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**JEWISH COMMUNITY OF BERDYCHIV
AND THE EARLY SOVIET POLICIES**

Master's Thesis

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INTRODUCTION¹

Berdychiv² is a city in the central part of contemporary Ukraine in Zhytomyr oblast. Its documented history dates back to the 16th century, and the local Jewish community has its origins in the 18th century. In the 19th century it was the second biggest Jewish settlement after Odessa on the territory of the Pale of Settlement. The Pale of Settlement was a region in the Western provinces of the Russian Empire where Jews were legally permitted to live. Its borders varied during its existence from 1791 to 1917.

I became interested in the Jewish history of Berdychiv, and particularly its historical Jewish cemetery, while participating in an international research team tasked with surveying this cemetery.³ The expeditions were undertaken at the request of the local Jewish community in the summers of 2016, 2017 and 2018 in order to catalogue the local necropolis. Our activities included mapping the cemetery, copying the texts of the epitaphs and translating them into Russian and English, making photos and describing decorations (more details in Len 2017). The decision to catalogue the cemetery was motivated by a number of reasons. Berdychiv Jewish cemetery is a pilgrimage destination because one of the religious leaders of the past, Levi Itzhok, is buried there. There is furthermore a growing genealogical interest by Jews of Berdychiv origin living abroad now to search for their ancestors.

Thus, when I started to study at the “Folkloristics and Applied Heritage Studies” programme, I already knew that I wanted to conduct research on the Jewish necropolis in Berdychiv. My intention was to investigate its history, the specifics of its organization, style of texts and decorations, and compare them to other Jewish cemeteries in the region. In search for additional materials, I visited Ukrainian archives and libraries during three research trips

¹ This work was supported by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research under the personal research grant PSG48.

² Here and afterwards I will spell toponyms transliterating them from their modern Ukrainian variant if there is no commonly agreed upon English equivalent.

³ Expeditions in 2016, 2017 and 2018 were headed by T. Solomatina and M. Gordon (Saint-Petersburg, Russia), experienced specialists in exploring Jewish cemeteries. Other members of the team were Hebrew scholars E. Karaseva (Russia), V. Alekseeva (Russia), B. Rashkovskiy (Russia), historians D. Melnik (Russia) and K. Gavrilenko (Belarus), philologist E. Diakiva (Russia), culturologists D. Genkina (Russia) and D. Bakhtadze (Russia), Jewish activist Y. Verkhalevsky (Belarus) and photographer L. Dubinchina (Belarus).



Figure 1 Pale of Settlement, 1855. Credit: YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe.

undertaken in 2018.⁴ As a result, I found fascinating documents about Jewish history of Berdychiv, though not exactly what I had expected. I discovered documents on Berdychiv demography and Jewish institutions in 19th century, and also about the closing of synagogues, language issues, and disputes over national minorities' rights in the 1920's. What impressed me the most, however, was the story about an old Jewish cemetery in Berdychiv that had been destroyed in 1929 and replaced by a city park. It made me ponder the reasons for such a radical decision, what preceded this event and how it was perceived by local Jews. The work in the archives led me to change the angle of my topic and I decided to dedicate my Master's thesis to the history of Sovietization of Berdychiv Jewry within the broader context of national and religious policies of the early USSR.

The main goal of this thesis is to reveal the typical and specific aspects of early Soviet policies towards the Jewish community of Berdychiv. Towards this end, this study sets several objectives:

- to explore cultural meanings of Berdychiv as a Jewish place;
- to review the historical development of the Jewish community in Berdychiv;
- to specify the process of Jews' Sovietization in Berdychiv;
- to analyze Berdychiv Jewry's perception of Soviet policies;
- to study the symbolic meaning of the destruction of the local Jewish cemetery in 1929.

The first chapter of my thesis is devoted to sources that underpin my work. The empirical basis for my research is made up of documents I discovered in various Ukrainian archives. They contain information about the institutions of the Berdychiv Jewish community as well as about the social and demographical structure of the city in the 19th - early 20th centuries. The bulk of archival resources, however, is connected with files of Berdychiv Soviet authority bodies in the 1920's and the documents of the local city museum. To the best of my knowledge, many of these sources have not been presented or even actively used in historical literature dedicated to the Berdychiv Jewry and I have not come across studies dedicated to this topic. The theoretical foundation of my thesis is based on academic works on national and religious policy in the Soviet Union, modernization in the early USSR, history of Jews

⁴ The trips during 09.04.2018 - 20.04.2018 and 16.09.2018 - 28.09.2018 were carried out thanks to the Dora Plus and the Kristjan Jaak scholarships, respectively.

in the Russian Empire and early Soviet Union as well as on studies by local historians of Berdychiv.

The second chapter is devoted to the development of the Jewish community of Berdychiv from the late 18th century up to the early 20th century and the imaginary meanings of Berdychiv first in the Russian Empire, then in the Soviet Union and finally among the post-Soviet Russian-speaking Jewry and its ethnical neighbours. Berdychiv became a synonym for the Jewish little city (shtetl in Yiddish) in the middle of the 19th century, which partly explains why authorities both in the Russian Empire and later in the USSR showed peculiar interest in this place. I think it is important to understand what preceded Sovietization because without this historical background it would not be clear what the Soviet authorities intended to change in the life of the Jewish community.

The third chapter focuses on the Sovietization of the Berdychiv Jewry in the 1920's. I intended to analyze what factors influenced this process, what methods the authorities used to modernize the life of the Jewish community and how the latter perceived those efforts. My special focus is on the destruction of the old Jewish cemetery in 1929 and its replacement by a city park. In my research I attempt to look at this event from the perspective of different agents interested in this site: Jewish community, city council and the local museum. I want to understand their intentions and motivation, using the concept of power relations by Foucault (1980). I also see this event as a symbolic act of Soviet modernization and not as an anti-Jewish act.

My thesis contains illustrations, such as maps and photos⁵, and is accompanied by an Appendix that gives an overview of demographics of the Jewish population in Berdychiv since the late 18th century until the present day. To create the table with this information, I used data provided in *Kratkaya evrejskaya enciklopediya na russkom yazyke* (The Shorter Jewish Encyclopedia in Russian) (Oren et al. 1975 - 2005), on the website of Nahum Center for Jewish Peoplehood (Berdichev, 2010), and in other publications on the history of Berdychiv (Horobchuk 2016; Kosich 1901). The numbers of the Jewish population during the 18th - early 20th century tend to vary in different sources as there was no a single system of collecting such a data during this period. Moreover, many Jews were traders and hence

⁵ If no credit is mentioned, the photo belongs to my personal archive.

highly mobile, which created further problems. Besides, the numbers were often submitted by the Jewish community itself and were sometimes lowered to avoid bigger taxation and military recruitment (Horobchuk 2016; Subbotin 1890).

I find it meaningful to explore Sovietization processes by means of local case studies such as Berdychiv for it helps to see the specific implementation of the Soviet policies and to avoid excessive generalizations in evaluation of the epoch. The case of Berdychiv is important in itself as it manifests crucial changes in the life of one of the noticeable Jewish communities of the former Pale of Settlement. In my research I intend to put local facts gleaned from archival documents of the city council, of the Jewish section of Berdychiv communist cell and from the city museum report into the wider context of national and religious policies of the early USSR. To analyze empirical material found in the archives, I draw on major works on Soviet policies (Martin 2001; Smith 2013; Hirsch 2005; Carrere d'Encausse 1992; Slezkine 1994). Material discovered in the archives and their analysis shed light on controversial power relations manifested in the events of the 1920's.

1. SOURCES AND PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

This chapter is devoted to the sources that I base my research on. I aim to analyze my archival survey and its influence on my focus, i.e. what kind of documents I found in the archives of Ukraine, how they helped to find the angle of my research and gave me the factology for the investigation. I will also review the academic resources which laid the theoretical foundation of my thesis, such as books and articles on early Soviet policies, Jewish culture and local history of Berdychiv.

1.2 Archival adventures: in search for the lost past

This subchapter is devoted to my archival peripeteia in Ukraine. I intend to explain and analyze the process of finding the focus of my research and discovering the relevant sources. Following R. F. Bendix (Bendix: 2015), I will attempt to look at my investigation through the lens of “archival habitus”.

My thesis is based on documents of several archives situated in Ukraine. I collected the materials during three research visits in 2018, two of which were carried out at the Center for Studies of History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry in Kyiv. The host organization is an institution specialized in the field of Jewish Studies. It houses some archival materials concerning Jewish history and culture in general and, in particular, on the Jewry of the lands that are now part of Ukraine. They also issue academic and artistic works about Jews, organize exhibitions and presentations. The goal of my work in the Center was to find materials concerning the topic of my master thesis. Besides working in the Center, I also visited several archives in Kyiv, Zhytomyr and Berdychiv:

- Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv (*Centralny derzhavny arkhiv Ukrainy, CDIAK*);
- Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (*Centralny derzhavny arkhiv vyschykh organiv vlady ta upravlinnya Ukrainy, CDAVO*);
- Scientific Archives of the Institute of Archeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (*NAIA NANU*);
- State Archives of Kiev Oblast (*Derzhavny arkhiv Kyivskoj oblasti, DAKO*);

- State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast (*Derzhavny arkhiv Zhytomirskoj oblasti, DAZHO*);
- Berdychiv Department of the State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast (*Berdychivski otdel derzhavnogo arkhiva Zhytomirskoj oblasti. BO DAZHO*).

The Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv was founded in 1852 as Kiev Central Archive of Ancient Acts. Today this institution keeps documents about the Ukrainian history when these lands were a part of the Great Duchy of Lithuania and Poland (14th – 18th centuries) and Russia (early 17th century up to February revolution in Russia in 1917). Most documents concern the history of the social-economic development of Ukraine in 19th – early 20th century. These archives contain a number of documents regarding Jewish history and culture on the territory of the contemporary Ukraine. Thus, I managed to find some records about the history of Berdychiv Jewish community in the 19th century, such as demographic statistics, numbers of synagogues and beth midrashes (places for studying Torah and Talmud), charity societies and maps of Berdychiv and its suburbs. The data I discovered there was helpful for a wider picture of the Jewish life in Berdychiv.

The Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine was founded in 1920 as Central State Archives of Revolution. The archives keep records of Soviet authority structures and state bodies on the territory of Ukraine since the 1917, when the Central Council of Ukraine was established up to today. Files from more than 300 source bodies are kept here. Amongst others are numerous documents about the Jewish history of that period. It is a big hub of internal documentation, minutes of meetings, protocols, correspondence and decrees of different state authorities concerning Jews. In these archives I found a number of papers from the 1920's -1930's concerning religious policies that supplied me with a more detailed picture of intricate national and religious politics towards Jews in early Soviet period: lists of religious communities, closing of synagogues and usage of these buildings for cultural and educational purposes, appeals of religious communities. Besides, the archives gave me several interesting documents about the old Jewish cemetery in Berdychiv and its demolition, such as minutes of the city council approving the decision about replacing the cemetery with a city park, protocols of discussions about turning this site into an ethnographic-historical reservation, correspondence of

Narkompros (People's Commissariat for Education) of Ukraine (Kharkov) and Okrvykonkom (Okrug Executive Committee) of Berdychiv where the former strongly restricted the latter to destruct the Jewish cemetery. These findings allowed me to assume that the local situation in Berdychiv reflected a messy system of Soviet authorities during the given period.

The Scientific Archives of the Institute of Archeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine keep documents regarding the activity of the Institute (founded in 1919), such as personal funds of academics, reports of archeological expeditions, old maps and photo negatives. Thanks to records from the personal archives of the Ukrainian historian, museologist and archeologist Todos Movchanivsky, I was able to make fascinating findings about demolishing the old Jewish cemetery in Berdychiv in 1929-30 when the central city park was built on its place. Movchanivsky was the initiator of archeological excavations of the old Jewish necropolis and its transformation into a historical ethnographic-historical reservation in 1928-1929. The archives preserve his reports, photos and diaries concerning Berdychiv in the 1920's – early 1930's.

The State Archives of Kiev Oblast was founded in 1782 as Archives of Kyiv governorship. My investigation in these archives didn't bring much result. According to the archival guide, there could be materials regarding Berdychiv cemeteries in 19th century, such as data about mapping of the city including cemeteries on it, land contention, information about Khevera Kadisha (Jewish burial brotherhood) activity and the tombstones of Tzadiks. Unfortunately, two days of search didn't have positive outcome for me. Probably it could happen because of the specific (and not very convenient) system of search: I could only use thematic card catalogues, which probably don't cover all the documents in the repository.

The State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast is a big hub of historical documents about the history of Zhytomyr, Rivne, Volyn, Khmelnytsky, Ternopol, Kyiv and Vinnitsa regions that historically were part of such cultural-geographical areas as Volyn, Podolia and Kyiv. It was founded in 1922 as the Volyn Province Archival Office, but its history dates back to the end of the 18th century. The institution keeps numerous documents from the 16th century up to 2007. Unfortunately, some of records were lost during the Second World War. There is a number of documents regarding Jewish history of Berdychiv in these archives. I found two

interesting city maps from 1845 and 1849, respectively, where both Jewish cemeteries are seen and that are helpful for understanding the changes of city structure. I also discovered post-revolutionary records regarding the national and religious policies of Soviet authorities in Berdychiv in the 1920's. They concern antireligious propaganda and its methods (such as theatrical performances, discussions, lectures), language matters (promotion of Yiddish as Jewish identity core), education (organizing new Jewish secondary and vocational schools in Yiddish and struggle with religious schools called “kheders”), problems of antisemitism, women’s issues, and a number of documents regarding expropriation of cult buildings, work of the local museum and local Yevsektiya (Jewish section of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union).

The Berdychiv Department of the State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast started its work in 1919 with the establishment of Soviet power. These archives supplied me with a more detailed story of expropriation of synagogues. It also disposes documents regarding the local museum in the 1920's. The director and then deputy of science of the museum, Movchanivsky, played a significant role in the exploration of local Jewish history and culture and its safe-guarding.

Though archives are institutions which are usually strictly organized and managed, it still can be a big puzzle to find and then get access to desired data kept there. My archival investigations were not purely academic but also an experience of interaction with the Ukrainian archival system, which is very diverse and sometimes working in unexpected ways. It turned out that academic survey is deeply intertwined with life experience and local habitus, both everyday and institutional. I met a number of challenges which I would classify as:

- a) dispersion of documents on my topic (which caused difficulties in finding them);
- b) variety of archival organization.

Materials on Jewish history and culture of Ukraine are disposed in numerous archives both in Ukraine itself and abroad (Russia, Israel, Belarus, Poland). Exploration of the archival documents on the topic and publishing them started in the 19th century (Melamed, 2006; p. 13) and is still in process. Considering my peculiar topic, the most complete and recent guides on Jewish material are *Dokumenty po evrejskoj istorii XVI-XX vekov v kievskikh arkhivakh*

(Documents on Jewish History of 16th - 20th Centuries in Kyiv Archives) by V. Khiterer (Khiterer 2001), *Dokumenty po istorii i culture evreev v arkhivakh Kieva* (Jewish Documentary Sources in Kiev Archives) by E. Melamed and M. Kupovetsky (Melamed, Kupovetsky, 2006) and *Dokumenty po istorii i culture evreev v regionalnykh arkhivakh Ukrainy* (Jewish Documentary Sources in the regional archives of Ukraine) by E. Melamed (Melamed, 2009). In these guides, a scholar can find an extended manual on searching the information about Jews in the region.

I should admit that it is not a simple task to find concrete documents if one does not have the exact name of the file but only a number of the fund which can contain thousands of registers. I would explain it by the internal archival organization of document collections. Most of the archives I attended (except for the Archives of the Institute of Archeology) followed a historical and institutional principle in disposing the documents of various state bodies. In spite of ownership changes, there is a kind of continuity and succession in the structure of archival collections. Thus, for example, in Central State Historical Archives in Kyiv and State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast, I saw the funds organized according to state bodies in institutions successively of the Commonwealth of Poland and the Great Duchy of Lithuania, then Russian Empire, Ukrainian Directory, USSR and the newly independent Ukraine. Documents regarding Jews are almost never specifically marked. However, documents of Soviet bureaucracy of the 1920's can be considered as an exception as there were special departments and funds devoted to Jews and religious questions. To my mind, this reflects a change in the attitude of authorities to this minority and considering it in some sense problematic. Though the Jewish question existed in the Russian Empire, it was reflected mostly in central governmental decrees and rarely on the local level (documents on Jews can be found amongst other documents of local authority bodies). That causes a problem in finding the necessary material as it is often not mentioned in the descriptions of the funds.

Another challenge in accessing the needed documents was caused by differences in the organization of each archival institution, starting from working hours and ending with possibilities of making copies of documents.

Though all the archives I mentioned are state institutions, they have a different status and therefore restrictions on access. Thus, to get access to documents (and even catalogues,

which are rarely digitalized in Ukraine), I had to present an official letter approving my scholarly status. This aspect is mostly formal, but in the Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine it was especially official as I was interviewed by its director about my intentions. Probably due to the high status of documents kept in these archives, I had to pass two levels of security. At the same time, in more “cameral” archives (in the Institute of Archeology and in Berdychiv) I got access to documents without any formalistic procedures.

Another issue was the time period during which I could receive the document I had requested. It depended on different factors and could vary from several minutes to several days. Smaller archives were more convenient, as I could find the necessary register and receive the needed documents rather quickly. Central archives typically provide the document by the next working day, but for example, in Zhytomyr archives it could take up to a week due to the not efficient system of delivering documents from different subsidiaries. I can say the same about the communication style of the archival workers. In small archives they were more willing to help and less formalistic.

At some moments my archival searches seemed ineffectual, as I could spend days without finding anything relevant, but the more joyful it was to discover something really interesting.

1.2 Theoretical background and literature review

In my thesis I am interested in understanding the intricate relations between authorities and the Jewish community of Berdychiv in the early years of the USSR. To make my investigation thorough and efficient, I need both empirical data (in my case it’s based on archival documents) and a conceptual basement.

My approach is to combine macro and micro viewpoints in order to see the processes in their complexity as well as to attempt to reveal some peculiarities of the Soviet policies on the local level during a transition period, while avoiding the aberration of retrospective teleology in explaining the events under consideration.

Understanding the changes brought by Soviet policies to the Jewish community is impossible without background knowledge of its status in the previous period, i.e. in the

Russian Empire, as well as without some awareness of Jewish ethnography and traditions. Thus, local history of Berdychiv has also been under my interest.

Based on this, I would divide my source corpus into several blocks:

1. Literature on Soviet policies in the early USSR (1920's).
2. Jewish history and traditional culture.
3. Berdychiv local history.

Literature on Soviet policies in the early USSR (1920's)

This first block is represented by books devoted to conceptual rethinking of national policies in the USSR. To build the theoretical frame of my work I rely on such academics as J. Smith, F. Hirsch, H. Carrere d'Encausse, T. Martin, Y. Slezkine.

The Great Challenge: Nationalities and the Bolshevik State, 1917–1930 by H. Carrere d'Encausse (1992) was one of the first books in the West to make a fundamental survey of the early Soviet policies after the classical R. Pipes's *The Formation of the Soviet Union*. The author gives a general review of the origins and challenges of national problems in the early USSR and the ways they were solved. The book was important for me as it gave me a broad view on the case I am interested in and touched the specifics of the national policies towards Jews from 1917 to the 1930s.

Y. Slezkine introduced a bright metaphor of the Soviet society as a communal apartment, the typical housing in the early USSR. His already classical article “The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism” (Slezkine 1994) provides a sharp and elaborate analysis of how the question of ethnicity was solved in the young socialist state. He underlines the disputed and dialectical character of discussions upon the question in the early 1920's, their origins and relations with Marxism which was considered the scientific basement for building the new society. The work gave me an understanding of the conflictual nature of the processes of korenization in big scale and helped me to see the actions of local authorities as a reflection of bigger policies.

The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union by T. Martin (2001) can be considered a book of an encyclopedic level, analyzing the nation building in the pre-war USSR (Yekelchuk 2004: 544). Based on rich archival material as well as

publications in newspapers and journals, the work gives a broad overview of the problem. Drawing on local case studies, the author suggests an original key to understanding actions of Soviet authorities. He evaluates the peculiarities of the implementation of central decisions and weaves them into the common outline of his conceptualization. Martin's distinction between soft and hard lines of realization of nationality policy gave me the insight for understanding the contradictory character of Sovietization of local Jews in Berdychiv.

F. Hirsch looks at nationality policies in the USSR through the perspective of Soviet ethnography. In her book *Empire of Nations. Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union* (Hirsch 2005), she suggests an original gaze at the problem. The author considers complicated relations between ethnographers and the Bolsheviks and writes about the constructing role of the former. F. Hirsch argues with T. Martin upon the point of the initial intentions of the Soviet government towards national minorities. F. Hirsch considers national minorities "victims" of modernization and completely denies the affirmative character of the policies in the 1920's (Hirsch 2005: 8 - 9), which is a disputable argument to my mind. Nevertheless, this book gave me insights into the role of professional ethnographers in the process of creating the Soviet nation in the early USSR within a broader context of the Bolsheviks' intention to use a scientific basement for building their state.

J. Smith in his book *Red Nations: The Nationalities Experience in and after the USSR* (Smith 2013) gives a broad overview of nationality policies in the USSR during the whole period of its existence and after it, so the author's focus is understanding the national question between the two poles: the emergence of the Soviet policies and their specifics in the post-Soviet period. The detailed review of the Bolsheviks' discussions on the question in the early 1920's, especially those between Lenin, Stalin and Bukharin, in the initial chapters of the work help to see the complexity of Soviet authorities' approach. Together with the thick historical background depicted by the author, it also helped me to better comprehend the dialectics of my case.

Works by N. Levin, Z. Gitelman, O. Budnitskii and H. Abramson adjoin the previous sources as they are focused on the specifics of policies towards Jews in the early Soviet period and during the preceding Civil War.

A Prayer for the Government: Ukrainians and Jews in Revolutionary Times, 1917-1920 by H. Abramson (1999) is devoted mostly to relations between Jews (and especially Jewish political parties) in the territory of modern Ukraine and the sporadically changing authorities in the period since the 1917 February Revolution until the complete defeat of the Ukrainian National Republic (the UNR) in 1920. It touches upon the topics of Ukrainian-Jewish relations in historical perspective, the first modern attempt to set up a Jewish autonomy and pogroms of the Civil War. Though this work is not directly connected with Soviet nationality policies, it gives some clues about relations between Jewish communities and the Soviet authorities in the period of their initial encounter.

The book *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics: The Jewish Sections of the CPSU, 1917-1930* by Z. Gitelman (1972) is a classic work devoted to early Soviet policies towards Jews. It reveals the connections between modernization, secularization and specifics of Jewish question beginning from the tsarist policies in the early 20th century. The author also writes about the Jewish political parties and transformation of political activities of Jews during the 1920's. The book is important for my thesis as it is based on archival papers including many minutes of Berdychiv Jewish section of the Communist party and it helped to understand their activities deeper.

N. Levin in her book *The Jews in the Soviet Union since 1917: Paradox of Survival* (Levin 1990) focuses on Jewish history during revolutionary years, postrevolutionary changes in Jewish life and the specifics of Soviet Jewish identity in post-Stalinist epoch. Though the work is not considered innovative and conceptually original (McCagg 1990), it gives a big massive of factual material which was very helpful for my thesis.

I would separately highlight the authors whose books are devoted to the history of particular cities during the early USSR, such as S. Kotkin, A. Zeltser and E. Bemporad. Urbanization, city building and development was one of the priorities in the process of Soviet modernization. In the book *Magnetic Mountain. Stalinism as a Civilization* S. Kotkin (1995) writes about building Magnitogorsk, conceived as an ideal industrial city of the young socialistic state. The author shows how big ideology reflected in local history and argues that Soviet policies were not only repressive but that “common people” believed those ideas sincerely.

Even more important for my thesis, however, were the works dedicated to local Jewish history within the USSR. E. Bemporad devoted her research to the sovietization of Minsk Jewry. Based on the massive corpus of sources from archives, newspapers, ego-documents, the author analyzes how life of Jewish people in Minsk changed with Soviets. Her book *Becoming Soviet Jews: the Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk* (Bemporad 2013) allowed me to compare the phenomena she describes with those in Berdychiv, and to find keys to their understanding and explaining. A. Zeltser's monograph *Evrei sovetskoi provintsii: Vitebsk i mestechki 1917-1941* (The Jews of the Soviet Provinces: Vitebsk and the Shtetls, 1917-1941) (2006) tells about Vitebsk case. He also touches on the changes in life of Jewish communities in small cities in Belarus, analyzing how differently questions of language, religion, social mobility and economic modernization effected provincial and capital cities.

The works by Ch. A. Binns, G. Gill, A. Sokolova reveal the specifics of symbolic Soviet policies. G. Gill's *Symbols and Legitimacy in Soviet Politics* (2011) is an extended analysis of how the legitimacy of Soviet authorities was maintained by ideology, metanarrative and myth during its different periods. The author underlines the importance of new language, visual arts, urbanization and rituals created for this purpose. Ch. A. Binns in his article "The Changing Face of Power: Revolution and Accommodation in the Development of the Soviet Ceremonial System" (1979) focuses on the significance of ceremonies and rituals in the USSR, and pays special attention to early post-revolutionary years, when the "canon" was not yet established. The article *Novyj mir i staraya smert': sud'ba kladbishch v sovetskikh gorodah 1920—1930 godov* (New World and Old Death: Cemeteries Destiny in the Soviet Cities in 1920's - 1930's) by A. Sokolova (2018) is dedicated to the Soviet rethinking of death culture, which reflected in the numerous speculations about the cemeteries and their functions. Besides the Soviet specifics, those discussions could also be placed into a broader context of reconsidering the death and cemeteries within philosophy and culture of modernity (for example, Laqueur, 2015). I was especially interested in this article as the destruction of the cemetery in Berdychiv in 1929 was a significant and symbolic event for the city.

Jewish history and traditional culture

The second block of my sources contains literature on Jewish history, culture and tradition. I focused mostly on the Jewish question in Russian Empire and changes in

traditional culture during the 19th and early 20th centuries which is relevant to understanding the topic of my thesis.

The works by Y. Petrovsky-Shtern and A. Markowski are devoted to the phenomenon of “shtetl”. The term usually refers to urban settlements (usually small) in Eastern Europe with prevailing Jewish population or just Jewish districts in cities, which were common for the area in 18th - early 20th century. The book *The Golden Age Shtetl: A New History of Jewish Life in East Europe* (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014) is a full-scale description of Jewish shtetl life in the first half of the 19th century based on various sources. The author touches on different aspects of Jewish life, and thus gives the reader a complex view on topic. It was especially useful for my work, as besides a general overview of the topic, the book contains factual information about Berdychiv. A. Markowski in his article “The shtetl Space in the 19th Century: A Sociological Approach” by (Markowski 2007) applies a sociological approach to the same topic, paying attention to structural specifics of Jewish urban space, both physical and symbolic.

The collective works *Shtetl, XXI vek* (Shtetl: 21st Century) (Dymshits et al. 2008) and *100 evrejskikh mestechek Ukrainy. Istoricheskii putevoditel. Podolia* (100 Jewish places of the Ukraine. Historical guide. Podolia) (Lukin et al. 2000) present diachronic analysis of Jewish ethnography, anthropology and material culture. Articles by A.V. Sokolova (2000; 2008) devoted to the architectural peculiarities of Jewish places in Podolia give an idea of how they looked like in 19th - early 20th century, which helps to understand deeper the changes brought by Soviet authorities.

An additional valuable source on Jewish culture is *Kratkaya evrejskaya enciklopediya na russskom yazyke* (The Shorter Jewish Encyclopedia in Russian) issued in 11 volumes in Jerusalem, from 1975 to 2005 (Oren et al. 1975-2005). It’s a comprehensive collection of knowledge on Jewish civilization which gives rich factual material.

Works on Jewish question in the Russian Empire adjoin the previous sources as it is impossible to understand the changes in Jewish life in the 19th and early 20th century without having some background knowledge on state nationality policies. Chapter 9 “*Inorodtsy* (allogeneous)” of the book *Soslovnnoe obshchestvo Rossijskoj imperii (XVIII - nachalo XX veka)* (Estate Society of the Russian Empire) by N. Ivanova and V. Zheltova (2009) is

devoted to the legal condition of non-Russian population in the Russian empire in the end of 18th - early 20th century, including Jews. It gives a detailed overview of laws, ukases and decrees considering life of Jews in numerous aspects, such as settlement limitations, taxation, education, military service and religion. The books *Beyond the Pale: the Jewish encounter with late imperial Russia* by B. Nathans (2004) and *Jewish Souls, Bureaucratic Minds. Jewish Bureaucracy and Policymaking in Late Imperial Russia, 1850–1917* by V. Schedrin (2016) analyze the relations between legislators and their activity, from one side and its implementation and Jewish community reactions and collaboration, from another. These works reveal an active position of Jews (at least its financial and intellectual elite) considering their status and conditions in the Russian Empire and their complex interactions with authorities.

Berdychiv local history

The third group of sources include work on local history of Berdychiv. The books by the Berdychiv historian A. Horobchuk are devoted to the city's history. His *Berdychyv. Istoriya mista vid zasnuvannya do syogodennya. Fotopodorozh z minulogo u suchasnist* (Berdychyv. History of the city since the foundation till today. Photo-voyage from the past into modernity) (2016) contains a special section dedicated to the history of local Jews and *Evreyskie sviatyni Berdicheva* (Jewish Shrines of Berdychiv) (2013) is completely devoted to the Berdychiv Jewry with a special focus on religion. Useful materials can also be found in the proceedings of local historical conferences, for example, "Museums of Berdychiv area. History and Modernity" (Beydyk et al, 2016). The article "Berdichev in Russian literary imagination: from Israel Aksenfeld to Friedrich Gorenshtein" by M. Krutikov (2000) is dedicated to the symbolic significance of Berdychiv in Jewish culture and focuses on Yiddish literature linked with the city. The memoirs of M. Derbaremdiker (2002), a scholar who was born and brought up in Berdychiv, give an interesting material on Jewish everyday life in Berdychiv in 1920's - 1930's.

I should also admit that I attempted to apply a broader conceptual framework for understanding the problems of my topic following the conception of power relations by M. Foucault (1980). The French poststructuralist philosopher saw the knowledge, language and power as unity, called discourse. It is never formed by one agent but always is a

contemplation of many as well as it never consists of one statement. Therefore, my presumption is that the political atmosphere in Berdychiv in 1920's was not determined by the Soviet authorities only and thus was neither direct nor plain.

2. JEWISH BERDYCHIV OR “JERUSALEM OF VOLYN”

*“If all the Gnilopyat’-river was made of inks,
they wouldn’t be enough to describe Berdychiv”*

Sholem Aleichem

In this chapter I will review the history of the Jewry of Berdychiv from the late 18th century up to the early 20th century and the imaginary meanings of Berdychiv in order to create a comprehensive idea of the life of the Jewish community before the Soviet Union.

2.1 Image of Berdychiv in Jewish culture

Volyn Shrine

Berdychiv is a town in central Ukraine. Nowadays the proportion of Jews there is low: about 3,000 out of a total population of 79,500 (see Appendix A) but it was different in the 19th and early 20th century. Back then it was what was called a shtetl with a high rate of Jewish population. Shtetl (שטעטל - “small town” in Yiddish) was an East-European market place, in the 1790s and the 1840s mostly possessed by Polish magnates, “inhabited mostly but not exclusively by Jews and subject to Russian bureaucracy” (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 2). Among Jews shtetl was also considered as a place of specific Jewish everyday life as well as of the religious and social insularity of a Jewish community (Mestechko 1990: 314).

Speaking in terms of historical geography, Berdychiv was situated on the borderline of two cultural-historical regions, Volyn and Podolia, both located on the right bank of the Dnieper.

Volyn (also Volhynia, polish Wolya) is a historic region in North-West Ukraine. Today it is in the territory of the Zhytomyr, Rivne and Volyn oblasts of Ukraine. The earliest mention of Jews here dates back to the 12th century. They were engaged in trade and crafts. The period from 1569 (when the territories became part of the Polish crown and the landlords invited Jews to live here) till 1648 (slaughter by Khmelnytsky⁶) is considered the golden age of the Jewish Volyn when its cities (Ostroh, Volodymyr-Volynskiy, Lutsk, Kremenets) became

⁶ The uprising of Bohdan Khmelnytsky happened in 1648-1649 and was directed against Polish magnates and Jews who were actually agents of the latter, collecting taxation from the local population.

important spiritual centers. Together with Podolia Volyn became the birthplace for Khasidism which was so influential here that by the end of the 18th century most Volyn communities were ruled by the Khasidik leaders. Though Haskalah (Jewish enlightenment movement) was spread here in the 19th century the role of Khasidism prevailed in the religious life of the region (Volyn' 1988: 733 - 735).

Podolia is a historic region in South-West Ukraine. Today it is the territory of the Vynnytsia, Odessa, Khmelnytskyi and partly Mykolaiv and Kirovohrad oblasts. The earliest mention of Jews here dates back to the 13th century with the first know Jewish community in



Figure 2 Volyn, Podolia, and Kyiv provinces of the Russian Empire in the 1820s with the key market towns (shtetls) Credit: Petrovsky-Shtern 2014.

Medzibozh (1517). The history of the region was largely determined by its borderline position between the Commonwealth of Poland and Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire. These lands were rich in Jewish religious movements, especially mystical ones, and it was also the centre of Khasidism as its founder and leader Baal Shem Tov (Besht) lived there (Oren et al. 1992: 576 - 577).

Due to its borderline position, Berdychiv gradually became an important trade and cultural center of Jewish life and got the name “Jerusalem of Volyn”. Such euphemisms were common in Jewish culture and referred to spots that were significant for a particular region and thus comparable to Jerusalem as the symbol of Israel and Jewishness itself. Thus, Vilnius was called “Jerusalem of Lithuania” or “North Jerusalem” as it was the centre of cultural and religious center of Jews living on the territory of contemporary Belarus and Lithuania and was furthermore important as the location of Maskilim.

Maskilim (משכילים - “the enlightened ones) were the Jews in 18th - 19th centuries who were members of Haskalah (השכלה - Enlightenment) – an intellectual, literary and social Jewish movement in Europe which was inspired by the European Enlightenment and was active in the late 18th - 19th centuries. It promoted Jewish assimilation (in dress, manners, language) and encouraged Jews to study secular subjects as well as European and Hebrew languages. Maskilim intended to change the Jewish system of education in ways that often correlated with integrational policies of state authorities. In Russia, the most important Haskalah centers were Vilna and Odessa (Etkes 2010).

Berdychiv became a famous center of Khasidism in the area as great tzadiks lived and taught here. Khasidism (חסידות) is a broad folk religious movement in the Eastern Europe that originated in the 18th century and still exists. Its genesis is associated with the Yisra’el ben Eli’ezer (1698/1700–1760), known as the Baal Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name; abbreviated Besht). The appearance and development of Khasidism was determined by social reasons (crisis of Jewish community autonomy) and numerous messianic religious movements of the epoch. Thus, Khasidism combined mystical religious practices and social renewal (Assaf 2010).

Tzadik (צדיק, “righteous man”) is a Khasidik leader, considered a superior spiritual figure by the Khasidik community. Tzadiks were highly honoured by virtue of their moral purity and wisdom. Unlike the rabbis, tzadiks did not hold an official post but they were the local spiritual leaders in Khasidik communities. Some of them became famous far around their communities, which would become pilgrimage destinations even after their death (Liber, Levi Itshak). Their tombstones became places people would come to for cure and spiritual inspiration. According to the records of the local museologist and historian T. Movchanivsky,

written down in 1929, the old Jewish cemetery was called “heilig feld” (“holy field” in Yiddish) for the Jewish people of the right-bank Ukraine. It was an honour to be buried there. It was the source of legends which were still circulating in 1929. For example, there was a “holy pear tree” standing in the eastern part of the cemetery. According to the legend, it miraculously grew on the place of the burial of the tzadik Liber’s daughter who died very young. People believed that her soul lived in that tree and that made the spot around the tree very appealing (NAIA NANU(a); 1. 2). According to Movchanivsky, this was widely believed in. Thus, the epitaphs on the tombstones close to the tree belonged to important “genius of rabbinat” and they were placed very densely (NAIA NANU(a); 1. 2). One more legend about the tree was the following. It said that opposite the line “pear-tree - old beit midrash [a place for studying Torah, often combined with a synagogue]” there were “gates of heaven” in the skies, thus it was popular to be buried in this section (NAIA NANU(a); 1. 2).



Figure 3 Old cemetery, early 20th century. Credit: <http://berdicheva.net>

The old cemetery was ruined in 1929 in order to build a city park. People who transmitted these legends were mostly either killed during the Second World War or left the town afterwards. Consequently, the Jewish proportion of Berdychiv declined and mostly the Jewish inhabitants in the postwar period (1944 - 1991) were newcomers who couldn't know these stories. Nevertheless, in the post-Soviet period the religious community started its revival thanks to the rabbi Shmuel Plotkin from the USA who funded the new synagogue building and supported educational and charity programmes to be carried out in Berdychiv. The "new" cemetery where tzadik Levi Itzhok was buried is now a place of pilgrimage for khasids from all over the world, which I have witness myself during expeditions to this cemetery. A kind of shrine (called "ohel" in Hebrew) was built in the 1990s on this cemetery and the tombstone of Levi Itzhok was brought there. There a pilgrim can have a rest and pray. Also, people from other countries, who are descendants of former Berdychiv dwellers come to the cemetery in search for the tombstones of the ancestors. That was one of the reasons the local community started cataloging this cemetery and invited researches to carry out this task, and I am honoured to be a member of one the teams working on the survey (Len 2017).

Literary and popular images of Berdychiv

Besides its significance as a religious spot, Berdychiv is also famous for being the symbol of "provincial Jewishness" (Oren, 1995; col. 361–363). I would call it a secular image of the city that differs from the sacred one described above.

The formation of such an image or even mythology surrounding the town started with the growth of Berdychiv. Being a commercial centre, Berdychiv grew fast in the 19th century and by 1861 its Jewish population reached 46,683, making it the second most populous Jewish community in the Russian Empire after Warsaw (see Appendix A). It was the birthplace or place of living of prominent people, who became famous far around the town. The classics of Yiddish literature of the 19th century Sholem Yankel Abramovitch (Mendele Moykher Sforim) (1835? - 1917) and Sholem Aleichem (1859 - 1916) lived in the town and depicted it in their oeuvre (Krutikov 2000). The Polish-British writer Joseph Conrad (born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski) (1857 - 1924) was born here and now there is a museum in Berdychiv devoted to him (Ruppel 2011: 2). Famous French novelist Honoré de Balzac

got married here, and today in Berdychiv one can find a memorial shield on the wall of the church where this happened as well as an eponymous trade center as a memory of him. Musicians and composers of the Jewish origin Anton Rubinstein (1829 - 1894) and Vladimir Horowitz (1903 - 1989) were born in Berdychiv. Berdychiv was also the mother town for writers Der Nister (born Pinchus Kahanovich) (1884 - 1950), Vasily Grossman (1905 - 1964) and Friedrich Gorenstein (1932 - 2002) who lived and worked during the Soviet times and devoted novels to the town (Krutikov 2000: 104). Present-day locals are very proud of these people and a special hall is devoted to them in the city museum.

It is mostly the literature that Berdychiv owes its status to as the symbol of a provincial Jewish town. Israel Aksenfeld (1787 - 1866), followed by Abramovitch and Sholem Aleichem created a satirical image of a shtetl embodied in Berdychiv. One can find Berdychiv's cameo emergence in the first modern Yiddish novel "The Headband" by Aksenfeld (1979) written between 1820's-1840's and first published in 1862. The author describes the town as overcrowded and full of ignorant and selfish people (Krutikov 2000: 91):

A shoving, a dashing, a chasing, one man scolding, one man beating, ten people arguing, five people shouting: "How ya doin'? What are ya up to?" No one's got time. One man runs afoul of a wheel, which rips away half of his kaftan; on the other side, somebody says to him: "Mazel-tov!" Tin alms-boxes clatter: "Charity delivered from death!" and women dance over to a bride with challahs and musicians across the street. Jews with tall bamboo canes demand money for various charities, while a dozen men race past, yelling: "Stop thief! There he is!" (Aksenfeld 1979: 69).

The author, a proponent of Jewish enlightenment and assimilation, contrasts this place to Breslau, which is the centre of German-Polish Haskalah.

Abramovitch, who lived in Berdychiv for some time, also chooses to criticize it from the perspective of progress and education. In his novels "The Travels and Adventures of Benjamin the Third" (1877), "The Magic Ring" (1888-1889) and "Fishke the Lame" (1909) he uses a symbolic city called Glupsk ("Fooltown") to depict the town where he lived and which he mocked in these books. This is how it appears in the first mentioned book:

Arriving by the Teterevke Road, you must indulgently cross a large bog, then a second, and then a third and largest, into which, to put it baldly, empty the sewers and chamberpots of Glupsk, bringing with them all the town has to offer...Here are the shops with their shelves of goods, and especially, with their odds and ends of cloths, lace, ribbons, satins and furs that are Glupsk's famous discount fabrics, so called because its tailors disdain to count them as the customer's when they are left over from what he has paid for. Around them noisily swarm a solid mass of Jews, pushing, pushed, and poked by carts and wagons (quot.in Krutikov 2000: 97).

Both Aksenfeld and Abramovitch depicted Berdychiv as a place inhabited by backward, selfish people, who are competing with each other for getting money in every possible way, even by cheating. It's interesting that both writers were fond of Khasidism while young but then turned to the ideas of Jewish enlightenment and criticized places like Berdychiv for their stubborn resistance to progress. At the same time, being a big town, it attracted newcomers of all kinds and thus transformed into a kind of a caricature provincial metropolis (Krutikov 2000: 98). Such an ambivalent character of the town then relocated to the songs and jokes which are still circulating, nowadays not only through word of mouth but also online (e.g. Anekdoty o nashem gorode). Their topics are mostly petty crimes, backwardness, adultery and provincial arrogance. An old but still beloved one is this:

- Abram, where did you get such a good suit from?
- In Paris.
- Is it far from Berdychiv?
- Something like 2,000 kilometers.
- Just think about it! Such boonies and they sew so well there (Anekdoty o nashem gorode).

The town's cameo appears also in Sholem Aleichem's novels and short stories, one of which, "Mendele the Matchmaker" inspired the early Soviet film director Aleksey Granovsky in 1925 to shoot the film *Jewish Luck*, the title of which is a common euphemism for Jewish unluck. One can see real Berdychiv landscapes there. As J. Hoberman writes:

Jewish Luck is almost semi-documentary in its representation of a tumbledown section of Berdichev, the Ukraine's archetypal Jewish town, the production design is virtually

ethnographic. Although Jewish Luck is ostensibly a portrait of pre-October misery, much of it is underscored by a preservationist spirit. Religious rituals may be conspicuously absent, but the lengthy open-air wedding that ends the film is a veritable précis of the traditional elements that had inspired Chagall's murals (Hoberman 2010: 93).

This spirit, if not preservationist but at least nostalgic and full of warmth, is found in the works of Der Nister, Vasily Grossman and Friedrich Gorenstein. The events of the novel “The Family Mashber” by Der Nister take place in Berdychiv, in the second half of the 19th century. Unlike Abramovitch or Aksenfeld, the town’s image is less mythological, but more historically authentic, though mystical as well. The author pays special attention to the social, physical and spiritual structure, and the old Jewish cemetery plays an important role in this effort, being a gathering place of local khasids. The irony is that they are the marginal in the city (both socially and physically, living in the suburbs as they do), but the cemetery is situated in the center of the city: “The Bratslav community is too poor to afford to keep a synagogue of their own and use the old and half-ruined ‘Living Synagogue’ at the entrance to the old cemetery in the center of the town. This synagogue is called ‘Living’ “because no one wanted to refer to a synagogue as ‘Dead’” (quot.in Krutikov 2000: 108). The logic of the naming is correlated with traditional Jewish euphemisms for a cemetery: בֵּית מוֹעֵד לְכָל חַי (bet mo’ed le-chol chay) - “the house appointed for all living” (Job 30:23) and בֵּית הַחַיִּים (bet ha-chayyim) - “the house of the life” (Kladbische 1988: 332).

V. Grossman’s “In the Town of Berdychiv” (1934) shifts the reader to the tragic times of the Civil War. The author shows Berdychiv through the prism of a poor Jewish family giving houseroom to a pregnant Red commissar. Grossman depicts with touching warmth a city exhausted by fourteen authority changes. Berdychiv here is the quintessence of the eternal Jewish exile bearing the burden of being under the strangers’ government and finding tiny peace in family: “to tell you the truth...the best time for people is when one regime is gone, and another has not come yet. No requisitions, no contributions, no pogroms”, - tells the father of the family which is in the author’s focus (quot. in Krutikov 2000: 105). Screen version of this short story (the film *Commissar*) was shot in 1967 by A. Askoldov but unfortunately was banned for screening for 20 years (Khiterer 2014).

F. Gorenstein wrote the play “Berdychev” in 1975, more than 30 years after the Jewish community of the town was killed by Nazis. Its personages are the rare survivors, the older ones living in memories and the youngster in dreams to leave the provincial town. Just like *Der Nister*, F. Gorenstein refers to the town’s topography, and it is with bitterness that he mentions the spots which are either forgotten in people’s minds (as the church where Balzac got married) or destroyed, as the old cemetery replaced by the city park. It is a fading memory of the city. Berdychev is depicted by the sad nostalgic view of one personage:

Berdychev is an ugly shack built of the wreckage of a great temple for protection from cold, rain and heat ... To someone from the capital city, this ugly shack of Berdychev seems a real heap of rubbish, but if you try to take it apart, you will discover that this dirty, covered with slog stairs leading to the rickety door of this hut are made of beautiful marble slabs, on which once walked the prophets and stood Jesus of Nazareth (quot.in Krutikov 2000: 112).

The last but not least mention of Berdychev in artistic oeuvre I’d like to touch on is a series of tales by E. Uspensky and animation films about “Brothers Pilots” (1986 - 1999), the scene of which is 1950s Berdychev. It is not declared as a Jewish place but rather embodies a homely provincial town of the past.

In this overview, I have aimed to demonstrate the cultural meaning Berdychev carries for Jewish people as well as for their ethnical neighbours on territories, which in the past were tensely populated by Jews. This meaning is also significant for understanding the peculiar interest and attention that Berdychev received from authorities, both in the Russian Empire and in the USSR. I would argue that Berdychev is still an actual symbolic and almost mythological image for Jews of Soviet origin, especially those who (or whose ancestors) lived in Russian-speaking areas. Thus, I wouldn’t agree with M. Krutikov (2000) who claims that “Unlike other East-European towns and ‘shtetl’, Berdychev does not reappear in contemporary Russian-Jewish imagination as a place of happy childhood, spiritual harmony and beauty nor does it attract immigrants and their descendants in search of their spiritual roots. So far, the revival of historical and imaginative interest in Jewish Eastern Europe has bypassed Berdychev” (Krutikov 2000: 114). I consider that such a generalization fails to reflect the actual state of affairs, as Berdychev is now a place of religious pilgrimage for *khasids* who honour Levi Itzhok. They cultivate his oeuvre by coming to the place of his burial, praying there, singing songs and glorifying him. Besides, the place is important for

the descendants of the Jews who lived in Berdychiv. As to literature, I would also mention that local writers living in Berdychiv today also devote books to their native town. For example, V. Korzhuk published in 2002 a book titled *Rassказы po-berdichevski* (Short Stories in Berdychiv style) (2002).



Figure 4 Group of khasids on the Berdychiv Jewish cemetery, 2018.

2.2 Jewish history of Berdychiv

From Poland to Russia

The town of Berdychiv is situated in central Ukraine by the river Gnilopyat. Today it is an important railway junction and a crossroad of automobile routes. It is the town's transportation and connective role that Berdychiv owes its historical development to as well as the destructive wars going through it. Archeological excavations witness that these territories have been inhabited since the II millennium BC (Horobchuk 2016: 8). There are academic debates upon the first literary mention of Berdychiv. Though some authors (Kosich 1901; p. 6; Kubijovyč 1993:112) claimed that it was first mentioned in 1320, they did not give any references. So, today, 1430 is considered the official date of founding the town, according to the compilation of the documents titled "Safeguarding of Cultural Heritage of Ukraine" (Horobchuk 2016: 10). The first geographical map to mention Berdychiv is a 1613 map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, published in Amsterdam by the

prince Mikolaj Krzysztof “the Orphan” Radziwill who organized cartographic work in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Horobchuk 2016: 10).

During the 16th - 17th centuries the place belonged to the family of Polish-Lithuanian magnates Tyszkiewicz who built a stone castle and gave land to Carmelites, a Roman Catholic mendicant religious order, to build a monastery in Berdychiv (Grytzkevich 2005: 681 - 682). In 1710 the town changed its owner and belonged to Mikolaj Faustin Radziwill and his descendants until 1793 when, being a part of the Right-Bank Ukraine, it was transferred to the Russian Empire as a result of the Partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. First it got into Volyn guberniya, then in 1844 - 1845 to Makhnivka uyezd and since 1845 it became the center of Berdychiv uyezd of Kiev guberniya⁷ (Oren et al. 1995).

The first notice of the Jewish presence in Berdychiv dates back to 1593, when the population of the city was about 140 houses (Lukin 2010). Inventory description of F. Tyszkiewicz’s property mentioned the following: “A recently populated Berdychiv, which stands on the river Bolshaya Pyata... There is a castle in the hillfort... which is surrounded by the walls. There are suburbs around the castle... Beside the castle there is a dike, a pond and a mill with four wheels, the latter is leased by a Jew until 1599 for 100 kopeks a year” (quot. in Horobchuk 2013: 31). This mention is also interesting as it reflects one of the typical Jewish occupations in those territories, as Jews often were tenants and acted as mediators of landlords, who tended to live far away from the place and hired Jews to manage their property.

Even so, it is possible to speak about a permanent Jewish community here only since 1721. The Radziwill family who owned the town started its renovation in the 1710s and invited people to live there. Among other things they mandated Jews to produce alcohol and be traders and craftsmen in Berdychiv (Lukin 2010). As Petrovsky-Shtern mentions, “the Polish magnates gladly used the Jews as a colonizing force in these very underpopulated and economically underdeveloped territories, for the Jews helped them build and maintain their

⁷ Guberniya was the principal administrative subdivision of the Russian Empire and the early Russian SFSR and Ukrainian SSR. Uezd was a minor administrative subdivision in the Russian Empire and the early SSSR.

manorial estates” (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 5). In 1721, kahal was organized here (Ettinger, Spector 2008).

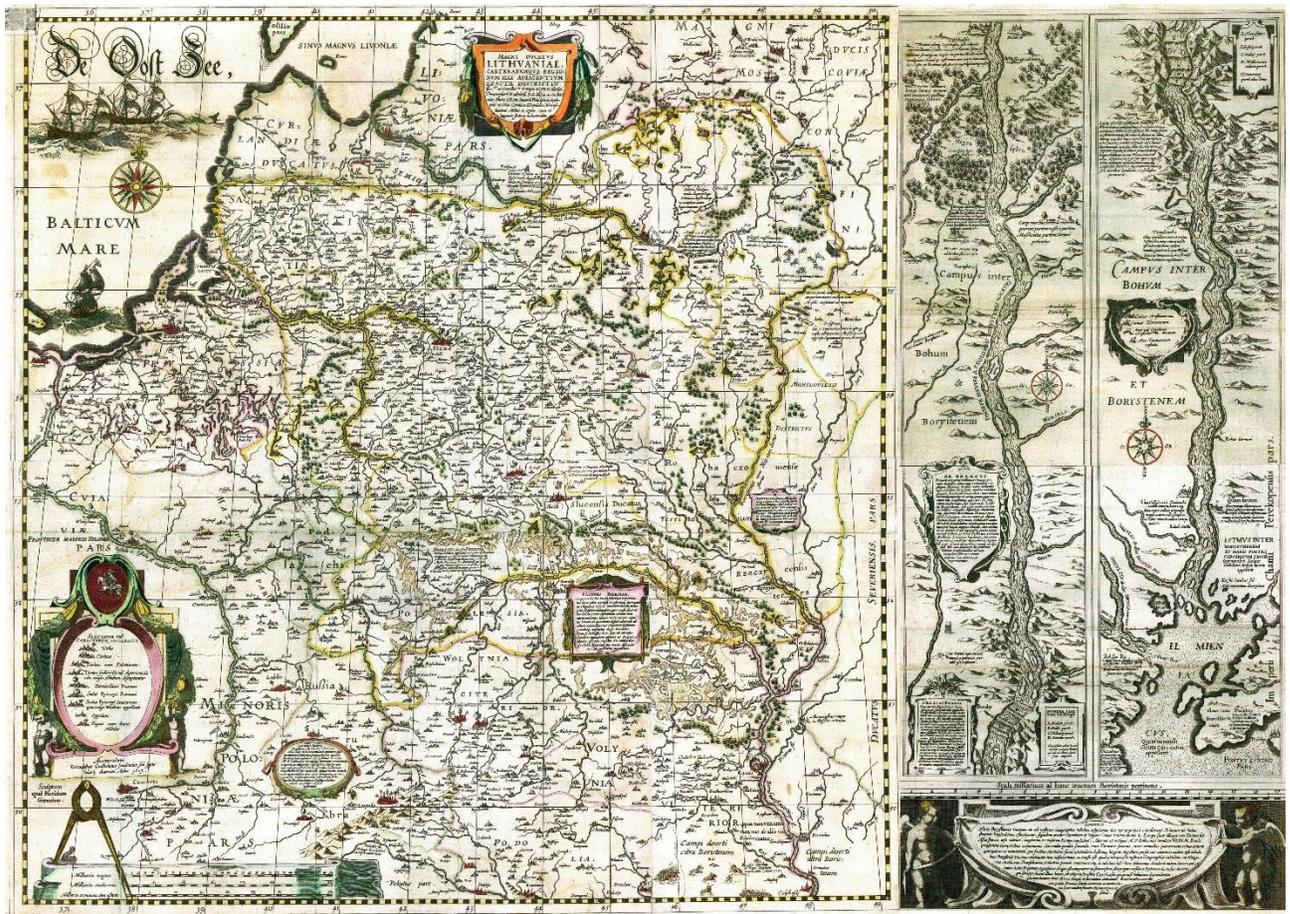


Figure 5 Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 1613. Credit: Sanderus Catalogue. <https://www.sanderusmaps.com/en/our-catalogue/detail/169225/old-antique-map-of-lithuania-by-w-blaeu>

Kahal ((קהל) - literally “community” in Hebrew) is a form of Jewish self-governing in Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th - 18th centuries and in the Russian Empire between 1772 and 1844. The term is commonly used to designate the governing body of the Jewish community, which played the role of a mediator between the community and state authorities. The head of the community (rabbi) was approved by the authorities and the kahal itself fulfilled a broad range of functions such as the right of trial. But the main thing was taxation: it was organized by the method of mutual guarantee and was counted for the community as a whole. This created a possibility for corruption and though the members of kahal were appointed randomly, gradually it turned into an oligarchy and caused conflicts between the kahal rulers and community members. In spite of this, this institution was

convenient for the state authorities and some changes in kahal organization (and then decline) started only after becoming part of the Russian Empire (Kagal 1988: 17-21).

The Jewish population of Berdychiv gradually grew, from 1,200 in 1765 to 1,500 in 1787, according to official censuses (see Appendix A). During this period the Jews of Berdychiv actively participated in the economic life of the place. In 1732 a Jewish guild of tailors was granted autonomy from the kahal (Lukin 2010). In 1765 the Radziwill family got the king's permission to hold fairs in Berdychiv (ten a year) and local Jews took part in these markets. Besides, in the second half of the 18th century the community became the home of the rabbi-preacher Lieber Eliezer who promoted kabbalah and became a great spiritual leader not only to the local community but also for the whole region of Volyn. Thanks to the religious and civil activity of Levi Itzhok Ben Meir, Berdychiv strengthened its status as a Khasidik centre.

After coming into the Russian Empire in 1793, Berdychiv started to enlarge its population (mostly Jews) rapidly and develop its economy. It was connected with changes in legislation towards Jews in their new motherland. Partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth brought Russia not only vast new lands but also a new kind of population such as Jews, making the Russian Empire the state with the highest rate of Jewry in Europe. It caused a number of legislative questions concerning their status. Though initially the Empress Catherine II equated the Jews to other citizens of the Empire according to their estate position (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 691 - 692), the legislation started to veer towards limitation and differentiation considering ethnic, religious and economical aspects. These laws defined the rights of Jews and determined their position in the Russian Empire up to its fall.

The first restrictions (ukase of the Catherine II in 1791) were connected with economic activity and prohibited Jewish merchants from trading in "inner guberniyas" (territories of European part of Russia, inhabited mostly by Russians) as they produced high competition for the locals. Actually, this did not aim to infringe Jewry's rights because it followed the practice of movement limitation of merchants and burgesses which was common in Russian Empire (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 693). It laid the foundation for the "Pale of Settlement" and other legislation regulating the conditions of the Jewish population in the Russian Empire. In 1793 and 1795, the Pale of Settlement was extended to include territories that were joined to

Russia after the second and third Partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The ukase of Catherine II in 1795 also restricted Jews to live in the countryside, thus limiting the occupations they could be involved in and forcing many people to move from their homes, which caused pauperization of the Jewry in the early 19th century (it concerned especially the Jews of Volyn guberniya). As a result, the relocation was stopped in 1809 (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 693).

Other restrictions were connected with religious questions. Being non-Christians, the Jews were ranked to the category of “inorodtsy” (literary “aliens”, “people of different nation”) to which different national minorities belonged (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 657). The peculiarity of the Jews was their religion, so unlike others they could get out of this category through baptism.

The incoming 19th century brought changes into the Jewish “civilization of shtetl” (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014) and Berdychiv experienced its prosperity in the first half and decline in the second half of this century.

Under the Russian Legislation

In 1831 a big family of the second guild’s merchant Roman (Ruven) Rubinstein got baptized in Berdychiv. Next year the family moved to Moscow where they founded a small factory. In a report to the bishop Amvrosy, the local priest P. Dunin-Borkovsky presented this conversion as a fundamental shift in Rubinstein’s religiosity (Horobchuk 2013: 39). Though speculations on converts’ spiritual motivation is not the subject of my study, such actions can be obviously seen as a reaction to the actual Russian legislation towards Jews and simultaneously as a sign of the coming decline of the “Golden Age of shtetl” (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: p.) in Berdychiv. Rubenstein aimed to uplift his family’s position and used those means that were at his disposal.

Y. Petrovsky-Shtern calls “the Golden Age of Shtetel” the period “for some fifty years, between the 1790s and the 1840s, [when] the shtetl was politically no longer Polish but administratively not yet entirely Russian, and its Jews were left to their own devices. It was the unique habitat of some 80 percent of East European Jews, who constituted two-thirds of world Jewry at the time” (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 3). It is fully relevant to Berdychiv.

In the first half of the 19th century, Berdychiv hold the status of a regional trading centre. Y. Petrovsky-Shtern quotes the Russian officer Alexander Muraviev's, who made a topographic description of Volyn in a report of his and portrayed Berdichev as a "big trading townlet overflowing with Jews, who control not only local, but most of the southern trade" (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 54). Berdychiv's owners Radziwills kept the right for ten fairs a year and the place continued to attract people, both Jewish traders and Ukrainian peasants. By 1829 the population of Berdychiv reached 34,000 (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 106) and the prosperity grew also. The turnover of the fairs here could compete with the ones in Kyiv.

On average in the first half of the 19th century, three local Jews per year became members of a merchant guild after declaring newly acquired capitals. There were 335 third guild, 9 second guild, and 2 first guild merchants in 1829 (and by 1839 it grew to 477, 24 and 7 respectively). 95 percent of them were Jews who owned shops and stalls in the local market (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 106). No wonder that with capital concentrating in the place, there also appeared banks and in 1830s Berdychiv became the financial centre of the Right-bank Ukraine. According to official data, there were eight private banks which were connected with banks in Kyiv, Saint-Petersburg, Moscow, Vilno and Odessa and Berdychiv bankers had "Berdychiv financial office" in Kyiv (Horobchuk 2016).

Though to economic development Berdychiv and other similar Jewish townlets brought revenue, Jews were considered suspicious in the eyes of the government. Berdychiv was inter alia connected with smuggling which was a grey part of local prosperity. According to Petrovsky-Shtern, "Russian state bureaucrats knew well that Berdichev was at the very center of contraband activity, but for the time being they could do nothing to suppress its flourishing business," mostly because the local police was bribed and usually warned local traders about coming inspections (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 72). But even more than contraband itself, the Nicholas' I government was displeased that Berdychiv was not a Russian town and at the same time played a significant role in regional economy. The fear was that Jews didn't just spread illegal merchandise but also illegal and pernicious ideas, which could spoil Russian people, meaning Orthodox Christians (Horobchuk 2013: 42).

In case of Berdychiv, the only way for the government to hamper its prosperity was to promote fairs in other places (for example, Zhytomyr) and make legal and other bureaucratic

obstacles to local trading. When local merchants appealed to authorities to establish a town hall in Berdychiv to simplify many legal procedures, their requests were rejected (Petrovsky- Shtern 2014: 72).

In 1836 a Jewish printing house in Berdychiv was closed as well as all other Jewish typographies on the territories of the Russian Empire. Berdychiv printing house mostly published religious literature in Hebrew and Yiddish (Horobchuk 2013: 42). In general, it was an element of a broader tendency of suspiciousness towards Jews. Foremost they were mistrusted because of their religion and often blamed in obscurantism and fanaticism (Petrovsky-Shtern 2014: 337).

Based on this presumption, different laws were adopted aimed at promoting baptizing (and even forcing to do it) or at least reducing the influence of “fanaticism”. It was considered that they will make Jews more socially useful and contribute to their assimilation. Among these laws were reforms concerning military recruitment and education.

Up to 1827, Jews were not recruited to the Russian Army and paid special taxes to compensate for it, but since that year according to Nicholas I’s ukase the Jewry started to be subject to natural conscription. It was specified that Jews were recruited at the age of 12 (unlike the common 18) and these children were directed to special institutions, so-called schools of cantonists, where they usually were forced to baptize (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 698).

Another way to influence the youth was by means of reforming the education system. According to the 1804 and 1835 Statutes on the Jews, Jews were allowed to study in parochial and private schools, gymnasiums within the Pale of Settlement and also in higher institutions. However, this initiative was not really popular among the Jewish population. In 1840 a special Committee for Definition of the Measure of Fundamental Reformation of Jews in Russia was formed the aim of which was to “demolish Jewish fanaticism and persuade powerless Jews to merge with the surrounding population” (quot.in Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 701). This committee started an education project in 1844 with the aim of establishing special schools for education of the Jewish youth (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 703). Its programmes combined religious studies (taught traditionally in Hebrew) and secular subjects (taught in Russian or German). This reform was

promoted and organized by the German-Jewish educator M. Lilienthal who was a follower of Haskalah and the idea of Jewish assimilation. He personally visited a number of places in the Pale of Settlement (Riga, Vilna, Minsk, Odessa, Kyiv) to promote the reform among Jews. Representatives of Berdychiv met him with excitement and welcomed him as a person “announcing help to the oppressed people” (quot. in Ruben 2011: 48). So, in 1850 a governmental Jewish school was established here. The significance of this event was underlined by Lilienthal himself: “Success in Berdychiv signifies success in Podolia, Volyn, Kherson and Odessa; failure in Berdychiv would spoil all the undertaking” (quot. in Horobchuk 2013: 44).

One more way of integration was to broaden the rights of some groups of “useful” Jews, such as the merchants of the first and second guild who could move on business outside the Pale of Settlement according to the Statute on the Jews of 1835 (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 700) (since 1859 the first guild merchant could also settle down in capital cities) (Ivanova, Zheltova 2009: 706). There were also special rights for medical doctors and scientists.

So, the Russian government suggested certain social lifts for the Jewry among which were baptizing, governmental education and essential contributions to the Empire’s coffers. All of them also implied russification and apparent loyalty to and collaboration with the government, from bribing to participating in bureaucracy. In the case of the Rubinstein family, baptizing together with enrichment helped them to improve their position. And if conversion was always condemned by Jewish community, russification and financial career became very common among Jews. A. Horobchuk mentions that in 19th century Russian became an everyday language for Berdychiv rich merchants, manufacturers and intelligentsia, whereas poorer people spoke Yiddish (Horobchuk 2013: 41). Language was one of the social differentiating markers in these changing conditions.

Social structure of the townlet

Here I intend to look at 19th century Berdychiv through the prism of its structure. I am following the perspective suggested by Artur Markowski, who defines shtetl “as a socio-economic-religious conglomeration situated in a certain defined physical space that does not

have a clearly rural structure” (Markowski 2007: 52). He divides the factors that influence the structure in the following way (Markowski 2007: 52):

Table 1. Factors that influenced the shtetl space in the 19th century

Social	National	Geographical	Historical
Religion	Legislation related with settlement	Landform elements	Former functions of the location
Customs and traditions	Economic legislation	Natural resources	Administrative-political changes
Characterization of the group active in a given space	Politics of territorial administration	Transport routes	Ownership changes
Social conflicts	Social politics		
Power and structure of collective memory resources			

To my mind, such an approach is relevant for understanding the structural elements of Berdychiv, considering that their impact overlapped and could be manifested in one and the same form. Also, I should admit a certain degree of approximation of the following speculations, as the structure of the place was dynamic, and this is just an attempt to catch the most general aspects.

In the 19th century Berdychiv was not a mono-ethnic townlet. Together with the Jewish population (who made up the majority) there also lived Poles, Russians, Ukrainians. As confession rather than ethnicity was the basic identity category in this period in the Russian Empire, it is more reasonable to look at the city structure in terms of religious contexts, i.e. shared by Jews, Orthodox (mostly Ukrainians), Catholic (Poles), Lutherans and some Muslims.

These groups didn't mix in the sense that they lived compactly with their coreligionists. The river Gnilopyat' served as a natural borderline between the Orthodox people and others. The former occupied mostly the district called "Zagrebelje" on the left bank of the river, and the rest lived mostly on the right bank (Horobchuk 2013: 40). The map demonstrates that synagogues, Catholic churches and the monastery, both Jewish cemeteries as well as



Figure 6 Plan of Berdychiv, 1845. The State Archives of Zhytomyr region (DAZHO (f)).

Catholic, Lutheran, Greek-Catholic and non-Christian necropolises were situated on the right bank. Nevertheless, the cult buildings of Orthodoxy, Catholic church and Jews were not placed close to each other, in the center of the city. I suppose it was historically determined as this was the former territory fenced by the city wall.

Jewish population was furthermore spatially divided depending on social and religious groups. The New Town district on the right of the center was populated by merchants, manufactures and intelligentsia. In the middle of the 19th century, the street where the richest people of the town lived was called Golden. The big and pompous Choral synagogue was built in this neighbourhood in 1850. On the periphery of the New Town, along the riverside,

a district called Kachanovka was located. Its inhabitants were mostly poor and even paupers living mostly with help of charity. The district called Peski (“Sands” as there were sand quarries) north of the town was inhabited by poor craftsmen and marginalized elements. Such a spatial opposition of “centre/elite - peripheries/marginals” was also typical of this and neighboring regions (such as Podolia). Markowski suggest that it was “collective memory (until the end of the 18th century, an enterprise located in the area near the marketplace brought the greatest profit), prestige, or maybe tradition that motivated people to settle in this area” (Markowski 2007: 60).

The Old town on the right of the very center was the place where petty tradesmen, craftsmen and religious activists of Khasidism lived (Horobhuck 2013: 40). The vicinity of shopping malls also may have played a role in this. Usually a house of a craftsman or a tradesman also served as a store (Sokolova 2000) so it was vitally important to live close to the market and the fair place. What for khasids they lived there traditionally as their old synagogue was situated in the centre and also the old cemetery where their great tzadiks were buried. Khasids venerated their tombstones and visited them often. Their community was known as very poor but tightly connected by their spiritual unity.

To my mind, comprehension of the way of Jewish life in Berdychiv during the 19th-early 20th century is necessary for understanding those changes that were brought by the Soviet authorities. It’s also important that the city has rather developed infrastructure by the times of the USSR, so it was a contradictory task to modernize it and not to destroy what existed before. The latter turned out to be unavoidable.

3. BERDYCHIV JEWS AND THE BOLSHEVIKS

This chapter is devoted to the establishment of Soviet rule in Berdychiv and its further reinforcement in the city. My focus is on the interrelation between state authorities and the local Jewish community. I aim to understand which methods were used to Sovietize the Jewish population in Berdychiv in 1920's, how people responded to them and also the transformation of these processes.

3.1 Establishment and Consolidation of Soviet Rule

How the Red Army Promoted Communism to Jews

The period of 1917-1921 brought dramatic changes into the lives of people of the ex-Russian Empire, as after the revolutions of 1917 the Empire disintegrated, and the chaos of the Civil war arose, which ended with the establishment of Soviet authority in most lands which previously had belonged to the Russian Empire. To understand how it happened and how it influenced the Berdychiv Jewish community, I will shortly touch upon the Jewish question during the First World War and the Civil war.

During the First World War the Jewish population of the Russian Empire suffered for different reasons. First, the Pale of Settlement was the place for the most horrors of the Eastern Front battles. As a result, many Jews were killed, became homeless, were forced to leave their settlements. Second, a new wave of antisemitism started during the war. Though about 500,000 Jews fought as soldiers in the Russian army⁸, they were treated with a suspicion that they were German spies and deserters. Such an attitude was common for the Russian army, as Jews there tended to be considered as troublemakers, especially as they often didn't know Russian language well (Budnitskii 2005:158). For sure, it could not but cause violence towards Jews. Yiddish (which resembled German) was forbidden for usage in public places. While Jews hoped that military collaboration of the Russian government and its Alliances would better the Jewish legislation in Russia, anti-Jewish moods spread, and no improvements happened (Levin 1990: 27).

⁸ In the beginning of the First World War there were 5, 338,000 people in the army and by the end of the war 7,000,000. Totally about 15,000,000 people were mobilized to the army during the war (Rossiyskaya imperatorskaya armiya 2015: 666-667).

Moreover, in 1915, when the German invasion of Russia started, the Jews of some inner provinces (Kovno, Kurland, Grodno and the Polish provinces) were sent to the Pale of Settlement, which caused deaths and suffering during the moving and overcrowding in the Pale afterwards (Levin 1990: 28).

The situation was aggravated when the German occupation government proclaimed its “friendship” towards Jews. German press promoted the idea that Germany was not an occupant but a liberator for the oppressed nations of the Russian Empire. Indeed, general Ludendorff declined anti-Jewish laws on the occupied territories of the Russian Empire. Nevertheless, life conditions of Jews, like those other, worsened because of the ravages of the war (Levin 1990: 29).

After the success of the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks usurped the authorities and promoted a separate peace treaty with Germany. When Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, suggested coming out of the war, the leaders of the Bund – Jewish socialist party The General Jewish Labour Bund – were hesitant. In any case, they didn’t want to unite with Bolsheviks, as one their leaders Raphael Abramovich proclaimed (Levin 1990: 30). When Tsar Nicholas II abdicated, and the Provisional Government started to rule, the Jews mostly supported it (one of the first legislation changes concerning Jews was the cancellation of the Pale of Settlement). Jews were rarely represented in the Provisional Governments or city administrations, but they actively participated in Soviets or Workers’ councils which functioned alongside the bodies of the Provisional Government during the “Dual Power” period in 1917. This was also relevant for Berdychiv where there were seventy-one Bundists or members of the Bund in the Soviet and its chairman was the Bundist David Lipets (Levin 1990: 32).

In the army the support of Bolsheviks by Jews grew in 1917 because of the military anti-Semitism propaganda, thus stimulating Jewish soldiers and officers to sympathize with the Bolsheviks who promoted the peace treaty among soldiers (Levin 1990: 34).

The situation in Ukraine was specific. In spring 1917, after the Tsar Nicolas II’s abdication, the Central Rada or “Council” in Ukrainian was established in Kyiv as the representative of the Provisional Government with M. Hrushevs’kyi as its leader. (Abramson 1999: xviii). The October Revolution was followed by the proclamation of the

Ukrainian National Republic (UNR) as an autonomy of Russia on 20, November, 1917. The supreme body of the UNR was called, the Directory which was headed by V. Vynnychenko in 1918-1919 and then S. Petliura in 1919-1920. The latter became also its commander-in-chief. In spring of 1918, the Ministry of Jewish Affairs was approved in the UNR with the further intention of establishing Jewish autonomy in Ukraine (Abramson 1999: xv). But this initiative failed as “by the spring of 1919 the experiment that once looked so promising ended in dismal failure, as Ukraine was submerged in a sea of violence that precluded such unprecedented cooperation” (Abramson 1999: xv).

Civil War was especially severe in Ukraine, bringing Jews in the region to the most miserable state. They were subjected to violence and pogroms committed by warriors of almost every participant army or gangs of the Civil War.

Being the main center of the Jewish life in the Russian Empire, Ukraine was the spot for the most intense anti-Jewish feelings and had witnessed violent Jewish pogroms in past since Khmel'nitchina – a series of severe slaughters of Jews during the uprising of Bohdan Khmel'nitsky in 1648. Mostly Jews lived in cities (the major Jewish centers in Ukraine were Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Berdychiv and Kiev) and for Ukrainians they often symbolized the oppressors (Russian and Polish landlords) due to the special economic role of Jews in the region. Such interpretations still exist in present-day academic treatments of the past. Thus, B. Markovs'ky accuses Berdychiv Jewish traders of immoral attitude to local Ukrainian peasants and considers Jews responsible for their miserable life conditions (Markovs'ky 1997: 124). As managers of landed estates, merchants, and factory owners, Jews were mediators between Ukrainian peasants and their landlords. In the words of N. Levin, “a peasant nationalism was fueled by a vehement hostility towards Russians, Poles and especially Jews” (Levin 1990: 37).

White Army soldiers and officers also often were the bearers of anti-Semitic moods. Anti-Semitism was the consequent part of White movement ideology, and also rooted in anti-Semitism of Tsar's Russian Army (Budnitskii 2005: 21). On September, 6, 1917 a newspaper Razsvet printed a declaration of pro-tsarists groups:

Russian people, awake from your asleep! A short time ago the sun shone and the Russian tsar used to visit Kiev. Now you find Jews everywhere! Let us throw off the yoke; we can no

longer bear it! They will destroy the Fatherland. Down with the Jews! Russian people, unite!
Bring the tsar back to us (quoted in Levin 1990: 38).

Thus, the Jews became a convenient target for violence for changing rulers of the Ukrainian cities and shtetlach.

In February 1918 the Ukrainian government signed a separate peace treaty with Germany and returned to Kiev under protection of Austrian-German bayonets. It was followed by a new series of anti-Jewish riots, made by starving deserters, Petlyura's army and peasant rebellions called Haidamaki. Berdychiv, being in the regional epicenter of the Civil War, suffered greatly during this period (Levin 1990: 39).

Though the leaders of the governments (Bolsheviks, Directory of Ukrainian National Republic (UNR), Hetmanate, German occupation) mostly condemned antisemitic violence, the soldiers of all the sides were involved in the pogroms. For example, in February – March 1918, first Jewish pogroms of the Civil War period happened in Berdychiv. Both the army of Ukrainian National Republic and Bolsheviks' army did it (Horobchuk 2016: 108). Both sides tried to hide these incidents as they were shameful for them. Representatives of the Bund applied to the Mala Rada⁹ of the UNR to defend the Jewish population of Berdychiv who were frightened to be shot or get other punishment for their “friendly attitude to Bolsheviks” (Horobchuk 2016: 108). Mala Rada approved this appeal, though it didn't mean that real measures were taken to defend the civil population.

In January 1919, six days of Jewish pogroms happened in Berdychiv, leaving 17 killed, 40 injured, and hundreds robbed). It was inflicted by “Kuren' [regiment] of Death” of the colonel Palij. (Horobchuk 2016: 110) Initially it was a punitive unit, called to the city to suppress the Bolshevik rebellion in the city during a UNR government period, whose leaders were mostly Jews (for example, Mendel, Roza Slomnitska (Martynyuk 2014: 378-379) and so the operation was associated with Jews as a result. Actually, there were many Jews among local Bolsheviks and their supporters. Underground Bolsheviks' groups were very active here. The workers (who were mostly Jews) and revolutionary intelligentsia didn't support the German and Hetman authorities in Berdychiv (who governed here in 1918) as there was

⁹ Ukrainian “Small Council” – executive committee of Ukrainian National Republic (1917-1921).

lack of work in the town. They organized a march on the 1st of May 1918, and several strikes in June 1918.

Following this pogrom, on 10, January 1919, a delegation of socialistic parties (the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labour Party, the Russian Social Democratic Party, the Bund) from Berdychiv visited the leader of Directory of UNR V. Vynnychenko regarding those pogroms (Horobchuk 2016: 111). It was possible as after the Directory took power in December 1918, it declared the intention of good Ukrainian-Jewish relation, promising national-personal autonomy.

“Jews are our friends. They are our fellow-travelers. No agitation against them is permitted and anyone guilty of such agitation will be considered a counter-revolutionary, trying to create confusion in people’s minds in order to reestablish the power of landlords and capitalists”, the proclamation said, according to the memoirs of one contemporary (cit. Abramson 1999: 141). In January 1919, the Directory condemned the pogroms and assigned one million hryvnas to Jewish families that had suffered from pogroms. Special commission headed by P. Yaschenko was organized to investigate Berdychiv pogroms, but probably nobody was executed finally (Horobchuk 2016: 111).

As H. Abramson summarizes, it was the inability of the Directory of the UNR to manage its army and prevent antisemitic violence that caused the worsening of relations between the UNR government and Jewish political parties in Ukraine. These events reflect the change since 1918, when most of them supported Directory for its promise to give the Jews state autonomy within Ukraine (Abramson 1999: 145). Though there were also cases of pogroms by Red Army troops,¹⁰ in general Jewish community started to support the Red Army more, as the Bolsheviks’ anti-pogrom measures were rather effective at this time. They used active propaganda among soldiers, for example, emphasizing Jewish sufferings from Tsarist regime (Abramson 1999: 235-236).

The Bolsheviks used the sympathy of the Jewish populations towards the Red Army (and consequently to the Communist Party) in order to Sovietize Jewish communities in Ukraine.

¹⁰ For example, on 22 and 24, March 1919 in Berdychiv two Red Army regiments committed anti-Jewish slaughters, killing and robbing people (Horobchuk 2016: 112))

Among other things, they made quasi-unions with Jewish socialistic parties on the way of their elimination and creating one-party political system (Levin 1990: 59).

For example, Ukrainian Bund split into several factions, and its left wing tended to unite with Bolsheviks, explaining it by the necessity to defend Jews from pogroms of Denikin's and Petlyura's armies: "To whom we can turn?...To civilized Europe which signs treaties with the anti-Semitic Directory? [...] The Bolsheviks...are not the only force which can oppose the pogroms...This is the best way and perhaps the only way to combat the horrible Jewish pogroms" (quot. in Gitelman 1972: 175-176).

It is estimated that pogroms took place in 700 communities between 1918 and the early 1921. Between 50,000 and 60,000 Jews were killed (Levin 1990: 49).

Although Petliura's forces were most closely identified with the pogroms, numerous attacks were carried out by various bandit groups, the Polish military, the forces of Atamans Hryhoryiv and Bulak-Bulakhovich and even the Red Army...However the Red Army pogroms were less violent compared to the others'...and were carried almost exclusively by Semyon Budyonny's First Cavalry, most soldiers of in these regiments had previously served under Denikin (Gitelman 1972: 164).

Berdychiv went under the control of Soviet authorities in 1919. 19, March 1919 is the day which is considered as the date of establishment of Soviet rule in Berdychiv (Horobchuk 2016: 112), though there happened several battles for the city afterwards also. A number of Jews died in the fights (Horobchuk 2016: 112). The wish for revenge for pogroms was rather strong among Jews and motivated many of them to join the Red Army. There are memories about a Jewish Red soldier from Berdychiv, who behaved savage with the enemies and explained it as a revenge for his killed mother and sister (Gitelman 1972: 165). Special Jewish recruitment section was created in the Red Army (*Evvoensek*) that agitated for Jews to volunteer into the Red Army. There were posters, banners and brochures in Yiddish, among which was one saying "In the Red Army, a Jew can die with a rifle in hand" (Levin 1990: 60).

Thus, it's possible to say that by the final establishment of Soviet government in Berdychiv, its Jewish population sympathized with Bolsheviks and mostly supported the communist party. Throughout the Civil War period, communist and Komsomol (Communist

unit of youth) underground were active, and the members were mostly Jews. Afterwards many Jews became leaders of the new institutions. The organizer of the first Soviet newspaper “Izvestiya” was Arnold Kadishev; in 1925 Shwartzzone was appointed the secretary of city council (Horobchuk 2016: 113).

New Soviet authorities needed people to work in government agencies. After the fall of Tsarism and then the Provisional Government, a big part of officials and intelligentsia fled abroad, and their places were often taken by Jews. According to the census of 1920, 70.4 % of the Jewish population were literate (unlike Ukrainians for example¹¹) and now they were no longer barred from taking on official posts. Their membership in Communist Party was also high: 5.2 % of the party membership in 1922 (Levin 1990: 47)). The new possibilities to study at universities were also highly appreciated as in the Russian Empire, there were special quotas and limitations for Jews.

Commissariat for Jewish National Affairs (Evsom) was established in January, 1918, (with S. Dimanshtain as the head) together with other similar national commissariats and was aimed to fill the gap between the Bolsheviks and the Jewish masses (Levin 1990: 49). Before 1917 few Jews were members of the Bolshevik party, and the party didn't conduct special agitation among Jews before the revolution (Gitelman 1972: 105). Nevertheless, the inner crises of the Bund and of the social Zionist with their further breakdown contributed to the strengthening of the Jewish section in its intention to change (or even destroy) the traditional Jewish life and Hebrew culture (Levin 1990: 57). The Jewish section of the local communist bureau in Berdychiv was also created. Judging by the documents I found in Ukrainian archives, their minutes were written both in Ukrainian and Yiddish, but rarely in Russian.

Korenization as the Stage of Sovietization

Having established the Soviet authority, the Bolsheviks intended to create the most progressive state in the world and thus their aim was the modernization of the country in many aspects. These intentions met some challenges among which were the discrepancy of their utopic ideals and the reality.

¹¹ According to the census of 1897, the literacy rate of Ukrainians was 23, 6 %. Implementation of the policies of Likbez (elimination of illiteracy) resulted in increased literacy and resulted in 41.3 % by 1926 census.

The Bolsheviks' ideology was mostly based on Marxism-Leninism, which saw the history as developing by means of a certain teleology. The development was seen to have an inner "logic" leading to the aim ("telos"): being pushed by "productive forces", societies go through the stages of feudalism, capitalism, socialism and finally communism. The Bolsheviks decided to use this thesis by Marx and Engels', but intended to accelerate the historical process instead of just being its witnesses. From one side, Europe was their landmark in understanding economical engines and nationalistic aspect of the society development. From the other side, they wanted to overtake it. They were oriented on the Enlightenment project with its tendency to organize society according to rationalism and science. In comparison to Europe, Russia was backward, therefore the Bolsheviks needed an extraordinary project to overcome the gaps (Hirsh 2005: 7).

Nation and national question were one of the problems to be solved on the way to building international unity of people. Marx considered nation an obstacle for the building of communism as it was a bourgeoisie "invention" aimed to distract proletarians from the solidarity beyond national and state borders. Lenin and other Bolsheviks speculated much on this topic in prerevolutionary period and the problem arose especially sharply during the Civil War. The events which took place in Ukraine during 1917-1921 proved that national question was not a rhetorical one but could be the sticking point for creating the Soviet Union in the form the Bolsheviks had imagined (Smith 2013: 18).

The 10th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) (1921) deliberated and discussed the questions concerning the overcoming of the gap between the idealistic aspirations of a new society and the obstacles that it faced. Among the obstacles were the economic crisis and "backwardness" of people. Special attention was paid to particular backward categories of the population, such as women, peasants, tradesmen and non-Russian people. The latter category was the basic, and Stalin, being the head of Narkomnats (Peoples' Commissariat for Nationalities) formulated the problem as following: "The essence of the nationality question in the RSFSR consists of the need to eliminate the backwardness (economic, political and cultural) that the nationalities have inherited from the past, to allow the backward peoples to catch up with central Russia" (cit. Slezkine 1994: 423). The backwardness of these non-Russian peoples was explained by the Tsarist policies towards non-Russian groups of population which was manifested in different legislative limitations

put upon them. As a result, such peoples experienced difficulties in appreciation of the revolutionary achievement of the Bolsheviks and inclined towards “local nationalism” as a reaction to previous oppression (Slezkine 1994: 423).

The Soviet authorities intended to oppose their attitude to minorities to the tsarist’s, which was said to have been suppressive. Thus, it was important to demonstrate that the new state made efforts to overcome the miserable condition of national minorities. Consequently, since the early 1920's, active support of national languages and promotion of locals into the bodies of government began. This was called the policies of korenization (or indigenization) (Martin 2001). It was seen (rather utopically) to lead to rapid nationalization.

To achieve this goal, the congress suggested measures which in practice meant temporary rejection of communist principles of social organization on the grounds that the most backward population strata were not ready for them yet. Thus, the policies of NEP (New Economic Policies) and Korenization (indigenization) were approved. The former annulled the War Communism economic system and partially restored private entrepreneurship. The latter was considered to be the following. First, to supply every nationality with its own statehood with a different level of autonomy (Republic, autonomous republic, rayon, okrug, selsoviet). Second, to organize national courts and bodies of government in national languages under the leadership of local people who knew the local peculiarities. Third, developing national educational and cultural institutions in native languages (Slezkine 1994: 423).

However, the flowering of separate nations was not the ultimate goal of the national policies in the USSR. It was considered a necessary step on the way to creating an international socialist society. The idea was to give all the rights and possibilities to nations in order to prevent the emergence of internal inter-class solidarity and to provoke further class conflict. The logic was that if labour and bourgeoisie classes did not share the goal of national building, it will guarantee the consolidation of workers and peasantry (Martin 2001: 15).

One of the strongest instruments for realization of the national policy towards Jews was the creation of Jewish sections of communist party. Jewish sections (Evreiskie Sektsii, often referred to as “the Evseksiya”) were established within the Bolshevik party in 1918

(Gitelman 1972: 123), in Berdychiv in 1923 (BD DAZHO (a)). Together with other national sections, its goal was to spread communist ideology among the national minorities using their native languages (Yiddish, as Hebrew was proclaimed a bourgeois language), creation of governmental bodies, educational institutions, theatres and newspapers in national languages. Local city councils also took part in realization of the national policies.

In general, national policies were not under control of one single department in the USSR. Their political character was rather intricate. Terry Martin suggests to look at it through the prism of division between “soft” and “hard” policies (Martin 2001: 37). There were two directions of communist policies in general. The most important tasks were realized within “hard” policies, and the mediators of “soft” policies tried to make these measures attractive in the eyes of people. They were realized by the Central Executive Committee and one of its chambers (Council of Nationalities), by Central Executive Committee of Russian Soviet Federative Republic and its Department of Nationalities, and by the People’s Commissariat for Education (Narkompros) and one of its department, Committee for Education of National Minorities. Among the governmental bodies of “hard” policies were the political police, Joint State Political Directorate (OGPU), Central Control Commission, and the Central Committee of Communist party and some of its departments (National Sector, Personnel Department, Organizational Bureau and Political Bureau) (Martin 2001: 38).

Though korenization was mostly the prerogative of the “soft” policies, actually both directions contributed to it, dividing the functions, and it could be seen in Berdychiv also. While the “soft” policies were “affirmative”, enthusiastic and motivating, praising the success of national creation, such as the development of education and culture, the “hard” policies were responsible for fulfillment of “proper” goals. From one point, it monitored that national minorities developed in the right direction on the way to modernization. From another point, it controlled that the national conciseness of some minorities would not prevail over socialistic values.

In 1924–1925 these policies mostly aimed to support the poorest segments of the Jewish population, especially their education, involvement into “useful economic activity” and antireligious enlightenment. It was a general trend which was actual in Berdychiv.

Language was considered to be the keystone of nation-building and thus it was important to introduce it into the most important (from the governmental standpoint) institutions, such as schools, agencies of the government, press, theatre, clubs. Stalin claimed that the ideas of communism would be clearer and more available for non-Russian peoples if they were formulated in native languages (Smith 2013: 53).

In Berdychiv the authorities and the Jewish section in particular paid much attention to the language question, as it can be seen from the minutes of different bodies. I have come across several mentions about the importance of language equality and explaining this to local people in the protocols of the bureau of Berdychiv Jewish section and commission of national minorities in 1923-1924 (DAZHO (a); l. 28; DAZHO (b); l. 43). As far as I could understand, it was about the implementation of the national languages into all the spheres of life. As such, it can be considered as politization of language.

The meeting of the Berdychiv Jewish section also discussed Yiddish press, for example, the foundation of the journal “Yungvald” for Jewish youth (DAZHO (b); l. 28) and recruiting subscribers for local Yiddish newspapers “Der Emes” (“the truth” in Yiddish) and “Komfon” (“Communist flag”) (DAZHO (b); l. 1, 6). Yiddish was also introduced as a political language, used for propaganda and political enlightenment. For instance, in February 1923, presentations in Jewish language about the February revolution and the 25th anniversary of the Russian Communist Party were given at shoe factories and at units of tanners, builders, sewers and transport workers (DAZHO (c); l. 4). Also, different meetings were held for communist and non-communist workers in Yiddish language. However, underlining the fact of using Yiddish gives the impression that its implementation into public life was an issue. Besides, one of the minutes claims that Jewish section met hardships in organizing the political work in Yiddish, especially for the reason of overload of general party work (DAZHO (c); l. 4). Probably it can mean that the same people headed the communist cell in the city and were the members of the local Jewish section. I can’t say the exact number but judging by the lists of members attending the meetings, it could be between 20-30 people.

Nevertheless, the national question seems really important for the period, as the protocols also mention plans for establishing a special collegium for studying Jewish culture.

Antireligious policies towards Jews

In 1924–1925 the policies in “Jewish question” were also focused on antireligious enlightenment. Antireligious propaganda accompanied the implementation of korenization policies towards Jews as a part of their modernization and Sovietization. Jews were simultaneously a national minority and a religious community, and religion was considered as a backward phenomenon used by bourgeoisie to manipulate peasants and proletariat.

Antireligious propaganda had such forms as scientific lectures, disproving religious dogmas, issuing the newspaper “Bezbozhnik” (Godless), organizing clubs “Bezbozhnik” where theatrical performances about religious holidays and their “true” meaning were shown, and expropriation of cult buildings (synagogues) and their transformation into workers’ clubs were discussed.

Special attention was paid to religious holidays and related customs. Reports about anti-Pesach campaigns occur rather often in the minutes of local governmental agencies. For example, minutes of a meeting in spring 1924 refer to an alive newspaper, dramatic section, presentation “Lenin and emancipated women”, and a theatrical performance with participants from all Jewish schools (DAZHO (a); 1. 20).

The stir about the holiday probably reflected the importance of this celebration for the Jewish community. Pesach, or Passover, is one the main Jewish festivals. It is celebrated in spring, for 8 days, and it symbolizes the exodus of Jews from Egypt slavery. Thus, this is a festival of liberation. Its main attribute is matzo, unleavened bread. It is considered that when Jews escaped from Egypt, they did not have time to wait until the dough was leavened and made unleavened bread. Eating matzo on Pesach explained one more tradition, connected with this holiday. It is about collecting everything leavened in a house (called *chametz* in Hebrew) before the festival and either burning it or selling it to gentiles (non-Jewish people). It is also important to collect money for the poor before the Pesach (especially for matzo).

The methods used by the local Jewish section to eradicate this tradition were not invented on the spot but were introduced by the supreme bodies and distributed centrally. So, there was the Commission of the Central committee of the Russian Communist party (the Bolsheviks) on holding the separation of Church and State, which worked from 1922 till 1929 (Lobanov 2014). Under its auspices the League of Militant Atheists was created. As for

Berdychiv, in the meeting of the Jewish section on 5, March 1928, its members decided to organize a club by the name of “Bezbozhnik” (“godless”).

The All-Union League had various activities such as organizing museums, exhibitions, issuing antireligious books and press. They also distributed materials to local clubs where one could find poems, games, sketches for performing (Velizhev et al. 1928). Their main press mouthpiece was the newspaper “Bezbozhnik” (Godless) which was completely devoted to antireligious propaganda. Speaking about Pesach, in 1923 it published a satirical essay about customs related to it (Litvakov 1923: 3), mocking the tradition of chametz by explaining it as bourgeois, chauvinistic and hypocritical. Linking religion with bourgeoisie and Nepmen was one of the most widely spread arguments in this ideological struggle. As theatrical performances and alive newspapers were mentioned, it refers to the fact agitators tried to be demonstrative and comprehensive for the audience and to spread their message in an entertaining form. Also, the lecture about emancipated women refers to the early Soviet view of women as being more backward than men due to the specifics of the traditional way of life where women were associated with the household and didn’t participate in public life.

In general, the style of local documents of this period is rather mild, meaning that the local authorities used the methods of mild policies to solve their problems, trying to persuade local people. Thus, we can read the following in the protocol of a meeting of the local Jewish section of Berdychiv district Communist Party Committee from 28, March 1923:

Comrade Gulko reported about “the proceeding of antireligious campaign (about Pesach) and the question of expropriation of Choral Synagogue. Discussions are held in all the night labour schools. General meetings of woodworkers and metalworkers were held successfully as well as a general meeting of sewer workers...Scientific presentations “Pesach, its origin, essence and meaning” were done during these meetings...Our resolutions about Pesach and the synagogue were accepted by the majority. The meeting of the workers of the city leather plant #1 was not a success. Our resolution was not supported by the majority...”. It was decided “to continue the company in the same style and to collaborate with culture sectors of working units to make the ideology work more effective. The question of holding a street march on the first day of Pesach and the expropriation of the synagogue remains open until all the meetings are held and the experience and the moods of masses are clear enough (DAZHO (a); l. 3).

We can see that the agitation was not always a success, and the protocols reflect this without blaming people of being a counter-revolutionists. It is aimed at fair persuasion, whereas in the late 1920's any ideological defeat will be explained by enemies' activity.

3.2 Sovietization reflected in everyday life

At the time of establishing Soviet Government in Berdychiv in 1922, Jewish population constituted the majority of settlers in the town. In 1907 there lived 80,000 people in Berdychiv, 60,000 of whom were Jews (TsDAGO (a)) and inclined to support the Bolsheviks. Though just after the October Revolution most Jewish socialist parties were set against the Bolsheviks in Ukraine, after the series of pogroms, inflicted by the soldiers of Directory and its affiliates, White Army, gangs, the Red Army was seen to be the least injurious to the Jewish people (Abramson 1999: 115, 120). In spite of numerous promises and reassurances by the government of the Ukrainian National Republic, it did not manage to suppress antisemitic riots of its soldiers (Abramson 1999: 145). It was only the Red Army that finally could stop pogroms and establish a more or less stable government in the town. Mark (Motl) Derbaremdiker, a scientist, Yiddish scholar and folklore collector, who was born in a Jewish family in Berdychiv in 1920 and lived there up to 1936, recalls his father's remembrance about the shooting of ten richest Jewish people by the Red Army, but it was considered not as an antisemitic, but as a class act (Derbaremdiker 2002).

Active sovietization of Jewish population started in 1923, supposedly after the 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) and it was aimed to korenization. Besides korenization, the Jewish population was also subjected to antireligious propaganda, aimed to weaken the influence of Judaism. Sovietization was executed by means of both oppressive methods (withdrawal of synagogues, closing kheders) and affirmative policies (education and agitation through lectures, theatrical performances, press).

The attitude of the Jewish people to korenization and antireligious propaganda can be considered ambivalent. From one side, a lot of local Jews supported Soviet initiatives (or at least didn't oppose them). Many high positions in Berdychiv city council and the communist party committee were occupied by Jews. They were the people who actively promoted Soviet ideas and values to masses. They agitated against religious holidays, established Jewish schools where pupils were taught in Yiddish, closed synagogues and kheders. The grass roots

seemed to be leading its life in a way that was accommodative to the new government and at the same time aimed at preserving its habitual way of life. Thus, Mark Derbaremdiker recalls that at the age of 4 (in 1924) he started to attend kheder in Berdychiv and studied there for three years, claiming that kheders were finally closed in Berdychiv only several years later. Next he entered a Soviet Yiddish school called “Grinike Boymelakh” or “green seedling” in Yiddish. There were classes on Saturday and pupils had to attend school on that day, but they didn’t take their pens or pencils and didn’t write anything in class, so they formally obeyed both Soviet and Judaist rules. “We were pioneers at school, and at home we followed the rules of Judaism” (Derbaremdiker 2002).

Such a behavior was not the specifics of Berdychiv Jewry, but probably can be considered as typical of early Soviet times. Thus, E. Bemporad in her book *Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk* (2013) tells about similar cases in Minsk. Some children, for example a rabbi’s daughter, didn’t attend school on Saturdays. When she was threatened with expulsion from school, she explained that her religion didn’t prevent her from being a good pupil and an active Soviet citizen (Bemporad 2013: 172). Teacher also sometimes behaved ambivalently. Being employees of the Soviet schools, they promoted Soviet ideology but at the same time could pretend not noticing that some pupils didn’t write anything on Saturdays. Moreover, even teachers themselves followed traditions and obeyed shabbat, celebrated Pesach or just came to work in fancy dresses on the days of Jewish holidays (Bemporad 2013: 174).

Derbaremdiker recalls that something similar happened with Jewish holidays in Berdychiv. Officially celebrations of religious holidays were condemned, especially for those who were communists or Komsomol members. It concerned also schoolchildren. During the holiday of Pesach some children’s houses were “inspected” by their classmates, and then they discussed that at their meeting. But both “inspectors” and “inspected” enjoyed the Pesach treats (Derbaremdiker 2002). Derbaremdiker himself compares their family with middle-age Morranos who were induced to get baptized but secretly followed Judaism. Another explanation that he gives for such a dual life was his father’s opinion that “We can’t live in conflict with the government”. Consciously or not, but he thereby refers to the so called “pray for government”. It originated in the Talmudic tractate “Pirkei Avot” (“Chapters of the Fathers”) where Rabbi Chanina, the Deputy High Priest, says: “Pray for the welfare of

the government, for were it not for the fear of it, man would swallow his fellow alive”. This extract is commonly interpreted that without any government the world would be taken over by chaos and violence. It is also connected with the fact that being in Galut (exile) since the Destruction of the Second Holy Temple, the Jews had been especially dependent on the government of the country they lived in and had to maintain good relations with the rulers (Abramson 1999: 41). This prayer was often put on the walls in synagogues and sometimes included in siddurs or Jewish prayer books: “In numerous communities it is accepted to pronounce the prayer for the wealth of the state where this community is settled” (Sidur, 1999: 449b).

So, it was habitual for Jews to balance between holding on to their traditions and being loyal to the government.

We can find similar examples in the minutes of the local Jewish section of the Communist Party in Berdychiv. People participated in Soviet activities, but at the same time didn't break with the community and tradition. It could cause problems, when it was released and publicly condemned, and even Comrades' courts took place to demonstrate that the Soviet government demanded exclusive loyalty. Thus, in one of the minutes of 1924, one can read about a trial upon one worker who bought a new Torah for the local synagogue (DAZHO (d)). I should notice that the minute doesn't give information whether this worker was a communist or not.

Minutes of the Jewish section from 1927-1929 mention that the growing number of Komsomol members can be considered as a sign of the correct work of the bodies of the Soviet government and party and of the growing consciousness of the local Jewish population (DAZHO (e)). At the same time, the following facts are registered in Berdychiv and its suburbs. Jewish Komsomol members helped a rabbi to rent a reading-house for a lower price (DAZHO (e)) in one of the nearby villages. Another case reports that Komsomol members participated in a religious wedding and in the making of matzah (DAZHO (e)) which was unacceptable for them. In Kozyatin, a town near Berdychiv that was part of the Berdychiv okrug at that period, a communist invited a “Soviet rabbi¹²” into the committee of help, which presumably was set up to help the poorest people. Though religious holidays were not days

¹² It's not specified what “soviet rabbi” meant, probably a rabbi loyal to the Soviet government.

off, some of the workers of enterprises in Berdychiv, such as “Pobeda” and “Profintern”, skipped work on Yom Kippur or Day of Atonement. Unfortunately, these minutes do not give any information of the self-explanation of such behavior and what the strategies to overcome it were. But analogic cases are described by E. Bemporad. When communists were blamed that they took part in religious rituals and their sons were circumcised, they justified it with “bad” influence of their backward wives and mothers (Bemporad 2013: 210).

3.3 Political symbolism of the old cemetery destruction

Judging by the minutes of local city bodies, actions toward “ideological enemies” became more aggressive and “hard” policies started to prevail in Berdychiv in 1928-1929. I can assume that it was the direct reflection of changes in central policies. The 1928-1932 period is called “cultural revolution” when the course of ideology was changed by Stalin. Collectivization of agricultural sector and industrialization became the main projects, and the question of national development became secondary and afterwards was declined completely (Smith 2013: 101). The situation was further complicated by the state’s anxiety about the international situation. Besides, “collectivization and the cultural revolution were accompanied by a renewed persecution on religious organizations... The anti-religious decrees of 1929 affected mosques and synagogues as much as churches” (Smith 2013: 104).

In Berdychiv, almost all synagogues were taken from religious Jews and transformed into workers’ clubs. It is interesting that the authorities still needed at least a nominal approval of their actions by the population. In minutes of meetings we can read about the initiatives and enthusiasm of the Jewish working population:

In general, the moods among the Jewish workers of the town and villages are healthy and Soviet, that is approved by last companies of self-taxation¹³ etc. Up to 100% of voters participated in them... In spite of resistance by kulaks and clericals, the workers of our district have expropriated four praying houses this year and transformed them into clubs. Numerous requests from Jewish working population of different villages for transfers of synagogues into clubs. All that is the best approval of the party and of the Soviet influence on the broad circles of Jewish population of our district (DAZHO (e); p. 166).

¹³ Self-taxation was a kind of voluntary taxation used for local needs.

This minute concludes with the decision to close illegal religious schools, to emphasize antireligious propaganda and urgently transform the old Jewish cemetery into a city park (DAZHO (e); p. 166).

The idea of a new city plan came to Berdychiv from the State Institute of City Design which had been founded in Leningrad. Such a decision can be logically embodied in general line of sovietization of the 1920's. This process was accompanied by active restructuring of urban space. Renaming of streets and squares, creating new building and destruction (or expropriation) of old cult edifices, replacement of old imperial memorials with monuments devoted to new heroes served to change the sacral vector of a city, the symbolic meaning of its structure. Everything that embodied sacredness in the prerevolutionary period insulted new shrines of the Soviet epoch (Bemporad 2013: 116). Berdychiv was not an exception. It was rather a common practice to put new monuments on the basements of old ones. In Berdychiv, the basement of Alexander II's monument became the foundation for the memorial of dead warriors of the Civil War (Horobchuk 2016: 101). Thus, the space that was important in the city kept its significance, but the content was changed. In 1919 Soborna (Temple) square was renamed Radyanska (Soviet), Belopolska street was renamed after the German socialist activist Karl Liebknecht, Makhivska after the Russian revolutionary Yakov Sverdlov, Mala Yurika street became Karl Marx street (Horobchuk 2016: 129).

So, I can suppose that the transformation of the cemetery into a city park could be multi-functional in that sense. It could serve the interests of sovietization and of the struggle with religious elements as it was a place of pilgrimage. But suddenly the decision about destruction of the cemetery caused hot discussions and intricate conflicts as it was contrastingly interpreted by different actors. The decision to destroy the cemetery was too radical both for the Jewish people and for the museum workers who advocated for safeguarding it.

Interesting facts about the events can be learned from the reports of Movchanivsky. These reports were submitted to the All-Ukrainian Archeological Committee and to the Department of Science of Narkompros (People's Commissariat of Education) of USSR.

In 1928 T. Movchanivsky suggested to organize at least part of the cemetery into an ethnographic sanctuary and to move at least some of the tombstones to the Berdychiv

museum that had a special Jewish department. But suddenly he encountered non-official obstacles from local authorities (NAIA NANU (b); 1. 2). While in Berdychiv, I tried to investigate whether T. Movchanivsky managed to bring those tombstones to the museum. I met with P. Skavrons'ky¹⁴, the current director of the Berdychiv museum, hoping that the museum disposed at least some information about this. I learned that Berdychiv City Museum was closed in 1957 according to the state plan for “enlargement” of museums, restarting its work only in late 1980s. The collections of the museum were supposed to be brought to the Zhytomyr regional museum, but there is no information about the tombstones. They could be lost or could have ended up in other institutions.

Back in June 1929, city communal services started preparation works for the park layout without any negotiations with the local museum. As a result, many tombstones of historical and esthetical significance were broken. It caused commotion among the citizens of the city (mostly Jewish), who were indignant at “the mockery over the bones and tombs of ancestors”. It pushed Movchanivsky for active investigation of the cemetery (NAIA NANU (c)).

The museum managers announced part of the cemetery a sanctuary and decided to make archaeological excavations in order to investigate if there were any material ritual items in the tombs of the 17th – 18th centuries – something that had been denied by local “Talmudists and Rabbins”. To a degree, the excavation verified Movchanivsky’s hypothesis about ritual items for smoking pipes, nails, crock and glass pieces, and locks “Jerusalem sand” were found. During the two weeks of archaeological work, local people under the influence of “clergy” started protests with petitions against the excavations and rumours about forthcoming doomsday were spread.

However, the excavation had rather surprising consequences. The report by Movchanivsky ends with an ideological part where he argues about the political influence of archaeological work. Following him, the excavations caused a strong resonance among local people, who were divided into two “working people and clericals with sympathizers in petty bourgeois circles” ((NAIA NANU(c); 1. 7). The entire process was accompanied by tempestuous discussions between museum workers and “Jewish soviet youth” versus

¹⁴ It happened in autumn, 2018, during my research visit to Ukraine (internship in the Center for Studies of History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry).

“Talmudists and ravinate”. Main topics under consideration were the following: demolishing of the cemetery, doomsday, Hebraic scholarly issues etc. The sharpest topic of the discussion was the presence of funeral inventory the existence of which had been vehemently denied by the rabbis as it’s now allowed by Halakha (Jewish traditional law). This was a kind of exposé of the clerics in the eyes of “common people”. A mob of about 1,500-2,000 people stood by all the time, witnessing excavations, and that was the reason to call for militiamen to safeguard those who worked at the dig and to prevent violence. Initially the mob supported the religious leader who promoted keeping the cemetery and were very expressive in their declaration. But when they saw that young museum workers were more educated and were better aware of meaning of ornaments and epitaphs, the people changed their partiality. (NAIA NANU(c); l. 7) and ritual findings. “Clerics” consequently cursed all those who went to the cemetery and threatened people with doomsday in case of demolishing of tzadiks’ tombs but they were met with whistles and mocked. All these events gave start for an active antireligious propaganda among working people of the city.

To my mind, the depicted events reveal a complex and intricate system of power relations, actual at that moment in Berdychiv. Following Foucault’s position, power relations are not reducible to the opposition between oppressors and the oppressed but could be rather characterised as a dynamic structure resembling a rhizome where power is represented on many levels. The lower levels of power are not only a reflection of central power but also its roots (Foucault 1980: 115). Here we can see at least four agents of this structure each of whom had its aims and “weapons” and acted simultaneously against and together with the others:

1) Local authorities for whom it was important for some reason to create a public park on the place of old cemetery.

2) Museum workers who were eager to preserve this cemetery (or at least part of it and at least some of the tombstones) as an ethnographic record and historical monument of Jewish culture.

3) “clerics” – religious authorities of Jewish community whose aim was to keep the status quo and defend the tombs of ancestors.

4) “Common people” with rather unclear aims.

The situation surrounding the old cemetery involved all of these parties, tying them into a knotty conflict. The territory of the old Jewish cemetery became a symbolic battle field of different values and policies, due to rather contradictory laws, regulating national and religious politics of the Soviet authorities of that period.

From one side, Jews were considered a national minority, and their folklore, and especially material culture was supposed to be preserved. In 1928 a special decree was issued about “Monuments of culture and nature” (Zbirnik 1928) to protect sites of high importance and evidence of folk culture and ethnography. Following this decree, Movchanivsky and his colleagues, as is evident from his numerous reports and letters, initiated several projects to protect synagogues in Berdychiv district (NAIA NANU (a)). They organized a separate Jewish department in the museum and petitioned to make a sanctuary in Berdychiv.

From another side, Jews were not only a national minority but a religious one as well. By the end of the 1920's the antireligious agitation became especially important. Seemingly it was important to overcome religion by scientific and ideological means within so-called political education (*politprosvet*). Thus, the replacement of the cemetery with a public park in Berdychiv seems to be in line with reorganization of numerous synagogues in Berdichev district into “Houses of Culture” (Dom Kul'tury). These can be regarded as symbolic acts of transforming old and out-of-date sites of oppression and prejudice into new and progressive places of freedom and emancipation.

Thus, the cemetery became a disputed issue between the museum and city council. I can suppose it could happen as a result of really confusing and contradictory legislation in that question. To a degree, it continued the tendency typical of the “Jewish question” in the Russian Empire, when local authorities were often confused by the number of laws and their mutual discrepancy (Nathans 2004). Nevertheless, it was for sure a representational case of Soviet policies of secularization and reformatting of urban space. The 1920's were the time of active discussions about death culture and a new attitude to death and hence to cemeteries, considered as an atavism of the “old world” (Sokolova 2018). These discussions were not only a reflection of the Soviet utopian ideology but also fit into modernity's ideas about death (Laqueur 2015).

As a result, it caused a conflict in which otherwise progressive museum workers for some period in some way united with the “retrogrades” or “Talmudists and Ravines” in their attempt to save the cemetery. To prove the importance of the cemetery, Movchanivsky used not only documentary data, but also applied to folklore, probably while interviewing rabbis and “common Jews”. It is interesting, however, how he interprets the data he obtained. It is done in terms of Marxist ideology (class struggle) and general scientific discourse considering folk beliefs and practices as prejudices, superstitions and vestiges of the past. Finally, he uses all the data he had found during the excavations to defeat “Talmudists and Ravines”. He gave material evidence that they were not right and thus he conquered the leaning of the mob (“workers”).

The site itself presented another conflict of interests. If in pre-revolutionary Russia a cemetery was owned by a community and all the territorial disputes were resolved judicially, then in Soviet Ukraine community was no longer a legal subject and land was communal. Thus, the position of local Jews who were eager to save the cemetery was not strong in that sense, and could only be reinforced by museum workers, who were also interested in preserving the site, though they were driven by different aims. However, this alliance collapsed because of ideological reasons. If the report by Movchanivsky is to be believed, the “core” group of Jewish protestors was influential to begin with, but lost its impact on the majority. Finally, the ideological victory over “clergymen” was followed by factual demolishing of the cemetery.

From 1923 to 1928-29 the style of minutes and approach to “Jewish question” changed significantly. In 1923-1925 there are mentions of pogroms and sufferings of the Jewish population during the Civil war, much emphasis was done on the support of national languages (in schools, public places, newspapers) due to the policy of korenization. Anti-semitism is condemned and some cases were discussed during the meetings. Clericals are criticized, but the main task is to educate poor stratum of Jewish population, such as workmen and craftsmen. The Bolsheviki’s aim was to bring people to revolution and it was impossible to do that only by oppression and terror. We can see the tendency to “soft” methods in organizing nationality and socialistic work among the Jewish population in Berdychiv and its suburbs. The official reports of city council and Jewish section of the CP(b)U in 1923-1925 reflect this tendency. They make accent on propaganda and agitation

as methods to persuade people in the rightness of the Soviet government intentions. Among these methods were natural history lectures (with antireligious accent), discussions about the synagogues and their transformation into clubs and educational centers. Important decisions, such as anti-religious demonstrations on the days of Pesakh or withdrawal of the synagogue were discussed with people. From one side, it could be explained by a certain uncertainty of the new authority status in the city. From another, it was important for the Bolsheviks to prove their rightness to people and to persuade them in propriety of the communist ideology. Besides, the Jewish people were considered a national minority that was oppressed in the times of the Russian Empire and afterwards suffered from pogroms during the Civil war. Thus, it was important to demonstrate different attitude to Jews from the side of the Soviet authorities.

On the early stages of the policies of korenization the authorities were more focused on its national aspect, intending to accelerate the formation of a nation (Jewish in this case). So, the main efforts were directed to maintain national differences, creating national border-lines with the supporting national languages and education. But by the end of the 1920's assimilation tendency got stronger, thus any national peculiarities and claim for special national rights or aspirations started to be considered as nationalistic and even chauvinistic.

In 1928-1929 the “soft-line” policies gradually changed into “hard-lines” in national question. These were centripetal tendencies that manifested on the local level as well. Antisemitism was still condemned but it was explained by class struggle and was not set apart from nationalism and “Jewish chauvinism”. This reflects the change in the national policies of the Soviet Government. In the beginning the term chauvinism was applied only to “Great Russians” (after Lenin) as they had been the personification of national oppression in Russian Empire and the policy of korenization was aimed to overcoming this chauvinism and its consequences. But in 1928 the attitude changed, and Stalin started to apply this term also to other nations. The argument was that both anti-semitism and Jewish chauvinism had the same class roots and thus they had to be struggled the same way, by defeating class enemies, such as clericals, Nepmen and kulaks. Besides the latter were accused in religious influence upon population by supporting philanthropic enterprises and helping people to educate their children in kheders as well as maintaining tradition by giving matzo.

One of the reasons of a certain failure of the Jewish section work was that “special national task” didn’t exist for Jewish communists (Levin 1990: 51). Unlike other national minorities the Jewish communities were rather developed socially in sense they had schools, libraries, synagogues, charity system for orphanage, aged and poor. The paradox for the Bolsheviks were that they didn’t manage to eliminate the need for such institutions, but at the same time couldn’t allow them functioning (Levin 1990: 51) as they were tightly connected with religion and traditional mode of life. Probably that’s why in the early period we see the critics of those institutions but no real activity to eliminate them. But in the late 1920's because of the changed politics of the Supreme Soviet authorities and the growing pressure upon local agencies there started a real offensive on traditional institutions of education and charity.

Incident on the cemetery became the quintessence of that struggle. The city council took into consideration neither the opinion of the Jewish community for whom it was a significant spot both in religious memorial meaning nor the initiative of the museum workers headed by Movchanivsky who aimed to preserve the cemetery as a monument of ethnography and history. As a result, both Movchanivsky and “rabbis” both were defeated in some sense. Neither he nor they succeeded to reach their goals, and the case was used to maintain antireligious work on local material.

CONCLUSION

The Soviet policies of the 1920's were radical, contradictory, dramatic and temporary, which makes this period fascinating for research: it is a challenge to discover the process of establishing the USSR at a time when ideology was not yet rigorous and ultimate. This is evident in the example of the Berdychiv Jewish community and the political measures it was subjected to in this period.

In my thesis, I attempted to reveal the specifics of early Soviet policies towards the Jewish community of Berdychiv. I consider that researching this period in the history of Berdychiv Jewry is important for understanding its changes through different epochs: within Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569-1793), Russian Empire (1793-1917), Civil War (1917-1921), USSR (1921-1991) and Ukraine (since 1991). Originated in the late 18th century, this community was a significant religious centre, enjoyed the prosperity in the first half and economical withering in the second half of the 19th century, developing educational opportunities and business, and it was active politically in the early 20th century. Its encounter with the Soviets was dramatic and contradictory and the peripeteias of the 1920's, which ended with the destruction of the cemetery, became in some sense an omen of the destruction and chaos the community was about to face. The Second World War brought death to almost every Jew who had not managed to evacuate, as only 10 to 15 of them survived the Holocaust in Berdychiv. But eventually by the 21st century the community managed to recover and restart its life and development.

In the first chapter “Previous Scholarship and Sources” I focused on the sources that laid the foundation of my thesis. The empirical basis for my research is made up of documents I discovered in various Ukrainian archives, such as the Central State Historical Archives of Ukraine in Kyiv, Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine, Scientific Archives of the Institute of Archeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast and Berdychiv Department of the State Archives of Zhytomyr Oblast. There I found records both about the history of Berdychiv Jewish community in the 19th century (demographic statistics, numbers of synagogues and beth midrashes) and the early Soviet epoch of the 1920's. The latter documents belonged to the city council, Jewish section of the local communist cell and the

local city museum. These papers concern antireligious propaganda and its methods (such as theatrical performances, discussions, lectures), language matters (promotion of Yiddish as the core of the Jewish identity), and education (organizing new Jewish secondary and vocational schools in Yiddish and struggling with religious schools called “kheders”, problems of anti-Semitism, questions pertaining to emancipation of women, and a number of documents regarding expropriation of cult buildings). The archives also gave me several interesting documents about the old Jewish cemetery in Berdychiv and its demolition. To place my research topic and data in the broader context of Soviet policies of the 1920s, I drew on research on Soviet approaches to nationality and religion questions, modernization and symbolical changes. Books on Jewish history and traditional culture helped me to comprehend the previous context of the Jewish history and culture. I also consulted the literature on Berdychiv local history.

In the second chapter “Jewish Berdychiv or “Jerusalem of Volyn”” I wrote about Berdychiv Jewish community from the late 18th century up to the early 20th century and the imaginary meanings of Berdychiv. The city played an important role in Jewish religious and economic life during this period, being a centre of Khasidism and active trading spot in the region. This found its way to popular culture and fiction depicting the Berdychiv as a typical Jewish city and creating its image as symbol of Jewish provincialism. It is meaningful to see the history of Berdychiv Jewry in its entirety as Sovietization did not occur in a vacuum, but was directly connected with the traditional structure of the Jewish city and its inhabitants way of life.

The third chapter “Berdychiv Jews and the Bolsheviks” focuses on the Sovietization of the Berdychiv Jewry in the 1920's. Being a national minority, Jewish population was subject to the policies of korenization that characterized this period, meaning that the authorities promoted Yiddish language in all the spheres, especially education, condemned Jews' oppression during the tsarist epoch as well as anti-Semitic pogroms of the Civil war, supported the poorest stratum of the Jewry. Jewish sections of the Communist party were created to solve these tasks. The authorities of Berdychiv tended to follow all the central decrees, and on the basis of the archival documents I revealed what challenges they met and how they were treated. My special focus was on the destruction of the old Jewish cemetery in 1929 and its replacement by city park and I aimed to approach this event from the

perspective of different agents interested in this site: Jewish community, city council and the local museum. I analyzed their intentions and motivation, using the concept of power relations developed by M. Foucault. My argument that the decision to demolish the cemetery and replace it by a city park was not a pure act of reconstructing the city. For the city authorities it was also the demonstration of new vector of modernization: such a replacement symbolized the victory of “new world” over the “old” one. Besides it turned out a convenient occasion to activate anti-religious propaganda in the city which hadn’t been very successful before. For the museum workers, especially T. Movchanivsky, the cemetery was an important ethnographic and historical monument, thus they put strong efforts to safe-guard it in any possible way, but they didn’t succeed as their findings were used as propaganda material. The religious community appreciated the necropolis as a shrine, as for a Jewish community a cemetery is one of the significant city objects. Besides this cemetery was legendary due to the burials of great tsaddiks. The community didn’t observe passively at the destruction of the necropolis and struggled in the way they could. Nevertheless, the decision was finally implemented.

I consider that the topic of my research is worthy of further exploration. First, a more detailed survey of the Sovietization of Berdychiv can add new facts to local history. Second, it may provide material for further studies on interethnic relations in Berdychiv, as it was traditionally a place where different ethnicities and confessions coexisted. Third, the documents of Soviet governing bodies combined with ego-documents of local inhabitants can be insightful for clarifying the bilateral aspects of power relations between the state authorities and the Jewish community.

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RESUME (IN ESTONIAN)

Magistritöö „Berdõtšivi juudi kogukond nõukogude võimu algusaastatel“ käsitleb Berdõtšivi juudi elanikkonna sovietsiseerimist 1920. aastate alguses. Tegemist on Ukraina keskosas asuva linnaga, mida 18. sajandi lõpust Teise maailmasõjani asustasid valdavalt juudid ning mis on suure kultuuriloolise väärtusega. Magistritöö peamiseks eesmärgiks on välja selgitada, milliseid meetmeid rakendati Berdõtšivi juudi kogukonna suhtes nõukogude võimu algusaastatel ja kuidas kohalik elanikkond neid vastu võttis. Samas selgitab uurimus ka kohaliku juudi kogukonna kujunemislugu ja linna rolli juudi linnana, sest need tegurid mängisid rolli ka nõukogude ametnike suhtumises Berdõtšivisse. Magistritöö teema valikule andis tõuke soov mõista sündmusi, mis viisid Berdõtšivi vana juudi surnuaia hävitamiseni 1929. aastal, ning kalmistu pargiga asendamise plaanile osaks saanud vastakaid reaktsioone.

Magistritöö koosneb sissejuhatausest, kolmest sisupeatükist, kasutatud materjalide loetelust ja lisast, mis annab arvulise ülevaate Berdõtšivi linna juudi elanikkonnast 18. sajandi lõpust tänaseni.

Esimene peatükk tutvustab empiirilisi allikaid ja uurimislugu. Magistritöö põhineb valdavalt erinevatest Ukraina arhiividest leitud protokollidel, aruannatel, kirjadel ja teistel dokumentidel, mis on seni uurijate huviorbiidist välja jäänud. Teoreetilisi tugipunkte pakuvad uurimused Nõukogude Liidu rahvus- ja usupoliitikast, moderniseerimisest ning juutide ajaloost Vene tsaaririigis ja Nõukogude Liidus. Samas on töös kasutatud ka koduloolisi käsitlusi Berdõtšivist.

Teine peatükk on pühendatud Berdõtšivi juudi kogukonna kujunemisele 18. sajandi lõpust 20. sajandi alguseni ning linnale omistatud sümbolsetele tähendustele. Hassidismi keskuse ja kaubandusteede ristumiskohana mängis Berdõtšiv nimetatud perioodil juudi usu- ja majanduselus olulist rolli. Selle kajastused jõudsid ka populaarkultuuri ja ilukirjandusse, kus Berdõtšivit kujutati tüüpilise juudi linna ning „juudi provintsi“ sümbolina.

Kolmas peatükk keskendub Berdõtšivi juudi elanikkonna sovietsiseerimisele 1920. aastatel. Rahvusvähemuseks peetud juutide suhtes rakendati etnilise eristumise poliitikat (*коренизация*), mis väljendus jidiši keele kasutamise propageerimises hariduses ja teistes eluvaldkondades, aga ka vaeste toetamises ja selles, et mõisteti hukka juutide rõhumine Vene tsaaririigis ning kodusõja aegsed pogrommid. Nende ülesannetega tegelemiseks loodi

kommunistlikus parteis juudi seksioonid. Magistritöö analüüsib arhiiviallikatele tuginedes, kuidas Berdõtšivi kohalikud võimud viisid keskvalitsuselt tulnud suuniseid ellu ning milliseid takistusi tuli neil sealjuures ületada. Erilist tähelepanu pälvib vana juudi surnuaia hävitamine ja selle asendamine linnapargiga 1929. aastal. Eesmärgiks on avada sündmust juudi kogukonna, linnavõimude ja kohaliku muuseumi vaatepunktist ning mõista nende erinevate osapoolte kavatsusi ja motiive, lähtudes M. Foucault võimu käsitlusest.

Nõukogude võimu algusaastate uurimine on Berdõtšivi juudi ajaloo seisukohast oluline, mh sest see aitab mõista kogukonnas sajandite jooksul toimunud muutusi ja elutingimusi erinevate võimude ja ajaloosündmuste tingimustes: Rzeczpospolita (1569-1793), Vene tsaaririik (1793-1917), Venemaa kodusõda (1917-1921), Nõukogude Liit (1921-1991) ja tänapäeva Ukraina (alates 1991). Berdõtšiv oli üks hassidismi keskusi ning sealne juudi elanikkond koges 19. sajandi vältel nii majanduslikku õitsengut kui ka allakäiku, arendas haridus- ja majanduselu, oli 20. sajandi alguses poliitiliselt aktiivne. Kohalike juutide kohtumine nõukogude võimuga oli dramaatiline ja vastuoluline. Võiks öelda, et vana surnuaia hävitamine pöördeliste 1920. aastate lõpus ennustas ette kaost ja hävingut, mis juute Teises maailmasõjas tabas. Berdõtšivis tuli holokaustist elavana välja vaid 10-15 kohalikku juuti, kel ei õnnestunud põgeneda; kõik ülejäänud tapeti. Ometi õnnestus kogukonnal 21. sajandil ennast uuesti koguda ja elu jätkata.

APPENDICES

Appendix A.

Jewish and non-Jewish population of Berdychiv

State	Year	Jewish population	Non-Jewish population	Total population
Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth	1765	1 220 (79 %)	321	1 541
	1787	1 504	-	-
	1789	1 951 ¹⁵ (79 %)	509	2,460
Russian Empire	1798	4 820	-	-
	1847	23 160	-	-
	1860	50 000 (92, 5 %)	4 000	54 000
	1861	46 683	-	-
	1884	62 366 (82 %)	13 634	76 000
	1897	41 617 (78 %)	11 734	53 351
USSR	1923	28 384 (66 %)	14 616	43 000
	1926	23 160 (55,6 %)	18 494	41 654
	1939	23 266	-	-
	1944	15	-	-
	1946	6 000	-	-
	1959	6 300 (11,8 %)	47 089	53 389
	1970	5 700 (8%),	63 000	70 000
	1979	4 637 (5,8%),	75 311	79 948
	1989	3 512 (3,9%)	86 539	90 051
Ukraine	1994	3 000 3%	94 000	97 000
	2001	5 000 (6,2 %)	74 500	79 500

¹⁵ Including Jews living in the vicinity

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