

Archival Sources on the History of Częstochowa Jews **Elżbieta Surma-Jończyk**

The holdings of the State Archives in Częstochowa, established by the precept of the Ministry of Education of July 21, 1950, consist mainly of the nineteenth and twentieth century documents, with a few seventeenth and eighteenth c exceptions. The central groups of documents are: the records of the state and local administration, both general and special, including a very valuable collection of Częstochowa municipality file for the years 1759–1948, records of the judiciary (courts, prosecution), notarial records, files of industrial plants, of craft guilds, of banks, cooperatives; multi-religion civil register records for the years 1808–1901.

Even if hardly complete (e.g., the nineteenth century records of voivodship and gubernya administration units are missing, as well as the records from the time of both world wars), the holdings of the State Archives in Częstochowa represent priceless cultural heritage and fundamental sources for the study of the history of Częstochowa and its region.

Sources concerning the history of Polish Jews are to be found in almost any file, as is true of any archival collection in Poland. Some of these have already been explored, while others have yet to be discovered.

In 2001 the Head Office of the State Archives published the results of a search query project carried out in all state archives in Poland concerning Judaica in their holdings. The book is entitled *Zródła archiwalne do badań dziejow Żydow w Polsce*, [Archival sources to the study of the history of Polish Jews] edited by Bolesław Woszczyński and Violetta Urbaniak. P. Snoch searched Częstochowa holdings and contributed to the book with an account of his search *Materiały do dziejów Żydów w zasobie AP w Częstochowie*¹ [Materials on Jewish History in the State Archives in Częstochowa].

Working on the Częstochowa Jews exhibition I have made my own search, whose results are outlined (since they exceed the present paper) below.

Laws and regulations relating to the life of Jewish community in the Duchy of Warsaw and Congress Kingdom of Poland are to be found in the Archives library. What historians might find particularly useful, is the collection of almost all official decrees and regulations (published in *Dzienniki Departamentu Kaliskiego*² 1809–1844 and in *Dzienniki Praw Królestwa Polskiego* 1808–1870), dating back to the October 17, 1808 decree of King Friedrich August on suspending the rights of Jews for a decade³, and the following legal restrictions:

- Decree of Tsar Alexander I on Jewish surnames of March 27, 1821, to the effect that: “Any Jewish resident of the Polish Kingdom shall in 6 months from the date of this announcement declare before a public agency and confirm by census his first name and

¹ *Zródła archiwalne do badań*, pp. 109–114.

² *Dziennik Departamentu Kaliskiego* [Gazette of the Kalisz Department] was first published in 1807 with the establishment of the Warsaw Duchy, from 1817 under the title *Dziennik Urzędowy Województwa Kaliskiego*, and from 1837 – *Dziennik Urzędowy Guberni Kaliskiej*, and lastly, from 1845, *Dziennik Urzędowy Guberni Warszawskiej*.

³ *Dziennik Departamentu Kaliskiego* nr 2, Jan. 8 1809 – nr inw. 1, p. 14: ”Art. 1. We suspend the residents of our Duchy who are of Mosaic faith, in using their future political rights for ten years with hope that they use that time to erase in themselves all features that distinguish them so much from other inhabitants. Art. 2: The above law shall not, however, prevent us from allowing particular individuals of this religion, to use their political rights before that time if they deserve to be thus highly privileged by meeting requirements defined in a separate regulation.”

surname, which he used so far and shall use henceforth [...]. Whoever was so far without a surname or cannot prove it, shall declare a name he takes and uses henceforth”⁴;

- Decree of Tsar Alexander I on abolition of Jewish kahals as of January 1, 1822: “To prevent continuous complaints of Jews as regarding the oppression of the poor by the present kahals, taking into consideration the advice of the Government Commissions recommending abolition of these kahals when they are replaced by synagogal boards, we have decided: Art. 1. As of the date of the present announcement, all of the so-called kahals in Jewish communities being so far in our municipalities cease to be”⁵;

- Decree of Tsar Alexander I concerning lodgings for Jews in municipalities, proclaimed on June 20, 1822.⁶

Or, lastly, a ban ruled by Tsar Nicholas I on November 9, 1853, on shaving Jewish women’s hair upon their marriage.⁷

The library of the State Archives is also in possession of a few copies of Jewish newspapers published in Częstochowa, including: *Dos Naye Vort*, *Unzer Czenstochower Express*, *Czenstochover Tsaytung*.

To illustrate the usefulness of *Goniec Częstochowski*, a Polish Częstochowa daily published 1906–1939, for the study of Polish-Jewish relations, here are some sample pieces:

- “City Council: National Club Leaves a Meeting in Protest as the PPS and Jews Vote Down Notion Excluding Jews from Selling Devotional Articles”, (20.01.1937);
- “Jewish Shopkeepers on Strike: Just Two Hours, What a Pity It Is Not For Ever” (25.05.1937);
- “Will a New Wave of Jews Arrive in Poland?”, (4.04.1939);
- “Germans Want to Expel All Polish Jews. Poland Can Retaliate Expelling German Citizens” (6.06.1939);
- “Decree on Jewish Property in Czech Republic and Moravia. Who Is a Jew? What Are Jews Not Allowed To Do?”, (24.06.1939);
- “Aryan Paragraph at All Engineers’ Organizations. Resolutions of the Convention of the Central Engineers’ Organization” (28.06.1939);
- “More Jews in Poland, As They Are Not Welcome Elsewhere”, (11.07.1939).

General and Special Administration Records

General administration prior to 1945 is represented in the State Archives’ holdings by the local administrative units at the powiat (county) level. The earliest and most varied materials are in the **Częstochowa Powiat Starosty File 1919–1939**.

The file includes records of the Starosty whose jurisdiction covered Częstochowa (under separate jurisdiction of Municipal Starosty), Janow, Krzepice, Mstow, Olsztyn, Przyrow, and 22 smaller village units (gminas). 1,141 archival units (a.u.) in this file include documents on Jewish organizations and associations in Częstochowa, such as:

- Union of Jewish War Veterans, Widows, and Orphans⁸

⁴ Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego nr 28 z 1821 r. – nr inw. 67

⁵ Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego nr 28 z 1824 r., str. 275 – nr inw.

⁶ Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego, T. 7 z 1822 r., str. 384

⁷ Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego, T. 47, s. 29

⁸ Starostwo Powiatowe w Częstochowie, sygn. 43, 49 includes correspondence concerning the Union’s registration and statutes.

- Jewish Bakers' Trade Union⁹
- Strzecha Robotnicza [Workers' Shelter] Society¹⁰
- Auxilium Academicum Judaicum Relief Society for Jewish Students, Częstochowa branch¹¹
- Special Bible Study Society¹²
- Ahavay Torah Society¹³
- Jewish Sports and Gymnastics Society¹⁴
- Beys Lechem (Bread House) Charity Society Against Dire Poverty, Częstochowa branch¹⁵
- Jewish Tourism and Geographic Society¹⁶
- Shomray Shabos veHadas (Guards of Shabbat and Religious Law)¹⁷
- Vizo Jewish Women Society, Częstochowa branch¹⁸
- Society for Health Protection (TOZ) of Jewish Population, Częstochowa branch¹⁹
- Jewish Union of Second-Hand Trade²⁰.

The file includes also a considerable amount of documents on prayer houses in various parts of Częstochowa, some with plans or sketches of buildings, where prayers halls were located, reports of the Starosty Sanitary Committee, correspondence with people applying for a license to set up a prayer hall, various certificates issued by the Jewish community.²¹ A 1922-1929 unit labeled "Jewish Community Affairs" includes registration cards of Mosaic temples, such as the community synagogue at 32, Nadrzeczna Str., and New Synagogue at 11, Wilsona Str., Jewish clergy, including Rabbi Nachum Asz and his assistants: J. Prokosz, N. Grynfield, J. Klajnplatz; or even the registration card of the Jewish community in Częstochowa with the following data: its location, date established, address, number of temples, property, number of members, annual budget, the Board, the Council²²; another archival unit²³ holds proceedings of the Częstochowa Jewish community Board and Council elections in the years 1930–1932.²⁴

The "Religious Conversion" unit provides access to letters concerning conversion, with some requests to the Poviast Starost (Head of the Starosty administrative unit) to register a conversion (from Mosaic faith to Catholic and vice versa, or renouncing Mosaic faith in favor of being nonreligious)²⁵. The records cover the 1922–1934 period.

The file includes documents for the study of Częstochowa economy between the wars, including Jewish enterprises, and Starosty correspondence concerning various

⁹ Ibidem, sygn. 47, includes correspondence concerning the Union's registration and approval of its statutes, . zawiera m.in. korespondencję w sprawie rejestracji związku i zatwierdzenia statutu, porównanie statutu ze statutem przedwojennym tego związku, skład zarządu.

¹⁰ Tamże, zawiera m.in. informacje o członkach założycielach Stowarzyszenia, statut, skład Zarządu.

¹¹ Tamże, zawiera m.in. korespondencję w sprawie organizacji festynu, skład Komitetu.

¹² Tamże, zawiera m.in. statut, informacje o członkach założycielach.

¹³ Tamże, zawiera m.in. korespondencję w sprawie rejestracji stowarzyszenia.

¹⁴ Tamże, zawiera m.in. korespondencję dotyczącą rejestracji, statut, skład Zarządu.

¹⁵ Tamże, zawiera m.in. korespondencję Zarządu Centralnego Towarzystwa w sprawie rejestracji Oddziału Towarzystwa, zatwierdzenia statutu, statut, lista członków Zarządu Towarzystwa.

¹⁶ Tamże.

¹⁷ Tamże, sygn. 48, zawiera m.in. statut.

¹⁸ Tamże.

¹⁹ Tamże.

²⁰ Tamże, sygn. 65.

²¹ Tamże, sygn. 364, 365, 366.

²² Tamże, sygn. 366.

²³ Tamże, sygn. 367.

²⁴ Tamże, sygn. 367.

²⁵ Tamże, sygn. 368.

business matters, plans of factories or small workshops, industrial certificates²⁶, as well as, although much less extensive, materials for the study of cultural life, including the history of the Jewish workers' library (the 1928–1930 letters concerning subsidies, inventory of books), or a 1923 plan of Wolberg's movie-theater at 12 NMP street in Częstochowa²⁷.

The next file with important Jewish-related information is **Częstochowa Municipal Starosty file of 1933-1939**.

The documents in this file are in fact a continuation or supplement to the Poviats Starosty records. Consequently, most Jewish related materials to be found here concern the Jewish community, and these are: its annual budgets, makeup of its Board and Council, renewed registration cards, data on the clergy and temples, applications for a license to set up a prayer hall.

The most noteworthy are the proceedings of the Board meetings, budget proposals, and materials on Jewish Guilds, such as:

- Guild of Jewish Tin Workers and Roofers²⁸,
- Guild of Jewish Hairdressers and Wig Makers²⁹,
- Guild of Jewish Tailors³⁰,
- Guild of Jewish Fur Dressers and Hatters³¹,
- Guild of Jewish Metal Workers³²,
- Guild of Jewish Bakers and Confectioners³³,
- Guild of Jewish Butchers and Charcuteriers³⁴,
- Guild of Jewish Leather Trade³⁵,
- Guild of Jewish Carpenters and Turners³⁶,
- Guild of Jewish Upholsterers and Brush Makers³⁷.

These materials include proceedings of the guild meetings, some statutes, budgetary reports, membership lists, and reports on fees collected.

There are several interesting folders labeled "Sanitary Staff: Doctors, Dentists, Pharmacists, Paramedics" from the years 1935–1937. The folders include official correspondence from medical specialists applying to have their practice registered at the Health Dept. of Kielce Voivodship (Province) Administrative Office.

The file contains also monthly reports of the Municipal Starost on social and political situation at the territory under his jurisdiction, including ethnic minorities issues, activity of political parties and trade unions, or anti-Jewish disturbances.³⁸

Under German occupation in WWII Częstochowa was a capital of a poviat administrative unit within Radom district. In 1939 the **Stadhauptmannschaft Tschenstochau** Office of Municipal Starost of Częstochowa was set up to act through January 1945. Its residual file holds 73 a.u. of class A documentation and 241 a.u. of class B documentation, basically from just two – budgetary and security – departments.

²⁶ Tamże, sygn. 537, 542.

²⁷ Tamże, sygn. 76; „Teatr u Wolbergów” – potoczna nazwa przyjęta przez mieszkańców miasta, oficjalnie nosił nazwę najpierw teatr „Apollo”, później, od 1915 r. – teatr „Nowości”, wreszcie od 1919 „Teatr Polonia”.

²⁸ Starostwo Grodzkie Częstochowskie, sygn. 215.

²⁹ Tamże.

³⁰ Tamże, sygn. 216.

³¹ Tamże, sygn. 217.

³² Tamże, sygn. 219.

³³ Tamże, sygn. 220.

³⁴ Tamże, sygn. 221, 222.

³⁵ Tamże, sygn. 223.

³⁶ Tamże.

³⁷ Tamże.

³⁸ Tamże, sygn. 288-294.

The file includes 16 binders concerning a variety of Jewish related matters during the Holocaust.

Noteworthy records pertain to the liquidation of the Esra Union of Jewish Women and confiscation of its property³⁹, other confiscations, forced labor, ban on out of the country letters exchange, establishment of the Judenrat, and provisions for Jews in occupied Częstochowa from October 1939 through April 1941⁴⁰, announcements, internal regulations, memos, documents on the establishment of the Jewish ghetto⁴¹, correspondence on registration of Jews, including lists of Jewish arrivals to Częstochowa drawn up by the Judenrat.⁴² A binder labeled “Juden. Verschiedenes” contains correspondence on miscellaneous Jewish related matters, such as issuing permits to travel by railway, illegal trade in the ghetto 1940–1942⁴³. Moreover, the file includes June-July 1941 documents on the organization and operations of Jewish auxiliary “police”, statistics of infectious diseases incidence, as well as various transgressions in the Częstochowa ghetto, such as thefts, leaving the ghetto without a pass.⁴⁴ Official correspondence of the Council of Elders (Judenrat) with the Municipal Starost from May 1940 through May 1942 includes information on food provisions for Jews, employment of some individuals at Częstochowa factories, Jewish forced labor; there are also requests for a license to perform from Jewish artists: musicians, singers, and actors⁴⁵, as well as applications for a permit to take a train to some towns in the GG in April through July 1941⁴⁶, some documents on the takeovers of Polish and Jewish printing houses in Częstochowa from April 1940 through October 1943.⁴⁷

As regards special administration it is in the file of the Russian **Internal Revenue Service in Częstochowa (Chenstochovskoye Kazennoye Upravleniye)**⁴⁸ for 1829-1873 that interesting documents on the *kosher* tax regulations are found, along with records of the usufruct leases, of “misuse”, such as “embezzlement of Bavarian beer”. Such groups of documents as “Records of Consensus Concerning Propination Profits of Jews in Towns as well as in the Country” from the years 1829–1865, or “Records Concerning Kosher Tax Regulations in the Polish Kingdom” 1843–1859, exemplify sources for the study of social and economic interaction in the Polish lands in the nineteenth c.

Special administration includes also the records of the **Powiat Land Registry in Częstochowa**⁴⁹. The documentation in this file covers the years 1920–1933 and includes materials on the lotting of state and private landed properties, divisions of communes, mergers and barter of grounds, loans. Częstochowa Powiat Land Registry had also Częstochowa and Bedzin poviats under its jurisdiction, while itself falling within Kielce District Land Registry. When the Land Registry was closed down in 1933, it was Częstochowa Powiat Starosty that took over its jurisdiction.

The records of the **Lease Arbitration Service in Częstochowa** is yet another noteworthy file. The Service was established in 1919 by the June 28, 1919 precept on

³⁹ Starostwo Miejskie w Częstochowie, sygn. 1.

⁴⁰ Tamże, sygn. 2.

⁴¹ Tamże, sygn. 3.

⁴² Tamże, sygn. 5.

⁴³ Tamże, sygn. 6.

⁴⁴ Tamże, sygn. 8.

⁴⁵ Tamże, sygn. 12.

⁴⁶ Tamże, sygn. 13.

⁴⁷ Tamże, sygn. 68.

⁴⁸ Urząd Skarbowy w Częstochowie istniał w Częstochowie prawdopodobnie już w okresie Księstwa Warszawskiego. Zakończył działalność w r. 1873. Zespół zachowany szczątkowo w ilości 48 j.a.

⁴⁹ Urzędy Ziemskie zostały ustanowione ustawą z dn. 6 lipca 1920 r.; ich zadaniem było przeprowadzenie i utrwalenie nowego ustroju rolnego w myśl zasad uchwały Sejmu z dn. 10 lipca 1919 r.

tenants' protection. The file is very fragmentary with 66 a.u. from the years 1921–1935. The documents concern mainly the rental fee and related lawsuits, as well as evictions. The cases are such as, e.g., "Chana Gasiorowicz' and Faygla Cymerman's rent action against Herszl Kohn"⁵⁰ or "rent action of the Mizrachi Association against C. Potasiewicz and others" of 1934.⁵¹

II Local Government Records

Another group of archival materials with many Jewish related documents is the legacy of municipal administration units. This group includes the largest file of the State Archives in Częstochowa, namely Częstochowa Municipality File with 140,000 a.u. from the years 1759–1948, most abundant in diverse information on Jewish life there.

In Polish Kingdom Jewish kehillahs (kahals) were abolished by an edict of the Russian ruler, Tsar Alexander I, on January 1, 1822 (according to Russian Orthodox calendar on Dec. 20, 1821) to be replaced, as decreed by the Governor of Polish Kingdom on February 20, 1822, by Jewish communities, first named "parishes", and then – "synagogal boroughs", supervised by synagogal boards.

The community had many functions, connected with Jewish religious life as well as with social welfare, organizing and running hospitals, orphanages, and shelters for the elderly or homeless, with supporting elementary schools and cemeteries, with repartition and collecting conscription tax.

Besides, Jewish community represented Jewish society before the state and municipal administration, issued "poverty certificates", passport affidavits, etc.

The most ancient Jewish related a.u. in this file, dating back to the early nineteenth century, are community budgets, correspondence illustrating the community efforts to annul the ban on Jewish settlement in town, usufruct leases, inventories of the assets of inheritance and pronouncements of custody of orphaned children.

"List of Jews, who pushed in our town unlawfully, of August 10, 1826" includes names of 90 persons⁵², while "register of census Jews from 20 to 30 years old submitted by the town mayor in 1865" is 178 names long⁵³.

Whereas "receipts to the synagogal funds' accounts of Częstochowa" for 1841 include:

- protocol of auction requirements concerning the lease of the Torah reading;
- list of exemptions from the Torah reading fee, in Polish and Yiddish;
- receipt for 600 zlotys reimbursed to Rabbi Zachariasz Weingutt to cover the costs of his move from Kowal to Częstochowa;
- costs specification of medical treatment of Josef Wolf at the municipal hospital;
- list of poor Jewish recipients of Easter [!] flour,
- invoice for medications ordered by the Jewish hospital at F. Kamiński's pharmacy;
- invoice for the renovation of ritual bath;
- invoice for the renovation of school;
- invoice for accompaniment to cantor's singing;
- information from the Synagogal Board on the rabbi's salary being paid from the 1841 wedding income, etc.

⁵⁰ Urząd Rozjemczy do Spraw Najmu w Częstochowie, sygn. 31

⁵¹ Tamże, sygn. 59.

⁵² Akta miasta Częstochowy, sygn. 200

⁵³ Tamże, sygn. 219.

The unit includes also the 1839 register of real property and other possessions by the Kahal of Częstochowa. The real property list includes:

- brick synagogue with men's section and women's section,
- brick public school,
- brick ritual bath,
- brick public hospital being built,
- walled cemetery,
- vault archive.

Every structure is with an inventory of its equipment.

For instance, furnishing of the hospital were:

- bed with bedding, namely eiderdown, pillow, and sheets,
- big pot and two smaller ones, copper,
- three black mattresses,
- two spades with iron fittings,
- two ordinary spades,
- bier,
- funeral cart with catafalque painted black;

while the synagogue utensils were:

- seven Torah Scrolls,
- two silver hangings and a mantle to ornate the Scrolls weighing 114 ounces,
- four silver hands, meaning pointers, weighing 21 ounces,
- Story of Estera on parchment,
- collection of prayers all year round in two volumes,
- blessings formulas on parchment,
- tales for a cantor,
- pulpit covering in front of tabernacle [!],
- two tin watering cans and two basins for a priest to wash his hands,
- white damask shirt,
- green damask shirt,
- silk shirt with golden embroidery,
- white *kitayka* shirt, etc.

“Records of synagogal dealings” for 1834–1846 are supplemented by the “receipts to the synagogal funds’ accounts” for the years 1843–1847, proofs to the invoices, and ledgers of synagogal funds for the years 1835–1847. Later (after 1867) records of Russian administration are rather homogeneous and include: community fees, overdue tax payments, community budgets, cheders.⁵⁴

Częstochowa municipality file in fact provides sources to the study of all spheres of Jewish life:

– education:

- heder documents 1887–1894 and 1902–1903⁵⁵
- School Guardianship Society⁵⁶
- Society for Education of Jews⁵⁷,
- literacy courses⁵⁸,

⁵⁴ Ibidem, sygn. 726, 751, 825.

⁵⁵ Tamże, sygn. 825, 845, 895, 959, 983, 1007, 1203, 1228.

⁵⁶ Tamże, sygn. 4867, 7121.

⁵⁷ Tamże, sygn. 4874, 7093, 7094.

⁵⁸ Tamże, sygn. 4868, 4884, 7116.

- elementary schools, timetables and curricula⁵⁹,
- Jewish Talmud Torah elementary school for the years 1915–1918⁶⁰,
- payouts of religion teachers' salaries in municipal Jewish schools in 1916⁶¹,
- Industrial Crafts Schools for Jews in Częstochowa⁶²,
- Additional Vocational School for Jewish Apprentices⁶³;

– health care, social welfare:

- Jewish Hospital at Zawodzie (for the years 1907-1913): cession of building lot, its map, the 1924 lists of patients⁶⁴,
- Jewish Welfare Society⁶⁵,
- Workers' Children Shelter⁶⁶,
- Society for Health Protection of Jewish Population⁶⁷ – correspondence, statutes,
- The Kremski Brothers' Baths⁶⁸;

– economy:

- salesmen's register, e.g. "Trades and Companies Listed by Streets" of 1914⁶⁹, or an earlier one, of 1879⁷⁰, with "Personnel of W. Kohn's and A. Oderfeld's printing house", or registers of Jewish craftsmen and artisans, e.g. of 1928⁷¹, with a list of 1,197 registered craftsmen running their own workshops in Częstochowa;

– everyday life:

- Jewish participation in major public events, such as the 1932 visit of President Mościcki⁷² and the 1923 one of Marshall Foch⁷³, celebrations of Polish independence anniversaries (letters concerning ceremonial services at the synagogue)⁷⁴.

The municipality file includes also a group of records important for the study of the Holocaust, and these are:

- census data for the City of Częstochowa 1943⁷⁵,
- statistical reports for 1939–1943⁷⁶,
- companies' registers 1940–1941⁷⁷,
- registration documentation for the years 1940–1941⁷⁸.

⁵⁹ Tamże, sygn. 4853, 4858, 4859, 4864, 4865, 4868, 4876, 4884, 7070.

⁶⁰ Tamże, sygn. 7068.

⁶¹ Tamże, sygn. 7087.

⁶² Tamże, sygn. 7133, 7796.

⁶³ Tamże, sygn. 7133.

⁶⁴ Tamże, sygn. 2684, 7185, 7290.

⁶⁵ Tamże, sygn. 7393.

⁶⁶ Tamże, sygn. 7188.

⁶⁷ Tamże, sygn. 7581.

⁶⁸ Tamże, sygn. 8018, 8021.

⁶⁹ Tamże, sygn. 4879.

⁷⁰ Tamże, sygn. 3295.

⁷¹ Tamże, sygn. 8337.

⁷² Tamże, sygn. 7696.

⁷³ Tamże, sygn. 5171.

⁷⁴ Tamże, sygn. 5200, 7532.

⁷⁵ Tamże, sygn. 8999, zawiera m.in. informację o stanie ludności miasta na dzień 1.09.1939 r. z podziałem na poszczególne grupy wyznaniowe.

⁷⁶ Tamże, sygn. 9054.

⁷⁷ Tamże, sygn. 9057.

⁷⁸ Tamże, sygn. 9060, 9061.

A unit labeled “Issuing Passes for Jews to Leave Ghetto 1941–1942”⁷⁹ includes official correspondence of German administration and application forms for Jews trying to obtain a pass to leave ghetto from April through December 1941. Scholars studying everyday life in the Częstochowa ghetto should find this material interesting.

Equally interesting are “Exhumation Records of Częstochowa, 1940”⁸⁰, or “Handwritten Payroll of Jews – 1942”⁸¹.

The former binder contains reports and protocols of 224 exhumations carried out in February through April 1940, probably of people killed in September 1939.

The other binder comprises official letters (exchanged between the municipality and the Judenrat) concerning forced labor: the number of workers, types of work (most often in the streets or gardens), number of hours worked, overhead costs. The unit includes also the correspondence concerning cases of refusal to do forced labor.

This file includes another important group of source materials on the history of Częstochowa Jews, namely Books of Permanent Inhabitation of Częstochowa for the years 1870–1930. The Books are with alphabetical listings of names and provide a lot of valuable information on individuals or entire families, including: date and place of birth, date of death, marital status, social background, religion, etc. It is to such a document that we owe an information on Rabbi Nachum Asz being born on January 3/15, 1838, in Wyszogrod, to Dawid Gersz Asz and Blima nee Goldfrid. Rabbi’s wife, Sura Asz nee Arensztajn, died on January 24, 1928 in Częstochowa⁸².

The municipality file includes also over 3,000 a.u. concerning building investments, such as technical blueprints, cost evaluations, orientation and situational plans of lots, etc. This documentation gathered at the technical Department is a valuable supplement to other documents. Beside house and workshop designs there are blueprints for Jewish institutions and organizations, including: a 1926 design of a building of a vinegar manufacture of S. Czestochowski and J. Nussbaum⁸³, a 1934 plan of Kenigsberg’s chemical and technical plant⁸⁴, a 1935 blueprint of a one-story extension building at the gardening farm property at 89 Rolnicza Str.⁸⁵, a 1939 extension blueprint for the Jewish Crafts School at 7, Nadrzeczna Str.⁸⁶, a 1933 rebuilding blueprint for the launderette of the Jewish hospital at Zawodzie and for a new boiler house there⁸⁷, a 1933 rebuilding project for a boiler room at 18 Garibaldiego Str.⁸⁸, or a 1931 shower extension design for the Kremski Brothers’ Baths at 4 Strazacka Str.⁸⁹

III. Judiciary and Notary Records

The most significant groups of courts of justice records at Częstochowa Archives are the 1928-1939 file of the Częstochowa Division of Piotrkow District Court, and the 1929-1939 file of Częstochowa Borough Court.

⁷⁹ Tamże, sygn. 9064.

⁸⁰ Tamże, sygn. 9055a.

⁸¹ Tamże, sygn. 9299a.

⁸² W uwagach księgi odnotowany został także nr aktu zgonu, tj. 21/1928.

⁸³ Akta miasta Częstochowy, Wydż. Techniczny, sygn. 278.

⁸⁴ Tamże, sygn. 2569.

⁸⁵ Tamże, sygn. 2875.

⁸⁶ Tamże, sygn. 28/105.

⁸⁷ Tamże, sygn. 2013, 2142.

⁸⁸ Tamże, sygn. Dopływ 30/13; na nieruchomości tej mieściła się mykwa.

⁸⁹ Tamże, sygn. 1405.

Częstochowa Division of Piotrkow District Court was established by the precept of the Ministry of Justice of December 24, 1928. Prior to that act all cases falling under its jurisdiction had been brought before the District Court in Piotrkow.

Częstochowa Division consisted of three departments: civil, criminal, and trade register. For some cases this court was first instance, for those opened in the Borough Court – higher instance. The higher instance for cases brought before Częstochowa Division was the Court of Appeal in Warsaw.

The trade register and registration records of companies operating in Częstochowa in the years 1917-1939 seem most noteworthy in this file.⁹⁰

The trade register was kept in compliance with the decree on trade registers of February 7, 1919 and later byelaws issued by the Ministry of Justice, and included information on the companies which were subject to being registered:

- entry number,
- company name, location,
- name of the businessman or partners,
- indication of proxy,
- legal status of single-handed companies,
- legal status of joint companies,
- no. of file folder, date of registration, signature.

For instance, vol.1, section A, p. 467⁹¹ of the Trade Register, includes basic data on the firm named “W. Kon i Oderfeld Częstochowa”, whose owners were Jakub Kon, Dawid Oderfeld, Henryk Oderfeld, and Stanislaw Oderfeld. The firm operated as an unlimited company, and “has been existing since July 1, 1869”, when it was founded by Wilhelm Kohn and Adolf Oderfeld.

A supplementary information is to be found in a records binder labeled Records of the District Court acting as registry in Piotrkow concerning the firm “Zakłady graficzno-papiernicze w Częstochowie Kon i Oderfeld”⁹², including:

- company application to the register on May 22, 1917,
- the company name upon the application: “Drukarnia, litografia i fabryka kolorowego papieru”,
- location: Częstochowa, 30, Teatralna Str.,
- copies from notarial deeds concerning marriage settlements,
- notarial deeds of the changes of company name, including the 1925 one upon the death of the founders Wilhelm Kohn and Adolf Oderfeld, when the name was changed to “Zakłady Graficzno-papiernicze w Częstochowie”,
- original signatures of the partners.

Moreover, the records of the above courts abound in materials for the social study of Jewish population in the interwar period, such as numerous notions for amendments at the registrar’s books (correction of first names⁹³, birth dates, declaring somebody dead, e.g., Gerszon Chorzewski, Aron Najman, Gryna Zysla Kajzer, etc.)⁹⁴, divorce cases⁹⁵, division

⁹⁰ Zespół zawiera anterioria, którymi są akta rejestru handlowego założonego w Cesarsko-Niemieckim Sądzie Okręgowym w Częstochowie.

⁹¹ J.w. doływ do zespołu, sygn.23/1.

⁹² Tamże, sygn. 1610.

⁹³ Z. 45: Sąd Grodzki w Częstochowie, sygn. 205.

⁹⁴ Tamże, sygn. 214 – Gerszon Chorzewski zgłoszony o 4 lata później z uwagi na pobór do wojska, sygn. 202 – Aron Najman zapisany w 3 lata po urodzeniu jako brat bliźniak, sygn. 203 – Gryna Zysla Kajzer.

⁹⁵ Tamże, sygn. 88, 87, 86, 80, 79, 387, 388.

of property or inheritance⁹⁶, or even criminal cases, such smuggling, illegal sale of foreign currency, impersonations, illicit slaughter of cattle, profanation of sacred pictures, instigating Christians against Jews, trademark registration cases, etc.⁹⁷

The **Labor Court in Częstochowa 1929-1939** is another file (3,000 a.u.) worth recommending for the study of social, economic, employment and apprenticeship relations, applicable also in the study of living conditions of working class, including Jewish workers, in Częstochowa.

By the March 22, 1928 precept of the President of Poland labor courts were set up to “resolve civil litigious cases resulting from employment and apprenticeship relationship between employers and employees or apprentices, or else between co-employees, as well as to hear criminal cases involving infringement of legal regulations on the protection of hired labor.”

Thus this court had to cope with two kinds of cases: civil cases resulting from employment relationship, and criminal cases concerning the breach of regulations on the working hours, employee’s holiday entitlement, occupational safety, etc.

The largest group of documents in this file concerns overdue payments of wages. Plaintiffs were workers, craftsmen, keepers, domestic servants, but also office staff. The attachments to such proceedings were often specifications of amount due, workers’ accounting books, various certificates. There are also many eviction records, concerning workers to be evicted from factory lodgings, affixed with appeals, justifications, or witnesses’ testimonies on the living conditions of the workers.

The majority of these records are from the years 1929–1933, the Depression time. It is enough to compare 913 cases brought in 1931 with just 308 in 1934.

Here are some examples of binders:

- Stefania Dzierzkowska against the Jewish Charity Hospital (33 zlotys claim)⁹⁸,
- Dawid Minc against Charity Society by the Jewish community (100 zlotys)⁹⁹,
- Moszek Borensztajn against Migros Co. Ltd. (1,050 zlotys)¹⁰⁰,
- Icek Mendel Moszkowicz against Roman Staszczyk (eviction case)¹⁰¹.

This group of materials includes also **the German Penitentiary in Częstochowa 1939–1945** file.

The file includes documents of the German penitentiary in Częstochowa from almost entire occupation period 1939–1944 with 3,749 a.u., such personal files of prisoners consisting usually of four pages long detention forms in Polish.

The form includes the following blanks: surname, first name, occupation, last habitation, date detained, by, charged under art. (this column was often filled with enigmatic notes, e.g., “relapse” without any reference to legal norms), and occasionally information on further procedure (transport, death penalty); many blanks were left blank, often preventing the identification of prisoner’s origin or his further history. Clues provided by the sound of name and type of offense, including such unmistakable “crimes” as not wearing an armband or escape from the ghetto point to about 477 a.u. of Jewish prisoners’ folders.

For instance:

⁹⁶ Tamże, sygn. 13, 6, 7, 44,46, 157, 163, 196, 376, 385.

⁹⁷ Tamże, sygn. 346, 340, 389, 317, 256, 355, 359.

⁹⁸ Sąd Pracy w Cz-wie, sygn. 62.

⁹⁹ Tamże, sygn. 69.

¹⁰⁰ Tamże, sygn. 139.

¹⁰¹ Sąd Pracy w Cz-wie, sygn. 923.

- Szlama Kutner b. 1917 in Częstochowa, arrested for: theft; penalty: firing squad¹⁰²; the 8.11.1939–8.3.1940 records;
- Sala Chlop, b. 1921 in Częstochowa, arrested for: no identity armband¹⁰³; the 29.01–29.02.1940 records;
- Jerzy Koenigsberg, b. 1921 in Częstochowa, arrested for: no armband; the 6.02–28.02.1940 records¹⁰⁴;
- Rachela Zlotnik, b. 1917 in Mstow, arrested for: no armband; the 7.02–21.02.1940 records¹⁰⁵;
- Icek Estrajch, b. 1925 in Częstochowa, refusal to work, the 19.08.–11.10.1941 records¹⁰⁶;
- Zalma Swider, b. 1897 in Częstochowa, leaving the Jewish quarter, the 1941–1942 records¹⁰⁷;
- Fajwel Cypler, b. 1922 in Częstochowa, leaving the Jewish quarter, death penalty, the 1941–1942 records¹⁰⁸; etc.

The file includes also a group of documents on Poles who were sentenced to death for helping Jews, including:

- Stanislaw and Jan Kurdziel, death penalties for giving help to Jews, the 1942 records¹⁰⁹;
- Antoni Nabialek, b. 1902 in Olsztyn, walking Jews out of the ghetto, the 1942 records¹¹⁰;
- Zofia Gryniecka, b. 1908 in Częstochowa, hiding Jews, the 1943 records¹¹¹;
- Franciszka and Jan Bielecki from Częstochowa, hiding Jews, the 1943 records¹¹².

Despite being underestimated and therefore inadequately explored, notarial records are an extremely valuable historical source. The legacy of 23 notaries active in Częstochowa in the years 1809-1945 is immensely represented in the State Archives. The profuse bulk of documents include contracts of sale¹¹³, contracts of lease, trade agreements, pre-nuptial settlements, testaments, certificates, donations, etc. Testaments in particular are useful for the study of economic, public and social life, as they are often being attached with inventories of assets together with detailed instructions as to their distribution.

IV. Civil Register Records

Civil registry offices with their register books were introduced in the Duchy of Warsaw along with Napoleon's Code. By the 1808 decree of Friedrich August, Saxon King and Duke of Warsaw, the civil registers records became a law. The registers were supposedly kept by secular officials, but due to the lack of qualified registrars, it were the clergy who

¹⁰² Niemiecki Zakład Karny w Częstochowie, sygn. 11.

¹⁰³ Tamże, sygn. 107.

¹⁰⁴ Tamże, sygn. 128.

¹⁰⁵ Tamże, sygn. 134.

¹⁰⁶ Tamże, sygn. 1234.

¹⁰⁷ Tamże, sygn. 1453.

¹⁰⁸ Tamże, sygn. 1470.

¹⁰⁹ Tamże, sygn. 2348, 2349.

¹¹⁰ Tamże, sygn. 2372.

¹¹¹ Tamże, sygn. 2990.

¹¹² Tamże, sygn. 2991, 2992.

¹¹³ Przedmiotem transakcji handlowych były nie tylko nieruchomości czy surowce ale także ławki w bożnicy, np. akt not. Nr 253/ 1821 z akt Kancelarii Notar. Truszkowskiego.

took up the task. The situation continued to 1825, when civil register records were merged with church registers. On November 3, 1825 the tsar's governor ruled that mayors would keep civil registers for non-Christian citizens, including Jews. An amendment of the Administrative Council of September 7, 1830, obliged rabbis to keep records upon performing religious rites.

Birth and marriage registers contain plenty of valuable personal information, such as people's age, social status, occupation, address of parents of christened children, of newlyweds, names and status of witnesses at ceremonies, sometimes even causes of death.

The holding of the State Archives in Częstochowa include civil register records of the Jewish community for the years 1826–1901, amounting to 234 volumes with birth, marriage, and death records. Marriage records sometimes include also the so-called addendum or evidence records. These were non-local birth certificates, death certificates of former spouses in case of remarrying widows or widowers, divorce documents, etc. In general, the documents confirming the parties' capacity to contract marriage.

Birth certificates of Jews born before 1826 can be found at the civil registers of St. Zygmunt's Catholic Parish Church in Częstochowa, where the earliest books date back to 1808.

And thus in the "Book of Births of Częstochowa Parish in Częstochowa Powiat of Kalisz Department" 1808/1809, there 15 Jewish births registered, with the earliest Częstochowa entry (no. 2 in 1809) being the birth of Ruchla Bomba to Marek Bomba, "master tailor resident of the city of Częstochowa".

This valuable material concerning early Jewish settlement in Częstochowa is supplemented with addendum records to marriages contracted in the 1809-1826 period.

Useful information provided by these additional records frequently date back to the late eighteenth c. They are for the most part certificates issued by the Elders of Częstochowa Kahal to confirm parties' capacity to contract marriage.

For instance: "We, the Elders of Częstochowa kahal, confirm that Machla, a widow Jewess, daughter of Jakub Cymerman, a Jew, was born on July 7, 1783, here in the city of Częstochowa, to Marjanna nee Judkowicz, as certified by the Kahal stamp imprinted with our own hands.

Did in Częstochowa February, 22 1810.

And we attest that the husband of the above widow the late *Starozakonny* [Jew] Tobyjasz Jakub Goldman died on Yanuary 14, 1807 and at the Kirkov of the local Częstochowa synagogue here was buried. This is to certify by signature by the Kahal stamp imprinted [...]"

The act was signed by the Elders and stamped: the inscription on the rim was: "Stamp of the Synagogue of Częstochowa", and a Hebrew inscription within. Some acts are with the *Siegel des Sinagogo zu Czenstochau* inscription on the stamp rim.

V. School Records

School records are not numerous in the State Archives, but they include a number of documents, in particular school report cards from various Jewish schools, such as: the Colonel Berek Joselewicz Private Co-ed Elementary School by Dr. Filip Axer's High School, elementary schools no. 15, 13, 5, the Zofia Wainsztoł private 7-grade co-ed elementary school, high school diplomas of Jewish students.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Państwowe Seminarium Nauczycielskie Męskie im. Tadeusza Kościuszki w Częstochowie, sygn. 34, 40.

School no.13 was one of many elementary schools in Częstochowa attended also by Jewish students. The school file consisting of 60 a.u. is kept at the Archives.

Public Elementary School no. 13 in Częstochowa, at 19/23 Narutowicza Str., was established in 1921 and functioned to 1939. Its headmistress was Miss Nacha Szacher, b. October 6, 1888.

The file includes organizational records, such as correspondence with the School Inspectorate, inventories, minutes of teaching staff meetings, registers of students' marks, copies of report cards. There is also part of school library documentation preserved in this file, including three volumes of students' library inventories, inventory of staff library, and inventory of teaching aids.

The following data can be induced from an annual report:

Number of children attending (as on Dec. 1, 1926 – in total 547, and from grade III upwards – 355), information on the school library (which was set up on Jan.12, 1923, thanks to children's contributions, donations of the Society for Jewish Education, of teachers, and of the headmistress); the number of books was 1,065, all in Polish, including most popular titles (1927 data).

VI. Records of Loan Funds and Enterprises

Częstochowa Archives holds a considerable number of records of enterprises active in Częstochowa before 1945, including such large plants like the A. Kohn and H. Markusfeld Paper Factory and Mills Limited Partnership Co. 1899–1944, or the Warta Linen and Jute Mills S.A. Częstochowa for the years 1906–1945. Jewish entrepreneurs founded and owned many big industrial works, which played major role in town's economy. The names to be remembered here are: Kohn, Sigman, Markusfeld, Oderfeld, Ginsberg.

The **Credit Society of Częstochowa 1899-1950** file includes records of loans contracted on pledge of real properties. These documents allow modern scholars to picture a topography of Jewish real property in town. The Society was established in 1898 and before 1918 functioned under Russian name: Chenstochovskoye Gorodskoye Kreditnoye Obshchestvo, whereas during WWII as: Tschenstochauer Städtische Kreditverein.

I have outlined in the present survey just the major pre-1945 files including Jewish related materials. I would like to note that the above files do not include residual files contained in files nos. 134 and 192.

And these groups of records certainly also deserve scholarly attention: Polish Red Cross, Częstochowa Branch, records for the years 1945–1946; Section of Support for Poor School Students by the Society for Jewish Education in Częstochowa 1916–1924; 1943 records of Częstochowa Camp; Military Collection Point of HASAG Metalworks Ltd.; Facilities Construction, Częstochowa for the years 1941–1945; Trust Management in Częstochowa for the years 1942–1944.