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Remarks About the Jewish Emigration From the Kingdom of Poland to USA Before WWI

Uwagi na temat emigracji żydowskiej z Królestwa Polskiego do USA przed pierwszą wojną światową

ABSTRACT

Before 1914, more than 2 million Jews arrived in the United States of America, accounting for nearly 6% of all European emigration to that country. It is estimated that up to 70% of Jewish immigrants in the United States were subjects of the Tsar, and up to a third of them came from the Polish lands of the Russian empire. Jews from the Kingdom of Poland were the first among the inhabitants of the Russian Empire to establish legal and illegal migration channels. This was due to the proximity of the German-Russian border and thus easier access to German ports, as well as the ties connecting the Jews in the

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Kingdom with their co-religionists in the Prussian partition. Based on the literature on the subject and statistical data, the article discusses the volume of emigration from the Polish lands with special emphasis on the emigration of Jews from the Kingdom of Poland, the circumstances and causes of emigration with consideration given to changing theories on the subject, the nature of Jewish emigration and migration routes. The aim of this article is, first of all, to review the present state of research on the overseas emigration of Jews from the Kingdom of Poland and then to indicate source materials and literature that will help in further research.

Key words: Jews, emigration, Kingdom of Poland, USA, migration networks

STRESZCZENIE

Przed 1914 r. do Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej przybyło ponad 2 mln Żydów, co stanowiło blisko 6% całej emigracji europejskiej do tego kraju. Szacuje się, że nawet 70% imigrantów żydowskich w USA stanowili poddani cara, a nawet trzecia część z nich przyjechała z ziem polskich zaboru rosyjskiego. Żydzi z Królestwa Polskiego jako pierwsi spośród mieszkańców Imperium Rosyjskiego utworzyli legalne i nielegalne kanały migracyjne. Wynikało to z bliskości granicy niemiecko-rosyjskiej, a tym samym łatwiejszego dostępu do portów niemieckich, a także więzi łączących Żydów w Królestwie z ich współwyznawcami w zaborze pruskim. W artykule w oparciu o literaturę przedmiotu i dane statystyczne omówione zostały: wielkość emigracji z ziem polskich ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem emigracji Żydów z Królestwa Polskiego, okoliczności i przyczyny emigracji z uwzględnieniem zmieniających się teorii na ten temat, charakter emigracji żydowskiej i szlaki migracyjne. Artykuł ma na celu przede wszystkim przegląd dotychczasowego stanu badań nad zamorską emigracją Żydów z Królestwa Polskiego i wskazanie materiałów źródłowych i literatury pomocnych w dalszych badaniach.

Słowa kluczowe: Żydzi, emigracja, Królestwo Polskie, USA, sieci migracyjne

INTRODUCTION: MIGRATION FROM POLISH LANDS (BEFORE 1914)

Emigrants from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth reached almost all continents between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, but mass emigration from Polish lands began at the end of the nineteenth century. This was associated with a growing demand for labor, including agricultural settlers in the Americas and Western European countries, as well as in the depths of Russia.

It is estimated that between 1871 and 1913 about 3.5 million people emigrated from the Polish lands: 1.2 million from the Prussian, 1.05 million from the Austrian and 1.25 million from the Russian partition¹. A more

¹ A. Gawryszewski, *Ludność Polski w XX wieku*, Warszawa 2005, s. 408–410; E. Morawska, *For bread with butter: the life-worlds of East Central Europeans in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, 1890–1940*, Cambridge 1985, s. 29.

precise estimation of the number of emigrants is hindered by the policies of the partitioning countries and the organisation of official statistics. Even in the Prussian and Austrian partition, from where the people could emigrate legally after having settled relationship with military service (although this was connected with certain difficulties on the part of the state authorities, not interested in leaving the workforce and reservists), the number of illegal emigrants exceeded the number of emigrants with permits by far. In the Russian partition, foreign emigration was treated almost like a crime, and only a few obtained a permission for permanent emigration. Hence, the large, difficult to determine number of illegal emigrants crossing the „green border” or using weekly border traffic permits (not necessarily their own) and 10-month seasonal emigration permits. In the 1890s, passport requirements were mitigated, however, a requirement was imposed of the deposit of 75 roubles of silver from an adult and 50 roubles from a child, which effectively reduced the number of the poorer emigrants. The amount of 75 roubles was a three-month saving for a seasonal worker in much better paid Prussian agriculture².

From the middle of the 19th century, the Pale of Settlement was undergoing a process of rapid transformations from a society of *shtetls* to one of large urban centers. The Jewish population expanded in cities of the „Russian” Poland, like Warsaw or Vilna, which were already home to established Jewish communities earlier. Indeed, the urban Jewish population grew faster than the Jewish population as a whole³. It led to overpopulation of cities and turbulence on the labor market. On a larger scale, however, the overseas emigration from the Kingdom of Poland began in 1876. It was a year of crop failure, and at the same time the textile industry plants in Łódź, Pabianice, Zgierz and Ozorków suffered a serious crisis, which caused high unemployment in this region. However, the problems during this period did not only affect the Łódź region, the Jewish population, and the textile industry. As a result of the declassification of small towns as a result of administrative reform in the Empire and enfranchisement in the Kingdom of Poland, cities received an influx of peasants for whom there was a lack of work on farms. As a result of repressions of the January Uprising former landowners, representatives of families of small,

² A. Gawryszewski, *op. cit.*, s. 409; T. Feys, *The Battle for Migrants: The Introduction of Steamships on the North-Atlantic and its Impact on the European Exodus*, St. John's 2013, s. 90.

³ In Warsaw between 1875 and 1908, the annual increase in the Jewish population was about 3.3%, in Vilna – about 2%. See: L.P. Boustan, *Were Jews Political Refugees or Economic Migrants? Assessing the Persecution Theory of Jewish Emigration, 1881–1914*, w: *The New Comparative Economic History. Essays in Honor of Jeffrey G. Williamson*, red. T.J. Hatton, K.H. O'Rourke, A.M. Taylor, Cambridge, MA–London 2007, s. 272–273.

propertyless nobility, who would give rise to the modern intelligentsia, were also forced to seek job in the cities. This army of people ready to work in the developing industry or trade clashed with the Jews, traditionally involved in many branches of commerce and industry, which led to a competitive struggle, but also raised anti-Semitic sentiments.

Nearly simultaneously (1874), Russia introduced general military service, which provided an additional impulse for emigration. This movement among the rural population of the Kingdom of Poland initially developed most strongly along the Prussian border, in the gubernyas of Piotrków, Płock, Warsaw, Kalisz and Suwałki⁴.

The main direction of emigration from Polish lands were the USA and Germany, but emigrants from the lands of the Kingdom of Poland most often headed for the USA, and to a lesser extent for the countries of South America, mainly Brazil (the so-called Brazilian fever, during which about 95,000 settlers left, mainly, the Kingdom)⁵. In the last years before the outbreak of World War, the emigrants' interest in France and Great Britain could be noticed, however, the United States was by far the most significant country of destination. Józef Buzek calculated that 38 people out of every thousand inhabitants emigrated from the Kingdom of Poland in the years 1890–1910. Canada was more popular in Galicia, especially among the Ukrainian and Ruthenian population⁶.

Table 1. Directions of temporary emigration from the Kingdom of Poland in 1908 and 1912.

Direction / country	1908	%	1912	%
Prussia	235 074	87,6	322 350	89,5
America*	12 399	4,6	22 391	6,2
Western Europe	7422	2,8	10 108	2,8
Russia**	3551	5,0	5293	1,5
TOTAL	268 446	100,0	360 142	100,0

* Emigration to the Americas, contrary to declarations, was often a permanent emigration.

** Emigration from The Kingdom of Poland to the other gubernyas in the Russian Empire.

Source: Rocznik Statystyczny Królestwa Polskiego z uwzględnieniem innych ziem polskich. Rok 1915, red. E. Strasburger, Warszawa 1916, s. 49–50.

⁴ J. Okołowicz, *Wychodźstwo i osadnictwo polskie przed pierwszą wojną światową*, Warszawa 1920, s. 28, 114.

⁵ K. Ziomek, *Obraz masowego wychodźstwa z ziem polskich do Brazylii w latach 1890–1897 na łamach ówczesnej prasy oraz literatury – zarys problematyki*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Towarzystwa Doktorantów Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Nauki Społeczne” 2018, 23, 4, s. 145–147.

⁶ J. Buzek, *Pogląd na wzrost ludności ziem polskich w wieku XIX*, Kraków 1915, s. 14–16.

More detailed data on emigration from the Kingdom of Poland for the years 1908 and 1912 show that in 1908 35,646 people left permanently, and in 1912, 32,064 did the same. In 1912, the most numerous was the emigration from the Płock and Lublin gubernyas, while the smallest – from the Piotrków and Kielce region. Temporary emigration from the gubernyas of the Kingdom of Poland in 1912 is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2. Temporary emigration from gubernyas of the Kingdom of Poland in 1912.

Kalisz	Piotrków	Płock	Kielce	Radom	Lublin	Warszawa	Łomża	Suwałki	Siedlce
128 545	52 578	40 076	38 580	24 569	24 506	21 155	20 037	5429	4331

Source: *Rocznik Statystyczny 1915*, s. 49–50.

In 1912, the largest number of emigrants were the rural population having no land – 50.7%, followed by landowners, 27.1%, factory workers, 3.3% and representatives of other professions at 18.9%⁷. The majority of them were men (63.2%), usually unmarried (47%). Most of the emigrants were Catholics (76.1%), followed by Jews (15.3%), Evangelics (5.6%) and Orthodox (3%)⁸.

As we have mentioned, about 75.6% of the total number of emigrants left for North America, South America 11.5%, Western European countries 9.5% and Russian gubernyas including Siberia 3.4%. Germany and Austria were popular destinations in Europe. Jews emigrated mainly to the USA, and on a much smaller scale to Great Britain⁹. Russian official statistics were based on official data and probably did not capture the actual number of emigrants (which was higher); the proportions between different ethnic and religious groups are however probably close to reality.

JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM POLISH LANDS

A large part among those who emigrated from the Polish lands was Jewish. In the years 1820–1880 about 60,000 Jews from Russia (including those from the Kingdom of Poland) came to the USA. In the years 1881–1890 about 265,000 more came to the USA, mainly from the Kingdom and Polish lands incorporated directly into the Russian Empire. About 236,000 Jews left the Austrian partition in 1881–1910, going primarily to the USA.

⁷ *Rocznik Statystyczny 1915*, s. 50.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ K. Zieliński, *Emigracja żydowska z Rosji i Królestwa Polskiego do Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej 1881–1918. Zarys problematyki*, „Kwartalnik Historii Żydów” 2002, 1, s. 18–19.

During the years, the smallest number of Jews emigrated from the Prussian partition. In the years 1871–1890, 17,500 Jews left the Poznań province, and in 1910 only 35,300 Jews remained (the total population was 1,887 million)¹⁰. Few people left for Palestine, where in the period 1882–1914 about 65,000 Jews from Eastern Europe settled down, but it is difficult to indicate how many of them came from the Polish lands¹¹. On the other hand, trips to Prussia concerned Jews only to a very small extent. They were seasonal in nature, workforce was sought primarily in agriculture, and only a fraction of men found employment in industrial plants and mines in the German state. There were very few Jews among them¹². Indeed, it would have been much more difficult in the case of Germany to transform the clothing industry from mechanical engineering to manufacturing, and so in fact to push it down to a lower level of production, as was the case in New York or Brooklyn. At that time, trade unions were already active in Germany, and the social democratic party was also strong, effectively defending the interests of workers from various industries and other professional groups¹³.

Before 1914, more than 2 million Jews arrived in the USA, which accounted for nearly 6% of the total European emigration to that country. They constituted about 14–15% of the total Jewish population on the old continent at that time. According to Arcadius Kahan, taking into consideration the country of origin, the most numerous in Jewish emigration from Europe to the USA between 1881 and 1914 were residents of Russian empire (72%), Galicia and Hungary (23%), followed by Jews from Southern Europe (1,5%)¹⁴. Slightly different values for the years 1881–1910 are given by Klaus Hödl (Table 3).

The Jewish emigration, similarly as in the case of other nations, was a „young” one – between 1899 and 1910, men and women aged 14–44 constituted 69.8% of all migrating Jews. At the same time, Jewish emigration had a permanent character – only 2% of European Jews, who left between 1908 and 1924, returned to their country of origin¹⁵. Liebmann Hersch,

¹⁰ A. Gawryszewski, *op. cit.*, s. 410.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, s. 409–410; G. Alroey, *Bread to Eat and Clothes to Wear: Letters from Jewish Migrants in the Early Twentieth Century*, Detroit 2011, s. 211–212.

¹² The only larger group of Jewish workers employed in German heavy industry were Polish Jews employed under the experimental program of the Prussian government in mines in Silesia shortly before the outbreak of the First World War. N.L. Green, *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora*, Berkeley–Los Angeles–London 1998, s. 56–58.

¹³ N. Szwalbe, *Straszak emigracyjny*, „Myśl Żydowska” 1916, 13, s. 4.

¹⁴ A. Kahan, *Essays in Jewish Social and Economic History*, Chicago 1986, s. 101–117.

¹⁵ I. Howe (assist. Kenneth Libo), *World of Our Fathers*, New York 1976, s. 58–59; K. Hödl, *op. cit.*, s. 87.

Table 3. Jewish emigration from Europe to the USA, 1881–1910.

Country of origin	Emigration: absolute numer	Emigration: 1881–1890	(%)	Emigration: 1891–1900	(%) 1891–1900	Emigration: 1901–1910	(%) 1901–1910
Russia	1 119 059	135 003	69,9	279 811	71,1	704245	72,1
Austria-Hungary	281 150	44 619	23,1	83 720	21,3	152 811	15,7
Romania	67 057	6967	3,6	12 789	3,2	47 301	4,8
Great Britain	42 589	-	-	-	-	42 589	4,4
Germany	20 454	5354	2,8	8827	2,3	6273	0,7
Kanada	9701	-	-	-	-	9701	1,0
Turkey	5081	-	-	-	-	5081	0,5
France	2273	-	-	-	-	2273	0,2
Others	15 436	1078	0,6	8369	2,1	5989	0,6
Total	1 562 800	193 021	100,0	393 516	100,0	976 263	100,0

Source: K. Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side. Galizische Juden in New York*, Wien 1991, s. 87–95.

who wrote about the emigration of Jews to the USA in 1908–1924, stated that they constituted 9.5% of all immigration and only 1.5% of emigration¹⁶. In the years 1899–1910 men constituted 56.6% of all Jews leaving; so, there were relatively many women, which distinguished Jewish emigration from other ethnic and religious groups. Jews emigrated with their families or later they brought their families over from the country. There were nearly 25% of people up to the age of 14, while the average for all other groups emigrating to the USA was only 12.3%. Similarly, there were 768 women for every 1000 Jewish men emigrating, while in the case of Poles it was only 440, and Lithuanians 417¹⁷.

JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM THE KINGDOM OF POLAND TO THE USA

Samuel Fogelson, a well-known mathematician and statistician, assumed that between 1895 and 1913 about 375,000 Jews emigrated from Polish lands to the USA, including 250,000 from the lands of the Russian partition. At that time 1.9 million people left the Polish lands, and Jews

¹⁶ L. Hersch, *International Migration of the Jews*, w: *International Migrations. Interpretations*, t. 2, red. W. Wilcox, New York 1931, s. 472–477.

¹⁷ K. Zieliński, *op. cit.*, s. 20.

constituted almost 20% of them. By analogy, it can be assumed that among 350,000 emigrants from Polish lands who left until 1895, Jews constituted at least a similar percentage (in absolute numbers about 70,000)¹⁸. According to a study by Imre Ferenczi and Walter Wilcox, in 1909–1913 a total of 16,785 people of Jewish faith left the Kingdom of Poland; most of whom, 4255, in 1912. This could prove that the boycott action and anti-Semitic hysteria unleashed by Roman Dmowski and the National Democracy after the Fourth Duma election had the intended effect (in the *Duma* election in 1912 the Jews of Warsaw supported a member of the Polish Socialist Party-Left, while the candidate of the right-wing and anti-Semitic National Democracy Dmowski lost)¹⁹. However, it would have been a too far-reaching conclusion, since in the following year only 2953 Jews emigrated from the Kingdom²⁰. The year 1912 was one of the two in which a record number of Catholics left the country, which rather proves the persistence of the growing trends in emigration and the progressive development of migration networks.

Table 4. Permanent emigration from the Kingdom of Poland according to religion, 1909–1913.

Year	Catholics	Orthodox	Evangelics	Mosaic	Others
1909	11 838	52	1145	3696	521
1910	10 884	66	871	2960	336
1911	17 500	167	810	2921	288
1912	14393	139	1125	4255	390
1913	12 612	61	1014	2953	523

Source: *International Migrations. Statistics*, vol. 1, red. I. Ferenczi, W.F. Wilcox, New York 1929, s. 788.

We can only estimate the volume of Jewish emigration from the various gubernyas of the Russian state. While the absolute number of Jewish emigrants from the Russian Empire is known and can be considered quite plausible, there is no reliable data to determine how many of them came from the Kingdom of Poland. In the Habsburg monarchy, appropriate lists were drawn up, hence it is known from which country and how many emigrants of which faith left Austria-Hungary in the period of interest.

¹⁸ A. Kapiszewski, *Emigracja Żydów z Polski do Stanów Zjednoczonych*, „Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego” 1986, 1–2, s. 82.

¹⁹ T.R. Weeks, *Poles, Jews, and Russians, 1863–1914: The Death of the Ideal of Assimilation in the Kingdom of Poland*, „Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry” 1999, 12, s. 224–226; J. Jedlicki, *The End of the Dialogue. Warsaw 1907–1912*, w: *The Jews in Poland*, t. 2, red. S. Kapralski, Cracow 1999, s. 111–123.

²⁰ *International Migrations*, vol. 1, s. 788.

Russian statistics do not contain such information. The only source of relatively reliable information on this emigration from Russia is the American „Annual Reports of Immigration“, which unfortunately does not distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish immigration respectively from the Kingdom of Poland and from the Russian state. A large part of this moving was illegal, and American immigration officials were not always able – due to language barriers and large waves of migration – to file neither place of birth nor origin of the newcomers²¹. Another source of information on emigration are lists of passengers who embarked in Hamburg and Bremen (*Auswandererlisten*), so far used mainly in family and genealogical research. However, while most of the Hamburg lists from 1850–1934 survived, the Bremen lists were destroyed.

According to the so-called one-day census in 1897, 5.2 million Jews lived in the Russian Empire, of which about 1.3 million in the Kingdom of Poland²². In the period 1820–1870 only about 20,000 Jews left the Russian Empire, until the events of 1881–1882 when about 40,000 more left it²³. Afterwards, the situation changed dramatically. In total, it is estimated that the number of so-called Russian Jews in the USA by 1910 had reached over 1.1 million people, and in the following years before 1914 more than 300,000 fellow believers were still to come²⁴. However, it is difficult to establish the actual number of emigrants from individual gubernyas, but it can be assumed that since Jews from the Kingdom of Poland constituted about a quarter of the entire Jewish population in the Russian Empire, then a similar percentage of Jews from the Kingdom were among all Jewish emigrants from Russia (i.e., about 350,000).

Valerian Obolensky-Ossinsky, President of the Central Statistical Board of the U.S.S.R. also shared this opinion, estimating the volume of Jewish emigration from the Kingdom of Poland among all Jews emigrating from the Empire at 20–30%: „Poland with 27 per cent of the Hebrew population furnished probably 30 per cent of the emigrants, the north-western region with 29 per cent of the Hebrew population furnished probably 35 percent of the emigrants“²⁵.

²¹ On methods of estimating the size of Jewish migration and related problems, see L.P. Boustan, *op. cit.*, s. 275–283.

²² A. Kahan, *op. cit.*, s. 101–117; A. Ruppin, *Die Juden der Gegenwart. Eine sozialwissenschaftliche studies*, Berlin 1920, s. 32.

²³ M. Aronson, *Geographical and Socioeconomic Factors in the 1881 Anti-Jewish Pogroms in Russia*, „Russian Review“ 1980, 39, 1, s. 19–31.

²⁴ I. Howe, *op. cit.*, s. 29–30; K. Zieliński, *op. cit.*, s. 23–24.

²⁵ V.V. Obolensky-Ossinsky, *Emigration from and immigration into Russia*, w: *International Migrations*, vol. 2, s. 544.

After 1905 the Jewish Colonization Society [hereinafter: JCS] established a network of information agencies, to which even 90% of emigrants applied before 1909. Of course, the number of people who turned to the Society was not the same as the number of those who actually left, but it allows for approximate estimates and illustrates the geographical distribution of emigration. It should be remembered that the activity of JCS was not as important for the Jews from the Kingdom of Poland as it was for the people from the other parts of the Pale of Settlement. In the Kingdom of Poland there was already a well-developed network of agencies distributing ship tickets (supplemented by agencies in neighbouring Galicia and Poznań Province), as well as denser migration networks²⁶.

Table 5. Number of applications to the Jewish Colonization Society and per cent distribution by regions, 1906–1909.

Year	Total number	Total (%)	Kingdom of Poland	North-western	South-Western	South	Outside the Pale of settlement
1906	12 128	100.0	3.0	29.4	25.4	42.2	-
1907	21 238	100.0	11.4	35.9	24.1	28.6	-
1908	15 477	100.0	20.3	31.9	30.5	17.3	-
1909	33 380	100.0	25.2	30.2	34.2	10.0	0.3
1910	47 088	100.0	22.2	32.4	36.5	8.7	0.2
1911	44 051	100.0	21.9	34.2	34.0	9.8	0.1
1912	49 272	100.0	17.6	32.3	37.7	12.4	-
1913	70 768	100.0	15.2	30.2	43.5	11.1	-

Source: *International Migrations. Interpretations*, vol. 2, red. W. Wilcox, New York 1931, s. 545.

Table 6. Number of applications to the Hebrew Emigration Society and per cent distribution by regions, 1901–1911, 1913.

Year	Total number	Total (%)	Kingdom of Poland	North-western	South-Western	South	Outside the Pale of settlement
1901-1911	2894	100.0	16.0	25.1	45.7	11.4	1.8
1913	2526	100.0	41.6	19.7	30.2	7.5	1.0

Source: *International Migrations. Interpretations*, vol. 2, s. 545.

The percentage of Jews in the Kingdom of Poland who turned to the JCS did not represent their share in emigration. The Jews from the King-

²⁶ L. Caro, *Emigracja i polityka emigracyjna ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem stosunków polskich*, Poznań 1914, s. 85–105, 335–347.

dom accidentally used the help of Hebrew Emigration Society. Generally, the distribution of emigrants from different parts of Pale of Settlement roughly corresponded with the distribution of Jewish population in the same region²⁷.

The Jews generally formed migratory chains within their own ethnic group and families. They did not differ from non-Jewish emigrants here, although it seems that in the case of the Jewish population, „their” chains were less accessible to „strangers”. The specificity of the Jewish community, social and economic situation, legal and political discrimination in the Kingdom of Poland and Russia were reflected in the way of arranging emigration and forming migratory streams, as well as in the target country of settlement²⁸.

The social and professional structure of the Jewish emigration from the 1880s to the beginning of 20th century underwent major transformations, above all in qualitative terms. More and more skilled workers with higher professional expertise, as well as relatively well-educated people set to leave. The latter was related to the development of Jewish and in general political movements, mainly Zionist and socialist ones²⁹. Although the percentage of Jews with professions such as teachers, rabbis, engineers, doctors, journalists or musicians did not increase radically within the entire immigrant population, they had a significant influence on the character of the Jewish communities in New York and other American cities. For example, in 1899, 91 secular teachers from Russia came to the United States, and in 1907, already 296; in 1899, 197 engineers, doctors, economists, journalists and other people with higher education came to the United States, and 1045 in 1907³⁰. It may be assumed that similar proportions concerned Jewish newcomers from the Kingdom of Poland.

In the years 1899–1910, according to American sources, the illiterate comprised 209,507 out of 806,786 Jews who came to the USA, which accounted for 26% of all respondents (the survey covered men and women of Jewish faith aged over 14 years from European countries). The percentage of illiterate Jews arriving in the United States between 1902 and 1911 was 19.8%, which was higher than the percentage for Czechs (1.3%), Germans (4.4%), Italians (9.8%) and Hungarians (10.1%), but much lower than for

²⁷ *Ibidem*, s. 546.

²⁸ J. Kulpińska, *Migracje z polskiej wsi do Stanów Zjednoczonych: Listy pasażerów statków jako źródło badań migracji z polskiej wsi do Stanów Zjednoczonych. Studium przypadku powiatu strzyżowskiego*, w: *Polityka migracyjna w obliczu współczesnych wyzwań: teoria i praktyka*, red. H. Chałupczak et al., Lublin 2018, s. 497–500.

²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ I. Howe, *op. cit.*, s. 59–60.

Russians (including Ukrainians, Belarusians, Lithuanians and emigrants from other parts of the Empire, at 50.5%), Romanians (35%), Slavs from the South and Poles (32.3%)³¹. A Jewish emigrant was most often a craftsman (64%), less often an unskilled worker or servant (21%), carpenter or woodworker (9.7%) or a tradesman (5.5%)³². The Jewish immigrants, due to their experience and professional skills from the „old country”, were more skilled than other European immigrants, especially in the garment trades. As Karen Brodtkin pointed out, by 1914, with 510,000 workers and 15,000 shops, the annual payroll came to 326 million USD; New York City produced two-thirds of the value of all apparel made in the USA³³.

CIRCUMSTANCES AND REASONS OF EMIGRATION

During the half-century separating the end of the civil war in the USA and the outbreak of the First World War, the country received not less than 35 million emigrants. Overpopulation in Europe, economic difficulties and, finally, the poverty experienced by the inhabitants of the southern and eastern parts of the continent led to the decision to leave their home country. Another „pushing factor” was the initiative taken by the governments of the USA, Canada and South American countries to offer free or symbolic payment for land to anyone who decided to cultivate them. Besides, the rapidly developing American cities and the progress of industrialization guaranteed hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

In addition to economic factors, in the case of Jewish emigrants, especially from Central and Eastern Europe, another factor encouraged them to leave: anti-Semitism, fear and doubts, which were becoming more and more widespread, especially in the Russian Empire, but also in Romania and elsewhere in Western Europe. According to older historiography, this factor was even decisive³⁴. This obsolete thesis is already abandoned³⁵, although there is no doubt that the pogroms in Russia from 1881–1882 and

³¹ K. Hödl, *op. cit.*, s. 94–95.

³² P. Wróbel, *Przed odzyskaniem niepodległości*, w: *Najnowsze dzieje Żydów w Polsce*, red. J. Tomaszewski, Warszawa 1993, s. 30.

³³ K. Brodtkin, *How Jews Became White Folks and What That Says about Race in America*, New Brunswick–New Jersey–London 2000, s. 62.

³⁴ See L. Caro, *Statystyka emigracji polskiej i austro-węgierskiej do Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki Północnej*, Kraków 1907, s. 21.

³⁵ S. Ury, *Jewish migration in modern times: the case of Eastern Europe*, „East European Jewish Affairs” 2017, 47, s. 127–128; Y. Spitzer, *Pogroms, Networks, and Migration: Jewish Migration from the Russian Empire to the United States 1881–1914*, <http://eh.net/eha/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Spitzer.pdf>, s. 5–7, 26 [dostęp: 20 XII 2020].

1905–1906 were a factor conducive to emigration. The permanent sense of threat and uncertainty of tomorrow were for many people decisive and might have speed up the decision to leave, but it was not a *condicio sine qua non* for emigration. The fact that in many regions of Pale of Settlement the economic situation worsened, labour markets contracted, and a number of restrictions were imposed on the Jewish population (e.g., a list of professions allowed for Jews, prohibiting the possession and lease of agricultural land, living in villages, alcohol trading, changes of residence and restricting the possibility of movement), with the specificity of Jewish trade and services, meant ruin for thousands of families. In the last years of the 19th century, up to 40% of Jewish families in Pale of Settlement benefited from public charity³⁶. It was not pogrom, but poverty and the lack of prospects for improvement of one's position that were the main reason for emigration. The Jewish middle class generally managed to rebuild their economic position in other parts of Russia, including the Kingdom of Poland. Some estimates even mentioned 100,000 so-called Litvaks, as the Jews from Lithuanian and Russian gubernyas were called who settled in Warsaw after 1881–1882. For these people, better educated, wealthier, with connections in Russia, internal emigration within the borders of the Russian Empire seemed to be better option than the oversea emigration. Many of them managed to integrate and succeed in the Kingdom of Poland, despite the initial reluctance from the local Jewish communities. It can be assumed that if the economic condition of Russian Jewry and the economic situation of the Russian state had been better, despite the pogroms, such mass emigration would not have taken place³⁷. In the later years, when the number of Russian-Jewish emigrants in America was greater and it was relatively easier to leave, counting on the help of already established relatives, anti-Semitism and pogroms were a factor that stimulated waves of emigrants to a greater extent and facilitated the decision to leave. The number of Jews leaving Russia after the pogroms in Kishinev and Odessa, respectively in 1903 and 1905, or the events of 1905–1907, increased considerably. The anti-Jewish riots and pogroms of the revolutionary years of 1905–1907 made more and more Jews look for a new ideology in order to solve the „Jewish question” and ensure the safety of the Jewish people in the future³⁸. Emigration to America and starting the „new life in New World” was one of the solutions.

³⁶ R. Strauss-Feuerlicht, *The Fate of the Jews. A People Torn Between Israeli Power and Jewish Ethnics*, New York–Toronto 1983, s. 83.

³⁷ A. Hertzberg, *The Jews in America*, New York 1997, s. 141.

³⁸ S. Ury, *The Jews of the Russian Empire in a Time of Revolution and Violence, 1904–1907: An Introduction*, „Studia Judaica” 2017, 20, 1, s. 2–15.

The number of emigrants from the late 1890s was also higher for strictly political reasons. However, this does not change the thesis that anti-Semitism was of secondary importance. Analysing the volume of migration from individual cities and regions of Russia affected by the pogroms, Leah Boustan writes: „The effect of a pogrom shock on the migration flow appears to die out after a single year. However, these short-term shocks can have long-run effects by increasing the stock of Jews living in the United States”³⁹.

Let us note that in the Austro-Hungarian Galicia the Jewish population enjoyed at least officially, equal rights, were not exposed to official, in general opinion state-sponsored anti-Semitism like in the Russian Empire, and to a lesser extent had to fear anti-Jewish incidents and pogroms, and yet the volume of Jewish emigration also increased steadily and was proportionately similar to that of emigration from Russia⁴⁰. Like most immigrants, Jews saw in America an opportunity to escape the poverty. The decision to emigrate was made by the poor – craftsmen, tradesmen, rarely workers and small officials – who managed to borrow and sell out of all possible values to obtain money for the journey. These were the ones who had relatively little to lose, but at the same time the most active, mobile and operative persons. Representatives of the Jewish middle class rarely decided to leave, even though the perspectives of being better off and educated people were more promising and made it more likely that they would succeed in business or make a career in the booming New World⁴¹.

Natural growth, related to overcrowding, urbanisation and industrialization, facilitated internal migration from rural to urban areas, which enabled foreign and overseas emigration, e.g., through larger connections and easier access to means of transport. It is worth noting one more factor: „The United States Post Office [...] was a wonderful emigration agent in Europe. Letters and money, sent to the remaining relatives in the country, gave birth to those desires and dreams that pushed new emigrants to America”⁴².

Leaving the shtetl or family village was often associated with emancipation from the long undivided, traditional Orthodox influences⁴³. From Warsaw or Łódź, it was closer to the port in Bremen and further to New York than from the shtetl in the Lublin or Kielce gubernyas – and it was

³⁹ L.P. Boustan, *op. cit.*, s. 282.

⁴⁰ E.M. Scott, *Galician Jews as Migrants: An Alternative Hypothesis*, „Austrian History Yearbook” 1975, 11, s. 59–63.

⁴¹ A. Hertzberg, *op. cit.*, s. 141.

⁴² J. Okołowicz, *op. cit.*, s. 19.

⁴³ L.P. Boustan, *op. cit.*, s. 273.

not only about geographical distance, but above all about crossing certain mental boundaries. Departure from the shtetl to the city required courage, and was associated with major changes in life, but then it was easier to decide on the next step and go overseas.

As we know, there were many Jewish women amongst the immigrants. Emigration also opened up new opportunities for Jewish women. In America, as in the eastern Europe, they „were not the focus of communal blame, although their changed roles and their special responsibility for cultural transmission were duly noted”⁴⁴. In some way Jewish women became agents and pioneers of assimilation in America. Availability of jobs, easy availability of consumer goods and leisure-time facility, facilitated Americanization of women. However, it was connected with the generational conflict between parents and children. Immigrants’ sons and daughters have criticized on their parents’ contentment with remaining in a ghetto milieu, surrounded by Yiddish-speaking neighbours⁴⁵. This does not change the fact that so-called *landsmanshaftn*, organizations bringing together emigrants coming from the same locality, played a great role both in the organization of departures and in the life of Jewish immigration in the USA, especially in the first generations of emigrants⁴⁶. The *landsmanshaftn* offered various sorts of life insurance and other benefits, provided small loans for business start-ups and small loans, and helped find jobs and housing. Daniel Soyer writes: „In addition to their social functions, fraternal organizations provided mutual aid to their members. This had both material and symbolic significance in a country whose people regarded self-reliance highly”⁴⁷. Jewish emigrants’ contacts with the Old World did not end with the migration to America. These ties were maintained and developed in the following decades, and the role that the emigrants played in the economy of the Polish lands cannot be overestimated⁴⁸.

⁴⁴ P.E. Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History. The Roles and Representation of Women*, Seattle–London 1997, s. 96–97.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, s. 97–98.

⁴⁶ On the role that *landsmanshaftn* played in the life of Jewish immigration and diaspora in the United States, see: R. Kobrin, *When a Jew was a ‘Landsman’*. *Rethinking American Jewish regional identity in the age of mass migration*, „Journal of Modern Jewish Studies” 2007, 8, s. 357–376.

⁴⁷ D. Soyer, *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880–1939: Jewish Landsmanshaftn in American Culture*, Detroit 2018, s. 30.

⁴⁸ We do not have statistics for the earlier period, but according to later estimates, beginning in 1930, the value of foreign currency remittances transferred from abroad to residents of small Jewish religious communities in Poland reached 150 million zlotys per year. See: J. Orlicki, *Szkice z dziejów stosunków polsko-żydowskich 1918–1949*, Szczecin 1983, s. 52.

The overseas emigration was criticized by orthodox spheres, which set the tone for the life of the Jewish community in small towns and settlements, and even in the Jewish neighbourhoods of large cities⁴⁹. This, however, had little impact on the volume of migration, and orthodox circles would soon try to „manage” the emigrants in the New World, provide them with care and religious service on the spot, and Chassidic courts will try to gain supporters among the emigrants in their new place of residence.

In the Polish literature on the subject (before 1939), one more reason was pointed out for Jewish emigration: at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries a cooperative movement began to develop in Poland, which exerted quite a significant influence on the emigration of petit Jewish traders and craftsmen. Polish and Ukrainian cooperative stores were to be serious competition for Jewish trade, especially in less-urbanized regions of the state⁵⁰. However, this theme still requires in-depth source research, made more difficult by the lack of authoritative statistical materials on economic relations in the Kingdom of Poland.

The number of migrating Jews was undoubtedly influenced by the military reform of 1874 in Russia, which introduced universal military service. Until then, the Jewish communities, on the order of the authorities, issued an appropriate number of recruits per year, which in practice allowed many young people, especially from wealthier families, to be exonerated from military service. After 1874, all men of the appropriate age became threatened with conscription to the army. Fragmentary research suggests that the number of migrants from the Kingdom of Poland increased after the outbreak of the war with Japan, the 1905–1907 revolution and before the First World War⁵¹. In February 1905, the police in the Kingdom of Poland estimated that deserters constituted 80% of the emigrants illegally crossing the border. A similar regularity can be observed in the case of Lithuanian gubernas⁵². Indeed, an official correspondence between the General Government in Warsaw and the governors of individual governorates is full of issues regarding deserters and people evading military service, often Jews⁵³.

⁴⁹ S. Birmingham, *‘The Rest of Us’. The Rise of America’s Eastern European Jews*, Boston-Toronto 1984, s. 13–14; C. Goldscheider, A.S. Zuckerman, *The Transformation of the Jews*, Chicago 1984, s. 100; N.L. Green, *op. cit.*, s. 71–79; I. Howe, *op. cit.*, s. 27–28.

⁵⁰ S. Pawłowski, *O emigracji Żydów z Polski*, Warszawa 1937, s. 14–15, 24.

⁵¹ K. Hödl, *op. cit.*, s. 87–90; *International Migrations*, vol. 2, s. 545.

⁵² T. Balkelis, *Opening Gates to the West: Lithuanian and Jewish Migrations from the Lithuanian Provinces, 1867–1914*, „Etniškumo Studijos/Ethnicity Studies” 2010, 1–2, s. 53–54; M. Starczewski, *Z dziejów emigracji zarobkowej: agencji emigracyjni na ziemiach polskich przed 1914 r.*, „Przegląd Historyczny” 2012, 103, 1, s. 65.

⁵³ V.V. Obolensky-Ossinsky, *op. cit.*, s. 552.

MIGRATION ROUTES

Jews from Ukrainian gubernyas and southern Russia most often crossed the border near Brody on the Austrian side, and then travelled by train to Vienna or Berlin⁵⁴. Then, in smaller groups, they went to Hamburg or Bremen, or embarked in Rotterdam and Amsterdam in the Netherlands, or in Belgian Antwerp. Jews from the Baltic and Belarusian gubernyas crossed the Russian-German border and headed for one of these ports via Berlin. Theoretically, Ukrainian Jews were able to sail on ships arriving in Odessa and heading for America, calling at Mediterranean ports on their way, or alternatively changing there, but the journey from Odessa was longer and more expensive. Most of the Jewish migration was illegal, and it was more difficult to embark without a valid passport on a ship in a Russian port, such as Odessa, than to cross the „green border“ without a permit. At the beginning of the 20th century the Baltic Lipava (Libau) started to compete with Bremen, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Antwerp and Liverpool, but the port located in Russia served mainly legal emigration from Lithuanian and Belarusian gubernyas and enjoyed little popularity among Jews from the Kingdom of Poland. In 1904, it served a large group of emigrants, including 21,000 Jews, but could not threaten the above-mentioned ports, especially the German ones⁵⁵.

A legal emigrant had to have a passport, which entailed high costs. Total amount for travelling by rail through Germany and embarkation in Bremen or Hamburg – even taking into account the fees associated with illegal border crossings (bribes or guide fees) – turned out to be lower⁵⁶. An important catalyst for increasing the frequency and volume of Jewish emigration was the legalisation of the offices of the Jewish Colonization Society and the Hebrew Emigration Society in the Pale of Settlement, although, as I mentioned, this was of lesser importance in the case of the Kingdom of Poland. Thanks to a large-scale information campaign and significant help provided by Jewish foundations and societies, the situation of emigrants has improved significantly. In 1890, Germany lifted the 5-year ban on admitting seasonal workers from Russia and lifted the nu-

⁵⁴ Although the the first wave of refugees was triggered by the pogroms in southern Russia in 1881–1882, in the following years for thousands of Russian Jews Brody, cross-border city between Austrian Galicia and Russia, was the first stop in their way to the West and the New World. B. Kuzmany, *Brody. Eine galizische Grenzstadt im langen 19. Jahrhundert*, Vienna–Cologne–Weimar 2011, *passim*.

⁵⁵ T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 50, 58, 60–61; N.J. Evans, *The port Jews of Libau, 1880–1914*, „Jewish Culture and History“ 2004, 7, 1–2, s. 197–214.

⁵⁶ I. Howe, *op. cit.*, s. 28–29; T. Feys, *op. cit.*, s. 83–84.

merical limits for transmission from Bremen and Hamburg. These regulations significantly facilitated trips from Poland to the USA via Germany, especially that a strictly controlled emigration system had been set up to maximise the profits from transport, while at the same time ensuring that emigrants would not settle in Germany⁵⁷. Emigrants who had ship tickets, purchased or paid for in shipping companies not belonging to the HAPAG and Lloyd cartels operating from Hamburg and Bremen, were often not allowed through Prussian territory. This guaranteed the wages of the German companies and prevented unwanted emigrants from staying in Germany. In practice, every Polish overseas emigrant who could not identify himself with a ticket issued by one of the German companies was turned back at the border⁵⁸.

Travelling conditions were disastrous, and most people did so in the cheapest class. In 1903, the cheapest ticket from Bremen or Antwerp to New York was 33.5 and 34 dollars respectively. Although modest meals were usually included in the ticket price, many Jews could not use them because they were not kosher. Shipowners usually did not run a separate kitchen for Jewish passengers, especially since they were usually the cheapest class passengers. The situation changed in the last decade before WWI, the HAPAG and the White Star Line companies served kosher food, as did the Red Star Line and Lloyd by 1912. The Hamburg-America Line did not, but this have not affected its popularity among Russian and Polish Jews⁵⁹. However, the condition of migrating people improved. While the average Jewish emigrant in the last decade of the nineteenth century brought 5 dollars with him to the USA, it rose at the turn of the century up to 7, in the years between 1905 and 1909 even to 31 dollars. It was usually much more than a peasant settler from Galicia, the Kingdom of Poland or Lithuania; yet it must be remembered that Jews, unlike non-Jewish emigrants, usually left permanently and often with whole families, so they had previously turned into money all their property⁶⁰.

The development of the railway also contributed to the increase in migration, making it easier and cheaper to reach larger cities. The growing number of potential emigrants created excellent earning opportunities for

⁵⁷ T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 54; J. Oltmer, „Verbotswidrige Einwanderung nach Deutschland“: *Osteuropäische Juden im Kaiserreich und in der Weimarer Republik*, „Aschkenas“ 2007, 17, s. 98–112.

⁵⁸ J. Okołowicz, *op. cit.*, s. 123–124.

⁵⁹ T. Feys, *op. cit.*, s. 175.

⁶⁰ I. Howe, *op. cit.*, s. 39; K. Hödl, *op. cit.*, s. 29–30, 38–42, 87, 96; A. Markowski, *Między wschodem a zachodem. Rodzina i gospodarstwo domowe Żydów Suwalskich w pierwszej połowie XIX wieku*, Warszawa 2008, s. 63.

ocean lines and employment agencies, but it also forced competition between them and led to lower prices⁶¹. Another thing is that the tsarist authorities did not carry out the planned emigration action, but they made it difficult and often treated it as a crime. Issuing the passport was subject to many limitations, and the costs associated with the procedure for obtaining it often exceeded the financial capabilities of the family of an average emigrant. So, none of the emigrants intended to return from USA within the time limit set by the authorities and the period of validity of the passport and in practice meant that the possibility of returning to the country was closed⁶². It was not until 1914 that a bill was drafted which provided for the retention of Russian citizenship by seasonal migrants, but due to the outbreak of the war, the bill was never debated at the Russian State Duma⁶³. The effect of the authorities' policy was illegal emigration: crossing the border using someone else's passport, a temporary exit permit or a pass entitling to cross the border issued to the residents of the border strip, and finally a bribe to an „appropriate” amount.

This situation gave rise to various types of abuse, but the emergence of a greater number of legally operating emigration agents in the 1890s, distributing ship tickets and facilitating the completion of formalities, greatly facilitated emigration. For example, the report of the Governor General of Warsaw of July 1907 refers to 20 legally operating exchange offices (in Warsaw – 4, in the Warsaw gubernya – 6, Piotrów – 3, Kalisz – 2, Płock – 2, Radom – 1, Siedlce – 1, Suwałki – 1). In fact, in the areas covered by refugee traffic, shipowners' agents could be found in every city and town, and even in some villages. They were mostly Jewish tavern and shopkeepers, but also mayors, community officials, teachers, post office workers, sometimes even priests and rabbis. However, the majority of agents were Jews, which was often emphasized in police reports and criticized in the Polish press. The advertisement of the Warsaw agency Wiśniewski and Muszyński is characteristic with the slogan: „Continental Travel Agency. The only Christian one”⁶⁴.

Of course, with the scale of illegal emigration, there were also established companies that were illegal or engaged in smuggling people, for

⁶¹ On the role of the shipping companies in coordinating the pro-immigration campaign in the USA, influence on the legislators as well as in mobilisation of the public opinion, see Torsten Feys, *Between the public and the State: The Shipping Lobby's Strategies against US Immigration Restrictions 1882–1917*, „*International Migration Review*” 2015, 49, 4, s. 1–27.

⁶² H. Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia*, Hampshire–London 1986, s. 178.

⁶³ T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 61.

⁶⁴ M. Starczewski, *op. cit.*, s. 50, 66.

whom the signboard of the emigration office was only a convenient excuse to foster their activity. The smugglers acted as solicitors (they also had their agents in the cities and towns located deep in Russia), and proper agents acting on behalf of the ocean lines already in the Prussian partition. The agents were mostly Jews, but the smuggling network also included peasants from border towns, providing accommodation and means of transportation and leading people across the „green border”. The police at railway stations and border guards were also most often involved. There were also intermediaries in the Kingdom who forged passports or prepared them for people who did not actually intend to leave. After all, their almost authentic passports were later sold to those interested in leaving. As mentioned above, most of the agents were Jews, and the ethnic structure of the agents in the Lithuanian gubernyas and Galicia was similar⁶⁵.

After 1905 the restrictive migration regulations in Russia were somewhat reduced. This can be seen in an attempt to calm the public opinion loose social moods after the Russian-Japanese war and the events of the so-called 1905 revolution. The Russian authorities had also attempted to compete with tycoons in servicing overseas emigration from Russia, German ocean lines such as Hamburg-American-Line and North German Lloyd, which operated from Bremen. In 1906, the Volunteer Fleet ocean line was created, directly connecting Lipava with New York. Due to financial losses, the line was closed in 1908 and replaced by the Russia-America Line, which from 1912 connected Lipava and Halifax⁶⁶. As mentioned earlier, the new campaign did not threaten the hegemony in transatlantic transport of German companies, but Lipava turned out to be another important transit point on the map of overseas emigrants from Russia and Lithuania. For understandable reasons, the new port was not very popular among the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Poland: it could be used by the inhabitants of the Suwałki gubernya only, although we should remember that Lipava handled legal emigration.

CONCLUSIONS

Jews from the Kingdom of Poland were the first among the inhabitants of the Russian Empire to establish legal and illegal migration channels. This was due to the proximity of the German-Russian border, and thus easier access to German ports, as well as family ties and other inhabitants

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, s. 67–68; T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 59–61.

⁶⁶ T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 62.

of the western provinces of the Kingdom with their fellow worshippers who found themselves on the other side of the border after the partitions of Poland. It was from the Prussian partition that Polish Jews emigrated to the USA as early as in the 1830s and 1840s⁶⁷. Despite the fact that Jews in the Poznań province soon after their naturalisation become the „German Jews”, in many communities the ties with Polishness and relatives in the Kingdom of Poland survived for a long time⁶⁸. These relationships had to translate to a large extent into access to migration networks. It is therefore appropriate to agree that the existence of migration networks was an almost necessary condition for the emergence of migration on a wider scale. The fact that emigration from the Kingdom was for a long time much greater than from other areas of Russia, affected not only by anti-Jewish violence and economic restrictions, but also much poorer, was a natural continuation of migration process initiated in the first half of the century. It is no coincidence, as Yannay Spitzer points out, that in the years between 1882 and 1905 there were four times as many Jewish *landsmanshaftn* from the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania in the USA as there were Jews from the southern provinces of Russia affected by the pogroms⁶⁹. The pogroms of 1881 (the Kiev pogrom of 1881 is considered the worst one) spreading across a big territory of modern-day Ukraine: Podolia, Volyn, Chernigov, Yekaterinoslav⁷⁰. Additional factors favouring migration were the development of the railway network facilitating the mobility of residents, German policy and competition of ocean lines as well as, finally, the threat of military conscription after the 1874 reform.

Anti-Semitism was generally exaggerated in older historiography (of the more famous works by Simon Dubnow, Raphael Mahler, Mark Wischnitzer and others)⁷¹ as well as in official reports and analyses pre-

⁶⁷ D. Praszałowicz, K. Makowski, A.A. Zięba, *Mechanizmy zamorskich migracji łańcuchowych w XIX wieku: Polacy, Niemcy, Żydzi, Rusini*, Kraków 2004, s. 78–79.

⁶⁸ T. Serrier, *Zwischen Inklusion und Exklusion: jüdische Erinnerungen im Spannungsfeld der deutschen und polnischen Nationsbildungen in der Provinz Posen des Kaiserreichs*, w: *Verflochtene Erinnerungen. Polen und seine Nachbarn im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, red. M. Aust, K. Ruchniewicz, S. Troebst, Cologne 2009, s. 173–188.

⁶⁹ Y. Spitzer, *op. cit.*, s. 19–20, 32.

⁷⁰ M. Aronson, *op. cit.*, s. 21–27.

⁷¹ S. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, from the Earliest Times Until the Present Day*, transl. I. Friedlaender, Philadelphia 1916, *passim*; R. Mahler, *The Economic Background of Jewish Emigration from Galicia to the United States*, w: *East European Jews in Two Worlds: Studies from the YIVO Annual*, red. D.D. Moore, Evanston 1990, *passim*; M. Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety: The Story of Jewish Migration Since 1800*, Philadelphia 1948, *passim*.

pared on behalf of the Russia's opponents and critics⁷², and the beginning of mass Jewish migration had little to do with the 1881 crisis. Although pogroms could have had a major impact on the tendency to migrate, it could not materialize in 1881, as in 1905, because the victims had not yet been linked to previous migration chains. The economic situation and poverty were the main reasons for emigration, but the level of poverty did not always translate directly into the volume of migration. Until the 1880s, transatlantic emigration from Russia was almost non-existent, due to the lack of migration networks; this also explains why the earliest emigrants from Russia were inhabitants of gubernyas located in the immediate vicinity of Germany, which made it much easier to cross the border and reach German ports. Among these first emigrants were Jewish residents of the Polish gubernyas bordering Germany, although they were not the poorest regions in Russia at all. After 1881, these areas were hardly affected by the wave of pogroms that took place in the years 1881–1882⁷³.

The first Jewish emigrants also came from the Suwałki gubernya in the Kingdom of Poland, however, one should remember about some differences that characterized the Jewish emigration from this region. The local Jews were considered Litvaks and were clearly different from the Jewish communities in the other gubernyas of the Kingdom, and the Suwałki region itself occupied a special place in the path of eastern migration. The region located between Lithuanian and Belarusian gubernyas, bordering on Prussia, represented the best transit for the crowds of Jewish emigrants from the East. Not affected by the wave of direct anti-Jewish violence, it was, however, an exceptionally poorly urbanised and industrialized region. Poverty, a lack or very limited possibilities of internal migration and the ease of crossing the „green border” with Prussia made the Suwałki region one of the first outbreaks of Jewish emigration overseas. The economic situation, violence and discrimination – even if not experienced directly – could, however, have been an important determinant of the permanent nature of Jewish emigration or facilitating the decision to remain in the country of exile⁷⁴.

A separate topic is the fate of Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe in America, which has already been the subject of many studies⁷⁵. Let us

⁷² See L. Caro, *Statystyka*, s. 21; *Urzędowa krytyka obecnego systemu paszportowego w Rosyi*, „Polski Przegląd Emigracyjny” 1909, 14, s. 19–21.

⁷³ Y. Spitzer, *op. cit.*, s. 8, 26.

⁷⁴ T. Balkelis, *op. cit.*, s. 49–53, 63; A. Markowski, *op. cit.*, s. 62–63.

⁷⁵ See for example: H.L. Feingold, *A Time for Searching. Entering the Mainstream 1920–1945*, Baltimore–London 1992, s. 2–124; G. Sorin, *A Time for Building. The Third Migration 1880–1920*, Baltimore–London 1992, s. 69–169.

only recall that nearly 2 million Eastern European Jews (*Ostjuden*) had little in common with the approximately 250,000 American Jewish population, often representing reformed Judaism, blended into the local community⁷⁶. The cultural differences between Russian or Galician Jews and Jews who had settled in America beforehand, mainly from Germany, were enormous. The latter, involved in other fields of industry and commerce, lawyers, doctors, editors and journalists, more and more often holding positions in the state administration, were not afraid of competition from the Polish or Russian tailor from New York's Lower East Side⁷⁷. The support of Jewish organizations and the Jewish lobby in the USA for immigration was dictated both by their representation of liberal business interests, as well as for humanitarian reasons⁷⁸.

However, there were fears of an increase in anti-Semitism, to which a mass influx of backward and poor Jews from the East might have contributed⁷⁹. These fears were all the greater because often the non-Jewish American society as well as „old“ American Jews knew very little about Eastern European Jewish newcomers⁸⁰. Despite the undoubtedly great contributions that immigrants made to the economic development of the United States, significant part of the American society looked upon them with disfavour. It will be recalled that in the days of Great Immigration, the Dillingham Commission was established to check who was coming to the USA and for what purpose. The results of its investigation, announced in 1911, proved a clear dislike of the Commission for emigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe (including Jews), as undesirable and allegedly extremely difficult to assimilate in the States⁸¹.

The outbreak of the First World War halted the outward movement. In the years 1914–1918 the number of Polish Jews in the USA increased only slightly. Even before the United States joined the war, the German and

⁷⁶ H. Diner, *A Time for Gathering. The Second Migration 1820–1880*, Baltimore–London 1992, s. 232; J. Kabakoff, *The View from the Old World: East European Jewish Perspective*, w: *The Americanization of the Jews*, red. R.M. Seltzer, N.J. Cohen, New York 1995, s. 41.

⁷⁷ M. Małoka, *The everyday life of Lower East Side Jews on the turn of the 19th and 20th century – selected aspects in the light of American daily press*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Towarzystwa Doktorantów Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Nauki Społeczne“ 2015, 11, 2, s. 81–96.

⁷⁸ K. MacDonald, *Jewish Involvement in Shaping American Immigration Policy, 1881–1965: A Historical Review*, „Population and Environment. A Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies“ 1998, 19, 4, s. 309–311.

⁷⁹ L. Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America*, New York–Oxford 1994, s. 35–57.

⁸⁰ I. Friedlander, *The Division Between German and Russian Jews*, w: *The Jew in the Modern World. A Documentary History*, red. P. Mendes-Flohr, J. Reinharz, New York–Oxford 1995, s. 486–487.

⁸¹ W.P. Dillingham, *Emigration Conditions in Europe, United States Immigration Commission (1907–1910)*, Washington 1911, s. 7295–7297.

Austro-Hungarian occupation authorities in the Kingdom of Poland were hindering emigration in general – not only the Jewish one – not wanting to diminish the reservoir of labour and possibly recruiters. The entrance of the USA into the war practically closed the possibility of legal travel to this country⁸². This had an impact, as did the difficulties associated with correspondence and the transfer of money, on the material situation of relatives left behind in the country.

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⁸² G. Alroey, *Between the straits: Jewish immigration to the United States and Palestine, 1915–1925*, „East European Jewish Affairs” 2017, 47, s. 151–154.

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