

**Lilia Belousova. Jewish History as Reflected in the Documents of the State Archives of Odessa Region // Avotaynu/ The International Review of Jewish Genealogy. – Volume XXIII, Number 3, Fall 2007. – P. 41-52 (USA)**

## **JEWISH HISTORY AS REFLECTED IN THE DOCUMENTS OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF ODESSA REGION**

By Lilia Belousova

### **Jewish records at the State Archives of Odessa Region: acquisition, preservation, using**

The State Archives of Odessa Region (GAOO) is one of the large-scale archives in southern Ukraine, holds 13,110 fonds (collections) with 2.2 million files, the majority in Cyrilic. Others are in English, French, German, Yiddish and Hebrew. Documents cover the period from the end of the 18th century through the present. A number of unique fonds reflect the Jewish history not only of Odessa and the Odessa Region but also of Southern Ukraine (the former Novorossia (New Russia) in the vicinity of the Black Sea). Many records refer to the history of the Jews of the region.

Prior to the Russian Revolution in 1917, documents of Jewish institutions (organizations, schools, societies, and so forth) were not concentrated in one place because a consolidated system of state archives did not exist yet. The government issued the Decree on Reorganization and Centralization of Archives in Russia in 1918, inaugurating state archival system.

Founded in 1920 as the Odessa Historical Archives, it began with 22 fonds and collections taken from various organizations, agencies and churches that had discontinued their archival activities following the Revolution. The primary fonds of the pre-revolutionary period came from the Novorossia and Bessarabia Governor-General Administration; Odessa City Chief; Odessa City Council; Guardianship Committee for Foreign Settlers in Southern Russia, Odessa Office for Foreign Settlers in South Russia, Odessa Police Office, Commercial Court, banks, Odessa port offices, customs, Novorossiysky University and other colleges and schools, cultural societies, churches, and others. Jewish records were filed in separate parts of these fonds or within more general records. The Jewish section of the Odessa Archives was founded in 1931. From the middle of 1920<sup>th</sup> until 1940 it impounded 33 fonds of separate Jewish institutions, such as: *Odessa Affiliate of the Committee of Society of the Spread of Learning among the Jews in Russia*, *private Banks of Aschkenazi and Barbash*, *Odessa City Rabbi*, *Talmud-Torah*, *College for Artisans of Society "Trud" ("Labour")*, *KOMZET*, *ORTVERBAND*, *Odessa Pedagogical Jewish College*, etc. (33 fonds in a whole). Researchers then began to show a great interest, and a Search Room was opened in 1927 giving scientists a wide admission to documents. The first Odessa historians working with Jewish records were *S. Borovoj* (subject – "Jewish colonies in Novorossia. 1830-1840"), *L.Strizhak* ("Economic state of the Jews in the Steppe Ukraine"), *A.Buzhevich* ("Jewish Comissions, 1882"), *D.Rishman* "History of Jews in Novorossia"), *A.Reminnik* ("Jewish Theatre"). The academician *M.Slabchenko* prepared for publication the materials of Zhaporozje Sich Kosh (cossaks) and found the Jewish records among them but researching and qualified description of them was able to make the young scientist Saul Borovoj. In 1940 S.Borovoj vindicated a doctor's dissertation on the subject "Studying the History of Jews in Ukraine, XVI-XVIII cent."

With the beginning of World War II and the German-Romanian occupation of Odessa in 1941, a major portion of the pre-revolutionary records were evacuated to Stalingrad. In 1942, when battles reached the city, archives were evacuated to Uralsk in the West Kazakhstan Region. Documentation of the Soviet Period was left in Odessa, and City Chief Alexianu ordered liquidated “all Soviet garbage.” Fortunately, the stuff of the Archives didn’t obey and valuable documents were salvaged. Still, replacements and evacuations led to irrecoverable waste: More than 1 million files (50 percent) were lost or destroyed during the war. Jewish fonds suffered, and some are missing forever, including fonds Odessa City Rabbi (320 files from 819 were lost), Odessa Affiliate of the Committee of Society of the Spread of Learning among the Jews in Russia (462 from 495 files), Odessa House of Jewish Culture (82 from 84) and others.

In April 1944, after liberation of Odessa from Germans and Romanians, the Odessa Archives renewed its work. After the war, a new archival documents on the history of Jews in Odessa Region were accepted. The most imported are 887 *fonds of German-Romanian occupying administration and various institutions (1941-1944)*. They contain information about Holocaust in Odessa Region: creation of 139 concentration camps and ghetto in “Transnistria”, lists of the Jews imprisoned, the policy of genocide.

From 1991, in the period of independence of Ukraine and reforming the communist party system, GAOO accepted more then 6000 fonds from the liquidated Archives of Ukrainian Communist Party (Odessa Regional Committee). These valuable documents contain imported information about life of Jews in Soviet period (1917-1991). Some Jewish fonds among them, such as: Odessa Region and City Committee of Poalei-Zion, Odessa Region Committee of Jewish Communist Union of Youth, Editorial Office of the Newspaper “Kommunistische Stimme” and others.

From 1945 till the beginning of 1990<sup>th</sup> scientists didn’t provided wide special researches on Jewish history. In spite of that fact that Jewish fonds weren’t secret or restricted, any information about them was absent in the Guide to Odessa Archives published in 1861.

Interest to this subject was recovered since 1990<sup>th</sup>. During the last 17 years some foreign researchers, that represented scientific centers of many countries worked at the Odessa Archives, viz: USA - *S.Zipperstein, P.Herlihy*; Germany - *G.Hausmann, T.Steinhoff, T.Grill, A.Hoffmeister, A.Hillbrenner*; Israel - *M.Beiser, M.Polishcuk, I.Kotler, J.Anchel, A.Waiss, J.Priworotsky*; Greece - *M.Vassilikou*; Japan - *S.Kioko*; Canada - *M.Komissarov*; Swiss – *K.Huzer* and others. Ukrainian historians *V.Oks, A.Misjuk, A.Dobrolyubsky, V.Solodova, O.Demin, V.Shchetnikov* and specialist of local history *S.Luschik, A.Rosenboim, M.Belsky, R.Tsiporkis, R.Shuvalov, V.Charnetsky, T.Dontsova, V.Netrebsky* made a great contribution researching the Jewish history using archival sources wide.

### **Settlement of Jews in Novorossiiia: legislation and real life**

Many Jews came to Novorossiiia (where they had been permitted to settle since 1791) from Volhynia, Lithuania and Belorussia. The process of migrations, arrangement and adaptation of Jews in New Russia is reflected in the Fond 1 of *General-Governor Administration for Novorossia and Bessarabia (Upravleniye novorossiyskogo i bessarabskogo general-gubernatora)*, that includes documentation for 1803-1804, over 29000 files. It contains sources on Jewish communities and individuals all over Black Sea Region (Khersonskaya, Ekaterinoslavskaya, Tavricheskaya and Bessarabskaya Guberniyas).

The most valuable sources are Emperor ukazes and directions of the Russian Senate regard arrangement of Jewish life in Russia in general. Such kind of juridical acts as Regulation for Jews (1804, 1835, 1844), Regulations for box taxes (1839), Rules for industrial activity of Jews only in towns, posads and stettles (1847)<sup>1</sup> and others show the main directions of Russian government policy concerning Jews. More detailed information about real life of Jewish settlers in Novorossia is among the correspondence of officials regard giving lands and privileges to the Jews, foundation of settlements. Very interesting are reports, opinions and decisions of the gubernial Governors on such questions as: settling Jews on private, landowners' and state lands (1847-1859)<sup>2</sup>, resettling Jews 50 km far from Austrian and Prussian boards<sup>3</sup>, liquidation of kahals and subordination of Jews to the general state management<sup>4</sup>, order for election and appointment of Jews on state and public posts<sup>5</sup>, allow for Jews to buy lands in Crimea, arrangement of hospitals, charity institutions, schools for Jews, also synagogues, benevolent societies and others.

From the other side, archival documents show the government policy of restrictions regard Jews and discussions among officials concerning separation of Jews in special quarters in cities<sup>6</sup>, prohibition for Jews to enter Moldavia<sup>7</sup>, limitation of their trade, giving rights to Jews equal with Christians<sup>8</sup>, etc.

In 1843, during one of a sporadic anti-Semitic campaigns, the Russian government sought to restrict the activities of foreign Jews in the empire. Novorossia and Bessarabia Governor-General M. Vorontsov petitioned the authorities in St. Petersburg the exempt Novorossia from regulation. He argued that many of the bankers in Odessa were Austrian Jews, whose departure would disrupt the business of the city. He expressed his opinion to the Emperor in a special document titled as "Regard measures offered for reformation of state of the Jewish people in Russia"<sup>9</sup>. The main his idea was to involve the Jews to the productive industrial and agricultural life of Russian Empire. That idea was realized partly during the process of Jewish colonization of the Black Sea Region.

### **Jewish colonies**

In the beginning of the XIX ct. in the complicated social stratification of Russian Empire (nobles, militaries, clergy, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> guild merchants, petty bourgeois and peasants) a new category of population appeared – *foreign colonists*. Germans, Mennonites, Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Polishes, Swiss, Sweden, French came from Europe to the Southern Russia on the invitation of Russian government with the hope to create a high-leveled economic and social structure in the lonely and unsettled Black Sea steppe.

Governor's archives include materials on surveying lands for Jewish colonies, applications of Jews from Podolsk, Grodno and Vitebsk Gubernias regard resettling to Kherson Gubernia<sup>10</sup>, permits from Russian authorities for delivery of passports for entering Russia, statistic information about economic

<sup>1</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 248 (1847), D. 3334.

<sup>2</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 249 (1847), D. 76; Op. 192 (1949), D. 30; Op. 193 (1854), D. 88-89

<sup>3</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 215 (1847), D. 31.

<sup>4</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 154 (1844), D. 37.; Op. 152 (1845), D. 90.

<sup>5</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 195 (1857), D. 707.

<sup>6</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 203 (1856), D. 47.

<sup>7</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 173 (1861), D. 24.

<sup>8</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 195 (1857), D. 549.

<sup>9</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 153 (1843), D. 128.

<sup>10</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 148 (1837), D. 1; Op. 148 (1838), D. 5; Op. 148 (1840), D. 33, 2728;

state of colonies<sup>11</sup>, exemption from recruiting for 50 years, delivery of loans, quantity of Jewish population, measures for improvement of management<sup>12</sup>. Official records tell us also about problems and disagreements among the colonists, great poverty and disability to reach success in farming, escaping some Jews from colonies because of their unwillingness to be engaged in agriculture, searching the Jewish colonists living in cities without passports and permits, and delivering them back to their colonies.

From the other side, certain part of Jewish population supported that government experiment. One of such bright positive example was the project of establishment of a model Jewish colony of Michailsdorf in Bessarabia named in honour of Emperor's brother Michail<sup>13</sup>. The project was offered in 1840 by three tradesmen, the 1<sup>st</sup> guild merchant D.Zelensky from Kremenchug, 3<sup>rd</sup> guild merchant I.Rabinovich from Pavlograd and J.Goldenveizer, the settler of Uman. Having capitals and being free from recruit duties, they intended to purchase a lot for arranging a rich Jewish colony with high level of agricultural production. Their aim was to refute negative opinion and prejudices of the native Russia population, mainly peasants, concerning 1.5 millions of Jews coming to Russia from Belorussia, Podolia and Kurlandia, mainly small tradesmen. Lodging application to the Governor M.S.Vorontsov, Zelensky, Rabinovich and Goldeveizer expressed their point of view regard the failure of government plan with Jewish colonies in Russia, viz: absence of experience of Jews in farming for 19 centuries, great religious and cultural differences between native and Jewish population and, as result, perception of Jews as non-working elements, "wheeler-dealers", deriving advantage by deception and money-grubbing. That utopian project was not realized because Bessarabian Governor didn't find free land for the model colony.

Materials on Jews are also concentrated in a special complex of files called "*About Jewish colonies in Novorissia Gubernias*" (Fond 1, Opis 2, 1837-1847, 101 files).

These are directions and reports of the central and local authorities about financing of house building, applications of Jews from Podolia, Mogilev, Vitebsk, Grodno, Kovno and Minsk Gubernias regard resettling in Novorossia, delivery of passports, valuable information about economic and social development of Jewish colonies of Bobrov Kut, Sejdemenukha (Bolshaya and Malaya), Nagartav (Bolshoj and Malyj), Inguletz, Izluchistaya, L'wowa, Yefengar, Novyj Berislav, Kamenka, Israilevka, Novopoltavka, Sagajdak.

Similar information is in the Fond 6, *Guardianship Committee for Foreign Settlers in Southern Russia* (*Popechitel'nyj komitet ob inostrannyh poselenzakh Yuzhnogo kraya Rossii*), that represents materials about Jewish colonists for 1799-1876 in comparative with another foreign colonies (German, Mennonite, Bulgarian, Greek, Swiss, Sweden). Statistic sheets on welfare, medicine state, demography movement, establishment of schools, organization of elections of headmen, voting lists, decisions of colonist meetings are the typical documentation of the Fond 6. Special one is information about appointment of Germans and Mennonites to Jewish colonies as model householders,

headmen and managers. The documents demonstrate relationships inside that mixed multinational colonist world, sometimes complicated and intricate. Apart official recording and officials' reports, complaints from colonists let us get into inner world of communities and individuals. One of such example is investigation of the conflict between the Jewish community of Zlatopol in Kherson

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<sup>11</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 248 (1841), D. 2723; Op. 248 (1843), D. 108, 115.

<sup>12</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 16 (1859), D. 105; Op. 248 (1843), D. 110; Op. 248 (1841), D. 89.

<sup>13</sup> GAOO, F. 1, Op. 215 (1840), F. 16.

Gubernia and its headmen (schulz), the Mennonite Jacob Dyck<sup>14</sup>. The colonists accused Dyck in cruelty and rudeness describing occasions of beating them with sticks for their unwillingness to make “back-breacking” work. The schulz lodged a counterclaim describing the Jews as “slackers” and “idlers” who avoided necessary, everyday agricultural labor.

### **Jews in Odessa: economic, social, educational and cultural life**

The stream of immigration carried Jews in large numbers into the city. Eventually this world give Odessa one of the largest concentrations of urban Jews to be found anywhere in the world. During the period from 1815 to 1861, the Jewish population rose from under 4 thousand to well over 17 thousand individuals. In 1854, 7 thousand Jews were citizens of Odessa, while 6 thousand other Jewish residents were officially considered to belong to other Russian towns. At the end of XXVIII ct., some three hundred Jewish families, mostly from Galicia, settled in Odessa. This was the start of a steady flow of emigrants from Galicia – Brody in particular. Joachim Tamopol, a leading Jewish scholar in Odessa, wrote in 1851 that the Jews from Brody combined the virtues of industriousness with commercial skill. Many of them became bankers, merchants and brokers. The Jews form the largest portion of foreign population ... A few are very rich and engage in the banking business. Many make large purchases of imported goods from the foreign merchants and sell them retail in their own shops.

Jewish Odessa is reflected by the records of urban institutions. The most important and diverse are Fond 4, *Odessa City Council (Odesskaya Gorodskaya Duma)*, 1796-1873, and Fond 16, *Odessa City Administration (Odesskaya Gorodskaya Uprava)*, 1873-1920, both contain 678181 files. The main functions of these organs of local self-government were financial, domesticity, building and trade questions, also donations, activity of societies, that let to remodel various aspects of influence of Jews for economic, social and cultural life of Odessa for the all pre-revolutionary period. Besides the general record management, documentation of the Jews is also concentrated in the *Jewish desk (Opis 107, 108, 109, 110, 124 part 2, 1824-1920, 1534 files)*. The main documents are: including of the Jews to the Odessa merchants (1, 2, 3 guilds) and petty bourgeois; accept of Russian citizenship; delivery of passports, certificates, resident permits; giving lots for building of houses; annual lists of merchants with indication of their capitals; information about recovery of taxes; establishment and activity of trade firms; participation in benevolent actions; information on well-known persons, also about state of Jewish hospital, Jewish cemetery, orphanages, synagogues and prayer-houses. Very interesting is correspondence regard registration of the Jews-atheists and individuals who were left out in synagogue birth books, also about recruits (there are indexes of them).

Special documents reflected the process of integration of the Jews to the complicated social stratification of Russian Empire. The higher estates of the noble, clergy and military were closed for the Jews by Russian legislation (with the rare exception). But including to the merchants gave a real possibility for Jews to climb from the 3<sup>rd</sup> merchant guild till the privileged 1<sup>st</sup> one and getting a higher status of honorary citizen (since 1832) for the special services to the country. A separate family register of Odessa honorary citizen for 1854-1897 includes 102 Jewish families (from 304 in a whole) with famous names of M.Rabinovitch, M.Gurovich, S.Brodsky, A.Rafalovich, S.Pinsker, I.Efrussi, S.Barmas, S.Barzhansky, I.Gessen, A.Zederbaum and others.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> GAOO, F. 6, Op. 3, F. 14576

<sup>15</sup> GAOO, F. 16, Op. 125, F. 2.

Fond 2, *Odessa City Chief Office (Kanzelyariia Odesskogo Gradonachal'nika)*, 1802-1917, 21690 files, contains materials about the Jewish Community in Odessa among the documentation of a few desks.

*Regulatory and economic desks (opis 1, 1a, 1b, 3 )* contain permits delivered to individuals for opening businesses, information about state of manufactures, factories and trade firms, application of businessmen on various questions. Very informative are materials about including Jews to the Odessa merchants and petty bourgeois, establishment of trade firms and houses, enterprises such as foundation of the A.Rafalovich's firm (1850)<sup>16</sup>, shipping companies of Rappoport, Kossodo<sup>17</sup> and others.

Information about religious life is present in such kinds of sources as: registers of 63 synagogues and houses of prayer in Odessa with indication dates of their foundation and addresses, lists of believers, information about election of synagogue stuffs and Odessa rabbis (Schwabacher, Kreps and others)<sup>18</sup>. Materials about conflicts between the Jews and Christians on religious ground, activity of London missionaries for converting Jews to Christians, foundation of the Society for the Jews converted to the Christian faith<sup>19</sup> and other similar ones help to understand some aspects of coexistence of various religious worlds in Russian Empire.

Materials about establishment of medical institutions like the Jewish Hospital in Odessa (1832)<sup>20</sup>, Iosif Valtuch's Orthopedic Institute (1888)<sup>21</sup>, Klara Veinberg's Medical Center for Vaccination against Smallpox (1893)<sup>22</sup>, private clinics of Gurovich, Polukher, Mering<sup>23</sup>.

Documents about development of the publishing trade, for example, prohibition to the merchant Aksenfeld to open a printing house in Odessa (1852)<sup>24</sup>, program of the first magazine for Jews in Russian "Rassvet" edited by O.Rabinovich and Tarnopol (1860), information about edition of "Hamelitz" by A.Zederbaum (1867)<sup>25</sup>.

Philanthropy in Odessa Jewish community are reflected with materials on establishment of the Odessa Jewish Charity Society (1866), Jewish Hospice (1880), about donations from the famous merchants A.Brodsky, R.Khari, O.Khais, M.Morgulis, M.Rabinovich, Rafalovich, Katzen, Luisa Aschkenazi and others in favor of orphans (1866-1898), poor pupils and students, homeless. Activity of successful people for the public benefit also is illuminated with the documents about establishment of S.Gurovich's and R.Khari's scholarships for talented pupils at the Odessa Commercial College (1888, 1892)<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 255.

<sup>17</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 3080

<sup>18</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 1176, 1432, 1515, 1629, 1630, 1691, 1742, 1743a, 1823, 1830, 1850, 1926, 1982, 2050, 2161, 2169, 2567, 2712, 2947, 2948, 2989, 2991, 3023, 3099, 3152.

<sup>19</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 539, 985, 2004.

<sup>20</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 146.

<sup>21</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 1728.

<sup>22</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 2021.

<sup>23</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 1356, 1363, 1454.

<sup>24</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 346.

<sup>25</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 720.

<sup>26</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 1700, 2006.

Fond 2 contains lots of files regard formation of numerous Jewish societies in Odessa such as: “Beseda” (*Converse*) (1863)<sup>27</sup>, “Druzhelyubije” (*Friendship*), (1898), “Trud” (*Labour*)(1895-1901)<sup>28</sup>, Society for Bilateral Aid to the Jews-teachers in Novorossia (1866)<sup>29</sup>, Society for Relief to Jews-Peasants and Artisans in Siria and Palestine (1888)<sup>30</sup>, assistance to Jewish woman, poor children, orphans, poor people of Slobodka-Romanovka and others.

Some documents illustrate a restrictive state policy and relationship of non-Jewish population in respect to the Jewish traditions and way of life, viz: prohibition to Jews wearing a special Jewish clothes (1851)<sup>31</sup>, requesting police office in day off (1852)<sup>32</sup>, to walk wedding processions along the streets with music and candles flared (1858)<sup>33</sup>, also shaving heads to Jewish women<sup>34</sup> etc.

Passport desk (opis 6) contain files with documents for 1808-1898 to entry Russia from abroad and departure from Russia abroad delivered to individuals: passports, certificates from foreign Consulates, debenture with warrants, applications for resident permits. The documents have a valuable information about purposes of trips, routes and migrants themselves (age, occupation, family members, description of appearances etc.). These records are important sources for researching migration processes for 90 years.

1<sup>st</sup> All-Russian Census, 1897 (opis 8, 9, 10) is of great historical consequence and lists full information on each family, a total of 3,000 files. It is a unique information about Odessa society in the end of XIX ct. In 1897 124511 persons indicated the Hebrew or Yeddish as a native languages. Jews were the 2<sup>th</sup> ethnic group after the Russians (Polishes and Germans occupied the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place). Census registered such kind of information on each individual as: full name, age, place of birth, citizenship, social state, education, confession, occupation and basis of income. The records give interesting facts of assimilation, mixed marriages, missing of mother tongue in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> generation of Odessa Jews.

Court desk (opis 4) consists of the documents on adjustment of decisions of courts concerning bankrupts, claims against their estates and protection of merchants' heritage.

Desk of societies (opis 7). Societies also stressed the importance of national representation. The Jewish societies founded in the end of XIX – beginning XX ct. in Odessa to keep national traditions, contribute to youth, and make life more informative and interesting. Many received moral and monetary support for musical parties and various organized performances.

Fond 5, *Temporal Odessa Governor-General (Vremennyj Odesskij general-gubernator)*, 1879-1889, 2068 files, also contain information on the Jews in variety of aspects. These are reports about state of Jewish population in Novorissiia<sup>35</sup>, collection of money for building synagogues and prayer-houses<sup>36</sup>,

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<sup>27</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 634.

<sup>28</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 17961, 2905.

<sup>29</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 685.

<sup>30</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 1791.

<sup>31</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 262.

<sup>32</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 297.

<sup>33</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 494.

<sup>34</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 30.

<sup>35</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 147, 187, 188, 943, 1385, 1528, 1547, 1870, 1935, 1943,

<sup>36</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 1533.

compiling the Statute of the Jewish hospital, complaints of the poor Jews against oppression of merchants, state of the Jews in Bessarabia.

Very special are documentation concerning revolution activity and criminality in Jewish milieu. As to the first one, the bright example is materials about state surveillance under doctor Shohr, linked with the revolutionary group headed Vera Figner (1885)<sup>37</sup>, also investigation of the activity of doctor Pinsker, who “incited the Jews to emigrate to America and Palestine” (1886-1887)<sup>38</sup>, indexes of politically unreliable persons, etc.

Criminal life of Odessa Jews was reflected in numerous journalist articles and became a main subject for some writers and their literature works. The world of Odessa robbers and thieves was described by Isaak Babel so talented! As to the documental confirmation, lots of them are among the official papers of Governor-General, City Chief, Prosecutor’s, Police and Customs offices, also of the courts. Thousand of files tell about various branches of criminality where Jews were the best specialists, such as smuggling, illegal import of foreign goods, making and transfer of false money (coins and assignations), speculations, robbery and business connected with supplying houses of prostitution and sail of women to brothels in Constantinopol (Turkey) and other places abroad.

Fond 5 contain also typical examples of documentation about evasion of Jews of military service, self-mutilation, criminal activity of Jewish doctors injuring the recruits<sup>39</sup>.

Very special is a file named “On accusation of the Jews from the town of Rezina, Orgeyevskij uyezd, Bessarabian Oblast, in torture and robbery of the Gypsies” (1885-1887).<sup>40</sup> Materials of investigation tell about the conflict between two ethnic groups, both oppressed in Russian Empire, on religious and economic ground.

Besides the aforementioned universal for studying various aspects of Jewish life fonds, there are some documental complexes useful for researching a certain branch.

### **Economic life**

Fond 18, *Odessa Commercial Court (Odesskij kommercheskij sud)*, 1808-1920, 5072 files, contains minute books, materials about commercial transactions, delivery of valuation sheets on houses, collection of commercial taxes, sales of immovable properties, evaluation sheets on merchants’ capitals and properties, evidence and court cases on bankrupts, claims of merchants against defaulters etc. There are also books for registration of trade firms on the territory of Odessa and suburbs from 1836-1843. Materials about Jews are among the general documentation and in separate files on certain trade firms such as “F.Shpolyanski”, “I.Dreifus”, “F.Rafalovich & Co”, “M.Ashkenazi”, “Valtukh”, “Brothers Moriz and Yacov Galpern”, “Leon Rabinovich”, “Brothers Fabrikant”, “I.G.Elikman & son”, “Puritz and Rubinstein”, “Vainstein and Levin”, “Lifshitz and Gammernan”, “Spivakov & Flaks”, “Tarle & Landau”<sup>41</sup> and many others.

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<sup>37</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 1459.

<sup>38</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 1567.

<sup>39</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 1385, 1397

<sup>40</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 1374

<sup>41</sup> GAOO, F. 18, Op. 1, F.1249, 1258, 1277, 2193, 2240, 2289, 2471, 2029, 1989, 1717, 3831, 1855, 1859, 3885, 2351, 1935, 2140, 2192, 2151, 2205, 2307.



Fond 17, *Odessa City Magistrate (Odesskij gorodovoj magistrat)*, 1795-1839, 180 files. Magistrate was found in 1795 and had administrative and court functions concerning merchants and petty bourgeois, primary for foreigners. Its records contain important materials on economic, such as: delivery of commercial certificates, licenses, valuation sheets, probate of ownership, references, decisions on complaints and applications, bankrupts etc. Registers of merchants, organizations of merchant guilds, information about capitals announced by merchants and their estates let imagine who were the first businessmen in Odessa and what was the contribution of the Jews in the foundation of the economic structure of the city (M.Medyanik, Levi and Aron Pibergod, Solomon and Abel Gershtovich, Gilel Manusovich, Leiba Krakovski, Gezel Friedental and others). Very important is "Alphabet of Jews" for 1811 – the first special list of Odessa Jews.<sup>42</sup>

Fond 35, *Head Notary of Odessa District Court (Starshij notarius Odesskogo okruzhnogo suda)*, 1869-1920, 32404 files, contains notaries' acts of sales, donations, wills of the movable and immovable properties, also files on guardianships, materials of investigation on claims and applications of individuals and firms, including the Jewish ones, on the territory of Odessa and Odessa, Ananjev and Tiraspol uyezds (districts) of Kherson Guberniya.

Fond 59, *Odessa Building Committee (Odesskij stroitel'nyj komitet)*, 1800-1870, 5450 files, consists of materials about first residents in Odessa, who got lots for building houses, stores, stocks, factories and similar documentation regard various institutions. Very interesting is information about formation of the Jewish places in the city such as the Jewish Street, Valtukhovskij Lane, Jewish cemetery, Jewish meat stalls, Jewish mail school, synagogues and others. The most valuable is collection of plans and façade drafts of the buildings belonged to the rich Jewish merchants and petty bourgeois.

Financial life of Odessa is reflected by the documents of various banks. Two of them are worth of special attention. Fond 175, *Samuil Barbash Bank (Bankirskaya kontora Samuila Barbasha)*, 1880-1919, 43 files, contain business correspondence of S.Barbash with partners, merchant certificates, information about his properties, warrants, notary acts, insurance policies of the Petersburg Insurance Company. Commercial agreements and correspondence with various firms including the Rotterdam "Schutten", joint-stock companies of "Athid", "Geula", "Carmel", Jewish Colonial Bank in London, Palestine Industrial Syndicate, Odessa State Bank Office, Society for Relief to Jews-Peasants and Artisans in Siria and Palestine brightly illuminate the most varied activity of the bank in general and in connection with Jewish life in particular.

Fond 246, *Ashkenazi Bank (Bankirskij dom Ashkenazi v Odesse)*, 1893-1918, 5 files, is not so substantial as the previous one but also have interesting materials on establishment and work of the Joint-stock society of South-East steamship line of "Star", reports and balances on exploiting the steamship "Eastern Star" and income sheets of the bank.

## **Education**

As the Jewish community grew, so did its institutions. In 1826, a secular Jewish school, one of the first in empire, was founded in Odessa. The curriculum included Hebrew, Talmudic studies, Russian, German, French, Mathematics, physics, rhetoric, history, calligraphy and civil law. In 1835, a similar school for Jewish girls was established. In addition to the subjects taught to the boys, they learned

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<sup>42</sup> GAOO, F. 17, Op. 3, F.445.

needlework. Soon there was a fashionable boarding school for the daughters of wealthy Jews. The founder were men like S.Pinsker, M.Finkel and I.Hurowitz, members of the Haskalakh or “Enlightenment”, who had to overcome the objections of more conservative Jews of the Hassidic community. Tsar Nikolas 1 visited the Jewish school and expressed his satisfaction with them. At times Count Vorontsov himself went to examine the youngsters.

More than 40 fonds of educational institutions, colleges, schools providing general education and the organs of their administrations give possibility to study such questions as forming of intellectual stratum in Jewish milieu, educational level of Jews in Russia, their contribution in cultural and scientific life of the city. Documents reflect the problem of percentage quota for the Jews when they entered to state educational institutions. In August, 22, 1909, the Emperor Nikolaj II confirmed the regulations for the order of employment of restrictive norms concerning the Jews. According to them, the quota for Jews in secondary schools was 5% in capitals, 10% in places out of the Pale and 15% within the Pale. The quota for Jews, admitted to the profession of pharmacist assistant and listening to lectures in universities for getting a rank of pharmacist, was 6% for the Moscow University, 10% for universities out of the Pale and 20% for universities in the Pale. Some educational institutions like the Pavel Galagan’s Collegium, the Noble Institute by the Emperor Alexander II in Nizhnij Novgorod, Nikolaevskij Orphan’s Institute in Gatchina, were inaccessible for the Jews totally. Without any restrictions they could be accepted just to the state primary technical schools and secondary schools that didn’t give any access to the universities. The Odessa Archives preserve records of three Odessa institutions of higher education. So, in the materials of the *Richelieu Lecee* (Fond 44, 1817-1856, 3262 files) there are much information about Jews in that first high educational institution in Odessa. The *Novorossian University* (Fond 45, 1865-1920, 44688 files) founded on the basis of Lecee in 1865, played great role in formation of Jewish intelligentsia in Novorossia. Besides of general administrative documentation, this fond are rich with the records useful for life stories and genealogical research - personal files of students are remarkable historical sources which allow to personify an epoch. The typical set of the documents in it usually includes applications of enrolment to the university, copy of birth certificate, school-leaving certificate, information about conduct and progress in study, student’s photographs.

Fond 334, *High Feminine Courses (Vysshnye zhenskije kursy)*, 1906-1920, contain quite a lot of information about the Jewish girls-students and development of female education in Russia.

Fond 42, *Office of the Warden for Odessa Educational District (Kanzelyariya popechitel’ya Odesskogo uchebnogo okruga)*, 1834-1920, 16393 files, is a valuable global source for studying of educational system in Odessa and Novorossia in general and Jewish one in particular. As the higher administrative regional organ, it included records about opening, registration and closing of educational institutions, their teacher’s staff, economic and financial activities, organization of tutoring, programs on various subjects, correspondence regard entrance examinations and percent quota for the Jews in the institutions of general education, also about opening of Jewish gymnasiums and schools, appointment of the Jews to the posts of teachers. The fond (Opis 6-33) also keeps documentation, personal files and exam sheets of private gymnasiums where the Jews have been educated mainly in the beginning of XX ct. These are female gymnasiums in *Odessa* of H. Veksler, A.Getzel’d (Tonchuk), V.Goldin (Abergau), L.Kaufman (Zak), T.Kopp (Zhabotinskaya), M.Leibenson, E.Mashkevich, V.Maslova&M.Gradsckaya, B.Fel’dman (Rashkovich), A.Steinberg; in *Elisavetgrad* of M.Goslen, E.Lobzovskaya-Shapiro; in *Kishinev* of A.Goldenberg; in *Ekaterinoslav* of P.Ioffe; in *Kherson* of A.Karachevskaya-Volk; also male gymnasiums of M.Iglitskij, L.Kovalchuk, I.Rappoport in Odessa, I.Berezovskij in Nikolaev, A.Fovitskij in Ekaterinoslav, etc.

In the Odessa Archives there are also some fonds of the separate Jewish educational institutions, viz: Fond 441, *Odessa Jewish school Tamud-Torah (Odesskoye evrejskoye uchilishche Tamud-Torah)*, 1891-1906, 13 files, contains correspondence with Odessa City Council on the problems of organization and finances, circulars and orders of an inspector for people's schools, information about staff of the guardian board, regulations, petitions concerning payment of benefits to the needy and lists of the pupils.

Fond 125, *Odessa 6-grade Commercial School by Efrussi (Odesskoye 6-klassnoye uchilishche Efrussi)*, 1898-1901, 710 files, includes minutes of master's meetings, general and examination progress-sheets, orders of the warden of Odessa Educational District regard appointments of the teachers and rewarding them, class registers, educational programs, receipt-cash books of payment for education. Special kinds of documents re photographs and certificates of external students<sup>43</sup> and 607 personal files of the pupils<sup>44</sup>.

The history of that school started in 1868 when the Odessa City Council expressed an idea to collect a special fund for public education and the banking firm "Efrussi & Co" donated 10 thousand roubles for that. The project was not realized but the capital staying in bank until 1879 had been increased to 15 thousand roubles. "Efrussi & Co" offered to the Council 5 thousand roubles more and establishment a 4-grade school on that capital. The proposition was accepted by the local authorities and in 1881 the Emperor gave to that new institution the name of "municipal school by Efrussi".

Building of the 2-storey school finished in 1882 and children of various religions were accepted but most of them were the Jews. The Efrussi family supported the school permanently giving money, scholarships for talented pupils, books, equipment etc.

Documentation of the school contains also some interesting details about struggling teachers for moral purity of the pupils. Thus, for example, the houses next door to the school were a restaurant and two brothels, and school board requested authorities to take some measures. Police investigated the circumstances and the brothels were closed but the owner of the restaurant was offered moving his business a little further from the school when the rent term expires.

Fond 108, *Odessa Craft School of "Trud" (Odessakoje reneslennoye uchilishche "Trud")*, 1873-1920, 62 files, contain documentation on establishment of the school in 1846, its activity, reorganization, personal files of the pupils, progress-sheets, regulations, also correspondence the Jewish Colonization Society,

Fond 101, *Odessa 8-grade commercial school of G.F.Faig (Odesskoye 8-klasnoye uchilishche G.F.Fajga)*, beginning of the XX ct. – 1918, 1302 files, consists of 1299 personal files of the pupils, indexes of the individuals, progress-sheets for 1913-1918. Fond 116, *Odessa polytechnic courses of I.Hoin (Odesskiye politechnicheskiye kursy I.I.Hojna)* is a complex of 500 personal files of the pupils for the beginning of the XX ct. – 1917. Fonds 130, 253-255, *Private dental schools of I.Margolin, I.Redals, Ravinskij and Trop (Chastnye zubovrachebnye shkoly I.Margolina, I.Redalsa, Ravinskogo and Tropa)* contain personal files and indexes of the pupils for 1904-1919.

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<sup>43</sup> GAOO, F. 125, Op. 1, F. 61; Po. 2, F. 28, 34

<sup>44</sup> GAOO, F. 125, Op. 3.

Materials on the Jews are present in documentation of other gymnasiums and schools. Some of them are worth of special attention like the Fond 52, *St. Paul Secondary school at the Evangelic-Lutheran Church in Odessa*, where Lev Bronstein (Trotsky) studied (his progress-sheets are preserved).

### **Printing houses, newspapers, magazines and their creators**

*Censorship institutions (Fonds 8-13, 1834-1917)* give an idea about that exceptional role which played mass media in forming of public opinion in different aspects of Jewish life. So, in 1907-1911 local authority issued permits for publishing of 93 periodical editions including Russian ones – 71, Jewish – 11, German – 3, Polish – 2 and Greek – 1. Jewish newspapers and magazines have been issued in 3 languages: in Hebrew – “Ha-Schiloah” (editor H.N.Byalik), “Hathio” (ed. M.-L.G.Lilienblum, H.G.Levinskij); in Yiddish (colloquial Jewish) – “Odesser Morgenblatt” (ed. Z.N.Krupitskij), “Gut Morgen” (ed. O.I.Halfin, S.A.Gerzfeld), “Des Judische Wort” (ed. P.I.Sigal-Meiler, H.-A.O.Zinkov), „Scholom Aleichem“ (ed. D.-M.M.Yankelevich, I.-L.M.Fridman); in Russian – „Palestinian Review“ (ed. A.Zusman, I.Sapir), “Jewish Medical Voice” (ed. I.S.Geshelin, Y.M.Raimist, C.E.Maryashes, C.-H.B. Adesman), “New Israel” (ed. H.-L.G.Paperin), “Jewish Future” (ed. G.V.Kaplan, M.K.Gepshtein) and others. Many educated Jews edited in Odessa not only Jewish but another, non-nationalist, editions, viz: I.V.Teitel (“Meteor”), I.S.Shtein (“Marriage Union”), V.G.Reisih (“Mill”), S.D.Litinskaya (“Southern Palmira”), H.Rashkovskij (“Latest News”) etc. Lots of famous owners of printing-houses and lithographs were of Jewish origin and played a great role in development of printing business in Odessa (N.Byalik, Kozman, Galperin, M.Pikovskij, Y.Sherman, I.Ermans and others).

Some of them supported successively the ideas of Enlightenment (Haskalah) like Yakov Moiseevich Priluker, the editor of the newspaper in Russian named “Lubov” (“Love”). He was well-educated man (graduador from the Zhitomir Jewish Teacher’s Institute), experienced journalist, also teacher, writer and philosopher. The main direction of his activity was to bring the Jews and Christians closer and to eliminate age-long antagonism between them. His publicistic works such as “Jews-reformers” (published in S-Petersburg under the pen-name of Ben-Zion), “To my oppressors” (Odessa, 1882), “Altruistic principles in aesthetic systems: Judaism and Christianity and about oppression of both religious in the future” (Odessa, 1885) were the notable contribution to social discussion regard the state of the Jews in Russian Empire.

The Odessa Archives preserve a set of the magazine named “Kadima” (1906, ## 1-12), organ of Southern Russia Zionists. Its constant authors were V.Zhabotinskij, an editor M.Aleinikov, G.Brodovskij, S.Gorelik, N.Shimkin, M.Schwarzman, Trivius. The magazine touched up the most vital questions of the present – how to change life of Jews to the best. “We know how to die, even to defend, but don’t know how to live...” – just that maxim the main topics of publications flew out. Movement to economic and political revival of Jewish people in Palestine, the history of Jews, theory of nationality, chronicle of Zionist activity and events, practical advices and rendering of moral encouragement for emigrants, news of culture and science were illuminated by “Kadima” and lots of problems were cast a new light.

## Pogroms

Information about pogroms in Odessa and Novorossia is spread among records variety of different institutions. Dramatic events of 1881-1886 in Odessa and Rostov-on-Don, in Kherson, Ekaterinoslav and Bessarabian Guberniyas are illuminated in details by the reports of the Temporal Odessa Governor-General about reasons, course of events and its consequences<sup>45</sup>, applications from the Jewish communities to prevent anti-Semitic crimes in Balta uyezd (Podolia)<sup>46</sup>.

Pogroms of 1905 in Odessa are reflected in documentation of Odessa City Chief by reports of policemen about events since June, 13, 1905, also applications of the Head of Odessa Currency Market Committee Angelo Anatra to the Minister of Finance about crisis of trade and finances in Odessa in consequence with pogroms<sup>47</sup>. Materials on investigations of concrete pogrom cases are also in the Fond 634, *Prosecutor of Odessa District Court (Prokuror Odesskogo okruzhnogo suda)*, 1870-1917, 2286 files.

One of them is a case of Rosa Drutman, the victim of pogrom in Odessa in October, 1905<sup>48</sup>. She served at the house of a rich Jewish family of Veizman-Varshavsky and became a witness of cruel massacre of the crowd of Christians under the Jews. Soldiers sent by the local authorities to prevent crimes, in fact marked the beginning of the drama using fire-arms against the Jews. 6 from 9 members of the family were killed. Rosa were wounded three times but survived after two months of treatment. Her witnesses, medicine card, materials of cross-examinations and protocols of court meetings let us to reconstruct the events in details.

Victims of pogroms 1881-1886, 1905, 1919 were registered in the metric death books of the Odessa City Rabbi (F. 39).

## Genealogy

There are some fonds that are very important for determination of family links and relationships. One of them is Fond 39, *Odessa City Rabbi (Odesskij gorodovoj ravvinat)*, 1846, 1854, 1875-1920, 499 files. It consists of metric books exclusively with birth, marriage, divorce and death entries. Documents for 1835-1874 missed during WW2. This is a basic source for genealogical research and biographies. In Odessa there were born such unique and world-known people as a founder of New Zionism Vladimir Zhabotinskij, writer Isaak Babel (Bobel in original), great violinist David Oistrakh - their birth entries have been preserving in the Odessa Archives.

Special feature of that documental complex in comparative with other religion institutions (Orthodox, Roman-Catholic, Evangelical-Lutheran, Armenian-Gregorian and other churches) is presence of divorce registers. In the metric books of the Fond 39 you can find information not only about the Jews – Odessa merchants or petty bourgeois (meshchanin) but also about the Jews who came in Odessa from various places, mainly from Podolia, Kiev Guberniya, Belorussia, Poland. Living in the city, very often for a long time, they stayed be enlisted in the places of their origin. That is why in the Odessa metric books it is possibly to find the Vinnitsa's, Zhitomir's, Shklov's, Kamenets-Podolsk's and other merchants and petty bourgeois who got married, born their children and died in Odessa.

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<sup>45</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 193, 1582

<sup>46</sup> GAOO, F. 5, Op. 1, F. 779

<sup>47</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 13, F.4

<sup>48</sup> GAOO, F. 634, Op. 1, F.404

Sometimes people changed their religious and archive records help to understand why it happened. As the Orthodox religious was a title one in Russian Empire, marriage of the Orthodox person with a member of other Christian religious (Roman-Catholic, Evangelical-Lutheran, Reformed etc.) could be registered in the Orthodox church without fail. Marriage of Christians with Jews could be allowed exclusively on condition of converting the last ones to the Christianity. Thus, in such fonds as *Kherson Orthodox Consistorium* (F. 37), *St. Paul Evangelical-Lutheran Church Parish in Odessa* (F. 630), *Odessa Roman-Catholic Church* (F. 618) you can find lots of entries about converting Jews to the Christianity. But very often the converts suffered from negative relationship of former co-religionist and lack of support from Christians. In 1893 there were established a special Society for Assistance to the Jews Converted to the Christianity. Its Head, the archbishop Iustin, Vice-Head G.Marazli (Head of the Odessa City Council) and board members S/Znamenskij, father Sergij and M.Ozmidov were the organizers of financial and moral support to the converts, delivering loans and work to them.<sup>49</sup>

Course, love and marriage, inner searching were important reasons for changing faith. But lots of similar facts show just a pragmatic approach to solve the problem of avoiding percentage quota for Jews. One of a bright example is investigation of circumstances connected with the deeds of Gershon Korik, a student of Novorosijski University, who converted from Judaism to Anglican religion before the entering the University and returned to Judaism after that<sup>50</sup>.

Archival documents reflect also the subject of children who were born out of wedlock, so called illegitimate children. It is impossible to find them in the official synagogue birth books in the Fond 39 – they were left out. Why? The answer on that question give resolutions of the Odessa City Council about determination of birth dates of such individuals and delivery them birth certificates<sup>51</sup>. The supplements to resolutions usually are: application from parents to legalize their children with explanations of previous circumstances of the case, confirmation of midwife, also indexes of that children.

Fond 359, *Odessa Board for Small Business. Jewish Desk* (*Odessakaya meshchanskaya uprava. Evrejskoye otdeleniye*), 1894-1918, 44 files includes 4505 family registers of Odessa petty bourgeois (*meshchane*). Every register contain date of its compiling, family, full name of the head and names of his wife, sons and daughters, their ages or birth dates, notes regard fulfillment of military service, address of the permanent residence in Odessa or other places, signature of the family head. In 2002 the Name Index of 4505 heads of Jewish families and their addresses was compiled as database and published<sup>52</sup>.

Genealogical research let us look at facts through the history of family and determine a place of an individual in society and his influence on outward things. This is important instrument of cognition of historical regularities. For example, family links and three generations of the Odessa petty bourgeois Krakhmalnikovs opened for us an engrossing story of development of confectionary production that started in 1892 as a factory and trade firm named “The Krakhmalnikov Brothers” that works today as the Joint Stock Company of “Odessa”. The way, the descendant of the family lives now in USA and Italy after emigration from Odessa in 1906. Some of them keep the family traditions: Bruce Kreig,

<sup>49</sup> GAOO, F. 2, Op. 1, F. 2001.

<sup>50</sup> GAOO, F. 42, OP. 35, D. 493, L. 5, 6.

<sup>51</sup> GAOO, F. 16, Op. 124, part 2, F. 15945, 15948, 15949, 16006-16015.

<sup>52</sup> Евреи Одессы и Юга Украины. История в документах. / Авт.сост. Л.Г.Белоусова, Т.Е.Волкова. – Одесса, 2002. – с.179-299.

Abram Krakhmalnikov's grandson, is a professor of Archeology in Chikago University, but at the same time he is a famous international expert in food and cooking. Searching the materials of Odessa Archives, he wrote: "We are very happy to know that we are part of the history of Odessa".

Fond 315, *Odessa City Office for Recruits (Odesskoye gorodskoye po voinskoj povinnosti prisutsvije)*, 1884-1920, 1022 files, contain lists of including reservists and their birth certificates, personal files of recruits and correspondence about taking in the Russian Army or deferment of military service. Materials on the Jews are among the general documentation.

## The Soviet Period

A dramatic period of history for Jews was from 1917 to 1930. The beginning of Soviet power affected the stabilization of economic and social conditions for all of the people in Russia, but the position of the Jews was compounded by the previous discriminating state policies and pogroms during the revolution and Civil War (1917-1920). Since 1919 the territory of Kherson Guberniya was met with numerous administrative-territorial changes whereupon old compact national units were destroyed. In 1919 Odessa Guberniya consisted of six *uyezdz*: Odessa, Tiraspol, Voznesensk, Ananjev, Balta, and Pervomajsk. Odessa Uyezd was divided into 43 *volosts*, in 1920 they were integrated into only 20. The population numbers of *volosts* were very different and varied between 5,000 and 30,000. That ineffective system was changed again between 1923 and 1925 when the old pre-revolutionary territorial division was changed finally into the three-level system of management: *rayon*, *okrug*, and *center*.

In Odessa Guberniya, six *okrugs* were created: Odessa, Nikolaev, Kherson, Balta, Elisavetgrad, and Pervomajsk; each was divided into *rayons*. Odessa *okrug*, for example, had 18 *rayons*. Former *volosts* were absorbed into *rayons*. But then that division also appeared ineffective; and one more large reform happened in 1932 when 5 *oblasts* were founded in Ukraine, including Odessa Oblast with 4 cities and 46 *rayons*. Since 1937 the territory of Odessa Oblast became smaller with the forming of new territorial units: Nikolaev Oblast (1937), Kirovograd (former Elisavetgrad) Oblast (1939), Kherson Oblast (1944), Ismail Oblast (1944-1954).

Administrative changes were linked with global economic and social changes, and society was divided into the rich and the poor. A policy to abolish private ownership started with campaigns against prosperous farmers (*kulaks*) in 1921 and led to the full reallocation of land and taking of other possessions, *kulaks* being exiled to Siberia, starvation, closing of churches and imprisoning priests, and punishment of those who expressed discontent against the Soviet power— all of which finally destroyed the foundations of the Jews. Such processes are reflected in the documentation of state organs, through numerous complaints from peasants to prosecutor and militia offices, in decisions at peasant meetings, and in materials on collectivization and foundation of *kolkhoz* (collective farms).

Fond R-969, *Odessa Okrug Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers, peasants and Red Army Deputates (Odesskij okružnoy komitet Soveta rabochih, krest'yanskih i krasnoarmejskih deputatov)*, 1923-1930, includes records of the *Commission of national minorities* (Opis 3) with information about Jewish life in the first years of soviet power. The most informative documents are: minutes of the commission for registration of Jews who wished to be involved to agricultural branch; correspondence with higher authorities about settling Jews and giving land for establishment of Jewish collective farms and agricultural communities in Odessa Okrug; informations about inspections of Jewish kolhozes in

Ekaterinoslav Guberniya; statistical reports about nationalities in Odessa, other cities and towns of Kherson Gubernia, including such villages with compact Jewish population as Chernovo, Berezovka, Zakharievka, Grossulovo, Tsebrikovo, Oktyabr' and others; informations about Jewish communities of Frieling and Andreevka, also in Pervomajsk Okrug; materials on collectivization of Jewish householders, creation of small producer's cooperatives; 5-years plan of measures for improvement of sanitary conditions of Jewish population, etc.<sup>53</sup>

More detailed information about economic and social state of Jewish population in 1920-30rd is in the separate fonds of Jewish organizations, societies, educational institutions and political formations.

Fond R-5138, *Odessa City Bureau of Central Board of the Union of Societies for Artisan and Agricultural Work "ORTFERBAND"* (*Odesskoje gorodskoje byuro Zentral'nogo pravlenija sojuza obshchestv remeslennogo iI zemledel'cheskogo truda "ORTFERBAND"*), 1919-1938, 1101 files contain minutes, reports about Jewish population in Odessa Guberniya (since 1923 – Okrug, since 1932 – Oblast). There are also lists of Jewish households, colonies, communities, resettlers. Correspondence with various organizations including Central Committee of Union "ORT" in Berlin regard importing agricultural equipment and machines and supplying peasants with them, also about establishment and developing the professional education for Jewish youth. 5-year agreement between the soviet government and "ORT" for prolongation of activity of the last one in the USSR (1929, copy).

Fond R-1509, *Society for land arrangement of working Jews, Odessa branch, "OZET"* (*Odesskoje otdelenije zemel'nogo ustrojstva trudyashchihsya evrejev "OZET"*), 1925-1932, 114 files, consists of application of poor Jews desiring to settle in national collective farms (kolhoz) in Odessa Okrug or to resettle to Biribidzhan, Jewish Authonomy National Okrug, also minutes of the Commission for Settling Jews and its correspondence, info about its officials. Some materials tell about the appearance of Jewish national administrative-territorial units (some of them were named in honor of the revolution leaders like Stalindorf or Kalinindorf Rayon in Crimea). Similar records are in two other fonds such as: Fond R-1511, *Representative of the Committee for land arrangement of working Jews in Odessa Oblast "KOMZET"* (*Predstavitel' Komiteta zeme'nogo ustrojstva trudyashchihsya evrejev na Odeschine "KOMZET"*), 1925-1930, 51 files, and Fond R-1510, *Odessa Oblast Council of the Society for land arrangement of working Jews "OZET"* (*Odesskij oblastnoj sovet obshchestva zemel'nogo ustrojstva trudyashchihsya evrejev "OZET"*), 1932-1938, 264 files.

Fond R-5275, *Odessa Rayon Commission of All-Ukrainian Jewish Public Committee for Relief to Victims of Pogroms "EVOBSCHESTKOM"* (*Odessakaya rajonnaja komissija Vseukrainskogo evrejskogo komiteta po okazaniyu pomoshchi postradavshim ot pogromov "EVOBSCHESTKOM"*), 1920-1924, 342 files, reflect dramatic for Jewish population events in the period of Revolution and Civil war (1917-1920) and consequences of that. These are evidences of victims and official reports about pogroms in 1919-1920 in the village of Goloskovo (Pervomajsk uyezd, Odessa Guberniya), and other places; also lists of victims killed by Grigoriev's band, information about organization and activity of the Boguslav self-defense guard. Fond contain numerous lists of victims of pogroms, their applications for assistance and forms, registers of refugees from various parts of Ukraine, questionnaires of individuals who had relatives abroad, correspondence regard people emigrating to Palestine. Some documents illuminate links between Ukrainian and American Jewish societies such as "Appeal from Jewish public committees in Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia to Jewish workers in

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<sup>53</sup> GAOO, F.R-969, Op. 3, F. 461, 493, 494, 498, 501, 503, 509, 510, 514, 540b, 600. 606, 611.



America" (1920), correspondence concerning activity of the delegate from "Odessa national community in Chikago" Pimmerman for assistance to Jewish population in Odessa, information about free aid from USA and distribution of food and clothes between victims of pogroms in Odessa region. Three separate fonds of *Representatives from All-Ukrainian "EVOBSHESTKOM" in Ananjev, Balta and Berezovka Uyezds* (FF. R-5994, R-5295, R-5297, 116 files) contain similar documents from 1920-1923.

Some fonds of institutions for supporting starving population in Odessa Region in 1922-1925 reflect the activity of the American Relief Administration (ARA), "Joint", Nansen's Mission and other international organization.

Educational soviet institutions such as the *Stalin Jewish Agricultural Institute in Odessa* (Fond R-4574, 1925-1935, 340 files), *Jewish Agricultural Institute in Novo-Poltavka* (Fond R-5019, 1924-1933, 464 files), *Odessa Jewish Pedagogical College* (Fond R-1650, 1925-1935, 181 files), *Odessa Jewish College of Precision Mechanics* (Trust of "Ukrainian Film") (Fond R-5286, 1930-1935, 13 files) contain management recording, lists of teachers and students, progress-sheets, results of examinations, diploma works, personal files.

A fond specifically for the period of *temporal Romanian-German occupation of Odessa and Odessa Oblast (1941-1944)* includes about 900 fonds of government organs formed in the Governorship of Transnistria. That name was given to the territory occupied between the Dniester and the South Bug Rivers taken under the jurisdiction of Royal Romania. The documents reflect the policy of genocide to Jewish population in materials about establishment of 138 concentration camps and ghetto (in Mogilev, Bershad, Berezovka, Obodovka, Domanevka and other places), numerous directions, circulars and orders of Roman-German authorities regard eviction the Jews from their flats, expropriation of their properties, using them for the mostly hard work in agriculture and industry, massacres under the escaped convicts etc. There are special proscription lists of Odessa Jews with indication of their addresses, registers of ghetto residents, reports about their medicine, economic and moral state, materials on organization of anti-Semitic actions. From the other side some documents illuminate the collaborative activity of the Jewish Committee during the occupation.

Detailed statistic information about victims are in documentation of special regional and district *commissions extraordinary for determination of damage* from Romanian-German occupation, formed just after liberation. Reports from Berezovka in Odessa Oblast, where mainly the Jews-Odessans were exiled, confirmed that in 1941-1944 there were killed 54 thousand of Jewish men, women and children; in Domanevka – 62 thousand. Total approximate statistic of the victims is near 300 thousand of individuals.

Since 1990 the Odessa Archives issued about 20 thousand confirmations to the declarants – former ghetto prisoners. Their requests contain important information about that time and could be considered as historical source also.

### **Private Fonds**

Odessa Archives preserve 146 private fonds of famous people – scientists, politics, writers, actors. They contain materials about public and private life of the person (or the family) mostly private documentation such as: family correspondence, photo, manuscripts, collections of cards, invitations, greetings, newspapers, posters etc. Some of them are referred to the history of Odessa Jews.

One of the most important among them is a private fond of the Professor of History Dr. *Saul Borovoj* (F. R-7400, 1927-1983, 35 files) with his curriculum vitae, materials for his book about credits and banks in Russia, correspondence with famous scientists (L.Grossman, N.Rosental, O.Vainstein, P.Berkov and others), information on participation of Dr. Borovoj at various conferences, also collection of maps of the Old Odessa (photocopies from the Moscow Military Historical Archives).

The actress *Liya Bugova (Feldscher)* (F. R-7972, 1905-1985, 100 files) left very interesting documents about three Jewish theatres in Ukraine in 1920-30s such as: “Kunst Winkl” in Kiev, “Router Fakel” in Vinnitsa and “GOSSET” in Odessa. These are lists of actors, materials about performances in various Ukrainian cities and towns, playbills, notes about history of theatres in Ukraine, newspapers, critic articles, photos of stuff and actors, including L.Bugova in costumes of her characters.

Fonds of attorneys *Yurij Grossfeld* (F. 195), *Isaak Khmel'nitskij* (F.R-5250), *Solomon Shapiro* (F.194) and *Mikhail Zwilling* (F. 193) contain materials of court processes under leaders of various political movements and parties accused for their revolutionary activity, preservation of illegal literature and arms. These are also cases of Bejlis (1911), Livshiz and other bombists (1905), anarchist Wolf Gologorski (1905), doctor N.Rabinovich and others.

A journalist *Isidor Brodovski* (F. 269) collected more than 5000 proclaims, newspapers, placards and applications published by various political parties and public societies that represent wide a social and political life in Russian Empire in the end of XIX- beginning XX ct.

Private fond of economist *Pyotr Routenberg* (F. 267, 1916-1920, 15 files) contains letters from editors of magazines *Evrejskaya Mysl'* (*Jewish View*) and *Ob'edinenie (Consolidation)* on the social and politic subjects, also projects of economic reforms in 1919 and a copy of protocols of the Defense Council acting in the period of English-French occupation of Odessa (1919).

In 2002-2007 some new private fonds were taken to the Odessa Archives, for example, of the satirist and editor of the humorous magazine of “Fontain” *Valerij Khait*; a deputy of the Odessa City Council, businessmen, founder of the medicine center for treatment of children cerebral paralysis and the best sport school in Odessa *Boris Litvak*; the famous photographer *Leonid Sidorskiy*, who presented to the Odessa Archives a unique collection of 15 thousand of photos and others. This work is continuing and developing.

## **Current Research Projects**

Studying history of national minorities in Novorossia is one of the main direction of activity at the Odessa Archives of late years. The main task of archivists is not only to preserve historical sources but also to make them open and admitted for society.

The process of declassifying the fonds of German-Romanians occupying administrative and other positions began in 1990, a full register of them was published. More than 20,000 former ghetto prisoners requested archives for the purpose of defining damages in order to file for compensation or to confirm their Jewish nationality

The archives of former Communist party members were put in GAOO in 1992 with fonds for 1920-1992. Some of these also refer to the activities of Jewish societies, schools, and institutes from 1920 to 1940.

Every year materials on Jewish history are presented at *exhibits* in cooperation with museums (Jewish, Literature, Historical). Last such kind of documental presentation was organized in May, 2007 for the 160 participants of the Klezmer Festival tour ("Unger Travel", Toronto, Canada) at the Odessa Historical Museum.

Some special data bases were created, viz: Name indexes of the Odessa Jews on materials of the 1<sup>st</sup> All-Russian Census, 1897; Odessa Board for Small Business, 1894-1918: Family register. The name and thematic catalogues on Jews also were brought up to date.

Publication of documents and descriptions of fond are the most important part of the work in GAOO. In 2000 the complete register of fonds and collections for pre-revolution period was published, including Jewish ones. Similar register for Soviet period has been compiling.

GAOO take part at the international program of annotation of Jewish fonds "Documents on History and Culture of Jews at Archives of Ukraine" (Ukraine-Russia-USA). In 2002 there were published a book "Jews of Odessa and Southern Ukraine: History in Documents (end of XVIII- beginning of XX cent.)" as a joint project of GAOO and Jewish Center *Migdal*.

## **Conclusion**

At present, the Odessa Archives has 250 sources of document collections. These are organs of government, educational institutes, state and private industrial and agricultural enterprises, and societies; and some of these will supplement documentation on the Jews. GAOO plans to form new collections of the International Jewish Center *Migdal* and the All-world Club of Odessans. The Odessa Council for Nationalities and Migration and district administrations continue to concentrate information reflecting a process for the renaissance of national traditions. These fonds will be taken to GAOO in the near future for safekeeping forever.

Jewish fonds of the Odessa Archives are an extremely valuable resource for researching the history of Jews in the Black Sea Region and contain thousands of irreplaceable files of governments, communities, and individuals. The creation of guides and databases and the publication and distribution of these documents are very important projects for groups and individuals to undertake in order to make Jewish fonds more known and readily available for researchers. Restoration of these archives are a critical priority: 70 percent of them need urgent restoration to be preserved or they may be lost forever. And, finally, collections of Jewish records must be expanded by adding new fonds based on the efforts of volunteers and staff in Jewish societies, keepers of private family archives, researchers holding subject collections, and others willing to preserve these valuable records for future generations.

## **ENDNOTES**

Odessa Archive abbreviations found in these endnotes are as follows:

- F. Fond - a complex of documents of one organization, a collection
- Op. Opis' - a register of file titles within a fond, an inventory
- D. Delo - a file
- L.. List - a sheet

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