.

Conversely, even though it had not been among its initial emphasis, the CŻKH appeared to play a major role in the legal processing of the Holocaust. Philip Friedman, Józef Kermisz, and Rachel Auerbach worked on various committees investigating the crimes in the Auschwitz, Treblinka, Majdanek, and Chełmno concentration and extermination camps. The CŻKH compiled a selection of documents regarding the extermination of Polish Jews by Nazis for the Polish delegation in the Nuremberg trials. A special department was tasked with identifying war criminals and producing expert opinions for courts. Material was sent to Polish authorities, such as the Main Committee for the Investigation of German Crimes in Poland (*Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Niemieckich w Polsce*), the public prosecution authority, and Polish courts. In 1950, the ŻIH estimated that its work contributed to the transfer of approximately 1,800 Nazi criminals from Germany's four occupied zones to Poland (Stach, 2019, pp. 217–218).

The third observation that somewhat blurs the essential difference between the two institutions is that the CDJC quite soon became also a major place for commemoration and writing about the Jewish experience during the Second World War. Already in the founding documents, it was stated that the aim was also to “write the big book of French Jews' martyrdom” (Poznanski, 1999, p. 51). In the early 1950s, a memorial project to commemorate the victims of the Nazi genocide of European Jews unfolded and eventually materialised at the CDJC, in the centre of Paris, in 1956: the Memorial of the Unknown Jewish Martyr (Perego, 2015).

However, one has to stress a French special quality that has for long been understudied: the fact that the CDJC was not the only documentation centre, although it quickly became the most important one. The French Jewish Communist resistance movement called the Jewish Union for Resistance and Mutual Aid (Union des Juifs pour la Résistance et l'Entraide – UJRE), among many other actions decided to commemorate their actions during the war and, in September 1945 decided to open a documentation centre, whose aim was to “collect all illegal documents, try to make live again the Jewish participation to the Resistance and collect all documents that had not been destroyed by the Nazis” (Grumberg, 2018, p. 25). This centre was clearly more politicised and did not seem to serve to fuel further trials, contrary to the CDJC or CŻKH. It, however, managed to gather throughout France important documents on clandestine Jewish and non-Jewish resistance press, as well as documents on their political activity and pieces of literature by Jewish writers murdered during the war. Though it was quite small in scope, this centre is important to mention as, like their counterparts elsewhere in Europe, it focused on the Jewish agency and reactions to the Holocaust. It was important to all those centres to show the Jew-

ish participation in the resistance against Nazism and in the liberation of the country. In order to achieve this goal, collecting documents accompanied their dissemination through publications and exhibits. Indeed, the UJRE also created a publishing house in Yiddish, called *Oyfsnay* – “Revival”, which extensively published on Jewish resistance and survival in transit camps in France (Beaune-la-Rolande, Pithiviers). Furthermore, dissemination was also implemented thanks to exhibitions for the general audience. It is interesting to note that the first exhibition was held as early as April 1946, and dedicated to «Life and death in the ghettos in Poland», which, according to their documentation, attracted more than 100,000 visitors. Contacts with Polish Jewish (pro-Communist) organisations, namely the Organisation for Polish Jews, a branch of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (*Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego* – PKWN), were essential for the implementation of this exhibition. Information circulation was also attested at this very early stage. For instance, a book by Bernard Mark on the Warsaw ghetto uprising was printed in Yiddish in 1945 in Paris thanks to this Organisation for Polish Jews. It included a foreword by Adam Rayski, a pre-war Communist activist from Białystok, journalist for the *Naye Presse* Yiddish daily and underground member of Jewish resistance. Bernard Mark became the head of Jewish Historical Institute in 1949, the same year that Adam Rayski returned to Poland, to work for press censorship.

These short but illuminating biographical sketches lead to the final point to be examined, which links together all those documentation centres: the personality of their founders and key members. In all countries, most activists of those centres were survivors of the Holocaust, with Eastern European, predominantly Polish backgrounds, even in France, where the Russian background prevailed at least in the beginnings of the CDJC. Indeed, Isaac Schneersohn, born in Kamenetz-Podolsk in a Yiddish-speaking religious family, Leon Poliakov, who had fled the Bolshevik revolution front Saint Petersburg in 1920, as well as Joseph Billig, also a Russian Jewish refugee from 1920, were among the founding members of the CDJC. As for the historical commission of Communist UJRE, its head was David Diamant, born in 1904 in Hrubieszów, from where he left for France in 1930. Soon after their emigration to France, two former members of Krakow branch of the CŻKH, Michel Borwicz and Józef Wulf, created a short-lived «Research Centre on the History of Polish Jews» (Centre de Recherche sur l’Histoire des Juifs Polonais) in Paris in 1947.

### 3. TRANSNATIONAL GOALS: BOOK PUBLICATIONS

It is also interesting to note that the CŻKH and their French counterparts, both the CDJC and the Communist documentation centre, had many contacts as it is shown by the rich correspondence between the centres, files that still await an in-depth

investigation. This point is particularly illuminating in terms of exploring the links between the two institutions.

From their very beginnings, both institutions strove to make the results of their documentation efforts public by publishing books and journals. In 1950, at least 20 books had already been issued by “les éditions du centre”, the CDJC publishing house in Paris. The most important titles included first monographs, and series testimonies, mostly owing to the collections of documents gathered by the centre itself. Priority was hence given to the study of internment camps in France (Weill, 1946) or the history of Jews in Italy-occupied France (Poliakov, 1946) while the first historical overview of the Holocaust appeared in 1951, by Leon Poliakov, based mostly on the documents available at the CDJC (Poliakov, 1951).

In the meanwhile in Warsaw, the CŻKH managed to publish within two and a half years no less than 3,000 articles, and 39 leaflets and books: compilations of documents (Blumental *et al.*, 1946), journals (Hescheles, 1946), testimonies (Hochberg-Marianska and Grüss, 1947), and monographs on ghettos (Kermisz, 1946) and camps (Friedman, 1945; Reder, 1946)<sup>1</sup>. A central topic was the Jewish resistance movement and its role in the struggle against Nazis (Ajzensztejn, 1946). In this aspect, a quite similar enterprise was undertaken at the same time by the Communist documentation centre in their publications: in 1949 it issued in Yiddish a collection of underground Yiddish press from during Nazi Occupation of France, with a foreword by Adam Rayski (UJRE, 1949).

#### 4. *LE MONDE JUIF*: A JOURNAL ILLUSTRATING TRANSNATIONAL CONTACTS

Apart from books, the CDJC edited a journal as early as 1945, even before the war was over. Its very first issue stated very clearly that “the work of which we inaugurate the first pages today is a work of testimony. We will carry it out without any political aim, without any apologetic or propaganda second thought, with the sole ambition of being impartial witnesses taking the oath of truth on countless graves” (CDJC, 1945, p. 1). The journal was not sold but handed out every month to Jewish institutions in France and abroad. It aimed at giving news of the situation of Jewish communities around the world and called for reconstruction. However, commemoration was from the very beginning central and testimonies were published from the very beginning. After a year or so, the *Bulletin* changed its name and became *Le Monde juif* [The Jewish world]. It published articles on contemporary Jewish life, but also documents from the war

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list, see Jockusch, 2012, pp. 284–285.

and testimonies (Lyon-Caen, 2020). As for Poland, it was not before 1947 that the newly created Jewish Historical Institute issued its journal, first in Yiddish under the name *Bleter far Geshichte* (Letter for History), while a Polish version was added in 1949, still existing today with the name *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* [Jewish History Quarterly], as does exist a journal of the Memorial de la Shoah, the successor organisation of the CDJC in Paris, with its journal, now called the *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*.

A close look at the French publication shows the very close links between the French CDJC and the loss of Polish Jews. In the fourth issue of the *Bulletin*, in July 1945, large excerpts from the book by Jan Karski, published a year earlier in the USA, were made available for the Polish audience in the *CŻKH*<sup>2</sup>. The passages chosen for translation referred to the meeting between Karski and the representatives of the Jewish resistance in the Warsaw ghetto.

#### 4.1. The Warsaw ghetto: a central reference

The Warsaw ghetto, and especially the Warsaw ghetto uprising, was hence a major focus point in the journal, as early as the second issue in May 1945, which mentioned the Warsaw ghetto uprising and its second anniversary. In 1946, French communist journalist Hélène Gosset interviewed for the journal Izabela Stachowicz, better known under the pseudonym of lieutenant Czajka, former escapee from Warsaw ghetto then People's Army lieutenant. In 1947, *Le Monde juif* published an article signed by French journalist Jane Albert Hesse, who had met Isaac Zuckerman, deputy commander of the ŻOB [Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa] Jewish resistance organisation, which provided guns and ammunition from the "Aryan" side of the city during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The climax of the presence of the Warsaw ghetto uprising in the columns of the journal occurred on the occasion of its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1958. A special issue contained the testimony of Helena Szereszewska, whose husband was a member of the Judenrat in the Warsaw ghetto and who managed to escape in January 1943, shortly before the uprising. She had left Poland for Israel and her testimony is among the first she gave and her only text available in French. The same issue also included a translation of a text by Isaac Zuckerman on the uprising, previously published in Hebrew.

If Israeli institutions seem to have, at that point, taken precedence over Polish ones, there were still contacts with former members of the Jewish historical commission. The special 1958 issue also contained a reminiscence by Emanuel Ringelblum, the historian of the Warsaw ghetto, interviewed by Genia Silkes, a social worker. Silkes had been a member of the Oneg Shabbat team in the ghetto

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<sup>2</sup> This text and the following, coming from the journal of the CDJC, were reprinted in a special issue of *Revue d'histoire de la Shoah*, n° 211, March 2020.

and had managed to survive deportation to Treblinka by jumping from the train. After the war, she worked for the Jewish historical commission in Łódź, gathering hundreds of children testimonies. She left Poland for France in 1949, before settling in New York and working as a secretary in the YIVO institute. The text published by *Le Monde juif* in 1958 was a second version of an initial text published in Yiddish and in Poland in 1949, on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of Ringelblum's death (Person, 2015, pp. 673–678).

The imposing presence of the topic of the Warsaw ghetto in the journal of the CDJC could also be explained by the arrival in France of Polish Jews who had experienced the war and the ghettos in Poland. Apart from Genia Silkes, one should also remember Michel Mazor a worker from the CDJC, who arrived in Paris in 1947. Mazor had been in the Warsaw ghetto and had managed to escape from the train upon his deportation, surviving in hiding until 1945. Mazor worked as a translator within the CDJC, before becoming the head of the Archive department. His memoirs on the Warsaw ghetto appeared in *Le Monde juif* and were thereafter published as a book in French (Mazor, 1955).

#### 4.2. Children testimonies in Poland and France: a major point of interest

More surprising than the omnipresence of the topic of the Warsaw ghetto, which is certainly not specific to French Jewish milieu but has been more widely quite early acknowledged as central in first Holocaust commemorations around Europe and even in the USA (Slucki, 2019, p. 204), is the translation into French in the March 1946 issue of *Le Monde juif* of children testimonies collected in April 1945 by Ida Gliksztejn, a Polish-Jewish survivor from Lublin who worked for the Jewish historical commission of Bytom in Lower Silesia. Those testimonies are available in the archives of the Jewish historical institute, with the same call number as indicated in the French journal (903, 904, 906). This means that someone from the CŻKH probably sent the testimonies to the CDJC, where they were translated into French and published in the journal.

At the same time, similar endeavours were undertaken in France to collect and publish testimonies from survivors, especially children. The Polish influence can clearly be seen, for instance, in Miriam Nowicz Bath-Ami interviewing refugee children from Poland in a DP camp near Marseille, on their way to Palestine. During the war, Nowicz had met in the Vittel internment camp Yitzhak Katzenelson, Yiddish poet from Warsaw, saving his poems from destruction, before he was deported to Auschwitz and had also helped Hillel Seidman, another survivor from Warsaw ghetto, escape the Vittel camps. As a member of the “Fédération des Sociétés juives de France” (Federation of Jewish *landsmanshaftn* in France), Nowicz collected many testimonies in France, now available in the archives of the CDJC. The collection of children testimonies, excerpts of which were made available in *Le Monde*



*juif* in 1946, were subsequently published in a book (Bath-Ami, 1946). Nowicz left for Israel in 1949 where she worked in the *Lohamei Hagetaot* kibbutz-museum.

Another piece of evidence of contacts and interest for the Polish Jewish war experience could also be found in the 1949 publication of additional children testimonies from Poland, collected by the CŻKH and published by Noe Gruss, former member of the Jewish Historical Commission. However, it is interesting to notice that the documents published in the French translation do not come from the Polish edition by Gruss and Mariańska-Hochberg, but from a Yiddish, slightly different version of the book, published in Buenos Aires, after Gruss emigrated to Paris from Poland in 1947.

## 5. HYBRID CHARACTER OF NARRATIVES: BETWEEN HISTORY, MEMORY, AND LITERATURE

This short and non-exhaustive list of examples taken from the journal of the CDJC shows the various topics that were important in both countries for Jewish survivors working in research institutions. It also shows the impact of circulation and emigration on the diffusion of those topics across boundaries. Although initially positioned as a centre devoted to French Jewry and the depiction of its sufferings during the war, the CDJC from the very beginning, and because of the migration influx of several Polish Jewish refugees, also publicised quite early their loss, hence giving the French audience access to testimonies by Polish Jewish children or about the survival in places from which the refugees had come – mostly Warsaw, but sometimes other cities as well, such as Lviv, or smaller towns in Poland, like Mińsk Mazowiecki. The arrival in Paris of Yiddish writers who had survived the war in occupied Poland, e.g. Ephraim Sedlecki, Jechiel Granatsztajn, or Leib Rochman, enabled them to make their testimonies available to readers in France, though predominantly Jews. It is worth noticing that the published excerpts from their narratives, initially written in Yiddish, were presented not so much as testimonies of survival, but as texts from “a young generation of Yiddish writers” (*Le Monde juif*, n° 16, 1949). For the editors of the journal, it was equally important to disseminate knowledge about the destruction of European Jews and to help rebuilt a new Jewish – and here, especially Yiddish – literature.

In this aspect, members of the CDJC who advocated the importance of literature had their counterparts in post-war Poland, whether in the Central Jewish Historical Commission or its successor body, the Jewish Historical Institute. Early publications of the CKZH included attempts to name and count the Jewish writers murdered during the Holocaust; literary texts written during the occupation were also published (Gebirtig, 1946).

### 5.1. One joint publication: “Dos buch fun Lublin” (1952)

The last example to be mentioned here, although not related directly with the participation of the CŻKH nor the CDJC, was the joint publication in Paris in 1952 of the Memory Book or *yizkor bukh* in Yiddish, about the city of Lublin (Kopciowski, 2011, pp. 9–136). This publication is important in as much as it is one of the only five *yizker bikher* published in France, while the majority of such books were published in Israel or in the US by survivors in *landsmanshaftn* or mutual aid societies formed by Jewish immigrants from the same hometowns, but also because of its quite early publication and the cooperation of authors across the borders between Poland, France, and Israel. As I have shown elsewhere (Kichelewski, 2018), this publication contained articles written by several members of the CŻKH and ŻIH, before or after their emigration from Poland: Nachman Blumenthal, as the coordinator of the book, and Isaiah Trunk, who had both just left for Israel; Noe Gruss who had left for Paris; Ida Gliksztejn and Tatiana Burstin-Berenstein, who were still in Poland. Moreover, the book contained several archival documents but also articles initially published in the journal of the Jewish Historical Institute. Last, the book also had a very hybrid character, typical of *yizker bikher*, mixing historical documents, testimonies and literary accounts, some of them by Polish Jewish refugees who had just made their way to Paris, such as Granatsztajn, whose narrative had already been made available for the French speaking audience in *Le Monde juif* in 1949, as previously mentioned.

## 6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, this study has shown how two important Jewish documentation centres, i.e. the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland and the Center of Contemporary Jewish Documentation in France, shared similar visions for the transmission of the history and memory of the Holocaust. This was in part due to maintained transnational links and migrations of key figures from Poland to France. Yet, one has to keep in mind that each centre had its own autonomy and was, of course, closely linked to the national political context. However, contrasted the reconstruction policies of the two countries might have been, both shared some priorities, one of them being a strong emphasis on the loss and the future of their children (Zahra, 2011, p. 8; Doron, 2015, p. 2). This could explain their shared interest to publish children’s testimonies. Similarly, both institutions tended to celebrate the fighting dimension of the Jewish experience, in order to legitimise the active role of Jews during the war – as part of the anti-fascist movement in Poland, that the official discourse would soon encourage; and to be considered

as “political” rather than “racial” deportees in France, thus to be part of the celebrated Resistance. For these reasons, a crucial episode such as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, even if it did not involve many survivors living on France, could well fit the political agenda of the French CDJC.

Last, the example of *Dos Buch fun Lublin* shows that circulations between research and publication produced in Poland and France managed to continue well into the 1950s, despite the drastic changes imposed upon Jewish institutions in Poland after the Stalinisation of the country from 1948 on. Such circulations owed a lot to the migration of former members of the Jewish historical commissions and subsequently the Jewish Historical Institute, from Poland to France, migrations that would last well into the 1970s, with the arrival of historian Adam Rutkowski to the CDJC after 1968, contributing to the publication in French journal of previous articles and documents he had been working on while working at ŻIH. Both centres held many similarities both in their motivations, actions, topics of interest, and ways of considering the nature and structure of testimonies. However, the circulation remained in most part restricted to the Jewish community, and the Yiddish-speaking community in the case of *yizker bikher*. That would explain in part why those testimonies and precious voices of the survivors striving to give sense and account of their dreadful experiences largely failed to be heard and understood in mainstream European societies. Whether in the process of social reconstruction or because of political ideologies, both East and West put aside the specificity of the Jewish experience of the Second World War. It would take decades for these voices to be at last heard and considered by researchers.

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## UNRECOGNIZABLE, ABANDONED, UNNAMED, AVOIDED PLACES: ON THE MURDERS COMMITTED AGAINST JEWS IN POLAND IN THE PERIOD AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THEIR COMMEMORATION

**Abstract.** The fall of the Third Reich, turning the “most tragic page” in the history of the Jewish nation, i.e. the Second World War, did not mean the end of the tragedy for Jews on Polish soil. Even before the end of the greatest conflict in the history of humankind, in the areas liberated from Nazi Germany occupation, many survivors of the Holocaust experienced acts of ruthless violence. However, very few of the numerous victims of the post-war anti-Jewish terror have been commemorated in public space. To a very small extent the form of public commemoration also covered earlier wartime cases of collective murders committed against Jews by Polish Christians. Even if the sites of the dramatic events which occurred in the shadow of the Holocaust were marked, the complete truth about their course was not restored everywhere.

**Key words:** Jews, the Holocaust, anti-Jewish violence, post-war period, sites of memory, sites of non-memory, non-sites of memory.

### 1. INTRODUCTION – THE MAJORITY *VERSUS* THE MINORITY IN EFFORTS TO COMMEMORATE IMPORTANT PLACES IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The development of national awareness among groups of the population connected by a more or less well-formed sense of distinctiveness (including the ability to transmit this self-identification towards various initiatives in the field of collective

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life) takes place in the most desirable way in conditions where such communities assume institutionalised, especially state-like forms. They provide a legal, administrative and economic framework for these communities, complementing and strengthening their existence. The comfort of an unrestricted existence in an area demarcated by political borders is usually provided to a national (religious) majority. Individuals in smaller communities are often unable to exercise the privileges and rights assigned to the dominant group. This is also the case today, despite the fact that in democratic states of law, great importance is attached to protecting these communities. Inequitable relations between the majority and ethnic minorities leave their mark, apart from numerous areas of life, also in space: in the ways and forms it is occupied, organised, marked, named, and commemorated<sup>1</sup>.

Jews, one of the minorities in Poland, remained for centuries in complex, though unequal relations with the Catholic nation (initially mainly the nobility), whose broadly understood interests were guarded by those in power, almost entirely identifying themselves with the Catholic majority. Pushed, with varying dynamism and often selectively, to the margins of social life, obliged for most of the time of their presence on the Polish lands to occupy the places indicated to them in space and organise them in a way not always consistent with their own needs, they were still met by those in power with relative respect for their cultural diversity: a relatively unrestricted material existence and a certain freedom of religious practices. The consequence of such an arrangement of relations was the formation in Poland, over several centuries, of the largest concentration of the Jewish nation in the world, being at the same time the most important intellectual and cultural centre of this community. However, this exceptional legacy lay in ruins in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the Jewish extermination by the Third Reich. It consumed the lives of 3 million Polish Jews (90% of the total population) (Adelson, 1993, p. 387; Cała and Datner-Śpiewak, 1997, p. 9; Datner and Melchior, 1997, pp. 70–71; Rykała, 2007, p. 17; Eberhardt, 2010, p. 93, 107, 110; 2011, p. 78, 88, 92; Stankowski and Weiser, 2011, pp. 31–34; Żbikowski, 2017, p. 9; Rosner, 2018, p. 100). As a result of the barbaric actions of the “enraged Nazi bandits”<sup>2</sup>, the material and spiritual culture, forming over a thousand years and unique in the history of the Jewish nation, was irretrievably destroyed.

There is not even a trace left of many human beings murdered in mass killing sites. Without even such a dimension of anchoring in reality, their closest ones were deprived of the opportunity to mourn the victims. One of the “sons” of the Jewish

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<sup>1</sup> These mutual systems of coordinates are reflected in the cultural landscape, which is the result of the transformation – broadly speaking – of the natural landscape under the influence of civilisation development. Such a landscape consists of all observable objects which are a form of a combination of natural and anthropogenic interactions.

<sup>2</sup> Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute (AŻIH), Central Committee of Jews in Poland (CKŻP), Bureau and Agency (PiS), 303/1/7. From the proclamation “Almost all of Poland is free”.



people expressed his poetic exultation at the impossibility of bowing his head to the fate of the victims in the places where their lives were interrupted, writing:

We, who will not ever find the graves of our children and our mothers - they are layered so, that they would cover the entire land were they to be buried one next to the other! And there will not be one spot where you could lay flowers, but like the sower casting his seed, you will cast them about. Through some coincidence, you may find the spot (Tuwim, 1993, p. 18).

The feeling of deep sadness caused by the mass of the Holocaust victims resting on the Polish soil – the cemetery of the Jewish nation, unable to count on collective sympathy, was also expressed by Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Dawid Kahane, the Chief Rabbi of the Polish Army. He spoke the following words over the graves of those murdered on 4 July 1946 in the Kielce pogrom:

In large and small towns and villages, and often in the open field, there are rows of graves surrounded by rails. In spring, when the fields and forests are filled with greenery, on All Souls' Day or other solemn occasion, banners will bow down over these graves, someone's hand will throw flowers on them, some lonely tear will fall.

With us Jews it's different. We, Polish Jews know other graves, whose unexpected presence will make a passer-by bridle up. The graves scattered ... like field stones, thrown with the inconsiderate hand of fate.

Those who lay in these graves knew when they went to their death that no one would put the tombstone over their grave, no one would say the *Kadish*, no one would hum *El Malei Rachamim*. (*Nad mogiłą Męczenników...*, 1946, p. 7).

The impossibility to express topographically numerous places marked by death or suffering and put them in the order of cultural perception of the landscape was accompanied by a depressing reflection on the inevitable destruction of the existing Jewish cemetery heritage, first by the Nazi occupying forces and then by the Polish (Fig. 1–4). This was put into words in a poignant and penetrating way by Kazimierz Wyka (1945), a historian and literary critic:

There are towns in Poland, in whose pavements you trample remnants of such stones, fragments of Hebrew inscriptions unreadable to you. The empty space of the cemetery is covered with grass. A stone has been saved here and there. They're playing cards on it or they're laying out the goods. There are paths leading through breaches in the cemetery walls. ... this cemetery is triply dead. No one throws pieces of paper on the grave under the tree. ... whoever fails to see the meaning of these empty walls, behind which a Levantine crowd of Polish origin swarms, is immensely dark. Dark to one of the greatest misfortunes and crimes history knows.

However, the approaching end of the Second World War and the inevitable defeat of Hitler's Germany did not stop the suffering of Jews in Poland. In areas abandoned by German occupation forces many survivors (frightened, often homeless, lonely, struggling with trauma and pain after the loss of their relatives) were still subjected to violence. Those guilty of anti-Jewish terror were usually not identified, and even if their identity was established, the acts they had committed

did not prevent them in modern Poland from being granted the honour of inclusion in the pantheon of heroes of history written by the majority (Fig. 5)<sup>3</sup>.



Fig. 1–4. Jewish necropolises in Tresta (Żarnów), Przedbórz, Ozorków and Rozprza

Source: own archive (2012).

<sup>3</sup> Emblematic examples include Józef Kuraś, nom-de-guerre Ogień, responsible, among others, for the murders of Jews in Podhale, or Romuald Rajs, nom-de-guerre Bury, the perpetrator of genocide committed on Orthodox inhabitants of Podlasie. The anti-communist underground unit under the command of the former was charged with the murder of 12 Jews, carried out in the vicinity of Krościenko on May 2, 1946. Archive of New Files (AAN), Ministry of Public Administration (MAP), Political Department (DP), Department of Nationalities (WN), ref. 787. A copy of a letter from Dr. Horowitz, the president, and Dr. Reichman, Secretary General of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Cracow, addressed to the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, May 4, 1946, on the murder of Jews at Krościenko; AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/I/11. Minutes of the meeting of the Bureau of the CKŻP held on 8 May 1946; AŻIH, CKŻP, Central Special Commission (CKS), ref. 303/XVIII/20. A list of murders committed against the Jewish population; see also: Cała and Datner-Śpiewak, 1997, pp. 44–45; Gross, 2008, p. 58; Kwiek, 2013, pp. 688–694. Among the anti-communist partisans, it is to this warlord of the armed underground that the most deaths among the surviving Jews are attributed (Grabski, Rykała, 2010, p. 403). More about the massacre near Krościenko, among others in: Wójcik, 2016, on the genocide by the Rajs squad – Moroz, 2015, pp. 61–91. See also about the pacification of Belarusian villages by Bury: Alina Pospischil's interview with Adam Puławski, *IPN wyrzuca naukowców...* 2018, p. 22.



Fig. 5. A plaque in the church of St. Stanislaus Kostka in Warsaw to commemorate Józef Kuraś, alias Ogień, responsible, among others, for the murder of Jews who survived the Holocaust

Source: own archive (2019).

In turn, the sites of these traumatic events, marked by the suffering and death of Holocaust survivors, have not become points that would spark memory in local or supralocal communities. They have arranged themselves, ‘spread out’ into another layer of “burial”, without a “spot” to lay flowers, on which “no one will put a tombstone over their grave, no one will say the *Kadish*.”

The main objectives of the article include:

- to discuss selected acts of collective violence against the Jewish population in the areas conquered by the Third German Reich in the mid-1941, which until then had been under the occupying jurisdiction of the Soviet Union;
- to analyse (using selected examples) the topographical marking of information about anti-Jewish terror from that period;
- to explain the causes and analyse the socio-political and spatial conditions of anti-Jewish violence in Poland after the Second World War;
- to restore the memory of the Jewish victims of murders and the sites where they occurred, as well as to reflect on their commemoration.

The time span of the analysis is determined by, on the one hand, the liberation of particular lands from the German occupation, and, on the other, the beginning (in February 1946) of the repatriation of the Jewish population from the Soviet Union.

## 2. IN THE SHADOW OF THE HOLOCAUST AND IN CO-OPERATION WITH ITS MAIN PERPETRATORS. ON COMMEMORATING EVENTS INCONVENIENT FOR THE NATIONAL MAJORITY IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

In reference to this annihilation of the Jewish community in Poland, unique throughout history, revealing “what abysses of humiliation and barbarism the ‘Third Reich’ have reached”<sup>4</sup>, it should be added that in the shadow of the Holocaust, and not infrequently also in co-operation with its main perpetrators, aggression and terror were also committed by “numerous sons of the Polish nation”<sup>5</sup>.

The greatest number of acts of collective anti-Jewish violence, which were horrifying in scale, occurred in the areas conquered by the Third Reich in the mid-1941, previously under the occupation of the Soviet Union. Within the borders of contemporary Poland, these were primarily Podlasie and eastern Masovia, areas that were poorly urbanised and backwards in terms of civilizational development.

Jews were a large portion of the local population, in some towns exceeding 50% (Fig. 6). In addition to their demographic potential, they also made an important contribution to the development of trade and crafts in the area (see, e.g.: Urynowicz, 2002, pp. 86–101).

The wave of violence, which was a sequence of several dozen collective acts against the Jewish population, spread over these lands in June and July 1941, i.e. the period when the occupying German authorities were installing their rule. Those guilty of this persecution – Polish neighbours (Christians) – blamed Jews of having pro-com-

<sup>4</sup> AŻIH, Central Jewish Historical Commission (CŻKH), ref. 303/XX/38. Objectives and tasks of CŻKH in Poland developed by F. Friedman, the Centre’s director.

<sup>5</sup> This phrase was used by Simcha “Kazik” Rotem, an insurgent from the Warsaw Ghetto. He was prompted to do so by the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Memory (IPN), which stipulates penalisation any suggestions that the Polish state or nation participated or were complicit in the crimes committed by the Third Reich. Expressing his protest (in a letter addressed to the Polish President) against the attempts of the currently governing Polish political party to introduce a legal muzzle for undertaking scientific research related to the Second World War, Rotem stated that “numerous sons of the Polish nation actively participated in the extermination of the Jewish nation in Poland during the Holocaust, in the deportation of Jews from their places of residence in Poland, while cruelly oppressing us,” (Rotem, 2018). Cases of Polish complicity in crimes against Jews, identified on the basis of abundant source materials, especially the decree of the Polish Committee of National Liberation of 31 August 1944, have been scientifically analysed by, among others, B. Engelking (2011) in her work *Jest taki piękny słoneczny dzień. Losy Żydów szukających ratunku na wsi polskiej 1942–1945*, J. Grabowski (2011) in *Judenjagd. Polowanie na Żydów 1942–1945. Studium dziejów pewnego powiatu*, and both authors as editors of *Zarys krajobrazu. Wieś polska wobec zagłady Żydów 1942–1945* (2011). The complicity of part of the Polish nation in the extermination of their Jewish co-citizens, documented and divided into districts, was also the research problem of the last work edited by both researchers entitled *Dalej jest noc. Losy Żydów w wybranych powiatach okupowanej Polski*, vol. 1 and 2 (2018).

munist attitudes and collaboration with the Soviet occupying forces, which was to be expressed in their “over-representation” in the structures of the local administration. However, contrary to the stereotype of the general approval of the Jewish community for the policy of the Soviet authorities – declaring equal rights and a fight against all manifestations of ethnic hatred – the representation of Jews who were allowed to participate in the structures of power was not, as A. Żbikowski (2006, pp. 235–237) has estimated, numerous<sup>6</sup>, and the instances of expelling them deep into the Soviet Union included proportionally more of them than the rest of the population.

German policy in the newly conquered territory was to incite acts of collective violence against the Jews living there. Those were perpetrated by the local population, mobilised by anti-communist political activists interested in suppressing the ideology hostile to Hitlerism and determined to crack down on Jews, who were seen as communism’s primary base. Poles were to be activated in order to incite riots, among other things, by the negative attitude of some of them towards the Jewish population and their willingness to take over the property belonging to them. The source of these attitudes was, as A. Żbikowski (1992, p. 7) has put it, rooted in a centuries-old system of mutual references, comprehensive contacts, and mutual observation.

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<sup>6</sup> The approval of a part of the Jewish community for the occupying Soviet authorities resulted both from the negative experiences of life in the inter-war, anti-Semitism-ridden Republic of Poland, and from their awareness of the tragic consequences of being under German jurisdiction. The affirmative attitude towards the Soviets stemmed from a hope – fed by the communist doctrine – for a government of social justice, free of any form of discrimination against the Jewish minority. As interpreted by B. C. Pinchuk (1991), Jews used this favourable attitude to compensate themselves for the legal and economic handicap they had suffered in the inter-war period. The Soviet authorities made socio-technical efforts to gain support from this numerous ethnic group living in the territory they just acquired. Their aim was to eliminate any manifestations of national autonomy, leading to the formation of a classless society, incapable of voicing attitudes of discrimination on ethnic or religious grounds. However, the socio-technical methods used to achieve this goal deprived Jews of their most important group distinctions. Among other things, they led to the liquidation of religious communities, they banned the use of the Hebrew language, which was gaining popularity in Zionist circles, and forced the transfer of religious activity from the public to the private (home) sphere. Economic life was also transformed by the new regulations. As a result of new taxes, administrative pressure (paragraph 11 aimed at “class enemies”) and police pressure (exiles), the merchant class was almost entirely eliminated. The second most numerous professional group of tradesmen, the craftsmen, were concentrated into cooperative artels. The community, undergoing complex transformations and indoctrination, was also deprived of their authorities. Socialist activists belonging to the anti-communist Bund party were arrested, while Zionist group members managed to cross to Lithuania. Other party members abandoned their previous activities to cooperate with the Soviets, taking up positions in local administrations. Concurrently with the ongoing indoctrination, which led to a deepening inertia in the Jewish community, external signs of anti-Semitic behaviour have been eliminated, thus contributing to an illusory sense of real equality. Such interdependencies with the new government led Jews to a kind of symbiosis with it, which in turn caused a hostile reaction from the Polish majority triggered by the social advancement of the Jewish minority, even though Poles were also engaged in forming the Soviet administrative structures. See also: Pinchuk, 1991; Żbikowski, 1992.



were first and foremost an explosion of antagonism, mainly economic, that had been brewing for several decades, fuelled by anti-Semitic ideologues, largely originating from nationalist groups, but also from the leaders of the Catholic Church (Żbikowski, 2006, pp. 236–239; Tryczyk, 2015, pp. 50–56; Rykała and Wosiak, 2019, p. 560). Although Nazi inspiration contributed to their outbreak in the summer of 1941, it was not of primary importance. Although German operational groups – which utilised, as S. Datner (1966, p. 19) has stressed, on their lowest instincts – sometimes initiated outbursts of “people’s wrath”, supplying weapons and giving instructions, they themselves did not “participate in the slaughter”. The stationing of German forces (army and police) was very conducive to the escalation of aggression against Jews but differed significantly from the methodical incidents of August and September of the same year, which assumed the character of genocidal “actions” (Żbikowski, 2006, pp. 238, 222–224).

The scale of the participation of each group of the perpetrators (the local population on the one hand, and the representatives of the occupying German authorities on the other) in a series of acts of collective violence was determined locally, demonstrating a dependence on the location of anti-Jewish terror.

One of the many cases of the explosion of collective anti-Jewish aggression, certainly the most thoroughly investigated, was the pogrom in Jedwabne, which occurred on 10 July 1941. In the presence of a handful of German soldiers, who were involved in helping to catch Jews, Polish neighbours forced the latter onto the market square, where they proceeded to beat them up (as a result of which several died) and forced them to carry out cleaning works. Then they gathered at least 300 of them in a barn and they set it on fire (Datner, 1966, p. 22; Wroniszewscy, 1988, p. 8–9; Żbikowski, 1992, pp. 15–16; Dmitrów, 2002, pp. 332–352; more on this subject in: Gross, 2000; Bikont, 2004).

A few days earlier, on 5 July 1941, a pogrom was conducted in Wąsosz, inspired by Nazis, although conducted by Poles, mainly recruited members of the auxiliary police. During this event, many Jews were injured using primitive tools (axes or pitchforks). As a result, almost the entire local Jewish population (about 250 people) was murdered (Datner, 1966, p. 22; Żbikowski, 2002, pp. 169–172; Milewski, 2002, pp. 87–112; Dmitrów, 2002, pp. 331–352; Monkiewicz, 1989, p. 346).

The local population, hand-in-hand with peasants from nearby villages (Czerwone and Zabiele), with the participation of Nazis, started a pogrom in Kolno (Fig. 6). First, the closest and more distant neighbours forced Jews to perform humiliating cleaning work and raped Jewish women, and then (on 5 July 1941), under the supervision of Nazi police, they organised a humiliating staging, which consisted in forcing Jews to enact a “funeral” of a Lenin statue. The conclusion of the pogrom, during which many houses were robbed and the synagogue burned down, was the murder of about 30 Jewish residents of the town (Datner, 1966, p. 22; Mędykowski, 2012, pp. 262–268; Żbikowski, 2002, pp. 167–168; Dmitrów, 2002, p. 316).

After Wąsosz and Kolno, the wave of anti-Jewish terror very quickly reached Radziłów (7 July). In a three-day pogrom, Jews were first humiliated and abused. Initially, the richest, mainly shopkeepers living in the market square, were expelled from their homes. They were ordered to clean the market (by pulling out the grass) with cutlery. Numerous rapes were committed – “When there was a beautiful Jewish woman, rape was the first thing to do. (...) They were horrifying, these days before the fire, the expulsion to the market, the beating, the rapes...” (Tryczyk, 2020, p. 13). In the last phase of abuse, local Poles, taking advantage of the permission of Nazi military policemen, forced most of their Jewish neighbours into a barn and burned them there. The remaining ones were caught and killed in other ways. It is estimated that 600 Jews were murdered at that time (Datner, 1966, p. 22; Żbikowski, 2002, pp. 231–259; Milewski, 2002, pp. 87–112; Dmiatrów, 2002, pp. 320–322, 332–352; Monkiewicz, 1989, p. 346).

The mass murders or executions of individual people took place in almost all Jewish communities in Podlasie and the eastern part of Mazovia (Datner, 1966, p. 21). The Nazi presence, which enabled the deluge of collective violence against Jews, was significantly different, as I have already mentioned, from the systemic, genocidal activities of August and September 1941. Still, in August the Polish killers resurfaced in, e.g. Szczuczyn. After the pogrom in this town on 27 June of the same year, in which, with the permission of the Nazi army and indifference from the clergy, about 300 Jews were murdered (Żbikowski, 2002, pp. 172–180; Monkiewicz, 1989, pp. 345–346). The owners of nearby farms came to the local ghetto<sup>8</sup>, with a population of 2,000 people, to hire 80 young Jewish women for work. A group of men came from Szczuczyn to nearby Bzury, where 20 of them found employment in the Zofiówka estate, and kidnapped the women from the fields. After taking the Jewish women to a forest, these individuals raped and killed them with wooden clubs with iron spikes (Datner, 1966, p. 20; Żbikowski, 2002, pp. 178–180; Tryczyk, 2015, pp. 328–332; see also: Domanowska, 2012; Kaćki, 2016; Chołodowski, 2017).

After the murder in Jedwabne became public, mainly because of J.T. Gross’s book *Neighbours: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (2000), there occurred a breakthrough in research on the negative attitude of the Polish majority towards the Jewish minority during the war, a topic which had been a taboo. With a nationwide debate<sup>9</sup> that followed, a plaque commemorating

<sup>8</sup> Among those imprisoned in the closed quarter there were mainly women and children because most of the men had been murdered during the pogrom (Datner, 1966, p. 20)

<sup>9</sup> The debate that started was followed by other fundamental works devoted to this subject, e.g.: *Wokół Jedwabnego*, vol. 1 and 2, edited by Paweł Machcewicz and Krzysztof Persak (2002), *My z Jedwabnego* by Anna Bikont (2004), *U genezy Jedwabnego. Żydzi na Kresach Północno-Wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej, wrzesień 1939 – lipiec 1941* by Andrzej Żbikowski (2006). It is worth mentioning that almost a quarter of a century before the publication of *Neighbours*, i.e. in 1966, the first attempt to break the silence about anti-Jewish violence in July 1941 was made by Szymon Datner in his article *Extermination of the Jewish population in the Białystok District*, published in



the murdered Jewish inhabitants of the town was changed. The previous inscription, which falsified the course of events (“The site of the slaughter of the Jewish population. The Gestapo and the Nazi gendarmerie burned 1,600 people alive on 10 July 1941”) was replaced for the unveiling of the new monument with a sentence: “To the memory of Jews from Jedwabne and the surrounding area, men, women, and children, fellow inhabitants of this land, who were murdered and burned alive on this spot on 10 July 1941. Jedwabne, 10 July 2001” (Fig. 7). The full truth about the pogrom, especially about its main perpetrators, has still to be set in the stone depicting the burnt doors of the barn in Jedwabne.



Fig. 7. The monument commemorating Jews murdered (burned) in Jedwabne by their Polish neighbours

Source: own archive (2018).

However, no information about the murder of almost the entire local Jewish population by Poles can be found in Wąsosz. The plaque placed on the mass grave of the pogrom victims there reads: “Here lie the ashes of 250 Jews, brutally murdered in June 1941. Honour to their memory” (Fig. 8). Despite the lack of courage to reveal the full truth about the course of the dramatic events (especially the ethnic affiliation of their perpetrators), there has been a slight progress regarding the lie visitors to this place were told to during the period of the People’s Republic of

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the Bulletin of the Jewish Historical Institute. A dozen or so years after the apogee of the discussion caused by *Neighbours*, books about the origins and course of collective terror in Podlasie and eastern Mazovia were written, among others, by Witold Mędykowski (*W cieniu gigantów. Pogromy Żydów 1941 r. w byłej sowieckiej strefie okupacyjnej. Kontekst historyczny, społeczny i kulturowy*, 2012) and Mirosław Tryczyk (*Miasta śmierci. Sąsiedzkie pogromy Żydów*, 2015).

Poland and even afterwards. Until 1995, when the old monument was removed by the locals, the plaque commemorating the site of the mass murder bore the following inscription: “Here lie the Jews murdered by the Fascists”<sup>10</sup>.



Fig. 8. A plaque on the monument commemorating the burial site of the Jewish victims of the pogrom in Wąsosz

Source: own archive (2018).

Neither has Radziłów become a site of memory for the massacre of 600 Jewish inhabitants by Polish Christians. The monument commemorating their martyrdom still bears an inscription: “In August of 1941, fascists murdered 800 people of Jewish nationality, they burnt 500 of these people in a barn. Honour to their memory” (Fig. 8). In a desperate move triggered by the unchanging position of relevant authorities regarding the information placed on the plaque, in 2011, representatives of the Warsaw Jewish Religious Community set up a plastic plaque of their own authorship to restore the truth about the perpetrators, date and course of the events in Radziłów. The inscription left by this delegation, removed shortly afterwards and replaced with a quotation from John Paul II, stated, among other things, that in this town “from 7 to 9 July 1941 ... about eight hundred Jewish residents were murdered, about five hundred of whom were burned alive in a barn”<sup>11</sup>. The information also left no doubt as to the ethnic and territorial origin of the perpetrators: “The crime was committed by their Polish brothers – neighbours”<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> From the *Guide to the commemorated sites of fighting and martyrdom; the years of war 1939–1945*, published at the end of the People’s Republic of Poland (in 1988), one could learn about Wąsosz that “in August 1941, 250 Jews” were shot by Wehrmacht soldiers (Czubryt-Borkowski, 1988, p. 441).

<sup>11</sup> <https://sztetl.org.pl> [accessed on: 18.05.2018]

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*



Fig. 9. Monument dedicated to the Jews murdered in Radziłów by their Christian neighbours

Source: own archive (2018).

Its counterpart in Szczuczyn is not very far in terms of falsification from the inscription commemorating the Jewish victims in Radziłów. The monument, located on the outskirts of the town, still bears the erroneous information concerning the date of the pogrom, the ethnic origin of the perpetrators and the number of victims: “Here, in August 1941, Fascists ruthlessly murdered 600 Jewish people. Honour to their memory”.

The murder of young Jewish women in Bzury is slowly being brought back from the abyss of local non-memory. In July 2017, a group of people reached the scene of the pogrom, unable to reconcile with its further tabooing and a failure by competent authorities to attempt to mark it in space. They were led by a witness to those tragic events, eighty-year-old Wojciech P.<sup>13</sup> Earlier, in June, at the site of the murder Mirosław Tryczyk, philosopher and researcher, set up a grave and was joined by a representation of the House of Memory of the Elder Brothers in the Faith, an organisation co-founded by fr. Wojciech Lemański. On 10 July, through the initiative of a group of people involved in restoring the memory of the place where these dramatic events occurred, a glass plaque with a fragment of Psalm 85 (12) appeared: “Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, and righteousness looks down from heaven...” and the inscription: “Here rests the blessed memory of the Jewish women from Szczuczyn, murdered in the autumn of 1941. May their souls be able to participate in eternal life” (Fig. 10–11).

<sup>13</sup> The man, fearing the reaction of his local community, even though almost seventy years have passed since the tragic events, remains anonymous in order, as he says, “not to bring any misfortune upon himself” (Chołodowski, 2017).

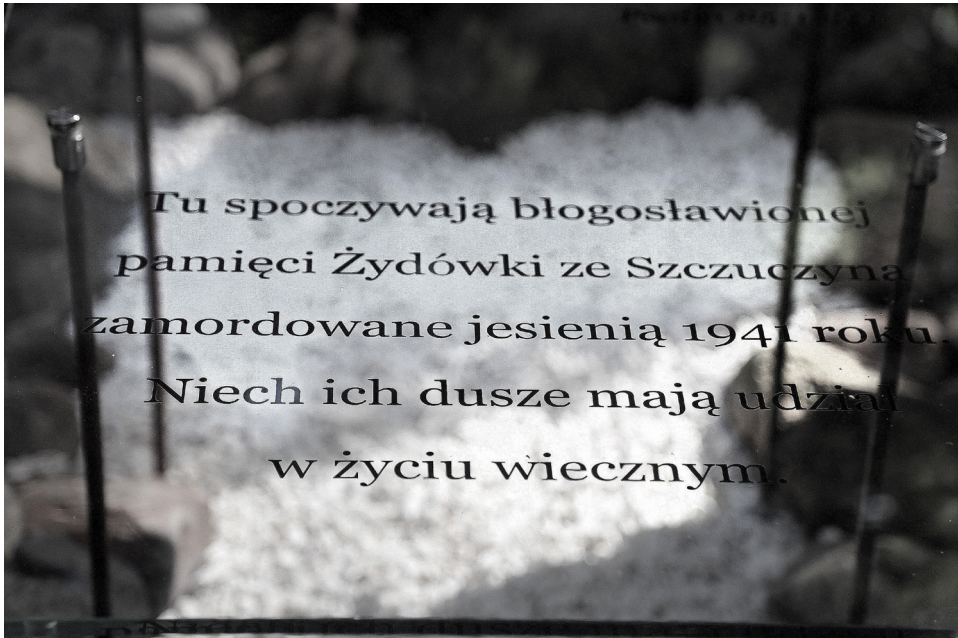


Fig. 10–11. Commemoration (for the first time) on 10 July 2017 of the helpless victims from Bzury at the place of their murder

Source: phot. by Agnieszka Sadowska / Agencja Gazeta.

When considering the issue of anti-Jewish violence from the point of view of places commemorating its victims and perpetrators, the power of the unequal relationship between the majority and the minority appears to be preserved and sanctioned by law. The dominant nation or, to put it differently, the majority of the Polish Nation (all Polish Citizens) imposes on a minority a narration convenient for the former group, using the privilege of deciding on the policies and activities of their subordinate state bodies, including local governments.

The reconstruction of the memory of these places, which could form the basis for the formation of local identity, is used to legitimise the political order established in the name of the national majority<sup>14</sup>.

### **3. THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CAUSES AND THE SPATIAL CONTEXT OF COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL ANTI-JEWISH VIOLENCE IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

Acts of anti-Jewish violence, many of which are still not commemorated in public space with at least the basic truth about their course, were progressing gradually, as was mentioned, along with the liberation of subsequent lands from Nazi occupation. “The massacres, especially common in the Lublin and Rzeszów voivodeships, are moving (...) – as pointed out by the Office for the Aid of the Jewish People<sup>15</sup> in April 1945 – to other voivodeships like Kielce and Łódź”<sup>16</sup>.

One of the main sources of anti-Semitic violence was the return of survivors to their pre-war homes. This natural reflex had many reasons, e.g. a longing for their family homes, the desire to regain their possessions, or to learn about the fates of their family members and other relatives. However, many of the returnees could not cross the threshold of their apartments as they had been taken over by their non-Jewish neighbours. A significant part of the assets belonging to the survivors fell into Polish hands even during the war, including items seized “for the most part” as a result of “robbery when transporting Jews to death camps” or given in

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<sup>14</sup> The main state body initiating and coordinating the works to commemorate historical events, places and figures in the history of the struggle and martyrdom of the Polish nation both domestically and abroad, as well as the sites of the struggle and martyrdom of other national groups on Polish territory between 1917 and 1990 is the Institute of National Memory (IPN) – Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation.

<sup>15</sup> The Agency, created through the decision of the Polish authorities on 8 August 1944 in Lublin, operated at the Cabinet of the Council of Ministers.

<sup>16</sup> AAN, Office of the Council of Ministers (URM), Executive Office (BP), ref. 5/17. The tenth report (for April 1945) on the activities of the Department for Jewish Aid at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

trust for safekeeping<sup>17</sup>. Faced with the impossibility of recovering stolen property, the Jews usually left their pre-war homes, very often forced to do so by local communities, to go to places where members of their families stayed or where larger Jewish communities formed. The hostile attitude towards the previous owners, manifested by the new, unlawful tenants, also created conflict situations. Those often became extremely dangerous, taking the form of ruthless attacks on Jews, some of which ended in fatalities (Gross, 2008, pp. 84–92; Skibińska, 2011, pp. 40–41, 63; Rykała, 2020, p. 45).

Kazimierz Wyka (1945) touched upon the poignant theme of Poles seizing their Jewish neighbours' property and the repercussions of this lawlessness for the survivors:

(...) we found a whole social stratum in the country – the newly born Polish bourgeoisie – which replaced the murdered Jews, often literally, and which, perhaps feeling the smell of blood on its fingers, hates Jews more than ever.

Anti-Jewish sentiments were intensifying against a backdrop of the cases of confiscation and looting of Jewish property, for which their rightful owners or their relatives returned. Those sentiments were strongly rooted in a system of mutual relations that lasted several hundred years, especially economic antagonism (inspired by anti-Semitic ideologues, largely derived from nationalist parties and the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church<sup>18</sup>) strengthened by the occupying forces' racist legislation, which excluded Jews not only from the Polish national community, but also from the human one. The Second World War did not contribute in the slightest to softening or discrediting Poles' prejudices against Jews. Anti-Jewish stereotypes proved permanent. They prevented any sympathy in the Polish society for the victims of the Shoah, and they prevented a sense of solidarity with them (Skibińska, 2011, pp. 40–41). Some Poles considered the “extermination of Jews” to be “quite natural”, which was a continuation of the “implanted” [during the occupation – author] values and concepts (Hurwic-Nowakowska, 1996, p. 140). The lives of the survivors after the war “meant in many spheres relieving the period of occupation”. They still “felt excluded, harassed, discriminated against, unwanted, and even hated.” (Skibińska, 2011, pp. 40–41, 69). The continuation of the actions of war-time murderers could be seen in the aforementioned looting of the property of the victims<sup>19</sup>. The killing of a Jew, in the opinion of many Poles, “did not have the significance of murder” (Keff,

<sup>17</sup> AAN, Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party (KC PPR), Secretariat, ref. 295/VII/149. A letter from an anonymous Jew sent by the Warsaw Provincial Committee to the Secretary General of the Central Committee (KC PPR), comrade Wiesław, 25 August 1946.

<sup>18</sup> More on the “experiences of the Catholic Church with Jews and the Holocaust” in J. Leociak, *Młyny boże. Zapiski o Kościele i Zagładzie*, Wołowiec 2018.

<sup>19</sup> In spite of the extremely difficult material situation of Jews, the myth of their inexhaustible wealth, which was an additional motivation for armed aggressions against them, kept reemerging.

2013, p. 200). Survivors of the Holocaust died “for no apparent reason, only because they were still considered outlawed” (Cała, 2000, p. 169).

Most of the murders occurred in small towns or villages. Combined with the escape of Jews who did not want to share the fate of the victims, these incidents led, especially in eastern Poland, to the disappearance of many Jewish communities (Rykała, 2018, p. 109; 2019, p. 412).

Terror from the Polish environment led, among other things, to the disappearance of Trzcianne, where 13 Jewish people (two families) were attacked on 15 April 1945, from the map of Jewish communities. The victims were then transported “on carts” about 2 km from Kałuszyn, where three bandits shot three members of the Żutkiewicz family: Ephraim (father, aged 45), Chaim (son, aged 16) and Golda (daughter, aged 9)<sup>20</sup>. Due to a “proclamation ... of the ‘Polish Anti-Communist Military Organisation’ ordering Jews to leave the settlement of Piaski within 7 days and threatening them with ‘appropriate’ measures, they [‘the few Jews scattered there’ – author] were forced to leave this town.”<sup>21</sup> “Having rushed to liquidate their personal affairs”, the whole Jewish community (of about 200 people) also left Parczew. This was a response to the terror committed in this town on 5 February 1946 by “a uniformed band of assailants (i.e. soldiers of the anti-communist underground), who murdered three local Jews.”<sup>22</sup>

Another reason for the terror was a positive response to the idea proclaimed by a part of the so-called independence underground to fight against “Judeo-Communism” – a stereotype (and conspiracy theory) that was alive throughout the inter-war period, and which was “defrosted” with varying degrees of intensity also during the occupation period (Gross, 2008, pp. 245–263, 268–296; Skibińska, 2011, pp. 66–68; Żbikowski, 2011, pp. 71–73, 79–87; Tokarska-Bakir, 2012, pp. 124–133; Keff, 2013, p. 200)<sup>23</sup>. The origins of the alleged association between Jews and communism lied in the involvement of a part of their political representation in the fulfilment of the idea of a world proletariat, which was to lead to the formation of a new social class, free from all forms of discrimination. A large and disadvantaged minority, additionally deprived of support from their so-called foreign homeland,

<sup>20</sup> AŻIH, CKŻP, CKS, ref. 303/XVIII/25. Information about an attack on Jews in Trzcianne.

<sup>21</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. The tenth report (for April 1945) on the activities of the Department for Jewish Aid at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

<sup>22</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Jews; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. A copy of the protocol drawn up on 8 February 1946 by WKŻ in Lublin; more on this murder in, e.g.: M. Bechta, *Pogrom czy odwet? Akcja zbrojna Zrzeszenia „Wolność i Niezawisłość” w Parczewie 5 lutego 1946 r.*, Warsaw 2015; see also a review of this book: A. Grabski, ‘Antysemicki pogrom jako kolejne polskie powstanie? Na marginesie pracy o pogromie w Parczewie w 1946 r.’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 2016, 2, pp. 550–557.

<sup>23</sup> More on the connections between Jews and this political and economic ideology, in, e.g.: Grabski (2004, 2007), Nalewajko-Kulikow (2009), Śpiewak (2012), Kendziorek (2016).

which other groups of this status could count on, was almost organically connected by many people with communism in the Second Republic of Poland. This happened despite it being a culturally and politically diverse community, largely composed of religious or socialist groups opposed to communism (such as Bund, striving for a national and cultural autonomy for Jews in their countries of residence), and persecuted by the system with particular ferocity. After the war, this stereotype was re-born as Jews were allowed to serve in the state administration for the first time in the history of Poland. Due to this social promotion, the affirmative attitude of a part of the Jewish community for the systemic changes in Poland was used (under the banner of fighting “Judeo-Communism”) by the anti-communist underground to initiate armed assaults against Jews. Accusations of widespread support for the authorities that lacked social legitimacy, combined with their alleged active participation in the creation of their structures, permeated the wider public. A fertile ground for this type of thinking was created even before the Second World War by the aggressive anti-Jewish activities and agitation of extreme nationalist groups, which were accompanied by a large part of Catholic clergy and press (Rykała, 2018, p. 110; 2020, pp. 54–56; Keff, 2013, p. 204; Kopciowski, 2007, p. 188).

Attacks on Jews were largely initiated by the heirs of the ideology of the nationalist camp, organised in the anti-communist underground. One of them, the National Armed Forces (NSZ), already during the war (in 1942) expressed its position on the dying nation and Poles showing courage to help it in a quite clear way: “Those who want to hide Jews among themselves should be stigmatised and declared traitors of the Polish cause. When every Pole knows that there is no place in the revived Poland, neither for the German nor for the Jew” (in: Grabowski, 2008, p. 88)<sup>24</sup>. Also some members of the post-Home Army underground saw Poland as free of Jews. The leaflet distributed by Freedom and Independence (WiN) contained such seemingly rhetorical questions: “Poles! Do you want the occupation of Poland to continue? (...) Do you want the Polish intelligentsia to be replaced by Jews? Do you want the Polish worker to be a slave to Soviet-Communist-Jewish authorities?” (in: Cała, Datner-Śpiewak, 1997, p. 36)<sup>25</sup>.

The Nationality Department of the Political Department of the Ministry of Public Administration (MAP) reported that from the beginning of October 1945 until the end of that year “38 Jews were killed by NSZ bandits (...)”<sup>26</sup> Apart from murder, other forms of terror were used to free the towns liberated from Nazis from Jewish people. In Radom, among others, in August 1945, “Anonymous members of the Home Army sent out threatening letters to Jews to leave the town and its surround-

<sup>24</sup> Extract from the text of “Propaganda Centralna”, an organ of the NSZ.

<sup>25</sup> The WiN leaflet was distributed in the run-up to the June referendum in 1946.

<sup>26</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Report of the MAP’s Political Department’s Nationality Department for the period: 1 October 1945 – 1 January 1946.



ings, which caused panic among the Jewish population (...)”<sup>27</sup> As a result of the departure of many people, the local Jewish Committee<sup>28</sup> “was dismantled”<sup>29</sup>.

Jews were relatively rarely killed for purely political reasons, i.e. in order to prevent them from taking positions in various ministries of communist power (especially power ministries) (Cała, 2000, pp. 167–180; Żbikowski, 2011, pp. 79–80; Bańkowska *et al.*, 2009, p. 356)<sup>30</sup>. The crimes motivated by a desire to crack down on individuals perpetuating the new system, were, as can be inferred, committed on specific individuals (Skibińska, 2007, p. 570; Żbikowski, 2011, pp. 79–80; see also: Engel, 1998). More often, when the purpose of violence was robbery or aversion to Jews motivated by the so-called traditional anti-Semitism, those serving the authorities were accidental casualties.

The fight against “Judeo-Communism” was for some of the anti-Communist underground a universal call to purge Polish territories of Jews, which would be enacted by murdering them or forcing them to emigrate. The sentiment was shared by the unlawful owners of Jewish property, guilty of crimes against the rightful owners. Thus, they gained an alibi for their conduct and apparently calmed their unclean consciences (Rykała, 2018, p. 111; 2020, p. 56)<sup>31</sup>.

Anti-Jewish violence was also committed by representatives of uniformed services (militia, Security Office, Polish Army), obliged to prevent it. In February 1945, the Office for Aid to the Jewish Population reported that in Dęblin “the police (...) not only does not take part in defending Jews against the attacks that take place, but on the contrary, it itself plays an active part in persecuting the Jewish population.”<sup>32</sup> A month earlier, the commander of the local police denied pre-war Jewish residents of the town the right to stay there as they returned from the camp in Częstochowa citing the lack of an appropriate “permit from Lublin.”<sup>33</sup> In Rzeszów, during a “staged «ritual murder»”, the police beat up numerous arrested

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<sup>27</sup> AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/I/7. Minutes of the meeting of the CKŻP Plenary, held on 14 August 1945.

<sup>28</sup> Jewish Committees (provincial, district and municipal) were field branches of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland, established on 29 October 1944 – the largest organisation of Holocaust survivors, having almost exclusive rights to represent them in relations with the Polish government and the so-called foreigners.

<sup>29</sup> AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/I/9. Minutes of the meeting of the CKŻP Plenary, held on 31 August 1945.

<sup>30</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews.

<sup>31</sup> “There were incidents where the bandits [‘NSZ’ – author] massacred and robbed Jews and ordered them to leave their homes within 24 hours. In one case, after the murder of Jews, some of the inhabitants robbed their apartments”. AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Report of the MAP’s Political Department’s Nationality Department for the period: 1 October 1945 – 1 January 1946.

<sup>32</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17, Eighth Report (for February 1945) of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population for Edward Osóbka-Morawski, Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland.

<sup>33</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. Report of the CKŻP sent on 30 January 1945 to the Voivodship Office in Lublin by WN DP MAP.

Jewish residents, while the Railway Protection Service ordered the imprisonment of those who sought refuge in Krakow and Tarnów<sup>34</sup> in order to avoid aggression from the inhabitants of Rzeszów. In the same month, police officers in Starachowice demonstrated complete indifference to an act of anti-Jewish terror. Despite the sounds of gunshots fired during an attack on an apartment where eight Jews were staying (two died as a result of the attack) they did not intervene<sup>35</sup>. In Bytom “Public Security Officers from Chorzów were conducting personal searches [among Jewish residents – author] in the street and at the gates in broad daylight, taking away whatever they had.”<sup>36</sup> Strong anti-Semitic prejudices among the officers of the power ministries, especially at lower levels, reflecting the attitude towards the Jewish population of the general Polish society, strengthened the conviction about the participation in the alleged plans of “Judeo-Communism” to seize power in Poland (Żbikowski, 2006, p. 243). Such a conviction was shared, among others, by a member of the Provincial Committee of the Polish Workers’ Party (KW PPR) in Legnica, who stated that “Jews will have to leave Poland because their presence in the country makes it difficult to fight the reaction.”<sup>37</sup>

In the services established to ensure order and security, and at the same time responsible in a particular way for the consolidation of the new system, the ideological heirs of the nationalist camp, including those burdened with crimes committed against Jews during the war, and even former police officers of the Polish General Government, often found refuge (Skibińska, 2007, p. 573; Tokarska-Bakir, 2018b, pp. 4–6; 2018, pp. 321–405, 409–413)<sup>38</sup>. For example, the police commander in Zwoleń, who had a negative attitude towards Jews, used to be the “vice-presi-

<sup>34</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. The twelfth report (for June 1945) on the activities of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/I/7. Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the CKŻP held on 19 June 1945; Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the CKŻP held on 29 June 1945.

<sup>35</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. The twelfth report (for June 1945) on the activities of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

<sup>36</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. Copy of a letter from WKŻ in Katowice sent on 18 December 1945 to the Provincial Public Security Office concerning acts of anti-Semitism in the Śląsko-Dąbrowskie Province.

<sup>37</sup> AAN, KC PPR, Secretariat, ref. 295/VII/149. J. Gitler-Barski’s letter to CK PPR about plans of Jewish settlement in Lower Silesia, 12 September 1945.

<sup>38</sup> More about the participation of the officers of the power ministries in post-war anti-Jewish violence in the context of the analysis of social conditions of the causes of the Kielce pogrom in the Polish capital: J. Tokarska-Bakir, 2018a. Although this largest act of anti-Semitic crime after the war, which occurred on 4 July 1946, exceeds the scope of the deliberations undertaken in this article, it is worth mentioning that in Kielce, the only group that did not have its representatives in the Provincial Command of the MO were Jews. However, police (MO) members included, among others, officers of the Home Army, Peasant Battalions (BCh), NSZ, “Blue Policemen”, Volksdeutsche, Gestapo agents, Schutz- and Hilfspolizei officers [operating in the Third Reich and the General Government, respectively, as Preventive Police and Auxiliary Police – author], and even a pretty high-ranking *shmaltsovník* (Tokarska-Bakir, 2018, pp. 4–6).

dent of the local National Democracy” before the war, known for its anti-Semitic views<sup>39</sup>, while in one of the communes in the Jasło district, an officer of the MO was a former Blue Police member “who caught (...) the hiding Jews on his own and liquidated them, stealing their property.”<sup>40</sup>

The participation of the representatives of power ministries in the violence against the Jewish population contradicted the common belief that Jews were in a privileged position in the new system and that they dominated positions in the power apparatus<sup>41</sup>. This is also confirmed by examples of negative attitude to this minority among local administration officials of all levels (Adelson, 1993, p. 402; Pisarski, 1997, p. 30; Gross, pp. 70–77; J. Tokarska-Bakir, 2012, pp. 133–141). This was most often expressed in the multitude of difficulties in granting apartments (which in many cases were owned by people who applied for them) and the reluctance to employ them in state offices and enterprises. Jews who returned in February 1945 to Dęblin (the Irena district to be precise) and who applied for the allocation of apartments were refused residence permits by the local authorities and the police, who indicated three other towns which were the only ones able to accept them (Lublin, Włodawa, and Żelechów)<sup>42</sup>. At the same time in Krzczonów there were frequent “street round-ups for work only for Jews”<sup>43</sup>. In Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski, the chairman of the City Council regularly refused to accept a delegation of representatives of the local Jewish community, and their applications were usually dismissed. He even went as far as not to give Jews, who were in an extremely difficult material or psychological situation, bread rations for December 1945, although at the same time he did not deny the inhabitants of Polish nationality such an allocation<sup>44</sup>. The rationing vouchers also became a sign of

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<sup>39</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. Eighth Report (for February 1945) of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population for Edward Osóbka-Morawski, Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland.

<sup>40</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Copies of reports of some murders and robberies conducted against the Polish Jewish population.

<sup>41</sup> The fact that Jews or people of Jewish descent (after all, it is a matter of self-determination) joined the UB [the secret police], MO [regular police] and the army resulted from various, often complex motivations. The need to oppose forces hostile to the new political order as an expression of an acceptance of the political changes taking place in Poland was one of them. The survivors were also pushed to work in law enforcement by a sense of threat from the non-Jewish environment. In addition to a kind of shelter, these services provided an opportunity to influence the course of events in the country and facilitated access to legal weapons, useful in the face of attacks. Among the reasons for joining the ranks of these services, one cannot exclude the natural desire for exacting a reckoning on those guilty of humiliation, harm and crime, or even to bring about some form of compensation or revenge (Ski-bińska, 2007, p. 572; see also: Kainer, 1983; Kersten, 1992, 1993; Paczkowski, 2001; Libionka, 2006).

<sup>42</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17, Eighth Report (for February 1945) of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population for Edward Osóbka-Morawski, the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

discrimination against the Jewish community in Łuków. The head of the local food supply department did not agree to distributing category I food vouchers to Holocaust survivors because of their alleged reluctance to work<sup>45</sup>.

Then, “in Jędrzejów, the starost (...) refuses all Jewish affairs, as in Chęciny and Chmielnik. In Ostrowiec, the National Municipal Council demanded [from the local Jewish committee – author] to send all Jews to work in the mine.”<sup>46</sup> The starost of Radom was “hostile towards citizens of Jewish nationality”. He consistently refused to receive their delegation, which was concerned about the dissemination of leaflets with anti-Semitic sentiments in places under his administrative authority<sup>47</sup>. In Tarnów, the Municipal Council collected tax arrears from Jewish residents “from the time of the German occupation, i.e. from the time when the above-mentioned people were in German concentration camps and their property was under German administration.”<sup>48</sup> The ruthless behaviour of local government officials and public security officials was often accompanied by verbal aggression and incitement to relocate<sup>49</sup>.

In their attempt to achieve justice, Jews could rarely count on the authorities obliged to ensure it. During criminal proceedings against Polish citizens accused of crimes against the Jewish minority (both during and after the war) the testimonies of Jewish victims and witnesses were often ridiculed and deprecated. Such an attitude only increased their alienation and confirmed their conviction about the lack of proper support from the state apparatus (Skibińska, 2011, p. 65). The fear of the Jewish population of the scale of the murders was intensified by the impunity of the perpetrators.

Jews were murdered for being Jewish, and for serving in the new authorities; the fact of seizing Jewish property and the intention to prevent survivors from regaining their property were not the only reasons for anti-Jewish violence. Religious superstitions, in particular legends of ritual murders, were an inexhaustible source of prejudice. The medieval version (in which the blood of a murdered non-Jew was to be used to make matzah) was joined after the war by its “modernised” – as A. Żbikowski (2011, p. 72) has noted – variant: the blood of Christian children was to be used for transfusions for Jews exhausted by the war.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787, Letter from the Director of the Political Department of MAP to the Provincial Office in Kielce, 25 June 1945.

<sup>47</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. Letter from the Director of the Political Department of MAP to the Provincial Office in Kielce of 30 October 1945, concerning the hostile attitude of the Radom starost towards the Jewish population; Statement of the Radom starost’s secretariat, dated 21 January 1946; Statement of Seweryn Kahane, President of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Kielce, and M. Bojm, President of the Regional Jewish Committee in Radom, dated 21 January 1946.

<sup>48</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787, a copy of the letter of the District Jewish Committee in Tarnów to the CKŻP on the activities of the Housing and Construction Commission and the army, dated 13 November 1945.

<sup>49</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Letter from the Political Department of the MAP to seven voivodes, dated 21 March 1945; AZIH, CKŻP, Organizational Department (WO), ref. 15. Those wanting to settle were threatened by unidentified groups with underground names.

The use of the legend of a ritual crime (allegedly committed on a little girl) was the basis of one of the first post-war acts of collective violence, which occurred on 12 June 1945 in Rzeszów. The aggression of the crowd directed towards the Jewish population, as well as mass arrests, forced a vast majority of approximately 1,000 local Jews to leave<sup>50</sup>.

#### **4. SELECTED ACTS OF COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL MURDERS COMMITTED AGAINST HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS IN THE FIRST MONTHS AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR**

Even before the end of the war, in March 1945, 117 Jews were attacked in the areas liberated from Nazi occupation: 21 in the Białystok Voivodeship, 33 in the Lublin Voivodeship, 35 in the Warsaw Voivodeship, 23 in the Rzeszów Voivodeship, and 5 in the Kielce Voivodeship. As a result of these acts of banditry, 108 people were killed and 9 wounded. In April of that year, even though the number of assaults decreased (to 11), 32 people were murdered and 7 wounded<sup>51</sup>. In May, the month when the war ended, there were two assaults and as many deaths in Lublin, while in Łódź there was a mugging and eight fatalities<sup>52</sup>. In the opinion of the director of the Political Department of MAP, expressed in March 1945, “accidents of harassment and even murder” led to “an outstanding deterioration of moods among the Jewish population, pessimism and distrust towards the authorities”<sup>53</sup>.

On 11 February 1945, after Nazi troops withdrew, a family of three was murdered in the village of Rozalin near Baranów (Fig. 12). The same number of Jews

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<sup>50</sup> AŻIH, CKŻP, WO, ref. 34; AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. The twelfth report (for June 1945) on the activities of the Office for Aid for Jewish Population at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/I/7. Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the CKŻP held on 19 June 1945; Minutes of the meeting of the Presidium of the CKŻP held on 29 June 1945.

<sup>51</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Letter of the head of the Social and Political Department of MAP to the Ministry of Public Security, dated 29 September 1945, concerning murders and robberies committed against Polish citizens of Jewish nationality. In the Kielce Voivodeship, in the penultimate month of the war, there were 5 attacks on Jews (18 people were killed and 4 wounded), in the Lublin and Warsaw Voivodeships – 2 each (8 killed in the first one, 4 wounded in the second), while in the Rzeszów (Lviv) and Kraków Voivodeships – 1 each (1 wounded, 2 murdered, respectively). It should be specified that, for example, out of the two attacks in the Warsaw Voivodeship, one was a mugging. Apart from those killed and wounded in the Warsaw Voivodeship, 2 people were abducted and probably murdered.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* According to the findings of the Political Department of MAP, which do not cover all acts of anti-Jewish violence, between April and August, a total of 31 attacks were conducted, in which 81 Jews were killed, 13 wounded and 2 were abducted.

<sup>53</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786, Letter from the Political Department of MAP to seven Voivodes, dated 21 March 1945.

were killed on April 6 of the same year in Kosowo Podlaskie. The murder victims were: Hersz Siedlecki (30), Icek Majdenberg (22), and Gita Jabłkowska (20). Rojza Flam (26) and Lejb Makowski (35) were gravely wounded, while Szloma Wajnstein (34) and Sura Fajgenbaum (54) were abducted<sup>54</sup>.

In the same month, five Jews were murdered in Połaniec near Staszów and as many in Klimontów (in the Sandomierz district). The Połaniec murder, which occurred on 9 April, claimed the lives of two ten-year-old sons of Chuna Berger, Herszl Berger, his sister and sister-in-law. The wounded were: Chuna, his niece, and Berek Berger, his nephew. In Przedbórz, eight people were killed in an anti-Semitic attack on 27 May 1945<sup>55</sup>.

In June, the first month with no warfare activities, 2 people were murdered in Częstochowa (on the 1st), with as many killed in Lublin (9th) and Starachowice (14th). The murder of three people of Jewish descent (with at least 50 people injured and severely beaten) occurred in Działoszyce (on the night of 16 June). The next three are the balance of murders committed by Polish citizens in Przemyśl (18th).

Also three victims were killed in anti-Jewish terror acts in Sanok, which occurred on 12 August. On the 25th of the same month, four Jews were murdered in Skaryszew.

The murder of five Jews in Raciąż on 13 August 1945 was definitely a ruthless act of violence, which, like other, not only frightened those returning to their hometowns, but also made them doubt the prospect of rebuilding their lives in Poland. During two days (16–17 December), one and two, respectively, Jewish citizens died at the hands of Polish citizens (including a Polish Army sergeant) in Bytom<sup>56</sup>.

“It happened in Tarnogród in Biłgoraj County.” On 20 December 1945 Chaim Fainer (Szloma’s father, who lived in Wrocław), while travelling to Biłgoraj, his hometown, visited a Jewish family in Tarnogród, where he wanted to spend the night. In the apartment, there were Pesa Wachmacher (35), her 9-month-old child and Symcha Sztatfeld, who, according to the testimony of Ojzer Wachmacher, Pesa’s husband, left the apartment at that time because of the suspicious behaving Roch Botek, a non-Jew. The call “Where are the Jews here?” forced Wachmacher’s neighbour, Ostrowski, to let in the intruders, who proceeded to kill all the Jews present there: Chaim Fainer, Pesa Wachmacher (35) and her nine-month-old child<sup>57</sup>.

<sup>54</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786, Copies of reports of some murders and robberies conducted against the Polish Jewish population.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786, Copies of the reports of some murders and robberies carried out on the Polish Jewish population; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. A copy of a letter from WKŻ in Katowice sent on 18 December 1945 to the Provincial Public Security Office concerning acts of anti-Semitism in the Śląsko-Dąbrowskie Province.

<sup>57</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. A report drawn up by an official of the CKŻP N. Blumenkwajg, 28 January 1946, based on the testimony of Szloma Fajner. At the Provincial Security Headquarters,

As the months since the end of the war passed, the wave of anti-Semitic violence was not receding. A new wave was triggered by the repatriation of Polish citizens from the USSR. On its brink, in February 1946, there were, among others, murders of three Jews in Myszków<sup>58</sup>, and the same number in the already mentioned Parczew<sup>59</sup>.

The latter town was surrounded on the 5<sup>th</sup> of that month by uniformed “assailants in the strength of 100 to 120 men”. Armed with firearms, the “gang went wild with impunity” for 5 hours. The partisans of the anti-communist underground slaughtered “defenceless Polish citizens, of Jewish nationality”: Mendel Turbiner (31), Abram Zysman (43), Dawid Tempy (42); Lejb Frajberger was wounded. Jewish property did not escape the attention of the attackers. Most of the houses were plundered, and items from them were placed on horse wagons and taken away. “In a number of cases where Jewish property did not represent a business opportunity for the attackers, it was destroyed so that it lost any value.”<sup>60</sup> As a result of this tragic event and the lack of proper reaction from the authorities responsible for their safety, the local Jewish community (about 200 people), “having quickly liquidated their personal affairs, left the town.”<sup>61</sup>

There were also individual murders, e.g. in Żarnów (on the night of 10 June 1945), Lublin (17 August), Tokarnia near Chęciny (in August), Bydgoszcz (in September), and Zabrze (19 January 1946)<sup>62</sup>.

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Pesa Wachmacher’s husband and Sztatfeld reported Botek and Ostrowski as the perpetrators of this deed. Five weeks after the crime, not only no investigation was started, but also a municipal official addressed “the last Jew of this town ... with a request to sign a report that the case for the above murder was discontinued due to lack of evidence.”

<sup>58</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. Announcement of WKŻ in Katowice (for CKŻP) on the murders of Jews in Gliwice and Myszków, 4 February 1946.

<sup>59</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Copy of the minutes drawn up by WKŻ in Lublin, 8 February 1946, concerning the events in Parczew.

<sup>60</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787, The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Copy of the minutes drawn up by WKŻ in Lublin, 8 February 1946, concerning the events in Parczew; more on this murder in, e.g.: M. Bechta, *Pogrom czy odwet? Akcja zbrojna Zrzeszenia „Wolność i Niezawisłość” w Parczewie 5 lutego 1946 r.*, Warsaw, 2015; also see a review of this book: A. Grabski, ‘Antysemicki pogrom jako kolejne polskie powstanie? Na marginesie pracy o pogromie w Parczewie w 1946 r.’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 2016, 2, pp. 550–557.

<sup>61</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews. A. Żbikowski (2006) placed Jews who served in the Volunteer Reserve of Citizens’ Militia (ORMO, a paramilitary organization supporting the police) who died in Parczew at the hands of the WiN unit, among accidental casualties. The attack was supposedly organised for primarily ideological reasons (disagreement with the new order) and mugging.

<sup>62</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Copies of the reports of some murders and robberies conducted against the Polish Jewish population; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. A copy of the report of 23 January 1946 on the murder of a person of Jewish nationality in Zabrze, the state of the investigation, the behaviour of Polish society, the position of municipal and party authorities and the course of the funeral; AAN, KC PPR, Secretariat, ref. 295/VII/149.

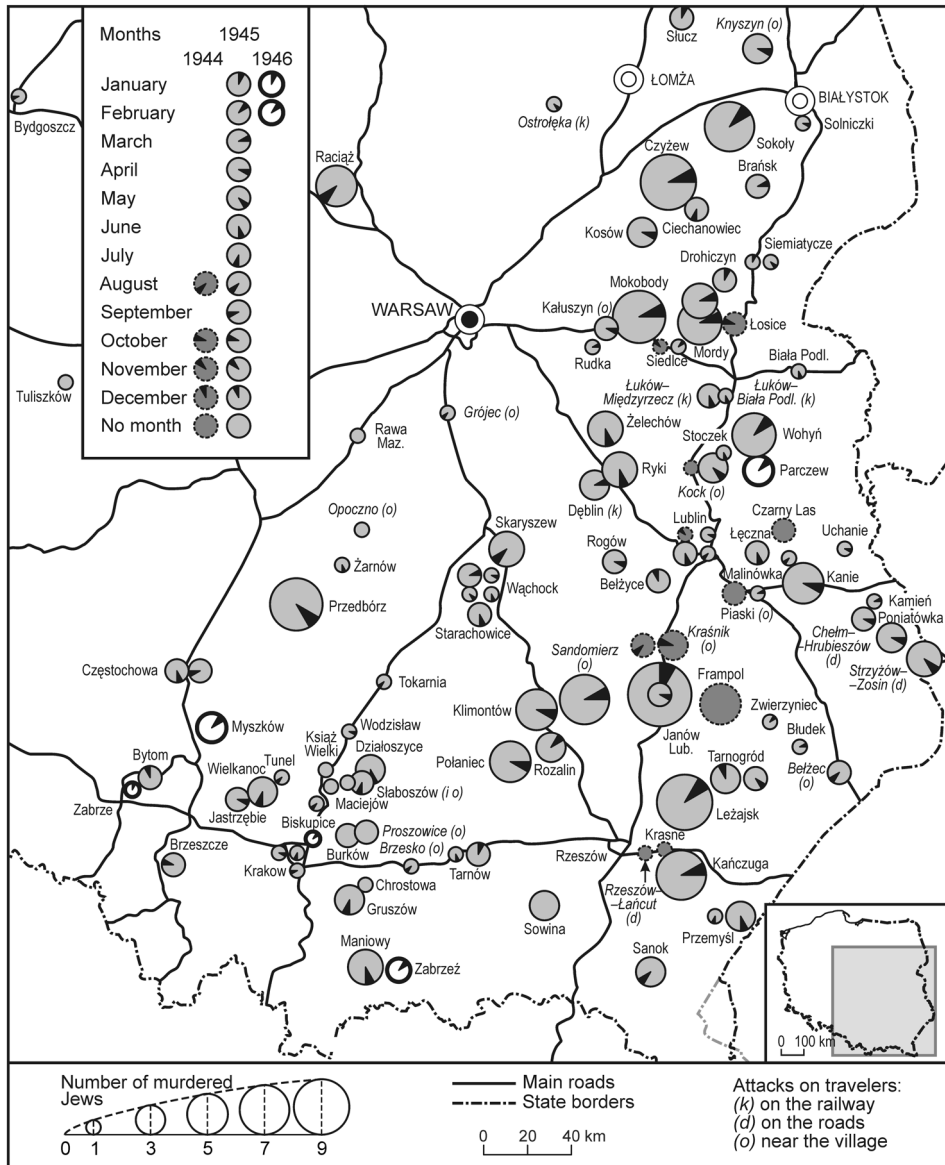


Fig. 12. Selected sites of murders committed by the Polish majority on Jews between late October 1944 and early February 1946

Source: own work based on AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786, 787, 788; AAN, KC PPR, Secretariat, ref. 295/VII/149; AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17; AŻIH, CKŻP, PiS, 303/1/11; Cała, Datner, 1997; Engel, 1998; Żbikowski, 2006, 2011; Skibińska, 2007, 2011; Kopciowski, 2007; Gross, 2008; Bańkowska *et al.*, 2009; Kwiek, 2013; Cała, 2014; Rykała and Wosiak, 2019.



Acts of terror directed at Holocaust survivors also occurred outside dense settlements, often during the so-called “train actions,” conducted by various groups of the armed anti-communist underground. For example, on 30 June 1945, Jakub Magliński and Rywka Staretz were murdered on a train travelling from Łuków to Międzyrzecz, while on 22 August, 4 km from Belzec, the seat of the recent death camp, 2 people were shot dead and 2 wounded<sup>63</sup>.

“The suppression of German fascism has not yet brought the Polish Jewry the desired peace,” the local Provincial Jewish Committee (WKŻ) reported in its memorial devoted to the safety of the Lublin region’s Jews<sup>64</sup>. “The Jews who came out of the bunkers, out of the forests, (...) returned from the camps, from exile or emigration, in many cases met with hostile attitudes on the part of Polish society”<sup>65</sup>. Deprived of a sense of security due to such an attitude of the national majority, they strived “to cross the border illegally, creating on the other side [in Germany – author], to the amazement of the world, numerous groups of fugitives from Poland”<sup>66</sup>.

Violence was also experienced by Jews coming to Poland from the USSR as part of organised, legal repatriation (Fig. 13) who, holding Polish citizenship until 17 September 1939, lived permanently in the lands seized by the Soviet Union (the so-called Eastern Borderlands) and stayed in the central and eastern parts of the Soviet Union (between February and June 1946, 120,579 Jews returned) (*Zarys...*, 1947, p. 13; Grynberg, 1986, p. 20; Rosner, 2018, pp. 27–29)<sup>67</sup>.

Although the problem of the attitude of the Polish society towards Jewish repatriates exceeds the temporal scope of this analysis, it is worth mentioning that the violence they suffered varied in terms of intensity: from mockery, through harassment and humiliation, to murder. The return to the country occurred in a period of an atmosphere which was described as “pogrom” in the documentation prepared at the time by the Central Committee of Jews in Poland (CKŻP), the largest organisation representing this community (Skibińska, 2011, p. 52).

On 2 February 1946, at the threshold of formal repatriation, which is the end date of this analysis, Zelig Weisberg, a repatriate from the East, was murdered.

(...) around 7 pm, the apartment (...) where Kagan Szloma and his 11-year-old son Mojżesz, Kamieniecki Szmul and Weisberg Zelig resided and were present, was broken into by two unknown men (...) in civilian clothes. (...) they searched those present, insulting them and shouting “rotten Jews, what did you come to Poland for” etc., beating and torturing them. (...) After searching the whole apartment, the bandits began to terrorise Weisberg Z., demanding money and valuables from him. When he answered that they had already taken

<sup>63</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. Copies of the reports of some murders and robberies conducted against the Polish Jewish population.

<sup>64</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> AŻIH, CKŻP, Department of Records and Statistics (WEiS), Ref. 474, 502, 507.

everything he had (...) the older of the bandits fired at Weisberg 6 times, shooting him dead on the spot. Seeing that a similar end awaits the others, they started screaming and making noise. The bandits got scared and ran away (...)<sup>68</sup>.



Fig. 13. Jewish repatriates from the USSR in Bielawa in 1946

Source: the collection of E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

The “covert murders and organised attacks of armed gangs”<sup>69</sup> compelled Jews to emigrate: internally – from small towns (with or without a small group of survivors) to larger ones, more secure and thus creating the prospect of achieving relative stability, and externally – outside Poland, continuously since the withdrawal of the occupying Nazi forces (Rykała, 2007, pp. 24, 26). In March 1946, i.e. in the initial phase of legal returns from the Soviet Union, WKŻ in Lublin reported:

The mood of panic among Jews is growing and it is spreading in ever larger circles. Their system of nervous sensitivity, impaired in the years of German hell, during the period of crematoria and gas chambers, causes those Jews who had a basis for existence in the country, based on sound economic and social principles, to abandon their homes and workshops to find themselves outside the area affected by the plague of anti-Semitism<sup>70</sup>.

<sup>68</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786. A copy of a letter from the Jewish Committee in Gliwice to the CKŻP, dated 7 February 1946, concerning the murder of Weisberg Zelig.

<sup>69</sup> AAN, URM, BP, ref. 5/17. The tenth report (for April 1945) on the activities of the Department for Jewish Aid at the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare; AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 786.

<sup>70</sup> AAN, MAP, DP, WN, ref. 787. The memorial of the Provincial Jewish Committee in Lublin of 23 March 1946 concerning the safety of life and property of Polish Jews.

## 5. SITES OF NON-MEMORY, NON-SITES OF MEMORY

Referring to the estimations of researchers (especially J. Adelson, D. Engel, A. Skibińska, A. Żbikowski, A. Cała, J. T. Gross, A. Bańkowska, A. Jarzębowska, and M. Siek.), when making one's own analysis of cases of murders of Jews, it should be assumed that between 1944 and 1947 at least 1,000 people of Jewish nationality, of all age and gender, lost their lives in this way. It is possible that in 1945 alone, 353 Holocaust survivors died at the hands of Poles (Kopciowski, 2007, p. 205; Skibińska, 2007, p. 568; Żbikowski, 2011, p. 91)<sup>71</sup>. The total number of fatal incidents, in many cases collective murders, oscillated between 200 and 300 (Żbikowski, 2011, p. 93; Skibińska, 2011, pp. 64–65; Cała, 2014, p. 17; Grabski, 2002, p. 73). The vast majority of anti-Jewish events happened in the eastern, south-eastern and central Poland.

Under the influence of these treacherous murders and organised attacks, serving as a continuation of anti-Jewish violence dating back to at least the 1930s and reinforced by the occupation's legal system and Hitler's mass anti-Semitic propaganda, an ethnic cleansing was taking place in Poland, as A. Cała (2014, p. 27) claimed. It was "initiated by the deportations conducted by the Nazis, and it concluded with the expulsion of Jews from Poland in 1968" (Cała, 2014, p. 27). Although the postponement of the completion of ethnic cleansing for many years after the war may be controversial, given the different situation of the Jewish population during this global conflict and more than two decades after its end, there is no doubt that under the influence of the brutal state anti-Semitic campaign, which was absorbed by a part of the population and with indifference of the rest, at least 12,000 Jews were forced to leave the country, which led to a radical reduction (by nearly a half) of this minority in Poland<sup>72</sup>.

There have been only few commemorations in public space of the numerous cases of post-war violence against Jews. The establishment of a site of memory<sup>73</sup> usually happened in relation to those crimes that had the largest number of victims, occurred in large cities, were precisely located and, due to this baggage of characteristics, have been academically described (such as the pogroms

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<sup>71</sup> In the Lublin region, between the summer of 1944 and September 1946, 118 Jews were murdered, sometimes in combat, in 30 separate incidents (Kopciowski, 2007, p. 205).

<sup>72</sup> After the so-called March emigration wave in 1971 decreased, about 13,500 Jews remained in Poland (Rykała, 2007, p. 209).

<sup>73</sup> Site of memory – a term combining place and memory – is expressed both topographically and symbolically. According to M. Delaperrière (2013, p. 49), it means both a specific topographical point and all material and non-material signs and traces recalling the past in collective memory. In this first sense, a site of memory includes, among others: monuments, commemorative plaques, historical buildings, relics, ruins, museums, and cemeteries. Another way of expressing these places (material and non-material signs and traces) involves the aforementioned symbolic (metaphorical) meaning. Due to the stigma of death or suffering they also remain the places where one is remembered ("sites of recollection").

in Krakow in August 1945 or in Kielce in July 1946). It should be assumed that these at least 200 sites of crimes against Holocaust survivors – the reference to an approximate number shows that a clear figure is impossible to arrive at at this early stage of research – will never be remembered in any form<sup>74</sup>. Topographically speaking, marking the information about acts of terror and their victims seems impossible because of the difficulty in identifying the location of many such incidents. After the war, the areas where they occurred underwent significant changes in development. As a result, not only has the possibility of spatial identification of the traces of crime scenes diminished, but that also applies to the possibility of introducing any elements commemorating it. Potential obstacles include the state of ownership, the type and form of use, and, above all, the willingness of the users to co-exist with these elements. Outside cities, the places in question had a topographical attachment within village boundaries, next to urbanised areas – also on meadows and in forests. Sometimes, they are distinguished in the landscape by some anthropogenic constructions, but there is usually nothing that marks such places: they interfere with buildings, and they are covered with clumps of grasses, bushes and hills.

The form of public commemoration is usually reserved for figures, events and deeds that have a special, momentous dimension for the formation of various spheres of life of such public status. In the system of mutual Polish-Jewish references in the post-war period, the Kielce pogrom gained such a rank – as the largest act of anti-Semitic violence after the Holocaust, which resulted in the emigration of Jews from Poland on an unprecedented scale and, as a consequence, a radical decrease of their share in the general population. This event has become a symbol of Polish prejudice, exclusion, harassment, discrimination, aversion and even hostility towards Jews. In this sense, Kielce, just like Jedwabne for the Second World War period, became a concept and a sign expressing not only this particular town, but a conventional representation of several dozen, several hundred places where Jews were murdered by Poles.

In the possible pursuit of topographical marking of acts of terror, it is also worth considering all those people of non-Jewish origin whose lives were interrupted in similar or other circumstances, although not because of their ethnic (religious) affiliation, and who have not received any form of commemoration. At the root of the problem, however, lies not the rivalry for priority in suffering between Poles and Jews (after all, the latter, despite being aware of their ethnic origin, often identified themselves with Polishness, and their sense of national affinity was subject to gradation), but the will to spark reflection on the salvation of the individualism of all victims, regardless of their descent. In the case of Jews, however, it is a community which, as a result of the Shoah and the consequent emigration, became one

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<sup>74</sup> Commemoration is opposed to forgetting. Thus, one can point to sites of forgetting, which are topographical anchor point only for a few individuals (who are the only ones that distinguish such points in the landscape, know their character, and sometimes discuss them).

of the least numerous minorities in Poland, and was therefore deprived of a significant power to record in public space the locations of heroic deeds or suffering, or to revitalise already existing markings. In view of the inertia of the relevant state authorities, the effort to achieve this goal, often treated as a kind of moral obligation, has thus largely rested with the representatives of the Jewish community, as well as people ethnically unrelated to it but involved in many ways in nurturing the heritage of Polish Jews, who perceive their Jewish compatriots as an integral part of Polish history, even a component of Polish national identity<sup>75</sup>.

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<sup>75</sup> The care to restore the memory of places (or larger fragments of space) marked by heroic or traumatic events also consists in preventing the covering, often done as a gesture of commemoration, by another presence. Such efforts are being made, for example, in relation to the area of the former Warsaw Ghetto, as attempts are being made to deprive the site of its significance by implementing a plan to build a monument to the Righteous Among the Nations, honouring Poles who rescued Jews during the Second World War, to be erected next to the Museum of the History of Polish Jews and the Monument of the Ghetto Heroes. The defenders of the inviolability of the memory (and its signs) of the “burnt-out” ghetto space – more and more strongly, thanks to the work of many academic institutions and social organisations, which is recorded both in the imaginary topography and in the form of signs symbolising the dramatic events of the uprising, include the participants of the uprising in the closed district, representatives of Polish Jews, and researchers of Jewish issues. The protesters, while honouring and expressing gratitude to the Polish Righteous, strongly support the idea of erecting a statue to the rescuers, especially since many of them remained anonymous, having to hide from their Polish neighbours because of their unprecedented bravery. Opponents of the deconstruction of this peculiar topography of emptiness in the cultural landscape, driven by a special kind of obligation towards thousands of victims who lived and suffered on this piece of land, who were subjected to unimaginable violations of their dignity, and who, eventually, perished, have made appeals and sent letters to relevant institutions. In 2015, an open letter to the presidents of Poland and Warsaw was sent by Pnina Grynszpan Frymer and Simcha Rotem Ratajzer (pseud. Kazik), who both participated in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. They wrote: “We cannot (...) comprehend why this monument should stand in a place where hundreds of thousands of people have died alone, without help, in the vicinity of the monument, which is their symbolic tombstone, a site of memory. (...) We ask you to preserve for them this piece of the former ghetto, to respect the feelings of those who feel they are guardians of their memory. (...) Warsaw is huge. There are certainly many worthy places in Warsaw to remember the Righteous. We solemnly ask for it (*Pomnikowi...*)” Other open letters, initiating a discussion around the monument, emphasised that “The monument of gratitude to people who saved Jews is to stand among the ashes of those who were not helped and whom no one wanted to help. The fate of the Jews who died in extreme solitude will be lost in this.” (Janicka *et al.*, 2014, p. 39). “This symbol [the monument to the Righteous – author] takes away the voice of thousands of existing Jewish testimonies and even more of those that have not been recorded, as their subjects did not survive, and which are not a story about the Righteous, but about blackmail, denunciation, exploitation, expulsion, persecution, robbery and death. (...) It is still not enough to repeat that [the Righteous – author] DID NOT [emphasis – original] act (...) on behalf of the Polish nation. (...) they acted AGAINST [emphasis – original], and not with the consent of the majority, becoming a minority in their own country, with everything that this entails.” (Keff *et al.*, 2014). Dedicating further fragments of the public space to the Righteous may lead to an unjustified, in Jan Grabowski’s opinion (2014), conviction that “helping Jews

In striving to identify these tragic points in the historical time-space, it should be of primary importance to make them parts of the collective consciousness. It is, therefore, paramount that the locations of these events become sites of focus for tragic Jewish stories, and assume characteristics that would transform them into carriers of memory of the victims. They should become the attachment points for the local and non-local identities (a source of realisation that it happened in this particular town, or its vicinity, here, no matter how hard it is now to say where exactly). The creation of a new space-time relationship is facilitated by the dynamics of those places which “are” and at the same time, due to various interactions, “become.” The willingness to experience empathy<sup>76</sup>, resulting, among other things, from an awareness of participating in the common cultural heritage of the area, can be a significant incentive to establish such a place. Even though this will lead to a violation of the cultural order of the perception of a given section of space, which has been established throughout the post-war period.

Now the points marked by the abyss of pain are generally sites of no memory and, therefore, not recognised by the local community. If this amnesia can be overcome, which means that their status is subject to change (“they become”), it is rather from the outside, as a result of discourse outside the local community (e.g. by participants and witnesses of events, researchers, and activists discovering the history of small homelands) and on the basis of criteria determined without its influence.

The sites of mass murder of Jews are also places that do not serve the local population to root their memory because they were “abandoned” and unmarked. Unlike the sites of non-memory, they are present in the life of local communities, but according to R. Sendyka (2013, pp. 280–281, 283), omitted and unnamed, as sites of taboo. “The memory of them is not revealed in the order of material culture (no plaques are placed on them).” (Sendyka, 2013, p. 280). According to the researcher, “(...) the community topographically assigned to a location has no need or even willingness to locate” their memory in these places, it wants to forget about them, it prefers not to remember them (Sendyka, 2013, p. 281). R. Sendyka also noted that “(...) the quality that characterises (...) is their invisibility, transparency (...)” (Sendyka, 2013, p. 283). They are so inconvenient for the community around them that it treats their commemoration as a greater threat to collective identity than their abandonment (Sendyka, 2013, p. 281). Thus, they are, to use a term by C. Lanzmann, the director of the film *Shoah* (in: Sendyka, 2013, p. 279), “non-sites of memory<sup>77</sup>.”

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was natural and that most of their ‘Aryan’ fellow citizens at least looked at the dying Jews with sympathy. Nothing could be more wrong.”

<sup>76</sup> A. Lebkowska (2018, p. 18) used the phrase “a desire to experience empathy” in her book.

<sup>77</sup> *Shoah*, directed by Claude Lanzmann, year of production: 1985.

## 6. CONCLUSION

By submitting to the hermeneutics of (non-)sites of (non-)memory, one can come to the conclusion that text remains one such site of recovering memory. It makes the past the present by passing on fractions of someone's memory (often mutilated), accounts of survivors and witnesses or discovering the content of archival sources devoted to dramatic situations. It gives an opportunity to "saturate" these (non-)sites with the reader's reflection and imagination, by dint of which it is possible to identify, not only topographically, traces of traumatic events obscured by layers of ignorance, forgetting, indifference, ignorance or silence<sup>78</sup>. In these *loci*, partially hollow<sup>79</sup> and devoid of content, with a more or less identifiable scope, let us restore the memory of the lives of the Holocaust survivors, cut short in them.

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<sup>78</sup> It is almost an encroachment on the area of post-memory, which, in the context of the interpretation of sites of memory, is seen as an affirmation created by the power of empathy able to saturate hollow spaces with the viewer's imagination (Delaperrière, 2013).

<sup>79</sup> The term was taken from the work of J. Leociak (2007, p. 494), who used it to refer to the area of the former Warsaw Ghetto: "The place has survived, but it's been hollowed out, devoid of 'content', 'interior'. The ghetto, which was here, was exterminated, but this 'here' remained, only covered with another presence. All that is left is a frame with a different reality, a topographical point, a cartographic abstraction."

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Martyna RUSINIAK-KARWAT 

## BUNDISTS AND THE ISSUE OF EMIGRATION FROM POLAND AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

**Abstract.** The main objective of this paper is to present a change in the attitudes among Bundists towards emigration in the post-war Poland. The program of the Jewish Labour Bund throughout its existence was based on three pillars: here-ness (*doykayt*), family-ness (*mishpokhedikayt*), and Jewish-ness (*Yiddishkayt*). After the Second World War some of them lost their significance. Many Jews, including Bundists, saw their future outside Poland. In the article I will show different attitudes of the members of the Bund towards emigration, as well as the reasons behind their choices: either to stay in Poland or to leave the country.

**Key words:** emigration and emigrationism, Jewish Labour Bund, post-war Poland.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Second World War, Holocaust survivors began to revive Jewish life in Poland. The reborn “Jewish street” was not able to proceed without Jewish political parties. One of these was the General Jewish Labor Bund, which was active between 1944 and 1949. Throughout the postwar period, the Bund, and the Tsukunft, its youth organisation, had roughly 3,000 registered members. The movement had been decimated during the war, and some of its ideals, like national and cultural autonomy, had lost currency in the absence of the Jewish shtetl.

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One of the main pillars of Bundist ideology since the very founding of the party was *doykayt* (Yiddish, here-ness). That was why Bundists were radically opposed to any form of emigration, including mass migration to Palestine. The attitude towards emigration among Bundists, including in Poland, evolved after the end of the Second World War. At that point they began to openly support free emigration and immigration, namely the right to choose where to settle, regardless of whether the rationale was political or economic (Blatman, 2003; Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016; Slucki, 2012). They emphasised: “emigration has always existed and will continue to exist. I have nothing against ideological emigration” (Salo Fiszgrund’s Speech, p. 156). At the same time, they continued to radically oppose illegal emigration (*Bricha*) (Semczyszyn, 2018).

Even if a certain portion of the Jewish people emigrate from Poland, this won’t change their primary goal and ideal. Whether the Jewish working masses find themselves in America or in Palestine, in France or in Belgium, their task will remain the same - just as that of the Jews remaining in Poland – to fight for socialism hand in hand with the proletariat of a given country (Szuldenfrei, 1947, p. 1).

In the new postwar reality Bundists realised that they could not enter into a political debate with the Zionists, whose stipulation to rebuild the Jewish state was becoming more and more real, propelled by the Holocaust and the lack of prospects for rebuilding Jewish life in Poland. The Bund, which had been the most serious political option on the “Jewish street” and among Jewish workers in the 1930s, strove to deal with the new situation that emerged after the Holocaust and which essentially meant the marginalisation of the party (Pickhan, 2001). Its members had been decimated, while the Jewish street, which the Bund had so eagerly considered as reference, had been reduced to ruins and the brick dust rising from the rubble of the Warsaw ghetto.

## **2. STAY OR LEAVE? THE ATTITUDE OF BUNDISTS TO EMIGRATION FROM POLAND. EMIGRATION AND EMIGRATIONISM**

Yet in spite of these circumstances Bundists were still dogmatically committed to rebuilding Jewish culture and to the party itself, and hence did not support mass emigration to the Land of Israel (emigrationism) (Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, pp. 149–154).

Grzegorz (Grisza) Jaszuński wrote in the Bund Bulletin: “To emigrationism we oppose fighting here in this land, hand in hand with the Polish working class, to put in place such conditions of life as would ensure freedom and prosperity for all citizens regardless of their ethnicity or religion” (Jaszuński, 1945, p. 12).

Jaszuński considered the idea of mass emigration to Palestine a nationalist utopia hampering the development of Jewish life in the diaspora and distracting people from the fight for their deserved political and social rights in their countries of residence – a utopia isolating Jews from the rest of the society.

The emigration issue and the wartime experiences of Bundists had an influence on how individual Bund committees as well as local and central party authorities worked. When it came to assessing the political situation, there were significant differences within the party between those who had survived the Second World War in German-occupied Poland and those who had spent it in the Soviet Union (with some minor exceptions). The trauma of the camps and gas chambers made the former the supporters of leaving Poland as they could not imagine continuing their lives in a Jewish ‘cemetery’. Meanwhile, those who survived the war in the Soviet Union were more inclined to rebuild the Bund in Poland and to defer to Poland’s new communist authorities, whose policies they accepted almost without any reservations. It seems they had forgotten that they were still “social-fascists” and that the Bolsheviks as well as their representatives in Poland could only see them as *poputchiks* (fellow travellers) who, when their usefulness ran its course, as the history of Soviet Russia amply showed, would be dropped in the dumpsters of history (like Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich, who had been murdered in Soviet prisons) (Rusiniak-Karwat, 2018).

After the Kielce pogrom the Bundist attitude to emigration became even more open, even though they continued to criticise Zionists for fearmongering. A number of Bundists also left Poland after July 1946. Members of the Bund even advocated allotting support to those emigrating in some special cases as part of a social benefits scheme. On these points, there were internal conflicts and tensions between two fractions in the party that had existed even before the outbreak of war in 1939. The first of these, the left wing, argued that the “Jewish street” had to be preserved in Poland, even in a microscopic form. They were all decidedly more anti-Zionist, but subgroups existed, though: some of these activists advocated a strict cooperation with the PPR (Polish Workers’ Party) (Grzegorz Jaszuński). Another group supported an alliance with the PPS (Polish Socialist Party) as a separate section within the Polish party (Michał Szuldenfrei). A third group pushed for independence on the Polish political scene while rejecting other options, including emigration (Salo Fiszgrund) (Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, p. 35; Szaynok, 2000, p. 320).

Their opponents, the right wing of the party (including Ignacy Falk and Avraham Zilbersztejn, the Tsukunft secretary in Warsaw), doubted the possibility of rebuilding the *yishuv* in postwar Poland. They even argued in favour of dissolving the party and emigrating. They were the first Bundists and Tsukunftists to leave Poland, refusing to accept the self-liquidation of the party (Szymon Zachariasz Collection, p. 155; Redakcja, *Jugnt Weker*, 1949, pp. 1–2; ‘Trayshaft un mut...’, 1949, pp. 37–38).

The issue of emigration, including the departure of party members, was discussed to some extent at meetings of the Bund committees. Their participants proposed to increase agitation in favour of remaining in the country and to encourage Jews to reject visas. Bundists repeatedly emphasised that the borders of all countries, including the United States, should be open for Jews from Poland and other places. They stressed that “the Bund supports the repeal of the White Paper and unhindered Jewish immigration to any country, including Palestine” (CKŻP, Report No. 5, p. 26). They realised that with each Jew leaving Poland there was a smaller chance of continuing Jewish life there. Emigration undermined the very reasons for continuing the Bund itself. For how could the Bund continue if there was no Jewish proletariat?

At the same time, Bund representatives made critical statements about illegal Jewish emigration during meetings of the presidium of the Central Committee of Jews in Poland. The Bund criticised the Central Committee *Memorandum to the Anglo-American Committee*, drafted on behalf of all Polish Jews in February 1946. The memorandum called for free Jewish emigration to Palestine and the repeal of the *White Paper*. Meanwhile, on several occasions the Bund underlined that “It is a crime to restrict the whole issue of Jewish emigration to Palestine alone. It was argued that the concept of an exodus from Europe as well as subordinating Jewish life wholly and completely to the idea of Palestine is proof of infantile political thinking” (A.R., 1946, p. 3).

Meanwhile, the Bund’s consent to Jews emigrating was a type of a modification of the party’s pre-war slogans. It may be that Bundists realised that Jewish emigration from Poland was inevitable and that the party’s continued existence would only be possible if large Jewish communities existed in the diaspora. Emigration to Palestine, where anti-Zionist slogans would no longer be relevant nor in line with the policies of the nascent Jewish state, would mean the end of the Bund. Moreover, the call for national and cultural autonomy, one of the main pillars of the party, would entirely lose its significance. The Bund would have to evolve from a party into a social/cultural association whose only task would be to cultivate *Yiddish* and *Yiddishkayt*, which was precisely what happened to the Bund in Israel after 1948.

Opposition to postwar emigration was also a feature of the ongoing political changes and was voiced by parties forming the so-called “democratic bloc” in Poland. In spite of having lived through dramatic experiences, most Jews returning from the USSR felt more affinity towards communism if they saw their future in Poland. Those who wanted to leave tended to sympathise with the Zionists, for whom Poland was only a transit country on the way to Palestine. When leaving Poland, they left nothing behind. Rebuilding life there had been an arduous task given the anti-Jewish atmosphere associated with the large number of Jews in the repressive communist apparatus and the anti-Jewish incidents proliferating in 1945–1947. A growing sense of alienation and fear pushed a large part of the Jewish community to emigrate and embrace Zionist, rather than socialist, ideals (Engel, 2001, pp. 213–224; Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, *passim*).



### 3. BUNDISTS FROM OUTSIDE POLAND ON EMIGRATION

To sum up the issue of migration, let me quote an opinion piece by Emanuel Scherer, who lived in the United States after the war, published in the *Głos Bundu* in Poland in 1946. Scherer emphasised that the Jews' right to emigrate should be a topic of debate, but emigration should not be presented as the only way out nor only to a Jewish state. His wordy argument is worth citing in full:

When calling upon Jews to leave their homes in Europe, are the Zionists certain that Palestine has the proper conditions to be colonized by masses of European refugees? [...] But let's leave room for doubt. Suppose the Zionists manage to overcome all of the difficulties which, in our opinion, are insurmountable. Suppose they even manage to create a Jewish state without a Jewish majority. So what? Will it make the so-called diaspora go out of existence? Will the Jews cease to live among other nations?

We take it for granted that regardless of whether the colonization of Palestine is successful or not, the vast majority of Jews shall remain outside of Palestine. As a matter of fact, if we look back to the time when an independent Judean state existed, there were other Jewish enclaves in the diaspora with an unquestionable national character. And often their spiritual culture was far superior to that of the metropolis (A.R., 1946, p. 3).<sup>1</sup>

Another opinion was held by Mordechai Canin (Tsanin), who had spent the Second World War in Palestine. In the *Davar* (the press outlet of Histadrut – the general labour union in Palestine) in 1946, he published an open letter to Bundists, in which he criticised their postwar stance on emigration and their traditionalism which failed to consider both the circumstances of Jewish life in Poland and the prospects of building a Jewish state in Palestine:

Instead of boldly looking reality in the face, we Bundists have assumed a tactic of waiting for the situation to develop and of keeping ourselves calm by passing resolutions. But the Jews who spent five years fighting to survive don't want resolutions. They are demanding a concise, clear response to their troubles. The remnants of surviving Jewry are facing an alternative: to emigrate from countries where life has become impossible. You have struck Palestine, the only country interested in Jewish immigration with its heart and soul, from the map, being guided by prejudice and motives that have long since become irrelevant. We all know that other countries that could admit Jewish immigrants are shutting their doors to them. Comrades, you have stopped the hands of the clock and have completely forgotten what kind of times we are living in. You cling to views that gave up breath along with the first victims of the first gas chamber the Germans built in Poland, and instead of facing the truth, you are hiding behind the screen of defunct theories (Canin, 1946, p. 7).

Canin's words could be considered a representative opinion of a Jewish socialist raised by the Bund. His wartime experiences had led to an evolution of his views and made him pro-Palestine, leaning closer to Zionism.

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<sup>1</sup> Scherer wrote also about the Jewish future in Poland in: Scherer, E. (1947), *The Future of Jews*, London.

#### 4. EMIGRATION OF BUNDISTS. THEORY AND PRACTICE

But theory is one thing, and practice is another. Let us now discuss a few examples of Bundists emigration. Bernard Goldstein and Vladka Meed left for New York right after the war. He had been active in the underground Bund Committee, while she had been a member of the Tsukunft in the Warsaw ghetto and later on the Aryan side, as well as a member of the Jewish Fighting Organisation. Goldstein left fearing for his life, as he was wanted by the authorities. The Bund informed of his departure in party press. The Central Party Committee wanted to reassure other Bundists. The reason given for his departure was his poor health, which Goldstein supposedly wanted to 'repair' in the West ('Kh. Bernard...', 1946, p. 2)

At the beginning of 1947, Leo Finkelsztejn (who survived the war in the USSR) left for the United States with Ignacy Falk on a mission to the Polish Bund representation in America and stayed there for health-related reasons. The members of the Bund Central Committee in Poland urged him to return as soon as possible. His forced (due to health reasons) absence was seen as an ideological escape. They sent him official letters not to prolong his stay. His leave was a violation of Bundist ideology and was treated almost on a par with treason and the implementation of Zionist slogans. It gave the impression that Finkelsztejn, one of the foremost Bundists in postwar Poland, had used an opportunity to leave the country; basically to escape. This could be used by Zionists against Bundists in ideological debates. The actions of one of the leading Bundist activists in the country could be interpreted as the party's tacit consent for emigration, which is something that the left wing of the Bund wanted to avoid at all cost, fearing it would discredit them. Continued Bundist activity would then lose its purpose (Dina, 1951, p. 22).

From the perspective of later events and in light of the liquidation of all Jewish parties in Polish People's Republic, we can say that the Bundists' faith (particularly of the left wing) in the continued existence of the Bund in Poland and in stopping Jewish emigration was nothing short of utopian. After leaving Poland, most Bundists bound their fates to Bund committees in the countries of their destination, which became something of a substitute family, *bundishe mishpokhe* (Yiddish, Bundists family), rather than a political party (Wolff, 2011, p. 79). Without a doubt many leading Bundists did not imagine a future outside of Poland. There they were leaders whereas in other countries the top party positions were already filled and they would have to become ordinary members. Age was also a factor (most had been born before 1900). Not everyone could or wanted to learn a new profession and language. Many Bund leaders in Poland held office jobs. They realised that abroad they would be blue

collar workers. For example, Szechatow was an accountant in Poland; after moving to Sweden, he worked in a radio factory (Blomqvist, 2020, *passim*; Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, *passim*).

## 5. MOTIVATION BEHIND DECISIONS TO EMIGRATE

There were many factors that influenced Bundist activists' attitude to emigration and emigrationism. These included the traditional ideological line of the party, viewed as the advocate of the Jewish proletariat in ensuring the latter's proper national and cultural autonomy; a lack of faith in the Zionist program, but also personal and professional reasons for the older generation of Bundists. Demographic changes in the structure of the Jewish population (considering it was mostly young people who had survived the Holocaust), hopes of a better tomorrow in their own state in Palestine – all of these considerations rendered the Bundist program somewhat obsolete given the expectations and aspirations of the Jewish community and even of the members of the party or its affiliate organisations.

The actions of the Bund leadership did not prevent the emigration of party members and other Jews from Poland. The greatest number of Bundists left the country after the Kielce pogrom as well as in the summer of 1948, as the self-liquidation of the party gained momentum. Many 'foot soldier' members of the party left Poland legally as soon as the war ended. Leaving illegally, with the help of guides, on their own or in small groups, the movement started in the summer of 1948 with the members of the Bund Central Committee, the Tsukunft, as well as local committee leaders, who did not want to or could not wait for a passport and a permission to emigrate. At this point I should emphasise that Bundists fled illegally when legal emigration to the newly founded State of Israel was already possible after May 1948 (AIPN Kr 07/1694; AIPN Ld PF 12/3107; 'Trayshaft un mut...', 1949, pp. 37–38).

The whole emigration scheme only worked by dint of the material support of Bundist organisations in the West, mainly in the United States. Bundists justified their decision to leave citing the following reasons:

1. Dissatisfaction with the political situation and refusal to adapt to the new reality,

2. Refusal to 'repent,' renounce Bundist ideology and join the Polish United Workers' Party,

3. Fear of being arrested for 'counterrevolutionary activity' (1947 saw the arrest of David Klin, a member of the underground Bund committee in the Warsaw ghetto; 1949 saw the arrest of Lieber Gottlob, who had returned to Poland from Great Britain in 1947, having served in Anders' Army) (AIPN Kr 07/1694; AIPN Ld PF 12/3107).

## 6. MIGRATION ROUTES AND CHANNELS

Many of those who had not planned to leave Poland earlier, left after 1948. Different migration routes and channels were used. Shulim Rozenberg described his departure as follows:

In 1948 the witch-hunt against the Bundists started, for its links with the Bund in America, because the Bund in America is against communism. And they told us the Bund had to be shut down and we had to go over to the workers' party, PPR. When we heard that, we made a meeting of the Zukunft Central Committee and the Bund Central Committee separately, and we decided we were leaving. (...) And groups started being organized to emigrate. Before that I'd never thought to leave, because I was waiting for my brother Ksil to be released from the camp. On 15 May 1948 my brother Ksil came back from Russia. (...)

When there was the decision to leave Poland, there was a group of 6 of us, and we went to Katowice (...). In Katowice was the boss who was running the emigration. I don't know who he was. We were to go in the night, over the border, and in the morning we were in Prague. I went with my wife, my brother Ksil, my friend who I lived with after the war, Leon Krolicki, and there was also one of the editors of the *Folkszeitung* with us, a writer and historian, Mordechaj Bernsztajn. From Prague we had to go to Germany. And we went by train to the border, and from the border by bus to Feldafing [Germany]. We arrived in Feldafing in the night; they saw there was a pregnant woman with us, so they took us straight away to a private family. We stayed with those private people those few weeks that we were in Feldafing. For a visa to America you had to wait a year, a year and a half, and I didn't want the child to be born in Germany. And we went to Ulm and from Ulm there was a group that was going to Paris. And we arrived in Paris on 22 August 1948 (Rozenberg: interview, 2006).

Icehak Luden left Poland with Zionists legally via Szczecin in 1948 on a ship called Beniowski. He reached Israel on 19 December 1948, having gone through France (Icehak Luden: interview, 2015). Most Jews left illegally through the green border with Czechoslovakia near Kudowa. Some of these fugitives initially stopped in Germany. According to the records of the Provincial Public Security Office in Łódź, they 'fled' and 'disappeared in an unknown direction.' Some very quickly made it to France, where they received help from other Bundists and they settled there. Others, like Mordechaj Bernstein, spent several years in Germany, where they continued to be active as Bundists in DP camps (Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, p. 88). Many Bundists also eventually settled in Australia, in spite of earlier declarations that they were going to the United States as they had trouble getting entry visas. The already mentioned Szechatow went to Sweden with his family. It was also through Sweden that Lucjan Blit's daughters reached London (Blomqvist, 2020; Vladka Blit: interview, 2007).

Only a handful of former Bundists remained in Poland after 1950. Owing to the help of fellow Bundists from Belgium and France and the invitations they sent, some of these joined them later (Roman Blit's Collection, folder 13). They left for Australia, for example Israel Zajd (AIPN, BU 1548/390), France – Ignacy Feldman (Marian Feldman: interview, 2012), USA – Lieber (Lipek) Gottlob, Is-

rael – a large group from Tarnów, as well as Josef Frajnd. The last ones to leave, including even those from the left wing of the party, left Poland at the end of the 1960s as a result of the 1968 anti-Zionist campaign targeting Jews. Most of them chose Israel as their destination (Salo Fiszgrund) (AIPN, BU 1268/19262).

## 7. THOSE WHO REMAINED

There were also Bundists who only saw their future in Poland. Their reasons for staying were diverse. Some of them even joined the Polish United Workers' Party. One reason for staying was their old age and health problems. Those who stayed were mostly around 60 years of age, for example Zdzisław Muszkat. They realised that starting everything anew at their age and with their faltering health could simply fail. Moreover, they enjoyed financial stability in Poland while they did not know what awaited them abroad. Another reason was having a Polish spouse – the case of Ignacy Samsonowicz. Inability to speak any foreign language, particularly English and French, was also an obstacle. Many, like Luba Blum-Bielicka, also did not want to leave (even if their children had left) because they considered Poland their homeland, and it was there – regardless of communism – that they saw their future. Another, probably the most important, reason for staying was financial status – having one's own large apartment and holding an important public post, like Dr. Michał Szuldenfrei and Grzegorz Jaszuński. Others, like Marek Edelman, a medical student in Łódź, claimed that someone must stay behind as a “guardian of the graves” of Bundist comrades (Rusiniak-Karwat, 2016, *passim*).

All those who stayed in Poland shared not only a common Bundist past but also a common present. They devoted themselves to their families, but also worked to help others. Most remained faithful to their ideals. They also tried to keep in touch with one another and with Bundists abroad in the West. The few who stayed in Poland included Irena Jaszuńska, who many years later regretted that she had not emigrated. If she had, she would have been able to live out her days among those she was close to in the Bundist family (Roman Blit's Collection, folder 13).

## 8. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the attitude of the Bund towards emigration and emigrationism was one of the main ideological pillars of the party which was anti-Zionism. In the new post-war reality Bundists realised that some of their main pillars had to be modified in order for the Bund to have a chance to continue existing. Hence, they changed their

attitude towards emigration. At the same time they fought for freedom to choose the destination country to settle after leaving Poland. They believed that existence of the party would be possible only when established larger Jewish communities would be established in the diaspora (dispersed) outside the Land of Israel. The emigration of Bundists from Poland continued throughout the 1940s after the Second World War. Most of them decided to leave in the summer of 1948 when a self-liquidation of the Bund in Poland was already a foregone conclusion. That way many of them avoided political repressions. Many chose France, the United States, and Australia as their destination countries. Thus they joined the ranks of Bund organisations in these countries and continued their political activities.

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Alessandro VITALE \*

## THE JEWISH AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BIROBIDZHAN IN SIBERIA

**Abstract.** The *Jewish Autonomous Region* (JAR) of Birobidzhan in Siberia is still alive. The once famous “Siberian Zion”, at the confluence of the Bira and Bidzhan rivers, a stone’s throw away from China and a day from the Pacific Ocean, 9,000 km and six days by train from Moscow, is still a geographical reality. The political class of the Soviet Union decided to create a territory the size of Belgium for a settlement for Jews, choosing a region on the border between China and the Soviet Union. It believed that Soviet Jews needed, like other national minorities, a homeland with a territory. The Soviet regime thus opted to establish an enclave that would become the JAR in 1934. We should note that the creation of the JAR was the first historically fulfilled case of building an officially recognised Jewish national territory since antiquity and well before Israel. Nevertheless, many historians declared this experiment a failure and the history of the Region only tragic. It is interesting to note, however, that the survival of the JAR in post-Soviet Russia has been not only a historical curiosity, a legacy of Soviet national policy, but today – after the collapse of the Soviet Union – it represents a very interesting case study. It is also a topic useful for the analysis and understanding of inter-ethnic relations, cooperation, and coexistence and it is a unique case of geographic resettlement that produced a special case of “local patriotism”, as an example also for different ethnic groups living in the JAR, based on Jewish and Yiddish roots.

**Key words:** Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR), Russia, Siberia, Birobidzhan, inter-ethnic relations, ethnopolitics.

I have crossed oceans and continents  
and I have not found any country as beautiful  
as my Birobidzhan.

Yiddish song of the Birobidzhan region

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Goodbye America, goodbye Europe,  
good morning our homeland, our Birobidzhan.

Isaak Dunajevsky

## 1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR) of Birobidzhan in Siberia is still alive. For many travellers and journalists, that is still surprising, after many years of silence over the fate of this Soviet experiment. The once famous old “Siberian Zion”, at the confluence of the Bira and Bidzhan rivers, a stone’s throw away from China and a day from the Pacific Ocean, between the 48th and 49th parallels north latitude (where the climate and conditions are like those of Ontario and Michigan), 9,000 kilometres (and six days by train) from Moscow, very closed to the end of the Trans-Siberian railway, is still a reality. It has been the first modern official Jewish homeland (long before Israel). In 1928, the Soviet Union set aside a territory larger than Belgium and the Netherlands combined, for a Jewish settlement, along the Soviet-Chinese border. With the conviction that Soviet Jews should be provided with a homeland based on territory – in accordance with the Stalinist doctrine of nationalities – the Soviet regime created a Jewish enclave, which in 1934 became the Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR, in Yiddish: *Yidische Avtonomne Gegnt*), popularly known as Biro-bidzhan, giving it a status that would remain identical throughout the Soviet period and post-Soviet Russia. The Soviet political class hoped to create an alternative to Palestine by fostering the development of a secular, non-religious Jewish culture based on the Yiddish language<sup>2</sup> and the principles of socialism, giving rise to a future “Jewish-socialist utopia,” counterbalancing Palestine. In fact, the settlement of the JAR aimed to counter both Zionism and religious Judaism by building an atheist Soviet version of Zion (Rovner, 2014, p. 8). The idea to create a Jewish agricultural colony along the border with China coincided with that of settling a strategic buffer against Chinese and Japanese expansion and it was a way of exiling Jews to the hinterland.

<sup>1</sup> This article is a development, with additions, of previous studies: Vitale (2014); idem (2015). The author would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their valuable insights.

<sup>2</sup> *Yiddish*, rather than *Ivrit* (Hebrew תִּיבְרִיט) – considered the tongue of “bourgeois Zionists” – was chosen as the “regional language” in clear contrast to *Ivrit*. The building of a *Yiddishland* raised many hopes among Jewish people who had suffered from pogroms and persecutions for a long time before 1917, especially in the Western part of the Russian Empire. See: Kadyshovich (1931), Alberton (1932), Lvavi (1965), Kagedan (1987, 1994), Stepan (1994), Vitale (2007), Srebnik (2010), Maroney (2010), Polonsky (2011), Nivat (2013), and Plures (2014).

As a result, thousands of Soviet Jews decided to colonise the area, some of them spurred by the desire to build a new society, others simply driven by hunger and the prospect of improving their living conditions. Even many Jews from America, Argentina and other parts of the world, faced with the Great Depression, tried to start a new life in the new Zion of the Jewish socialist utopia. In fact the creation of the JAR was the first case of an officially recognised Jewish national territory since the antiquity.<sup>3</sup> The “Birobidzhan Project” intended to solve the social and economic issues of Russian Jewry, removing any potential support to the Zionist movement. However, the implementation did not enable the project to fulfil its potential (Vladykina, 2016, p. 1285). The “Jewish” status of the region has survived incredible violence, persecution, and deportations, such as Stalin’s purges and the never-ending attempts at destroying the local cultural heritage, culture, and libraries.<sup>4</sup> Despite all these problems, the survival and renewed life of the Birobidzhan and the revival of Jewish life and culture in the post-Soviet JAR have proven more than just a curious legacy of Soviet national politics. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, this example has continued to offer an interesting case study for examining complex geographical and political problems, as well as alternative possibilities for interethnic relations.

According to the working hypothesis, even completely artificial geographical and residential settlements created intentionally and for political reasons – even the most implausible – can produce unplanned and unintentional effects of great significance. Among these, there may be the formation of spontaneous cohabitations, even endowed with their own ‘patriotism’ and a strong sense of belonging based on different cultures and composite syncretism. In order to answer the research question, the methodology of this research first considers the empirical elements (data collected in the 2000s in field research and the use of statistics to test the relationships between the variables involved). In addition, the research used thematic analysis to interpret the patterns and meanings in the qualitative data because in this case, the quantitative analysis does not answer the research question.

The JAR is still functionally considered a “Jewish region”, although probably only a handful of Jews now live there. No one knows how many inhabitants of Jewish descent have remained in the region. Officially there are 8,000: but one inhabitant in two has a Jewish great-grandmother or great-uncle, including the many Koreans and Chinese who live there. Not to mention the countless Ukrainians or Belarusians who have remained living in the Russian Far East. In the present day,

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<sup>3</sup> The JAR was the first and the only (administrative) territorial unit of the Jewish people not only in the USSR but also in the world. Israel was established on the UN’s solution only twenty years later, in 1948.

<sup>4</sup> The purges even led to the burning of the whole *Judaica Collection* in Birobidzhan’s local libraries by Soviet officials. In 1948, Soviet bureaucrats closed the last Jewish school in Birobidzhan. The reason for Stalin’s shutting down Yiddish institutions in the JAR was that Yiddish culture could had a hindering effect on his project of the assimilation of Jews.

the region's relative economic prosperity because of its proximity to China, along with its renewed Yiddish cultural heritage, has helped to set the stage for a local Jewish future.<sup>5</sup> This may seem strange at first glance, but not if one considers the fact that citizenship of a national minority is a matter of personal choice and no disadvantage results from that affiliation. The coexistence of Jewish, Orthodox, and now Muslim religions and cultures is a remarkable and noticeable example of an authentic spontaneous, cooperative, and unplanned face of ethnopolitics.



Fig. 1. The geographical location of the JAR

Source: own work.

## 2. A CONTROVERSIAL GEOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT

The Kremlin created the Jewish Autonomous Region (*Oblast*) as an administrative tool to solve the “Jewish Question” in Stalin’s Soviet Union. In the 1920s, the Soviet government made several efforts to build a Jewish homeland in Ukraine and Crimea but the projects met local resistance and hostility because of conflicting attitudes and emerging forms of anti-Semitism and they were soon abandoned.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Jewish culture was revived here much earlier than elsewhere in the Soviet Union. In the last twenty years, Jewish culture and Yidishkayt have been revived. Here *Yiddish* is still spoken and even taught. Some Chinese children also study it. There are new extensive links between the JAR and Israel, and despite a long history of problems and disputes, Jewish life is reviving both in quantity as in quality (Srebnik, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> In 1928 Jews had deep roots in the Western part of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia. In fact, initially there was a proposal to move them into a new “Jewish Soviet Republic” projected

Therefore, in March 1928 the government populated an area in the Amur River Basin for “settlement by working people of Jewish nationality”. This decision resonated with Stalin’s 1913 *The National Question* where he stated that nationalities without territory would not be authentic.<sup>7</sup> In the 1920s the Party determined that the Jewish economic life was “ideologically suspicious”. In fact, Jews were at the same time an “extra-territorial” national minority, a religious community in an atheist state, and an ethnic group on the brink of assimilation into Sovietism. Even Jewish communists agreed that the only way to solve this ideological dilemma would be to populate a Jewish territory, creating a kind of a “Soviet Jewish homeland”. The Birobidzhan project was at the same time also coherent with the objectives of Jewish nationalism known as *territorialism*, which preached the building of a Jewish political community in a suitable territory anywhere in the world.<sup>8</sup> This seemed aligned with the designs of the Stalinist and Soviet political class, which aimed to keep Jews as far away as possible from the central territorial and political zones of the Soviet Union. At any rate, the government and the KOMZET (the *Committee on Land Settlement of the Working Jews*) created a “homeland” for the compact transfer of Jews, adapting Jewish communities to agriculture. By devoting resources and land to Jews, the government (which invested very little in the project) tried to attract Jewish money and settlers from all over the world: America, Argentina, and Europe.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, to settle and develop a region on the border with China (on a territory that was annexed by Imperial Russia in 1858) would also be a strategic step in strengthening Soviet control over the whole area of the Soviet Far East and its natural resources (iron, fish, timber, tin, graphite, and gold). In 1934, the Kremlin decided to assign the Region the status of an *autonomous region* (*avtonomnaja oblast’*) to an area comprising 36,000 square km, i.e. larger than that of Palestine. The authorities created Jewish settlements in small villages. The work was very hard. When Jews arrived in the 1930s, there was nothing: only the taiga and marshes. During the time of the Great Purges and later, after the Second World War, Jewish people became the subject

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for the Crimean Peninsula or Ukraine, but the projects were abandoned because of the hostility of non-Jews against Jewish people in those regions of the Union (see Gitelman, 1991). In fact, Jewish resettlement projects created discontent among the local population (in Crimea, notably the Tatars).

<sup>7</sup> According to Stalin, a nation was a historically developed stable community of people formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological makeup manifested in a common culture. Therefore, in his doctrine a human group could be a “nation” only if its members had a territory: since there was no actual Jewish territory, Jews were not a nation and did not have national rights at all. See Stalin, 1913.

<sup>8</sup> Territorialism was an attractive option for many Jewish intellectuals. Rovner, 2014, pp. 8–9.

<sup>9</sup> Historians have argued that in this period and under these circumstances, the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union was regarded as a feather in the red cap, and the effort to create a Jewish national administrative unit would be doomed to create a measure of sympathy (Goldberg, 1961, p. 170). See also Bruk (1928), Bugaenko (1984), Arnowitz (1985), and Kuchenbecker (1997).

of persecution and Jewish institutions were shut down. Thousands of inhabitants of the autonomous region were imprisoned. Some lost their lives. Therefore, the Terror ended the autonomist project: it closed many Yiddish-language schools, and the entire resettlement project ended in a standoff. In the Jewish Autonomous Region migration spontaneously stopped. As a result, the Region became “autonomous” and “Jewish” only in name. After Stalin’s death and with the memory of the persecutions of the Great Terror, Soviet Jews left en masse for Israel. Everyone expected a slow end of the JAR. However, some Jews bought pieces of land that they continued to cultivate.

In the late 1980s, although it was difficult to establish precise religious and national affiliations, less than 5% of inhabitants were Jewish. There was only a small wooden synagogue, and it was not officially recognised. However, in recent years, the ethnic and socio-cultural composition has changed, as some residents are now less afraid to claim their Jewish background. Even more importantly, they decided to revive both Yiddish and modern Jewish cultures after the decision of a significant number of Jews to return to the JAR from Israel. Valery Gurevich, the former Vice-chairman of the Regional Government (Jewish, like many of the Region’s elected officials), has openly denied that the Region is no longer Jewish (Vitale, 2005, p. 160). Nowadays, in the Region there is a clear rebirth of spontaneous cooperation: different religions are working together establishing meaningful and close relationships within institutions and especially schools, with the clear absence of interethnic tensions and conflicts. The cooperation consists of, firstly, the fulfilment of joint charitable actions and cultural events. Within schools and cultural institutions, Birobidzhan’s children (Jews and non-Jews) have long since learned together about the traditions and heritage of global Jews. As a result, the local youth has never known what anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism are, simply because those notions would be very incomprehensible in that context of living. Children grow up, play and learn together in schools where the Jewish culture is nurtured, made known, and loved. Despite Soviet persecution and the incredible difficulties with surviving, Jewish people and non-Jews have lived in peace in the Region for over sixty years without ethnic clashes. What is noteworthy is that the Jewish culture has spontaneously risen from the ruins of Stalin’s incredible experiment reluctantly conceived by the Kremlin.

### **3. THE GLORIOUS AND TRAGIC HISTORY OF THE JAR**

After the first wave of immigrants, 35,000 Jews came over the following ten years to Birobidzhan, mixing locally with Ukrainians, Cossacks, and Koreans (approx. 27,000), peoples who were already living there. The Kremlin moved

Jews to the Siberian area, using the Trans-Siberian railway. The 5,000-mile journey from Moscow to Birobidzhan takes today six days; the same journey took more than a month back then. Artisans and craftspeople, the descendants of the impoverished *shtetls* of the Western part of the Russian Empire, as members of massive, voluntary immigration built Birobidzhan. However, the early living conditions were terrible and so crude that some settlers lived in *zemlyanki*, huts of sod and thatch, built over a hole in the ground. It is noteworthy that most settlers were not familiar with agriculture at all. State administration did very little to prepare them, and many had never worked the land in their lives. The government failed to provide decent housing, food, healthcare, and working conditions. Severe floods ravaged the region and some collective farms had to be started anew. Despite a fresh wave of emigration from the region (many settlers stayed there briefly), some immigrants remained, building the settlements of Waldheim, Tikhonkaya (later Birobidzhan), Amurzet in the South of the Region, and others. They created Jewish settlements in small villages (Birofeld, Danilovka, etc.) connecting the Trans-Siberian railway with the Amur River valley.

The perspective of the revival of Jewish political, “autonomous” unity, resonated even abroad, first among the American diaspora. *Ambijan*<sup>10</sup>, Agro-Joint and ICOR (*Idishe Kolonizatsy Organizatsye; Association for Jewish Colonization in the Soviet Union*, established in 1924 in America) made huge contributions to the Birobidzhan project (Srebrnik, 2006, 2008, 2010). The ICOR rendered free material help to the settlers. The initial, apparent revival of a “self-governed” territory stimulated the *pull factor* for further immigration from abroad. Jews from other countries sincerely believed that the Soviet Union would become an authentic people’s democracy, a state of all the people, without having to struggle to survive. In 1929–1930, it also appeared as a genuine solution and alternative to the Great Depression, which was becoming the symbol of the “great crisis of capitalism.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, almost 700 people from Lithuania, Argentina, Latvia, France, Germany, Belgium, USA, and Poland and even several hundred from Palestine<sup>12</sup> went to the JAR. Many left-wing Jews and pro-Soviet organisations in, e.g. the United States and Canada followed the events in Birobidzhan from a distance. Many of the organisations that brought them together sent money, equipment, and machinery. Other settlers (up to 2,000) went to the supposed “Soviet Zion” during the 1930s.

<sup>10</sup> Albert Einstein served as honorary President of the American Birobidzhan Committee (*Ambijan*).

<sup>11</sup> Significantly, in these years a government-produced Yiddish film called *Seekers of Happiness* told the story of a Jewish family that fled the Great Depression in the United States to start anew in Birobidzhan.

<sup>12</sup> The propaganda impact was so effective that several thousand Jews immigrated to Birobidzhan from outside the Soviet Union, including several hundred from Palestine as they had become disillusioned with the Zionist experience.

By 1934, 22,000 Jews had come to the JAR; a few over 5,000 remained to work living in kolkhozes. They did their best to preserve a secular Yiddish culture<sup>13</sup> through operating theatres, schools, clubs, and libraries. The Russian population and even Cossacks already living there (contrary to what happened in the Western part of the Empire)<sup>14</sup>, supported their efforts. There were no tensions between Jews and Cossacks or with the community of ethnic Koreans that settled those lands after escaping from Japanese labour camps in Manchuria. Many villages and collective farms sent instructors who trained the settlers in agriculture. From 1928 up to 1933, 22,300 persons went to the region. In the mid-1930s, Birobidzhan was hailed the growing centre of Yiddish culture; Jewish artists were encouraged to settle there. As the Jewish population grew, so did the impact of Yiddish culture on the region (Emiot, 1981, p. XV). In the Jewish Autonomous Region a multi-ethnic culture, forms of religious syncretism, and new artistic and literary forms developed quickly. The circulation of many regional newspapers and literary, artistic, and political magazines began. During the first decade of its existence, Yiddish became the official language in the region, along with Russian. In 1935, following a government decree, all official and party documents were published in Russian and Yiddish.

However, despite the state's efforts to encourage Soviet Jews to settle in the region during the first decade of its existence and again after the Second World War, the region failed to attract further Jewish settlers. As a result, by 1939 less than 18,000 of the region's approximately 109,000 inhabitants were "ethnically Jews". The operations of the police department, courts and city administration were conducted at least partially in Yiddish but Soviet Jews were still more inclined to move to one of the main cities in western Soviet Union, such as Minsk, Leningrad, Kyiv, Moscow or Odessa than to uproot themselves to the marshes of Birobidzhan. As the Soviet Union became a totalitarian state ruled by Stalin's iron fist in the late 1930s and purges swept the country the Party and the NKVD decimated the JAR's leadership and accused them of ideological heresies. The political climate discouraged people from expressing their Jewishness. The Kremlin's attitude toward Jews turned hostile and the regime became strict on Jewish settlements. In fact, less than 10 years after the creation of the *Jewish Autonomous Region*, *Stalin's regime destroyed the local Jewish culture*. Yiddish books were burnt; Jewish schools and the synagogue were closed down. Thousands of Jews were imprisoned and killed. The Kremlin dismantled the

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<sup>13</sup> Only initially Judaism in the Jewish Region was entirely secular. It must be remembered that by 1927 23% of Soviet synagogues had been shut down and by 1939 there were very few synagogues left in the Soviet Union. (Lustiger, 2003, p. 51).

<sup>14</sup> During the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Cossacks – ancient defenders of the Russian Empire, known for their military prowess – conducted vicious pogroms against Jews in the southwestern part of the Empire. After the Revolution, the last remnants of their autonomy disappeared.



agencies that handled Jewish resettlement, closed many social and cultural institutions in the region, and eliminated the Jewish *intelligentsia* while promoting the cultural assimilation of Jews. Since retaining Yiddish as an official language and maintaining the fiction that Birobidzhan embodied the national and cultural aspirations of Soviet Jewry, the Soviet regime stifled the emergence of Jewish culture and society.

Since the first days of the Second World War, the economy of the region shifted to war production. Even if not intentionally, for the third time<sup>15</sup> the region saved Jewish people from starvation and eventually from Nazi persecutions. However, the Soviet political class undermined and hindered the voluntary resettlement of Soviet Jews in the Far East, which revived briefly after the Second World War because of the chronic and constantly growing fear of Jewish nationalism, increasingly considered as potentially disloyal to Soviet power. Nevertheless, the three post-war years were the time of prosperity of the local Jewish culture and industrial building of the local civil society. Another wave of Jewish immigrants flooded the region.

During the Second World War, anti-Semitism was one reason for the increase in solidarity among Jewish people. Nazi aggression toward the Jews intensified national sentiment among them. This tragedy increased the interest of the world Jewry and even of many countries in the JAR as well.<sup>16</sup> Between 1946 and 1948, about 10,000 Jews moved to the JAR. In 1947 and 1948, twelve special trains brought approximately 6,500 Jewish settlers, primarily from Ukraine, to the JAR. By the end of 1948<sup>17</sup>, when the State of Israel was established, 30,000 Jews were living in Birobidzhan. In the streets of the city, of many villages and settlements, Yiddish was as widespread as Russian. Soviet control over the area was relaxed. Jewish cultural life in the region flourished again and in 1947 a synagogue was opened, in which Jewish cultural and religious life was organised. During the last years of Stalin's life, however, the regime's anti-Semitism resurfaced, together with the fabricated *Doctors' plot* (1952), and manifested itself in the fight against the so-called "Jewish nationalist conspiracy." This shattered any further hope that Birobidzhan could develop into an authentic centre of Soviet Jewish life.

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<sup>15</sup> The first was the settlement as an escape from the Western part of the Soviet Union with its dramatic problems in the 1920s and the second happened at the time of *Holodomor*, the intentionally provoked famine in Ukraine (1932–1933), with approximately 7 million dying in tragic circumstances. See R. Conquest (1986), *The Harvest of Sorrow. Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>16</sup> The *Einigkeit*, the Yiddish newspaper published in Moscow, often referred on its pages to the desire of Jewish immigrants to take part in the future building of the JAR. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee played a major role in attracting the attention of government officials to the Birobidzhan Project (Emiot, 1981, pp. 2–3).

<sup>17</sup> The JAR reached its population peak in 1948.

The number of Jewish demands for expatriation documents to Israel increased and Stalin brutally changed the policy towards Jewish people inside the Soviet Union. All traces of the Jewish culture in the JAR were eliminated, with the only exception of the *Birobidzhaner Stern*, a newspaper written in Yiddish, and a radio programme, which were virtual translations of *Pravda*. Yiddish schools, theatres, and the synagogue were closed again. The practice of Judaism was discouraged and bureaucracy curtailed the teaching of Yiddish. The revival of the “Birobidzhan idea” ended with Stalin’s second wave of purges, shortly before his death. Although Jewish people used to be almost the majority in the JAR, their numbers declined inexorably. In the ensuing years, the idea of an autonomous Jewish region in the Soviet Union was all but forgotten.<sup>18</sup> The 1959 census revealed 1,269 Jews in the JAR’s population. Compared with 1939, the number of Jews in the JAR had decreased by almost a fifth.

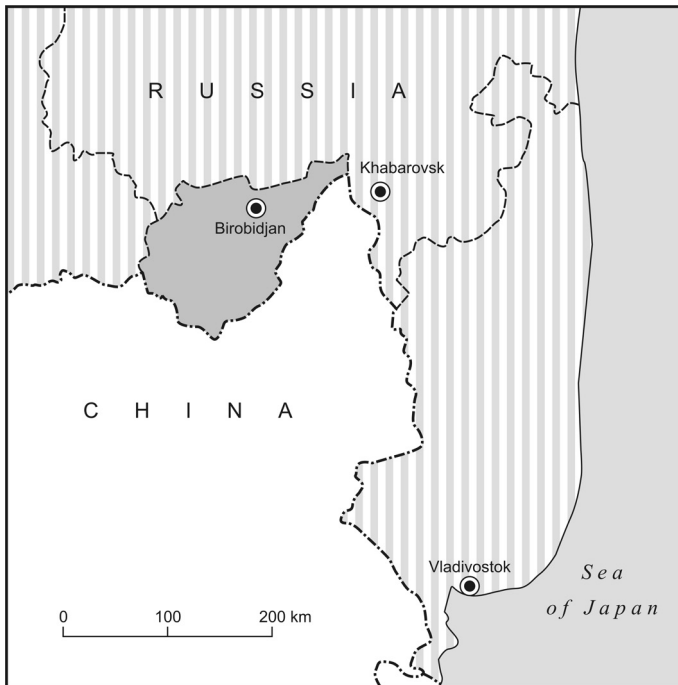


Fig. 2. The JAR in the Far East

Source: own work.

<sup>18</sup> Even those Jews who believed in the future Jewish Republic and contributed to the development of Birobidzhan, had been executed during the purges of the 1930s and the 1940s. The purges not only exterminated Jewish officials and intellectuals, but also erased many basic elements of the Jewish nationality and culture, leaving the inhabitants of the region bewildered and largely in the grips of encroaching terror.

#### 4. THE JAR AFTER THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION

*Perestrojka* unintentionally encouraged Jewish culture in Birobidzhan. By the time the USSR collapsed in 1991 and when Russia and Israel established diplomatic relations, most of the remaining Jewish population left for Israel and Germany.<sup>19</sup>

Nowadays, the remaining Jews officially are less than 3% of the inhabitants but it is uncertain how many Jews are living in the region. Yet the region retains its roots in everyday life. In fact, there has been a noticeable revival of Jewish life. Although young people have understandable problems with Yiddish, the language experienced a revival in public schools and is one of the official languages of the region. In all JAR schools where Jewish children and children of Gentiles live together, including Koreans and Chinese, young people study Jewish culture and literature, as well as the Yiddish language and Modern Hebrew. Interest in Judaism and the Yiddish language remains strong and even children of non-Jewish families are interested in studying them. This is also because many non-Jewish parents say that since they live in the JAR, they want their children to know about the global Jewish history, language, and culture. The Birobidzhan National University is unique in Russian Far East. The basis of the training course is the study of the Hebrew language, history, and classic Jewish texts. The *Birobidzhaner Stern* newspaper, one of the few of its kind in the world, has been published continuously since the early 1930s, though the Second World War interrupted its publication for several years (it was shut down by a decree), even if some efforts were made to “Russify” Yiddish culture and to eliminate it.<sup>20</sup> Today, only the central pages of the newspaper remain in Yiddish, but these are also considered a landmark of the region’s culture. Yiddish radio and television programming continues. In the early 1990s, offices displayed plaques both in Russian and Yiddish everywhere. The culture in Yiddish is flourishing, attracting many Jews from all over the world. The JAR now hosts an *International Festival of Jewish culture*, an annual event held since 1988. In recent years, the ethnic and socio-cultural composition has changed significantly as some residents are now less afraid to admit their Jewish background, which has caused a rebirth of both Yiddish and modern Jewish cultures, also through the decision of major Jewish figures to return to the JAR from Israel (Vitale, 2005a, 2005b, 2007).

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<sup>19</sup> According to Iosef Brener, a local historian, 20,000 Jews left Birobidzhan in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, most for Israel. The JAR is still suffering from the effects of high Jewish emigration, especially in medicine.

<sup>20</sup> The most notable of these attempts was that to replace the Hebrew alphabet used for writing Yiddish with the Cyrillic alphabet. The Yiddish section of the *Birobidzhaner Stern* is edited today by Elena Sarashevskaja, who is not Jewish. She learned Yiddish and realised that this ancient language “Is not only a language, it is about Jewish history and literature, our culture.”

Something unusual is happening: about 150–200 Jews move to Birobidzhan every year. The autonomy caused the building of regional and federal bodies of executive authority, although the centralising reforms adopted by the Kremlin in the 2000s and in 2020 have made regional autonomy only an appearance. Nevertheless, nowadays in the Region there are clear spontaneous cooperation and close relations between religions, schools, and institutions, which replaced interethnic tensions and conflicts. The cooperation is evident above all in the organisation of charitable actions and cultural events that aid the development of the religions and ethnic groups present in the region. Birobidzhan's children (Jews and non-Jews) study Jewish traditions together and this helps them cooperate because they recognise that they have a cultural substratum in common. It is certainly not surprising that the local youth has never known what anti-Semitism is. There is simply no reason or occasion to deal with this bias. They may discover it (with great surprise and frustration) only as they grow up, attend higher levels of education, and move to the western part of Russia. When they encounter it, it seems to them a very curious, “strange” and a quite incomprehensible phenomenon and some sort of a mental deformation or a psychological problem of the person who manifests and carries it. In fact, children grow up, play, and learn together in schools where Jewish culture is widespread. Despite Soviet persecutions, Jewish people and non-Jews have lived peacefully in the region for over sixty years. Therefore, this case study may be important for ethnic research beyond the case of the JAR and as an opportunity in developing policy strategies for managing ethnic conflicts, and cultural and religious diversities.

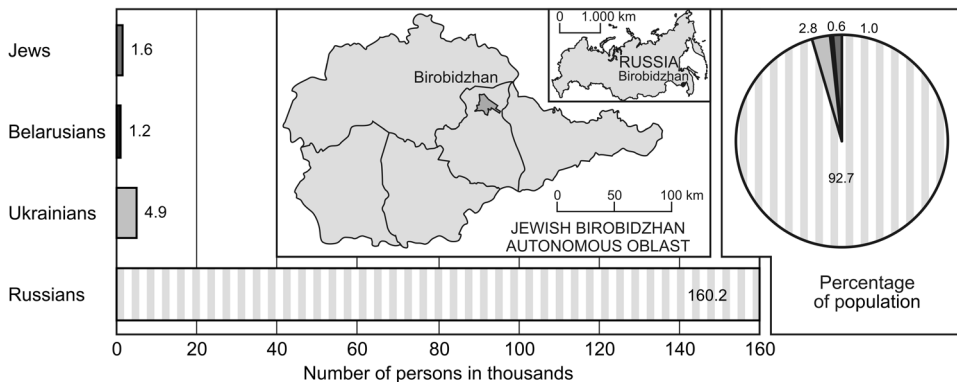


Fig. 3. Ethnic structure of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast in 2010

Source: own work.

According to the 2010 Russian census, there were only 1,628, mostly older, Jews living in the region, out of a total population of approx. 167,000. The official figures were 160,185 ethnic Russians (92.7%), 4,871 ethnic Ukrainians (2.8%),

1,182 Belarusians (0.62%), and 1,628 ethnic Jews (1%). According to a 2012 official survey, 22.6% of the population of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast adhered to the Russian Orthodox Church, 9% were unaffiliated generic Christians, 6% adhered to other orthodox churches. 0.2% of the population practiced Judaism. In addition, 35% of the population deemed itself to be “spiritual but not religious”, 22% were atheist, and 5.2% followed other religions or did not give an answer to the question.

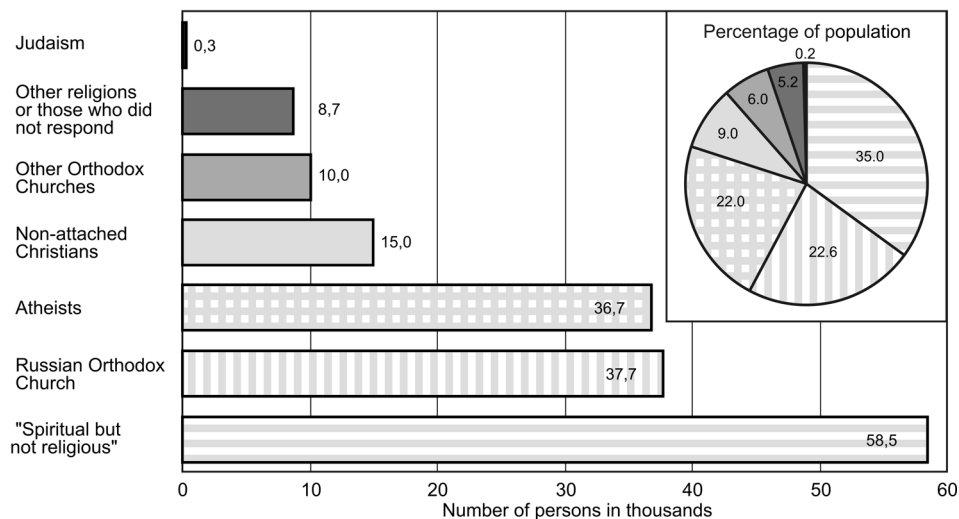


Fig. 4. Religious structure of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast in 2012

Source: own work.

The leading position among religions belongs to the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchy. Two Jewish communities are also active. The “*Frejd*” Birobidzhan Jewish religious community has existed for 24 years. The already close cooperation between the Orthodox parishes and the Birobidzhan Jewish cultural and religious communities (Orthodox parishes donated many financial contributions for the building of the synagogue), has expanded to include, a rather rare occurrence in the world, Muslims. This is a recent and very significant phenomenon. The immigration of Muslim people from Central Asia to the JAR has increased steadily since 2008. The most extraordinary thing is that the Jewish community has created optimal conditions for Muslims for their religious practices and activities, and conditions for effective cooperation in solving their daily problems. The coexistence with Muslims and mutual respect is today the most challenging and interesting development of the intercultural and interethnic relations in the JAR.

Nowadays, the inhabitants of the region believe that there is a real chance they could establish a thriving Jewish community in Birobidzhan. Although the city’s

Jewish population – depleted by the large *aliyah* wave (emigration to Israel) of the 1990s – hovers between 2,000 and 6,000, the region's economic prosperity, combined with its Yiddish heritage and the return from Israel, has helped to create a rich soil for a Jewish future. Even if there is still great confusion between Birobidzhan's Yiddish heritage, which is both linguistic and cultural, and the Jewish practice that rabbis and foreign Jewish organisations are trying to encourage, the rebirth of the religious efforts in the region is quite remarkable. In 2003, a rabbi went to the region from Israel and the administration built a new Synagogue. Jewish people in the region have continued to mark Jewish holidays, and older people have recollected their Yiddish and Jewish traditions, which are taught in public schools not as Jewish exotica, but as part of the region's "national heritage". Many people in the region (even of different descents) have discovered their Jewish roots and embraced them. Ten years ago, many of those who left did not want to proclaim themselves as Jewish. Nevertheless, people today define themselves using Jewish qualities and talk about how their grandmothers and great-grandmothers practiced the Jewish faith. In fact, the Jewish community in the region has a more solid base than it had in 1995 and a greater sense of permanence. Jewish children learn about their history and traditions in summer camps, together with other young Jews from around the world. The Jewish cultural revival is turning into an identity banner. The Jewish region has retained its identity despite emigration waves. Not everyone who moved to the Holy Land stayed in Israel forever (Vitale, 2005). Some Jews are moving from Israel to Birobidzhan today also because of an intense sense of estrangement in Palestine and longing back for Siberia's magnificent wildlife, for the sense of community and uniqueness that one experiences in Birobidzhan, and for the human and personal relationships typical of a remote Siberian region. These aspects are certainly not surprising or rare in the global Jewish culture. Eric Maroney's seminal work (Maroney, 2010) has demonstrated that since antiquity, the ability of Jews to craft homelands for themselves in regions far from their imagined point of origins has been an important, if overlooked, part of their history. In 2013 the Russian government has announced a plan to offer a n 8,000 dollar aid (including direct financial help, airline ticket, coverage of moving expenses, and health insurance) to many immigrants – who did not even have to be Russian nationals – who would be willing to relocate to the JAR.

On the economic side, peaceful coexistence between ethnic and religious groups has proven to be very influential. The JAR's economy, based on mining, agriculture, lumber extraction, and light manufacturing, is doing well also because of an intensive exchange with the Chinese living beyond the border on the Amur. After the breakdown of the Soviet Union, cheap goods from China flooded the market, which has helped the local population to maintain an acceptable standard of living.

The JAR's gross regional product has reportedly increased by 50% since 2000. Its well-developed industrial and agricultural sectors and its rich resources of min-

erals and building materials are in great demand with the booming export of raw materials to China. Water is also abundant in the region, which is of great help to agriculture and animal breeding. Cattle and poultry are bred on the rich grassland, and an abundance of nectar-producing plants creates favourable conditions for beekeeping (Srebrnik, 2006, p. 18).

Transportation has also always been very favourable for the region. The Amur river connects the JAR to the Pacific Ocean. The Trans-Siberian railway links the region with western Russia, East Asia, and the Pacific. Russia and China completed a rail bridge across the Amur linking Russia's JAR to China's Heilongjiang province, providing about 5.2 million tons of annual freight turnover capacity with further work elsewhere increasing that to about 20 million tons.

## **5. IDENTITY, COEXISTENCE AND INTERETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE JAR**

The most interesting characteristic and unique feature of the JAR are the formations and the consolidation of local identity of a regional kind that came directly from its history. As Milton J. Esman wrote: "Ethnic identity can be on a spectrum between primordial historic continuities and instrumental opportunistic adaptation." (Esman, 1994, p. 15). Even though the Jewish Autonomous Region was created in 1934 to control the Jewish component of the Soviet Union with apartheid, assimilation, and even possibly fusion (*slijane nacij*: the "fusion" of nationalities, as a deliberate project) of different ethnonational components, this process did not occur at all. In fact, there is no cultural homogeneity or assimilation, even though many characteristics, typical of different peoples living in the region, became common. The region's inhabitants were used to seize different cultures and take what was better one from another (and above all to form a common substratum of Jewish cultural inspiration) for generations. This appeared very clear as the Soviet period ended because it became normal to declare one's own Jewish nationality, or to refer to this culture, even taking advantages, as for immigration to Israel. This historical aspect, with the spirit given by enthusiastic descendants of the first Jewish settlers, has been of paramount importance in the building of their unique regional identity that became quite normal for the coexistence among people taking the characteristics of Jewish culture. The natural conditions and the need to solve common problems of a typical Siberian region have always stimulated cooperative behaviour. Hence, the integration that occurred in the Jewish Autonomous Region is very far from that elaborated by the theorists of the assimilation. The reality of today's coexistence is the opposite of the assimilation paradigm (according to the Sociological School of Chicago of the first half of the 20th century) which considers culture homogeneous: identifications have not disappeared or

have even become dimmer. There has not occurred an assumption of values, rules, and models of behaviour (seen as static and not changeable) by minorities gained from the majority group, resulting in the loss of their ethnic distinctive characters with the fusion of differences – a process that Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess considered inevitable (Park and Burgess, 1921). Particularly in this case, there is a powerful interest in the local Jewish cultural characteristics as globally unique heritage, as a common point of reference, and as a clear source of regional pride. Even mixed marriages could create neither an amalgam nor assimilation. They have stimulated cultural life and the enrichment of the Jewish culture of the region, shared as a common culture of which one can be proud. Rather, there has always been an awareness of the relevance of ethnic differences and the differences as a source of enrichment.

The most interesting feature is the non-existence of ethnic prejudices such as anti-Semitism, which in Russia has had a long and tragic history. In fact, the Jewish people of the region have been able to oppose assimilation seeking soft forms of ethnonational conscience not in contrast with multicultural coexistence but stimulating reciprocal imitation. As a result, there was a process of “approaching” (Bromley, 1979) and “adaptation.” (Smith, 1984, p. 34). Ethnic groups of different origins, completely different in terms of cultural characteristics, took many aspects from other groups, producing common cultural traits. It corresponds to new approaches to the problem of integration (see, for example, Alba and Nee, 1997, pp. 826–874): culture, the basic element of a people, is seen as syncretism in permanent evolution, as a target of an amalgam of different influences. This is the reason why “natural assimilation” (Connor, 1994; Bari, 1995, p. 34), coming from cultural everyday interactions, did not occur. Reciprocal “acculturation” – typical in the conceptions of the 20th century (be it American or Soviet), and which is seen as a certain product of the succession of generations (“straight-line assimilation”) – has become untrue in the JAR. What is more important, “reactive ethnicity”, able to stimulate the “feeling of us” against the “other”, has not formed.

Nowadays diversity management in the JAR is based on cultural (not only Jewish) institutions that follow an old tradition of spontaneous cooperation between different ethnic groups. Cultural innovative programs continuously promote diversity management and interethnic coexistence, based on a very interesting Jewish “local” and “regional patriotism”, shared intensely by almost all the inhabitants of Birobidzhan and the region. In fact, the JAR lacks cultural exclusivism, uniformity, discrimination, and ethnocentrism, features typical of every kind of nationalism (Wehler, 2001), and self-isolation of ethnic minorities. The community has developed spontaneous forms of syncretism and of mutual comprehension among different ethnic groups (Nivat, 2013). The roots the inhabitants feel to share are not a product of a single identity or a fruit of assimilation but of the coexistence with different people, of mutual respect, frequent interactions, and



of common history that has created many links between individuals and groups<sup>21</sup> among which Jews are considered the pioneers. This Siberian “territory of the frontier” has contributed to the development of strong ties with the earth and the other settlers; a sort of “local patriotism” or “communitarian *mythomoteur*” (Smith, 1992, p. 72) that constantly renews itself and which does not disappear (as reflected in direct testimonies) in the Jewish people who moved to Israel and who continue to be called in Palestine “the Birobidzhancy”.

The “ethnic revival” of Jewish people (Rotschild, 1981) stimulates also children born in mixed marriages (contrary to what happened in the communities of Jewish people in the western part of the former Soviet Union) not to strive for assimilation but highlight the distinctive characteristics of the different cultures inhabiting the region, despite not having known their own origins for so long. This has been amplified by the renaissance of an “active Jewish culture” (because of the religious renaissance) and the elimination of the old contrast (of Soviet-type) between Yiddish culture and Hebraism. The “active culture” (Gitelman, 1991), contrary to the Jewish “passive” culture of the Soviet period<sup>22</sup>, has actually continued to stimulate the unique process of identity building.

Judaism in Birobidzhan takes a different physiognomy towards the exclusivity of blood (descendance from mother) and religion. Non-Jewish people mostly experience culture, a sort of integral way of life, a historically-based identity, as some scholars define it (Schnapper, 1980, p. 38) that does not stop the vision of current Hebraism. Thus, the local Hebraism has produced many forms of cultural patterns of reference which have created the basis for a culture rooted in Jewish characteristics, of which people are proud, shared by the inhabitants, which became the constituent myth of the local community, the source of identity, and “the culture of reference”. As a result, territoriality means, in this case, the sheer process of personal and collective identity building and self-identification.

Russians, Ukrainians, and Byelorussians who reached the region at different times and in several immigration waves considered the region their own and they often described their traditions as rooted in Jewish history and culture, viewing them as parts of their own history. Their interest in Jewish culture, habits, and the everyday way of life has been developing along with their interest in the Yiddish language. Although throughout the world many languages are endangered, Yiddish is experimenting with a consistent revival in the region. The Nazi tried to destroy *Yidishkayt* in Europe, but here it is still alive and throbbing.

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<sup>21</sup> Connor, 1994 (Bari, 1995, pp. 103–104 and 234).

<sup>22</sup> The Bolsheviks tried to build an atmosphere where Jewish culture would be a passive one. However, Jews were different from other ethnic groups (nations) in Russia because there was a religious identity tied to their cultural identity that could not be disabled. The aim of assimilation was eliminate religious identity. However, an artificially created void would need to be filled with something. A secular Yiddish culture with “a socialist base” seemed to be a friendly approach.

The Jewish people of the region do not consider themselves members of the world's Jewish Diaspora but think of the region simply as one of many "world's Hebraism twigs". They do not feel as the "curriers" of a "vicarious nationalism" (Smith, 1992, p. 314), referred to as other ethnonational fragments dispersed in different parts of the world.

## 6. THE JAR IN THE POST-SOVIET POLITICAL SYSTEM

Within an atmosphere of very heated debates about nationality, Jews struggled to find a place to call home after the Revolution, to secure a future for Yiddish as a specific culture and language: the territorialisation (the typical element of nationality advocated by Stalin) inspired support to Birobidzhan. Many scholars have defined the story of the JAR as a "failure"<sup>23</sup>, "a sad and absurd history", "the concentrated tragic absurdity of Birobidzhan" (Gessen, 2016), and the region as "an exile more than a home", "an exotic attraction" (Maksimowska, 2018), "a utopia", "a Jewish Disneyland" "a parody of the world history of the Jewish people", "a caricature of Israel", "the false Zion", "the unfulfilled dream of a Jewish homeland" (Stolberg, 1999b), "a relic of a failed Soviet project" "the failed experiment of a failed system", and so on. But is that correct?

The main problem of the post-Soviet political system is that the potential offered by cooperation and coexistence have continued to be hindered by the difficulties with a steady protection of minorities – even though they do not have the typical problems of minorities – through constitutional tools (federalism and stable self-rule) (Schlesinger, 1970<sup>2</sup>; Smith, 1986; Vitale, 1999; Wehler, 2001), and the difficulty to protect the region from strong interferences continuously raised by the over-centralised power, which could always threaten the fragile and unique balance between ethnic groups peacefully living in the JAR. A possible "imbalance" stimulated by the political centralisation and its obsessive planning could today encourage even a new emigration of Jewish people to Israel. The political system of post-Soviet Russia does not offer guarantees for the development of spontaneous diversity management in the region, and for keeping pluralism and coexistence, especially considering the current revival of xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and discrimination of a different kind in the European part of Russia, which is tolerated by the government. Moreover, the reform of the federal structure deprived Russian regions not only of a part of their political autonomy but also of their economic resources. Since then, the regions have delivered an increasing

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<sup>23</sup> "The mass departure from the JAR, once conceived as the Soviet/Russian Jewish homeland, made the failure of the entire project particularly evident," (Estraiikh, 2019, p. 69). Already Stalin and Khrushchev declared the JAR of Birobidzhan "a failure".

share of their tax revenues to Moscow, which has continued to deplete its funds. As a result, the Russian system became an increasingly “apparent federal system”, a Soviet-type of “*façade federalism*” that can revoke at any time the status of autonomy and impose harsh conditions, which could destroy this balance of spontaneously self-formed relations. “Cosmetic autonomies” (see Nosov, 1996, p. 208) are only a mirror of a hierarchic vertical system, one which is federal only in appearance<sup>24</sup>: a sort of *fédéralisme inauthentique* (Beaud, 1996, p. 42), *de facto* aborted and based on the dependency relation between the centre and the peripheries (Sharlet, 1994, p. 125). This system lacks intergovernmental relations as in other federations and parity between “federal subjects” and its centralised government. Not surprisingly, typically the JAR has many problems with its financial independence.

Russia’s political structure is still based on the national/territorial principle (the recognition – of Soviet origin – of nationality as “the owner” of the territory) in the definition of the administrative rule of republics and regions: the most threatening factor for a federal system.<sup>25</sup> This condition is more and more likely to generate additional problems among local minorities. When the principle of ethnic homogeneity remains the basis of the constituent unities of a federation, this increases the force of external attraction which can cause internal interethnic conflicts.<sup>26</sup> Federalism and self-rule – as shown by the Yugoslav and Soviet collapses – work well only in the absence of ethnic homogeneous federate entities. Jewish people have never constituted a majority in the region yet in fact it remains Jewish in terms of its culture. This made it harder for the Jewish national and cultural institutions to dominate the region (Goldberg, 1961, p. 226), even if it is truly remarkable how much *yidishkayt*, in all of its variety, can endure, and Russian political class’ efforts seemed more designed to cripple a nascent civil society rather than to help it mature and grow (Taylor, 2011, p. 204).

All the best characteristics of the JAR are developing under the most unfavourable political and administrative conditions. Increasing centralisation (especially after the constitutional reform of August 2020) makes the centre vs. periphery relations tense and unstable. Similarly, the hierarchic administrative structure and the lack of governmental, independent responsibilities in the regional sphere remain impactful

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<sup>24</sup> See Bassani, Stewart, Vitale, 1995. On the formal federal structure of Russia, redesigned by centralisation of Eltsin in 1993, see Sharlet, 1994, pp. 115–127, and *La Costituzione della Federazione Russa*, Milan, 1994; introd., transl. and ed. by A. Vitale.

<sup>25</sup> Elazar, 1987 (Milan, 1995, p. 194). Ethnic nationalism is the most egocentric (and irreducible) form of nationalism, the most complicated base on which one can build a system of constitutional power-sharing (a functioning and peaceful federal system). Language, religion, national myths, and so on tend to divide people sharply and to create the most difficult conditions for maintaining the unstable balances typical of a federal system.

<sup>26</sup> External pressures on ethnic not satisfied minorities can very easily produce interethnic conflicts. (Duchacek, 1987, p. 288).

and the dependency on centralised decisions can aggravate several problems in the delicate system of interethnic relations in the JAR. In fact, the centralised government could always intervene in linguistic, cultural, and religious policies altering the balance given by the original and unique coexistence characterised by a special “regional patriotism”, based on a deep sense of cultural affinity.

The JAR depends on the decision-making process of the centralised government, that constantly threatens self-governing groups, and risks crippling the activity of the independent organisations of the local civil society, which is essential for the renaissance of the region. Only an authentic federal system based on the shared rule, self-rule, and limited rule could preserve and merge the amazing spontaneous formation of the interethnic coexistence inside the region. As Antony D. Smith wrote: “The federal solutions help to minimize the ethnic antagonisms and to assure the political recognition to territorialist entities and cultures.” (Smith, 1992, p. 547). The Birobidzhan project may still have relevance today as an example of unexpected consequences of a national planned system, which has produced spontaneous ethnic coexistence, and even a sort of “local, geographic patriotism”, despite its location within a permanently dangerous, over-centralised political system that leaves nothing to self-government. However, the problem is that only the evolution of the JAR towards self-rule within an authentic federal system could protect the region from the continuing threats caused by centralised power decisions, which are potentially dangerous for the delicate interethnic relations management and coexistence.

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## NOTES, COMMENTARIES AND REPORTS

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### BOUND BY HISTORY: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO POLISH-JEWISH RELATIONS

Inter-ethnic relations, in majority vs. minority terms, are an extremely complex subject, almost always topical, with social and often also political resonance. It requires from researchers, not only those professionally involved in science, pardon this platitude, appropriate substantive background, often very specialised (which can be reduced to having insightful knowledge in a particular era or type of mutual relations), and at the same time characterised by far-reaching sensitivity and empathy. The efforts to undertake in-depth scientific reflection, expressed as, among others, the principle of maintaining objectivity, are generally accompanied by a certain amount of emotions. They come to light when one enters the realm of the experiences of the members of groups subjected to some sort of discrimination or pushed – by means of more sophisticated and veiled methods – to the margins of social life; I am referring to communities generally considered minorities which were (and sometimes still are) an integral part of many countries, regions, cities and villages, who creatively found

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themselves within them, only to become absent or almost relict in such places, usually through no fault of their own.

In Poland, Jews were one of the minorities that for centuries have had complex, albeit unequal, relations with the populous, politically and culturally dominant nation, whose broadly defined interests were guarded by the rulers of that country. Pushed aside to the margins of social life – with different dynamics, and often selectively, depending on the historical period – with the order to occupy and organise specific parts of space, not always according to their own needs, they were met by those in power with relative respect for their cultural differences. The result of such an attitude was a fairly unhindered material existence of the followers of Judaism and a certain freedom for them to practise religious worship. As a result of such an arrangement of relations, after several centuries, the largest concentration of the Jewish nation in the world formed in Poland, being at the same time the most intellectually and culturally creative of all (Rykała, 2018, p. 94; 2020, p. 9). This legacy was turned into rubble in the mid-20th century by the Third Reich's extermination efforts. It consumed the lives of 3 million Polish Jews (about 90% of the total population) (Adelson, 1993, p. 387; Cała and Dąbner-Śpiewak, 1997, p. 9; Rykała, 2007, p. 17; Eberhardt, 2010, p. 93, 107, 110). As a result of these barbaric acts, the unique material and spiritual legacy of the Jewish people on Polish soil was also irretrievably destroyed.

Although the main culprits of this unprecedented extermination – which exceeded the horizon of human experience to date – were the “unruly Nazi bandits”<sup>1</sup>, one cannot ignore the “Polish «neighbours», who hunted Jews, sometimes with no less ferocity” (Rykała, 2020, p. 18). The anti-Semitic violence committed by a section of Polish society during the Second World War and immediately afterwards was a function of the continuity of anti-Jewish attitudes and sentiments which existed at least since the 1930s, strengthened by the occupant's legal system and by the massive anti-Semitic Nazi propaganda. As Alina Cała (2014, p. 27) stated ethnic cleansing, which began with the deportations conducted by the Nazis and culminating in the 1968 expulsion of Jews from Poland, occurred on Polish soil.

Various dimensions and shades of Polish-Jewish relations, which started generally in the 16th and ending in the 20th century, were discussed in a multi-year interdisciplinary research project launched in 2018, financed by the Minister of Culture and National Heritage (MKiDN) within the framework of the NIE-PODLEGŁA (INDEPENDENT) Multiannual Programme for 2017–2022. A grant with the full title: *Bound by history. Polish-Jewish relations on Polish soil*, is led by prof. Anna Landau-Czajka, a historian and sociologist at the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences. “We mean to present,” the project's head explains, “both cooperation and rivalry or conflicts, and the differ-

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<sup>1</sup> A term taken from the proclamation “Almost all of Poland is free”. Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute (JHI), Central Committee of Jews in Poland, bureau and agency, ref. 303/1/7.

ent dimensions of coexistence between representatives of two nationalities on Polish soil throughout history<sup>2</sup>.” Despite the broad time span of the issues discussed, it is anticipated that the bulk of the deliberations will be devoted to the inter-war period and the Second World War. The project will be followed by the publication of several monographs and a series of volumes edited by researchers specialising in the issues of mutual relations between the two nations.

The project had a symbolic inauguration – a kind of an opening ceremony. It took the form of a conference having the same title as the whole research project. It was held on 16 November 2018 at the E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. The choice of the venue was no accident. This institution, with great accomplishments for Polish science and culture, and an unquestionable status as the most important institution in the field of research into the history of Polish Jews and promotion of the material and spiritual achievements of this minority, is one of the project partners, along with the Institute of Jewish Studies at the Jagiellonian University, the Institute of Sociological Sciences and Pedagogy of the Warsaw University of Life Sciences, and the Department of Social History of the 19th and 20th Centuries of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

The conference was the first stage in the implementation of a project intended to progress, as mentioned, over several years. The main idea of this meeting was to present the basic assumptions of the grant and to create a forum for the presentation of short speeches presenting the research problems planned by the speakers in the coming year. The conference was divided into 6 thematic panels, which were intended to correspond to later monograph volumes. The research problems discussed during speeches were to be reflected in the form of chapters comprising individual published items.

The first session, entitled “Cities and Towns”, discussed, among others, the antagonisms and connections between Jews, townsmen and nobility in Warsaw in the 17th–18th centuries (discussed by Paweł Fijałkowski), the perception of Jews from the perspective of the Polish landowner’s manor in the 19th and 20th centuries (Tadeusz Epsztein), the planes of cooperation and conflicts in the rural environment of interwar Poland (Sławomir Mańko), the attitude of Vilnius Jews in the years 1918–1922 towards their affinity to Poland or Lithuania (Paweł Rokicki), or the Christian-Jewish criminal world – under a very telling title: “Between a safecracker and a pimp” – in interwar Warsaw, using the example of Ostrowska Street (Mateusz Rodak).

During the panel “Power and Politics”, chaired by the director of the Jewish Historical Institute, Paweł Śpiwak, the lecturers outlined similarly diverse research plans as those presented in the session devoted to cities. This multithreaded landscape consisted of proposals for research relating to, e.g.: the situation of the Jew-

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<sup>2</sup> Excerpt from Anna Landau-Czajka’s speech at the inauguration of the conference “Bound by history. Polish-Jewish relations on Polish soil” 16 November 2018 (author’s note).

ish soldiers interned in Jabłonna in the Battle of Warsaw of 1920 (discussion by Christhardt Henschel), the participation of Jews in the Krakow City Council in the 19th century (Hanna Koziańska-Witt), the issue of the block of three nationalities (Polish, Jewish and Ukrainian) in the city council in the Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic (Wacław Wierzbieniec), the Jewish Religious Self-Government in the same period (Rafał Żebrowski), the area of cooperation between Polish and Jewish youth within communist organisations (Sandra Tomczak), and the activities of the Special Commission (Jewish Self-Defense) after the Second World War, with particular emphasis on Łódź and the Łódź region (Andrzej Rykała).

The Polish-Jewish relations, which were the main cause for establishing one's own (para)military formations just after the war, as discussed in the last lecture, were presented, this time in an extremely tragic dimension, also in the next panel, entitled The Holocaust. It could only be devoted to this unprecedented genocide in the world history. During this session, the participants discussed, e.g. the activities of Polish tax collectors towards the inhabitants of the Warsaw Ghetto (a sketch presented by Marta Janczewska), the denunciation of Jews and how they were blackmailed in occupied Krakow (Martyna Grądzka-Rejak), the reactions of the Polish Socialist Party activists in the Krakow district to the extermination of the Jewish population (Katarzyna Kocik), and the attitudes of the Polish population in the Lublin district towards the consequences of the extermination of Jews in the years 1943–1944 (Janusz Kłapeć).

The forum in the form of a separate panel was also made available to speakers specialising in economic issues. During the speeches (and discussions) under the "Economy and professional environments" title, *scenarios* of potential studies (subject, scope, often also methodological assumptions) were outlined. The future authors made the following issues the objects of their research: Jewish printers active in Lublin in the 16th and 17th centuries (presented by Magdalena Bendowska), Polish-Jewish advocacy circles (Izabela Mrzygłód), mathematical circles (Wiesław Wójcik), trade unions (Magdalena Kozłowska), including filmmakers (Katarzyna Czajka-Kominiarczuk), and cooperative circles (Piotr Kendziorek) in Poland during the interwar period.

The publishing plans also recognise, in the form of a separate volume, the sphere of culture in the broadest sense of the word, which is extremely important for maintaining the national and religious identity of Jews. Its manifestations examined by speakers and potential authors. The topics included, among others, the anti-Semitic depictions in selected old-Polish leaflets (Marta Wojas), the presentation of peasants as a collective character in humorous and satirical creations in the Jewish press in the interwar period (Agnieszka Żółkiewska), the mythologisation of B'nai Brith's activity in the Polish anti-Semitic and nationalist press (Larysa Michalska), Polish-Jewish relations in the light of the memories of Yiddish writers who survived in the USSR using the example of the work of Awrom Zak (Magdalena Ruta), and the relations between these communities in contemporary Polish literature for children about the Holocaust (Krzysztof Rybak).

During the conference, there were two curatorial tours by Dr Agnieszka Żółkiewska (JHI) of the temporary exhibition *Free Bird/Der Frajer Fojgl*<sup>3</sup>. *Caricature in the Jewish press in independent Poland* (Fig. 1). It has been the first and largest exhibition of satirical drawings published in the Jewish press to date (between 1919 and 1939), both in Yiddish and in Polish. It presents an extensive collection of drawings showing the political, social and moral problems which Polish Jews faced during the interwar period. The drawings, despite their humorous overtones, formed a poignant tale of the highlights and shadows of the life of the Jewish community in the twenty years' period prior to the turning of the “most tragic page in the history of the Jewish people,”<sup>4</sup> i.e. the Holocaust.

The authors of the drawings presented at the exhibition were artists gifted with an extraordinary talent and a sense of humour that matched it: Jakub Bickels, Szaja Fajgenbojm, Samuel Finkelstein, Chaim Goldberg, Fryderyk Kleinman, Artur Szyk, Ignacy Witz and other, sometimes anonymous, cartoonists. Many died during the Shoah, leaving behind, often as their only memento, the works displayed in the exhibition.

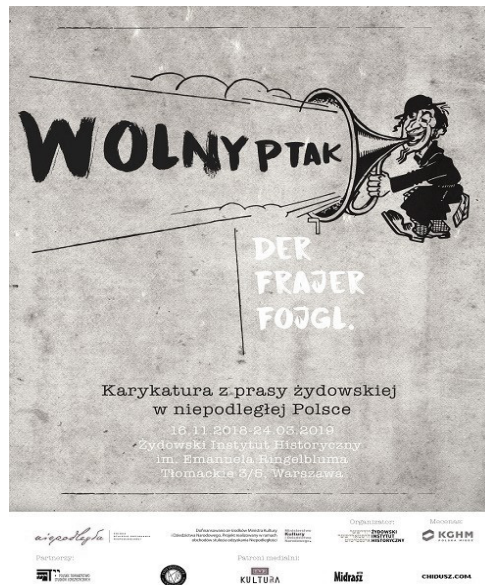


Fig. 1. Poster for the exhibition of caricatures from the Jewish press in independent Poland

Source: E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

<sup>3</sup> The title was taken from the masthead of one of the first satirical weeklies “Der Frajer Fojgel”. The graphic sign of the magazine referred to the symbol of the independent Polish state – the White Eagle.

<sup>4</sup> The phrase comes from a report by F. Friedman, the director of the Central Jewish Historical Commission, which operated after the Second World War. Archive of the JHI, Central Jewish Historical Commission, ref. 303/XX/37.

The exhibition was followed by a bilingual (Polish-English) album with satirical drawings published in the Jewish press in 1919–1939, compiled by Agnieszka Żółkiewska (Fig. 2–3).



Fig. 2–3. The *Wolny Ptak/Der Frajer Fojgl. Humor z prasy żydowskiej w Polsce niepodległej* album, edited by Agnieszka Żółkiewska (Warsaw, 2019).

Source: phot. by A. Rykała.

Most of the plans and research drafts presented at the November conference were developed in the form of extensive papers in the following year. On 20–22 November 2019, once again in Warsaw, the JHI held another scientific conference entitled “Bound by history. Polish-Jewish relations on Polish soil.” Its title was therefore identical to the previous one and coincided with the topic of the research project, under way at that time. However, the list of participants did not exactly

match that of the previous year. Minor differences also could be found in the topics of individual panels and a thematically diverse opening session during the second grant meeting. This part, chaired by Paweł Śpiwak, the director of the Jewish Historical Institute, was devoted to some of the issues already discussed the previous year, namely the interwar Christian-Jewish criminal world of Warsaw (Mateusz Rodak), and Jewish self-defence after the Shoah (Andrzej Rykała), as well as, for the first time, the activities of Jewish envoys during the Sejm meetings of the Republic of Poland in the 16th–18th century (Anna Michałowska-Mycielska), and the attitudes of rabbis towards the Second Polish Republic (Jolanta Żyndul).

The other panellists presented in the following thematic sessions: (i) Holocaust – e.g. Alicja Jarkowska-Natkaniec discussed the subject of blackmailers and informers in Krakow during the Second World War; Justyna Majewska examined the exchange of flats between Poles and Jews during the creation of ghettos on selected examples from cities in occupied Poland; Michał Grochowski researched Polish-Jewish smuggling companies and their participation in supplying the Warsaw Ghetto; Maria Sławek traced the Holocaust theme in the compositional work of Mieczysław Weinberg; (ii) Culture – e.g. Anna Kuligowska-Korzeniewska presented the “dybukification” of Polish theatre; Agnieszka Kajczyk discussed the Jewish film community in post-war Poland until 1950; Jacek Drozda traced Warsaw street politics in the autobiography of the revolutionary Hersz Mendel and in the novel by Szczepan Twardoch entitled *The King*, and Anna Landau-Czajka examined the ambiguity of the term “goy”; (iii) Locality and towns – e.g., Marian Skwara presented the situation of Jews in Pruszków from the establishment of the Jewish community to their deportation to the Warsaw ghetto; Katarzyna Thomas analysed Polish-Jewish relations in Drohobycz between 1918 and 1939, and Maria Misztal examined the influence of repatriation experiences on the attitudes of the representatives of both nationalities in Lower Silesia after the Second World War; (iv) Economy – e.g. Alicja Maślak-Maciejewska talked about the charity initiatives of progressive Jews in Krakow in the 19th century; Przemysław Zarubin examined the role of Jews in the economic life of Krakow and its surroundings during the period of Galician autonomy (1860–1914), and Michał Grochowski discussed the topic of the employment of Poles in the shed in the Warsaw Ghetto; (v) Power and politics – e.g. Katarzyna Kocik analysed the attitude of the Polish Socialist Party towards the Jewish question in interwar Poland; Maciej Moszyński discussed the activity of the Jewish People’s Council in Max Kollenscher’s memoirs, and Katarzyna Person traced the fortunes of Poles and Jews from Poland in Bergen-Belsen DP camp; (vi) Remembrance – e.g. Andrzej Czyżewski discussed the official commemoration of the history of the Lodz Ghetto in the People’s Republic of Poland; Piotr Kendziorek examined psychoanalytical categories as an instrument for describing the consequences of the Shoah in the Polish collective consciousness, and Krzysztof Czajka-Kalinowski analysed the digitisation and presentation of collections as a tool of historical awareness.

An exceptional, thoroughly ceremonial point of the second symposium was a meeting devoted to a book by dr hab. Jan Doktór, researcher at the Jewish Historical Institute, entitled *Brothers, strangers or fellow citizens. Christian debates on Judaism and its followers in Europe until the early 19th century* (Fig. 4). This item is the first in a series of volumes published by the Jewish Historical Institute devoted to Polish-Jewish relations<sup>5</sup>. The discussion with the author was hosted by prof. Stanisław Obirek, theologian, historian and cultural anthropologist, and Anna Landau-Czajka. The book presents, as was presented during the meeting, Christian debates on Jews and Judaism, from the late Middle Ages to the French Revolution. It presents the changes in the perception of Judaism by Christians, along with an attempt to find an answer to the question: could Christians and Jews, from the perspective of two millennia, have established permanent rules of coexistence?

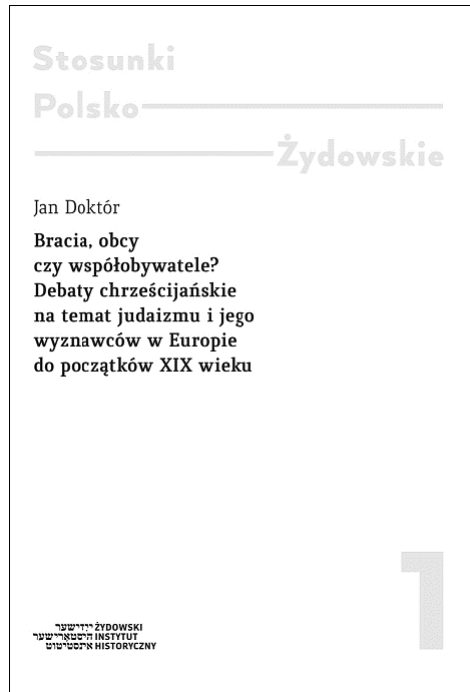


Fig. 4. The cover of Jan Doktór's book

Source: E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

<sup>5</sup> The publication is co-financed by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage under the NIEPOD-LEGLA Multiannual Programme for the years 2017–2022, and the Taube Center for the Renewal of Jewish Life in Poland Foundation.



“In his book *Brothers, Strangers or Fellow Citizens*,” said Stanisław Obirek, “Jan Doktor presents in a synthetic and insightful way, on the basis of various sources, the debates conducted by Christians in different parts of Europe on Judaism and its followers. Starting with the arguments of St. Augustine, and concluding with projects of equal rights for Jews from the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, he chooses from this rich material some key cases, sometimes some also less known, such as the Barcelona dispute of 1263 or the writings of Marcin Czechowic, a member of the Polish Brethren. A particular value of the work is, on the one hand, the presentation of the polemics concerning Judaism in the context of the developing culture of print, and, on the other, the discussions and initiatives undertaken on Polish soil against the background of European debates.

The centuries-old disputes between Christians and Jews in Jan Doktor’s book have been divided into nine chapters, each of which is a miniature monograph, which could easily be developed into a thick volume. It should, therefore, be regarded as a great achievement, both scientific and promotional,” Obirek concluded, “that it has sometimes been possible to capture on several pages the essence of very complex phenomena that far exceeded sheer religious differences.”

As in the previous year, the conference also featured a curatorial tour, this time by dr Katarzyna Person (JHI), of the temporary exhibition *Polenaktion! October, 1938. The Story of the Expellees from Germany*, devoted to the anniversary of a forgotten and, above all, little known event from eighty years ago (Fig. 5). The purpose of the action, announced on 26 October 1938 and carried out mainly on 28 and 29 October, was to deport Polish Jews from the Third Reich. In just two days, 17,000 people were expelled. It was one of the largest and unprecedented manifestations of the growing persecution of Jews by the Third Reich. However, the action did not remain unrelated to Poland. Apart from citizenship, this was influenced by the adoption by the Sejm in March of the same year of the provision on revoking Polish citizenship for compatriots who lived abroad for more than five years. The decision was aimed primarily at the Jews, whose return was becoming more and more of an issue, especially in the case of Germany, with its growing anti-Semitic persecution. The adoption of the law was intended to effectively block this return. Among the exiles there were Jews who went there as children and even those born in Germany. Their sense of connection with Poland was generally weak and many of them did not even speak Polish.

These stateless Jews were placed in the transition camp established in Zbąszyń – a town located on the then Polish-German border. Those who had family ties to Poland and adequate financial resources were able to leave this place after some effort. However, several thousand people remained in Zbąszyń in tragic conditions.



Fig. 5. Poster from the exhibition devoted to the expulsion of Polish Jews from Germany in October 1938  
Source: E. Ringelblum Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw.

Emanuel Ringelblum, the patron of the Jewish Historical Institute, joined in helping those in Zbąszyń. He participated in a huge aid and logistics project, organised mainly by charitable institutions, including the Polish Red Cross. “By also gathering the accounts of the exiles, Ringelblum gained experience which proved crucial in his organisation of the Underground Archive of the Warsaw Ghetto – the most important collection of our Institute”, said the curator of the exhibition<sup>6</sup>. The camp in Zbąszyń was closed down in August 1939, just before the outbreak of the Second World War.

*Polenaktion* was shown through the perspective of the victims’ individual fates. The main thread of the exhibition were the stories of six Jewish families from Berlin. The exhibition was divided into three chronologically arranged chapters: “Life in Berlin before 1938”, “Deportations in October 1938”, and “The history of persecution and rescue”. This three-part approach was underscored by photographs, documents, accounts, memories and letters of deported family members, as well as maps with the routes of their deportation and subsequent movements.

The following institutions were responsible for the substantive preparation of the exhibition: The Department of History of the Institute for East European Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin, and the Actives Museum in Berlin. It was organised by the Jewish Historical Institute. The exhibition was an extremely valuable addition to the meeting, perfectly fitting the theme of inter-ethnic relations.

<sup>6</sup> Excerpt from the speech given during the curatorial tour (author’s note).

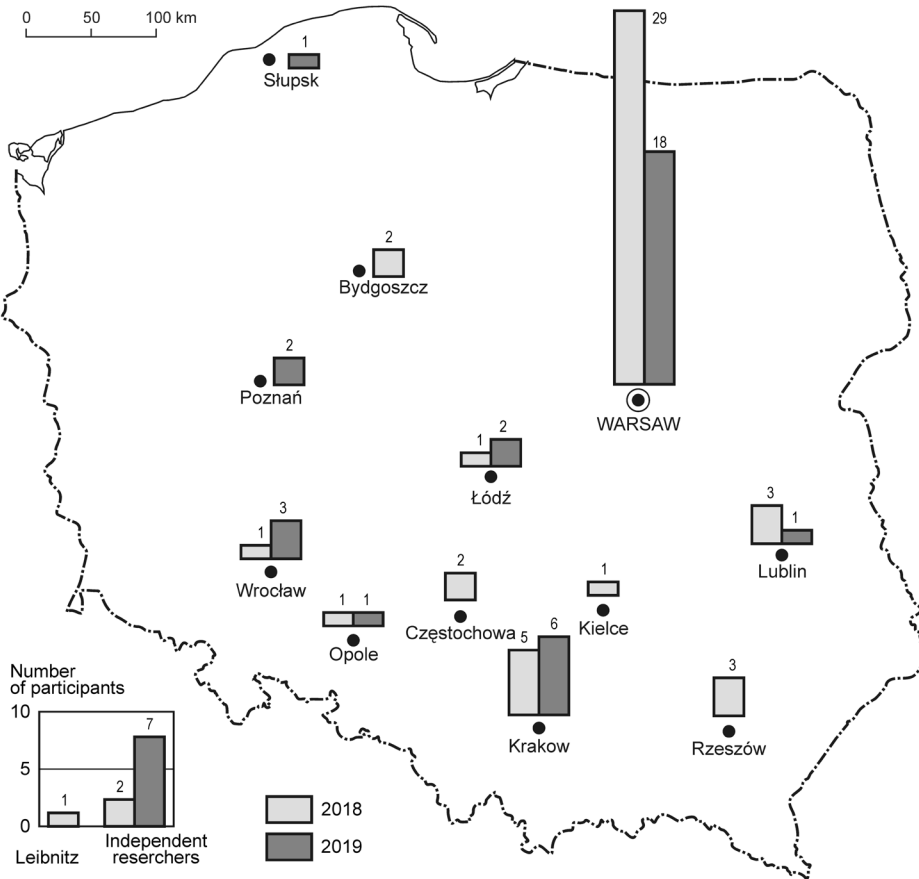


Fig. 6. Number of participants and the cities they represented at the conferences on Polish-Jewish relations in 2018 and 2019

Source: own work.

Both conferences were forums for very varied, original and interesting presentations, encouraging inspiring discussions, providing plenty of material for similarly promising publications. “Bound by history” is an exemplarily interdisciplinary project. Its participants are not only historians, though they dominate by far in terms of numbers and contributions, but also representatives of other fields of science: sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, literary studies, art history, Jewish studies, and geography. The authors’ use of their respective scientific tools did not preclude them from employing an interdisciplinary approach in many cases. Apart from the representatives of scientific institutions (both recognised independent employees and young doctors and doctoral students), journalists and social activists, active in the field of local history research and involved in pre-

servicing the relics of the multicultural heritage of small towns, were included in the project. During both conferences a total of 92 papers were delivered (51 in the first and 41 in the second). The speakers, and potential authors of the chapters in the monographs, represented the following cities: Warsaw, Łódź, Krakow, Wrocław, Częstochowa, Opole, Rzeszów, Bydgoszcz, Lublin, Kielce, Poznań, Słupsk, and Leibnitz (Fig. 6). Thanks to this spatial scale, an interesting cross-section has been presented of the latest research on Polish-Jewish relations from the 16th to 20th century.

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Anna M. ROSNER \*

## MAJER BALABAN'S COMPETITION FOR THE BEST MA AND PHD THESIS ON JEWISH HISTORY AND CULTURE

Among many events held at the Jewish Historical Institute the **Majer Balaban Contest for the best Master's and Doctoral thesis on the Jewish subject matter**<sup>1</sup> definitely deserves some closer attention. The 9th edition of this biannual event was held last year and the winners were announced in the autumn of 2020.

The major goals of the contest indicated in its terms and conditions are: to contribute to the development of Polish humanities; to promote people's knowledge of Polish Jews, including their history and culture; to promote researchers who study the subject; and, finally, to create a central information database on the state of the research.

The contest has been held biannually since 1990 with just a short break in the 1990s. Its reputation and reach have been growing steadily as more participants submit their works with each incoming edition. The laureates, who participate in the contest at the very beginning of their scientific careers, commonly become major figures of the academia in the broadly understood humanities focused on Jewish history and culture. Those have included such researchers as Professor Barbara Engelking (today the head of the Polish Centre for Holocaust Research at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences), Professor Michał Galas (the head of the Institute of Jewish Studies of the Jagiellonian University), and Professor Andrzej Żbikowski (the head of the Research Department at the Jewish Historical Institute).

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<sup>1</sup> Konkurs im. Majera Bałabana na najlepsze prace doktorskie i magisterskie o Żydach i Izraelu.

The 9th edition of the contest was organised under the patronage of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, the Embassy of Israel in Warsaw, and the Tadeusz Manteuffel Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences. It differed from earlier editions mostly due to the pandemic reality which forced the organisers to move all the activities around the contest online. The jury faced an incredibly hard task as the number of submissions exceeded those from previous years with as many as seventeen Ph.D. thesis and seventeen M.A. dissertations. Many of them discussed topics which were extremely rarely researched or which have never been researched before. A majority of them focused on the 20th century and the Shoah, though there were also entries which discussed earlier centuries, as well as some which focussed on other scientific fields such as literary studies, sociology, history, art, political studies, and the history of law. The 9th edition different a lot from the 8<sup>th</sup> edition as in 2018 it was micro-history as well as local history, together with literature studies, which dominated. There were also numerous entries on anti-Semitism, and Jewish identification both withing the Jewish world and in non-Jewish communities.

In the Ph.D. thesis category, two *ex aequo* winners, i.e. **Karolina Panz, Ph.D.**, for her work on the micro-historical perspective applied to the Holocaust victims from the city of Nowy Targ<sup>2</sup>, which she defended at the University of Warsaw, and **Mikołaj Smykowski, Ph.D.**, for his study of the Shoah's ecology and a critical post-camp landscape anthropology study using the example of the Chełm nad Nerem camp<sup>3</sup>, which he wrote at the Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań. The runner-up was **Jan Borowicz, Ph.D.**, University of Warsaw, for his dissertation on Holocaust perversions and the position of the Polish witness<sup>4</sup>.

In the MA dissertation category, the winner was **Krzysztof Bielawski, M.A.**, the University of Warsaw, for his work on the destruction of Jewish burial grounds in Poland after 1933<sup>5</sup>. The runner-up was **Joanna Zych, M.A.**, the War Studies Academy, for her dissertation on a comparative analysis of Zionist armed organisations before 1948<sup>6</sup>. The second runner-up was **Katarzyna Kiejrys, M.A.**, the University of Warsaw, who wrote a thesis on American anti-Semitism in the colonial era<sup>7</sup>.

Graduates of both M.A. and Ph.D. studies willing to participate need to submit their works in Polish; if a dissertation is written in a foreign language, it needs to be defended at a Polish university. The submission needs to be supported by

<sup>2</sup> *Zagłada żydowskich mieszkańców Nowego Targu w perspektywie mikrohistorycznej.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ekologie Zagłady. Krytyczne studium z antropologii krajobrazu poobozowego na przykładzie Byłego Obozu Zagłady w Chełmie nad Nerem.*

<sup>4</sup> *Perwersje holokaustowe. Pozycja polskiego świadka.*

<sup>5</sup> *Destrukcyjna cmentarzy żydowskich na terenach obecnej Polski po 1933 roku.*

<sup>6</sup> *Zbrojne organizacje ruchu syjonistycznego przed 1948 r. – analiza porównawcza.*

<sup>7</sup> *Old Sentiments in the New World. Patterns of American Antisemitism from the Colonial Times through the Nineteenth Century.*

a letter of recommendation from the graduate's scientific tutor. Contest winners receive a diploma along with a cash prize. Additionally, they are offered the opportunity to present their paper at the Jewish Historical Institute seminar. They are also asked to submit an article to the Institute's quarterly: *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*. Many of the recognised works have been published as monographs, some by the Institute's publisher.





## PART II

Giancarlo COTELLA , Umberto JANIN RIVOLIN , Elena PEDE ,  
Maurizio PIOLETTI 

### MULTI-LEVEL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE: A EUROPEAN TYPOLOGY

**Abstract.** The European Union identifies the regional level as the ideal spatial scale for resources' redistribution, in so doing turning European regions into key spatial development players. This raises challenges due to the heterogeneity of the EU in terms of administrative configurations, and spatial governance and planning systems. The contribution of this article draws on the results of three interlinked ESPON research projects to shed light on the matter. Building on an overview of the institutional variables that may influence successful regional development, it proposes a typology of multi-level regional development governance in the EU and reflects upon the potentials for delivering economic, social, and territorial cohesion.

**Key words:** EU cohesion policy, multi-level governance, territorial governance, spatial planning systems, regional development.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Since the establishment of the cohesion policy in the late 1980s and the subsequent reform of the Structural Funds, the European Union (EU) has been investing in the cohesive spatial development of countries and regions. As a consequence, the development of synergies between supranational and domestic regional policy has gained importance over time, especially with the financial constraints cast by the global financial crisis on national public budgets. Despite the undisputed role played by Member States' national governments<sup>1</sup>, the European Commission identified the regional level as the main operational channel for setting up development programmes and managing funds, while at the same time dedicating increasing attention to the engagement of local actors and institutions<sup>2</sup>.

This articulated approach raises a number of issues in relation to the institutional heterogeneity that characterises the European context. Particularly, while the authorities responsible for delivering EU cohesion policy have generally been identified with the NUTS2 level<sup>3</sup>, not all countries feature such administrative layer. Moreover, even when NUTS2 regions exist, they may be either fully autonomous federal units (e.g. Austria, Germany), directly elected subnational entities (e.g. Italy, Poland, Spain), non-elected bodies characterised by second-level democracy, or directly nominated by the central government (e.g. Portugal) or purely statistical units (e.g. Hungary, Slovenia). Similarly, EU countries and regions differ significantly in a number of other issues that, directly or indirectly, impact the governance of spatial development: their administrative and technical cultures, the spatial governance and planning systems, the quality of governance, etc. Such heterogeneity constitutes a challenge when aiming at achieving the EU objective of economic, social, and territorial cohesion, and shall be carefully considered in policy development.

To provide a contribution in this direction, this article develops a typology of multi-level regional development governance in the EU and uses it to reflect on the

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<sup>1</sup> The research projects upon which the paper is grounded were completed before the conclusion of the Brexit process, and the produced typology builds on evidence collected in relation to the 2007–2013 and the 2014–2020 EU programming periods. In this light, the United Kingdom is also included in the analysis.

<sup>2</sup> Further attention dedicated to local actors and institutions is demonstrated by the multiplication of instruments dedicated to the development of integrated territorial and urban strategies (e.g. Integrated Territorial Investments and the Community Led Local Development approach) and, more in general, by the growing relevance awarded to the urban and metropolitan dimension within the EU cohesion policy since the 2000s (Medeiros, 2019; Cotella, 2019; Armondi and De Gregorio Hurtado, 2020). However, in most cases, the choice to activate new tools and to introduce new governance models remains in the hands of the national and regional authorities, as recently highlighted by the ESPON METRO project (ESPON, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> The Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics (NUTS) is a geocode standard for referencing the subdivisions of countries for statistical purposes. It has been developed and regulated by the EU and is instrumental in the Structural Fund delivery mechanisms. Additional information is available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/nuts/background>.

potentials and challenges for a cross-fertilisation between European and domestic development policies. In doing so, it builds on the results of three ESPON research projects to which the authors contributed in recent years, namely: ESPON TANGO (Territorial Approaches for New Governance)<sup>4</sup>, ESPON ReSSI (Regional Strategies for Sustainable and Inclusive Territorial Development)<sup>5</sup>, and ESPON COMPASS (Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in the European Union)<sup>6</sup>. After this introduction, the article outlines the theoretical framework upon which the study is based, dedicating particular attention to various dimensions that characterise the EU's multi-level institutional landscape and, more, in particular, the promotion of regional development therein. Section three briefly introduces institutional similarities and differences among European countries based on existing studies. The fourth section explores the current operational configuration of the EU cohesion policy within Member States, to reflect upon the existing (or missing) links between EU programming activity and domestic spatial planning devices. Building on this analysis, the mentioned typology is proposed and discussed in relation to the actual potentials and challenges to delivering economic, social, and territorial cohesion in the different countries. A concluding section completes the contribution, summarising the main findings in the light of possible future developments and indicating the need for a formalisation of the role of domestic systems of spatial governance and planning with respect to European territorial governance.

## 2. THE MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF EU REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT. SOME CONCEPTUAL COORDINATES

The EU is a unique, hybrid institutional entity. It has been consolidating incrementally since the end of the Second World War, as a consequence of a process combining both federal and intergovernmental characteristics (Nugent, 2006) and featuring swinging momentum and pace (D'Ottavio *et al.*, 2020). The result of this process

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<sup>4</sup> The applied research project ESPON TANGO (Territorial Approaches for New Governance) focuses on the need for coherent public action and allocation of resources within the different territories across the EU, in a times of restricted public budgets. Additional information is available at: <https://www.espon.eu/programme/projects/espon-2013/applied-research/tango-territorial-approaches-new-governance>.

<sup>5</sup> The targeted analysis ESPON ReSSI (Regional Strategies for Sustainable and Inclusive Territorial Development – Regional Interplay and EU Dialogue) focuses on how sustainable, inclusive and smart development can be promoted in Europe, with particular attention to the regional level. Additional information is available at: <https://www.espon.eu/ressi>.

<sup>6</sup> The applied research project ESPON COMPASS (Comparative Analysis of Territorial Governance and Spatial Planning Systems in Europe) focuses on the evolution of spatial governance and planning systems in Europe since 2000, with particular attention to the impact of the European Union on the changes which occur. Additional information is available at <https://www.espon.eu/planning-systems>.

is an organisation based on the rule of law, whose action is legitimised by treaties voluntarily and democratically concluded by its Member States (Hix, 2005). These treaties regulate the distribution of sovereignty and competences on a number of issues between the various administrative levels, as it is effectively described through the concept of ‘multi-level governance’ (Scharpf, 1994; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). Importantly, due to the ‘open-ended’ nature of the EU integration process, its multi-level governance is a rather ‘unstable equilibrium’, which continuously reshapes through the means of reciprocal influence between the EU, the Member States and subnational institutions (Ferlaino and Molinari, 2009; Shackel *et al.*, 2015). In particular, while the distribution of competences and their implication for the functioning of EU regulation and policy-making is rather consolidated in those fields for which the Member States have transferred a high level of sovereignty to EU institutions (e.g. competition rules, monetary policy, customs etc.), the fields that are characterised by shared competences between the EU and the Member States may be subject to further uncertainty, depending on changing political attitudes of the various national (and subnational) actors (Sutcliffe, 2000).

This is further evident in those policy fields in which the introduction of an EU competence has followed a particularly bumpy road, as it is the case with spatial development and planning (Faludi, 2001). As a matter of fact, the European Union has developed its spatial agenda through time, with the latter that has become increasingly explicit since the end of the 1980s (Faludi, 2010), which has become increasingly explicit with the progression of the integration process. At the same time, however, Member States have at a different points in time argued against the attribution of a spatial competence to the EU as they were afraid that this could limit their sovereignty on the development and planning of their respective territories (Faludi, 2008). A compromise was found at the end of the 1980s when the conclusive steps to establish the European single market were coupled with the agreement that the EU should be allowed to intervene to mitigate the resulting unbalancing trends. To this end, the economic and social cohesion objective – which was explicitly extended to its ‘territorial’ dimension in 2007, with the signing of the Treaty of Lisbon – was included in the Single European Act of 1986, affirming the need for a Community action of regional balancing (Dühr *et al.*, 2010; Janin Rivolin, 2010). The Structural Funds were subsequently reformed in 1988, giving birth to the EU cohesion policy, a complex mechanism through which the EU redistributes to regions a good share of the resources it draws from Member States<sup>7</sup>.

The importance of the EU action on regional development has been acknowledged by multiple studies (Baron *et al.*, 2010; Davies, 2017; Gagliardi and Percoco,

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<sup>7</sup> During the recently concluded programming period, the resources redistributed from the EU to its Member States through the EU cohesion policy amount to 351.8 billion euro, accounting for about one third of the total EU budget. Additional information is available at: <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/overview#>.

2017; Fratesi and Wishlade, 2017), even more so in the historic moment in which national public investment was cut on average by 20% in real terms between 2008 and 2013, as a consequence of a significant deficit caused by the financial crisis, and now that regional economies are further threatened by the pandemic<sup>8</sup>. The implementation of the EU cohesion policy is, however, subject to a number of challenges. On the one hand, this reflects the inherent complexity that characterises the economic, social, and territorial dimensions of EU development (CEC, 2017). On the other, it is a consequence of the instability of the cohesion policy governance. In particular, due to the lack of spatial planning competences at the EU level, the programming, management, and implementation of the EU cohesion policy in individual countries varies widely, with Member States being offered considerable leeway in adopting the operational configuration, as they see fit for their institutional frameworks.

While the need to establish synergies between the EU cohesion policy and spatial development policies put in place at various levels in Member States is a crucial precondition for the achievement of the cohesion objective, at present the success of this operation is largely influenced by the capacities and choices of local institutions. This has been clearly acknowledged by the European Commission's 11<sup>th</sup> key thematic objective for the programming period 2014–2020, as it recognised the crucial coordination challenge posed by the high heterogeneity that characterises the EU institutional landscape. In view of that, in order to shed light on the actual potentials for cross-fertilisation between European and domestic development policies, the following sections will explore in more detail the institutional heterogeneity that characterises the EU in terms of administrative culture, governance capacity, and spatial governance and planning, to afterwards reflect on the implication which these variables may have for the establishment of effective frameworks of coordination between European and domestic regional development policies.

### 3. UNFOLDING THE INSTITUTIONAL HETEROGENEITY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

A primary level of complexity that depicts the institutional heterogeneity of the EU well is represented by the different administrative traditions that characterise its countries<sup>9</sup>. First attempts to produce classifications on the matter date back to the

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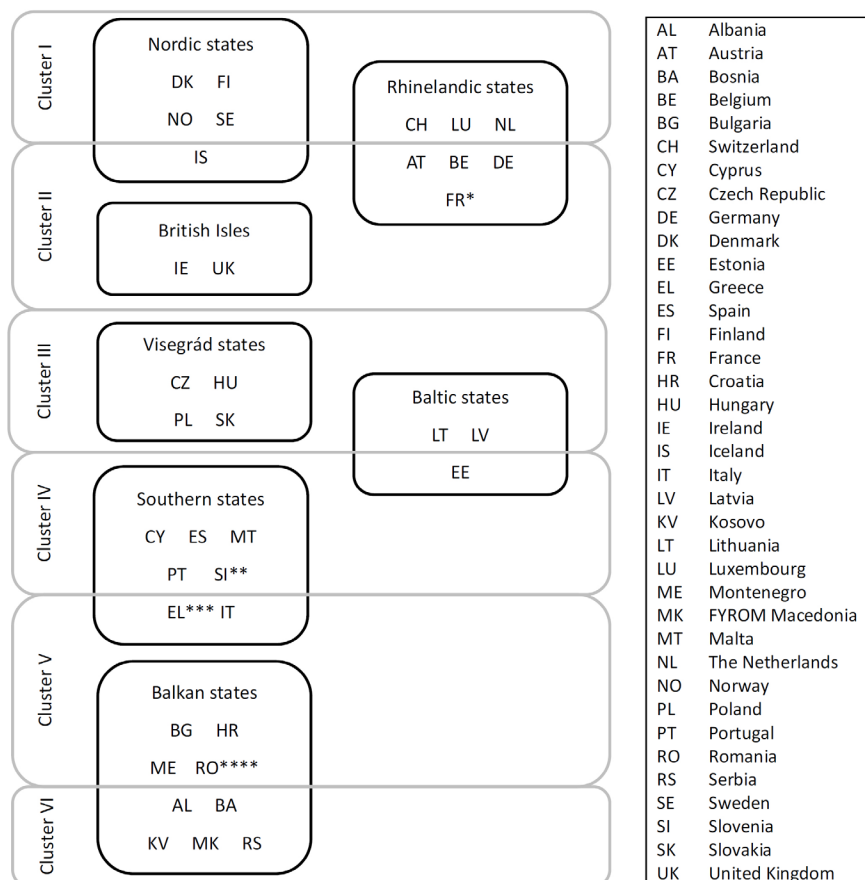
<sup>8</sup> The austerity policies put in place in numerous EU countries (Arestis and Pelagidis, 2010; Mastaganis and Leventi, 2014; Cotella *et al.*, 2015a; Tulumello *et al.*, 2020), have led to an increasing reliance on the EU cohesion policy to finance development investments. In particular, in the 2014–2020 period, about a third of the EU budget is invested under cohesion policy to help address disparities between regions, equivalent to over 20% of the total of Member States' public investment and peaking to around 60% of the total public investment in the regions, falling into the cohesion objective (CEC, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> For a comprehensive overview, see ESPON, 2013, pp. 27–54.

early 1990s, with Hesse and Sharpe (1991) who distinguished between Northern European, Anglo-Saxon, and Napoleonic countries on the basis of the degree of local autonomy. A similar exercise was produced by Goldsmith (1992) who has argued that the Southern European countries (Greece, Italy, Spain, but also France) are characterised by patronage-oriented administrative models, where the primary duty of local politicians is presumably to ensure that the interests of their communities are well promoted and defended at higher levels of government. In contrast, Northern European countries feature a more welfare state-oriented model, that has formed over time as a consequence of an efficient delivery of services. Additionally, the promotion of spatial development within each context is also influenced by the respective 'quality of governance' (see De Mello and Barenstein, 2001; Rodriguez-Pose and Gill, 2003). A preliminary account of this subject, and in particular of the capacity of vertical and horizontal coordination among different territorial levels and among actors and sectors at the same territorial level, has been elaborated by the ESPON 2.3.2 project *Governance of Territorial and Urban Policy from the EU to the Local Level*. This project grouped EU countries into four categories (ESPON, 2007): (i) countries characterised by strong a vertical and horizontal coordination (Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia); (ii) countries with mainly vertical coordination and weak horizontal co-ordination (Austria, Switzerland, Hungary, Norway, Romania, Slovenia); (iii) countries featuring a good level of horizontal coordination and scarce vertical coordination (Slovenia, Luxembourg, Malta, Sweden, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Cyprus), and (iv) countries characterised by weak vertical and horizontal coordination (Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, Greece, Italy, Portugal). These aspects were tackled more comprehensively in the ESPON TANGO project (ESPON, 2013), which ranked and clustered the European countries on the basis of the number of indicators reflecting their quality of governance (Fig. 1)<sup>10</sup>: (i) government effectiveness, i.e. the quality of public services and its independence from political pressures, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies, (ii) regulatory quality, i.e. the ability of the government to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development, (iii) rule of law, i.e. the extent to which agents have confidence in, and abide by, the rules of the society, and in particular the quality of contract enforcement, property rights, and the courts, and (iv) control of corruption, i.e. the extent to which public power is exercised for private gain, as well as the level of the 'seizing of the state by elites and private interests'.

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<sup>10</sup> These indicators were drawn from the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) database (Kraay *et al.*, 2010).



## Notes:

- \* Some of the comparative politics literature categorises France as a Southern (or Mediterranean) state (e.g. Hendriks et al, 2010), rather than a Rhinelandic state (as indicated in the diagram)
- \*\* Part of Slovenia belongs to the Balkan region although the country is not generally classified as a Balkan state
- \*\*\* Although Greece is also located in the Balkan region it is often categorised as a member of the Southern (or Mediterranean) states in comparative politics literature
- \*\*\*\* Only a small part of Romania belongs to the Balkan region but the country is categorised above as a member of the Balkan states since it does not belong to the other country groups

Fig. 1. Governance quality clusters in Europe and its macro-regions

Source: ESPON (2013, p. 42).

The administrative tradition and the quality of governance that characterise EU countries and regions have influenced at least partly the development, consolidation, and functioning of spatial governance and planning systems. After preliminary comparative studies that were based on different 'juridical families'

characterising various countries (e.g. Davies *et al.*, 1989; Newman and Thornley, 1996), a more comprehensive representation of the EU heterogeneity in this field was proposed by the *EU Compendium of spatial planning systems and policies* (CEC, 1997) and then tentatively updated by the analysis of the ESPON 2.3.2 project (ESPON, 2007). Building on a number of variables, this work developed four Weberian ideal types or ‘traditions of spatial planning’ in Europe (Table 1), arguing that some countries might exhibit a strong tendency to one tradition while others showed a more complex combination of types.

Table 1. Traditions of spatial planning in Europe

	<b>Comprehensive integrated</b>	<b>Regional economic</b>	<b>Land use management</b>	<b>Urbanism</b>
Legal basis	Mixed	Mixed	Discretion	Code
Scope of planning	Wide	Wide	Narrow	Narrow
Scale of planning	Multilevel planning	National planning	Local	Local
Locus of power	Mixed	Centre and local	Centre	Local
Public or private	Public	Public	Mixed	Mixed
Maturity of the system	Mature	Mature	Mature	Immature
Distance between goals and outcomes	Narrow	Mixed	Narrow	Wide
Examples (CEC, 1997)	AT, DK, FI, DE, NL, SE	FR, PT, (+DE)	IE, UK (+BE)	GR, IT, ES (+PT)
Examples (ESPON, 2007)	AT, DK, FI, NL, SE, DE, BG, EE, HU, LV, LT PL, RO, SL, SV, (+ BE, FR, IE LU, UK)	BE, IE, LU, UK, CY, CZ, MT, (+ PT, ES)	FR, DE, PT, HU, LV, LT, SK, (+ IE, SE, UK)	GR, IT, ES CY, MT

Source: own work based on CEC (1997), Nadin and Stead (2008), and ESPON (2007).

More recent analyses, such as those performed in the context of the ESPON COMPASS research project (ESPON, 2018), offer an account of an even higher heterogeneity. The conceptualisation of spatial governance and planning systems as ‘institutional technologies’ through which public authorities allocate rights



for land use and development (Janin Rivolin, 2012, 2017) allowed Berisha *et al.* (2021) to reflect on the actual capacity of public control of spatial development embedded in each system (Fig. 2). In particular, their analysis indicated the lower capacity of public control intrinsic in the traditional ‘conformative’ models operating in Southern European countries, especially in comparison to the ‘performative’ models that characterise Anglo-Saxon countries (Janin Rivolin, 2008). However, it also shows that while most North-Western and Eastern European countries have been progressively moving towards a ‘neo-performative’ model (Muñoz Gielen and Tasan-Kok, 2010), the results achieved as a consequence of this shift are highly variable.

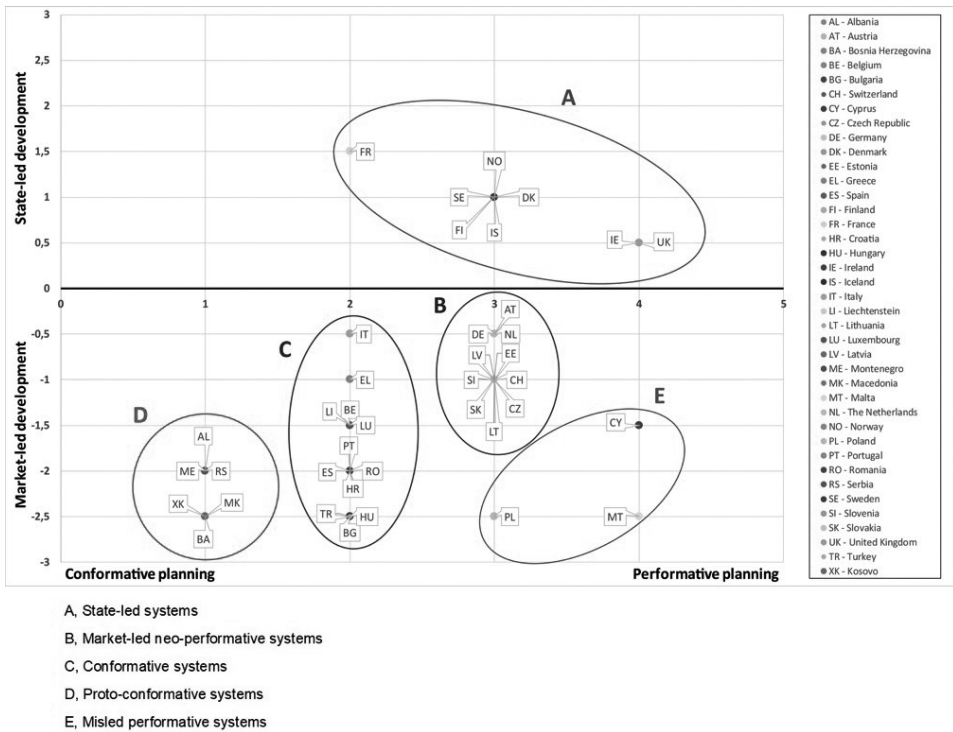


Fig. 2. A typology of European systems of spatial governance and planning with respect to the capacity for public control of spatial development

Source: Berisha *et al.* (2021).

As it will be further explored in the following sections, the quality of governance and the differential spatial governance and planning systems have implications for the implementation of the EU cohesion policy in each country, in turn allowing or constraining the development of synergies between the latter and domestic development tools.

#### 4. EUROPEAN AND DOMESTIC PERSPECTIVES IN SEARCH FOR COORDINATION

Since the programming period 2007–2013, all European regions have been eligible for some sort of support in the framework of the EU cohesion policy, with the vast majority of funding being allocated to the regions where investment needs are arguably the greatest<sup>11</sup>. Despite the influential role played by national governments, the EU looks at NUTS2 regions as the main institutional level to invest its resources in. However, not all Member States have equivalent administrative layers and, even where NUTS2 regions exist, they can be fully autonomous federal units, directly elected sub-national entities, indirectly nominated second-tier bodies, authorities directly appointed by the central government, or purely statistical units. Due to this heterogeneity, the most successful way to promote regional development may vary from place to place, also in relation to the capacity of domestic spatial planning systems to establish virtuous links with the programming, management and implementation of the EU cohesion policy.

In order to shed light on the matter, the research project, ESPON ReSSI (ESPON, 2017) put together a qualitative characterisation of EU Member States, considering how each of them has been involved in the EU cohesion policy during the 2007–2013 and 2014–2020 programming periods (Table 2). The results of this analysis show that countries may be divided into four groups: (i) countries managing EU cohesion policy exclusively at the national level; (ii) countries managing the EU cohesion policy through non-elected bodies strongly dependent on the central level; (iii) countries managing the EU cohesion policy through non-elected bodies whose actions are influenced by both central government and lower levels; and (iv) countries managing the EU cohesion policy through elected sub-national entities.

The proposed representation triggers a number of considerations. First of all, it provides evidence of the heterogeneity of the EU cohesion policy management models. When considering the 2007–2013 programming period, the largest number of countries is characterised by a regionalised structure dedicated to funds management and implementation, featuring either elected or non-elected NUTS2 regional institutions. In several cases, as in the Central and Eastern European Member States that entered the EU in 2004, NUTS2 regional levels were created *ad hoc* through more or less successful regionalisation processes occurring from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s (Cotella, 2007, 2014). However, there are some exceptions to this pattern: that applies to small countries, for which the introduction of autonomous NUTS2 regions would not be of much added value (i.e.

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<sup>11</sup> These have been classified as Convergence (2007–2013) or Less Developed Regions (2014–2020), and feature GDP per capita lower than 75% of the EU average.

Cyprus, Malta, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia); Romania and Bulgaria, which only joined the EU in 2007 and for which regional administration reforms were still ongoing; and Denmark which centralised the management of the EU cohesion policy through Operational Programmes (OPs) drafted at the central level.

Table 2. Institutional level prevalently managing EU cohesion policy in the Member States

Programming period	Level at which EU cohesion policy is prevalently managed			
	Central level	Non-elected sub-national institutions		Elected sub-national institutions
		Central influence	Mixed influence	
2007–2013	BG, CY, DK, EE, LT, LV, LU, MT, RO, SI	HU, PT, SK	CZ, FI, GR, IE, NL, SE, UK	AT, BE, DE, ES, FR, IT, PL
2014–2020	AT, BG, CZ, CY, DK, EE, FI, HR, HU, LT, LV, LU, MT, RO, SI, SK, UK	PT	GR, IE, NL, SE	BE, DE, ES, FR, IT, PL

Source: own work.

At the same time, the table also shows that a relatively large number of countries opted for a recentralisation of the programming and management of the Operational Programmes in the 2014–2020 period. This phenomenon witnesses once more the unstable, and partially contested nature of the EU cohesion policy governance model, and its continuous redefinition as an outcome of the complex interaction between the political interest of European, national, and subnational institutions and actors (Adams *et al.*, 2011).

Various sub-national institutions established during the 2000s succumbed to the national versus local negotiations on the distribution of EU funds. Similarly, the regionalisation processes that were still ongoing in some countries (e.g. Bulgaria and Romania) were hampered and eventually neutralised. Only those countries traditionally characterised by a strong sub-national level (federal or regionalised states) maintained the distribution of resources firmly in the hands of these levels, somehow advocating the efficiency of this approach.

When it comes to the actual extent of the overlap between EU programming activities and domestic spatial planning, recent studies have shown how specific attempts to improve the coupling of spatial and strategic-programming

documents in terms of timing and investment priorities have been sporadic (Dabrowski, 2014; Dotti, 2016; Schmitt and Van Well, 2017). Most countries have made little or no effort in this direction and linkages between the EU cohesion policy and domestic spatial governance and planning mainly relate to the embracing of multi-annual perspectives in domestic spatial development policy (ESPON, 2018). Be that as it may, since in all Member States domestic funds and EU funds coexist, although, in different proportions, it is interesting to investigate the distribution of spatial governance and planning competences at the different levels in each country, and to highlight the existing overlap between the management of the EU cohesion policy and domestic spatial planning tools (Table 3).

Table 3. EU countries' levels provided with spatial planning competences (In Bold when overlapping with the level prevalently managing EU cohesion policy in the country in the programming period 2014–2020)

EU countries' level that present spatial competences			
NUTS0	NUTS1	NUTS2	NUTS3
AT, <b>BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FR, GR, HR, HU, IE, LT, LU, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SI, SK</b>	<b>UK, BE, DE</b>	AT, BE, BG, <b>ES, FR, IT, PL, PT, NL</b>	BG, CZ, DE, FI, HU, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, RO, SE, SK, UK

Source: own work.

The results of the ESPON COMPASS project show that most EU countries feature at least one autonomous sub-national level responsible for spatial planning (ESPON, 2018). In this light one can assume that when a sub-national level plays a role in both domestic and European regional development, potentials exist for the fruitful integration of programming activities within domestic spatial planning. On the other extreme, the absence of correspondence between domestic spatial planning instruments and EU programming activities might limit the effects of the EU cohesion policy, virtually depriving the latter of a spatial dimension. Countries managing the EU cohesion policy centrally show heterogeneous behaviours. Most of them are also responsible for the preparation of one or more spatial planning instruments at the same level, defining general provisions for the spatial organisation. The specificity and concreteness of these instruments are inversely proportional to the dimension of the country, as are the chances of establishing relevant spatial synergies between EU cohesion policy programming and domestic spatial planning priorities. Additional differences emerge between countries featuring non-elected and elected regional institu-

tions. When the institutions deputed to manage the EU cohesion policy correspond to an elected administrative level featuring spatial planning competences (i.e. Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland and, although at a different scale, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom) it may be possible to exploit synergies between domestic planning and EU programming activities, in turn strengthening the spatial dimension of the EU cohesion policy. In a converse situation, when the EU cohesion policy is managed through non-elected bodies, except for Portugal, no correspondent spatial planning tool exists with which synergy can be established.

## **5. TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY OF MULTI-LEVEL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOVERNANCE IN THE EU**

Building on the evidence presented above, it is possible to position individual EU countries as a consequence of (i) the operational models that each of them adopted to programme and manage the EU cohesion policy in the 2014–2020 programming period, and (ii) the level of the quality of their governance. When analysed in light of the systems of spatial governance and planning that characterise each country, the resulting representation enables the identification of a typology of multi-level regional development governance in the EU, composed of groups of countries that show similar potentials for the integration of EU and domestic actions towards economic, social and territorial cohesion (Fig. 3).

Firstly, there are those Member States that display the highest potential for exploiting synergies between domestic spatial development policies and the EU cohesion policy (group A). In these countries, the sub-national level plays a crucial role in domestic spatial governance and planning, as well as in the management and implementation of the EU cohesion policy (e.g. France, Poland, and Germany). They are characterised by mature, comprehensive integrated spatial planning systems moving towards a neo-performative model (e.g. the Netherlands, and Sweden). A similar situation also exists in those Member States that have traditionally adopted a land-use management approach to spatial planning, where both the central and the local levels play important roles in promoting spatial development (Ireland, and partially Belgium). In all these countries, the respective regional NUTS 2 levels (or the Lander at NUTS1, in the case of Germany) are responsible for the preparation of regional spatial development documents, which contribute to enriching the EU cohesion policy regional operational programmes with a spatial dimension, as well as to exploiting relevant synergies between the programming of domestic and EU resources.

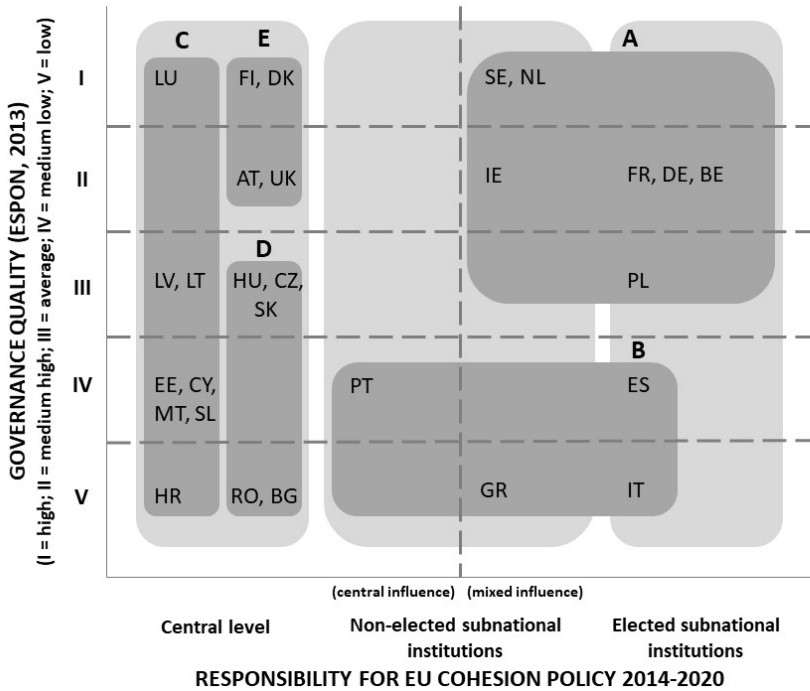


Fig. 3. A typology of multi-level regional development governance in the EU

Source: own work on ESPON (2017).

The second type includes those countries where, despite strongly regionalised programming and management of the EU cohesion policy, the development synergies are limited by the relatively lower level of governance quality (group B). This is the case of Mediterranean countries such as Italy, Spain, and Greece, where the spatial governance and planning approach is less comprehensive and often characterised by vertical and horizontal coordination gaps between levels and sectors. Portugal is an exception here, as the EU cohesion policy is partially managed at the regional level, but simultaneously influenced by the central government in the definition of development priorities. This may be a direct consequence of the country's spatial planning tradition, which is often associated with the regional economic approach rather than with the Mediterranean urbanism approach. Evidence collected from recent studies has confirmed the described situation, with regional authorities that are not always capable of coordinating domestic spatial development priorities and tools with the EU cohesion policy programming activity, and eventually subordinate the former to the latter for pragmatic reasons (Stead and Cotella, 2011; ESPON, 2018; Cotella and Janin Rivolin, 2015).

The third type applies to the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, as well as Cyprus, Malta, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and Croatia, where cohesion policies are managed centrally (group C). Each of these countries corresponds to a single NUTS2 region, except for Slovenia and Croatia, which are divided into two units. Due to their relatively reduced sizes, they have not deemed it necessary to delegate the management of EU resources to subnational units, as spatial development priorities are in most cases defined and pursued through national-level documents, and the sub-national level is either non-existent or constrained between the national and the local (Adams *et al.*, 2014). The successful promotion of regional development mostly depends here on two issues: (i) the vertical coordination, enabling an accurate representation of local development instances into centrally developed spatial development strategies and programmes, and (ii) the horizontal coordination between the central bodies responsible for the definition of national development strategies and those deputed to the EU cohesion policy programming and management. In this light, countries characterised by more mature, integrated spatial governance and planning systems and higher levels of the quality of governance appear better positioned (e.g. Luxembourg).

Central and Eastern European countries that are characterised by a wider territorial extension belong to the fourth type (group D). Excluding Poland, where autonomous regions are a traditional administrative element and which were reintroduced in 2000, all these countries have not yet succeeded in establishing autonomous meso-level institutions, despite the regionalisation processes undertaken in the second half of the 1990s and in the 2000s. On the one hand, Romania and Bulgaria have been managing the EU cohesion policy centrally since their accession. On the other hand, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary have delegated the task to NUTS2 regions instituted for this purpose in the 2007–2013 programming period, eventually favouring a more centralised approach in the 2014–2020 period. These countries are traditionally centralised and characterised by a dominance of the capital region over the rest of the country territory. Development trajectories are defined centrally, as is the programming of the EU resources, which accounts for the major share of public investments (Cotella *et al.*, 2012). As a consequence, the promotion of balanced regional development depends here on the actual will of the central government to prioritise territorial cohesion over economic growth (Camagni and Capello, 2014).

Finally, the fifth type (group E) includes those countries which while being characterised by mature, comprehensive integrated spatial planning systems and scoring good levels of the quality of governance opted for a (re)nationalisation of the programming and management of the EU cohesion policy. While in Austria the development of a national programme for the distribution of EU resources was negotiated with the Lander to exploit synergies between domestic and EU priorities, in Finland, a country traditionally featuring a weaker regional level, the renationalisation led to the almost exclusive control of the central level over EU

resources. The same occurred also in Denmark which, despite the introduction of five NUTS2 regions in 2007, has continued to manage EU cohesion policy centrally. It should be mentioned that all three countries are characterised by a high level of development well over the EU average, hence obtaining a quota of funds that is scarcely relevant in comparison to domestic public investments. The United Kingdom is a partial exception in this case as it also renationalised the programming and management of EU resources in the 2014–2020 period. However, due to the peculiar administrative configuration of the country, the competences for drafting national programmes have remained in the hands of the NUTS1 governments of England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Gibraltar.

## **6. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND FUTURE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES**

The proposed contribution has shed light on the multi-level governance challenges that characterise the promotion of regional development in the EU and, in particular, on the actual chances for coordination and cross-fertilisation between domestic spatial governance and planning and the programming and management of the EU cohesion policy (Cotella, 2018). This issue is of particular relevance in a historical period that has been characterised by the incremental cut of public investments, a situation further aggravated by the global financial crisis and, most recently, by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the start of the new EU cohesion policy 2021–2027 programming period, and with the governance models that will govern the management of the EU recovery fund in the making in all Member States, the successful promotion of regional development appears to be strongly dependent on the coordination between domestic development strategies and initiatives, and the programming and management of EU resources, all to be tailored in the most functional way to the actual development potentials and challenges that characterise each region.

Building on the evidence collected through a number of pan-European analyses of the institutional heterogeneity that characterises the EU in relation to administrative traditions, the quality of governance, and spatial planning approaches, the authors have developed a typology of multi-level regional development governance and used it to reflect on the potentials for establishing synergies between the programming and management of the EU cohesion policy and the domestic national and sub-national spatial development tools. This activity enables one to partially unfold the complexity that characterises the multi-level governance of regional development in the EU, while highlight how the latter depends not only on the institutional framework in place to enable coordination of EU and domestic priorities and resources but also on the different spatial governance and planning traditions as well as the overall quality of governance.



Moreover, the proposed typology helps one formulate a number of hypotheses concerning the actual capacity to promote economic, social and territorial cohesion in European regions, which should be tested and validated through future research. First of all, the chances of an effective ‘spatialisation’ of the EU cohesion policy seems to depend on the actual level of (vertical and horizontal) coordination between the institutions responsible for its programming and management and those in charge of the development of spatial strategies and policies. In turn, the potential for effective coordination between levels and actors is higher in those countries which are characterised by more mature, comprehensive and integrated spatial planning systems, and which feature higher levels of the quality of governance and institutional capacity. In particular, effective coordination appears hard to achieve in those countries where the magnitude of the EU cohesion policy support overshadows that of domestic resources, and its programming and management is often subject to pragmatic reasons that act to the detriment of any spatial coordination of their impact. Conversely, when regional development priorities are defined centrally, smaller countries are in advantage in effectively promoting regional development, as it may be easier for national governments to address regional development dynamics upon which to build EU cohesion policy programming, also in coordination with subnational/local actors. Also in this case, the maturity of the spatial governance and planning system and the quality of governance play a crucial role, and the magnitude of resources may lead to a marginalisation of the spatial dimension in favour of more pragmatic logics aiming at maximising resources’ absorption.

In general, the study highlights the scarce stability that characterises the EU’s multi-level governance, especially in relation to contested fields such as spatial development, governance, and planning. As already introduced above, under these conditions multi-level governance is subject to the influence of the national and/or regional political attitudes, and any change in the equilibrium of those may impact its future configuration. In this light, additional research is required into the actual influence that national and regional politics have on the redefinition of the programming and management procedures that characterise the EU cohesion policy within each country and, more in general, on the overall European framework. As already highlighted by the results of the ESPON COMPASS project (ESPON, 2018), this instability ultimately indicates the need for some kind of an institutional formalisation of the interlinkage between the various spatial governance and planning systems and the EU cohesion policy, aiming at a further ‘spatialisation’ of its programmes and management procedures. After all, according to EU treaties, economic, social and territorial cohesion is a ‘shared competence’ between the EU and Member States, which should find agreement on this point.

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## URBAN REGENERATION PROGRAMMING IN POLAND IN THE YEARS 2014–2020

**Abstract.** In 2015, *the National Urban Policy*, *The Urban Regeneration Law*, and the *Guidelines regarding urban regeneration in operational programmes for the years 2014–2020* were adopted in Poland. These documents marked a new direction for developing and implementing these difficult processes. Simultaneously, communes received support which was supposed to help them plan urban regeneration properly on the basis of reliable diagnoses of the initial state, considering their endogenous features and potentials, with active participation of local communities. The aim of the article is to present the Polish approach to regeneration programming. Its background is the analysis of the definitions of urban regeneration which have functioned in Polish literature since the 1990s followed by a presentation of Western European stages of the evolution of this subject. The analysis offered in the article as well as the resulting conclusions show that the Polish approach to regeneration follows the integrated model prevalent in Europe. It fits the discussions between the academics and practitioners regarding the designation of degraded areas in cities, the principles of regeneration programming, and active involvement of different stakeholders in the aforementioned processes.

**Key words:** urban regeneration, regeneration programme, National Urban Policy, Urban Regeneration Law, Poland.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Dynamic political changes in Poland in the 1990s combined with many years of neglect of renovation have caused cities to struggle with the problem of degraded areas. These are the areas where deficiencies in the social, economic, spatial, and en-

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vironmental spheres are concentrated. In most cases, they include downtown areas or brownfields. The problems of degraded areas apply to over 20% of urbanised areas of Polish cities and towns (Jarczewski and Kuryłło, 2010) where a significant number of Polish citizens live. Therefore, the scope of regeneration needs is significant and it is certainly one of the undeniable arguments why this subject matter should be an important element of urban development policy. The most important deficiencies of degraded areas include: inherited poverty of inhabitants, long-term unemployment, low social activity, sub-standard residential tissue, low quality of public spaces and green areas, and significant exceedances of environmental standards.

The issue of regeneration has been discussed in Poland since the 1990s. Definitions of regeneration based on the oeuvres of such authors as K. Skalski, Z. Zuziak, B. Domański, M. Bryx, T. Markowski, A. Billert, P. Lorens, S. Kaczmarek, or Z. Ziobrowski have always emphasised that it is a comprehensive and long-term process, the essence of which is to lead urbanised degraded areas out of crisis. It should occur in the infrastructural, social and economic sphere with the participation of the local community and all interested parties. Unfortunately, in practice, this concept was and continues to be abused and associated to a large extent with the possibility of implementing investments. Currently, however, a lot of emphasis (at least in planning documents) is placed on the social dimension of this process. The social problems occurring there are considered the basis for, e.g. designating a degraded area. Cities carry out a series of analyses and studies that enable one to learn about the problems of the inhabitants of an area. It could also be noted that the institutions which manage EU funds expect beneficiaries to create a regeneration framework in the form of programmes based on social participation. Cities developing their urban regeneration programmes in 2015–2020 had to change their approaches from typically infrastructural to social. Earlier, a similar trend was observed in Western Europe, e.g. in Germany, France, and Great Britain, however, these countries had started their regeneration experience much earlier and they also had understood much earlier that infrastructural measures alone were not enough to make a permanent change in a crisis area. Moreover, these countries had largely dealt with sub-standard residential tissue earlier through large-scale renovation programmes which had been conducted since the 1960s. They also have a number of proven instruments that help manage these processes and have launched numerous national (and regional) funds to solve the problems of degraded areas, not relying exclusively on the support from EU funds in this area.

Polish cities have been gathering experience in the implementation of regeneration projects only since the 1990s. There are many problems, however, be it financial, organisational, and formal and legal, which significantly hinder those efforts. This is mainly due to the fact that successive governments were never seriously interested in this problematic subject, the effects of which definitely exceed political tenures. The responsibility for running these processes has been pushed onto local governments and their very limited budgets, which have been supported by EU funds since 2004.



Since then communes have been undertaking the implementation of projects which could be subsidised from available funds. Their willingness to use EU funds made communes develop the necessary Local Regeneration Programmes (LRP). Pursuant to applicable regulations, they have been considered since 2004 as economic programmes<sup>1</sup>. In their guidelines, the Institutions Managing Regional Operational Programmes (IMROP) imposed the principles of drawing up such documents and their contents. In the period from 2004 to 2013 the desire to observe these guidelines often caused that beneficiaries approached the task of developing LRPs in a conventional way. Many LRPs were commissioned to external entities. The resulting documents usually constituted an appendix required in order to obtain subsidies rather than a long-term regeneration policy for a city. Cases when these documents were developed on the basis of a reliable diagnosis of a city's condition and its local potential were very scarce. Every LRP included a list of projects. To a large extent they referred to different types of infrastructure. No social or economic projects were integrated with the proposed investment actions. Initially, stakeholders were not involved in the process of drawing up LRPs and their role was rather limited to consulting a ready document. As a consequence, cities often implemented projects which were adapted to the available source of financing rather than to the actual needs of local communities (Masieriek, 2016). No policy in this area, either at the national or a regional level, inclined local units to take individual actions aimed at using the possibility of obtaining financing for individual projects (Herbst and Jadach-Sepiolo, 2010).

In order for a visible expansion of urban regeneration in Poland to occur, it is necessary to start supporting communes at the governmental level by developing appropriate strategic and legal frames and instruments (including financial ones) which would enable them to effectively manage the programmes in practice. It could be said that the first stipulation was fulfilled by adopting the *National Urban Policy* in 2015 and including urban regeneration therein as a strategic goal. Another, after a dozen years of ineffective legislative attempts usually modelled on French and German experiences<sup>2</sup>, was fulfilled by passing in 2015 the *Urban Regeneration Law*. The third one, referring to instruments which would enable entities to earmark national funds for this purpose, to employ the potential of private investors and non-governmental organisations, still remains an open subject. Unfortunately, the regeneration of Polish cities still depends to a large extent on EU funds, which leads to a false assumption that it is a task to be financed from public funds exclusively. As Romańczyk indicated “It is estimated that in the years 2007–2013 8.5 billion zlotys was earmarked for this purpose across the country (1.89 billion EUR), whereas in the perspective of 2014–2020 as much as 26 billion zlotys will be spent (5.78 billion EUR),” (Romańczyk, 2018, p. 9).

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to Art. 18 Section 2(6) of the Law of 8 March 1990 on commune local government (Journal of Laws Dz.U.2020.0.713).

<sup>2</sup> More on the subject: Masieriek, 2013, pp. 41–59.

It was only in 2015 that regeneration in Poland became more systematised. The approach to it visibly changed and more emphasis was placed on its social dimension. The *Urban Regeneration Law* regulates, among others, the procedure of approving and the required minimal contents of the *Commune Regeneration Programme* (CRP). Additionally, communes willing to use EU funds for regeneration programmes had to observe new *Guidelines regarding regeneration in operational programmes for the years 2014–2020* issued by the Ministry of Development. Polish communes had to radically change the way they approached preparation and implementation of regeneration process, including reliable diagnostic work with the purpose of marking the intervention area, developing regeneration programmes with the participation of local communities, and implementing a bigger number of the so-called “soft” projects addressing social issues. In order to support communes in their adaptation to new expectations and challenges, new subsidies were introduced in Poland in the years 2015–2019. The above-mentioned support referred mainly to assistance in the elaboration of LRPs and CRPs. Additionally, pilot and model projects were implemented within which practical solutions were developed. Their purpose has been to be a source of inspiration for communes developing their own ideas for regeneration.

The purpose of this article is to present the current requirements for Polish communes developing regeneration programmes against the background of different stages of the evolution of the regeneration issue in Western Europe and in Poland, as well as against the background of different definitions of regeneration which have appeared in Polish literature since the 1990s. I wrote this article because I wished to systematise the data regarding the current trends in regeneration programming in Poland and present it to broader audience. This article relies on subject literature, analysis of the provisions of the National Urban Policy (2015), the Urban Regeneration Law (2015), the Guidelines regarding urban regeneration in operational programmes in the years 2014–2020 (2016), the reports of the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development (2018) regarding the support given to local governments in the area of programming and implementing regeneration, and my practical experience, as in the years 2015–2019 I cooperated with three entities submitting their applications within the Model Urban Regeneration project.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The regeneration of Polish cities has been a delayed process as compared to Western European (Lorens and Martyniuk-Pęczek, 2009), which has enabled Poles to learn from the experiences of their fellow European countries. Post-

WWII actions of such countries as Great Britain, France, and Germany involved to a large extent the demolishing of sub-standard buildings and replacing them with new ones (Short, 1982; Gibson and Langsta, 1982; Schmoll, 1999; Skalski, 2009). A. Jadach-Sepiolo has argued that “urban complexes which would be considered valuable from contemporary point of view were erased” (Jadach-Sepiolo, 2018, p. 28). Until the end of the 1960s, infrastructural projects were the main focus. It was only in the 1970s that the social and economic aspect of the development of degraded city districts’ started to be appreciated. The main purpose of such actions was not only to improve living standard but also to regenerate local communities in degraded quarters (Cameron, 2003; Gripiaios, 2002; Ginsburg, 1999; Carmon, 1976). The 1970s and 1980s were the decades of the return to city centres, the regeneration of brownfield sites, and the regeneration of the so-called “waterfronts” (Lorens and Martyniuk-Pęczek, 2009). In the 1980s the private sector was allowed to join regeneration policy. It contributed to the implementation of a project which would not have been completed without the support of private investors (Carmon, 1999; Hall, 2000). In the 1990s, through, e.g. the URBAN initiative, an integrated approach to regeneration became prevalent in Europe and attempts were made to combine solving social problems (e.g. long-lasting unemployment, a low level of schooling and professional qualifications of inhabitants) and eliminating functional, spatial, and technical deficiencies (Carpenter, 2006; Billert, 2007). Such programmes as the Policy of Social Development of Urban Quarters (*Développement Social des Quartiers*) in France<sup>3</sup>, the Social City (*Die Soziale Stadt*) in Germany<sup>4</sup> or the City Challenge and Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) in England<sup>5</sup> were implemented (Billert 2006; Jacquier 2005). Unfortunately, no such governmental programmes dedicated to urban regeneration have been implemented in Poland so far, nor financial instruments have been developed to support these long-term processes and guarantee the implementation of projects after the expiry of the current EU programming period.

The definitions of urban regeneration which appeared in literature have usually highlighted one of its numerous aspects, e.g. C. Couch (1990) emphasised its physical dimension, G. J. Ashworth (1991) put emphasis on its economic func-

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<sup>3</sup> The priority here was renovation of the existing buildings in city centres and levelling of sub-standard residential facilities. A new procedure of creating the so-called Architectural, Urban and Landscape Heritage Protection Zones was developed and protection zones were designated for listed buildings.

<sup>4</sup> The main objectives of the programme were the following: improving living standards in quarters, creating stable social structures, and improving life opportunities for the inhabitants.

<sup>5</sup> City tenders were organised within this budget. In order to acquire subsidies, local authorities had to prove that they had private partners and show that there were social groups engaged in the regeneration project.

tions, whereas P. Roberts *et al.* (2000) assumed a position shared by the author of this article that a single-aspect perspective on regeneration, regardless of the fact which aspect is highlighted – be it physical, economic, or social – is wrong. Only simultaneous, long-term, integrated actions within all these spheres may contribute to the actual lifting of an area from crisis.

In Polish literature, K. Skalski has rich theoretical and practical achievements in the area of urban regeneration. It was already in the 1990s that he presented urban regeneration as a complex process. He repeatedly highlighted that integrating technical, economic, and social projects within regeneration was the essence of the issue (Skalski, 2000, 2004). He defined regeneration as “a system of activities aimed at the renewal of old districts, the development of their residential, economic, social functions and significant spatial and cultural values” (Skalski, 2006, p. 11). Thus, he also drew attention to regeneration’s strong connection with cultural heritage and housing.

In the urban regeneration manual developed in 2003 jointly by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit and the now defunct Office for Housing and Urban Development, M. Bryx has insisted that regeneration requires that various areas which enable the functioning of a city be combined. Among them he included the following areas: economic, social, ecological, legal, financial, and planning. He has noted that regeneration not only improves living conditions in cities and the quality of public space, but also constitutes “a factor in increasing the competitiveness of cities on a supra-local or even transnational scale” (*Manual...*, 2003, p. 11).

Regeneration should include interventions in existing urbanised areas, a fact which significantly distinguishes it from the concepts which define activities aimed at planning and creating new buildings in undeveloped areas (*Manual...*, 2003). The perspective of the concentration of regeneration in urbanised areas was shared by A. Billert (2009), who additionally described the state of crisis which prevented or significantly hindered the proper economic and social development of a given area, but also emphasised its impact on the sustainable development of the entire city. When describing urban regeneration T. Markowski (1999, 2007) drew attention to the commercial dimension of these processes and, similarly to A. Billert (2009) and M. Bryx (2003), to the impact not only on the selected area, but on the entire urban organism. As a result, the investment and tourist attractiveness increases, which brings measurable benefits also to residents from outside the regenerated area. He has emphasised that the basis of the urban regeneration concept is the understanding of the essence of generating land value. He described the relationship between the value of land, its price, land rent, externalities, and taxes on property value (Markowski, 1999, 2007). In contrast, M. Tertelis (2005) considered urban regeneration in the context of EU policy. He has claimed that its essence is the use of tools and methods of stimulating investors’ activity. These

instruments are to operate on the basis of financial leverage, i.e. one zloty spent from public money should initiate an investment of a few zlotys from a private budget (Tertelis, 2005). Polish literature also emphasises that urban regeneration should be a socialised process in which all interested parties are involved. Therefore, it is important at the planning stage to identify entities and social groups whose interests may be related to regeneration, and then analyse their mutual relations and potential areas of conflict. The management of this process should be manifested, among others, by “skilfully combining many and sometimes opposing interests – to achieve an acceptable goal” (Ziobrowski, 2009, p. 10).

The basic purpose of urban regeneration is the improvement of the quality of life of city dwellers. Simultaneously, the following groups of goals have been differentiated (Lorens, 2010, p. 11):

- urban-architectural (renovations, modernisations, restoration of monuments, and the shaping cultural identity of the regeneration area);
- technical (the improvement of technical and road infrastructure);
- social (solving social problems, preventing negative social phenomena such as pathologies, social exclusion, and improvement of safety);
- economic (economic recovery, including the support of entrepreneurship, the development of tourism, and the implementation of private projects);
- environmental (the improvement of the condition of natural environment, the elimination of pollution and emissions, and noise reduction).

Urban regeneration may cover: (i) degraded downtown areas and multifunctional pre-WWII urban development areas, (ii) brownfield sites, and post-rail and post-military sites, and (iii) housing projects (Ziobrowski, 2010, p. 8).

Discussions concerning different issues related to urban regeneration have been unravelling for many years. In terms of European cities, two approaches to the issue of regeneration prevail. The first one focuses on inhabitants (people-based initiatives or PBI), while the other one focuses on the area (area-based initiatives or ABI) (Anderson, 2006; Jadach-Sepiolo, 2018). In literature, urban regeneration is usually presented as a remedy to the problems of degraded areas. It is also highlighted that regeneration should be planned with active participation of the local community (cf.: Hospers, 2017; Masierek, 2017; Przywojska, 2016; Stouten and Rosenboom, 2013). This article is in favour of the latter. However, there is also a critical approach which sees urban regeneration as a source of polarisation and dividing a city into areas with and without special support (Klemek, 2011; von Hoffman, 2008; Griffith, 1996). Moreover, urban regeneration is perceived as a gentrification factor, which is an object of interest for many researchers, e.g. Less (2019), Mehdipanah *et al.* (2018), Górczyńska (2015), Zukin (2010), Redefern (2003), Griffith (1996), van Weesep *et al.*, Musterd (1991), Smith *et al.* (1986). This issue has also been noticed and included in Polish premises for regeneration programming.

### 3. PREMISES AND SUPPORT OF REGENERATION PROGRAMMING IN POLAND

#### 3.1. Urban regeneration in National Urban Policy (2015)

In 2015, the National Urban Policy was passed in Poland. It is intended for all towns and cities regardless of their size or location. Its provisions respect the existing political system in Poland with the independence of local government being its indispensable element. The *National Urban Policy* indicates urban development directions favoured by the government. Its strategic goals are: strengthening the capacity of cities/towns and urban areas to create sustainable development, creating jobs, and improving the quality of life of residents. The *National Urban Policy* indicates the need to undertake actions which:

- counteract spontaneous suburbanisation,
- lead to sustainable investment in cities, with preference for previously developed areas and regeneration areas,
- launch social participation in planning and the development of cities,
- address demographic problems,
- lead to sustainable mobility,
- develop a multi-level cooperation in the management of urban areas and functional areas,
- strive for rational resource management (earth, water, environment, and energy), environmental improvement, and adaptation to climate change.

The National Urban Policy covers issues which are important from the point of view of the development of Polish cities, such as: spatial planning, public participation, urban transport and mobility, low emissions and energy efficiency, **urban regeneration**, investment policy, economic development, environmental protection and climate change, demography, and the management of urban areas (The National Urban Policy, 2015).

The second item in this list of “participation” is not accidental. In Poland, attempts are currently being made to involve residents in and integrate them around local activities practically in all areas of a city’s functioning. This is to help build a self-conscious and responsible civil society that co-administers the city. The issue of regeneration itself, as well as the participatory approach to it, constitutes a big part of the National Urban Policy as an extremely significant issue.

The main challenge faced by all entities involved in urban regeneration is to ensure that the process is comprehensive, coordinated, long-term, and that it covers social, economic, spatial, and technical changes. It must be adapted to the specificity of a city. It is crucial that it creates conditions for development based

on the specific endogenous conditions. Regeneration may apply to many types of urban areas and other areas losing their current socio-economic functions (The National Urban Policy, 2015).

### 3.2. The Urban Regeneration Law (2015)

In 2015, after many years of legislative attempts, the *Urban Regeneration Law* was adopted. It (i) creates the legal framework for regeneration, (ii) systematises the concepts related to regeneration, (iii) introduces the procedure for developing and adopting CRPs, (iv) motivates communes to undertake this process, (v) emphasises the aspect of regeneration planning and social participation, and (vi) introduces (optional) tools, such as: Special Regeneration Zone, Local Regeneration Plan.

The Urban Regeneration Law determines the principles and the procedure of preparing, conducting and evaluating regeneration. According to a definition included therein “regeneration is a process of recovering degraded areas from crisis, conducted in a comprehensive manner through integrated actions for the benefit of the local community, area, and economy, territorially focused, conducted by regeneration stakeholders on the basis of a community regeneration programme” (Art. 2(1) of The Urban Regeneration Law, 2015). It could be said that this definition summarises the theoretical and practical achievements to date and emphasises the special role of stakeholders in the process. It imposes the obligation of actual involvement of local communities not only in the phase of planning and developing a programme, but also in the phase of implementing, monitoring, and managing regeneration. It is not easy, however, to implement this stipulation in practice. The Polish society is in the process of building its awareness as citizens and its sense of agency. What raises some doubts is the fact that the cited definition does not mention that regeneration should apply to urbanised areas, i.e. in principle, according to the author, degraded urban areas. As a result, in practice, in Poland there appear regeneration programmes referring to rural areas. As a result funds are unnecessarily dispersed, there are difficulties in identifying endogenous features, and not fully justified diagnostic work is being conducted.

The statutory definition highlights that the regeneration process should refer to a **degraded area**, i.e. an area where there occur negative phenomena in the social sphere, additionally accompanied by deficiencies in at least one of the following areas: economic, functional and spatial, technical, or environmental (Table 1). Non-social spheres may be analysed in an area considered to be in crisis within the social sphere (Fig. 1), but not within the entire unit, which from the point of view of the author is a false assumption. It is difficult to decide whether one is dealing with, e.g. an economic crisis if one has no point of reference to the entire commune.

Table 1. Negative phenomena usually occurring in a degraded area

Sphere	Examples of deficiencies
Social	unemployment, poverty, crime, low level of education and social capital, low level of participation in public and cultural life
Economic	low level of business activity, poor condition of local businesses
Functional-spatial	insufficient technical and social infrastructure or poor condition thereof, no access to basic services or poor quality thereof, failure to adapt urban solutions to changing functions of an area, low level of communication services, lack of public areas or low quality thereof
Technical	poor technical condition of buildings, especially those with residential function or failure to adapt them to the current standards and needs
Environmental	infringement of the environmental quality standards, the presence of waste posing a threat to life, human health or the environment

Source: own work based on the Urban Regeneration Law, 2015.

A degraded area may be divided into sub-areas, including ones which do not share borders. A commune may designate an entire degraded area or a part of it as a regeneration area. Such a decision is taken on the basis of an analysis of the concentration of negative phenomena within the area, as well as the area's potential which is of great significance to local development (Fig. 1) (Jarczewski, 2017). A degraded area and a regeneration area must be approved in the form of a resolution. From the point of view of *the Urban Regeneration Law* it is important that the size of an urban regeneration area **may not exceed 20% of the city area and 30% of its population** (The Urban Regeneration Law, 2015).

A question arises as to the status of uninhabited areas, such as brownfield sites, for which it is impossible to indicate negative social phenomena that constitute the basis for the designation of degraded areas. These areas may be included in the regeneration area provided that the activities planned for them will closely correlate with it and contribute to the actual prevention of negative social phenomena presented in the diagnosis.

An entire chapter in the Urban Regeneration Law is devoted to social participation. The legislator referred to this issue in some detail, specifying, for example, the manner and methods of conducting public consultations. It also indicates that active the participation of stakeholders must occur at every stage of the regeneration process, i.e. during the preparation of the process, as well as during its implementation and evaluation. As specified in the Urban Regeneration Law: "Public consultations are conducted by the mayor, city mayor or commune mayor"<sup>6</sup> (Article 6, Clause 1, the Urban Regeneration Law, 2015). It

<sup>6</sup> The *Mayor* is the executive in a commune where the seat of the local authorities is located in a town situated in the territory of the commune. In the case of cities with a population of over 100,000, the



is necessary to ensure that the widest possible group of stakeholders participates in the consultations which take different forms, e.g. collection of comments, organised meetings, debates, workshops, study walks, and the application of surveys and interviews using representative groups and leaders. It is also important that the content presented during public consultations is understandable and preceded by an educational and information campaign. The Urban Regeneration Law also imposes an obligation to establish a Regeneration Committee which is to be a forum for cooperation and dialogue with stakeholders. If several regeneration sub-areas have been designated in a unit, a separate Regeneration Committee may be appointed for each of them. The rules for determining its composition are established before the adoption of a CRP or within a period not longer than 3 months after its adoption. These rules must be subject to the public consultation procedure.

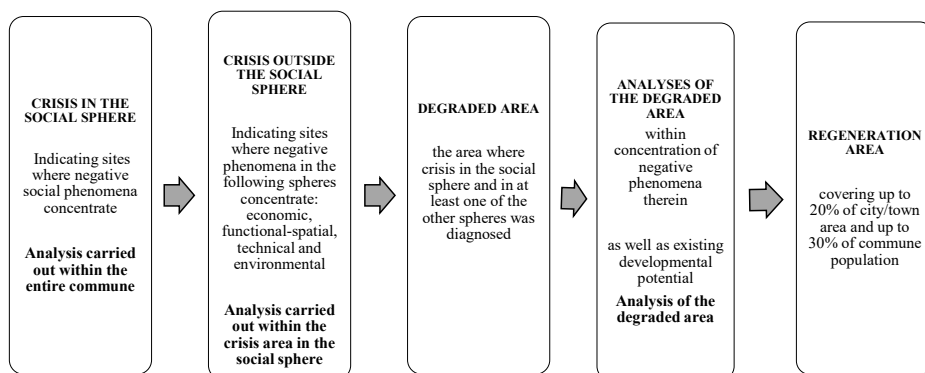


Fig. 1. Marking the regeneration area pursuant to the Urban Regeneration Law

Source: own work based on The Urban Regeneration Law (2015).

The Urban Regeneration Law determines the basic scope of CRPs, which should include, in particular:

- a detailed diagnosis of both the negative phenomena and the potentials of the regeneration area,
- connections to the commune's strategic documents,
- a vision of the area after the regeneration,
- goals and regeneration activities,
- directions of functional and spatial changes,
- a description of the regeneration projects,
- mechanisms that enable the integration of regeneration activities and undertakings,

executive is a *City Mayor*, whereas in other units – a *commune mayor*. The Law of 8<sup>th</sup> March 1990 on Commune Local Government (Journal of Laws of 2020, item 713).

- sources of financing,
- the administration system,
- the necessary regeneration instruments, and
- monitoring systems of the CRP progress and evaluation.

The Law has provided local governments with (non-obligatory) tools to help implement regeneration in Poland. However, it is too early to assess whether they are effective in practice. Such instruments include, among others, the Special Regeneration Zone, which can be established for a maximum of 10 years in a part or all of a regeneration area. Through it a commune can exercise the right of pre-emption, suspend the issuing of building permit decisions or subsidise renovation of private buildings. Previously, local governments could legally support private investments only in the case of listed historic buildings. Currently, local governments that have established a Special Regeneration Zone usually organise annual competitions for subsidies for the renovation of private buildings (including those remaining in joint ownership with the commune), which enables the financial participation of stakeholders. The second instrument worth mentioning is the Local Regeneration Plan. On its basis, urban transformations occur in the area covered by a CRP. It may contain urban concepts and special investment requirements for selected properties.

It needs to be noted that the Law came into force in 2015, i.e. already during the new EU programming period. Hence, its provisions have introduced a transitional period and its application by communes will be discretionary until the end of 2023. This means that in practice most units are currently implementing regeneration programmes on the basis of LRPs and not on the basis of CRPs consistent with the Law (Report..., 2018). This is mainly due to the fact that the procedure of adopting an LRP is much simpler and communes may rely on previous experiences. Both of these forms, however, must comply with the *Guidelines regarding urban regeneration in operational programmes for the years 2014–2020*, if communes want to receive EU funding for their projects.

### **3.3. Guidelines regarding urban regeneration in operational programmes for the years 2014–2020**

In 2015, the Ministry of Development drew up *the Guidelines regarding urban regeneration in operational programmes for the years 2014–2020*. They were, first of all, intended for IMROPs, which at their level, for particular voivodships, developed detailed requirements regarding the implementation of regeneration projects co-financed from EU funds. Therefore, all communes which want to use EU funds in the 2014–2020 programming period for projects connected with urban regeneration have to meet both national and regional guidelines.

The Guidelines have determined the tasks to be performed by the IMROPs, which include maintaining communes informed about the requirements and ex-

pectations which are set for LRPs/CRPs, the verification of the correctness of LRP's/CRP's preparation and regeneration projects' consistency with the LRPs/CRPs, as well as maintaining a list of regeneration programmes in a voivodship (Report..., 2018).

According to the Guidelines, a commune is required to possess an LRP/CRP determining the main directions for investments and operations in a designated area in crisis to conduct regeneration activities. An LRP can be adopted by passing one resolution, whereas the procedure of adopting a CRP is definitely more laborious and time-consuming. It begins with the stage of designating a degraded area and a regeneration area by passing a resolution. Usually, another resolution on commencing the preparation of a CRP is simultaneously adopted. Only after these two resolutions are passed, can the stage of developing a CRP commence. As soon as a commune adopts an LRP or a CRP, it is submitted for verification to the competent IMROP. If approved, it is entered in the list of regeneration programmes of a voivodeship and only then can it be the basis for applying for EU funding (Fig. 2). **This approach differs from that which was applied in 2004–2013 when the substantive content of a regeneration programme was not assessed at all. What mattered was the very fact of having it and of including the beneficiary's project in it.**

Most of the Guidelines' stipulations are consistent with the provisions and obligations arising from the Law. In addition, they emphasise such aspects as:

- including regeneration as an important element of a comprehensive vision of a commune's development;
- the necessity to perform a diagnosis covering an entire commune within the social, economic, spatial-functional, technical, and environmental spheres in order to indicate the places where various problems concentrate (as opposed to the Law which includes a requirement to set a diagnosis in the social sphere for the whole city, whereas deficiencies in other areas are analysed only as regards those places where social problems have been diagnosed (Fig. 2));
- establishing a hierarchy of needs in the field of regeneration activities;
- proper selection of tools and interventions addressing the needs and conditions of the problem area;
- integration of activities;
- proper monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of urban regeneration;
- implementation of the partnership principle (Art. 5(1) of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EU) No. 1303/2013);
- planning of regeneration in such a way as to create the so-called social mix in the regeneration area and so that the influx of new residents does not “push out” the less affluent part of the community (The Guidelines..., 2016). This is to counteract the processes of gentrification, which might be the consequence of the urban regeneration process.

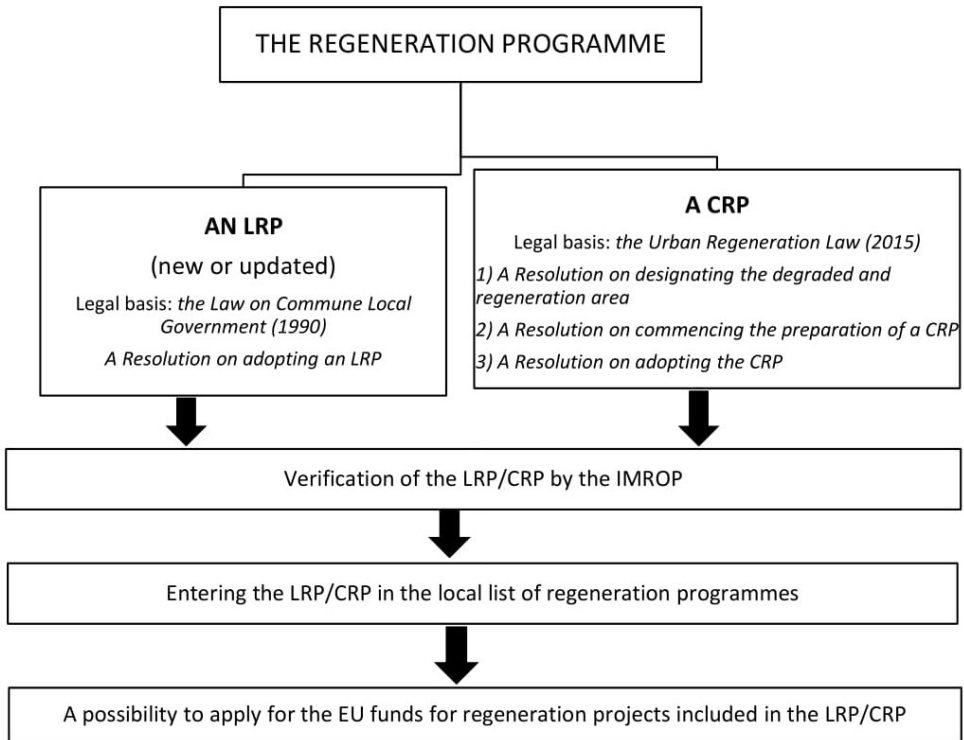


Fig. 2. A Regeneration Programme as the basis for applying for EU funds in 2014–2020  
Source: own work on the basis of the Guidelines (2016) and The Urban Regeneration Law (2015).

When assessing an LRP or CRP in terms of the implementation of the Guidelines, the following aspects are considered: its complexity, concentration and complementarity of the planned regeneration activities in the spatial dimension, problem-based dimension, procedural-institutional dimension, intertemporal dimension, and the financing sources. The assessment of these aspects is supposed to motivate potential beneficiaries to jointly plan solutions to problems existing in the regeneration area.

EU funds are the main source of co-financing of regeneration projects in Poland. They are allocated under 16 Regional Operational Programmes and, as a supplementary measure, from various National Operational Programmes. Investment priorities directly related to regeneration concern, among others, improving competitiveness, low-carbon economy, environmental protection, sustainable transport, supporting mobility, and combating social exclusion and poverty (Table 2).

Table 2. Investment priorities directly related to regeneration in operational programmes

Regional Operational Programmes	National Operational Programmes
<p><b>Reinforcing the competitiveness of SMBs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promoting business initiatives (e.g. business incubators).</li> </ul> <p><b>Supporting the transition to a low-carbon economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supporting energetic effectiveness, intelligent energy management and use of renewable energy sources in public infrastructure;</li> <li>– Promoting low-carbon strategies.</li> </ul> <p><b>Preserving and protecting the natural environment and promoting effective resource management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Protection, promotion and development of natural and cultural heritages;</li> <li>– Improvement of the urban environment quality, urban regeneration, reclamation and decontamination of brownfield sites (including post-military areas).</li> </ul> <p><b>Promoting sustainable transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Development and rehabilitation of rail transport systems.</li> </ul> <p><b>Promoting sustainable and high-quality employment and supporting employee mobility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Access to employment for persons seeking jobs and professionally inactive persons;</li> <li>– Supporting self-employment and enterprise development.</li> </ul> <p><b>Supporting social inclusion and combating poverty:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supporting regeneration in urban and rural areas;</li> <li>– Active participation and increasing chances for employment;</li> <li>– Access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality public services;</li> <li>– Supporting the social economy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>‘Infrastructure and Environment’ Operational Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Supporting energy efficiency, intelligent energy management and use of renewable energy sources in public infrastructure;</li> <li>– Promoting low-carbon strategies;</li> <li>– Protection and development of natural and cultural heritages;</li> <li>– Improvement of the urban environment quality, urban regeneration, reclamation and decontamination of brownfield sites (including post-military areas);</li> <li>– Investments in healthcare and social infrastructure.</li> </ul> <p><b>‘Knowledge, Education, Development’ Operational Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Investments aimed at integrating young people in the labour market, in particular those at risk of social exclusion or originating from marginalised communities.</li> </ul> <p><b>‘Eastern Poland’ Operational Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Promotion of low-carbon strategies and adaptation measures with a mitigating effect on climate change.</li> </ul> <p><b>‘Digital Poland’ Operational Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Expanding the scope of broadband connections and introducing high-speed internet networks;</li> <li>– Supporting new technologies and networks for the digital economy;</li> <li>– Strengthening the application of information and communication technologies for e-governance, e-learning, e-social inclusion, e-culture, and e-health.</li> </ul>

Source: own work based on The Guidelines..., (2016).

In Poland, there is still no national financial support for the implementation of the LRPs/CRPs developed by local governments. Unfortunately, this results in them being focussed mainly on activities that can be financed from EU funds.

Examples from different countries show that all administrative levels should be involved financially and organisationally in regeneration processes. The roles of regional and national authorities cannot be limited to the distribution of EU funds. The private sector's active participation in the regeneration process is also important from the financial perspective. Hence the necessity to create proper conditions and develop instruments that will implement this stipulation.

### 3.4. Supporting communes in regeneration programming

In 2015–2019, the Ministry of Investment and Development conducted activities aimed at helping local governments prepare the correct bases for this process. The support was provided in three forms (Report ..., 2018; Jadach- Sepioło *et al.*, 2018):

1) grant competitions for communes conducted by the IMROPs for the development of regeneration programmes. Cooperation in this area was initiated by 15 out of 16 voivodeships. The IMROPs conducted a total number of 30 calls for communes to prepare LRPs or the CRPs. 1,114 subsidy agreements were signed, which constituted 45% of all communes in Poland;

2) pilot projects intended for selected cities recognised as those with the greatest regeneration needs, i.e. Łódź<sup>7</sup> (Łódzkie Voivodeship), Bytom (Śląskie Voivodeship) and Wałbrzych<sup>8</sup> (Dolnośląskie Voivodeship). These projects constituted an individualised form of support in programming integrated, comprehensive and effective regeneration activities that would address the specific needs of crisis areas and, at the same time, fit the vision of a given city's development;

3) the project *Model Urban Regeneration*, in which 20 communes representing 13 out of 16 voivodships were selected in a two-stage competition. The beneficiaries were both urban-rural and urban communes, small towns, and medium and large cities. The average value of the project could be PLN 100,000.00, and the maximum figure reached PLN 5 million. At the first stage of project implementation, the beneficiaries developed regeneration programmes; at the second stage,

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<sup>7</sup> Łódź is a city that underwent unfavourable changes after 1989, with the fall of the textile industry. These changes caused, among others, the liquidation of many jobs and a significant outflow of people. In 2000, Łódź had a population of 793,000; in 2010 – 737,000; at the end of 2019 – 680,000 (source: Szukalski P., *Demographic situation in Łódź, Demographic collapse of the city and its consequences for the future of Łódź*, the study was prepared under the grant of the Mayor of the City of Łódź, Łódź 2012 and Statistical Information 1/20, Socio-economic situation of Łódź, Statistical Office in Łódź, Łódź 2020).

<sup>8</sup> As a result of the liquidation processes in the mining and metallurgical industries, Bytom and Wałbrzych faced a large-scale degradation of facilities (including post-industrial ones), depreciation of the housing substance, and significant environmental pollution (Partnership Agreement, Programming the 2014–2020 financial perspective, The Minister of Development, Warsaw, December 2015, p. 48).

they developed model solutions and procedures related to a problem/challenge identified in their area. Each commune decided on the so-called leading topic of their project and developed model solutions in this area. These topics included: financing regeneration activities, social policy and the labour market, social participation, housing, shaping urban space, environmental protection, economic recovery and increasing investment attractiveness, urban mobility in degraded areas, and the protection and use of the potential of cultural and natural heritage (The Regulations of the Model Urban Regeneration Competition, 2015).

Table 3. Support for urban regeneration process development in communes in 2015–2019

Type of support	Granted subsidies (in million PLN)
Subsidies for developing a regeneration programme	66.7
Pilot projects	14.5
Model Urban Regeneration	47.3
TOTAL	128.5

Source: own work based on *the Report...* (2018).

In total, approximately PLN 128.5 million was allocated for the above activities (Table 3). The projects were co-financed in 85% from the Cohesion Fund under the 2014–2020 Operational Program Technical Assistance and in 15% from the central budget. The experience gained by the beneficiaries of various sizes and conditions is to help other communes in preparing their own regeneration studies and developing the necessary tools and implementation instruments. Hence, all the educational activities and the dissemination of their results were an important element of the support provided by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development. The materials developed as part of the projects were made available on the website of the National Knowledge Centre (*The Report...*, 2018).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The subject of urban regeneration in Poland has been discussed in theory and practice since the 1990s. Polish literature on the subject presents its correct definitions, which emphasize that it is a long-term and comprehensive process which integrates activities in the spatial, economic, environmental, and social spheres, related to degraded urban areas where residents and stakeholders should be actively involved. In practice, however, a deliberate intervention in the space which

is called ‘urban regeneration’ in Poland, similarly to the countries of Western Europe, began with typically infrastructural measures, which are obviously necessary, but do not in themselves constitute a remedy for the actual problems of the degraded areas.

Poland’s accession to the European Union and access to funds for regeneration projects motivated communes to create LRPs as obligatory documents on their way to obtain funding. According to Jadach-Sepioło, in 2004–2013, due to the willingness to use EU funds, “the investment approach was dominant, and the multi-faceted nature and integrated nature of urban regeneration were marginalised” (Jadach-Sepioło, 2018). At that time, rather schematic LRPs subordinated to the guidelines of the IMROP were developed and stakeholders were activated to a small extent. Projects tailored to the available source of financing and not the actual needs of the local community were often implemented (Masierek, 2016).

Only since 2015, i.e. since the adoption of the *National Urban Policy* (in which regeneration has found its place) and the long-awaited Law that a definite change in the perception of this issue has occurred in Poland. Additionally, the Guidelines appeared and they set the directions of regeneration activities expected from the beneficiaries of the EU funds. The new approach definitely promotes the social and participatory aspect of regeneration, which applies both to solving social problems in the regeneration area and the active participation of stakeholders in the entire process of change (from joint planning through the implementation and subsequent monitoring of changes). It also emphasizes the need to integrate activities undertaken in various spheres and by various entities, aimed at leading the designated regeneration area out of crisis. Moreover, the new approach forces communes, among others, to:

- pay more attention to diagnostic work delineating the area of intervention (in previous local regeneration programmes, diagnoses were often conducted summarily);

- territorial concentration – the regeneration area may cover a maximum of 20% of a commune’s area and 30% of its population (previously, some units covered large areas with their regeneration programmes, sometimes even entire cities);

- the concentration of activities in inhabited areas (several previously undertaken regeneration activities concerned brownfield sites, and post-military and post-rail areas);

- activate stakeholders and conducted participation activities in different forms at every stage of the regeneration process (previously, participation often meant conducting consultations of ready LRPs and forms of consultation were very limited);

- make planned and undertaken regeneration activities complementary in the following dimensions: spatial, problematic, procedural and institutional, intertemporal, and financing sources.



Before they become the basis for obtaining EU funds in 2014–2020, the urban regeneration programmes developed by communes (in the form of LRPs or CRPs) have to undergo a substantive assessment by IMROPs and be entered in the voivodship list of urban regeneration programmes. This enables verification and control of the programming bases adopted by the communes. At the same time, it means that they have to prepare qualitatively better programmes and select the area of intervention much more objectively than before, and plan the entire process.

In 2015–2019 grant support was launched to help communes adapt to the currently preferred approach to urban regeneration in Poland. It mainly concerned assistance in the development of LRPs and CRPs and in the search for individualised solutions and practical instruments, tailored to a given unit and its needs. The experiences gained by various beneficiaries during the implementation of these projects are to be an inspiration for other communes that develop “their own regeneration paths.”

Unfortunately, regeneration in Poland still largely depends on EU funding (Romańczyk, 2018). Local governments have only a small amount of their own resources to conduct these capital-intensive processes. The role of local governments should be limited to the coordination, stimulation, monitoring of regeneration processes, developing their foundations, and creating permanent platforms for integration, activation and cooperation of stakeholders. In Poland, there is clearly a need for greater involvement of the private sector in the regeneration activities. Incentives should be developed to encourage investments in the degraded areas.

The sense of urban regeneration is the simultaneous performance and integration of activities in the following, practically interpenetrating, spheres: social, economic, spatial and functional, technical, and environmental (Roberts, 2000), as well as its planning and implementation by stakeholders. Each city has its own specificity and unique identity; it is characterised by different endogenous conditions, strengths and problems to be solved. Each has a different potential to be used. Therefore, there is no single recipe for urban regeneration. Each commune should prepare and fulfil it in its own way. However, on the way to change, it is important to have solid strategic, financial, and legal foundations, as well as the possibility to learn from the experience of others and to use successful solutions as a model. Therefore, the course of action taken by Poland after 2015 seems to be proper. Currently, there is a need for a consistent implementation of the LRPs/CRPs adopted by communes; making a critical reflection on the projects implemented in the 2013–2020 period and the instruments launched at that time; the modification of legal bases verified in practice and the preparation of national government programs dedicated to urban regeneration.

The analysis of the current Polish approach to the issue of urban regeneration made in this article and the conclusions drawn from it show that Poland follows the integrated approach common in Europe. The analysis fits the discussions of

both academics and practitioners on the designation of degraded areas in cities and the principles of developing urban regeneration programmes. They emphasise the need to include stakeholders in the regeneration processes and to use legal, organisational, and financial instruments to support this issue. The article also points to the need, which is criticised by some researchers, to direct aid to selected areas in cities, which, left to themselves, deteriorate and, in the author's opinion, do not have a chance to solve their problems on their own without explicit, coordinated support in the form of an urban regeneration programme.

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## NEW TRENDS IN THE CHANGES OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES IN POLAND

**Abstract.** The objective of the study is to determine the leading trends in changing administrative boundaries in Poland. Based on 194 Regulations of the Council of Ministers concerning the changes of boundaries and granting city status, which covered a total of 1,383.8 sq. km, multidimensional analyses for the years 2010–2020 were conducted, and their results were referred to territorial reforms in Europe and Poland. The analyses provided the basis for selecting the leading trends, including: (1) the ‘new wave’ of the restitution of city status (from 2018 in the new fast-track mode), resulting in quantitative changes within 3<sup>rd</sup>-tier units, (2) a significant increase in the area of cities and city counties primarily caused by annexations in suburban zones and establishing new cities, and (3) the politicisation of the process of changing boundaries, especially in the years preceding local government elections. The trend of unit fragmentation observed in the 1990s has disappeared. The initiators of the changes of administrative boundaries are still predominantly local elites and rarely the inhabitants of communes.

**Key words:** boundary changes, administrative boundaries, territorial reform, administrative division, commune, county, voivodeship, Poland.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Changes in the territorial organisation of units result from territorial reforms or bottom-up initiatives (Baldersheim and Rose, 2010; Ebinger *et al.*, 2019; Kaczmarek, 2005). The current experience shows that approaches in this scope have evolved, as reflected in consolidation reforms based on the trust in the ‘economies

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of scale' (1960s and 1970s) (Blom-Hansen *et al.*, 2014), 'Europe of the Regions' (early 21<sup>st</sup> century) (Magone, 2003), or countering the effects of the economic crisis (after 2009) (Steiner *et al.*, 2016). Researchers have also observed territorial fragmentation resulting from decentralisation reforms in post-socialist countries in the 1990s (Baldersheim and Rose, 2010; Swianewicz, 2002). In Europe, a quantifiable effect of these reforms was the reduction of the number of local government units by 14,200 in the years 1990–2018 (Swianewicz, 2020).

It should also be emphasised that changes in the territorial organisation of units consist not only of modifying their numbers either through reduction or increase. The distribution of administrative boundaries established as the result of territorial reforms is often further modified in subsequent years due to both top-down and bottom-up initiatives. Such changes can take various forms, dependent on geographic, social, and economic conditions, as well as on the adopted legal solutions. They can cover units of different tiers. Such modifications can consist of establishing new, abolishing existing or merging or dividing entire units or their fragments (Carr and Feiock, 2016; Hardy, 2012; Holzer *et al.*, 2009; Kaczmarek, 2005, 2016; Kachniarz, 2016; Szmytkie and Krzysztofik, 2019). Territorial reforms implemented in Poland have generally reflected European trends. The issue has been broadly discussed in the literature (Chojnicki and Czyż, 2000; Kaczmarek, 2001; Kulesza, 1997; Służewski, 1977). It is worth emphasising that the majority of the analyses have been conducted at the level of communes (*gmina*) (Kaczmarek, 2016; Walczak, 2012), seldom counties (*powiat*) (Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016) or regions/provinces (voivodeship – *województwo*) (Miszczuk, 2003; Janicki, 2020). Studies usually focus on already amalgamated (Swianewicz and Szmigiel-Rawska, 2020) or split units (Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016; Swianewicz *et al.*, 2018). A clear research trend has also developed regarding the processes of territorial integration and disintegration of urban areas (Jarczewski, 2002; Kociuba, 2019; Krzysztofik and Dymitrow, 2015; Szmytkie, 2014; Szmytkie and Krzysztofik, 2019) and new cities (Drobek, 2020; Konecka-Szydłowska *et al.*, 2018; Krzysztofik and Dymitrow, 2015; Liszewski *et al.*, 1989; Sokołowski, 2014; Szymańska, 1993). Less attention is paid to changes in the boundaries of parts of units and related studies usually apply to the territorial expansion of cities (Kociuba, 2019; Rajchel, 2018) or counties (Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016). Nonetheless, the majority of changes in the course of boundaries, particularly those of rural communes and smaller units due to their local character, is largely neglected and only mentioned in local and regional press. Other hardly investigated issues include changes in the administrative-territorial status and the area of units subject to boundary adjustment at the scale of the entire country (Kociuba, 2019), as well as new formal-legal procedures introduced in recent years, and the effects of their implementation. There is a general lack of studies that comprehensively discuss the changes in administrative boundaries, and analyse the regularities and trends in this scope.

The aim of the article is to fill this research gap. The objective of the study is to determine the leading trends in changing administrative boundaries in Poland.



Starting from the presentation of the rationale and the effects of territorial reforms in Europe and Poland, further chapters discuss the main aspects of the issue:

1) legal and procedural conditions for changes in LGU boundaries and the granting of city status to localities and new regulations in this area;

2) the results of the changes in LGU boundaries in the 2010–2020 in terms of: territorial-administrative status and the area of units covered by a change, the cyclical character of changes, as well as the establishment of new cities;

3) main mechanisms of the transformation of the existing administrative-territorial structure, the interactions between units covered by boundary changes and the dominant tendencies in this scope.

These conducted analyses have identified several dominant trends and regularities, which were addressed in the discussion.

The study was conducted based on a thorough analysis of scientific publications, as well as legal acts and government decisions regarding the changes in the administrative boundaries of LGUs. It employed the methods of meta-analysis, query search, and information screening. The desk research method was used in the multi-dimensional analyses of the effects of the changes in administrative LGU boundaries. To present the scale of the phenomenon, the analyses were conducted both in the horizontal (units of the same tier) and vertical (hierarchical) systems. The source materials included the Regulations of the Council of Ministers (hereinafter: CM) on establishing the boundaries of certain communes and cities, granting city status to certain localities, as well as abolishing or changing the administrative status of cities and communes in 2009–2019. The analysis covered a total of 194 decisions of the CM regarding the changes of LGU boundaries. The data was supplemented based on justifications and drafts of justifications to regulations of the CM (<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/>, <https://archiwumbip.mswia.gov.pl/bip/>), documentation related to the change of administrative LGU boundaries, and press releases. Illustrating the scale of the discussed phenomena in reference to the changes in administrative area, and in the case of new cities also population, employed data obtained from the resources of Statistics Poland ([www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl)).

## **2. THE RATIONALE AND THE EFFECTS OF TERRITORIAL REFORMS IN EUROPE AND POLAND**

### **2.1. Territorial reforms in Europe**

Consolidation reforms in the 1960s and 1970s were implemented both in Western European countries (e.g. in the Scandinavia, the Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Western Germany) and in Central and Eastern European countries (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Poland). They resulted in the reduc-

tion of the number of administrative-territorial units at all tiers (Steiner *et al.*, 2016). The reforms of the 1990s introduced under decentralisation measures more frequently resulted in the division of existing units. That was particularly evident in post-socialist countries as a manifestation of the ‘abreaction’ to the forced consolidations in the 1970s (Baldersheim and Rose, 2010; Swianewicz, 2010), and it led to a considerable increase in the number of communes (quadrupled in Croatia and Macedonia, tripled in Slovenia, and doubled in Hungary) (Swianewicz, 2010).

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, new consolidation reforms were implemented. On the one hand, they constituted an attempt to adjust to better absorb European funds in the “Europe of the Regions” (Magone, 2003), and, on the other hand, they constituted a response to the global economic crisis. They were implemented on a one-off basis (e.g. Iceland, Latvia, (Northern) Macedonia, Denmark, Ireland, Albania, Estonia, France, and Norway) or gradually (e.g. Great Britain, Greece, The Netherlands, and Finland) by at least 19 European countries (Swianewicz, 2020). Although most changes have recently involved territorial mergers, splits of units have also occurred, often as a result of bottom-up initiatives (Ebinger *et al.*, 2019). Fragmentation was observed in at least 10 European countries, to the greatest degree in Romania, and less so in Slovenia, Spain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Croatia (Swianewicz, 2020). Territorial reforms have led to changes in the number of administrative units, especially at the local level. Analyses conducted for 40 European countries have shown that consolidation reforms have resulted in a systematic decrease in the total number of communes that reached 116,000 in 1990. The decentralisation reforms in Central and Eastern Europe caused the number of communes to increase to 120,000 in 1994. The consolidation reforms at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century caused another decrease in the number of communes to 114,500 in 1998 and 101,800 in 2018 (Ladner *et al.*, 2019; Swianewicz, 2020).

Changes in administrative division are usually of a horizontal character – they consist of fragmentation or consolidation of units of the same tier into larger territorial structures (Hardy, 2012; Holzer *et al.*, 2009; Kachniarz, 2016). This results from the fact that the protection of boundaries, particularly at the local level, is rarely guaranteed by the constitution. This enables the governments of most countries to make decisions in the scope of both complex and unitary changes of administrative division, including the establishment and abolition of communes, and the modification of their boundaries. They are usually implemented based on a regular act (e.g. Bulgaria, Albania, and Portugal) or legal acts of governmental administration (regulations) (Poland) (Kaczmarek, 2005, 2016).

## 2.2. The changes in the structure of territorial division in Poland

The changes to the structure of territorial division units in Poland generally did not differ from the trends observed in Europe. Consolidation intensified in the 1970s for the purpose of creating *strong* units. As a result of the reform implemented in the

1973–1975 period, the three-tier division from the pre-war period of 17 voivodeships (+ 5 cities with voivodeship status), 314 counties, 78 cities with county status, and 4,315 gromadas<sup>1</sup> was replaced with a two-tier division. 49 voivodeships were designated, counties that had been functioning for over 400 years were abolished, and instead of 4,315 gromadas, 2,366 considerably larger collective communes were introduced<sup>2</sup>, divided into auxiliary units called ‘sołectwo’. As a result of numerous amalgamations, exemplified by activities conducted in Silesia (Jarczewski, 2002), or development or conglomerate cities (Szmytkie, 2014), the number of communes decreased to 2,129 by 1976, and 39 cities were repealed (lost administrative independence) (Służewski, 1977). Such activities provided the basis for the administrative division of the country at the local level. The consolidation reform also inhibited the process of granting city status to localities, which intensified in the 1950s and 1960s and particularly concerned new cities established due to planned industrialisation. The consolidations at a much smaller scale continued in the 1980s. The number of cities slightly increased as a result of granting, or more frequently, restitution of city status to 22 localities.

The system transformation in the early 1990s brought a shift of public administration based on the rules of decentralisation and development of local self-government. The introduction of the Act of 8 March 1990 on Local Self-Government (since 1 January 1999, the title has been “Act on Commune Self-Government) (Journal of Laws 1990 No. 16 Item 95, as amended), pointing to commune councils as the primary initiators of the changes of boundaries, in combination with an increase in the sense of local autonomy expressed in the need of self-determination and independence, led to numerous divisions particularly recorded in the first half of the 1990s (Kaczmarek, 2016; Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016). Some were related to a change of the status of units because the act abolished the division into cities and rural communes, and introduced the commune as the main administrative unit at the local level<sup>3</sup>. In 1992, after the completion of the process of the changes related to the implementation of the act, instead of 830 cities and 2,121 rural communes (state as at 1 January 1990), the number of communes stabilised at a level of 2,459 (299 urban communes, 535 urban-rural commune, and 1,625 rural communes). Two trends were observed in the process of the fragmentation of communes. On the one hand, urban-rural communes

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<sup>1</sup> Gromadas were established based on the reform of 1954 as units of administrative division replacing rural communes. 3,001 communes were replaced with 8,789 gromadas covering several villages and hamlets.

<sup>2</sup> Until 1990, the term ‘commune’ (‘gmina’) was applied exclusively in reference to rural communes. Moreover, new cities were designated, i.e. units which were granted city rights.

<sup>3</sup> The applied division includes: urban communes, i.e. those containing cities in their administrative boundaries; urban-rural communes which include a city and several to a dozen villages and hamlets; rural communes which include no cities in their territory, although their seat may be located in a neighbouring urban commune (the so-called bagel communes). The division was not introduced in the act as a consequence of the coherence of system solutions in the scope of the legal status of the local government unit that is not subject to change. The differences consist of the names of administrative bodies (Sobota *et al.*, 2012).

disintegrated (23 in 1991). On the other hand, parts of communes, often previously forced to consolidate in the 1970s and 1980s, detached from the existing territorial-administrative units. This particularly concerned cities located in the Upper Silesian agglomeration, where cities and sometimes rural communes were established, or more frequently resituated (Jarczewski, 2002). Moreover, the trend of granting city status to localities intensified (50 decisions were issued in the 1990s, including 41 on restitutions). It did not affect the total number of communes, but altered the number of self-government units of particular types at the local level.

The development of territorial self-government resulted in the need for a new reform of the territorial organisation of the country. It was completed in 1998 (Journal of Laws 1998 No. 96 Item 603), and restored the three-tier division: commune-county-province/voivodship (*gmina-powiat-województwo*), implementing the rules of decentralisation and territorial self-government. 16 voivodeships were established (1<sup>st</sup> tier), as well as 373 self-governmental units of administrative division of the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier, i.e. 308 counties (*powiat*, pl. *powiaty*) and 65 city counties (cities with county status – *miasta na prawie powiatu*) (Journal of Laws of 1998 No. 103, Item 652). That state generally reflected the situation before the 1975 reform. In 2002, it was modified through restoring 7 *powiaty*, and the establishment of the Warsaw county comprising 12 communes (including the city of Wesoła incorporated into Warsaw), then transformed into a city county. In the following year, the Wałbrzych city county was eliminated and incorporated into the Wałbrzych county. Fragmentation of 2<sup>nd</sup> tier units in the 2002–2003 resulted in an increase in their number to 379, including *powiaty* to 314. The implementation of the 1998 reform inhibited the tendencies of fragmentation of communes. In 1999 in Poland, there were 2,489 communes (including 307 urban communes, 567 urban-rural communes, and 1,615 rural communes). As a result of the elimination of Warsaw rural communes in 2002, the number of communes decreased to 2,478, and remained at that level until 2009. The process of granting city status also decelerated (in the 2000s, 23 decisions were issued, including 21 on restitutions).

### 3. THE FORMAL-LEGAL AND THE PROCEDURAL ASPECTS OF THE CHANGES OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

#### 3.1. The formal-legal aspect

In Poland, as in most other countries, the protection of unit boundaries is not guaranteed by the constitution<sup>4</sup>. Pursuant to Art. 4 of the Act of 8 March 1990

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<sup>4</sup> As stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997 (Journal of Laws 1997 No. 78, item 483, as amended), the “basic unit of territorial local government is the commune (Art. 164(1)), therefore, constitutional guarantees concern only the institution of local self-government and not the spatial framework of its operation.

on *Local Self-Government* (Journal of Laws 1990 No. 16, Item 95, as amended) and Art. 3 of the Act of 5 June 1998 on county self-government (Journal of Laws 1998 No. 91, Item 578, as amended), the Council of Ministers is entitled to apply changes to the territorial division of the state. Based on its annually regulations, the CM can, among others, establish, merge, divide, and abolish municipalities/counties, and determine their boundaries, as well as grant city status to localities. The Council of Ministers issues an appropriate regulation by 31 July each year. The changes come into force on 1 January of the following year. The procedure of the submission of applications and documents required in such cases is stipulated by the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 9 August 2001 (Journal of Laws No. 86, Item 943) and its amendment published in the form of an announcement of the Prime Minister (Journal of Laws 2014, Item 310).

A decision by the CM should consider two basic premises. The first one is the provision of maximum uniformity and territorial cohesion resulting from the analysis of the settlement and spatial layout in the context of social, economic, and cultural bonds. The second states that a commune/county in its new boundaries should be able to perform public tasks. A change of boundaries is determined by: the proper resources of social and technical infrastructure, urban layout, and the nature of building development. The CM does not issue a permit if the new unit does not meet the following criteria: (1) the revenue criterion, i.e. tax revenue per inhabitant is lower than the lowest tax revenue per inhabitant determined for particular communes pursuant to the The Act of 13 November 2003 on revenues of territorial self-government units (Journal of Laws 2003 No. 203, Item 1966, as amended), and (2) the population criterion, i.e. the new unit is smaller than the smallest unit in terms of the number of inhabitants of a commune in Poland as of 31 December of the year preceding the announcement of the regulation. In the case of granting a locality the city status, determination of its boundaries, and their change, the legislator additionally ensures for them to be implemented in a way which considers the social and technical infrastructure, as well as the urban layout and nature of building development.

### **3.2. The procedures of the changes of LGUs boundaries**

A change of the administrative boundaries of an LGU in most cases involves an application procedure. The application for a change of boundaries is submitted by the council of a commune/county/city county after conducting consultation with residents. By 31 March of each year, the council, with the intermediation of the voivode, submits an application to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration (hereinafter: MIAA) who submits it together with recommendations to the CM. The CM makes the final decision with consideration for statutory requirements and mutual consent between units covered by boundary changes, and issues a relevant regulation. Other less popular procedures include:

- a ministerial procedure that requires a consultation of the MIAA with interested municipal councils,
- a merger procedure (initiated by the voivode). Since 2003, the procedure has had financial support of the state in the form of a so-called ‘ministerial bonus’, i.e. a 5 percent point increase in the index of participation in revenues from personal income tax for 5 years.

In the analysed period, two new procedures were introduced:

- a local referendum<sup>5</sup>, introduced in 2011, based on the initiative of a minimum of 15 inhabitants. A positive result of the referendum requires the commune council to submit an application to the Council of Ministers for issuing an appropriate regulation regarding a change of boundaries;
- a ‘fast track’ procedure, introduced in 2018 on the ‘wave’ of the celebrations of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Poland regaining its independence and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the January Uprising. The ‘fast track’ procedure involves the restitution of the city status for localities located in the former Russian partition<sup>6</sup>, degraded after the fall of the January Uprising under the territorial reform introduced by the tsarist authorities in 1869–1870. The ‘fast track’ combines the ministerial and application procedures. The municipal council passes a resolution in the form of an appeal for “restoring city status lost as a result of the Tsar repressions”, submitted to the MIAA. The Minister decides whether to launch the procedure, and applies to the commune council for issuing a relevant opinion. After consultations with residents, the commune council submits an application to the MIAA that, once approved, it is passed on to the Prime Minister.

### 3.3. Granting city status

A particular case of the change of LGU boundaries related to a change in the administrative status of localities is granting, and in practice – usually the restitution of formerly lost city status, based on the Regulation of the CM, usually occurring as a result of:

- 1) granting city status to a locality the territory of which is designated from the area of a rural commune. In the majority of cases, the application procedure is applied, and from 2018, for localities in the area of the former Russian partition, also the ‘fast track’ procedure;

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<sup>5</sup> The procedure was introduced based on amendment of the Act on Local Self-Government of 26 May 2011 (Journal of Laws 2011 No. 134, Item 777). The rules and mode of conducting the referendum are stipulated in detail in the Act on Local Referendum (Journal of Laws 2000 No. 88, Item 985, as amended). The referendum is valid if it involves the participation of at least 30% of eligible voters (Art. 55(1)), and its result is conclusive if more than 50% of the votes are cast for a specific option (Art. 56(1)).

<sup>6</sup> This area covers the territories of current voivodeships: Lubelskie, Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie, Mazowieckie, Łódzkie, and parts of voivodeships: Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Wielkopolskie, Śląskie, and Małopolskie.

2) the loss of city status by an urban commune in favour of the establishment of an urban-rural commune. The procedure is of purely administrative nature related to a change of the type of commune. It occurs in two stages based on the provisions of one regulation. The first stage involves revoking the city status of an urban commune on 1 January in favour of the establishment of a rural commune. At the second stage, on 1 January, the city status is granted to a city, and its area (usually considerably limited in comparison to its original surface area) is designated from the new rural commune that covers the remaining areas within the former administrative boundaries of the city.

#### **4. THE RESULTS OF THE CHANGES OF ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES IN 2010–2020**

##### **4.1. Decisions regarding a change of territorial-administrative status of LGUs**

In 2009–2019, a total of 194 decisions regarding the changes of boundaries were issued, covering 199 LGUs<sup>7</sup>, and concerning: (1) the areas of entire communes, (2) the area of a cadastral region (villages, hamlets, or sołectwos<sup>8</sup> in rural communes, less frequently city boroughs), (3) parts of cadastral regions, or (4) cadastral parcels. These included:

- 97 decisions regarding the incorporation of the areas of rural communes into cities, including one regarding a communal merger of a city county and rural commune (Zielona Góra) (commune-city variant);
- 34 annexations of the areas of rural communes into the neighbouring rural communes (commune);
- 13 annexations of the areas of cities into the neighbouring rural communes (city);
- 4 incorporations of the areas of cities into the neighbouring cities (city-city), including one change in the status of a city into a city county status (Wałbrzych);
- 51 instances of granting city status to localities (new cities), including 47 through the exclusion of their area from rural communes, and 4 as a result of establishing urban-rural communes in cities areas.

The analysis of the changes within the units of different tiers indicates the following:

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<sup>7</sup> The differences in the numbers of analysed cases result from the fact that eight changes of boundaries occurred based on four decisions, and one decision concerned the incorporation into a city of areas located in two rural communes.

<sup>8</sup> Sołectwo is an auxiliary unit of a rural commune. Sołectwo can cover one locality (e.g. a village or hamlet), a part of a locality, or several localities. One locality can also include several sołectwos.

- 2 decisions concerned the changes of the boundaries of voivodeships (Dolnośląskie and Lubuskie, as well as Wielkopolskie and Lubuskie);
- 40 changes of the boundaries of counties and city counties;
- 157 changes of the boundaries of communes and cities<sup>9</sup>.

It should be mentioned that 16 of the analysed decisions concerned exchanges of areas within neighbouring LGUs.

#### 4.2. The changes of the administrative areas of LGUs

The changes of LGU boundaries in 2010–2020 as a result of decisions issued by the CM covered a total area of 1,383.8 sq. km. The majority of the changes concerned the incorporation of the territories of rural communes or their parts into cities (943 sq. km). More than half of them occurred in new cities. In the case of the designation of rural communes from the territories of cities, the surface area of all four cities covered by the changes (Czarna Woda in 2014, Władysławowo in 2015, Pieszyce in 2016, and Jastarnia in 2017) decreased from 138.3 to 44.5 sq. km. Almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the surface area was subject to a change in boundaries within neighbouring rural communes. The smallest area was covered by changes resulting from the incorporation of the territories of cities in rural communes (1%).

Changes over the largest areas occurred within units of the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier, and covered almost 900 sq. km, whereas more than 63% accounted for the incorporations of the territories of rural communes into cities, and 30% – rural communes into rural communes. In the scope of 2<sup>nd</sup> tier units, the changes covered 487 sq. km. They were dominated by the incorporations of the territories of rural communes in the administrative boundaries of city counties (68% of the area covered by a change). The smallest changes concerned the areas of voivodeships (0.05 sq. km) (Table 1).

Small area changes were dominant (up to 1 sq. km). Only 16% of the decisions were issued for areas exceeding 10 sq. km. The changes concerning the largest areas resulted from: the restitution of the Jaśliska commune (the Podkarpackie Voivodeship) in 2010 (99 sq. km) and its later expansion in 2017 (67.2 sq. km), the change of the status of the city of Wałbrzych (the Dolnośląskie Voivodeship) to a city county in 2013 (84.7 sq. km), the merger of the city county and commune of Zielona Góra (the Lubuskie Voivodeship) in 2015 (220 sq. km), and the abolition of the Ostrowice commune (the Zachodniopomorskie Voivodeship) in 2019 (150.6 sq. km) and the incorporation of its territory into the Drawsko Pomorskie (65.6 sq. km) and Złocieniec communes (85 sq. km).

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<sup>9</sup> ‘Commune’ is defined as a rural commune, and an urban commune and a city in the urban-rural commune is described as a ‘city’. Such a differentiation is also applied in CM Regulations.



Table 1. Changes in administrative area resulting from a change in LGU boundaries in Poland in the 2010–2020 period in reference to the 3-tier territorial division of the country (in sq. km) and the number of decisions issued (in %)

Name of unit	Decisions		Area	
	Number	%	Sq. km	%
Voivodeship	2	1	1	1
County, including	40	20	487	34
city county	27	13	411	30
Commune, including	157	79	896	65
commune-city	72	36	116	8
city-commune	9	4	15	1
commune-commune	23	12	270	19
city-city	2	1	1	1
new cities	51	26	495	36

Source: own work based on CM Regulations.

#### 4.3. The cyclical character of the changes of LGUs boundaries related to unit status and administrative division

The changes of the boundaries of voivodeships in 2010–2020 were made twice, and covered a total of 0.056 sq. km (Table 1). The effect of the changes of boundaries was an increase in the area of the Lubuskie Voivodeship with a simultaneous reduction of the area of the Dolnośląskie (2013) and Wielkopolskie Voivodeships (2016).

The changes of boundaries between counties within 2<sup>nd</sup>-tier units even though occupied 20% of decisions and covered 34% of the area subject to change, occurred much more frequently (Table 1). They were dominated by one-off changes within neighbouring rural areas. In the case of some counties (Jarociński, Mikołowski, and Pszczyński), the changes were of cyclical nature. Moreover, changes were introduced in the boundaries of 14 city counties. Most were one-off changes involving the incorporation of the territories of the neighbouring rural communes. Annexations over the largest areas were performed in Opole (52.3 sq. km) and Koszalin (15 sq. km). Cyclical annexations occurred more seldom (10 decisions). In the analysed period, Rzeszów increased its territory the most frequently (in 2010, 2017, and 2019, a total of 28.9 sq. km was incorporated into the city), and Skierniewice and Żory at a lower scale.

The changes of boundaries within administrative units of the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier resulted from almost 80% of decisions, and covered 65% of the area (Table 1). 96% of the decisions concerned urban-rural communes, and usually involved: (1) the expansion of city boundaries by the territories of neighbouring villages or hamlets,

or (2) instances of granting city status to localities located in a rural commune. Among one-off annexations, the most spectacular ones include the expansion of the boundaries of Sędziszów Małopolski (27.0 sq. km), Otmuchów (21.7 sq. km), and Szczecinek (11.3 sq. km). Changes resulting in a part of the territory of a city annexed to a rural commune occurred considerably less often. Among those, the exclusion of villages and settlements from the boundaries of the cities of Jedwabne and Ciechanowiec, and their incorporation into neighbouring rural communities is particularly noteworthy. Only two cases of a change of the boundaries of neighbouring cities were recorded in the analysed period (Reda and Wejherowo, and Orzesze and Łaziska). The changes of the boundaries of neighbouring rural communes were also usually of one-off nature, although some resulted in a large-area change (e.g. Jaśliska, Drawsko Pomorskie, Złocieniec, and Rutka-Tartak). Cyclical changes occurred considerably less often. They were primarily introduced in suburban zones (Jarocin, Żarów, and Mirosławiec). Cyclical changes in boundaries also occurred in the rural communes of Spytkowo, Pułtusk, and Kobiór.

#### 4.4. New (old) cities

Another important issue in the context of the changes in administrative boundaries is the fact of granting city status to localities which results in the establishment of new cities. A total of 51 such cases were recorded in the analysed period (1/4 of the analysed decisions), whereas four concerned the establishment of urban-rural communes in the territories of cities (the aforementioned: Jastarnia, Władysławowo, Czarna Woda, and Pieszyce), and the remaining 47 were instances of extracting a city area from a rural commune. The highest number of new cities is located in the Świętokrzyskie (13) and Lubelskie (7) Voivodeships, and none in the Śląskie and Kujawsko-Pomorskie Voivodeships.

In only nine cases a locality obtained the city status for the first time (the latest being Mielno and Morawica in 2017). The majority of cases involved the restitution of the city status granted in the Middle Ages which was lost in the 1869–1870 period<sup>10</sup> (27 cities, including 8 based on the ‘fast track’ procedure: Nowy Korczyn, Oleśnica, Pacanów, Opatowiec, Klimontów, Lututów, Piątek, and Czerwińsk nad Wisłą). Lututów (the Łódzkie Voivodeship) obtained the city status already for the third time. In spite of the positive decision of the CM, the city status has not been obtained by Chełmiec so far (the Małopolskie Voivodeship). It should be emphasised that in the analysed period the demographic criterion (over 2000 inhabitants) did not consider in as many as 26 decisions. Until 2017, such cases were rare. Since 2018, after the introduction of the ‘fast track’ procedure, where the fact of stripping the city status by

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<sup>10</sup> Among 336 cities degraded in the period 1869–1870 currently located in the territory of Poland, 153 remain with no city status or constitute dependent parts of other cities (state as of May 2020).

the tsarist authorities was crucial, it has become customary (only 4 out of 21 new cities have more than 2,000 inhabitants). In 2018, the city status was granted to cities with less than 1,000 residents (Wiślica – 550, and Józefów nad Wisłą – 920), and in 2019 the city status was regained by Opatowiec with a population of only 309.

#### 4.5. The general effects of the administrative boundary changes on the territorial division of Poland

In 2009, there were 897 cities in Poland, including 306 in urban communes, 591 in urban-rural communes, and 1,581 rural communes. The number of units of the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier was 2,478, and 379 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier, including 314 counties and 65 city counties. In 2010–2020, as a result of the introduction of regulations of the CM regarding the changes in boundaries and granting city status, changes occurred in the number of the units of the 2<sup>nd</sup> tier – one city county was established, and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier – one rural commune was established (Jaśliśka) and two were abolished (Ostrowice, and Zielona Góra), and the number of urban and rural communes decreased (by 4 and 47, respectively) in favour of new urban-rural communes. As a result of the aforementioned changes, the total number of units of the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier decreased by 1 to 2,477<sup>11</sup>. In 2020 in Poland, there were 944 cities, including 302 in urban communes, 642 urban-rural communes, and 1,533 rural communes. A total of 379 changes of unit boundaries in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier were introduced, where their highest number results from the incorporation of territories of rural communes into cities (Table 2).

Table 2. Changes in the administrative division of Poland in the years 2010–2020

Voivodeships	Counties	City counties	Communes		Cities in urban-rural communes	New urban-rural communes
			Rural	Urban		
establishment						
-	-	1	1	-	47	51
abolition						
-	-	-	1	4	-	-
change of boundaries						
4	45	21	163	77	66	3

\* The table presents the changes of boundaries of all LGUs covered by the decision of the CM. The total number of 379 results from the fact that in approximately a dozen cases the changes concerned not only communes/cities, but also counties/city counties, and voivodeships.

Source: own work based on CM Regulations.

<sup>11</sup> In July 2015, the CM issued a regulation regarding the establishment of the Szczawa commune and the Grabówka commune (Journal of Laws Item 1085), but the new government constituted in November 2015 revoked the decisions.

As a result of the establishment of urban-rural communes in the territories of cities and the annexation by rural communes of areas which used to belong to cities, 19 new villages and hamlets were established (which were restituted in the majority of cases).

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The analyses conducted for the 2010–2020 period, based on 194 Regulations of the Council of Ministers resulting in the changes of administrative boundaries in 199 LGUs, permitted the identification of the principal mechanisms of the transformation of the existing administrative-territorial structure and a clarification of the interactions between units subject to boundary changes. The research has highlighted several dominant trends and tendencies in each of the aspects of the discussed issue.

Firstly, Poland was in the mainstream of European territorial reforms until the 1990s. The intensification of the fragmentation of communes as a result of the deregulation of forced mergers from the 1970s (Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016), observed in most post-socialist countries (Swianewicz, 2010; Ebinger *et al.*, 2019) was effectively halted by the 1998 county reform. The study evidently shows that Poland is aligned with neither the consolidation (Estonia, France, and Norway) (Traves, 2018) nor the ‘divorce’ (Romania, Ukraine, and Slovenia) (Swianewicz, 2020) trends recently observed in Europe. New amalgamations or splits, which occurred in the 1990s and in the early 2000s, are sporadic, and their introduction is partly due to the adopted strategies. As a result of the undertaken bottom-up initiatives, the county city and commune of Zielona Góra merged (Kociuba, 2019; Swianewicz, Szmigiel-Rawska, 2020) and the commune of Jaśliska was restituted. The divisions are connected with top-down actions, i.e. the abolition of the Ostrowice commune (by virtue of the special act due to its bankruptcy caused by its indebtedness in quasi-banking entities). This affects the stable number of units within the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier territorial division of the country.

Secondly, as in previous years, the application procedure was still prevalent (90% of decisions approved by the CM). The initiators of boundary changes were most often the city authorities (particularly in urban-rural communes) and city counties interested in territorial expansion (almost 50% of decisions). Therefore, the role of the state continued to be limited to approving the municipalities’ applications for boundary changes. In some cases the Council of Ministers assumed the role of the ‘oracle’ in a dispute between the municipalities which were to gain from the change and those which were to lose. The most prominent example was that of Opole, which expanded its boundaries in 2017 with a strong opposi-

tion from neighbouring municipalities expressed in the negative results of public consultations and with a violation of statutory procedures, yet with strong political support (Kociuba, 2019). Moreover, the first merger procedure supported by a ministerial ‘bonus’ (Zielona Góra in 2015) (Kociuba, 2019; Swianewicz and Szmigiel-Rawska, 2020) was successfully completed and two new procedures for boundary changes have been introduced. The local referendum procedure was applied sporadically, and boundary changes assumed the form of small area adjustments. In contrast, the ‘fast track’ procedure became very popular (in 2019–2020 8 restitutions were implemented under this procedure, and in 2020, 6 localities passed appeals to the MIAA).

Thirdly, the trend of intra-commune fragmentation within 3<sup>rd</sup>-tier units has intensified. This is mainly due to the granting, and in most cases restitution, of the city status to localities in rural communes (1/4 of the analysed decisions) and the exclusion of rural communes from the territories of cities (4 cases). This has resulted in an increase in the number of cities (from 897 to 944) and urban-rural communes (from 591 to 642), and a decrease in the number of rural communes (from 1,581 to 1,533).

Fourthly, the trend of incorporating suburban areas into cities and county cities, observed since 1989 (Kaczmarek, 2016; Swianewicz *et al.*, 2016; Szymytkie and Krzysztofik, 2019), has prevailed. In turn, the processes of the disintegration of cities artificially expanded in the socialist period, observed in the 1990s (Jarczewski, 2002; Kaczmarek, 2016; Szymytkie and Krzysztofik, 2019) were inhibited. The few cases of the secession of cities concern only tourist resorts whose inhabitants, after the change of boundaries, have the opportunity to benefit from EU funds allocated for rural development.

Fifthly, over the last 10 years, a ‘new wave’ (1/4 of all issued decisions) of ‘new cities’ has been noticed. There has been a return to the trend observed already in the 1990s (50 new cities), which stopped the implementation of the Act on the three-stage division of the state (23 new cities in the first decade of the 2000s) (Krzysztofik and Dymitrow, 2015). Two issues should be emphasised, i.e. historical-genetic and demographic. Firstly, 80% of the ‘new cities’ are cities that regained their city status, and the remaining ones are villages being granted city status for the first time (9 cases by 2017). Secondly, the demographic criterion (2,000 inhabitants), which was still in force in the early 2000s, was completely abandoned (out of 47 new cities, only 18 have a population of more than 2,000, and after 2018, only one in 14 has met that criterion). This is closely related to the ‘new wave of restitutions’ after the introduction of the ‘fast track’ procedure. This trend, which has emerged as ‘damage compensation in the name of historical justice’, is intensifying, and it includes predominantly the smallest cities. It results from the activity of local authorities seeking opportunities to elevate their prestige and recognisability through gaining the city status, as well as quantifiable economic benefits (cities with a population below 5,000 are entitled to apply for EU subsidies for both rural and

urban areas). The ‘fast-track restitution’ of cities also has significant effects for the settlement system of the country – it densifies the city network in the least urbanised regions (the Świętokrzyskie and Lubelskie Voivodeships).

Moreover, some phenomena not previously analysed in terms of unit area and frequency of boundary changes were identified. Changes in boundaries in the analysed years covered an area of 1383.8 sq. km, which corresponds with the area of 6 largest cities in Poland (Warsaw, Krakow, Łódź, Wrocław, Poznań, and Gdańsk). Small area changes prevailed (more than 50% of the decisions concerned areas below 1 sq. km). Large area changes primarily resulted from fusions, fragmentations, and the establishment of a commune, as well as designation of a county city. They constituted a total of 45% of the total area subject to change. A further 35% of the area constitutes new cities. In the hierarchical layout, changes covering the largest areas occurred within 3<sup>rd</sup> tier units (65% of the area subject to change), and primarily resulted from the establishment of new cities, or territorial annexations in urban-rural communes. As a consequence, rural communes lost territories and cities gained them (70% of the area subject to change). In the case of 2<sup>nd</sup>-tier units, increases in territory of county cities were dominant. The greatest stability was confirmed for boundaries of voivodships.

Most of the changes in boundaries were of a one-off adjustment nature (80% of decisions). This regularity concerned both units of the same tier and units in the hierarchical system. Cyclical changes were considerably rarer, and primarily concerned expansion of the boundaries of cities or city counties. The peculiar record-holder was the city of Rzeszów which increased its territory by 30% as a result of three expansions of its boundaries.

Finally, it should be emphasised that the phenomenon of the politicisation of the process of boundary changes was observed. In extreme cases, boundary changes or the restitution of the city status did not reflect the needs of local communities and elites, but became part of the political game. The best known case was the incorporation of a highly profitable power plant into the city of Opole. In addition to numerous revolts and protests of residents of the annexed areas, it led the Dobrzeń Wielki commune to the verge of bankruptcy as it was deprived of investment income in violation of the law, but with a vast support of political elites (Kociuba, 2019). Such politicisation was especially noticeable in the years preceding the local government elections held in 2010, 2014, and 2018. At that time, out of approximately 30 applications submitted annually, the majority were approved. In 2009, the number was 26; the 28 in 2014, 17 in 2017, but as many as 29 in 2018, including 10 concerning the granting of city status, four of them within the ‘fast track’ procedure. It should also be mentioned that this regularity did not apply to the years of parliamentary (2011, 2015, 2019) or presidential elections (2010, 2015, 2020), when the CM approved approximately 10–15 applications. The intensification of the politicisation of the process of boundary changes was particularly evident with the introduction of the ‘fast track’ procedure in 2018. The support of commune

authorities in the restitution of city status was used by many local politicians as a basis for building electoral capital in their local government election campaigns. The ‘new wave of restitution’ has not been weakening, which in the context of the upcoming local elections (2022) requires in-depth studies.

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## THE POLICY OF EUROPEAN AND EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION AS A KEY FACTOR FOR UKRAINE'S TRANSFORMATION

**Abstract.** The article explores the practice perspectives of European and Euro-Atlantic integration for the West's Eastern neighbours with a focus on Ukraine in the main directions of cooperation: political, economic, security, and communication. It has been established that Eastern Partners show a dissimilar political interest in rapprochement with the EU and NATO due to the existence of different foreign policy goals. The EU's Association Agreements with Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova are primarily aimed at defending the European integration, so the states are interested in developing close trade relations, and in achieving open and sustainable economic growth. The results have shown that Ukraine's deepening Euro-Atlantic ties are a continuation of the European course of the state's development, since the interaction with the EU and NATO aims to expand transatlantic relations and create updated security formats. The article also analyses the mechanisms of improving the efficiency of the communication between the EU, NATO and Ukraine by informing the public about the progress of Ukraine's integration into relevant structures, the reforms of the economic and security sectors of Ukraine, and its participation in the Alliance's non-military initiatives. The findings suggest that the improvement of public communication tools increases the involvement of governments in implementing integration policy goals and identifying issues that need a further response. Additionally, the Ukrainian government should strategically focus on ensuring and implementing practical measures aimed at shaping the image of Ukraine as an intent partner that adheres to its political commitments.

**Key words:** integration, media mentions, Eastern Partnership, EU, NATO, Ukraine.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The prospects for European and Euro-Atlantic integration are seen as a process of deepening transformations, which include the emergence of new leaders, new challenges for supranational governance, and new approaches to defining foreign and security policies, considering new threats to the regional peace and stability. Despite some issues, a united Europe seeks to achieve more viable economic and social foundations for its development, as well as demonstrates the ability of European states to find ways to overcome a crisis and promote further EU stability through strengthening interactions with European neighbours and security cooperation within NATO. The practices of European and Euro-Atlantic integrations are considered in the context of Ukraine's transformation through the state's involvement in security and defence, economy and energy, and science and innovation projects of the EU and NATO, as well as the inclusion in the European neighbourhood system.

The purpose of the paper is to explore the practice of European and Euro-Atlantic integration for the West's Eastern neighbours with a focus on Ukraine in such directions of cooperation as political, economic, security, and communication: the political direction includes the continued development of democracy and civil society in the Eastern neighbours, and the support of political dialogue and regional collaboration; the economic direction covers the consistent economic integration of the associate countries to the EU internal market and the creation of a common economic space; the security direction embraces the cooperation on defence issues, conflict prevention, the interaction in the field of counterterrorism, and the collaboration to prevent extremism and radicalisation; the communication direction relates to ensuring a positive perception of mutual initiatives and overcoming disinformation. However, the consensus on cooperation reached by the EU and NATO member states encompasses an individual approach to each partner country.

This paper is one of the systemic studies of European and Euro-Atlantic integration issues of Ukraine where we present our insights on the state's reform process. In the pages that follow, the political, economic, security, and communication backgrounds of the European and Euro-Atlantic integration for the Eastern neighbours and Ukraine are considered. In addition, the paper explores the efficiency of the government's actions to inform the public about the progress in Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations by analysing international and Ukrainian media space for the 2013–2020 period.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF EXISTING RESEARCH FINDINGS

The analysis of foreign and Ukrainian research findings has shown that the transformation of Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policy in the 21st century has become a priority of the foreign policy doctrine of the Eastern Partnership countries, which

influenced the regional alignment of forces and interests. The current studies are devoted to examining the features of the development of Ukraine's cooperation with the EU and NATO in the framework of strengthening the country's international status, counteracting the spread of negative perceptions about Ukraine, and ensuring an appropriate information support of international initiatives.

Among the foreign studies on European and Euro-Atlantic integration of Eastern neighbours and Ukraine, most noteworthy were the studies by L. Brent (2019), N. Jennings (2019), U. Kühn (2018), and A. Mehta (2020) that analysed the political and security strategies in the context of integration, as well as the impact of European security imperatives on maintaining stability in the region. We also highlight a regional civil society platform "The Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum" that created the Eastern Partnership Index (2017) for the presentation of the progress of six Eastern Partnership countries in the context of their European integration aspirations.

The attitudes of Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and the expectations from the Eastern Partnership countries towards the issues of interaction within the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU and NATO Enlargement Policy have been presented in the research by M. Celewicz, M. Nizioł-Celewicz (2006), C. Williams, J. Round (2007), T. Shaban (2018), M. Barwiński (2019), K. Kakachia, B. Lebanidze and V. Dubovyk (2019), as well as in the publications of the Kosciuszko Institute (2011).

Among the Ukrainian research findings on European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of the Eastern neighbours and Ukraine, the most significant have included the studies by S. Voitko and M. Kokoruz (2015) on the changes of the macroeconomic situation in the EU and Ukraine after 2014 and the military actions in eastern regions of the state; by O. Moskalenko and V. Streltsov (2015) on a historical aspect of the development of the EU-Ukraine relations; by O. Shnyrkov, O. Rogach and O. Chugaiev (2015) on the evidence of the economic and political impact of the EU-Ukraine Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas on the relations with Russia; and by V. Kopyika, M. Doroshko, O. Kondratenko *et al.* (2012) on the political, legal, economic, and information aspects of Ukraine's relations with the European Union.

The contemporary attitude of the population of Ukraine to the EU and NATO has been presented in the framework of the study "Security Passport of Ukraine: National and Regional Dimensions" (2020) prepared by the civil organisation Center for International Security and the National Institute for Strategic Studies with the support of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Ukraine. The modern challenges and forecasts for 2020, as well as the public opinion trends on Ukraine's foreign policy activities, have been investigated by researchers of the Razumkov Centre (Yakymenko *et al.*, 2020). Additionally, the Government Office for the Coordination of European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine prepared the publication "The European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine" (2019) which described the peculiarities of the implementation of the European and Euro-Atlantic course at the

level of Ukrainian authorities. Our research provides a valuable contribution to the study of the perception of Ukraine's Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policy by foreign and Ukrainian public.

Thus, the expansion of research on the perception of Ukraine as a component of European civilization and the formation of its European identity is of great importance for Ukraine's integration into the international political space. The main approach to this study of Ukraine's EU-NATO cooperation has been to examine the awareness of threats, as well as the Western and Ukrainian public opinion trends with regard to the cooperation's development.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The paper uses a descriptive and interpretative approach, which has enabled a documentary and institutional analysis and interpretation of the data within the study. Online tools such as Google Trends (2020) and Media Cloud (2020a) were used to establish the perception of Ukraine's Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policy by residents of other countries and Ukrainians by analysing international and Ukrainian media space within the 2013–2020 period. The level of audience awareness, the main political and media actors, as well as the peculiarities of regional information dissemination were identified.

The main advantage of Google Trends is regular data updating according to political, economic, and social categories, which enables the identification of trends of a search query, and comparison of search volumes per criteria, as well as demonstration of the impact of new events on search popularity. The increased interest in the topics of "Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement" and "Ukraine-NATO relations" opens exploration into the related issues and ideas for further analysis in Media Cloud.

Media Cloud is an open platform for examining online media space that enables the analysis of the dissemination and content of thematic stories and ideas. To identify the specificities of informing the international and Ukrainian communities concerning Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic and Euro-integration policies, such indicators as time periods, news content, regional distribution and formed narratives have been explored, revealing the essence of event interpretation, the involvement of political leaders and organisations, as well as revealing tendencies of media space imbalance in informing the public. We analysed the selected topics with the help of English and Ukrainian news collections formed in Media Cloud, in particular Europe Media Monitor, including 3,605 international and European media sources; Ukraine-National, including 270 media sources and Global Voices Online, including 12,377 media sources that belonged to the international blogosphere.

The above-mentioned online tools enabled us to identify the global media tendencies, understand the evolution of communication, and analyse how the research ideas circulate in the information space. These platforms (Rogers, 2016; Media Cloud, 2020b) contribute to the easing of the acquisition of statistical data and information that could be compared with other statistics at different time periods. The absolute numbers, ratios and average indicators enable regional and international comparability of data. To study specific metrics of the target audiences and to evaluate an online campaign the other online tools are be used.

#### **4. POSITIVE PRACTICE OF EUROPEAN AND EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION FOR THE EASTERN NEIGHBOURS IN THE MAIN AREAS OF COOPERATION**

The European and Euro-Atlantic integration process for the Eastern neighbours is considered through the analysis of the main political, economic, security, and communication directions of cooperation, since a common vision and a unified approach to regional interaction are needed for addressing European issues (see Table 1). The attractiveness of the European integration policy for Member States, candidate countries and associated countries was determined by the positions of supranational institutions on the necessity to develop a strong European Union. To achieve an ambitious goal, the EU Global Strategy “Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe” (European External Action Service, 2016) considered the major human resource potential in Europe, a wide network of diplomatic missions, a factor of the third economy of the world, an important role of unification in global governance, as well as military power to maintain peace and security in the region. Nowadays, the EU institutions seek the ability to create jobs and increase employment, to develop open societies and respect for human rights, and to support stability of states and societies in Europe and EU’s neighbouring countries.

The priority political and economic directions for the integration process of the Eastern neighbours are as follows: implementing association agreements, covering political, trade, social, cultural and security sectors of cooperation with the EU; increasing the opportunities for political dialogue within the Eastern Partnership program; establishing new jointly agreed partnership priorities; introducing more effective modes of reforms in partner countries, including engagement with community, economic and social actors; utilising financial instruments operated by the European Neighbourhood Policy for responding to crises; and supporting the Three Seas Initiative that arises from the practical need to strengthen communication and economic cooperation on the North-South axis of the European Union (Association Agreement with Ukraine, 2014; ENP, 2016; Reinsalu, 2019).

Table 1. European and Euro-Atlantic integration directions for the Eastern neighbours

<p><b>POLITICAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– increasing political dialogue;</li> <li>– creating common space for enhanced cooperation;</li> <li>– recognising the Eastern Partners’ European aspirations for the EU and NATO membership;</li> <li>– strengthening cooperation on the North-South axis.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ECONOMIC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– achieving economic and social growth;</li> <li>– assisting industrial, environmental, energy, infrastructure, and tourism transformations;</li> <li>– reorganising businesses and rethinking the relationship between public and private sectors;</li> <li>– supporting financial instruments for responses crises.</li> </ul>
<p><b>SECURITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– overcoming hybrid threats to regional peace and stability;</li> <li>– participating in security and defence projects;</li> <li>– upgrading the defence industry;</li> <li>– increasing measures in cybersecurity.</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMMUNICATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ensuring a positive perception of initiatives;</li> <li>– implementing digital reforms;</li> <li>– counteracting destructive propaganda;</li> <li>– intensifying scientific research and innovations.</li> </ul>

Source: own work.

The EU’s Eastern Partnership program, which involves the EU Member States and six Eastern European partners – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, is of particular importance. It aims to create a common space for general democracy, economic growth, stability, and enhanced cooperation. In addition, the declarations, signed within the framework of the Eastern Partnership, will help strengthen the state and public resilience of the neighbouring countries and allow the EU and its partners to solve internal and external issues more effectively. The most heated discussions between the EU and the Eastern Partnership countries relate to Ukraine’s continued insistence that the EU should recognise the Eastern partners’ European aspirations for the EU and NATO membership. The European Parliament recommendation (2017) confirmed the legitimacy of the European aspirations and the possibility of EU membership in the long-term perspective for Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, and proposed the creation of the “Eastern Partnership+” model for these countries with extensive European integration opportunities. Another opportunity for implementation of the Eastern partners’ European aspirations is the “The Eastern Partnership Policy beyond 2020: Reinforcing Resilience – an Eastern Partnership that delivers for all” program (European Commission, 2020a) that is aimed, above all, at strengthening political and economic relations between the EU and partner countries for increasing the stability, prosperity and resilience of EU neighbours, as well as achieving a dual environmental and digital transformation.

The security directions address the initiative on the creation of the Intermarium Alliance that could provide security guarantees to Eastern European countries, including Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. At the same time, the Intermarium Initiative has historically lost its relevance, as the EU and NATO address the major issues of security and interstate engagement for many Eastern European countries. In addition,

the Intermarium Initiative should not be seen as an effective security mechanism, since Turkey is economically related to the EU and is a NATO member, and Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Baltic states also position themselves as EU and NATO members. Instead, the EU backs the Three Seas Initiative launched in 2015 as an infrastructure project in the fields of economics, energy, transport, and communications, bringing together twelve member organisations located between the Baltic, the Adriatic and the Black Sea (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Romania), as well as outside actors supporting the initiative – the United States, China, and Germany as observers. The focus of the initiative is to enhance the economic competitiveness of the participants and strengthen infrastructural ties, which means reinforcing the economy and supporting a more cohesive and sustainable European Union. To that end, the Polish Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego and EximBank Romania have set up the Three Seas Investment Fund, which is open to all participating countries, partner countries, and institutional investors, such as the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, for the first specific projects in the region to be implemented as soon as possible. It is worth noting that Estonia took the initiative with a view of sharing its experience in implementing e-governance, digital market, standardisation and data exchange between countries on different platforms, as such digital solutions, which can form the basis of future cross-border infrastructure (European Commission, 2018a; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2020).

The EU experience in developing new strategies for economic growth, implementing new technologies (considering their social acceptability), reorganising businesses, rethinking the relationship between public and private sectors, as well as creating new forms of institutional activities are of paramount importance. This is particularly the case for the conclusion of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) that the EU signed with the third countries to develop a strong and sustainable industrial base and support a free circulation of industrial goods. The European Commission intends to work with stakeholders to develop common principles of modern industrial policy to help businesses overcome existing challenges. At the EU level, the European Commission is developing a policy of creating favourable conditions for the competitiveness of the industry in Europe; improving business environment, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises; promoting the creation of a single EU digital market; supporting the use of technological and production tools that reduce energy consumption; and intensifying competition in the tourism sector of the EU economy. To conclude the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products, Ukraine adapted its legislation to EU legislation standards in the field of technical regulation, standardisation, and the decrement of pressure on business by market surveillance authorities. The European community was informed about Ukraine's readiness for a preliminary assessment of its infrastructure quality (Kuleba, 2019; Ministry for Development of Economy, Trade and Agriculture, 2020).

The decisive characteristics of the European integration prospects are the digitalisation of European governance and the use of e-services in all spheres based on the cooperation of European countries in advanced digital technologies, the adaptation of European markets to new socio-economic conditions, and a further development of scientific innovation research. For supporting digital processes in Eastern Partner countries and shaping the digital community, the EU4Digital initiative was launched as several regional projects, namely “EU4Digital networks”, “EU4Digital Facility”, “EU4Digital – Broadband strategies in the EaP region”, and “EU programme on cyber” (European Commission, 2018b).

The establishment of NATO’ partnerships with non-member countries has become an important aspect of supporting regional security and deepening the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Eastern Partners aimed at improving interstate cooperation, counteracting hybrid threats, developing cybersecurity, and exchanging expert experience. In the context of promoting closer Euro-Atlantic integration, we should note such transformations within NATO as an updating strategy for counteracting hybrid threats, supporting the decision to strengthen EU-NATO cooperation, and identifying the parameters of a hybrid war and its threats to European security with attention to the war in Ukraine and further relations with Russia. The NATO cyber defence doctrine that is being implemented at the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, which operates in Estonia, is particularly noteworthy. Thus, NATO member states have become aware that cyber threats are becoming more complex, destructive and central, so the leadership of the organisation, the member states and allies are forced to create the conditions for collective cyber defence to fulfil the Alliance’s core tasks. The Alliance’s basic cybersecurity principles were enshrined in the 2019 provisions, which confirmed that cybersecurity is considered a component of NATO’s collective defence. Allies have reaffirmed NATO’s defence mandate and recognised cyberspace as an operational environment in which NATO must effectively defend itself as in the physical combat space. It also endorsed NATO’s recommendations to further strengthen the organisation’s ability to respond to aggressive cyberattacks, and to intensify cooperation with the business and private sectors in cyber industry (NATO, 2017, 2018, 2020).

An efficient instrument of European and Euro-Atlantic integration policy is public communication, which prioritises the formation and enhancement of reputation by disseminating EU and NATO information in the media, as well as tracking information to ensure a positive perception of organisations’ initiatives. In due course, the EU White Paper on European Communication Policy (European Commission, 2006) outlined the challenges of European integration and defined the strategy of European institutions, Member States, local and regional governments, non-governmental organisations, and the European community on the EU communication policy. Nowadays, the Communication Directorate of the European Commission (Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine, 2019; European Commission, 2020b) is



responsible for clarifying EU policies for various target audiences, informing supranational institutions of public opinion trends, coordinating communication image campaigns, and conducting reputational risks analysis in the EU, and associated or third countries. Communication measures on supporting Euro-Atlantic integration (NATO, 2019) involve holding press conferences and regular briefings on cooperation with NATO, preparation and coverage of non-military Alliance initiatives in the media, implementation of projects under NATO Trust Funds, as well as the security and defence sector reform of non-member countries. Communications instruments allow the EU and NATO to communicate purposefully with the public on updating the integration policy and security initiatives, to transform the technological and social infrastructure, as well as to cooperate with member states and partner countries in the fields of mutual interest.

We should note that the Eastern Partners show a dissimilar political interest in rapprochement with the EU and NATO due to the existence of different foreign policy goals, as well as their diverse political and economic states of development. Ukraine and Georgia in particular are promoting initiatives for maximum rapprochement with the EU and NATO to gain membership. Moldova has decided not to join NATO but the government supports the EU membership initiatives. Armenia, Belarus, and Azerbaijan develop their own individual political, economic, and security approaches to the interaction with the EU and NATO.

As a result, the involvement of the Eastern Partners in the EU and NATO activity concerning the European and Euro-Atlantic integration has enabled the stabilisation of the political and economic situation in these states, as well as ensuring the common security of Europe. The deepening of integration processes is conducted through participation in the European Neighbourhood initiatives and the development of partnerships with NATO. In this context, one important issue is to maintain an adequate level of public awareness on a states' participation in the integration processes and their role in supporting the political, economic, and security stability of Europe. Therefore, the improvement of public communication tools based on the study of international and regional media space enables people to realise the involvement of governments in implementing integration policy goals and identify the issues that need a further response because they are insufficiently covered or distorted.

## **5. UKRAINE'S PRIORITIES IN EUROPEAN AND EURO-ATLANTIC INTEGRATION**

The study of the peculiarities of implementing European and Euro-Atlantic integration policies for the Eastern Neighbours has enabled the authors to express their viewpoint concerning Ukraine's course on rapprochement with the EU and NATO.

In the direction of European integration, the Association Agreement is a priority for Ukraine that is recognised as the main instrument for bringing Ukraine closer to the EU, deepening political relations, strengthening economic ties, and respecting common values. Therefore, the priority reforms include fight against corruption, the renewal of judiciary, constitutional and electoral systems, the improvement of the business climate and energy efficiency, as well as decentralisation within public administration reform. At the same time, Ukraine seeks to improve the text of the Association Agreement with the EU in the following thematic blocks: a revision of the tariffs that were set at the 2006–2007 negotiations with the EU and are now obsolete; an update to the provisions on non-tariff barriers in the “industrial visa waiver” format; development of the agreement itself and adapting it to the changes in the EU regulatory rules. The current task of the Ukrainian government is to complete all preparatory work to enter the stage of formal negotiations to improve the Agreement.

As regards the participation of the state in the Eastern Partnership program, Ukraine calls for closer economic cooperation within the “Eastern Partnership+” model. The signing of an agreement on the Common Aviation Area of Ukraine with the EU and the inclusion of Ukrainian transport arteries in the pan-European network could be an additional political and economic priority of the interaction of the Ukrainian government with the EU on the efficient usage of Ukraine’s transport capabilities. Among the economic priorities, we note the signing of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products, as well as recognising parity of the Ukrainian technical regulation system and conformity assessment with the European system. This “industrial visa waiver” will greatly simplify the export of industrial products to the EU through obtaining the necessary certificates in Ukraine. The signing of the new digital transformation program “Digital Agenda of Ukraine” could be an additional incentive for rapprochement of Ukraine with the EU.

The priorities also include such security issues that could be addressed jointly with the EU, as combating hybrid threats and ensuring cybersecurity, overcoming migration challenges, cooperating in energy security and reservations regarding support for the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline project, as well as strengthening energy integration that provides cheaper energy and increasing its efficiency. Additionally, Ukraine has agreed to integrate its environmental agenda with the EU under the European Green Agreement that will enable both to work together on environmental challenges.

In the direction of Euro-Atlantic integration, the Ukrainian government seeks to combine the security cooperation within the EU and NATO. The essence of Ukraine’s security interaction at the EU level is revealed through Ukraine’s potential involvement in the EU rapid reaction operations and defining the perspectives of Ukraine’s security commitments in sectors of mutual interest. At the same time,

Ukraine has obtained the NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partnership membership status that is an instrument for deepening the Alliance's bilateral cooperation with third countries. Ukraine's accession to the NATO Enhanced Partnership is a key element of increasing European security and deepening cooperation. Additionally, this program envisages enhanced cooperation in the intelligence sphere and enables its partner countries to obtain positions in the NATO headquarters or structures. Ukraine has something to offer the Alliance to continue involving the Ukrainian armed forces in operations under the NATO auspices, namely the exchange of the experience gained during the confrontation with Russian aggression in eastern Ukraine, including the hybrid component, intelligence sharing, and security in the Black Sea.

In the area of communication for supporting the European and Euro-Atlantic integration, the Ukrainian government has adopted communication measures in the field of European and Euro-Atlantic integration to increase the support of this state policy by Ukrainians. In particular, the campaigns are aimed at communicating successful practices of implementing European standards in all spheres of life and the success stories of Ukrainian business, science, culture, and public initiatives in the EU. Moreover, holding seminars and training on Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration is foreseen to change citizens' attitudes towards NATO and national policies in rapprochement with the Alliance.

Therefore, the efficiency of government actions concerning informing the public on Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations has been explored through analysing international and Ukrainian media space after intensifying interaction in political, economic, and security fields. We should note that the fact of raising the awareness of the international and Ukrainian communities will contribute to deepening integration processes and determining further directions for ensuring initiatives of the state.

## **6. RESULTS**

The study of the perception of Ukraine's European integration and Euro-Atlantic policy conducted using Google Trends enabled us to identify inquiries popular in the media about the main foreign policy directions, while Media Cloud enabled us to distinguish the peculiarities of communicating to the international and Ukrainian communities information on integration activities. On average, the popularity dynamics of the "Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement" inquiry during the period from 2013 to March 2020 was three times higher when compared to the topic of "Ukraine-NATO relations" (Fig. 1).

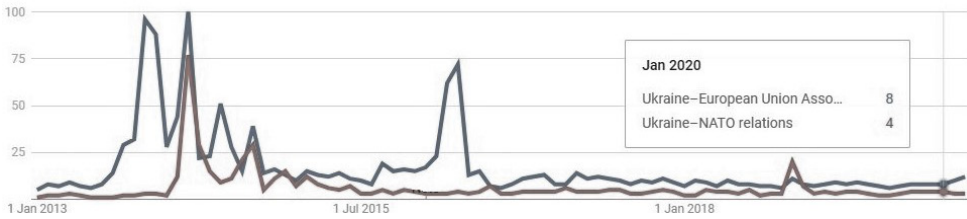


Fig. 1. Dynamics of world popularity of the request “Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement” and “Ukraine-NATO relations” during 2013–March 2020

Source: own work based on Google Trends.

The Netherlands, Sweden, Moldova, Belarus, Russia, Finland, Belgium, Austria, Germany, and Norway were ten countries where users were interested in the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement. At the same time, the countries interested in Ukraine-NATO relations included Estonia, Norway, Russia, Denmark, Lithuania, Latvia, Finland, Sweden, Bulgaria, and Belgium. The thematic focus of the searches on Ukraine’s European integration issues was linked to the Ukraine–EU Association Agreement, its ratification issues, as well as the political and economic implications for the European and Ukrainian communities. “Is Ukraine a part of NATO”, “Are there NATO troops in Ukraine” and “What military exercises does NATO conduct in Ukraine” were the top searches of users interested in the Ukraine-NATO interaction.

There existed a high level of interest of the international community in the topic of developing European integration processes in Ukraine in 2014 and 2016 (Fig. 1), which is connected with signing the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, as well as the processes of its ratification. Due to the violation of the territorial integrity of Ukraine in 2014 and deepening of security risks, there was an increase in interest of users in the development of NATO-Ukraine relations. At the same time, if one compares the period before 2014 and that after, one could find increased interest of users in the topic of the Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine.

Considering the intensity of the development of Ukraine’s relations with the EU and NATO, which were identified as strategic partners along with the US, as well as the aggravation of relations with the Russian Federation, the perception of Ukraine’s foreign policy activity by leading political actors has changed. Along with this, the thematic line of the development of Ukraine’s relations with the EU and NATO was of interest either in business centres of the above-mentioned countries or in the metropolitan regions, with inquiries concerning the news on Ukraine and the studied international organisations with an emphasis on the query “Is Ukraine a part of the EU or NATO”. Overall, 71% of internet queries were

related to the “Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement” query and 29% were related to the topic of “Ukraine-NATO relations”.

Ukrainians showed the greatest interest in the “Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement” query, and the thematic line was related to the development of the cooperation with the EU and the EU-Ukraine-Russia relationship triangle. The interest in the “Ukraine-NATO relations” query was lower and concerned with development of security cooperation. Within Ukraine, users from the regions of Lviv, Khmelnytskyi, Dnipropetrovsk, Odessa, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Kharkiv, and from Kyiv showed the highest interest in both topics (Fig. 2). On average, during the study period, the popularity of the queries was higher for the topic “Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement” reaching 10 units, while the topic of “Ukraine-NATO relations” showed interest of only 3 units.

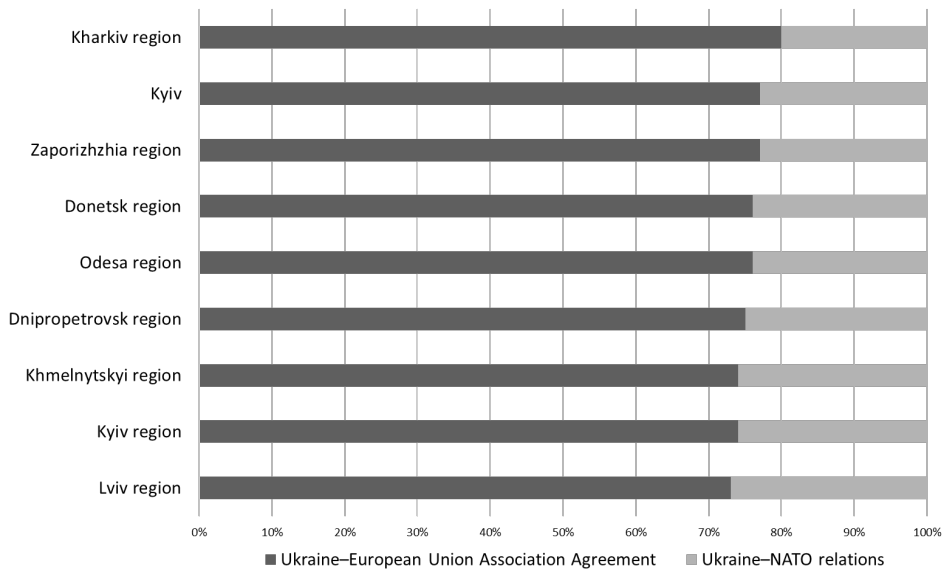


Fig. 2. Popularity of the “Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement” and “Ukraine-NATO relations” queries in Ukraine, 2013–March 2020

Source: own work based on Google Trends.

The interest of participants of international relations in Ukraine’s foreign policy has been primarily determined by a number of internal and external factors that significantly affect the perception of the Ukrainian state as a modern actor in international relations. Therefore, the positioning of Ukraine in the world media space through creation and dissemination of information materials, as well as its presentation abroad, contributes to a positive assessment of the country’s foreign policy initiatives.

The distinguished trends have made it possible to identify queries popular in media about Ukraine's European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies since 2013, and to analyse the main thematic areas of political, economic, security, and social challenges for Ukraine in the context of the EU and NATO engagement. In view of this, key topics were selected such as EU sanctions against the Russian Federation, overcoming the Ukraine's security and defence issues, Ukraine's interaction with the EU within the Association Agreement and a visa-free regime, electoral processes in the EU and Ukraine, as well as migration processes and Ukrainian migrants in Europe.

It has been found that the level of audience awareness about Ukraine's European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies depended on the language in which the information was provided, as the Ukrainian-speaking audience received more information on European integration processes in Ukraine and interaction with the EU and its Member States (1,640 pieces of news), while English-speaking audience was becoming familiar more with the thematic information on Euro-Atlantic processes and Ukraine's involvement in them (1,042 pieces of news). Among those, 372 news pieces in Ukrainian referred to Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration and 823 in English informed about Ukraine's European integration prospects. Thus, the English-language media space regarding Ukraine's Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policies was more balanced (approximately 1.3 reports on Euro-Atlantic policies corresponded to one message on European integration processes in the country); the Ukrainian-language media space focused on disseminating news about Ukraine's European integration prospects (approximately 4.4 reports on Euro-integration policies corresponded to about one news on Euro-Atlantic processes). The communication of Euro-Atlantic prospects to the Ukrainian audience should be expanded upon, as a lack of objective information leads to the emergence of negative stereotypes about NATO in the Ukrainian-speaking media space, which will not deepen security and defence cooperation between Ukraine and the Alliance in the long run.

The study of the reports on the outlined topics during period from 2013 to March 2020 has led to the conclusions that there has been a change in media attention to the challenges of Ukraine's foreign policy activities. In general, in terms of language and the popularity, we can distinguish the following two groups (Fig. 3):

- Ukrainian-speaking key challenging issues – electoral processes in the EU and Ukraine (9,488 news pieces), Ukraine's interaction with the EU within the Association Agreement and a visa-free regime (2,166 news pieces), the EU sanctions against the Russian Federation (1,182 news pieces), overcoming Ukraine's security and defence issues (704 news pieces), as well as migration processes and Ukrainian migrants in Europe (225 news pieces);

- English-speaking key challenging issues – electoral processes in the EU and Ukraine (3,986 news pieces), the EU sanctions against the Russian Federation

(2,731 news pieces), Ukraine’s interaction with the EU within the Association Agreement and a visa-free regime (1,653 news pieces), overcoming Ukraine’s security and defence issues (1,106 news pieces), as well as migration processes and Ukrainian migrants in Europe (176 news pieces).

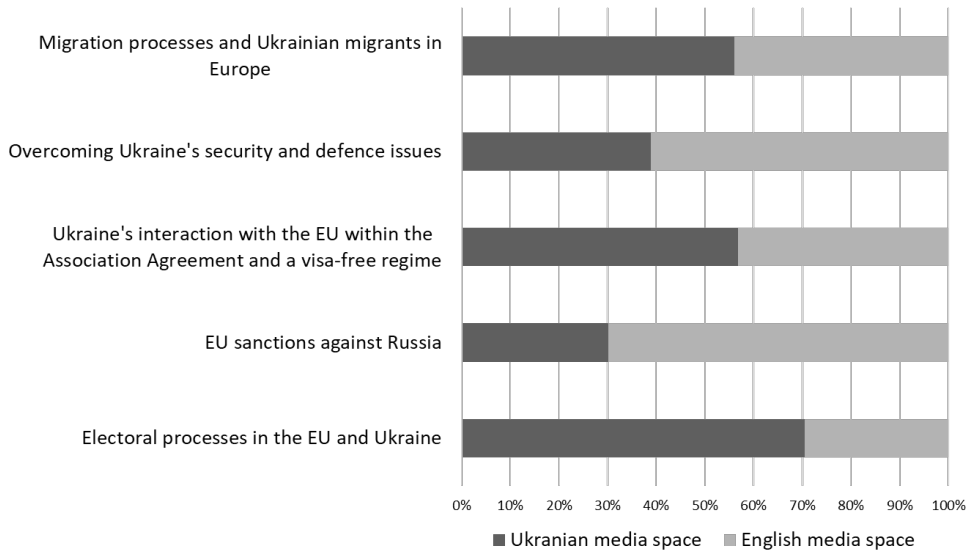


Fig. 3. Popularity of key topics concerning Ukraine’s Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policy during 2013–March 2020, % of total news pieces

Source: own work based on Media Cloud.

Internal political processes as well as external political and economic interactions have been the main narratives of Ukraine’s European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies, which form a systematic view of the challenges under consideration, (Fig. 4). News pieces about domestic political processes shape the attitude of international and Ukrainian communities to government activity within the “politics and government” narrative. News pieces on foreign political and economic interactions are mainly related to such narratives as “international relations”, “the US politics and government,” as well as “international trade and world market.” Additional narratives related to the narrow characteristics of Ukraine’s European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies included “the US international relations”, “economic conditions and trends”, “embargoes and economic sanctions”, “armament, defence and military forces”, “elections”, “immigration and refugees”, and “labour”.

Hence, the key ideas on the European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies of Ukraine, which remained in the minds of the international and Ukrainian communities after reading the news, were related to the processes of direct in-

teraction between governmental institutions of Ukraine, the EU and the US, as well as global economic processes. At the same time, the issues of local community involvement and development of local economic, cultural and social cooperation were hardly discussed in the media space, whereas the deepening of the European integration and, in part, Euro-Atlantic processes, aims at improving such local ties.

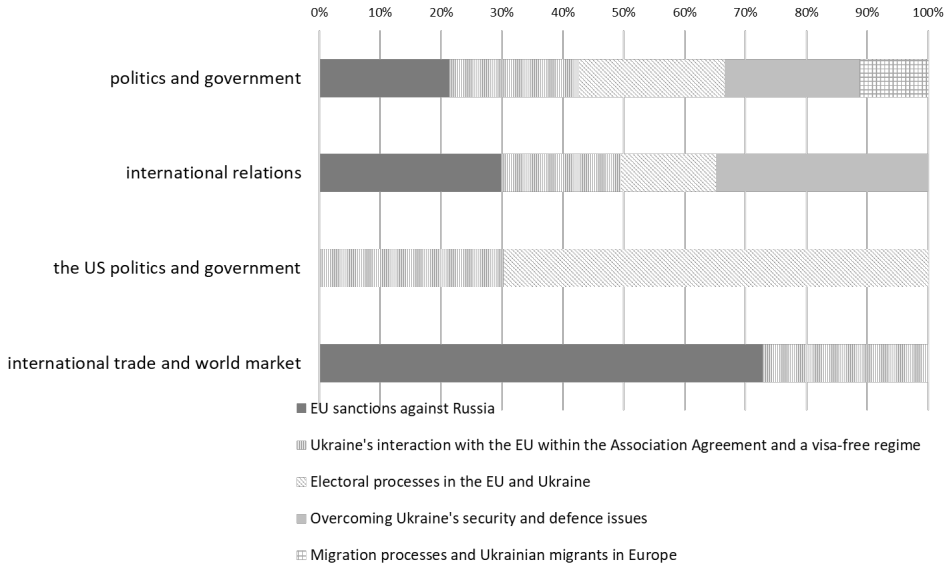


Fig. 4. Main narratives on Ukraine's Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policies during the period from 2013 to March 2020, percentage of total news pieces

Source: own work based on Media Cloud.

The five political leaders mentioned in the context of all the investigated challenging topics to Ukraine's European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies during the period from 2013 to March 2020 included V. Putin, P. Poroshenko, A. Merkel, D. Trump, and B. Obama (Fig. 5). Additionally mentioned figures included J. Stoltenberg, the 13th Secretary General of NATO (12%), mentioned under the topic "Ukraine's overcoming security and defence issues"; V. Yanukovich, the 4th President of Ukraine, and Y. Tymoshenko, a Ukrainian politician – in the topics of "Ukraine's interaction with the EU within the Association Agreement and a visa-free regime" (V. Yanukovich – 19% and Y. Tymoshenko – 16%) and "Electoral processes in the EU and Ukraine" (V. Yanukovich – 9% and Y. Tymoshenko – 8%); V. Zelensky, the 6th President of Ukraine, M. Salvini, an Italian politician, L. Di Maio, the Foreign Minister of Italy, and L. Codogno, an Economist, (10% each) – in the topic "Electoral processes in the EU and Ukraine";



V. Orban, Prime Minister of Hungary (8%), R. Radev, the 5th President of the Republic of Bulgaria, V. Goranov, the Minister of Finance of the Republic of Bulgaria, and A. Kubisiak, the Expert of Polish Economic Institute (5% each) – in the topic “Migration processes and Ukrainian migrants in Europe”.

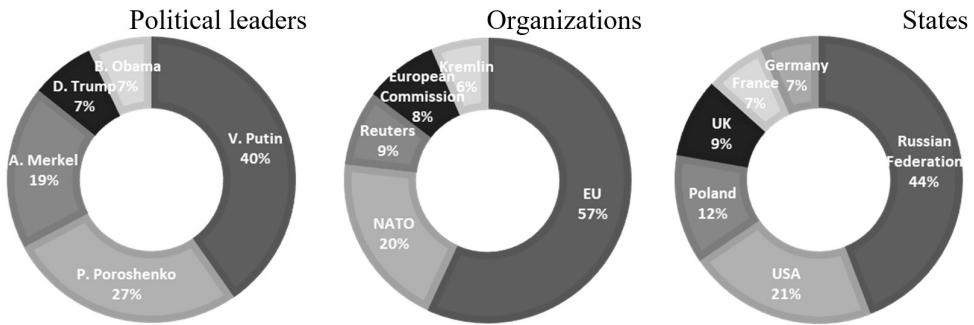


Fig. 5. Five political leaders, organisations and states, mentioned in the context of Ukraine’s Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic policies during 2013–March 2020, percentage of total news pieces

Source: own work based on Media Cloud.

The European Union, NATO, the European Commission, and the “Kremlin” Presidential Executive Office, as political institutions, and Reuters, as the News Agency, were mentioned most often in the context of all research issues related to Ukraine’s European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies (Fig. 5). Kyiv Post (5.6% of mentions), Agence France-Presse (1.6%) Bulgarian News Agency (1% of mentions), and UNIAN (1% of mentions) were also among the media sources that reported on specific topics covered. European institutions (8% of mentions), the European Council (4% of mentions), and the OSCE (2.6% of mentions) could be further added to the political institutions and organisations.

A high regional frequency of references to Ukraine’s European integration and Euro-Atlantic policies was recorded in the Russian Federation, the USA, Poland, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany (Fig. 5). In addition, news from countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Turkey, and Belarus also spread certain aspects of Ukraine’s foreign policy initiatives.

Thus, media resources acted as the leaders of the Ukrainian information presence in the minds of the international community, developed an understanding of the political actors of the EU and NATO, acted as components of securing international and national interests of Ukraine, and confirmed that the use of such tools could promote objective positioning of a state in the world’s media space.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The study of European and Euro-Atlantic integration policies in the context of Ukraine's transformation has led to the conclusions that:

1. At the political level, one could observe a qualitative increase of the political dialogue between Ukraine and the EU and NATO that has enabled Ukraine to become a priority partner for the European Union and receive the status of NATO's Enhanced Opportunities Partner. The fact of creating common space for enhanced cooperation opens to Ukraine an opportunity to define a reform agenda aimed at developing a socio-economic and security stabilisation of the state. Ukraine's participation in the European and Euro-Atlantic programs contributes to maintaining the pan-European balance of power, as well as strengthening political and economic cooperation on the Baltic-Black Sea axis when both EU Member States and the Eastern neighbours are involved in the integration;

2. At the economic level, one could underline the potential assistance in industrial, environmental, energy, and infrastructure transformation of Ukraine that the government has received within the adaptation to European standards. The fact of reorganising businesses and rethinking the relationship between public and private sectors has remained the current issues for Ukraine that needs solving within the practical implementation of accepted regulations. Moreover, further economic and social growth of the state partly depends on available financial instruments for crisis responses that the Ukrainian government can receive through participation in the EU-NATO economic and security projects.

3. At the security level, one could note Ukraine's opportunities for overcoming hybrid threats to regional peace and stability after the aggravation of relations with Russia and the outbreak of the war in Eastern Ukraine; an upgrade of the Ukrainian defence industry according to NATO standards would strengthen the state political and defence status and enable it to ensure the balance of regional power.

4. At the communication level, Ukraine has faced a negative perception of its state image in the media space due to a lack of objective information on foreign and domestic political transformations. Partial positive changes have occurred after 2014 when the Ukrainian government began deepening the country's involvement in European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes. The study of the media space from 2013 to March 2020 has shown that information on Ukraine's European integration aspirations and its achievements within the EU Association Agreement dominated the Ukrainian media space. Information on the possibilities of expanding Ukraine-NATO cooperation circulates in the English-speaking media space because the security stability of Europe is considered as preservation of the political and economic positions of NATO member

states at the international stage. Therefore, the fact of expanding political communication could help not only inform the world about Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic successes but also form the necessary foreign policy narratives on the country's activities. The strategic priority of the Ukrainian government should involve the ensuring and implementing of practical measures aimed at shaping the image of Ukraine as an intended partner that adheres to its political commitments.

In the years to come, the EU, NATO and Ukraine could demonstrate common actions and show solidarity in establishing joint funds to address contemporary political, economic, and security issues, and create renewed economic governance. Ukraine should seek to mobilise domestic resources and become investment attractive to partners by accelerating the digitalisation of its economy and ensuring a sufficient level of cybersecurity. In addition, an interlocked support of Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations could help launch the untapped economic, social, human, and natural resources of Ukraine that would give a new impetus to regional development. Being a border state, Ukraine could be involved in preventing the flow of migrants and participate in the joint EU-NATO actions on border control and security of the region.

Finally, Ukraine's successful integration into the EU and NATO will depend on the use of available foreign and domestic policy resources, the demonstration of political stability, the effectiveness of managing innovative potential, and the improvement of the country's socio-economic development.

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## MODELLING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF CLUSTERS: THE CASE OF HUNGARY

**Abstract.** In Hungary, like in other post-socialist countries, clustering started only around the turn of the millennium. However, the mostly top-down organised clusters seemed not to be viable because the basic requirements of long-term operation, such as financial support and sufficient number of members, were not fulfilled. Thus, the main aim of this paper is to establish such a cluster-model which is applicable for the examination of clusters' opportunity to be self-supporting under different circumstances. By determining the criteria of the long-term financial sustainability of clusters, the model and its simulations can considerably support the work of cluster managers and the competitiveness of clusters.

**Key words:** clusters, financial sustainability, model, simulation, Hungary.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In developed countries, clustering has had a relatively long history (Marshall, 1920). However, clusters came into the focus of researchers only in the last decades of the 20th century, since the efforts of distinct economic actors for co-operation became stronger parallel to the progress of globalisation and to the intensi-

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fication of competition (Brenner, 2004; Breschi and Malerba, 2006; Porter, 1998; Steiner, 1998). Clusters as special spatial formations of these collaborations, and as systems of interconnected companies and other institutions play an outstanding role in the spread of knowledge and enhancement of competitiveness (Fontagné *et al.*, 2013; Porter, 2000).

Although in developed countries many clusters already operated at the end of the last century (Breschi and Malerba, 2006; Cruz and Teixeira, 2010), in post-socialist countries it was only then that they started to appear. In Western countries they emerged in a bottom-up manner as an integral part of a lengthy evolution process (Commission..., 2008; Grosz, 2006), while in post-socialist countries they were organised in a top-down approach. There are also significant differences in the efficiency and durability of clusters' operation depending on their location. In developed countries, major parts of clusters operate effectively because their financial situation is mostly adequate, and they are in the mature stage of their development (Isaksen, 1997; Isaksen and Hauge, 2002).

In contrast with this, in post-socialist countries clustering is not so advanced even today, and most clusters are at earlier stages (initial phase) of development because the collaborations among enterprises of different sizes, ownership structures and activities were hindered by several factors (distrust, poor management skills, the lack of a sufficient number of enterprises and skilled labour force, poor infrastructure, the lack of entrepreneurship traditions, etc.), particularly in the beginning (Buzás, 2000; Kiss, 2010; Kowalski and Marcinkowski, 2014; Rosenfeld, 2002). Usually the serious financial difficulties have caused the largest problems for the development and lasting operation of these clusters because either the number and composition of members participating in a collaboration are not appropriate or the necessary income for their operation is not available.

In Hungary the concept of clusters emerged in the 1990s and the first clusters were created at the turn of the millennium as the country was a leader in the post-socialist transformation. Since then, their number has continued to increase, but only a small proportion of them operates durably, because the funding available to clusters from various sources is insufficient for sustaining an effective operation. The main aim of this paper is to determine the necessary income and membership ('critical mass') for the financial sustainability of clusters by creating a model. The idea of this cluster-model was inspired by biology, more precisely the example of a community of lions. Haque, Egerstedt and Martin (2010) strove to elaborate a generally applicable model seeking the optimal membership composition of African lion prides. Using the lessons from that model as the basis, a cluster-model has been developed which suggests the size of funding and membership composition necessary for the long-lasting, sustainable operation of clusters.

This study provides an original contribution to the cluster literature because previous studies on clusters have not dealt with the relationship between the fi-



financial situation of and membership in clusters. The model can be considered the first attempt to fill this gap. The other novelty is the research approach, as the idea of the model came from natural sciences, and the intention to adopt it in social (e.g. regional) sciences is not common at all. Moreover, the methods applied are also new. The use of simulation is not a 'customary' tool of analysis in the cluster literature, it rather is an 'innovative' one. Its greatest advantage is the ability to demonstrate the results of the changes in conditions without their experiences in reality, and this was the main reason for its application.

This paper consists of five sections. After the introduction, section two discusses the concepts of clusters primarily in terms of membership and clustering in Hungary, including the main features of the financial support for clusters. The third section describes the model together with methodological issues. Section four presents the simulations of the model based on the data and experiences of empirical research (primarily interviews) conducted among the managers of some clusters located in western Hungary. Finally, a short discussion and conclusions complete the article.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1. The cluster concept

The quantity (number) and quality (composition) of cluster members are important elements of the model for clusters to become self-sustainable, which is why this approach focusses on the analysis of cluster concepts. In recent decades the concept of a cluster was defined in many ways demonstrating its evolution well (Bresnahan *et al.*, 2001; Dahl and Pedersen, 2003; Hertog and Maltha, 2004; Maskell, 2001; Menzel and Fornhal, 2009; Steiner, 1998). By now, relevant shifts have occurred in the cluster literature from more descriptive accounts to more dynamic and systemic approaches (Cruz and Teixeira, 2010), and many cluster concepts exist. For example, Martin and Sunley (2003) identified 10 while Cruz and Teixeira (2010) 15 different cluster concepts, in which different levels of significance were assigned to the composition of cluster members.

The most often used cluster definition is that by Porter, who has defined a cluster as follows: "Clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions (for example, universities, standard agencies, and trade associations) in particular fields that compete but also co-operate." (Porter, 1998, p. 197). Ten years after Porter's definition, the European Union – in response to new challenges – defined the cluster concept in the following way: "...group of

firms, related economic actors, and institutions that are located near each other and have reached a sufficient scale to develop specialized expertise, services resources, suppliers and skills.” (Commission..., 2008, p. 5).

According to both definitions cluster membership can be divided into two homogeneous groups – just like in a lion pride. The so-called “productive” group includes competing but also collaborating economic actors who represent a specific industry and pursue activities closely related to that sector’s profile, plus their suppliers. The other “non-productive” group consists of non-profit institutions, educational and research units, support and background institutions (agencies, foundations, and consulting firms) that are assigned to help and support the operations of productive cluster members along with their research, development, and marketing efforts. They participate in continual market monitoring, data collection, tender drafting, specialised consulting, and workforce training and development to meet corporate needs, as well as in obtaining external funding vital for cluster operation, and in establishing an adequate business environment. The two homogeneous groups forming a cluster have clear and well-separated responsibilities. When compared to a lion pride, the productive members have the role of lionesses: hunting or feeding the group. Non-productive members, however, have the male lions’ role: protecting the group (Haque *et al.*, 2010). Thus they help the cluster’s productive members and participate, to some extent, in ‘feeding’ the cluster, too, by obtaining external funding and paying membership fees, yet this contribution is usually modest from a financing standpoint.

Although cluster theory does not refer to how many cluster members have to operate effectively in a cluster, it is obvious that the successful operation of a cluster requires a certain minimum number of members, a ‘critical mass’ to enable the exploitation of the benefits arising from collaboration and geographical concentration, and to attract other companies and supporting organisations into the region or the network (Grosz, 2006; Isaksen and Hauqe, 2002). As cluster membership renders exclusive benefits (access to additional information from markets and trend monitoring, joint action options in research, development and marketing, the elaboration of benchmarking systems, the adoption of best practices, the reduction of transaction and transportation costs, etc.) to member organisations which are not accessible to outsiders, outside organisations strive to become cluster members. The increasing number of cluster members, however, raises the issue of the long-term sustainability and viability of the cluster.

In the model, the option of increasing cooperation is left open, noting that the growth of membership is not a single-sided process. Any increase in the number of productive members is also accompanied by an increase of non-productive members, as both have their specific functions in the cluster and supposedly there exists an optimum ratio between the two. Within certain limits, this ratio may change, constituting an important factor during the simulation.

## 2.2. Cluster support and clustering in Hungary

Since the 1980s, the EU has developed several cluster development programs which vary considerably across EU Member States (Commission..., 2008). The history of these programs clearly reflects a shift from a quantitative to a qualitative approach, also impacting cluster support practices. A growing number of analyses (Engel *et al.*, 2011; Junichi and Okamuro, 2011) shows that, first, cluster development intensified in the past decade and Hungary's cluster policy matched pace with international trends. Second, it also became apparent that indirect support has been gaining significance instead of direct support (Roelandt and den Hertog, 1999). According to the European Cluster Observatory, national budgets were the primary sources of financing for national cluster programs in Europe, while EU cohesion policy was a secondary source. The contribution of national budgets for funding cluster programs was estimated at 63% while the support of EU at 19% (Commission..., 2008). Probably this relatively good financing was the main reason why Cruz and Teixeira (2010) have found little research on cluster financial problems among 3,000 articles published in developed countries between 1962 and 2007. However, such articles may have not been published either because other 'features' of clusters (e.g. the role in networks, competitiveness, regional development or in the spread of innovation, and knowledge) in line with EU economic and regional policies were more important in the last decade (European Commission, 2010; Ketels, 2015).

In Hungary, support for clusters has been in focus since 2000, when the first cluster was established in the automotive industry, though its intensity often fluctuated. It depended considerably on the approach of consecutive governments to clusters and on the changes in the national and regional cluster policy. According to different studies, the Hungarian government provides far more money to cluster formation than to cluster operation. The related ratios are 60 percent versus 40 percent, respectively. At the same time, it also became obvious that at least HUF 20–25 million (EUR 66–82,500 at current prices) was necessary for each cluster, or even HUF 100 million in the case of a major one would be necessary to maintain their efficient operation (Grosz, 2006; Hegedűs, 2008).

Support for clusters can be provided from various (internal and external) financial resources. Internal funding refers to membership fees while external funding comes from sources outside a cluster, for example from tenders. Initially, clusters could mostly obtain funding from domestic sources. Their rapid growth after 2000 was enabled by the availability of significant funding in 2001 and 2002. Back then HUF 266 million was granted to 13 cluster initiatives. After the change of the government, support for cluster formation and maintenance temporarily received less attention. In 2005, 19 bids complied with the requirements defined in the call for tenders. Those bids received HUF 122 million in total, which was about HUF 13.6 million on average (Rödönyi, 2009).

Cluster support reached a new high after 2006 when EU funds became accessible, as the EU assigned great significance to developing clusters and strengthening their innovation relations. Funding was provided from the Structural Funds that were only opened to former communist countries after their accession to the EU. Also, between 2007 and 2013, cluster development had a priority in Hungary. Clusters could apply for various forms of funding depending on the depth of their collaboration: they were categorised as initial, developing, or accredited innovation clusters. In 2008, out of 181 applicants, 79 were rated as initial and 21 as developing clusters, receiving an average amount of HUF 25 and 62 million, respectively. At the same time accredited clusters (25 in 2011) were not granted direct support, they only gained eligibility for participating in certain tenders. Since 2014 the support from different EU sources for the development of already existing clusters has gained greater attention. For example, since 2016 clusters have been able to apply for HUF 5–50 million to improve the quality of their services for their members to become more competitive. Nowadays Hungary is developing a new development strategy and support system of the next financial period for operating clusters.

In 2019, there were 183 clusters in Hungary, many of which (55%) were still cluster-initiatives where the smooth operation or financial sustainability was least ensured. The number of accredited clusters was 27 (15%). Many clusters represented ICT, environmental, energy, and health industries, but the majority (41%) operated in different branches of the manufacturing industry (Fig. 1).

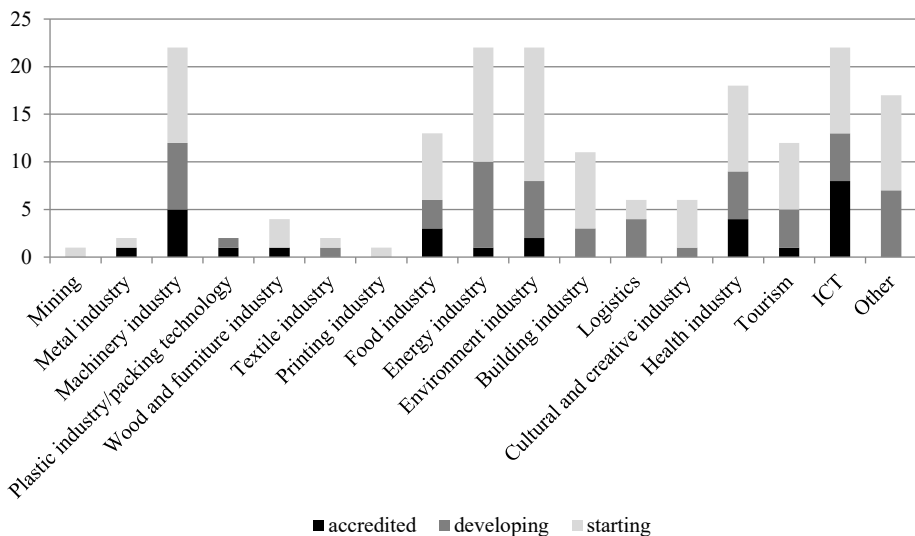


Fig. 1. Economic sectors and the level of development, 2019

Source: own work based on [www.klaszterfejlesztes.hu](http://www.klaszterfejlesztes.hu).

In Hungary, clusters are usually local, which means their members are found in the same settlements. Particularly in the beginning, the geographical distribution of clusters was closely connected to the new spatial pattern of Hungarian industry where the preconditions of clustering emerged soon after 1989 due to considerable foreign direct investments (Kiss, 2007, 2010). This was the reason why the first and more developed clusters could be found in the manufacturing industry, the primary location of which has been the north-western part of the country. Today, however, the majority of clusters are located in central Hungary, especially in and around Budapest and in some county seats because during the last decade clustering started to accelerate in other economic sectors and in other regions of the country (Fig. 2).

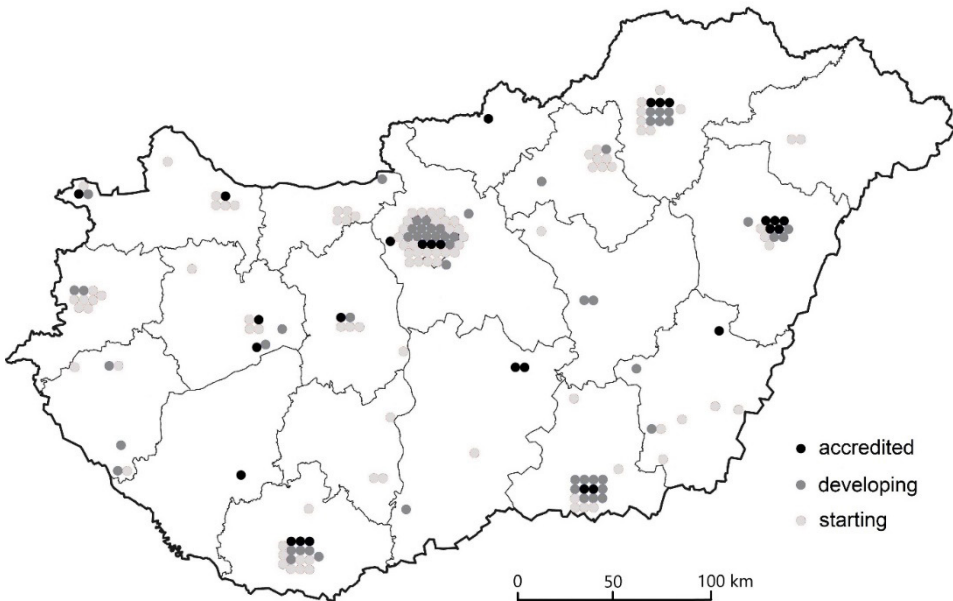


Fig. 2. Clusters in Hungary by the settlement of their headquarters and by the level of development, 2019

Source: own work based on [www.klaszterfejlesztzes.hu](http://www.klaszterfejlesztzes.hu).

Even today many clusters operate on an on-and-off basis and are highly dependent upon external resources, have many passive members, or lack a critical mass of economic actors. The last fact is especially important because if there is not an adequate number of members, it is practically no longer justifiable to maintain the cluster and obtain government support for its further evolution. That is why the development of the model can promote the qualitative development and smooth operation of clusters in Hungary over the longer term.

### 3. METHODOLOGY AND THE CLUSTER-MODEL

#### 3.1. Conditions related to financing

Regarding the income acquisition opportunities and financing systems of Hungarian clusters, the following conditions have been specified, which are, in fact, the building blocks of the model:

1. If a membership fee is payable, all cluster members are required to pay a set amount. However, this amount may vary depending on whether a member is a productive or a non-productive one. Usually a higher number of productive members participate in network cooperation and each of them pursues profit-oriented activities that generate income, thus they take a larger share in financing joint expenditures within the cluster. In most cases, non-productive members pay a lower membership fee. The more members a cluster has, the more significant this income source is. (It must be noted that zero is written if membership fee is not collected in the cluster.)

2. Service fees are linked to external service contracts and derive from work performed by productive cluster members. Therefore, it is in a cluster's interest to have as many productive members as possible in collaboration. (The presumably optimum ratio between productive and non-productive cluster members has been already determined and actual values are usually spread around this rate.) If non-productive members also perform services for external economic players, this problem can be managed easily with a single additional parameter.

3. Productive and non-productive members participate equally in obtaining external funds from tendering as the chance of winning grows proportionally to the number of cooperating members, although capped by an upper limit. In bid evaluation and the awarding of tenders (again up to a certain limit) additional points are given to bids submitted by an ad-hoc association of large groups. Further, the chance of winning is also higher if there are non-productive members among bidders. This finding called for assumption number 4.

4. Each bid drafting team formed within a cluster must include both productive and non-productive members. To keep things simple, their ratio should be the same in each group.

5. Not every cluster member is required to participate in an ad-hoc bid drafting team established to pursue funding for the cluster. However, each member is allowed to participate in one group only: thus the overall number of cluster members is greater or equal to that of cluster members 'going to battle' for tender funds. The network may also include passive members – at least in the short term. In the long run, a cluster must spot and exclude 'stowaway' members, otherwise the organisation becomes unstable and will break up sooner or later.

6. The sum of all funds obtained by an entire cluster in a year equals the sum of money successfully won in tenders by ad-hoc bidding associations of cluster members in the same year. However, these funds are spent and used jointly at the cluster level, i.e. every cluster member receives the same share from the profits from the services granted regardless of whether the member participated in drafting the winner bid or not.

7. The higher the number of ad-hoc bid drafting groups in a cluster, the higher the funding they are expected to obtain. If there are too many teams, however, they mutually reduce each other's chances of winning along with the likelihood of successful bidding.

8. Incomes rise proportionally to the increase in cluster members, but a higher number of network participants entail more difficulties in harmonising diverse and often conflicting interests, and in coordination and maintaining contact across the group. Further, administrative and operating expenses also grow proportionally, for example, owing to the need for printing a larger quantity of promotional materials, and staging larger events and meetings.

If the government's cluster and financing policy change, the conditions must be altered accordingly to avoid any compromises in the applicability of the model.

Like every model, this one needed simplified assumptions. One pivotal item is the model's monetary nature. Once critical mass is achieved, certain additional benefits and positive external impacts emerge that are difficult (if not impossible) to capture in financial figures, although they may justify cluster operations in themselves. At the same time, in the model all benefits associated with cluster membership that collaborator participants can fulfil through services or merely through geographical proximity or capacity harmonisation were 'monetised'. This is necessary because continual and regular communication, relationship network extension, joint marketing efforts, and localisation benefits will sooner or later lead to increased revenues, i.e. financial gains that each member would like to share in.

### 3.2. Abbreviations and notations

Abbreviations and notations used for describing the above-mentioned criteria by mathematical tools are the following:

$C$  = number of members in a given cluster,

$J$  = number of productive members,

$I$  = number of non-productive members,

$m_j$  = source demand of productive members for a year,

$m_i$  = source demand of non-productive members for a year,

$M$  = total income of the cluster in a year,

$t$  = annual membership fee that has to be paid by the members of the cluster,

$t_j$  = membership fee of productive members,

- $t_I$  = membership fee of non-productive members,  
 $S$  = total income from external services for external firms,  
 $s_J$  = income from external services generated by productive members,  
 $Pr$  = bivariate function describes the probability of the chances of a bid for winning. These applications were submitted by the groups formed in an ad-hoc manner within the cluster to apply for money from the EU and the Hungarian government.  
 $g$  = project teams established within the cluster,  
 $j$  = productive cluster members in project or cluster teams,  
 $i_g$  = non-productive cluster members in project or cluster teams,  
 $k_{opt}$  = optimal ratio of productive – non-productive members in the cluster. The best for the cluster is when the  $J/I$  ratio agrees with the value of  $k_{opt}$ . The aim of clusters is to reach this optimal value.

### 3.3. The assumptions of the cluster model

The number of cluster members is aligned with the total number of productive and non-productive members in a cluster. This condition can be described by the equation

$$C = I + J \quad (1)$$

The long-term operation and the sustainability of the cluster require a minimum level of annual income sources necessary to cover the operating expenses and to facilitate the provision of services for the cluster's members (e.g. to maintain a common webpage, to organise different trainings, to represent the cluster's members at conferences). This can be expressed by the formula

$$M \min(I, J) = m_I \cdot I + m_J \cdot J \quad (2)$$

The money flowing into the cluster within a year is jointly utilised by the members to fulfil their common goals. Therefore, when the model is simulated it is assumed that the share from the network's money is the same for productive and non-productive members. That was the reason why the same amount was introduced in  $m_I$  and  $m_J$ , but it can be modified. If the contribution of the productive members to a cluster's maintenance is more considerable than that of the non-productive ones, it is justifiable to allocate a larger amount to them, which means:  $m_J > m_I$ .

The annual income of a cluster also has to be increased. It can be derived from membership fees, from external services, and from successful applications. Thus



$$M(I, J) = t_I \cdot I + t_J \cdot J + s_J \cdot J + g \cdot \bar{M} \cdot \Pr(j_g, i_g) \quad (3)$$

where  $M$  indicates the amount of the average annual money acquired by the applying groups formed ad hoc within the cluster, while  $\Pr(j_g, i_g)$  shows the probability of the applications' chance for winning.

Hence  $\Pr(j_g, i_g) \in [0, 1]$  gives a probability, the value of which can move between 0 and 1. The probability can be received by inserting these values ( $x = j_g, y = i_g$ ) in the following equation<sup>1</sup>:

$$\Pr(x, y) = \frac{1}{(x - ky_0)^2 + k^2 \cdot (y - y_0)^2 + e^{(x-ky)^2}} \quad (4)$$

and at the same time the condition  $x_0 = k_{opt} y_0$  is also valid. As a consequence the chance for winning is the largest along the  $x = ky$  line, and the function  $\Pr(x, y)$  takes up its absolute maximum in the point  $(x_0, y_0)$  (Fig. 3).

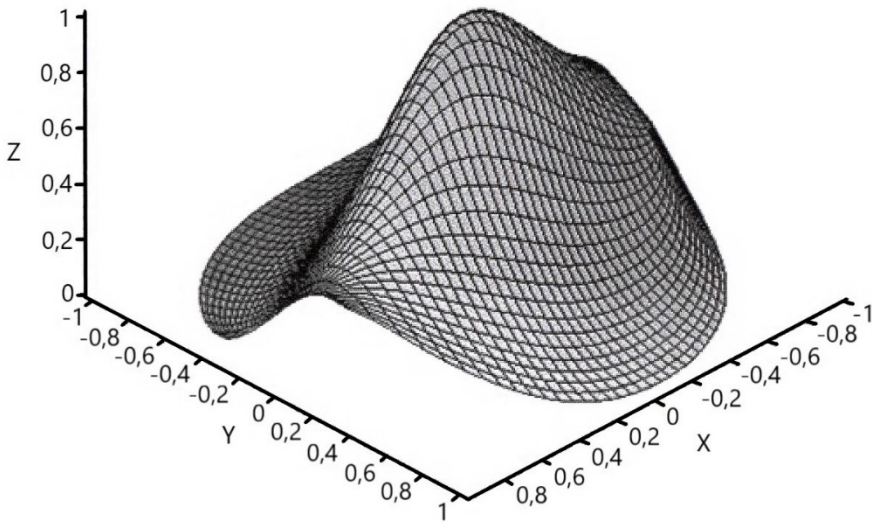


Fig. 3. Distribution of the normal probability function

Source: own work.

The applications' chances of winning are higher if the members form more teams to write and submit proposals and if a group consists of more members,

<sup>1</sup> The equation (4) was created to best match the expectations and the conditions prevailing in the model. Many bivariate probability functions are possible, but for our purpose this proved to be the most suitable.

though to a certain limit. However, after reaching the upper limit, which is usually 15 members per group (because until this point the applicants of clusters can get some advantages, i.e. extra points, in the course of the evaluation of their applications), the coordination and harmonisation of the members' interests become more difficult and efficiency decreases.

In each group of a cluster which applies for governmental support there are productive and non-productive members, their ratio marked by  $k$  is supposed to be the same in all groups in order to agree with the whole productive and non-productive ratio of the cluster, thus

$$k = J / I = j_g / i_g \quad (5)$$

Provided that every member of the cluster participates only in one application at the maximum and not every member of the cluster has to participate in an application:

$$g \cdot j_g \leq J \quad (6)$$

$$g \cdot i_g \leq I \quad (7)$$

This makes it possible for groups within a cluster to have passive members, too. A cluster can be maintained from the financial viewpoint in the long-term if the condition:

$$J \cdot (m_j - t_j - s_j) + I \cdot (m_l - t_l) \leq g \cdot \bar{M} \cdot \Pr(j_g, i_g) \quad (8)$$

is fulfilled.

#### 4. TESTING THE MODEL: SIMULATIONS

After the creation of the model which provided the theoretical basis for simulations, it was made operational. First, based on the data and information collected from the managers of three developed clusters (Pannon Mechatronikai Klaszter, Pannon Fa- és Bútoripari Klaszter, and Pannon Textil Klaszter) in western Hungary, an 'average' cluster was created for testing, and it was described using mathematical equations. Then, those were fed into a computer and different possible solutions were generated by changing input parameters ( $M$ ,  $t$ ). The computer simulation<sup>2</sup> has proven to be an appropriate analytical tool for testing the model

<sup>2</sup> The calculations, simulations, and illustrations of the cluster-model were made with the "Maple" software.

because it enabled us to observe different results in accordance with the changes of conditions on a computer instead of in real life.

Although, several tests were conducted by changing each parameter, only the results of two examinations will be demonstrated. In the first simulation, the following criteria were valid in the cluster. The amount of the annual membership fee was  $t_j = \text{HUF } 100,000$  for productive members and  $t_l = \text{HUF } 50,000$  for non-productive ones. The optimal productive–non-productive ratio in the cluster and in all groups formed within the cluster was assumed to be two, i.e.  $k = 2$ .

The cluster had also other sources of income, which arose from external services conducted by productive members for external firms. The amount of the annual service charge was estimated by the data collected from the three managers. Its value was  $s_j = \text{HUF } 67,000$ . It was also assumed that three groups ( $g = 3$ ) were organised within the cluster to submit applications and to apply for financial support in order to be able to fulfil their common projects and ideas. Regarding the composition of proposal writing groups, it was assumed that each group consisted of five productive and two non-productive members:  $j_g = 5$  and  $i_g = 2$ .

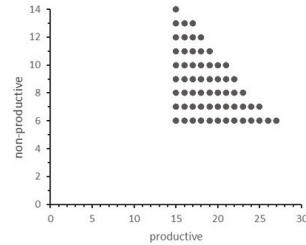
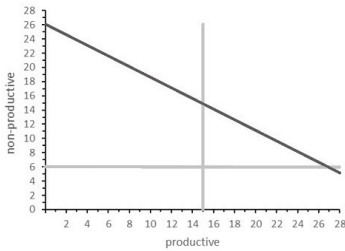
The cluster members shared the sources gained in a year equally because they utilised the money jointly. Based on the assumption, the average annual resource demand of non-productive and productive members was the same. This amounted to  $m_j = m_l = \text{HUF } 500,000$ . Then the question arose: which clusters were sustainable in the long-term under these conditions? The answer was illustrated by the results of the first simulation (Fig. 4).

The three cases differed from each other only in that the amount of money acquired by winning tenders was decreased gradually while every other parameter remained the same. In the first case, HUF 50 million acquired from external sources made the long-term operation possible, as well as the maintenance of a cluster which had 60 members of different sizes and compositions. This solution could be represented by a triangle bound by three lines arising from the equations in points 5, 6 and 7. When the amount of external sources was reduced, the number of members of the sustainable cluster also decreased. When the support was HUF 35 million, due to changes in the financial criteria, the steepness and position of the line also changed. The area of the triangle (solution of the mathematical equation) became smaller and led to less viable clusters in the long-term. Only a cluster with 2 members could operate under these circumstances. In the third case when the assumed external contribution to the cluster's budget was HUF 30 million, there was no such network cooperation which could be maintained in the long-term.

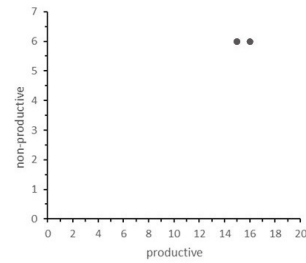
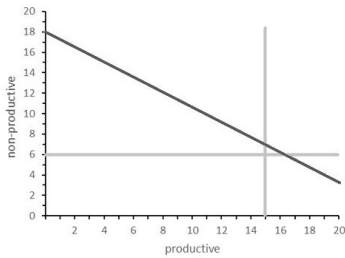
The second simulation examined what would happen if the amount of external sources of a cluster was decreased while the annual membership fees of productive and non-productive members were increased. This idea was considered a good one by the experts dealing with the financial maintenance of clusters because they emphasised the importance of organisations' self-maintenance, which is essential in long-term operation. The same measurement (20 percent)

was assumed in the reduction of the governmental support and in the increase of the amount of annual fees. This meant that three parameters changed simultaneously in the model:  $M$  which indicated the amount of the average annual money acquired by the winning applications decreased by 20 percent year-to-year while  $t_j$  and  $t_l$  (the annual membership fees of productive and non-productive members) increased by 20 percent each year. All other data remained unchanged compared to the initial state (Fig. 5).

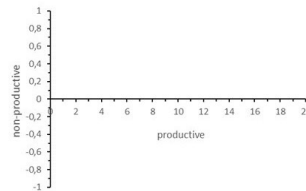
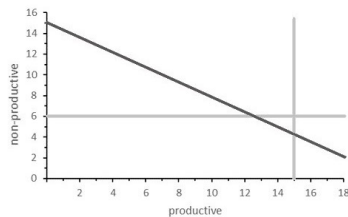
Case 1  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 50 million/year



Case 2  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 35 million/year



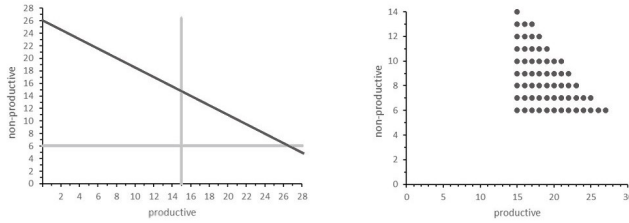
Case 3  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 30 million/year



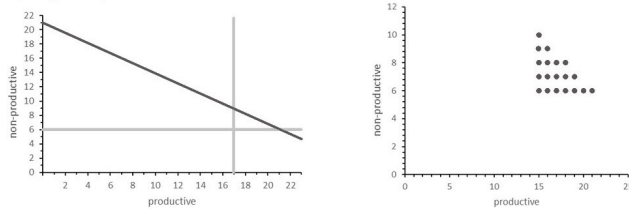
Note: HUF 50 million about EUR 165,000

Fig. 4. The results of the first simulation  
Source: own work.

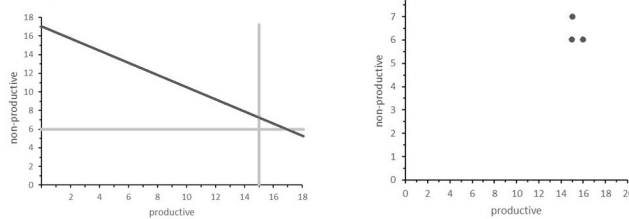
Case 1  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 50 million/year,  $t_j$  = HUF 100,000 and  $t_i$  = HUF 50,000/year



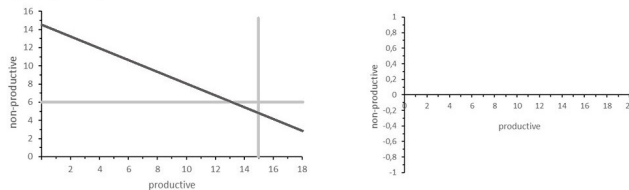
Case 2  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 40 million/year (-20 percent),  $t_j$  = HUF 120,000 and  $t_i$  = HUF 60,000 /year (+20 percent)



Case 3  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 32million/year (-20 percent),  $t_j$  = HUF 144,000 and  $t_i$  = HUF 72,000 /year (+20 percent)



Case 4  $\bar{M}$  = HUF 25.6million/year (-20 percent),  $t_j$  = HUF 172,800 and  $t_i$  = HUF 86,400 /year (+20 percent)



Note: HUF 50 million about EUR 165,000

Fig. 5. The results of the second simulation

Source: own work.

In the first case when the data was the same as in the initial state of the first simulation, the result was the same because the cluster consisting of 60 members of different sizes and compositions was viable. One year later there was a 20 percent decrease and because the external sources represented a larger proportion in the financial structure of the cluster than the amount of annual membership

fees, their reduction could not be compensated by an increase of annual membership fees. (This remained roughly aligned with present-day Hungarian reality.) As a consequence, the size of the sustainable cluster decreased year by year. In the second case only a cluster with 19 members remained viable, while in the third case (after a newer modification) only a cluster with three members, and then their number reached zero.

The conclusion of the second simulation has been that without a balanced financial structure – where the external sources do not represent an extremely big proportion in a cluster's budget – it is not possible for decreasing external sources to be substituted by an increase of participant contributions; in other words: by increasing membership fees.

Although the cluster model describes the situation in a single year, one might presume that if the conditions in the model were fulfilled durably, the model would be dynamic and sustainable for a long time.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In recent years in the course of the theoretical and empirical research on clusters it has become obvious that in order for clusters in Hungary, functioning with a distorted financing structure and dependant mostly on external sources, to advance to a higher stage of development and become self-sustaining, analytical tools that can help them reach the critical mass and establish appropriately sized clusters are required. Borrowing from an idea in biology, we designed our cluster model to serve this purpose. It represents an examination method that can define the limits of cluster operability in the long-term by defining and adjusting some of their operational parameters. It ensures clusters to operate more smoothly and not to have financial problems in the long run, thus these organisations can shift into a more developed phase.

In testing the model, simulations have proved on the one hand the operability of the model under certain circumstances, while, on the other, it has also been revealed that clusters will not be self-sustainable if the decrease of external sources exceeds a certain amount. But if membership fees increase at the same rate as external sources decrease, the increasing membership fee cannot compensate the decreasing external sources because the latter usually form a larger proportion in the budgets of clusters, particularly in the initial phases of their development.

In general, the financial status of clusters depends on in which development phase they are. Usually greater support is necessary in the first phase of their life cycles. After they are established, in the growth stage the most important task is to increase the number of members and reach a critical mass while

forming the organisational and operational conditions for clusters. At this time external sources are extremely important for the survival of clusters. In the mature stage the effective cooperation of members is already realised, their financial situation is stable, and they cover their operational costs primarily from membership fees.

Usually the most viable clusters are those with firms of different sizes and owners. It is quite often that clustering is more advanced among enterprises with foreign interests and better financial statuses. The development and appropriate internal structure of clusters depending on the geographical location and the specialities of economic sectors can be also different. One might presume that branch party affiliation can also have an indirect impact on the measure of clustering and on the number of cluster members because in certain economic sectors the intention or compulsion for cooperation can be more intense.

The sustainability of clusters also depends on the quality of the political, economic and social environment because it can affect the operation and the size of obtainable support. Depending on governmental politics, the latter can often change. After the turn of the millennium, when clusters were 'new' in Hungary and several factors hindered their establishment and operation, they received considerable state support. But later, when the number of clusters increased and the volume of state support decreased, other sources, membership fees in particular, became increasingly important in the budgets of clusters. That is why the model or the number and composition of cluster members are relevant, just like in a pride of African lions, where there is also a special internal structure and finding an optimal member structure can be essential for its survival.

The results of this research can be of great help to authorities and economic policy makers interested in cluster development and to decision-making managers of clusters alike because they determine those factors (number and composition of cluster members, income) which are necessary for the sustainable operation of clusters. The different results of simulations can provide ideas to cluster managers, for example how to organise cluster members or to what to pay attention in connection with finance and membership when establishing and/or managing clusters. In fact, they present a basis for different calculations in different circumstances, namely what payments, membership fees or what kind of membership composition it requires. Knowing this, those who are interested in cluster development will be able to choose cluster members – to a certain degree – more consciously to ensure a cluster's sustainable financial operation.

In terms of future research, one option would be to examine how the model works in other post-socialist countries. Moreover, it would be also interesting to study some other limitations of the model (e.g. the relations inside and outside a cluster, the relevance of EU funds in promoting innovation, especially in the recent accessors to the EU). Perhaps further analysis will reveal such new connections which could contribute to a different or a more complex interpretation of

the model. A better understanding of the operation of clusters could also increase their competitiveness, which is extremely important in the economic crisis caused by the current global pandemic in the age of the fourth industrial revolution.

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## NON-MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND UNIQUENESS IN THE PLANNING OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN SPACE: EXAMPLE OF LVIV

**Abstract.** The paper is an attempt to respond to selected problems of the spatial planning system in Lviv, as defined by analyses of strategic documents. Based on the analysis, the authors proposed a spatial planning model considering non-material and hard-to-measure factors which have shaped the city. Lviv was selected for analysis because of its size, its long and multicultural history, and its considerable accumulation of tangible and intangible cultural heritage elements from various eras. Today, the city faces numerous challenges in terms of heritage protection, its functional and spatial development, and the choice of an effective form of planning and management. Hence the need to offer an in-depth reflection on the importance and to consider the rich cultural heritage and non-material factors shaping urban space, in the spatial planning process.

**Key words:** non-material factors, uniqueness of urban space, expert methods, spatial planning.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The history of the urban planning culture, i.e. the formation, development and shaping of the structure of urban space, illustrate the importance of non-material qualities and uniqueness in architectural and urban planning solutions. The city as a type of a complex shaped in time has a specific and legally established spatial organisation. It produces long-term material considerations as part of its operation, which in turn shape its spatial organisation (morphology), land utilisation, and a special type of developed landscape. Therefore, the city has its own material/physical dimension (buildings, houses, streets, schools, squares, etc.) (Oliveira, 2016). It can be also viewed in anthropological terms – as a space occupied by people which possesses a special kind of communicational energy, atmosphere, special relations with the environment, a character, age, beauty, and a way in which it reacts to outside influence. Thus, it also possesses a certain spiritual dimension, e.g. a location memory, cultural continuity, potential and unique meanings, and a set of culture codes and symbols which shape the personal and collective identities of its inhabitants. Through the combination of those layers, i.e. material and non-material, cities in their historic development become exceptional and unique centres of human life. When analysing past and present significances of cities one may reach a point when it becomes difficult to specify what defines cities more: the material or the non-material dimension. An answer to this question seems to be impossible in the context of a city treated as a ‘complex system’. According to Byrne (2010), in order to understand the complex system of a city, its past and present, and to be able to map out its future development paths, we cannot reduce it to the sum of the isolated components we will model. There is a need for the human factor and consideration of the non-material factors affecting the city. By addressing the importance of non-material factors in urban development, and in particular in its management and planning, the authors are part of the trend of complexity theory in urban planning, which is becoming an increasingly important research issue for many scientific disciplines (Servillo and van der Broeck, 2012).

We have chosen Lviv as a case study for the ongoing analysis of non-material factors and the uniqueness of the city in urban planning practice. Lviv can be a city with various dimensions of heritage. It occupies an area of nearly 182 sq. km and has a population of 724,713 people (2019). It is the seventh largest urban centre in Ukraine, but due to its extensive historical heritage it is considered as the country’s capital of culture. Its history dates back to Mediaeval times and its character was shaped by the influences of the cultures of both Eastern and Western Europe. Representatives of diverse nationalities, races, religions and cultures have lived in the city, leaving an indelible mark on the urban fabric, as well as creating the uniqueness of its atmosphere and spirit (Godis and Nilsson, 2016). In the 19th century it nearly matched Prague in terms of its urban development and architectural

solutions. At that time, its modern metropolitan infrastructure (theatres, museums) developed (Purchla, 2018). Lviv's multi-national composition was one of its trademarks, which had a strong influence on its material and non-material heritage (Saliuk, 2009; Shablyi, 2017). In 1998, the historical part of the city was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its perfectly preserved urban organisation. That fact required the authorities and the local community to become more responsible for maintaining a good condition of the structures and spatial organisation. Today, the city is famous for its many theatre, literary, and music festivals. In this way, attempts are made to relate to the city's rich and diverse cultural tradition (Hou *et al.*, 2014; Weslund, 2014). A dynamic turn towards history took place in Lviv after the fall of communism, in the early 1990s (Corsale and Vuytsyk, 2015). The interest in the past, the clarification and taming of the landscape, and the attempts to restore the old spirit of the city are initiated by the inhabitants of Lviv (Vonnák, 2020). The importance of both the material and non-material legacy of the city is also starting to be recognised by the municipal authorities. In the face of many livelihood problems, this process is slow and often geared towards the use of heritage for utilitarian purposes, such as tourism (Kozoviy, 2018). Thanks to its unique cultural value, Lviv constitutes a major node of the tourism flow in Western Ukraine of international significance. The 2012 UEFA European Football Championship offered the city an opportunity to improve its infrastructure and to develop. New constructions included Arena Lviv (with a capacity of 34,915), a new airport terminal, and 60 km of roads were repaired. Those and other activities became the quality-based stimuli for the development of the hotel and restaurant offer (Posatsky, 2014). Major funds were invested in the restoration and repairs of the most valuable architectural and urban development projects, and various entities engaged in actions aimed at urban regeneration of selected boroughs.

Despite the dynamic development and modernisation of many areas of life, Lviv suffers from all the problems that characterise the regional centres of the Western Ukraine area (social, environmental, economic, and territorial): transport, preservation of the historic environment, efficient use of territorial resources, development of engineering infrastructure, landscaping and beautification. At the same time, Lviv has its own problems, which are especially acute: depopulation, the city has lost many functions; territorial over-densification with buildings; intensive anthropopressure on natural elements in its structure, the lack of systematic housing policy, and problems with city planning and managing of cultural heritage. These problems, despite numerous attempts to overcome them, also in spatial planning, have remained unresolved, despite nearly thirty years of the city functioning within the free market economy. This is largely due to several decades of the city's functioning in the Soviet reality. The legacy and consequences of that period are visible in the urban fabric. They are no less clearly visible to the authors in the strategic documents they analysed. Lviv is thus examined not only from the perspective of the cultural layering of several centuries, but also as

a post-socialist city. All the above factors became the basis for choosing the city of Lviv for a detailed study of intangible factors and their impact on architectural planning processes and phenomena in the cities of Ukraine.

The article underlines the importance of non-material considerations, especially those related to the history of non-material culture, which has shaped unique architectural and urban solutions, and the uniqueness of cities in urban planning process alongside material considerations. The paper emphasises how both the material and non-material characteristics of cities, being interconnected and intertwined, are an essential component of spatial planning in the spirit of comprehensiveness. To understand how efficient non-material considerations and uniqueness in planning decisions are, the authors examined Lviv strategic/urban planning experiences between years 1991–2019. Considering the research topic and the significant amount of investigated source materials, we have analysed only selected shortcomings of the documents and we have outlined only the major methodological issues. The result of the conducted analysis, supported by the long-term experience of a part of the team working in the city management structures of Lviv, is a proposal for a model of management of the city's spatial planning. This model considers the often overlooked non-material values – from the definition of strategies for controlled urban development to the development of projects and the implementation of local tasks. It largely recognises the need for knowledgeable and experienced people to apply expert analysis when making decisions and solving spatial problems.

The article is divided into sections. After the introduction, the theoretical basis of the research is presented along with an explanation of the concept of non-material factors influencing the city. The chapter also presents a selection of source material and introduces the method of analysis used. The next part of the paper is devoted to identifying the main problems of Lviv in the context of spatial planning and its development. As an answer to the defined problems, a method for considering non-material factors and the uniqueness of a city in the urban planning process is presented. This section is followed by a discussion chapter aimed at analysing various non-material factors in the context of the city's development problems and needs. The paper concludes with a summary and presentation of the main conclusions of the research.

## **2. THEORETICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY**

According to Dąbrowska-Budziko (2005), non-material considerations which impact the physiognomy of a city are: principles, urban planning concepts of specific historical periods founded on world views, faith, science, aesthetics, and philos-

ophy; religion (centres of religious cult, cemeteries); power (secular, religious); prestige and wealth; hierarchy (e.g. the social ladder); and patriotism. The author also listed the notions of authenticity, uniqueness, *genius loci*, and various kinds of referents among the important cultural elements which impact the material side of a city. However, those are not the only elements which impact how a city functions or how it is perceived. As Boryczka and Zasina argued (2016, p. 74), considering the fact that people's prosperity is constantly growing as are their level of education and mobility, major factors which draw them to cities, apart from beautiful architecture and a well-organised space, include a city's atmosphere, and its cultural offer. The material tangible and the indefinable elements of a city combined ensure its uniqueness. The uniqueness of urban space can be, therefore, understood as the uniqueness of qualities and the interactions between its various dimensions (Vonnák, 2020). That may become apparent in various aspects: the political aspect, the socio-humanistic aspect, or the religious/world-view aspect; further in the cityscape, economic relations, etc. Furthermore, it is specific for every dimension of urban space. The uniqueness of urban space can be defined yet it cannot be measured. Significantly enough both the non-material features and the uniqueness of a city may have a positive or a negative impact on its fabric and its inhabitants. In order to simplify the analysis, the listed non-material factors which shape a city were classified thematically into four categories: cultural/religious, social, political, and administrative/legal. They were analysed both from the historical and the modern perspectives. Please note that non-material factors may influence not only the physiognomy of a city but also its other physical and functional elements, yet in the article the authors have mainly focussed on the city's architectural sphere.

The spatial scope of the study covers Lviv within its present-day administrative boundaries. The temporal scope of the study begins after Ukraine regained independence in 1991. In describing the cultural values and defining the non-material values of Lviv, the authors go back to the period of the city's historical development.

According to the authors, the main aims of the paper are to show how non-material considerations of urban space and development can matter in spatial planning, and to present the method of considering the non-material factors shaping the city and its uniqueness in the spatial planning process, in the spirit of complexity theory. The main initial assumption made by the authors in conducting the study was that in Lviv's planning practice to date, after 1991, non-material factors and the city's uniqueness have been marginalised or even ignored in development strategies and management.

The article is an evaluation of the main guidelines of Lviv's development strategies from 1991 through 2019. The purpose of the article is to discuss the nature and the role of non-material elements and the uniqueness in the current conditions for the development of Ukrainian cities using the example of Lviv, as well as to

explain how those can be considered in producing development strategies, updating urban planning documentation, and making managerial decisions.

The authors have acquired their knowledge of the relationship between non-material factors and the uniqueness of a city, and the ways of managing it and planning its development (mainly spatial) over a long period of time. This article capitalises on the expertise and skills of its authors and the exchange of information between them regarding the practical and theoretical aspects of urban planning. A critical analysis of municipal, strategic, development, and planning documents formed the basis of the analytical activities. Due to the complex nature and the broad scope of the study problem, for the analysis the authors used a number of documents from various areas of the city's activities that could be influenced by non-material factors. Their total number exceeded 150. Particular attention was paid to documents from the last 10 years (2010–2019). Additionally, the authors also studied the major historical concepts of Lviv's spatial planning in the communist era. A selection of several of the documents analysed is presented in Table 1. The table includes studies of varying spatial and temporal scope that touch on a broad spectrum of the planes of Lviv's functioning. A descriptive method was also used in the study as an auxiliary method for evaluating the collected material.

Table 1. Selected documents on the formation of the development strategy of Lviv analysed in the article

No.	Document Name	Authorisation	Time limit
1.	Program on the development of the tourist branch of the city.	resolution of LCC as of 10.03.2011 № 243	until 2011
2.	State target program on the preparation and holding of the final part of the 2012 European Football Championship in Ukraine.	resolution of the CMU as of 14.04.2010 № 357	until 2012
3.	Small business development promotion program in Lviv for 2011–2012.	resolution of LCC as of 21.04.2011 № 373	until 2012
4.	City target program on the preparation and holding in Ukraine of the final leg of the European Football Championship 2012 in Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 16.02.2009 № 2315	until 2012
5.	Program on improving the system of management, repair and maintenance of the housing stock of Lviv for the period of 2010–2012.	resolution of LCC as of 25.03.2010 № 3420	until 2012
6.	Housing program for young families and single citizens of Lviv for 2007–2012.	resolution of LCC as of 18.12.2007 № 13793	until 2012
7.	Household waste management program in Lviv for 2010–2013.	decision of the Executive Committee of LCC as of 26.03.2010 № 362	until 2013
8.	National program on the reform and development of housing and communal services for 2009–2014.	Law of Ukraine № 1869-15 as of 11.07.2009	until 2014



No.	Document Name	Authorisation	Time limit
9.	Program on the preservation, development and maintenance of parks in Lviv for 2011–2015.	resolution of LCC as of 21.04.2011 № 375	until 2015
10.	Integrated concept of the development of the central part of Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 21.04.2011 № 429	until 2015
11.	Strategy to increase the competitiveness of the city of Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 07.06.2010 № 3460	until 2015
12.	Sustainable energy development programs for Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 14.07.2011 № 663	until 2020
13.	General development plan of Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 30.09.2010 № 3924	until 2025
14.	Program on the reconstruction and modernisation of heat and power systems of Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 29.04.2004 № 1239	not indicated
15.	Program to create a universally accessible environment for people with disabilities in Lviv.	resolution of LCC as of 11.10.2005 № 2582	permanent

Source: own work based on the analysed documents.

The applied methods of analysis of Lviv's development strategies and the studies of the literature on the subject enabled the authors to determine the main problems of the city's spatial and social development in historical and contemporary terms. In the course of the analysis of the strategic documents, their fundamental shortcomings and deficiencies were detailed. The critical analysis of the documents also provided the basis for proposing a method of considering non-material heritage in the strategic planning of the city. In the opinion of the authors, the selection of the analysed sources and the methods of analysis have enabled the study to meet its objectives.

### 3. LVIV'S PROBLEMS WITH URBAN PLANNING

From the mid1990s there has been a sharp decrease of the population and its quality-based composition has deteriorated in Lviv (age distribution, level of qualifications, level of education) (Habrel *et al.*, 2020). That has been accompanied by a change in the general world view and morals, and by a social polarisation and pauperisation of a considerable part of the population. Social polarisation is also visible when it comes to the changes in the perception of heritage, history, and the surrounding space, and it is associated with the introduction of market economy and the restoration of private property. On the one hand, there has been an increase in local identity and in the sense of responsibility for one's

surroundings. On the other, however, there exists a clear superiority of ground rent, which causes problems for the protection of cultural heritage and the needs of local communities. Within the conditional dimension, one should note: political/legal and location conditions of a city; the requirements, limitations and regulations applicable in the city management system; the deteriorating ecological conditions; the increasing outflow of capital from Ukraine; the decreasing actual income of inhabitants; and other tendencies (chiefly negative ones). The development of urban areas and the functioning of cities is largely influenced by the policies of state and regional authorities, which create legal conditions which stimulate or hinder the development of urban areas. One example could be the repercussions of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. A majority of affluent people seek safe locations for living and investing in the western part of the country (e.g. in construction and real estate), including in Lviv. In the case of Ukrainian cities, including Lviv, the geometric dimension features increasing urbanisation, territorial expansion of the largest cities, a changing planning layout, and the loss of the past character. For planning, the specificities of the content and density of a city are key. The spatial arrangement of a city and its functional structure determine the problem of the development of technical and transport infrastructures and cause complications for justifying developmental decisions. Within the temporal dimension (including the historical features of development), the present, and the developmental perspectives of a city, mainly negative tendencies are visible, though there are also some positive changes (Zwid Pamatok Istorii Ta Kulturi Ukraini M. Lviv, 2019). The first and foremost issue in Lviv is the need to retain its historical environment, to modernise residential buildings and to redevelop historic areas, and to revitalise degraded areas.

Other problematic areas identified by Habrel (2017) in Lviv's urban planning, which define the current objectives of spatial policy, include:

- transport and communication,
- functional changes of degraded urban areas,
- optimisation of the city's relationship with its surroundings,
- providing flats for the poorest groups of the population who are not covered by social welfare,
- municipal waste management and handling outdated technical infrastructure,
- interruptions of the city's compositional order and retaining its identity in its historic part,
- ecological hazards,
- humanisation of the Soviet-era developments,
- lack of social areas intended for the entire city and expanding the city's centre,
- inhabitant mentality, e.g. no cooperation or a sense of responsibility for urban space.

Upon analysing the situation which exists between the authorities, specialists, inhabitants and investors, it can be concluded that all the problems have indicated a major role of the social (human) aspect in defining the causes of Lviv's urban planning problems.

The authors, who are members of communal councils, analysed the existing strategies, concepts and urban planning designs, as well as the procedures for approving them, in order to indicate whether non-material considerations were included in the applied urban planning solutions in Lviv. After the fall of communism and the initial years of Ukraine's independence, the general plans for city development were subjected to critical evaluation. The conclusion was that they had been prepared based on a Soviet methodological platform, which did not match the new reality of urban life nor the urban planning tasks, and thus they have been abandoned. Instead, there have been dozens of various strategic documents being proposed, which are developed based on European expertise in creating such documents (Remiga, 2010). In Lviv in 1991–2019, over 150 development strategies, programmes and concepts were devised in line with regional and sectoral principles. However, they must be regarded as incomplete, selective and partly contradictory. The main goal of the analysed documents was to improve the inhabitants' quality of life (treated in most cases as creating opportunities for leisure and recreation), shaping the city for it to become a community and searching for the outcomes of the synergy of the work of various active social groups, the development of democracy and the rights of inhabitants related with the notion of listening to the voices of the inhabitants and supporting grass-roots initiatives. Therefore, strong emphasis was placed on the attempt to recreate a civil society (*Lviv potrebuje strategicknow..., Socijalni monitoring jakosti zitta...*) in reference to the principles of the development of urban areas, the strategies stated the principle of sustainable development and the utilisation of the effect of synergy of using existing resources, including social, cultural, historic, and natural resources. It seems, then, that the utilisation of non-material resources has been gaining importance in the planning documentation. Sadly, though, the potential opportunities in this respect have not been properly studied nor analysed. They have not progressed past the stage of declarations.

After analysing source documents in the form of development plans and city development strategies, the authors have pointed to only two prominent documents regarding the formation of urban space in Lviv: The General development plan of Lviv (2010) and the Integrated concept of development of the central part of Lviv (2011). They identified the city's land-use activities and projects for 10–15 years and considered demographic forecasts and economic perspectives as relevant for justifying planning decisions. Despite the high value that these documents presented, they were not free of flaws and shortcomings. In the "2012–2025 comprehensive strategy for the development of Lviv" (*Kompleksna strategija rozvitku*

*Lvova...*), as well as in previous documents, the vision and the mission were not supported by facts, merely derived as emotional wishful thinking. The definition of the functional concepts of the Strategy should not be based solely on intuition. It would be more appropriate to outline the global objective, which would have priority, and only then to indicate the local development goals at various levels. The authors of the Strategy declared the utilisation of developmental options without defining the criteria for their evaluation or selection. Reliable studies and evaluations of resources are necessary to justify goals and objectives. That cannot be based on empty and unimplementable statements regarding sustainable development. The methodology of a systemic approach to managing a city must include a comprehensive analysis, not just individual fragmentary studies and an attempt to draw global conclusions on their basis. The same applies to the priorities of the city's development. They were formulated and selected subjectively; they were assigned equal merit and significance. Furthermore, the document's authors did not consider to a sufficient extent the factor of time and the order of implementing them. What is particularly puzzling is the fact that the authors indicated obstacles in implementing their concept which in many cases could be the assets for the city's development, e.g. the role of the historical urban fabric. The issues of stressing the uniqueness of the city for the development of its spatial structures were also left unsolved. The authors discussed to a limited extent the qualitative and non-material features of urban space and their impact on the city's functioning. They suppressed those indicators which could not be quantified. Those elements included the beauty of the cityscape, harmony, and the city's historical features reflected in its architectural heritage, as well as the mentality and the level of refinement of the inhabitants reflected, e.g. in their religiosity, political and legal knowledge, the level of trust to municipal authorities, or nationalism. Uniqueness and efficiency are the two sides of urban systems which do not need to be mutually exclusive, but which must always be considered. Fig. 1 shows selected material and non-material factors and selected indicators that can be used to assess their impact on the spatial organisation of the city. The framework of the article does not allow for a more detailed analysis of those, and that should be the subject of a separate study. In the presented text, they play an auxiliary role by explaining the process of influence of chosen factors on city functioning.

The manner of considering social opinion, i.e. the broader variant of public opinion, was yet another failing of Lviv's development strategy. When developing a comprehensive municipal strategy, one should assign major significance to the voice of the inhabitants and their needs. On the one hand, studies of public opinion should be conducted in a reliable manner on the widest possible scale, not just in fragments and at random. On the other, during social consultations, one should consider the voices of local leaders, yet the final direction of changes should be analysed and approved by experts. The current and earlier strategies utilised notions the meanings of which were not clearly defined. Subsequently,

their authors introduced the notion of informed choice of the city’s development paths and the usage of the appropriate research and analysis methodology. That dissonance and terminological chaos is unacceptable in such documents. When analysing the strategic documents of Lviv’s development, one more fact should be noted. The Masterplan was developed on the basis of Soviet methodological principles for the period until 2025. It was updated and adopted late – for almost 20 years the city functioned without such a document. According to the authors, as a result, a belief in the acceptability of a city functioning without quality urban planning documentation has formed among many officials and professionals. This state of affairs will be difficult to change in the short term without the implementation of a new management policy based on strict adherence to the guidelines of a new, comprehensively developed document considering all aspects of the city’s functioning.

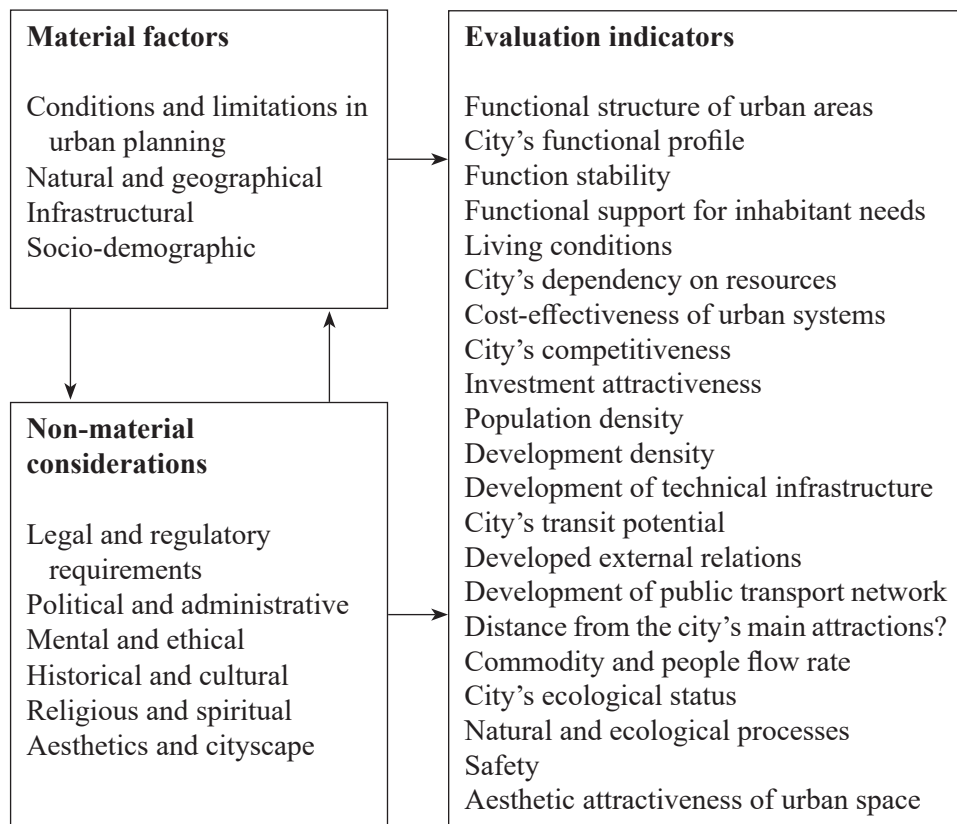


Fig. 1. Material and non-material factors, and selected indicators for the evaluation of their impact on the spatial organisation of the city

Source: own work.

#### **4. INCLUSION OF THE NON-MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND UNIQUENESS OF A CITY IN JUSTIFYING ITS DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVES AND URBAN PLANNING SOLUTIONS**

One of the most important matters which must be defined in the process of urban planning is the appropriate formulation of the main objective of the development and the so-called intermediate goals. The main objective can be achieved by considering various strategies as alternatives. Usually experts choose from among a set of possible solutions. As indicated by the analysed documents and situations, the objectives in the spatial management of Lviv were often formulated at will and without any actual analysis of the spatial situation in the city. The justification of goals and tasks should be based on the analysis of the pre-planning status. The expert method enables an efficient analysis of the available options and the selection of the best solution. In the case of including the uniqueness of urban space and its non-material considerations, the significance of specific conditions and factors which cannot be easily formulated and included in the justification of plan solutions increases. Therefore, expert methods are essential. When applied properly and consistently, they can correct the outcomes of public debates which proved unsuccessful. With that in mind, we have proposed a specific way forward, with a classification into four main points and detailed in graphic form.

Stage 1: it begins with the formulation of objectives and the creation of an objectives tree (from the main objective to partial goals and individual tasks). At this stage, there occurs an analysis of the functions fulfilled by the city and of the internal and external conditions which influence the achieving of the pre-established objective, and the definition of the guidelines of urban planning. What is particularly important, which is usually emphasised to a lesser extent, is the consideration of external influences, i.e. the definition of the position and the developmental tasks of a city in reference to broader processes at the regional, national, and international levels. The problems associated with including non-material considerations and the uniqueness of the character of the city at this stage mainly centre around the human dimension, i.e. reconciling the positions of specialists and decision-makers, overcoming the difficulties in applying expert methods, and, finally, finding a consensus. At this stage it is important to define the limits of the plans and ambitions of the community, authorities and experts based on the analysis and diagnosis of the condition of the system (the city) and its resources.

Stage 2: an analysis of the spatial situation and the available resources for achieving individual goals and the main objective. At this stage it is important to establish the hierarchy of individual goals and adjust them to the available resources. Specific tasks must be completed: clarify the objectives which can be achieved using the available functions and measures; uncover critical deficiencies; and formulate initial requirements for the concept and design solutions. It is

important to adjust the quantitative and qualitative parameters being used, and to classify the factors which impact the studied problem. The factors which must be considered when making decisions at this stage can be divided into controllable and uncontrollable factors. The former should be properly utilised, while the latter should be considered when planning and justifying decisions. In order to establish the main development goals and the hierarchy of importance for the city, it is necessary to balance the approach to personal needs and the needs of the entire community; material vs. spiritual needs; the ability to properly apply the model of the policy of tolerance and tenacity vs. management in the managerial or partner mode, and many more factors. The problems emerging at this stage were caused by the shortcomings of the instruments applied and the methods for analysing spatial situations, and by the inadequate inclusion of non-material considerations and qualitative characteristics. At this stage of decision making, what was particularly visible was the lack of a systemic mode of thinking, impulsiveness in actions, and the subjectivity of arguments and evaluations which did not consider the city's uniqueness or the conditions its spatial situation.

Stage 3: defining alternatives for achieving the pre-established objectives. This stage consists of outlining the limitations associated with the available resources, ecological requirements, morality of the inhabitants, and other non-material considerations which influence urban space which must be considered during planning. The main focus is placed on the possible problems of task execution, and on their alternative solutions and justifying their selection. The problems of this stage centre around the issue of the methodology of the undertaken decisions and the systemic mode of thinking among experts.

Stage 4: evaluation of alternative solutions and justified selection of the final solution. The problems of this stage apply to the analysis, evaluation and selection of the final solution, and to the matching of appropriate measures for achieving the objectives. Complications at this stage are caused by the multi-faceted nature of the issues being discussed. The experts' task is to analyse all the dimensions of the issues being discussed, and to ensure the appropriate understanding and fact-based justification of the chosen solution. A diagram illustrating the algorithm for developing planning documents while including a city's non-material considerations and uniqueness is presented on Fig. 2.

According to the authors, the so-called expert methods can help decrease the influence of subjectivity in the decision-making process, they provide compelling arguments, they facilitate the acquisition of information on the phenomena being studied, they expand the knowledge, and they help understand the mechanisms which govern the processes being analysed. Yet they carry some disadvantages. The results of expert studies may depend on the presumed theory and scientific methodology, and they are achieved over extensive periods. In the decision-making process, it is important to apply the so-called historical thinking, which consists of a comparative analysis of historical examples of the solutions of spatial-functional problems in other cities.

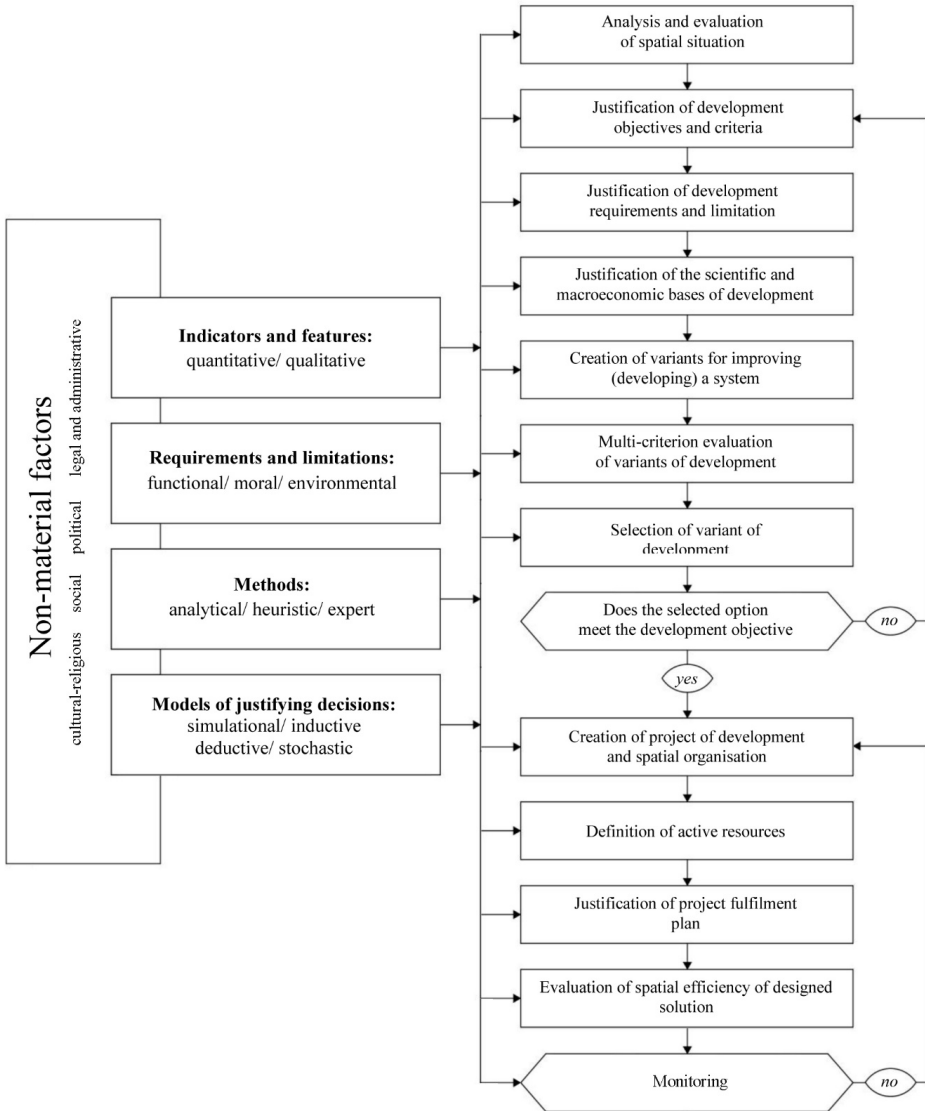


Fig. 2. Model of the impact of non-material factors on the spatial organisation and development of urban systems\*

\*In the decision analysis and justification:

- material and non-material considerations must be treated as an organic whole of spatial processes and they must be conditionally separated when analysing specific problems;
- in some cases, qualitative features can be defined in quantitative terms;
- qualitative features are best reflected in the definition of limitations, the definition of system conflicts, faults and incoherences, and in the justification of the macro features and directions of system development.

Source: own work.



There is also some merit to the descriptive-intuitive approach, which can be applied by talented and experienced experts. It is particularly useful for generalising and systematising the phenomena being studied, and in defining innovative solutions and directions of operation. However, the major role is played by the logical-analytical approach. Despite the drawbacks indicated, the authors believe that the expert method should be considered the best from the point of view of urban planning and management. Especially in the context of being able to consider its uniqueness and the non-material factors that shape its landscape and community. The following elements should be considered in the logical-analytical analysis with a view to integrate the non-material qualities and the uniqueness of the city into the development plans:

a) an analysis of spatial situations conducted as per the model of the 5-dimensional urban space (man – conditions – function – geometry – time) and the interactions between them, which define the processes which occur in a city, and which reveal the non-material considerations and uniqueness of urban space;

b) an analysis of cause and effect relationships in order to define spatial situations. The structure of cause and effect chains support the classification of major deviations in the universality of a system, and it enables one to define the structures and locations of unique phenomena and situations. Those relationships are easily verifiable in a reverse order (one analyses certain consequences and seeks their causes);

c) an analysis of the losses, spatial conflicts, and faults within a system. Losses depend on various conditions; they become apparent at various stages of the functioning of a system. They are identified and evaluated through loss mapping. Depending on the causes, conflicts include interests of groups of influence, the structure and the relations between process participants, the values they profess, etc.

d) the knowledge and methods in cityscape architecture and urban planning composition associated with the studies of environmental aesthetics and cityscape analysis. According to the theory of landscapes, urban scenes include walls, horizontal plains, ceilings, and elements distributed freely throughout them. The specificity of those elements and their combinations define the mood, compositional characteristics, and the style of urban scenes, etc. The study of the aesthetics of cityscapes and the compositional organisations of selected cities also covers the analysis of urban panoramas and the specificity of the visual perception of the cityscape, i.e. the location of special viewing points; the stock taking and analysis of the existing silhouettes emerging from the main viewing points; and an evaluation and definition of the extents of existing panoramas based on the analysis of their components and properties. The evaluation of the aesthetics of cityscapes and their uniqueness also covers compliance with the requirements and conditions of the protection of cityscapes, the evaluation of their changes, and the preservation of the major compositional solutions.

## **5. NON-MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND UNIQUENESS IN THE URBAN PLANNING CULTURE**

Non-material considerations and the unique character of cities can be reflected in various domains. In the article, the authors discussed some of those. One of the domains is the cultural/religious domain, which, as Mumford (1938) has argued, has a considerable impact on the spatial forms of a city and its development. Culture can be interpreted as a combination of the material and spiritual heritage of an urban community produced throughout its entire history or during a specific era. It is often associated with civilisation as a stage in the development of a community, and it consists of material and spiritual elements. It becomes apparent in everyday life, and the system of management and functioning of social institutions. It covers norms, instances of civic activity, and it is also visible in the nature of urban space. A city is both the creator and the embodiment of culture. It establishes a special environment for displaying culture in architectural forms (Purchla, 2018). Culture and ideology have always been major non-material factors in the development of cities and the basic determiners of the placement of buildings and how their spatial organisations formed in specific historical periods. We owe much knowledge in this respect to the works of Sedlachek (2017) and the representatives of the Chicago school, i.e. Wirth (1964), and Park, Burgess and McKenzie (1967). The importance of culture for the development of cities can also be discussed from the perspective of its social and functional benefits. Considerable spatial concentration results in the breakup of a community, people lose a sense of affiliation with their group, social bonds become weaker, and the sense of a lack of unity increases. Culture plays a major role in overcoming such maladies as it shapes values and creates symbols which stimulate inhabitants to identify with a location. Some impacts of ideology and culture on the uniqueness of a city include, e.g. direct shaping of a culture product and increasing the cultural engagement of inhabitants; retrieval of valuable long-lost elements of urban space; and the shaping of a positive image of a city (Karwińska, 2017).

To better understand the non-material nature and uniqueness of a city and its place in the evolution of civilisation, one must consider the views of philosophers and theologians who have viewed cities and their architecture as philosophical and world-view phenomena (Yurkevych and Tkachuk, 1999; Peñalosa, 2012). A city can be understood as an idea. That leads to the conclusion that the integral part of culture, which shapes the material and non-material domains of a city, is religion. Theological nature and the religious functions of a city shape its spatial organisation to a major extent. Some philosophies and streams of thought consider cities as the examples of a strive to achieve “heaven on earth” (Morris, 1994). That is why urban space should be organised in such a way to produce happy inhabitants already while on the Earth. Religion can be also treated as a socio-political phenom-

enon. It contains one of the main components, i.e. human approach to that which is holy, a factor which leads to major changes in the image of places and cities as it creates a particular cityscape dominated by sacred objects and religious space (Sheptytsky, 2007). The perception and interpretation of those spaces constantly change. This was discussed by, e.g. Butler-Bowdon (2009), who argued that in the cities of post-socialist states there occurred a reinterpretation of religious space on the one hand and, on the other, there appeared the phenomenon of sacralisation of the elements of urban space which had not been previously considered as sacred or which had lost that status due to the activities of former authorities. Then, in the West, there are many examples of a growing trend of the desacralisation of urban space and changing the original religious functions of religious sites (de Wildt, Radermacher, Krech, Löffler and Sonne, 2019). After the Second World War, all of Lviv's cultural strata – Polish, Jewish, German, Austrian, and Armenian – fell into oblivion together. Lviv became mono-Soviet. Attempts were made to conceal, negate and erase the city's multiculturalism and its European character, as well as to eradicate it both from the urban landscape and from human memory. The centuries-old tradition of the city was seen as a threat and an obstacle to the creation of a unified, homogeneous Soviet society (Hrycak, 2003). In the current reality, the city is slowly returning to its traditions. The proportion of people identifying with the city and today's national minorities is gradually increasing (Kozoviy, 2018). The life of national and cultural societies is being revived. In particular, the annual street festivals of Jewish music, held since 2009, are prominent in the city's cultural landscape. The Polish Cultural Society operates not only a regional centre, but has 15 branches in the region. Another valuable initiative could be the transformation of a circle of Polish scientists into the University of the Third Age. The role of newly built places of worship, cultural and memorial centres in the city space is increasing, historical memorials, sacred spaces are being arranged, and places for ethnic festivals and other cultural events are being created (Vonnák, 2020).

Phenomena and processes with a non-material nature are directly related to people and the community. The notion of "community" has in the context of a city two dimensions: personal and social (people and their social relations) (Burden, 2018). All social phenomena are the results of human activity, communication, relations, and interactions. The uniqueness of a city stems from the knowledge and skills of the local community gathered over generations. Local traditions are, therefore, extremely important for the proper functioning of cities. They help people understand not only the material domain of a city, but also the deeply rooted customs and social bonds, which help maintain an atmosphere of trust, and which guarantee that cultural, spiritual and other values are passed over to new generations (Mostafavi, 2012). This is particularly relevant for cities such as Lviv, with its rich and ethnically diverse culture and traditions (Buryaidi, 2000). Apart from traditions and the need to maintain cultural continuity, what is also important is

the specialisation of civic roles. In the past, it enabled the establishing of cities, while today it facilitates proper functioning of the complex urban organism. Specialisation in sociological terms leads to interdependency, i.e. to strengthening bonds, yet it can also aggravate conflicts between the haves and the have-nots. Thanks to the competition for the most favourable position within the space of a city, its every part is formed in such a way to offer the biggest local gains. The social aspects of urban planning were classified in Jan Gehl's works *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space* (1987) and *Cities for People* (2010). In them he discussed the adaptive mechanisms of various cultural groups of inhabitants depending on the architectural or urban planning layouts of their boroughs, he suggested an approach to improving quality of life from the point of view of humanistic urban planning, and he has argued that a city is a living creature which requires proper care and appropriate solutions. According to Tina Saaby (2018), a former chief architect of Copenhagen, only cities in which people can see each other and are ready to communicate with each other can become successful. If buildings are excessively large and there are no green areas between them, people usually do not communicate, which is one of the reasons why there are no favourable conditions for interaction. Kevin Lynch, an American psychologist and urban planner, proposed (1960) a set of principles for structuring urban space based on aesthetics and a favourable psychological atmosphere of the existing space, and he discussed urban planning within the context of social phenomena and problems (social conditions of urban planning). In discussing the notion of a happy city, Montgomery (2013) has suggested that the way how we build urban centres alters the sensations, thinking, and behaviour of both individuals and whole communities. Montgomery has argued that spatial development changes human life by introducing new functions to residential complexes to enable communication and self-identification of local communities. He indicated how to consolidate and change an approach to the problems of a borough and of the responsibility to such. A "regime-induced" feature of the mode of thinking of communist-era citizens was their lack of a sense of responsibility for the common good, including public space. In recent years, Lviv has made a breakthrough and a bold step towards changing the mode of thinking typical of *Homo Sovieticus* accustomed to central management without social participation. One example could be the revitalisation of Pidzamche, which despite a severely limited budget was successful thanks to a huge participation of its inhabitants (Janas and Trojnar, 2014). The activity and grassroots activism of residents was highlighted by Batty (2010, p. 3), who has argued there is a profound move in western societies which supposes that effective action comes from the grass roots. That correct direction of operation and of managing space was validated by two American architects Lydon and Garcia (2015), who described various approaches to the urban environment and have argued that one of the major conditions for a proper functioning of a city is to develop social capital through developing relations between inhabitants, and be-

tween inhabitants and municipal authorities (decision-makers). Such an approach requires engagement on both sides. Please note that spatial planners and architects play a huge role in transforming the mode of thinking about public space and including non-material considerations, the uniqueness of a city, and the needs of the inhabitants (Larkham and Conzen, 2014; Oliveira, Silva and Samuels, 2014; Lamprecht, 2016). In the study *The Nature of Urban Design* Washburn (2013) explained the need to change the mode of thinking also among urban planners, and he argued for the shifting of the focus to the proper justification and substantiation of the design decisions being made.

A considerable portion of major events in the history of urban planning was politically motivated. There are organic cities which grew and developed over centuries, and there are those which emerged suddenly, e.g. by the enactment of political decisions (Słodczyk, 2012). Political factors play a major role in the structuring and placement of cities, and in the shaping of the unique character of their spaces (Mostafavi, 2012). Politics can be also interpreted as the ability of a system of state authority to manage a society (Butler-Bowdon, 2009). That is an aspect of activity associated with planning and management, as intended for achieving social prosperity. Another politically motivated factor which shapes the image of a city, one which has made its mark in history, is the segregation of the population. It was not uncommon for it to be the trigger for establishing new boroughs where the members of a specific social group lived. Cities which were established based on political decisions, just as it is the case with religious factors, have often tried to relate to the notion of “the perfect city” (Morris, 1994; Słodczyk, 2012). That concept, which has been transformative since antiquity, was also conveyed to some extent in the ideology of communism. Cities which formed on the basis of the doctrine often constituted attempts at creating “the perfect city”, both in spatial and social terms (Kryvoruchko, 2002; Timokhin, 2003). However, considering the aesthetics of urban planning which followed the principles of communism, plans did not always translate into the functionality of space (Omelyanenko and Dyomin, 2007; Cherkes, 2008). Some of those cities or residential complexes built from “ideological” scratch transformed, as they lacked the qualities which would have otherwise developed over the span of generations, into seats of social pathology and spatial deterioration (Węclawowicz, 2013; Pieleśniak, 2016). Political and ideological factors have also played a major role in the shaping of Lviv’s urban space (Posatsky, 2014). The period after the Second World War has made a particularly strong mark on it as it was then that the approach of the authorities to urban planning and the tasks associated with urban development changed. In that period, it was typical for decision-makers to order ideologically specific monumental forms. Those were achieved by erecting overblown buildings and monuments, establishing wide alleys and expansive squares, and creating a new public space intended to dominate and diminish the importance of individuals (Omelyanenko and Dyomin, 2007). At the same time, due to intensive industrialisation, the

intention was to provide accommodation for the population as quickly as possible while simplifying the shapes of buildings to the minimum. That resulted not only in the creation of Lviv's new boroughs, which were completely detached in terms of their form and principles from the history and traditions of the place, but it also caused a complete loss of the aesthetic qualities of mass developments (Shkodovsky, 2007; Ponomareva, 2017).

Legal and administrative matter constitute yet another group of non-material factors. Those can be defined as the ability to manage a system, and to create regulatory requirements and legal bases for the activities. Law should be interpreted as a system of general and specific requirements which apply to compliance with legal standards, genetically and functionally related to the functioning of a country (regions and cities). Its functions and nature are defined by the system of social relations. The management of a city is an activity aimed at fulfilling major objectives within the areas of community life through a central body which manages the social organisation (Butler-Bowdon, 2009). Without mindful municipal authorities who invite appropriate experts to participate in the process of planning the development of their city, the chances of properly including non-material considerations in the development drop dramatically. Particular attention to contemporary urban problems, including the problems with planning and structuring urban space, was demanded by Jacobs (1992), Bauman (2003), and Florida (2002; 2018).

In Ukraine, communism formally ended 30 years ago. But as in other post-Soviet countries, despite its demise, it will still be present in people's consciousness and mentality for many years to come (Eisler, 2016). It can be said that decades of Soviet ideology are still taking their toll. In the absence of official national ideological propaganda, a mental void arose among parts of the population in the 1990s, and identity problems became apparent. Today's Ukrainian cities, despite the passage of years, still face a number of problems related to historical memory and the protection of monuments – they are in danger of losing their identity. To a large extent, this problem affects the residents of Lviv. Especially people coming from other parts of Ukraine and the former Soviet Empire who, being newcomers, have not managed to establish their consciousness and identity of their new place until today (Cherkes, 2008). At the level of urban planning and management, the fall of communism was also followed by a period of chaos and a lack of clear vision and direction. As a further consequence, this has resulted in existing laws and regulations, created at different times and drawing on different models, being incompatible and sometimes even contradictory. This creates difficulties in the legal regulation of architectural and urban planning activities. This is well illustrated by the decades-long impasse over the agreement of the historical-architectural plan of Lviv. Consequently, the city faces problems in the preservation, restoration and use of architectural monuments and historical memory. Uncontrolled construction and violations of historic environment protection requirements have exac-

erbated the problem to such an extent that the city is in danger of being removed from the UNESCO list by compromising the scale of development and landscapes of the historic part of the city.

As noted in the introduction, the complexity of urban structures informed the development of complexity theory in planning practise (Servillo and van der Broeck, 2012). In the theory of a comprehensive approach to city planning, all planes of its functioning are relevant and cannot be ignored (Byrne, 2003; de Roo, Hillier and Wezemaal, 2012). Cities must be considered as complex and comprehensive systems, consisting of many layers and planes that are interdependent (Byrne, 2001; Batty, 2005). The aforementioned works have attempted to understand urban systems as complex open systems – an ontological validation of complexity theory (Portugali, 2011). In the early 1960s, Jane Jacobs argued that the “mechanistic way in which cities were conceived and planned was entirely counter to the diversity that made up vibrant and living cities, with the result that post-war urban planning (and modern architecture) were killing the heterogeneity and diversity that characterised urban life”. Jacobs’ work has become a milestone in the perception and planning of cities. The process of shaping spatial planning principles and directions continues to this day. It became clear to planners and city managers that cities should not be treated like machines but like living system paradigms. Batty (2010, p. 3) defined that as the “slow march from the physicalism which dominated city planning a generation or more ago to a serious concern for social process”. Despite this knowledge, there is still great interest in the analysis of urban systems through simplified simulation and related procedures. However, it is worth noting that the simulation approach is somewhat limited in the sense that it is constrained by the current situation of the city taken as a starting point for the simulation and the simulation tools used (Byrne, 2003; Portugali, 2011). According to the authors, the key task of contemporary planners working in a complexity frame of reference is, therefore, to consider the social factor and the other non-material planes that influence the functioning of a city. When justifying design and management decisions, as well as when supporting bottom-up initiatives, the subjective and emotional assessment of residents should be considered. Local communities, which are increasingly involved in the process of city development, should be prepared for this participation – improving their culture and expanding their knowledge of the mechanisms of city functioning (Batty, 2010). In addition, the study of non-material factors affecting the city requires a rethinking of urban processes, in-depth knowledge of various fields such as psychology, history, social relations, knowledge of laws and regulations, philosophical and ideological currents that are the invisible drivers of human and social progress. The principle of integration must be the guiding principle for planners who consider non-material factors in urban development and planning. It is based on an understanding of the need to combine quantitative and qualitative, as well as selective and analytical and holistic tools used in the planning process. It is a manifestation of a way of

understanding the complexity of the city (Byrne, 2003). Such a complicated and complex process, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, can only be conducted by experienced, informed and well educated experts.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The article is an evaluation of the main guidelines of Lviv's development strategies from 1991 through 2019. They were all fairly declarative and conveyed a minor level of significance. They also featured poor organisations of the analyses and evaluations of the city's condition. The special nature of urban planning thinking was not reflected in either of the analysed strategies, nor did they include the aspects of urban planning. The authors of those documents acted correctly in their perceptions, yet by operating within the frameworks of their own world views, they ignored the measures and methods specific for urban planning. Despite the passage of thirty years of Lviv's development within independent Ukraine, there is still no single strategy for the city's development that meets all the needs for good and comprehensive management of spatial development, considering its uniqueness and the legacy of its material and non-material heritage. The General development plan of Lviv (2010) and the Integrated concept of development of the central part of Lviv (2011), considered as positively distinguished documents compared to the remainder of the examined material, did not fulfil all the hopes placed in them. The authors hope that the proposed method will be considered when improving the planning processes of Lviv's spatial development. With reference to the stated objectives of the study, it should be said that as a result of the analysis of the city's planning documents, the authors established that non-material considerations and uniqueness of the city were not effective in planning decisions, so that they have suggested a methodology of how to integrate material and non-material considerations into the planning process. The authors of this article have proposed means of rectifying the methodological errors in the justifications of design decisions by outlining specific solutions. The propositions cover all stages of activity and designing – from justifying the strategy of controlled development all the way to creating designs and finding solutions to local tasks. They have also justified the approaches and requirements regarding the efficient utilisation of non-material considerations and the uniqueness of cities to improve the urban planning solutions being applied. Furthermore, they have suggested to change the algorithm of the processes and systems of urban planning focussed on revealing non-material considerations and uniqueness as major factors shaping a city.

Non-material considerations have a somewhat grass-roots effect and they shape the atmosphere of a city, people's mentality, as well as a city's spatial planning, physiognomy, and cityscape. An increasing awareness of the non-material con-



siderations and the uniqueness of the history of a city demands radical reforms of information management and of the methodological approach to using, restoring and maintaining cultural, historic and architectural sites. The authorities need to first and foremost identify, then accept, and, eventually, properly utilise the uniqueness of a city and its non-material assets. The authors postulate that the use of the so-called expert method in the decision-making process is crucial. However, the selection of experts is equally important. It is important to select experts in such a way to not only consider their professional qualifications but also their objectivity and ability to select objective evaluation criteria for solutions of tasks of various level and kind. Specific solutions should be proposed not only by managerial and academic groups, but also by the local community. Today, according to the authors of the article, expert methods, despite their various advantages, are not sufficiently considered when justifying the planning and managerial decisions in Lviv.

During the socialist era, social and personal needs were usually not considered in spatial planning. The same applied to non-material considerations represented by cities. Uniqueness was considered as something which might threaten social development and order. That was the situation in Lviv, which was defined by the authorities as reactionary and “infected with the spirit of the past” (Hrycak, 2003). The general strive was to ensure a maximum unification of Soviet cities, including Lviv. To make them similar in terms of their forms and functions (universal industrialisation). Only after 1991, i.e. when Ukraine stopped being part of the USSR, was it possible to change the thinking about city planning. Sadly, though, a huge number of development plans devised in Lviv since 1991 displayed a whole host of problems and deficiency of their planning assumptions and concepts. The approach of city officials has been mostly an authoritarian enforcement of pre-established visions and strategies, which is a relic of Soviet urban management. In a democratic and European city such as Lviv such management and planning is ineffective. On the one hand, that is due to the identity, views and mentality of its inhabitants, and, on the other, to a major accumulation of culture sites, codes, symbols, identities, and the historic heft of the city. Only recently the city’s authorities have began learning how to use human potential (consider the successful revitalisation of Pidzamche), and the non-material potential of the city. They have developed tourism strategies, there are subsidies for protecting culture sites and promoting cultural engagement, there is support for the development of street art, etc. Yet that is still not enough. The analysis presented in the article indicates that the majority of urban planning problems and conflicts contain a human element and they are influenced by non-material considerations – ideological, social, and other causes. The fact of including the city’s uniqueness and non-material considerations in the process of urban planning and management has a positive effect on its proper development. The city should pro-actively utilise its non-material capital to develop in a harmonious and efficient manner. Hopefully a new development strategy and the actions of Lviv’s authorities shall be an expression of that.

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Csaba LAKÓCAI \*

## THE ROLE OF LOCATION IN THE FUNCTIONING OF A LOCAL CURRENCY: LA GONETTE CASE STUDY

**Abstract.** The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century was a proliferation of complementary currencies worldwide. Among them, a number of newly created local currencies were notable. France proved to be especially fertile in this regard from the early 2010s. La Gonette, operating in the metropolitan area of Lyon, is one of the biggest French local complementary currencies in terms of its users, providers (business partners), and money supply. For every scheme, the most important issue, which is also a challenge, is to provide enough spending options to be attractive for users, while also retaining their particular sociocultural identity. Besides a variety of spending options, their location features are also important in regards to future development, so decision-makers of a scheme can diversify the business expansion strategy accordingly in order to better achieve the desired socio-economic goals. Using la Gonette as a case study, the research objective of this paper is to uncover the implications of the providers' location on the functioning of the scheme. To address this objective, I applied statistical tests for correspondence on the providers' categorical and locational breakdowns. The results have shown heterogeneity in the spatial distribution of the types of providers in accordance with broader location characteristics, a fact which supports the need for territorial diversification of future development concepts. **Key words:** local complementary currencies, la Gonette, France, location features.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Since its creation in 2015, la Gonette, operating in the metropolitan area of Lyon, has become one of the biggest local complementary currencies in France based on the number of its users, providers (businesses which accept the cur-

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rency), and money supply. Local currencies are complementary monetary assets used within a particular geographic territory of participating individuals, businesses, and organisations, with the aim of boosting local economy and/or addressing social and environmental objectives at the local level by connecting underused resources with demand (Rivero Santos, 2017). In many cases, such as in Argentina during the late 1990s and the beginning of the new millennium, local currencies are a community response to economic crises and globalisation (Gómez and Helmsing, 2007; Blanc and Fare, 2013; Cohen, 2017). However, their payment function is limited on purpose. They do not replace but rather complement legal tender, i.e. the official money of a country (Kennedy *et al.*, 2012). In France, local currencies are required to be backed by the same amount of euro (at parity exchange rate), which is put into reserve accounts by the association that coordinates the project (Blanc and Fare, 2018).<sup>1</sup> La Gonet is part of the country-wide local currency network, called the “MLCC network”<sup>2</sup>, which is an informal grouping of local currencies launched as citizen initiatives. (Similar schemes launched by local governments or merchant associations may not be members of this network.)

Local currencies, as complementary assets, can imply a better cash flow once they become accepted sufficiently by users and providers. In the case of the Bristol Pound in England, a survey was launched among its users and municipality employees who had signed up to receive their salary partly in the local currency (NEF, 2015). Most of them (67%) reported that they started to visit local shops they had never visited before because they accepted the Bristol Pound. Despite that, most of them continued to visit the shops they used to before the introduction of the local currency scheme and continued to spend both Bristol Pound and sterling more in those shops. However, a study by Johnson and Harvey-Wilson (2018) has found that it is hard to say whether the Bristol Pound really changed the users’ shopping habits. In practice, the real reason behind the use of this local currency is cultural and ideological, i.e. local identity and the need to be ethical and behave sustainably are the main motivations for users, without necessarily wanting to change their overall consumption patterns. In order to achieve the desired economic impact, a scheme must provide various and diversified spending options while retaining its ethical values, as well as local and cultural identity, which is challenging (Blanc and Fare, 2016). Therefore, two key issues are how much a local currency is accepted as a tool of payment, and what types of providers accept it. Nonetheless, a high number of participating businesses does not guarantee any economic impact in itself,

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<sup>1</sup> For the relevant legal and regulatory framework on the local complementary currencies, see the 2014 law on social and solidarity economy: LOI n°2014-856 du 31 juillet 2014 – art. 1, v. init.

<sup>2</sup> ‘MLCC’ stands for *monnaies locales complémentaires citoyennes* (local complementary citizens’ currencies).



as Marshall and O'Neill (2018) have found. Based on their case study of the Bristol Pound it appeared that political institutional changes were necessary for altering the economy in the long run, and local currencies in themselves were ineffective tools for localisation. Nevertheless, local currencies can be beneficial in facilitating exchanges during recessions, as well as for fostering social capital.

In France, charters have a major role in the selection criteria of providers (Blanc and Fare, 2016). Apart from ethical values, e.g. fair-trade, proximities are also important. There are several forms of proximity, such as geographical, institutional, and social (Blanc and Fare, 2016; Torre, 2018). Rivero Santos (2017) has argued that local social currencies can increase both physical and relational proximity by promoting short food supply chains. His argument is based on a case study of the Spanish scheme and a network of barter communities called RASTRU.

Bland and Lakócai (2020) have concluded, after analysing the French local currencies, that a broader socio-economic context of territorial conditions influences the spatial distribution of schemes. This paper examines the physical/geographical proximity of different kinds of providers. The main motivation is the assumption that when a local currency scheme seeks new business partners, the locational context of certain types of providers is worth considering. Every scheme is different, and the same applies to territories, therefore, it is advisable to examine local currencies separately in the form of case studies. The topic of this current study is *la Gonetie*, the French local currency scheme of the Lyon agglomeration.

*La Gonetie*, similarly to the Bristol Pound, could reach a significant number of users and providers by the end of 2019. The solid increase in money supply since its creation implies that its usage has reached the threshold value, which is necessary for a local currency scheme to survive. The launching of the digital payment option by *la Gonetie* on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019 may have further extended the money supply in the future. Additionally, the increase in the number of accepting partners from the initial 39 business entities in 2015 to 296 business entities by November 2019 was spectacular.<sup>3</sup> From that point on, the interesting question has been whether *la Gonetie* would have any impact on the local economy. To answer that, one of the key indicators is the variety of the types of providers. Their spatial distribution is also interesting as the breakdown may contain relevant information about the diverseness of spending options at different locations. It means that different expansion strategies are recommended to be followed at different locations (municipalities, districts, or neighbourhoods) of the operation area of the scheme because such diversification may result in more regular exchanges of the local currency compared to a lack of diversification. In other words, more acceptance of the local currency can be

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<sup>3</sup> The data was provided by Charlotte Perring from the *La Gonetie* Association in November 2019.

expected by linking development concepts to the existing local socio-economic conditions if new business partners are sought according to the basic locational features.

Subject literature affirms that district and neighbourhood characteristics significantly influence the location decisions of a certain type of entrepreneurs (Smit, 2011). This paper analyses the relationship between the diversity of providers and their location as of the end of 2019. The research objective is to indicate the existence or lack of a statistically significant association between these dimensions in order to answer the question to what extent it can affect the dynamics of the usage of la Gonette. The assumption is that the more heterogeneous the territorial distribution of providers is, in accordance with the urban socio-economic conditions, the greater acceptance can be achieved. This assumption is based on the statement by Torre (2018) that geographical proximity and 'organised' proximity interact with each other.

Although the operational area of la Gonette is the whole metropolitan area of Lyon (and a little bit beyond that), I have focussed my research mainly, but not exclusively, on the city of Lyon as most of the economic activities are concentrated here. The next part describes the applied methodology and the data used for the analyses. Then, the following section shows the statistics and the urban socio-economic context within a district, municipality and neighbourhood breakdown. Finally, the conclusion part summarises the topic of the paper, including broader implications for future research.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

So far, a few papers about local currencies have investigated any hard data. Didier (2020) examined the socioeconomic profile of the users of Florain, the local currency scheme in Nancy, by applying a multiple correspondence analysis based on survey data. He identified four clusters: social activists, gentrifiers, simple users, and culturally committed users. The methodological approach could be relevant for further case studies.

This paper investigates the relation between the type and location of la Gonette business partners in the hope of presenting another new perspective to the literature. In order to analyse the association between these variables quantitatively, I shall apply tests of independence. Quantitative analyses in themselves cannot offer sufficient explanations as to the existence or lack of association. Therefore, a qualitative interpretation of statistical data, which is in the focus of the paper, is indispensable. Units under observation are territories such as the municipalities, districts and neighbourhoods of the Lyon agglomeration.

The approach assumed in this paper is unique in the literature on local currencies. Another publication by Guillaume and Lung (2019), dealing with local currencies operating in the Nouvelle-Aquitaine region of France, has provided an interesting statistical comparison about the category breakdown of the different kinds of the providers of certain schemes. However, their paper did not raise the associational relationship between the types of providers and location *within* the operation area of a local currency scheme.

The data about business partners is partly from the la Gonette website and partly it was provided by Charlotte Perring from the La Gonette Association in November 2019. Further data about LVED (“*Lyon, Ville Equitable et Durable*”) business partners, presented below, is from a Lyon municipality brochure published in December 2019.

### 3. SPENDING OPTIONS WITH LA GONETTE AS PER LOCATION

Lyon is the third largest city and, with its agglomeration, the second largest urban area of France. The agglomeration has 1.3 million residents while the functional urban area of Lyon includes nearly 2 million inhabitants. It is located in the region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and the department of Rhône. The Lyon agglomeration, called *Métropole de Lyon* in French, has had a jurisdiction as both a department and a *métropole* since 2015, and it is often discussed independently from the rest of Rhône in statistical reports and literature. The agglomeration of Lyon is characterised by relatively high employment in the service sector (23%), compared to (the rest of) Rhône where industrialisation is more significant (Lahi, 2009). Nevertheless, industry is still an important part of the local economy with a 12% share in employment. Administration, education, healthcare and social care represent the biggest employment sector (29% of total employment) in the Lyon agglomeration (Reynaud and Simon, 2016). Compared to other European urban areas of the same size, the Lyon agglomeration is distinctive for its youth, with 140,000 students. Between 2006 and 2012, the outer parts of the city of Lyon had the most dynamic overall population growth in the agglomeration (*ibid*).

Since the 1982 law on the local administration of Paris, Marseille and Lyon was passed, these cities of France have consisted of directly elected district municipalities besides city municipal councils<sup>4</sup>. The districts have informal inner territorial units of neighbourhoods (*quartiers* in French), which are often mentioned in urban planning sources and literature. The actual division of neighbourhoods can be changed by the district municipalities over time. Fig. 1 shows the nine districts of Lyon.

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<sup>4</sup> See: <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000880033>

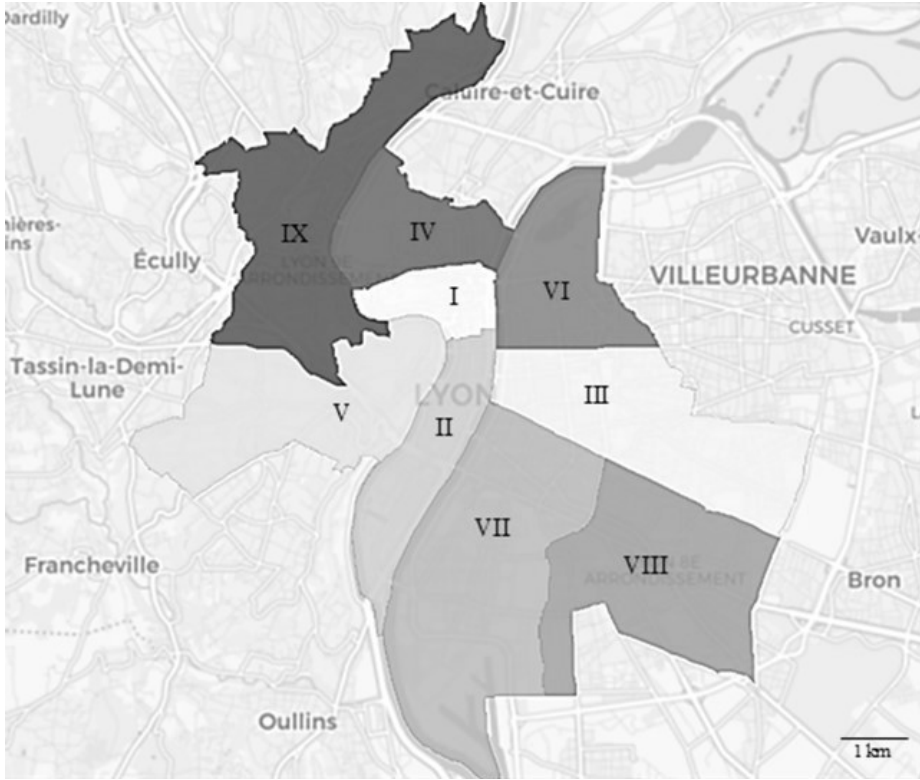


Fig. 1. Map of Lyon districts

Source: own work.

The following parts of the study discuss the location of la Gonette partners in respect of the agglomeration's municipalities, Lyon's districts and neighbourhoods. The main assumption behind this research is that the analysis of the location of the local currency partners brings a new aspect in dealing with local currencies, as well as urban economics, and sociology.

### 3.1. Districts and municipalities

La Gonette's website offers an interactive map of the places where users can spend their local currency.<sup>5</sup> The legends on this map distinguish different kinds of providers by their icons according to categories in which the partners of the scheme are classified. In order to simplify the handling of these categories, I merged them into four main categories. Table 1 shows how the that has been implemented.

<sup>5</sup> See: <http://www.lagonette.org/>

Table 1. Merged categories of la Gonetie providers into main categories

<b>Categories of providers</b>	<b>Main categories</b>
restaurants, bars, catering	catering and food trade
grocery shops	
agricultural products	
crafts trade	non-food commercial providers
clothing	
cosmetics	
stationery, bookstores, press, publishing	
decorations, furnishing, DIY, gardening	
other shops	
cultural outings	
sport and leisure	
education, training	
computer, electronics	other service providers
web, multimedia, communication, printing	
health and well-being	
repair	
transport, delivery	
accommodation	
personal services	
business services	
other	

Source: own work based on la Gonetie’s website.

The other dimension of the analysis is the locational breakdown. First, I compared the distribution according to the administrative units of the districts. Lyon has 9 districts. Table 2 shows the distribution of providers according to the districts and their main categories, both in absolute numbers and as percentages. It is important to mention that in Table 2 I considered only the network partners that functioned as permanent accepting places and excluded places that occasionally accepted la Gonetie, such as casual markets of producers. Furthermore, whenever providers belonged to more than one category, I chose to classify them under the most suitable one according to their main profile based on their websites.

Table 2. Distribution of providers according to their districts and categories in Lyon

District	Providers				Overall
	Catering and food trade	Non-food commercial providers	Culture and leisure provides	Other providers	
1	18	8	8	6	40
	45%	20%	20%	15%	
2	3	1	1	5	10
	30%	10%	10%	50%	
3	10	6	7	11	34
	29%	18%	21%	32%	
4	8	6	2	6	22
	36%	27%	9%	27%	
5	3	3	2	0	8
	37,5%	37,5%	25%	0%	
6	7	0	0	6	13
	54%	0%	0%	46%	
7	18	6	3	11	38
	47%	16%	8%	29%	
8	3	2	1	3	9
	33%	22%	11%	33%	
9	5	0	2	4	11
	45%	0%	18%	36%	
Overall	75	32	26	52	185
	41%	17%	14%	28%	

Source: own work.

Table 2 shows that the percentage shares of main categories in most districts did not differ much from the overall percentage shares. Based on the Chi-square test, shown in Appendix 1, there was no significant relationship between the location and the share of different kinds of providers. In other words, the district where the providers were located did not influence the distribution of the type of providers. In this regard, the category breakdown of providers was homogeneous. The same was true for the whole metropolitan area (see Appendix 2). Outside Lyon, catering and food trade providers represented 34%, non-food commercial providers represented 11%, culture and leisure providers represented 21%, and other providers represented 34% of the overall 104 providers.

Even though there was no statistically significant relationship between the districts and the category breakdown, it is worth interpreting the numbers from a qualitative approach. Overall, catering and food trade represented the largest category of providers. This is understandable as many food products might easily be produced locally and, among a certain group of consumers, there is a definite demand for local foods. Behind this, different types of service providers such as accounting, IT services, personalised coaching, therapeutic services, non-profits, etc. were the second most important group of acceptors. Indeed, in post-industrial societies, the tertiary sector is the biggest economic sector, and some service providers have distinct local profiles that facilitate the acceptance of the local currency among them. There were less non-food commercial providers, as well as the culture and leisure activity providers than there were the previous ones. However, they were sufficient to provide spending options for users in need of their products or services.

Within the city of Lyon, most of the providers were located in districts 1, 3 and 7. According to Maury and Gilbert (2016), district 3 is characterised by the tertiary sector, while district 7 is the most oriented toward local businesses. The numbers in Table 2 seem to agree with this statement. Furthermore, they correlate in general with Rolland's (2014) figure about the location of different kinds of business labelled "*Lyon, Ville Equitable et Durable*" or *LVED*, based on data from January 2014. This certificate, provided by the municipality, is given to businesses for fair trade and eco-conscious operation within the whole agglomeration of Lyon.<sup>6</sup> The office of the la Gonetie association has retained this label since 2018.

As for district 1, the fact that it is the headquarters of la Gonetie might have a role in the high number of acceptors found there. Besides, this district has undergone spectacular socioeconomic changes and a sort of gentrification over the past 40 years from a population of mainly poor and underqualified inhabitants to higher qualified intellectual citizens (Maury and Gilbert, 2016). Based on empirical research on the US population, Collom (2005) has shown that highly educated people are generally more open to social innovations, such as local currencies. Didier (2020) has found that the share of more educated people among the users of Florain in the French city of Nancy is relatively high, but they are not necessarily the most active users. In this regard, political, social, and ecological engagements, with a strong affinity to localism, are more important factors than education. One might assume that this statement is relevant for la Gonetie, too; in district 7, where businesses are generally the most locally oriented, spending with the local currency was more regular than in district 1. However, we do not have explicit data so far to prove this assumption.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> However, the criteria and the way of providing this label are sometimes questionable (Rolland, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> However, the increasing use of the digital payment will probably provide us with such data in the coming years.

In the agglomeration outside the city of Lyon, the relatively higher share of culture and social service providers (compared to the city of Lyon) can be explained by the highest share of associations dealing with educational and social issues as employers within the non-profit sector in respect of the whole metropolitan area (Bouchpan *et al.*, 2014).

The above-mentioned correlation between la Gonette acceptors and LVED partners can be analysed statistically. Indeed, there is an overlap. Based on the data as of the end of 2019, 38 businesses were identified as members of both networks. Table 3 shows the breakdown of LVED-labelled businesses according to their categories and the municipalities where they were located. Villeurbanne, which is often referred to unofficially as the 10<sup>th</sup> district of Lyon, is displayed separately from the rest of the agglomeration municipalities outside Lyon. This is justified by the high number of labelled businesses there. The table includes only partners with permanent addresses, i.e. online business partners are excluded. The breakdown of LVED partners shows some similarity with the breakdown of la Gonette partners, however, this is not straightforward.

Table 3. Distribution of LVED partners according to their location

Municipality	Cater- ing	Culture and leisure	House- hold	Educa- tion, training	Well- being	Every- day life services	Cloth- ing	Busi- ness services	Overall
Lyon District 1	7	1	0	1	0	1	5	3	<b>18</b>
Lyon District 2	4	1	0	3	1	2	1	3	<b>15</b>
Lyon District 3	7	1	4	9	1	7	0	2	<b>31</b>
Lyon District 4	6	2	3	2	1	4	2	0	<b>20</b>
Lyon District 5	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	<b>7</b>
Lyon District 6	6	0	3	1	0	3	0	0	<b>13</b>
Lyon District 7	7	2	5	5	1	2	2	2	<b>26</b>
Lyon District 8	3	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	<b>9</b>
Lyon District 9	3	2	1	4	1	3	1	1	<b>16</b>
Villeurbanne	7	2	3	4	2	2	0	1	<b>21</b>
Agglomeration outside Lyon	23	2	12	13	0	4	1	3	<b>58</b>
Overall	77	17	32	42	8	31	12	15	234

Source: Lyon municipality brochure about the LVED partners published in December 2019.

Among the district and agglomeration municipalities, there is a strong and statistically significant correlation between the number of local currency acceptors



and LVED-labelled businesses, which is shown in Fig. 2. Furthermore, the correlation within the 9 districts of Lyon and Villeurbanne is statistically different from the rest of the agglomeration, based on the Chow test. The results have confirmed the nexus of the two local business networks.

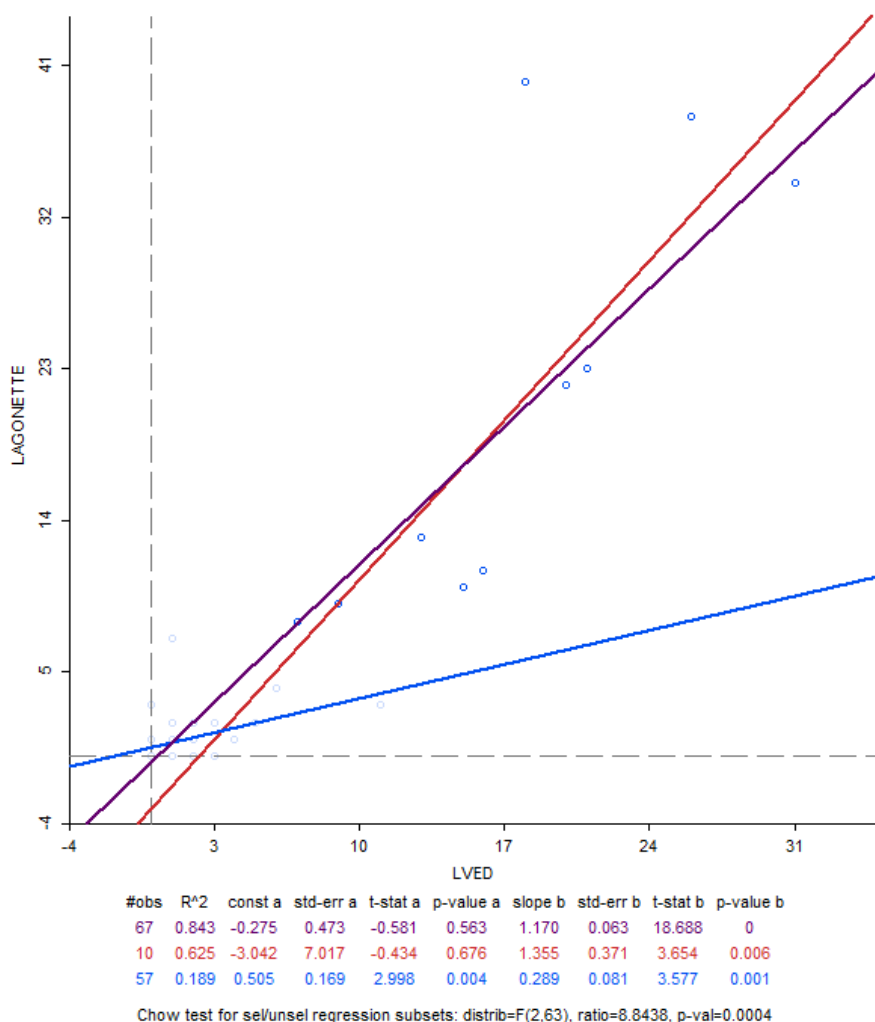


Fig. 2. Correlation between the number of la Gonette and LVED partner businesses among the districts and community municipalities in the Lyon agglomeration (Notes: in purple: correlation within the whole agglomeration; in red: correlation in Lyon districts; in blue: correlation in the municipalities outside Lyon)

Source: own work.

So far, I have considered the locations according to districts and community municipalities. In the next part, I shall approach the issue of location in smaller territorial breakdowns.

### 3.2. Neighbourhoods

While districts, as subdivisions of city municipalities, are administrative units, neighbourhoods are informal territorial units organised on the basis of actual inner urban conditions. For this reason, neighbourhoods are often mentioned in the literature as the ideal territories of urban planning and development (Yigitcanlar *et al.*, 2015; Neilagh, Ghafourian, 2018; Ortega-Momtequín *et al.*, 2021).

Within Lyon, there is also a need to go deeper into districts and look at neighbourhoods, too, as districts themselves are heterogeneous enough in their social conditions as well as the distribution of providers. The map in Fig. 3 shows a classification of neighbourhoods according to the number of acceptors. I classified the neighbourhoods into six clusters in order to compare them with another classification by Balouzat *et al.* (2019), which analysed the demographic dynamics and urban development from the 1980s. This study classified the neighbourhoods into six clusters according to the following typology:

- G1: urban transformation and strong population growth.
- G2: constant and popular family profile.
- G3: rejuvenation and gentrification.
- G4: low dynamics, aging population.
- G5: rejuvenation, low urban development.
- G6: from aging population toward a more familial profile<sup>8</sup>.

Table 4, as a contingency table, shows a breakdown of neighbourhoods according to the two classifications. In both cases, neighbourhoods belonging to the same district can be diverse. Even though there is no statistically significant association between the two classifications, based on the Chi-square test (Appendix 3) some qualitative statements can be articulated.

Three neighbourhoods, namely Pentes de la Croix-Rousse, Guillotière, and Jean Macé, having the highest number of providers, belonged to the group G3, which is characterised by rejuvenation and “gentrification”. Guillotière and Jean Macé are located in district 7 while Pentes de la Croix-Rousse is in district 1. The fact that local currencies are not dedicated necessarily to the wealthiest population implies that there is no direct relationship between the sociodemographic condition of these neighbourhoods and the number of acceptors. Most probably, the reason behind the high number of providers could be that these neighbourhoods have witnessed considerable public investments and infrastructural development

<sup>8</sup> Author’s translation from French.

since the 1980s (Balouzat *et al.*, 2019), making them more attractive for businesses. Besides, they are centrally located or easily accessible by public transport.

Those neighbourhoods where there are no providers or there is only one were located mainly around the periphery of the city. They belonged to all kinds of clusters apart from G3, and all of the districts apart from district 1 and 3. Neighbourhoods with more than one but no more than a dozen of providers were also heterogeneous according to their social profile.



Fig. 3. Classification of the neighbourhoods of Lyon according to the number of providers  
Source: own work.

Table 4. Distribution of the neighbourhoods of Lyon according to demographic typology and the number of providers

Typology	Number of providers					
	0-1	2-4	5-7	8-12	13-19	>20
G1	5	2	2	1	0	0
G2	4	1	0	0	0	0
G3	0	0	1	0	2	1
G4	2	3	0	0	1	0
G5	2	1	1	4	1	0
G6	1	1	0	0	0	0

Source: own work based on Balouzat *et al.* (2019) and la Gonetie’s website.

To get a more sophisticated picture of the locational distribution of providers, we might go even deeper past the level of neighbourhoods. The website of the central statistical office of France called INSEE (*Institut national de statistique et des études économique*) provides some basic demographic data on building blocks (squares). Based on Balouzat and Simon's study (2017) about urban segregation, the concentration of the wealthy and the poor populations is quite high in a building block breakdown, which is partly hidden in a neighbourhood breakdown. Once their findings are compared, presented on a map of Lyon consisting of squares (blocks), with the location of la Gonette acceptors, one can see that many of the providers were located in blocks, which were characterised as the residence of population with mainly low revenue. It would be interesting to analyse the relationship between the providers' location and the residents' financial situation in a squared territorial breakdown. However, such detailed dataset is not at our disposal so far.<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Literature dealing with local currencies occasionally works with hard data and the analysis of spatiality is even rarer. The author's intention here is to compensate that deficiency, as well as to show the relevance of the topic for the broader urban sociological context. This study discussed the features of la Gonette as the local currency of the Lyon metropolitan area, in terms of providers and their location. This approach brings a new aspect in approaching local currencies, as well as the socio-spatial dynamics of their urban environment.

Based on the *quantitative* analysis we can conclude that location does not determine the type of providers, neither is the number of providers related to the basic characteristics of the neighbourhoods where they operate. However, taking a rather *qualitative* look at the numbers, one can notice some implications. The profiles of the districts where the number of acceptors is the highest is associated with the most common types of providers within them. It might be advisable for la Gonette practitioners to consider these locational specificities in further development of the scheme as such territorial diversification of business expansion strategy may result in greater acceptance of the local currency. Apart from districts and municipalities, the number of providers is interrelated with the social conditions also at the neighbourhood level, even though there is no direct interpretation of this relationship.

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<sup>9</sup> Marcon and Puech (2014) have argued and demonstrated that even more sophisticated and diverse results can be detected in distance-based continuous space. Indeed, it would be also interesting to analyse the providers' location using distance-based spatial weights instead of any territorial breakdown, however, it goes beyond the frame of the current study.

The findings are necessarily scale-dependent, therefore, the more detailed the territorial breakdown and the more sophisticated the data one has, the more relevant and more specific conclusions one achieves. The limitation of the current study resides in the availability of data. Further territorial research is encouraged accordingly as such kinds of analyses not only represent a new aspect of dealing with a local currency but they can also widen our knowledge about urban socio-spatial conditions.

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**APPENDIX 1.**

Test of independence between the main types of providers and their districts within Lyon

Chi-square (Observed value)	25,525
Chi-square (Critical value)	36,415
DF	24
p-value	0.378
alpha	0.05

**APPENDIX 2.**

Test of independence between the main types of providers and their location according to their location in Lyon or in its surrounding agglomeration

Chi-square (Observed value)	4,980
Chi-square (Critical value)	7,815
DF	3
p-value	0.173
alpha	0.05

**APPENDIX 3.**

Test of independence between the breakdowns of Lyon neighbourhoods according to the number of providers and their demographic dynamics based on Balouzat *et al.* (2019)

Chi-square (Observed value)	35,870
Chi-square (Critical value)	37,652
DF	25
p-value	0.074
alpha	0.05





## BOOK REVIEWS

### URBAN-RURAL INTERFACES: TODAY AND IN THE FUTURE

With a review of:

**Vanessa Miriam CARLOW**, Institute for Sustainable Urbanism ISU, TU Braunschweig (ed.), *Ruralism: The Future of Villages and Small Towns in an Urbanizing World*, Jovis Verlag, Berlin 2016, 296 pages, **Gert-Jan HOSPERS** and **Josefina SYSSNER** (eds.), *Dealing with Urban and Rural Shrinkage: Formal and Informal Strategies*, LIT Verlag, Münster 2018, 146 pages and **Jörg SCHRÖDER**, **Mauricio CARTA**, **Maddalena FERRETTI** and **Barbara LINO** (eds.), *Territories: Rural – Urban Strategies*, Jovis Verlag, Berlin 2017, 304 pages.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

This article reviews three edited books which discuss the spatial theme, which is receiving more and more attention in today's academic and policy circles. As a quick overview of the titles shows, the books are all concerned with the relationship or interaction between urban and rural regions, or, to take an older nominal pair, between town and country. The perspectives described in the books focus on the current situation of this relationship, in a constellation characterised by the fact that nowadays more than half of the world's population is living

in urban contexts – with a still growing highly concentrated share all over the world but today especially in Africa and Asia. This urbanisation can be seen as a contrast to sparsely populated peripheral territories that also abound across the world. Today, we live indeed in an “urbanising world” as one of the book titles states. However, if measured in terms of space or square kilometres, an enormous part of the world still consists of peripheral or non-urbanised territories, not in every respect even rural.

In addition, we must face the fact that the world in which we are living is no more a world which could be named as belonging to the ‘Holocene’, to use the title of one of the books of the Swiss author Max Frisch. As a matter of fact, we are rather living in a man-made epoch, the ‘Anthropocene’, as the famous Nobel-Prize winning chemist Paul Crutzen has stated. This epoch is dominated by urban structures which even led Geoffrey West to the derivative term: ‘Urbanocene’. In his book *Arrival City* (2012) Doug Saunders described this constellation as a continuous flow of people migrating from rural regions into cities. In his view, cities should be better prepared to accept and integrate these people instead of trying to create strategies to stop them from coming. Is this an unstoppable future trend? Is this trend more relevant for the booming cities in Asia and Africa? Or do we have strategies to prevent this movement from rural areas into urbanised regions which can stop the escape from ‘the country’, leaving the rural areas in a permanent status of depopulation? And in whose interest should this happen?

Accidentally, the aforementioned trend is not a new phenomenon. Depopulation migrations have characterised Europe since the start of the industrialisation period, which was accompanied by urbanisation – offering job opportunities and better living conditions. Furthermore, we should not forget the old motivation for moving to the city: it could free people from the status of dependency as an heir of feudal structures. The still quite famous German proverb “Stadtluft macht frei” (The air of the city makes you free) is a case in point.

In addition, the problematic circumstances of life around 1900 in big and rapidly growing European cities created a desire of bourgeois people to move away from cities to rural regions. They migrated to more or less romanticised villages, serving as refuges to escape from the grey walls of the city. This was the dream for a more pleasant life in the countryside, not as a farmer but rather as a hobby gardener or landlord far away from the real hard working life of farmers. In Germany, this even created a special movement, the ‘Jugendbewegung’ (Youth Movement), which was characterised by “agro-romanticism” and “hostility toward big cities”, to refer to the title of an important study by Klaus Bergmann. A trend which was adopted with the Garden City-concept and the associated movement by Ebenezer Howard around 1900. And this bourgeois praise of country life has remained a trend, favoured and supported by journals like *Country Life* in Great Britain and *Landlust* (love for the country)

in Germany. With the Covid-19 epidemic and its new living and working constellations – home office is gaining importance – interest in the country is rising once again.

Allow me to discuss how the three books under review tackle today's urban-rural interactions – having a long tradition and a future dimension. Is the topic a never ending story?

## 2. TACKLING URBAN AND RURAL SHRINKAGE

The book edited by Gert-Jan Hospers and Josefina Sysner is the outcome of a research project supported by the Formas Swedish Research Council. The editors have stressed that the current dominance of urbanisation entails “massive implications for non-urban places”, resulting mostly in the shrinkage of the population (depopulation), a change of population composition (leaving elderly people back), and an “over-dimensioned infrastructure” (p. 9). The editors have also stressed that this phenomenon of shrinkage has been a problem of the countryside for a long time, while today it is the topic of cohesion policies in many European countries, especially regarding the question of whether this should be tackled with the help of “top-down” or “bottom-up” strategies. The chapters in the edited volume discuss “how local communities in both urban and rural contexts have responded to the challenge of population decline”. It is emphasised that spatial planning “is only one of the many ways to deal with population decline”. And “the book brings together several theoretical perspectives, case studies and policy lessons from both urban and rural areas” (p. 11). The articles are written mostly by Swedish and Dutch authors with three exceptions: there are also contributions by academics from Italy, Germany, and Russia.

One chapter tackles the topic of “Towards a culture of degrowth”, that is accepting the fact of “growing smaller” (p. 17 ff.). The following chapter discusses the problems of fixed assets, i.e. old infrastructure mostly neglected in relation to the adaption of real estate (p. 31 ff.). Another chapter highlights the importance of “raising community involvement and empowerment” to tackle the shrinking processes in old industrial regions (p. 45 ff.). The case of Russia reveals (p. 58 ff.) a lack of “a professional approach to spatial planning” – this is quite a statement! The case of regional planning in Lower Austria (p. 73 ff.) reveals the “unexploited potential of strategic spatial planning in shrinking regions” and the need to have “a rethink of the division of tasks between the public sector and civil society”. This is supported by a Dutch case study (p. 87 ff.) which stresses the need “to strengthen informal ties”.

The following analysis of both a Swedish and a Dutch case (p. 100 ff.) reveals once again the “dominant impression” for the future of rural depopulating regions: “Informal groups are the ones most active in the local planning process”. These groups are central, but they have “to formalize their informal structures”, that means they must be taken seriously not just as individual voices or special interest groups. Obviously, this is not an easy proposal but rather a demanding one. The following case study, which deals with the Swedish region of Östergötland (p. 111 ff.), reflects the fact that in many peripheral areas more and more women, especially young ones, are leaving the region. The chapter demonstrates that this Swedish region is not by itself an “equal country”. However, the fact of employing the so-called “Local Economic Analysis” tool might increase the chance for improvement by focusing on the endogenous potentials of the area. This idea – adopted based on the experiences from development policies in the Third World – was discussed already in European regions intensively in the 1980s!

The chapter on “social inclusion of migrants in European shrinking small towns” (p. 123 ff.) uses the example of Germany to suggest that the success of this integration depends on a clever combination of formal and informal strategies, which is not present in all regions. The last chapter deals with mobile technology (p. 134 ff.) as a chance for rural areas to raise the level of digital literacy. Again, this is still more a desideratum for many regions than reality.

Essentially, this book combines professionally written and documented analyses of several important aspects of the economic and social realities of shrinking localities, stressing the need for engaged formal governmental and institutional arrangements, as well as active informal structures, i.e. active participation and mobilisation of endogenous potentials. This book offers clarity of view and, in many ways, may inspire researchers and, hopefully, also the actors affected by the shrinkage processes at their locations. For those at the front of such shrinking processes I recommend that – based on these findings – a short manual should be written or developed about all the aspects of shrinkage and the possible ways of handling it.

### **3. RURALISM: THE FUTURE OF VILLAGES AND SMALL TOWNS IN AN URBANIZING WORLD**

This book edited by Vanessa Miriam Carlow is based on a talk from 2015 at the Institute for Sustainable Urbanism of the Technical University Braunschweig (Germany) about “The Future of Villages and Small Towns in an Urbanizing World”. Its appearance is quite different from the previously discussed book, not so much in terms of its main topic, but when it comes to its layout: the book combines ana-

lytical texts with maps, diagrams, and illustrations. It even includes a photo essay, which makes its design rather attractive and appealing.

In its approach the book focusses on transgressing the dichotomy of urban and rural constellations. This reminds me of a cartoon by the French cartoonist Sempé which juxtaposed the picture of a traditional village and a high-rise urban centre: all the labels in the village signifying pubs and shops had names and implications of the modern city, like “Centre of Joy”, “Express Service”, etc., while in the city the labels had names like “Old Barn”, “Horse Stable”, and more. This cartoon could be viewed as an early critical vision of the coming age of ruralism! The photo essay at the beginning and end of the book also reflects this tone. It presents pictures of a small village as the habitat of small family houses in an urbanised (suburban, small city) style without any urban life in the vicinity of agroindustry and adjacent big distribution centres for goods – quite a contrast to the cosy image of a village or the idea of “Landlust”!

The following chapter discusses two perspectives of modern rural life. One deals with quasi-suburban living areas and agro-industrial structures, while the other can be characterised as “secluded luxury or ecological enthusiasm” at the edges of big cities. The perspectives are linked to two scenarios: “On the one hand, these scenarios are dominated by highly industrialised, large-scale agriculture, operated using large quantities of chemicals. On the other, the scenarios focus on small-scale, local food production and dense local networks” (p. 27). However, such constellations do not only reflect different settlement structures or lifestyles but also different social structures and differences in income. The latter aspect is often overlooked in the current development of “ruralism”. In general, there are no common strategies for development into the new phase of ruralism, combining rural and urban elements, because this development is heavily dependant on the relevant local natural, economic, and social context. Moreover, it matters if localities are situated close to or far away from cities, as Kvorning, one of the book’s contributors, has argued: “It should also be said that there are probably villages that must be abandoned and demolished and rural districts that must remain very sparsely populated,” (p. 38). In other words, cohesion policies regarding “ruralism” must always be seen and adjusted in relation to applicable local circumstances. There are no ready-made solutions that match every context.

The next chapter discusses the special constellation of small towns, “a persisting pattern of contrasting *urban* and *rural*” (...) a decisive element of the Central European settlement system”, which is endangered as well (p. 52). The chapter is followed by another one which asks how the image of rurality in the city, featured by supermarkets, journals or TV, corresponds in any way to the reality in villages. It is not surprising that from the urban perspective “we find a clean version of rurality (...), where the commodities of the city are guaranteed and the discomfort of rural life, like animal dirt, noise, smells, and the agriculture industry and so on are avoided” (p. 61). This is more than a misunderstanding, but actually this is not

a new observation because a similar misunderstanding existed around 1900 as well. It must be said, however, that the book does focus on the urban/rural constellation in history. There are flashbacks into the development of this over time, e.g. by reflections on the changing landscape around the German cities of Hamburg and Dessau.

There are some chapters which analyse and represent case studies about spatial development in different parts of Germany, like the fusing of urban structures into rural "Hinterlands". This development is framed as "Landungsprozesse" (landing processes or disembarkation), that means "those consequences and effects which are dependent on the surrounding metropolitan centers (...), just how they landed," (p. 121). The book also discusses case studies of the 'hard' impacts of urbanisation on rural environments, being the opposite to the 'soft' impacts of a rural style on urban environments.

The fact that this is not a new phenomenon is demonstrated impressively by a very personal chapter by Eckard Voigts. His contribution analyses the images of rurality in the context of literary documents over time and shows "the complex, two-way diffusion of urban-rural exchange" (p. 175) – but the literary voices are coming mostly from urban or urban-influenced writers. The case studies presented are based on research not only in different German regions, but also in parts of Sweden, Norway, China, Colombia, and Oman. In an interview with Stephan Petermann, who has been working with Rem Koolhaas, the interlocutors has argued that besides the growing effects of urbanising all over the world, it should not be forgotten that "the countryside is ninety-eight percent of the world's surface and fifty percent of the world's population of mankind lives there (...) Today, the terra incognita is the countryside". Yet "the supposed dialectical opposition of urban growth and rural decline might be true when you look at population proportions, but not at the actual size of infrastructure built substance" (p. 268). Consequently, Petermann is asking for a completely new approach towards the countryside beyond "the celebration of the romantic countryside in magazines like *Country-Living* and *Landlust*".

With its combination of analyses, case studies and impressive photographs, this inspiring book presents a particularly good introduction into the new world of "ruralism". Together with the previous book, which presents a more straight-forward academic discussion, the edited volume is helpful in understanding the future development of the countryside 'under attack' by omnipresent urbanisation processes.

#### 4. TERRITORIES: URBAN-RURAL STRATEGIES

The third book under review is *Territories. Rural-Urban Strategies*, a volume edited by Jörg Schröder, Maurizio Carta, Maddalena Ferretti, and Barbara Lino. It addresses the "potential of multiplicities of places in larger-scale perspectives,

and in a rural-urban view of linkages of cooperation for human and natural habitat". Its case studies came from Sicily, Northern Germany, Liguria, Trentino, Catalonia, Campania, as well as from Brazil and the US. All territories under consideration are "targeted towards rural-urban interfaces" (p. 2). The book is based on a 2016 international conference in Hannover as part of the "Hochschuldialog Süd-Europa" (University Dialog Southern Europe), a programme by DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) with contributions from German, Italian, and Spanish universities. The volume is a very condensed panorama of presentations of eighteen scientists combined with "a colloquium debate with fourteen young scientists" and with "a master student laboratory".

As Jörg Schröder, one of the editors and organisers, argues in the first part of the book ("Flows"), the intention "is to start a discussion for a working outline of research towards innovations by an architectural approach – as methodology extended beyond buildings, toward larger spatial scales, for the disciplines of urban design and territorial planning" (p. 16). In turn, Mauricio Carta stresses that the aim of this new approach is to create open, creative discussions on planning platforms, as opposed to following strict prescriptions by masterplans. The following chapters discuss concepts for agro-cities and agro-cultures, and ideas for a new urban plan for the Italian city of Lecce, which should not be based on zoning or peripheral expansion any more, but rather "on the city's deepest values: landscape, tourism and quality of life" (p. 70) – that means the inclusion of the basic values for city planning rather than prolongating the status quo. However, this raises the question of how these abstract goals can be implemented in relation to other very concrete interests. All these contributions stem apparently from oral and visual presentations but once transferred in the book, which is well designed, the result is not always successful because many pictures, graphs, diagrams, and maps must be looked at or read with a magnifying glass.

The next section of the book is concerned with "Places". Its chapters deal with the concepts of "Regiobranding" and "Rural Routes", followed by a section on "Patterns". The authors deal with Italian examples, from Sicily and Rome, and focus on "rurban" fringes like urban gardening. In the section on "Practices", which discusses innovative actions, examples from Italy and Brazil are presented. In the "Tactics" part of the book strategies toward self-sufficiency and sustainable development, food cities, and placemaking in the city are discussed. "Visions" presents the re-emerging flows of a river, as well as the social regeneration of brownfields and new visions for the relationship of a city with its port, the recycling of urban rivers, and the adaption of blue and green infrastructure for an urban resilience strategy. "Processes" discusses the status of Mediterranean agriculture, as well as the spatial integration of a new subway. But there is also a focus on highways as a TechnoEcoSystem, resilient landscapes, the transition from food production to energy production, historical rural buildings as a territorial resource, scenarios for sustainable development, and, finally, transformation processes in an urban quar-

ter of Sao Paulo. The last section entitled “Workshop” presents the result of deliberations of master students about a part of the Elbe valley, South–East of Hamburg, just in the middle of the former frontier between East and West Germany, now a protected area according to UNESCO biosphere regulations.

As said at the beginning, the book is the outcome of a conference concerned with new architectural planning approaches towards urban-rural constellations with the idea to learn from examples from all parts of Europe and even from some parts of America. It was intended for it not to deliver innovations in a systematic overview, but to learn from different spatial constellations about future approaches toward rural-urban strategies. As such, it is a source-book about innovation in this field. It is a pity that the many pictures and graphical designs – as they were apparently shown at the conference – appear in the book in a way that they are hard to recognise or even to read. As it is presented, it is more a record of the conference rather than a book.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

What can be concluded after reading these three books? All three raise the old relationship or confrontation between town and country, which changed from a status of equal dependency before industrialisation to an uneven relationship after it. As early as in the Communist Manifest by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, this unevenness was approached in terms of the level of living in the country vis-à-vis the standard of urban life. And nowadays? In the EU, the target of cohesion policy is still to guarantee equal living conditions in all regions, in Germany even in the constitution under the “Gleichwertigkeit der Lebensverhältnisse” (equivalence of living conditions) stipulation. To reach this target many policy programs were enacted, but today new constellations have posed new challenges: sustainability, climate protection, conservation aspects, and, last not but least, new living styles – the “rurban” style – not only for the privileged but for all. However, there are still differences, nationally, regionally and...rurbanly! This requires new approaches.

All three books provide arguments and ideas to understand the current challenges in town and country, either analytically or by design examples. They do so in different ways. Two of the books excel in reasoning respectively visual presentations, while one has some problems in its readability. But all three volumes contribute to an ongoing process and discussion about the future development of urban-rural constellations. These constellations are not settled yet – especially when we relate them to the new challenges of digitalisation and globalisation, new international divisions of labour and its uneven side-effects, as well as ecological, social, and economic sustainable development. And, obviously, when discussing urban-rural relationships we should not forget the current climate crisis, and, final-



ly, global epidemics and the ways they are tackled by the international community and how they might influence the future relation between working and living (e.g. the concept of home office) – just to raise a note on the current and future “rurban” situation with which we have to cope.

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**Inge HOOIJEN, *Place Attractiveness. A Study of the Determinants Playing a Role in Residential Settlement Behaviour* (Ph.D. thesis),  
Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market,  
Maastricht, 2021, 242 pages**

When writing my PhD-thesis some twenty years ago, I came across the classic *The Economics of Location* (1954) by the German economist August Lösch. I still remember how impressed I was by the opening sentences of the book: “Our existence in time is determined for us, but we are largely free to select our location. This is influenced, though not dictated, by our place of origin. Finding the right location is essential to successful life...” (p. 3). Though seemingly obvious, this observation was an eye-opener for me. Therefore, I was immediately attracted to the book *Who’s Your City?* (2008) in which the American creative class-guru Richard Florida explored ‘the geography of happiness’. Based on the Place and Happiness Survey among 27,000 Americans, he showed that the place where people live proves essential for one’s happiness – it ranked third, just behind personal life (family, relatives and friends), and work, but ahead of one’s income level. In short: location choice is a life-decision.

In her Ph.D. thesis Inge Hooijen examines this crucial ‘where-factor’ and the implications it has for places and their development strategies. In an era in which many European regions are confronted with brain drain and demographic shrinkage, this is a very relevant policy issue. More and more policymakers ask themselves how they can attract and bind residents to their territories. Knowledge workers are welcomed in particular since they may boost the regional economy. How to make a place more attractive and competitive in the Europe-wide battle for talent? Against this background, Hooijen has conducted four empirical studies in several geographical contexts (the Dutch region of South Limburg, the

Meuse-Rhine Euregio, and the Netherlands as a whole) utilising a mix of methods (data-analysis, surveys, and interviews). The four studies are embedded in a book that starts with an introductory chapter and ends with a conclusion, discussion and policy recommendations.

The first study investigates the location choice of a sub-group of knowledge workers, namely people working in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). To establish their living preferences, Hooijen has analysed data from surveys taken by 420 employees in a high-tech business park in South Limburg, followed by interviews with 32 of them. For the believers of Florida's creative class theory, the results will be a surprise: the respondents were not so much attracted to vibrant and trendy cities with plenty of culinary, cultural and nightlife opportunities. For them, basic consumer amenities (e.g. supermarkets and family doctors) sufficed; these were seen as more important than bars, theatres and restaurants. Moreover, the average STEM-worker valued green areas and open spaces more and thus preferred a suburban lifestyle.

The next chapter in the Ph.D. thesis explores the (im)mobility intentions of prospective graduates: whether they intended to stay in the area where they studied or leave it after graduation. To answer this question, Hooijen analysed the data gathered in surveys returned by 1,211 students based in five higher education institutes in the Meuse-Rhine Euregio. In their plans to stay or go, students considered several factors: apart from their perceptions of the quality of life and career opportunities in their study area, they examined the region's 'openness', i.e. its ethnic diversity and tolerance, as well as the ease to come into contact with the local population. Social ties of prospective graduates, e.g. having a partner, family and friends in the region, also played a part. Finally, individual characteristics like one's place of birth and nationality influenced the decision of students to stay or leave the area. Although the study is context-specific, it is a convenient illustration that the choice of a location entails more than just 'hard' factors. It is not only about economics – the soft side (sociology and psychology) is relevant as well.

In the chapter that follows the discrepancy between stated and revealed preferences in location choice is scrutinised. In my view, this is an important topic, since it is well known that that what people intend to do does not always correspond to that what they actually do. To examine this gap, Hooijen has distributed the aforementioned survey in the Meuse-Rhine Euregio about two years later among a sample of 220 graduates. To offer more insight, the survey results are complemented with findings from 27 interviews. Apparently, about 70 percent of the graduates participating in the study actually did what they intended. The others stayed in the region or left it because of several factors. For one thing, location-specific capital (DaVanzo, 1981) bonding people to an area (e.g. regional familiarity) plays a role besides new opportunities to leave it, for example because someone obtained a master's degree. For another, unexpected events such

as a breakup with a partner, and personality traits can explain whether or not the original (im)mobility intentions were realised.

The last empirical study is linked to the fascinating question Florida raised in his book *Who's Your City?* (2008): are people with certain psychologic attributes drawn to some regions in particular? Is there a match between a person and a place? To test this claim for the Netherlands, Hooijen has used a sample of 4,500 respondents from the HBO-Monitor, i.e. a survey among recent graduates from Dutch universities of applied science. When relating the personality traits of these respondents (e.g. their degree of extraversion and neuroticism) with the environmental characteristics of the region they lived in, a geographical clustering among Dutch regions could actually be observed. For example, it appeared that graduates who ranked high in terms of their extraversion were relatively more clustered in the Randstad area and the south of the Netherlands than in the eastern and northern parts of the country. However, this relationship weakened with age, while economic factors seemed to be the driving force of choosing where to live. Yet it is still valid to say that personality traits influence location choice.

In the last two chapters Hooijen discusses the findings of the four empirical studies. A general conclusion of the dissertation is that residential behaviour is determined by a range of factors that can also differ from person to person. Therefore, the answer to the question “what makes a place attractive?” simply is “it depends”. Also the relevant geographical level is subject to differences: for some a house or street is the most important factor, while for others it is the city or the region. These main findings have important implications for policymakers, business people and representatives of higher education institutes who are interested in attracting or retaining people for their territory. In fact, they should be as specific as possible in targeting individuals and develop customised approaches to impact their (im)mobility decisions.

All in all, *Place Attractiveness* is an inspiring Ph.D. thesis that makes a significant contribution to our understanding of people's location choices. Through its interdisciplinary approach and the application of mixed methods it offers a fresh look at the topic. To be sure, one could criticise the empirical studies that are brought together in the book on several points. For instance, how place-specific are the findings? Would they also hold in other European regions and countries and among other types of residents? And why is the geographical focus of two of the studies on a cross-border region, thus making matters unnecessarily complicated? It is also unclear how Hooijen has dealt in her research with the effect of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). After all, in life decisions such as residential settlement behaviour people often tend to justify the choices they make (ex post rationalisation) in order to avoid psychological stress. At the same time, Hooijen has done a great job in dealing with the ‘where-factor’ and the interplay of its various determinants. Her book is a must-read for geogra-

phers, planners, and other social and spatial scientists, as well as professionals working in regional development and place marketing. Non-specialists may also find food for thought in the dissertation if only because it makes one involuntarily reflect about one's own location choice: did I find the right location for a successful life?

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