

Kutno. Ogólny widok.



THE HISTORY OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN KUTNO

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*I dedicate this work about the community of my birthplace, Kutno, from its beginning to its destruction, to the memory of my mother Frymet, my sisters Pryva and Dobrush, her infant daughter Leah'le, my brothers-in-law Ber and David, who were in the Warsaw ghetto and were slaughtered by the Nazi murderers. Also, to my brother Israel Yehoshua whose life ended in a Soviet concentration camp.
May God take revenge!*

Foreword

When did Jews settle in Kutno? This question is connected to a more general one: when and where did Jews settle at all in Mazowia?

From the sources available to us it is not possible to extract information concerning the beginning of Jewish settlement in this province. It is reasonable to merely assume that Jews arrived there from the surrounding Polish areas, that is greater Poland and Kujawia, and later also from lesser Poland, Silesia and areas under the rule of the German crusaders.

The most ancient documentation of the presence of Jews in Mazowia dates from 1237 and concerns Jews from Płock. Following this, there is a gap of about two hundred years, until the year 1413 when the name of a Jew from Czersk (near Warsaw) appears in one of the documents.

The political and economic situation in Mazowia during the 13th and 14th centuries was not at all ideal for absorbing many Jewish outsiders, since then they were mainly occupied in trade and finance, and they could only make a living in relatively developed places, enjoying political stability – conditions such as these were not prevalent in Mazowia.

Only at the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th, during the reigns of Prince Janusz I and Siemowit IV, when ties with the kingdom of Poland were strengthened, did a lasting peace prevail in this area and the Grand-Duchy rose up out of its two-hundred-year long slump. It is possible, therefore, to assume that Jews started to settle in Mazowia during the second half of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th. And so, in very old documents from law courts in Mazowia from the early part of the 15th century, we come across mention of Jewish communities. In Czersk – as noted previously, the oldest source material is dated 1413; Warsaw 1414; Wyszogród 1422; Płock 1425; Płońsk 1446; Zakroczym 1449; Rawa Mazowiecka 1448; Sochaczew 1443; Błonie 1478; Pułtusk 1420; Ciechanów 1488; and Gostynin. Of course, these years are not associated with the early settlement of Jews in such places, since most of the dates refer to a single event.

From this list of towns, it can be seen that the Jews settled mainly in the southern and western parts of Mazowia, while in the north and east which were lightly

populated and near the border and at all event lacked stability, no Jewish communities could be found in the 15th century¹. As we know, Kutno is located in the western part of Mazowia.

PART I

History of the community until the end of the 18th century

The oldest document concerning the Jews of Kutno is dated 1513. In the same year, King Sigismund granted an "iron charter" to three Jews from Kutno, specified in the document by their given names: Moshe, Solomon (Shlomo) and Lewek². This deed authorizes debtors' freedom from payment of their debts for a period of one year although from the date of this document it should not be assumed that Jewish settlement in Kutno was only established from the beginning of the 16th century. It can be supposed that Jews arrived in Kutno no later than the second half of the 15th century. In the two neighboring communities – Gąbin and Gostynin – Jews were already dwelling there in the first half of the 16th century. From the middle of the 16th century Polish documents already mentioned names of Jewish merchants from Kutno, although, until the 18th century, most of the sources concerning all aspects of the lives of the Jews in this town are meagre. Interestingly, in 1685, we can find in Amsterdam a printer named Asher ben Anshel Kutner, whose name without doubt bears witness to his home town³.

From the beginning Kutno was a private town, made up of the estates of landowners. In the 16th century it was the private property of the wife of the governor of Rawa Mazowiecka, who according to her personal request, in 1555, was granted by King Sigismund Augustus the right to hold a fair in the town. Undoubtedly, the setting up of a market affected the status of Kutno, but never the less the town remained unimportant, and around the year 1800 the entire population numbered altogether 2,278 souls (Jews and Christians)⁴.

As noted above, only from the second half of the 18th century do we have documents and historical sources regarding accounts of the Jewish settlement which allow us to paint a fairly clear picture of Jewish life in Kutno. At the beginning of the second half of the 18th century – in 1753 – Kutno was beleaguered by fire. The wooden huts quickly went up in flames and the town became a complete ruin. Ten years went by before Kutno was rebuilt. Then, the last Polish king, Stanislaw Augustus Poniatowski, granted Count Zamojski permission to restore the town⁵. According to the census of the Jewish population which was carried out in Poland between the years 1765 and 1766, the Jewish community in Kutno amounted to 928 persons but, it turns out this total includes Jews living in the nearby townlets, Żychlin and Gostynin⁶, and also the Jews dwelling in the neighboring villages. Therefore, how many Jews lived in Kutno alone cannot be determined for certain. The population census does not indicate the true number of this population owing to the feelings of distrust among the Jews towards every government census, whose aim was none other than to increase the tax burden. In his

research, Prof. Rafael Mahler notes the conclusion that the population not included in the census reached an average of 20%⁷. From this, the upshot is that the number of Jews in Kutno and surroundings reached 1,115 souls, apart from infants below the age of one year who were not counted. Prof. Mahler estimates them to account for 6.35% of the population. The end result is that the number of Jews living in Kutno and the surrounding villages in the years 1765-1766 reached a total of 2,000 souls.

This corrected figure looks more accurate if it is compared to the number of Jews living there ten years later – in 1776. In that year an official document stated that there were 200 Jewish families living in the town and a further 187 in the neighboring villages. If we calculate that, on the average, each family comprised five persons, we get 1,000 people in the town and 935 in the surroundings.

It was also stated in this document that there were 885 books at the disposal of the townsfolk and in the villages, 200 books⁸. The object of this book census, carried out at that time in Poland, was the collection of stamp tax on books which the state treasury imposed on Jews. Thanks to this book tax we know of the existence of a doctor in Kutno, around the year 1775. Stamp tax was collected that year on behalf of six books from this doctor who had a Polish name – Marek (probably Mordechai)⁹.

From the 18th century we have in our possession documentation about two rabbis from Kutno. The first of them, who lived at the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th, was Rabbi Moshe Yekutiel Kaufman HaKohen, author of the book "*Lechem HaPanim*" and was the son-in-law of the Kalisz rabbi, Rabbi Abraham Abele Gombiner, author of "*Magen Abraham*". Rabbi Kaufman was born in Krotoszyn and died there in the year 1722 while serving as rabbi of the congregation¹⁰. His successor is thought to have been Rabbi Arie Leib, son of the rabbi of Kalisz Josef Chaim, whom, in 1768, the community of Poznań appointed as a preacher and also at the same time served as a rabbi¹¹.

Jews from Kutno could be found in Warsaw during the second half of the same century. As is known, it was forbidden for Jews to live in this city, and only at the time when the *Sejm* (parliament) was meeting were they allowed to visit and trade, on condition that they had a "daily pass" (which was a special permit) and which had to be purchased. Around the year 1784, a Jew from Kutno, Moshe ben Shlomo (Solomonowicz) served as commercial attaché for the Austrian ambassador in Warsaw and enjoyed his protection and exemption from a permit to be in the city¹².

Another Kutno Jew, Moshe ben Shmuel (Szmulowicz) was an arms supplier during the uprising in the streets of Warsaw (17th April, 1794) at the time of the Kościuszko uprising and even offered the rebels a contribution – two horses and a cart¹³.

It turned out that, thanks to his past in politics, in the spring of 1807, Moshe ben Shmuel was appointed by the mayor of Warsaw, Paweł Bielinski, to the post of lobbyist for the Warsaw Jewish community council, the *Kahal*.

However, because of this appointment an argument broke out between the mayor and the *Kahal* heads who did not approve and rejected him. The affair was discussed at the offices of the central authorities and in the end the mayor was forced to retreat from his intention¹⁴.

Even tradesmen's' apprentices started to come to Warsaw to try their luck. In the year 1787 the Warsaw Gazette printed the following item about one of them, named David: "Instead of the homeless vagabond thanking the master tailor for his goodness, he stole from him and ran away"¹⁵.

Other "wandering" Jews naturally chose to travel further away from Warsaw and, in 1820, it was possible to find Jews from Kutno at the famous markets then held in Frankfurt, Breslau and Leipzig. In order to pay for their expensive travels, they borrowed money from Polish landowners¹⁶.

The charters of two artisans' guilds were also drawn up at the end of the 18th century (in the two last decades of that century) – one of the guilds involved was that of tailors, milliners and furriers, which was made official by landowner Gadowski in 1783. The other guild, "the society of butchers", was certified by the landowner in 1791.

The charter of the artisans gives us a credible picture of conditions prevailing in this area at the second half of the 18th century. The original charters were drawn up in the Polish language and, after Kutno passed over to Prussian rule (after the second partition of Poland), were translated into German.¹⁷

The charter of the amalgamated guild was typical of the other charters of Jewish artisans of that period. Their principal aim was to avoid competition among the craftsmen and make a reasonable living possible, while requiring strict supervision over the assistants.

Paragraph 18 of the charter affirms that a craftsman was forbidden to employ more than one assistant and one young apprentice. However, if his workload was heavy, he was permitted to take on a second assistant, on condition that he was married or too poor to employ others. The craftsman undertook to pay one third of his profit ("the third *groszy*") and if a craftsman should tempt the assistant of another to work for him, he would have to pay a fine to the treasury of the guild (paragraph 23).

It was also forbidden for the craftsmen to send their assistants to the villages and markets in order to get hold of work there. Only the craftsmen themselves were allowed to take care of orders.

Should a craftsman spoil his work, he would have to pay for the damage out of his own pocket, and not from the guild's account. The aim of this regulation was to maintain a high professional standard and to prevent unqualified persons from entering the guild as craftsmen, and even to work as assistants (paragraph 14).

Each contract between the craftsman and his assistant had to be registered by the head of the guild. The length of time of the contract had to be stated and also other work conditions. The contract would be entered in the guild ledger by the secretary, who would receive from

the craftsman one copper *groszy* for his effort (paragraphs 22, 29).

The assistant was forbidden to leave during the time of the contract. Should a craftsman employ an assistant without making sure that his previous employer agreed to his leaving, the craftsman would be obliged to pay a fine of four *groszy* into the guild's account (paragraph 23).

Each craftsman was obliged to pay a weekly fee into the treasury of the guild. A craftsman who employed an assistant – 4 shilling, and if he did not employ an assistant – 2 shilling (paragraph 30).

It is not by chance that these charters did not mention contacts with Christian craftsman's guilds or the community leaders, since, unlike in cities of the kingdom, where, as always, the Jews were forced to compete fiercely against the Christian craftsmen, in the privately-owned cities the Jewish craftsmen enjoyed the landowner's protection, and were not subject to regulation, neither by the Christian guilds nor by the community leaders. The word of the landowner was law.¹⁸

From the same period – the last decade of the 18th century – a very illuminating document has been preserved, from which we are able to learn about the life of the Jewish community. This is a statistical record carried out in 1796 among the Jewish population by the new Prussian authorities in this area, when Kutno was annexed to the kingdom of Prussia, following the second partition of Poland in about 1793. This partition lasted until the year 1807, the year when the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw was declared (1807-1815). This statistical record is fairly accurate and includes several categories:

- Family members by age
- Homeowners or tenants
- House condition and type of building
- Occupations
- Various taxes

The statistics also included Jews living in 71 villages, giving the names of the villages and the landowners. In addition, the record gives names of those owing taxes and a general survey of the community institutions, financial matters, details on property condition, tax exemption and dwelling problems among 250 families in the town and villages.

A protocol signed by the clerk of the authority was added to the statistical record, attesting that the community leaders had sworn to tell the truth when giving information to the authorities. It was also mentioned there that the Prussian official warned them that they would have to pay a fine of 5 thalers for every person not reported. The community leaders replied that they are prepared to swear as their words were based on the whole truth.

However, despite all the threats and solemn announcements, it appears that their words did not completely describe the reality, and the reasons for this are very clear: the fear implanted in the hearts of the Jews of all the various official censuses. Their instinct was always right in making them aware of the danger awaiting them with every census, since they were carried out for financial reasons.

Each tally had its single objective – control over tax payments and their increase, especially in their particular case – when the census was performed by a foreign, controlling rule whose taxation policy towards the Jews was clearly known to them. It is possible that the community leaders sought ways to lighten the wickedness of the verdict. The leaders themselves were caught in a difficult situation, and were troubled by a tragic conflict – between pangs of conscience and demands of society, but apparently the general concern prevailed.

Therefore, the numbers in the document must be regarded with caution and it should be remembered that the stand of the community leaders would have been to reduce them as much as possible. These methodological precepts are critical before setting out to examine the numbers in detail.

We are sure that the picture that we wish to describe was undoubtedly typical of most of the landowners' townships in the 18th century.

JEWISH POPULATION NUMBER TOWN DWELLERS

According to official statistics from 1796, the Jewish population of Kutno was 1087 souls.

Table 1

Married men	343
Married women	342
Boys up to age 14	166
Girls up to age 14	152
Boys over age 14	28
Girls over age 14	13
Male servants, assistants, apprentices	25
Female servants	18
Total	1087 people

From Table No. 1 it can be seen that the number of boys and girls of various ages was 359. Since, according to the list, the number of families totaled 357, it works out that each family had slightly more than one child. This is not at all likely and so it seems that a false report must have been given to the authorities. There are several reasons for this: the number of children was reduced because of the poll tax and, regarding the boys, the fear that they would be enlisted into the army; also, as in Galicia, the threat of compulsory education.

If it is remembered that, according to the custom in those days, young boys and girls aged 14-16 got married, it is obvious that the number of unmarried youngsters over the age of 14 was relatively small.

If it is assumed that the size of the average family was five persons (and regarding this period that is undoubtedly a low number), a total of approximately 1,760 souls is reached. To this must be added 43 servants, assistants and apprentices¹⁹, and before us is a population of at least 1,800. This figure, therefore, is greater by 713 than the official number. It is likely that 65% of the Jewish population (mostly children) was not included in the official census.

If we continue to compare the figures, it can be seen that the number of married men is almost equal to the

number of married women. In contrast, the number of boys of various ages is greater than that of the girls: the numbers are 194 to 165. Even though there were more reasons to hide the young boys from the eyes of the authorities than the girls, when the number of boys is larger than the girls, there is no room to doubt the veracity of this connection.

It is possible to explain this lack of proportion in that the young girls married early and that the relation between boys and girls below the age of 14 was 166:152, while it changes among the older children to 28:13.

In answer to the question how many people lived in each house, sadly it is not possible to give an exact reply, because the above statistics only record the home owner's name and not the names of the inhabitants. If it is remembered that among Jews at that time 90% would be living in Jewish homes²⁰, we arrive at the figure of 1,620 people living in 100 houses, which is 16 persons (three families) to a house. From this the conclusion can be drawn that these houses were really very small.

THE VILLAGERS

According to the official statistics, 381 Jews lived in the 71 villages on the list (in error the clerk recorded 378), that is, 98 families²¹. Among them are:

Table 2

Married men	98
Married women	97
Boys up to age 14	84
Girls up to age 14	63
Boys over age 14	8
Girls over age 14	5
Male servants, assistants, apprentices	19
Female servants	7
Total	381 people

As we know now, the correlation between the unmarried children and the number of families was slightly higher among the Jewish villagers than among the townsfolk: 160:98, that is 1.6 children per family; even that figure is too low and should be corrected. The same reasons that persuaded the towns' people to state lower numbers worked also for the villagers. The correct number of Jewish villagers was, apparently, higher than the official number. Even if it is assumed that the village family had five members, the figure of 510 is reached. To this must be added 26 servants, assistants and apprentices²² – a total of 536 people. This figure is therefore 35% higher than the official figure. Only about a third of the village Jews was not included in the census. It is simple to understand the large difference in the extent of evasion between the town and the village, since in a village it was not easy to deceive either the community or the authorities concerning the number of children where certainly they were known to everyone, while in the town, where the Jewish population was spread out and larger, evasion was easier.

So, it can be seen from Table No. 2 that the number of married men is equal to that of the married women. The relation between the girls and boys of various ages is 92:68, which is a larger difference than that found in the town. It turns out that the village Jews tried as far as

possible to send their daughters out of the village almost exclusively to protect them. Apparently, these girls grew up in their relatives' homes in the town. This disproportion is especially marked among youngsters, girls and boys, over the age of 14: 8:5, and can also be explained by the custom of early marriages.

Regarding the number of Jewish families in each village, going by the findings there were one or two families in each of them. Only in one village were four Jewish families counted and in three villages, three families.

According to the official census, the overall figure of Jews in both the town and villages reached 1,452, and according to our calculations – 2,340 people.

Dealing with age, the census counted children from a quarter of a year old. According to the official figures, the number of children aged two years and below was 89 (24 in the villages and 65 in town). The number of elderly persons over the age of 60 was 122 (11 in the villages and 111 in town). When comparing the number of elderlies with the number of adults (males and females) in town and village, the townspeople had 111:583 and the villagers: 11:184. The number of town elderly persons was three times bigger than that in the villages. It is obvious that the harsh quality of life in the country – physical labor and so on – did not make it a place for the old. In addition, the elderly tended to move to towns for religious reasons. When the number of children under the age of 2 years is compared to that of older children, in the villages the relation is 24:160 and in the town 65:359. These figures give room for conjecture, since there was almost no difference in the number of children between town and village.

OCCUPATIONS GENERAL REMARKS

At that time, among the Jews of Kutno there was a conspicuous lack of professional training. In dividing the various wage earners into groups, first of all the main occupation of the bread winner was taken into account, even though his secondary jobs made him also belong to another category. Therefore, each column of occupations must be studied for primary and secondary activities. Artisans can be found who at the very same time were shopkeepers and also the opposite, or a single earner who had many sources of livelihood. In many cases it is not possible to define the slightest economic difference between the various occupations, and even the classification of the different occupations into groups sometimes becomes whimsical. Altogether 31 families were found to have two jobs, that is, more than 8.5%.

A bar was a particularly acceptable form of activity on the side. A goldsmith was found who also kept a bar and in addition to that he also dealt in spices; also, a hat maker, a dealer in skins, two tailors and three furriers who all kept bars. The preparation of salt was considered a secondary occupation and two barbers did that, also two bar tenders, one nurse, a merchant and a shopkeeper. We also find a goldsmith who at the same time worked as a

textile merchant and a shopkeeper; a dealer in skins who also produced candles; a tailor, a furrier and a costume decorator who at the same time were shopkeepers, and a shopkeeper who made hats during the summer season. It was usual that craftsmen such as hatters also sold their products by themselves. Likewise, the wives of the poorer community officials, such as the synagogue singers and the teachers, were stall holders in the market. It is interesting that the only Jewish furrier who had an additional occupation was a hunter and fashioned other "corpses" (most likely he dyed the skins of the animals he hunted). With regard to his non-Jewish activities, the list informs that his life style was not moral, he was defined as a big wastrel and heavily built and the community was not able to get him to pay his taxes.

It should be added that the reason for so many occupations was that a living could not be made from one occupation by itself.

OCCUPATIONS AMONG JEWS OF THE TOWN WORKERS

According to the official list from the year 1796 the Jews of Kutno were busy in the following occupations:

Table 3a

Tailor (primary occupation)	74
Shoemaker	26
Furrier	15
Butcher	11
Hat maker (primary occ:7; secondary: 2)	9
Barber	4
Baker	5
Artisan (non-specialized)	3
Comb maker	3
Goldsmith	2
Engraver	2
Candle maker (primary occupation: 2; secondary: 1)	3
Worker in felt	2
Button maker	2
Lace maker	1
Belt maker	1
Tanner	1
Dyer	1
Binder	1
Salt refiner	7
Carter	2
Domestic servant	28
Various assistants	16
Daily staff	6
Messenger	4
TOTAL	231

Therefore, 231 Jews made a livelihood from an occupation which was their main one – 175 were independent workers and 56 were wage earners: assistants, servants, daily staff and messengers. Ten Jews (about 4%) were occupied in labor as a secondary job.

Ten Jews were occupied in the free professions: 4 barbers (who also served at the same time as wound

dressers), 2 wound dressers and two musical instrument makers. If these occupations are included in the larger categories (primary and secondary) the following table is obtained:

Table 3b: Craft and free professions

	Number	%
Sewing (independent)	116	48.0
Metal (independent)	17	7.0
Food (independent)	23	9.5
Haberdashery (independent)	4	1.7
Free occupation (see detail, above)	10	4.1
Wage earners (servants, assistants, day workers)	56	23.5
Transportation	6	2.5
Other	9	3.7
TOTAL	241	100.0

Therefore, about half of all craftsmen worked in the sewing trade. In this trade, the professional structure of the working Jewish population was similar to that prevalent up to the First World War.

In contrast, a small place was filled by the haberdashery trade (1.7%), which at a later date increased in importance among Jewish professions.

Especially great was the number of tailors, which, together with assistants, reached 70% in the needlework category and 34% of all craftsmen. The number of costume decorators (15), butchers (11) and assistants (18) should be emphasized²³. These figures should certainly have been greater but, for reasons which have been mentioned previously, lower numbers were reported. Approximately only five apprentices were recorded. It must be noted that also this figure does not fit the actual situation.

Typical for those days, is the group of messengers (4 of them) called by the German name "Fuss Bothe", who were employed both by the community and private clients. It is likely that the mail services also used them to deliver mail. In addition, it is usual that cobblers and painters were definitely absent from the list – apparently this work was completely in the hands of the Christians.

The findings do not show that there was any kind of industrial enterprise then.

COMMERCE

The Census listed the following categories of trade:

Table 4a

Branch	Num.	Main occupation	Side occupation
Wool	18	17	1
Leather	10	7	3
Small trade (mixed shops)	24	3	1
Bar	22	13	9
Liquor, smoking equipment	5		
Market stall	21	16	5
Peddler	8		
Grain	1		

Horse trader	1		
Foreign trader	1		
TOTAL	111		

Four agents should be added to those making a living from trade – giving a total of 115 persons, that is, 25% of the population. As can be seen from the table, not a small number of persons were employed in trade as a secondary occupation – 18% of all the merchants. If we compare these numbers with those occupied in crafts as a secondary job, we will get a relation of 18:4. Therefore, the numbers of those employed in trade as a secondary occupation was 4.5 times greater than those in craft as a secondary occupation. The reason for this is obvious. Persons occupied in crafts have to have knowledge and skill in their special work, whereas vendors in the market or bar tenders in the inn do not need that. Indeed, we find that the bar and market stall owners make up the largest group of those having secondary occupations (14 out of 43).

Trade in iron, couriers, and alcoholic drinks such as wine, liqueur and arak, was the monopoly of the land owner and was mostly leased out²⁴. Trade in iron was leased out for 1,200 florins a year²⁵; courier service – 1,500, and alcoholic drinks at various rents. At first, monopolies included a larger number of businesses and, according to records, kept very strictly. Following is a list of types of merchants, their numbers and percentages.

Table 4b: Traders

	Number	%
Traders in wool	18	15.6
Traders in skins	10	8.7
Small merchants	24	20.8
Bartenders, wine merchants	27	23.5
Market stall traders	21	18.3
Door-to-door salesman	8	6.9
Agents	4	3.4
Other	3	2.8
TOTAL	115	100.0

It is found that barmen and wine merchants comprise a quarter of the traders since the keeping of bars in the towns and villages was very popular then.

Also usual for those times was the relatively large number of traders in spices – 10 (they have been included in the group of small merchants), such as tobacco and snuff merchants.

COMMUNITY WORKERS (CLERKS)

This group of workers could be appended to the free traders, but owing to its special nature and large number, has been itemized in greater detail.

Table 5: Community clerks

Civil Representative	1
Rabbi	1
Judge	2
Teacher ²⁶	11
Synagogue cantor	2
Assistant cantor	2
Ritual slaughterer	4
Caretaker	6

Grave digger	5
Scribe	1
Sick visitor	1
Prayer caller	1
TOTAL	37

It turns out that a sizeable portion of the Jewish population (9.7%) earned a living from the community. Especially large is the group of teachers (11), janitors (6) and grave diggers (5). It is likely that that not all of them were actually community employees, but were recorded as such in order to claim exemption from taxes (according to the list, community workers did not usually pay taxes). Also, with the object of being a business man of some sort, presented themselves (by gentlemen's agreement) as community workers.

DOMESTIC LABOUR²⁷

In Table 1, a row notes the total of male "servants" and assistants as 25, and in the next row 18 female servants – a total of 43 people. The first column is not exact. Although it is difficult to determine the number belonging to each category, according to our estimates, if the number of servants included 8-10 males, then the number of people engaged in domestic service would be 26-28. If this number is divided among the 352 families, the result is one servant (male or female) for every 13 families. In our opinion this number is also not correct, for reasons mentioned above concerning the concealing of the actual size of the population. There is another matter to be added: employment of servants indicates a certain degree of status. So even if this number is doubled, only one-sixth of the Jewish population was able to maintain a servant girl or "slave" – an indication of the economic status of the Jews in the town.

Female servants are only recorded among the eighteen higher class families, that is, traders in fur skins, lease holders in the iron and alcoholic drinks trades, goldsmiths, civil representative, butchers, tailors and a teacher who also was a house owner. Even the rabbi had a caretaker.

Only three families enjoyed the services of female servants, or a girl and a man. Although they were not the richest, they had status – a trader in silk and two wool traders. Interestingly, the big landowner of the town (a butcher and rich landlord) did not declare that he had servants. The girl servants were very young – girls of twelve years old and apprentices were from ten years old.

THE UNEMPLOYED

Into this category fall 19 families, which is 5%. Belonging to this group are eight young families (from 13 to 20) who are still living with their parents. It must be noted that most of them will become independent as soon as they have obtained all the necessary equipment, at the end of the "dowry chest" period – about the age of 20. The remainder of the group are the elderly (6) and disabled (5), most of them without children. Some of them are supported by relatives and some by the community.

It is permitted to cast doubt on this figure of the unemployed and to suppose that it was greater than 5%. As is known, the Prussian authorities put pressure on

unemployed Jews and so there was an agreed reason to reduce these numbers, either by concealing or by fictitious employment.

Table 6: Professions in the town

	Number	%
Independent: craft and industry	158	41.6
Trade	95	24.9
Community clerk; Free trader	47	12.4
Transport, Communication	6	1.1
Wage earner: Servant; assistant; Apprentice; Daily worker	56	14.8
Unemployed	19	5.2
TOTAL	381	100.0

Special emphasis must be given to the fact that according to the statistics, some 42% of the livelihoods were from crafts and only one quarter from trade. If those engaged in special jobs are added to the craftsmen, independent and wage earners and also the free professions (except for the community clerks), a full 60% is reached. About 80% are independent and 15% are wage earners.

LIVELIHOOD OF THE VILLAGE JEWS

In the village the method of livelihood of the Jewish families can be divided as follows:

Table 7a

INDEPENDENT:

Independent: brewer (lease holder)	40
Bar tender (side occupation = 2)	24
Tailor (side occupation = 1)	7
Tanner	7
Slaughterer, teacher	3
Baker	1
Milkman (lease holder)	1
Shopkeeper	1
Soap maker	1
Carter	1

NON-INDEPENDENT

Beer and spirits refiner	14
Assistant	2
Servant	25
TOTAL	127

One hundred and twenty-two persons were occupied in their main job and 5 had a secondary job.

If the various activities are put into larger groups, the following picture of the occupational composition of the Jewish village population can be obtained:

Table 7b: Occupational groups among the Jewish village population

	Number	%
Brewery leaseholder	40	32.5
Bartender	22	17.9
Brewer, spirit distiller	14	11.9
Craftsman (independent, assistant)	17	13.9
Religious personnel	2	1.6

Servant	25	20.3
Other	2	2.4
TOTAL	122	100

It turns out, therefore, that brewery activity is the largest group, almost a third of all the occupations. Also large is the percentage of bar tenders (17.9%). Independent workers make up more than two-thirds (68.7%) and the non-independent are a third (31.3%) of the whole Jewish population in villages.

As the previous table shows, more than 60% of the Jews in the villages (76 out of 122) earned a livelihood from the "bitter drop", as distillery lease holders, bar tenders and brewers. 78.8% earned a living from crafts and industry, and 18.8% from commerce.

Professional specialization was greater in the village than in the town; the professions were defined in a clearer fashion. Only two families were occupied in two activities at the same time. The list informs of two distillery lease holders who were, at the same time, bar tenders. Also, of the three ritual slaughterers, one of them was also a tanner, another was also a milkman and the third also worked as a teacher.

Usually, the contract for leasing a distillery was determined verbally between the owner and the tenant. Some occasions of a written contract were also found. The conditions of all leasing contracts were handed to the Prussian authorities by the landowner. On average, the lease cost 150-300 gold zlotys (the lowest cost 50 and the most expensive about 2,000). The duration of each lease was different – mostly one year. Only in one case was a lifelong lease recorded.

The number of tanners in the village – seven – is surprising, while in the town one person was occupied in this craft. The reason for this is that the landowners held the monopoly of the leather trade in town, which did not affect the villages and so there were convenient conditions for tanning. This way it is also possible to explain the large number of ritual slaughterers who took care of the Jews' requirements in the village, in addition to three village slaughterers, there were also two town ones who were employed for the village Jews.

One of the tanneries was larger, where, in addition to the owner, three workers could be found.

Five out of the 14 brewers were wage earners in the landowners' breweries, two worked for Jewish distillery leaseholders, and the rest in other places. Two of the helpers were heads of families and the other a young man of about twenty years old and another about fifty years old.

It is typical that the list of village Jews does not include even a single farmer²⁸.

In the village 33 people were occupied in domestic service²⁹ – 28 girls and 8 men, which is one servant to four families – that is to say, three times more than in town. Most of the male servants were employed by the lease distillers (16 out of 18), who were the highest class among the village Jews. Four of those kept two servants each (a girl and a male) and one, who also had a salt refining business, even had three. The shopkeeper also had two servants. In contrast, in town, only three families had two

servants, and three servants were not found in any family at all. Only two of the bar tenders had servants and among the craftsmen, only one tanner had. Typical of the servants in the village was that the number of male servants was 2.5 greater than that of females – 18:7. In the town it was an opposite relation – 18 girl servants as opposed to 10 males. These differences can be explained by the dissimilar nature of the work. Men were required for the hard work conditions in the village breweries and distilleries, and also it can be assumed that Jewish girls did not tend to work in the villages. Male servants were mainly aged 20-30, whereas the girls were aged 13-16.

A fact that is worthy of noting is that in all the villages visited in the census, only one Jewish shopkeeper was found. Apparently, the needs of the villagers were satisfied by townspeople on the one hand and by the bartenders on the other.

It must also be emphasized that not one unemployed person was recorded among the Jewish villagers.

The following table shows the occupational structure of the town Jews in parallel to the village Jews.

Table 8: Occupational structure of Jews in town and village

TOWN JEWS	%
1. Independents:	66.5
Craft, industry	41.6
Trade	24.9
2. Wage earners:	14.8
Domestic staff, assistant, daily staff	14.8
VILLAGE JEWS	%
1. Independents:	63.6
Craft, industry	45.0
Commerce	18.6
2. Wage earners:	33.6
Servants, brewers, assistants	33.6

In this table the greater percentage of independent workers in the town stands out in comparison to that in the village, in a relation of 66.5:63.6. In contrast to that, the percentage of wage earners is greater in the village – 33.6:14.8 – that is more than double. The relationship is caused by activities in the village being more laborious, such as in the refinery, brewery or tannery, which employed a larger number of wage earners. Also, improved material conditions in the villagers influenced the employment of wage earners; this subject will be discussed further.

The percentage occupied in craft and industry was greater in the village by 3.4%, compared to the city where the percentage occupied in commerce was greater by 6.3%. If the peddlers are calculated as shopkeepers in the village, the relation is equal.

MATERIAL SITUATION OF THE JEWISH POPULATION TOWN DWELLERS

Additionally, the statistics under discussion surveyed the situation of the Jewish population. The organizer of the survey came to the conclusion that the

Jewish situation was very serious following the heavy tax burden imposed by the land owners on the Jews of Kutno, and also due to the commercial monopoly on various necessities possessed by the land owners. As proof of that, the report mentioned the fact that the Jews had been forced to stop building the synagogue which was started thirty years previously, that is, about 1766.

The report further notes that since about 1791 the Jews had been feeling more "fortunate", because at that time the taxes had been reduced and also since the land owner had received large sums of money from rich house owners for the community loans. In that way the community income had grown, as up till then fees from leasing the ritual slaughtering had been used to cover the debts.

Concerning the details of each tax payer's property, we do not have any figures (the statistics deal with occupation and amount of taxes of each). The report notes that the list of the community's taxes, which served as a basis for our evaluation tables, included facts on the possessions of each tax payer, and even of those who were exempt from taxes. To our regret, this list has not been preserved so that in our effort to clarify the economic situation of each family we only have at our disposal the list of taxes.

Even the facts concerning the occupants or owners of the homes are not able to be of help to us. The fact of the matter is that the home owners should have been included among the wealthy class, although when coming across home owners who were dependent on assistance, which was a large number of home owners, according to occupation and the level of tax paid, they cannot be included among the wealthy class. House ownership, whether sole or shared ownership, is not an indicator of an individual's wealth. If we remember that most of the houses were made of wood (97 out of 100) – therefore in the case of the ownership of a hut of this kind and especially when it's being shared, it is more important to show the economic situation of the person living in it. This group comprises 130 families, which is 34% of the whole total of Jewish families. Although the list includes wealthy house owners, the rich merchants, only a small number of home owners made a living from rents, and our list does not mention these.

Using the level of taxes as a measure of economic situation, we obtain the following table:

Table 9: Tax levels

Amount (florins)	No. of families	% of persons employed
2-20	115	42.2
20-50	101	37.6
50-100	38	14.2
100-200	8	3.0
Over 200	8	3.0
TOTAL	270	100.0

The table shows, therefore, that the first type which is classified as not wealthy (paying the minimum amount

of tax) contains 115 families. The second type, which comprises groups 2 and 3 and contains, as it happens, families who were moderately wealthy, 139 families. The third type (groups 4 and 5) comprises 16 wealthy families.

The remaining 88 families were exempt from taxes:

- (1) 26 owing to poverty (even if they were employed)
- (2) 6 families of old and disabled people who were supported by the community or various guardians
- (3) 26 families of community clerks (out of 37 families, only 26 were exempt from taxes)
- (4) 8 young families still living with parents
- (5) 7 families of assistants
- (6) 15 families who, at the time of the census, were soon to be married but had not yet got organized and for that reason taxes were not demanded. No data is available on their economic situation.

The 72 families who were exempt from taxes can be divided as follows: 32 families (26 + 6) can be classified as poor; 22 community clerks (except for the rabbi), 2 judges and the civil representative can be classified as not wealthy, which group also comprises 7 families of assistants. The remaining 8 families, who were still living at the parent's home, have to be classified according to the parents. This last group is included in the wealthy group – where the new son-in-law is offered board and lodging so that he can continue his studies – and it can be supposed that wealthy families were able to grant this to their children.

Going by this, the following picture of the economic situation of the Jewish population of Kutno can be obtained³⁰:

Table 10

Group	No. of families	%
Poor	32	9.2
Not wealthy	144	42.1
Wealthy	151	44.1
Very wealthy	17 ³¹	4.6
TOTAL	344	100.0

Next, the connection between the levels of this population and their occupation will be examined.

Poor people

This group comprises one tenth of the entire population and contains elderly and sick craftsmen, for example, tailors, mainly repairers and patchers and also daily workers (5); middlemen (1), peddlers (1), messengers (2 out of 4), furriers (2), and so on. Six families of elderly and disabled should be added to this group.

Not wealthy

This group is a fairly wide one and contains wage earners of all types: craftsmen and other workers – 74 families and 33 shopkeepers. Among the craftsmen not considered wealthy are half the number of tailors (36) and half of the costume decorators (8); less than a third of the furriers (8) half of the hat makers and a third of the bakers (2).

Among the tradesmen, about half of the small merchants (9), bar owners (6), market stall owners (8), most of the peddlers (5), and middlemen (3) belong to this group. To this group are also appended 22 families of community clerks and five small families who lived off private charity. All these families paid house tax (smoke tax – "*podymne*"), and three of them also paid taxes to the community and the land owner. One of them is noted to be bankrupt.

Apparently, the boundaries between the poor and the not wealthy were not strict – persons in both groups were occupied in the same areas. For example, both messengers exempt from taxes and messengers eligible for taxes, although at low rates, can be found. This is also the case for repairers and furriers. In all instances the movement from group to group is frequent; these two groups are actually made up of two different levels of poverty³², especially since they contain about half of the whole population and this is plain proof of the economic situation of the Jews of Kutno during the second half of the 18th century.

Moderately Wealthy persons³³

This type is the largest of all in number and incorporates the established persons from the groups of occupation – ninety families of craftsmen and 47 merchants. Among the wealthy craftsmen are half the number of tailors (38), almost all the butchers, most of the furriers (16), all the barbers (4), half of the costume decorators (7) and others.

Among the merchants were half the textile merchants (8), most of the leather traders, half of the small traders (13), bar owners (7), market stall owners (8), and others.

As mentioned above, included in this group are four families of community clerks and eight young couples who were still living in their parent's homes.

Rich families

Seventeen families belong in this group – more than half of the textile traders (9), also included are two goldsmiths, four lease holders of whom the richest of them paid a yearly rent for a sum of 6,000 florins in return for meat slaughtering. Also rich was the costume decorator whose trade connections reached as far as Breslau; he was the only one among the merchants whose trading branched out over the borders of his country.

Table 11: Craftsmen and merchants grouped by economic state

	Craftsmen (%)	Merchants (%)
Poor	12.6	2.1
Not wealthy	38.6	34.7
Wealthy	46.8	49.4
Rich	2.0	13.8
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

From this table it can be learnt that the percentages of the not wealthy and wealthy merchants and craftsmen are almost identical. Most of the craftsmen are in the wealthy group and a few in the not wealthy, whereas most of the merchants are in the wealthy group.

This is not the case in the two smallest groups – the poor and the rich. While the percentage of craftsmen in the poor group reached 12.6%, among the merchants, 2.1% were poor. Among the craftsmen and other workers, the percentage of poor was six times greater than that of the merchants. Among the rich the situation is just the opposite – only 2% of the craftsmen are included in this group, in contrast to 13.8% of the merchants, which is seven times greater.

ECONOMIC STATE OF THE VILLAGE JEWS

On this subject the material available is even more defective, since the tax levels cannot be used as a gauge because a third of the village population did not pay any taxes to the community of Kutno (they paid a poll tax to the communities that they belonged to previously). Twenty-six families had settled in the villages and so far, no tax had been levied from them³⁴. However, it turns out that the economic situation among the village Jews was better than that of the town Jews. First of all, this fact is made clear from the large number of lease holders of distilleries (40 families). As was mentioned, the lease fee reached an average of 150-300 florins a year. No doubt, that these tenants should be more or less included in the wealthy group and six of them in the rich group, since two of the latter paid rents of 2,000 florins, one 1,700 florins, one 820 florins, one 700 florins and one paid 600 florins. To the wealthy group five bar owners have to be added who paid a high rent of up to 100 florins.

Another fact which indicates the improved situation of the village Jews is that only seven wage earners – as noted in the document before us – were considered poor. Of them, two shopkeepers who became impoverished, of whom one who loaned himself to the land owner as a brewer, three slaughterers in the village, one elderly tailor and a baker who toured the villages with his baked goods. It is strange, therefore, that only two of them – the old baker and the slaughterer were totally exempt from taxes. All of the rest had to pay poll tax. Further proof of the better economic situation of the village Jewish population is the fact that, in the village, there was a female servant for every four families and in the town, for thirteen families.

Villagers according to their economic status

When we try to determine the property situation of the rural population, we can clearly set the following groups: 1) Poor – 2 families; 2) Not wealthy – 5 families already mentioned and 5 tanners; 3) Shoemakers (paid minimal tax); apparently all the brewers³⁵ and the sole carter. Altogether 28 families. 3) Wealthy – 34 families, lease holders of breweries; 5 families – bars; the only soap maker and the grocer. Altogether 41 families and 4) Rich – 6 families, and the richest among the lease holders of distilleries. It is proven that only those in groups 3 and 4 are wealthy since servants are found only among them.

Table 12: Village Jews according to their economic status

	Families	%
1. Poor	2	2.6
2. Not wealthy	28	36.9

3. Wealthy	41	52.6
4. Rich	6	7.9
TOTAL	77	100

This table only shows 77 out of 102 families, which is approximately 75% of the population. We are sure that the relation of the percentages between the different groups would not have changed even if the entire population had been included. Should there have been any change, it would have only increased the wealthy group. This is because about half of the families not included in the table were bar owners who it can be assured belong to the wealthy group and of the rest (craftsmen), almost all of them pay the poll tax to the communities they belong to and also rent at an amount between 10-50 florins a year to the lord of the village.

If the economic state of the townspeople is compared to that of the villagers, the following table can be constructed:

Table 13: Economic state of the townspeople and the village (percentages)

	Town	Villages
1) Poor	9.2	2.6
2) Not wealthy	42.1	36.9
3) Wealthy	44.1	52.6
4) Rich	4.6	7.9
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

This table shows in an outstanding way the assumption concerning the improved economic state of the Jewish village dwellers in contrast to that in the town. First of all, it can be seen that the number of the poor in the town is three times greater than in the village: 9.2:2.6. And is it to be wondered at, that in town, there were various charitable societies enabling a significant number of families lacking means of livelihood to exist? Therefore, in the village not one single person can be found who existed on public funds. The only one was the old tailor who was supported by his son. Also, in the village the number of not wealthy is smaller compared to that in the town 36.9:42.1. There were more rich families in the village than in the town – almost double: 7.9:4.6

The village Jews kept up contact with those in the town and the rich villagers owned or were partners of houses in the town.

TAXES

Townspeople

As already noted, a full list of the taxes and those paying them is found in the statistics. Firstly, the taxes will be described. As related in the report, the lists were made up according to a special tax table which was put together by the leaders of the community. In this table were detailed the various types of taxes that each community member was obliged to pay, and also those that according to accepted custom there was exemption from. In addition, there was an estimate of the economic state of the tax payers, setting out the amount of tax.

It was also stated that the tax level that each Jew had to pay to the community and the land owner was

determined each year by five people selected by lot and under oath, according to the material situation of each taxpayer.³⁶

The statistics notes five types of taxes:

- 1) royal (*Königliche*);
- 2) community (*Synagogale*);
- 3) to the village lord (*Dominale*);

The royal tax included three secondary taxes:

- 1) poll tax (*Kopf-geld poglowne*);
- 2) conscription tax (*Recruten geld*);
- 3) house tax – determined by chimney smoke (*Rauchfansgeld* – "podymne" in Polish).

The poll tax was paid by all those obliged to pay tax; it amounted to between 3 to 18 gold zlotys and was on an average of 6 zlotys per family. According to a law passed in parliament in 1775, the poll tax was determined at 3 florins for each person one year old and upwards. Levying and collection of the taxes was the business of the community but they did not actually abide by the amounts and fixed them according to the economic situation of the family. In 1796, in the Kutno community, this tax amounted to 1,654 florins.

The conscription tax mention was only a formality, since no Polish Jew was required to pay it. As will be shown, this was not the only tax that Jews did not pay. It turns out that the Prussian official did not know and he recorded in his tables all those taxes that the Prussian Jews were obliged to pay.

Only house holders were obliged to pay the chimney tax, which was between 2 to 8 florins. In that year this tax gathered 482 florins. The kingdom tax for the same year amounted to 2,136 florins.

The community tax also comprised three sub taxes:

- 1) *Synagogale Schlacht-Accise* (known as "Atar");
- 2) *Interessen-Beitrag*;
- 3) *Schlacht-Accise* (*Szlachta* – nobles).

From all those taxes the Jews of Kutno only paid the first tax directly. The second was intended to cover the interest on community debt and was not paid as a one-time tax but added it to the ritual slaughter payments according to a fixed levy. The sum of the yearly Synagogale tax was a minimum of 2 florins and a maximum of 390. The same year the income from it was 6,539 florins. Income from the slaughtering tax, transferred in the lease, amounted to 3,200 florins. The total income collected by the community from taxes was 9,739 florins.

The third group of taxes – paid to the lord of the village – included a direct tax ("*tlaki*") which was compulsory for almost everyone, and also a system of indirect taxes in the form of lease payments. The lowest tax was 2 florins and the highest 80 florins. Annual income was 2,321 florins and 15 zlotys.

The indirect taxes which the landowner usually transferred in a lease were as follows:

- 1) levy on butchers whose meat lease was from 200 florins.
- 2) "*lopatkowa*" [shoulder blade], payment for the "shoulder blades" which belonged to the land owner, the

lease holder got the fat and the merchant the skin. The lease price was 1,300 florins a year.

3) levy on couriers – this was also leased out at 1,300 florins a year.

4) "bridge" tax (*mostowa*) – the lease holder was the baker; lease fee was 300 florins a year.

5) lease on alcoholic drinks – 500 florins a year.

6) levy on iron commerce lease: iron merchant paid 1,200 florins a year.

All these taxes gave the land owner an annual income of 5,000 florins. In the report it is mentioned that the land owner leased out taxes 2) and 3) in order to dispense with the trouble of collection. It appears that formerly he used to collect the payments from the butchers by himself.

In addition to the taxes paid to the various authorities, the community also levied taxes in order to cover civil expenses, payments to the land owner, etc.

The list also notes the following leases:

7) milk lease;

8) lease on brewing which the land owner usually imposed on village Jews.

As can be seen from the above list, the land owner squeezed significant sums as a favor to let Kutno Jews live in town. In the year mentioned (1796) the Jews brought him 7,321 florins and 15 zlotys. From one Jew alone the land owner collected lease fees "*luftkaba*" and "*skoraba*" totaling 2,833 florins.

The total sum of the various taxes paid to the country, the community and the land owner came to 19,196 florins and 15 zlotys. According to the official account this sum can be divided into an average of 17.70 florins per head. Since 270 families were eligible to pay tax, each family paid 71.01 florins.

Out of 357 wage earners, 270 were taxable, which is 75.6% of the whole population. The various exemptions have already been discussed; we briefly mention them here:

1) most of the community clerks

2) assistants

3) poor people (those who were eligible)

4) families not settled at the time of tax determination.

As a group which carried a heavy burden of taxes, the butchers can be selected. In addition to general taxes, they made special payments for the benefit of leases in slaughtering and delivery services. The levy of payments for the "*lopatkowa*" was on each animal.

For an ox – 2 florins, 25 zlotys

For a bull or cow – 1 florin, 4 zlotys

For a lamb – 28 zlotys

For a goat or sheep – 12 zlotys

Payments for delivery:

An ox – 3 florins

A bull or cow – 2 florins, 15 zlotys

Small animal – 1 florin

A lamb or sheep – 1 florin, 15 zlotys

Payments for slaughter³⁷:

An ox, bull or cow – 4 florins, 5 zlotys

A 2-year-old animal – 2 florins, 25 zlotys

A 1-year-old animal – 1 florin, 10 zlotys

A lamb, goat or sheep – 20 zlotys

As shown, the butchers' fees to the lease holders were fairly large. It should be noted that the extra payment for an ox came to 8 florins and 5 zlotys, and for a cow 7 florins and 24 zlotys. The price of an ox was 80-100 florins and for a cow 50 florins. And from this, part of the various payments totaled 8-10% of the value of the ox, and 15-16% of a cow. Of course, all this would be paid by the consumer.

The income from meat was divided between the community – 3,200 florins – and the land owner – 2,800 florins³⁸. However, it should not be forgotten that the lease owners did not add customs duties to this transaction and this is a modest evaluation if their profit is calculated to be 30-40% and that all who had to pay "*korobka*" (kosher meat tax) were the same type that "understood business". Altogether the Jewish population paid about 8,000 – 9,000 florins a year in meat tax. From this, it can be concluded that a Jew who was not wealthy could only enjoy eating meat on the Shabbat and festivals.

Villagers

From the three types of taxes the village Jews only paid the state the poll tax, and to the land owner they paid the indirect taxes on the breweries and bars. Unlike the town Jews, the villagers did not have to pay house tax, community tax or "*talaki*" to the land owner.

The levy of the poll tax in the village was approximately the same as in the town, an average of 6 florins per family. The income from this tax amounted to 390 florins. The land owner collected 14,288 florins from leasing the breweries and from bars 256 florins was collected. As already mentioned, 50 florins were collected from leasing the smallest brewery and 2,000 florins from the biggest. Concerning the bars – the smallest paid 20 florins and the biggest 100 florins. Money from leasing milk supply came to 20 florins.

Only 66 out of 98 village families (65.8%) paid tax. Thirty-two families did not pay taxes; of these, 26 families had only recently arrived; two assistants; two poor families; two families who owed taxes for several years (1 tailor, 1 bar owner). It was usual that out of 22 bar owners, only five paid rent and all of them declared that they do not intend to pay taxes as bar owners, to the lord of the village.

There is no way of knowing if this was in fact the way or if it was a whim on the part of the land owner alone. It is likely that the land owner decided this by himself. The two slaughterers paid rent, since they also had occupations on the side.

The total sum of taxes levied on the village Jews reached 14,930 florins, which is an average of 39.3 florins per head and 226.3 florins per family. Compared to the town levy, the village levy per person was more than double, and per family it was more than three times greater. Sixty-six families paid only 42.2% less than 270 families in the town. The number of Jewish families in the

town was four times greater than that in the village and the total taxes were only 28 % higher compared to that in the village.

The rent for various leases paid to the land owner in the village was twice that paid in the town: 14,564 florins compared to 7,321 florins. Rent from leases on distilleries in the village alone amounted to 14,288 florins.

Table 14: Taxes in town and village

	In town (florins)	In village (florins)	
State tax	2,136	390	
Community tax	9,739		
Land owner tax	7,321	14,544	
Total	19,196	14,934	34,130

According to the above table, taxes paid to the land owner amounted to 21,865 florins, which were 64% of all the taxes, compared to 25% collected by the community and less than 10% state taxes.

The number of families and occupations liable for tax in town and village together reached 337*, and from the account made by the Prussian clerk (apparently – to be discussed later) the number owing taxes from the town and village population was greater – 428. According to our calculations, the number of Jews reached 1452, from this exempted from tax: (1) elderly men aged 60-80 and (2) women with no age limit: 426 persons; (3) youth under the age of 14: 427 persons; (4) girls with no age limit: 230; (5) male servants younger than 14 years: 5; (6) female servants: 25.

This gives a total of 1024 persons, leaving a total of 428 persons liable to pay tax (1452 less 1024 = 428).

As will be seen, this figure of those liable for tax was only on paper, and undoubtedly changed after payment from each individual. Below the account is the signature of the Regent of Plock, and the date 8.5.1796.

Typical of the Prussian taxation system was the clerk's inability to make do with increasing the number of those liable for tax on paper from 336 to 428, but immediately increased the figure with a new account to 878 people, and, a few lines later, to 1251. According to this, everyone was liable for tax, even infants in the cradle. The impression is credible that the two last figures were personal calculations made by an over-zealous and faithful clerk whose intention was to squeeze the population as much as possible. This assumption is supported by the fact that these calculations were not signed by the regent as was the first reckoning. At all events, it is clear that the Prussian authorities increased the numbers of taxpayers. In comparison with the first list (the official one) from the time of the Polish authorities, the number of taxpayers increased by 27% (428:336).

THE COMMUNITY

According to the report, the charter of rights dated 22nd November 1796, given by the King of Poland Stanislaw Augustus to the landlord of Kutno, served as a

basis for the special contract (the *Pacht Contract* – leasing contract) between the land owner and the Jews. The date is apparently incorrect since Stanislaw Augustus relinquished his throne in 1795. It is likely that before us is a mistake by an illiterate scribe or a forgery.

The contract clearly determines:

- 1) Commercial monopoly of the land owner;
- 2) Scope of free trade;
- 3) The authority to which the Jews give supervision in judicial and court matters;
- 4) Rights of Jewish inhabitants.

To our great regret we were not able to obtain this important document. According to the report in the beginning the Jewish residents of Żychlin and Gostynin also belonged to the community, and even paid it taxes. But in the end, they rose up and set up independent communities with their own rabbis. The Prussian clerk noted that the Rabbi of Gostynin was not legal as he did not have the relevant qualifications and contrary to the laws of Israel, he also engaged in commerce (!).

Jewish residents from 71 villages in the area also belonged to the community and paid taxes to it. They were obliged (under threat of excommunication) to travel to the town to give any information required.

According to the Prussian clerk, the Kutno community at that time (1796) did not keep up any contact with communities in other areas of Prussia and not even with other communities in Poland.

As noted, there were in Kutno a rabbi – Rabbi Tuvia was his name – two judges (one called Beisitzer in the original document), a civil representative (*syndik*), 4 ritual slaughterers (2 for the villages), 4 cantors, 11 teachers, 6 beadles, 5 grave diggers, a scribe, and one prayer summoner.

As mentioned, in addition to the teachers from the community there were also private teachers. The number of clerks was very high and it is doubtful if that was indeed their number.

As leaders of the community the following appear in the documents: Shalom ben Meir, a rich textile merchant and lease holder for meat slaughter and butchery has been mentioned many times, Hirsh ben Leibel³⁹, bar owner, and Wolf ben Chaim (a free wine merchant "owing to special privileges from the land owner"); also, a tailor from the rich group – Shlomo ben Abraham. The statistics also refer to a synagogue and a religious seminary which were inside wooden buildings. Concerning the brick-built synagogue, whose building was started in 1766 and stopped owing to the difficult economic situation, this was already discussed previously (this synagogue was completed in the year 1799⁴⁰).

The community also maintained guest houses. The income was derived from a direct tax which brought in 6,539 florins and also from slaughtering tax, which it is remembered, brought in 3,200 florins in 1796. Together the income in 1796 reached a sum of 9,739 florins. Up to that time the land owner had levied the meat tax himself

* TN: Later twice quoted as 336.

as compensation for the debt owed to him by the community. He collected 2,600 florins a year and only from 1796 onwards the fees from leased slaughtering went to the community treasury.

The highest community tax was 390 florins and the lowest was 2 florins. This tax went in parallel with two other kinds of taxes – to the state and to the land owner. Whoever paid a lot to the state and the land owner, a lot was also taken from him for the community. However, exceptions were also noted. That is to say, village Jews did not pay community tax, as they claimed – according to the report – that the landowner forbade "his" Jews to pay tax to the community, and even, the clerk noted, in order to compromise with the landowner, the community relinquished the income from the "settlers". Here certainly the whim of the landowner became a set custom.

Although the burial society books have a record that a tenant from the village of Gołębiew paid community tax, it is likely it does not mean community but poll tax to the state, which was also levied on village Jews.

It must be mentioned that the community suffered from a permanent financial deficit.

CHEVRA KADISHA

Two sources are available concerning the burial society at that time: a short report in the Prussian document and the register of the burial society itself. The register is from the year 1808, but there are some entries from earlier dates, from the year 1755. The ledger relates that "by secret" the previous one was taken from them; the reasons are not noted, but it is reasonable to assume that the matter is connected with the conquering Prussian authorities. The pages from 1755 and afterwards are from the old ledger and apparently, they were torn from the old book and bound together with the new one.

During the Holocaust this ledger was lost, together with the community archives and other cultural treasures.⁴¹

The source of the regulations in the ledger is from the 19th century. The records in the ledger are complementary with the report and relying on both, a reliable picture of the organization and activity of this institution is painted.

At the head of the burial society stood managers who were elected in elections arranged on the concluding day of the Passover festival. Slips bearing the names of registered voters were placed into a ballot box and it was customary to take out five slips. Those who were selected were deemed "legitimate" [kosher] and they carried out the position of managers for eight days, which is until the new month of Iyyar. Up until that date they were obliged to appoint three managers for a period of tenure of one year and also three substitutes. It was forbidden to appoint the previous managers and also the "legitimate" selected were not allowed to appoint themselves managers. However, they were allowed some rights: they were allowed to let new members join and to add new regulations to the register, and also to fill the position of regulator in other communities. Passive voting rights were granted only after six years of membership and active

rights after three years. Up until the same time the member was called "*młodszy*" – junior – and he was obliged to respect the veteran members and to carry out all his obligations as a member. One exception from the rule was that it was customary that outstanding pupils and important persons were released from the "*młodszy*".

In contradiction to what was written in the Prussian document, the ledger emphasizes that the managers were obliged to hand over a financial report at the time of the election assembly and that the accounts had to be confirmed by all present. Each month a different manager headed the society. The managers had to be financially stable and with no blemish in their way of life.

In addition to matters relating to burial, other duties were imposed on them: visiting the sick, distributing benefits to the poor and festival refreshments to religious staff.

The *shamash* of the society had to stay overnight in the home of a sick person during the first days of the sickness; after that the society members did it, under the supervision of the monthly manager who summoned the members by little notes. Later on, the burial society also had its own hospital. As already noted, the burial society usually donated money to the poor, widows and also the elderly, caretakers and other lower rank religious staff. Going by the record of 1811, monthly support money amounted to 88 zlotys. According to the Prussian document, in 1795-1796, the expenses of the society reached 840 zlotys a year. Society income was derived from membership fees, from donations paid into the collection boxes at funerals, from monthly payments made by the members for the poor, from income from the *mikveh* [ritual bath house] built with money from the society, and also from the sale of burial plots. This last payment was paid according to the financial situation of the deceased. The highest payment made was during the Prussian rule – 180 zlotys – and the lowest was 3 zlotys. Of course, funerals were also conducted free of charge. A member of the society did not pay more than 10 zlotys even if he was very rich. The "junior" member fee for the son of a member was also 10 zlotys (outsiders paid more); however, this could only be paid after marriage. The salary of the *shamash* was paid from income from the *mikveh*, from the charity box and an additional 30 zlotys a year. From the document, his salary was 300 zlotys a year.

Typical of the social strictness of the society is an action concerning a member, the son of a butcher who had started to deal in his father's business, in contradiction to his promise at the time of registration in the society that he would not do so. Because of this his voting rights were taken from him (details from 1810).

The *Chevra Kadisha* held an important place in the community and to a certain extent was in competition with the community council itself. At times, the same people headed the two institutions at the same time (in 1808, Moshe Majzler headed the community council and at the same time was the *shamash* of the *Chevra Kadisha*). As mentioned, the income from the *mikveh* was at the disposal of the society, and the society was informed of

matters referring to charity, care of the sick, etc. Typical of the competing status of the *Chevra Kadisha* is a detail in the protocol from the year 1791 that three years previously (that is, in 1787) the poll tax of a village lease holder from Gołębiew was reduced following his waiving of a loan of 300 zlotys that he gave in order to buy land for the extension of the cemetery.

It is characteristic that the guarantee for this loan were the silver finials of the Scrolls of the Law.

THE SYNAGOGUE TREASURY

According to the Prussian report this fund had not much value and for that reason it was managed by one single *gabbai*, for several years. Income was derived from donations made for the participation in readings of the Law in the synagogue which brought in an average of 400 zlotys a year. The money was used for lighting in the synagogue and for small repairs. The income covered the expenses.

The report relates that the Prussian authorities remarked that an income of 400 zlotys a year seemed too small, since in other communities this amounted to several thousand florins. However, the caretakers and leaders explained that, because of the dilapidated condition of the synagogue the public did not attend services in the stormy winter days, and owing to this the income was low.

DEBTS

The impoverished situation of the Jewish population at the end of the 18th century was also reflected in the financial state of the communities which sank into debt, which was a burden on their condition. It was their bad luck that their expenses grew at that time.

In addition to the taxes which increased from time to time, which the community owed to the state, the town council and the land lords, there were also expenses to the civil representative – mainly bribes – for the bail of innocent persons in blood libel cases, etc.

The increase in community taxes and introduction of consumer taxes on meat etc., which burdened the poor population, was not enough – the community treasury was empty and the community was forced to borrow money. Loans were fairly easy to obtain since they appeared only at the end of the 18th century in Poland banks and owners of capital did not have anywhere to invest their money. Because the church laws forbade the taking of interest, loans were willingly made to Jews, and especially to the community, which was then considered a more secure loan. Credit was given by the farmers and the land owners, and especially by the rich clergy. However, owing to the impoverishment of the population and the inefficient management of the financial market in the community, the loans could not be paid and in order to pay the accumulated interest the leaders took out new loans. In this way the debts of the community grew and reached hundreds of thousands of zlotys. The various attempts that were made by the government of Poland to manage the debts were unsuccessful and the problem was handed down as an inheritance to the countries which divided up the kingdom of Poland between them.

The community of Kutno was no exception. Their loan was given by the land owner of Kutno. According to the report, in the year 1791 the Kutno community reached an agreement with the town lord – who was then the governor Gadowski – by which it had to pay a sum of 3,500 florins interest yearly. His successor, the lord Zantkowski, received as coverage for this sum, the rent from meat slaughtering leases which reached the sum of 2,600 florins a year. In this way, the yearly deficit was 900 florins. However, the Jews claimed to have paid in addition 500 florins, but the accounts were not finalized.

An interesting detail has come to light – the Jews took the previous land owner to the law court (the Prussian court) in Toruń. In this case, the Jews tried to prove that the land owner forced the agreement on them and that he illegally added further sums to the actual debt. The report notes that it is likely that from the outcome of the trial the land owner returned the rent from meat slaughtering for the whole of the year 1796 to the community.

The rich in the community bore the burden of the debt. As noted, they paid the land owner various sums on account of the debt. At the same time the lease for meat slaughtering went up in price, to 3,200 florins. However, the report adds that even that still did not bring the community debts to settlement – and we are entitled to believe it.

The Prussian authorities annexed Kutno to a new territory ("South Prussia"), which included the province of Poznań. Cut off was Inowrocław, the whole area of Kalisz, Brześć Kujawski, the area around Sieradz, Łęczyca, Płock and parts of the province of Mazowia Rawa – altogether about one thousand square miles.

There is no information available concerning the state of the community of Kutno in the new political situation, since the above-mentioned survey only deals with the previous period.

The policy of the Prussian authorities towards the Jewish population in the Polish areas was dictated by fiscal motives, on the one hand, and by the character of the enlightened bureaucratic ruling authority, according to the Prussian concept at that time, on the other hand.

According to an order from the year 1797, the Jews in south-east Prussia were subject to a list of economic restrictions: trade in the villages was forbidden; wage earners were forbidden to deal in secondary occupations etc. The authorities struck out at Jewish autonomy by limiting the power of the communities and rabbis to religious matters alone, cancelling the boycott and the organizing contacts between the communities.

In the same way, the burden of taxes was made heavier. The Polish poll tax was upped from 3 to 10 zlotys. New taxes were also added: army tax, tax on kosher meat, wedding payments, burial, etc. Only those over the age of 25 were allowed to marry, and only if they had a steady income (and had capital).

The "*Juden-Reglement*" (Jewish regulations) of the year 1797 hurt the Jewish population seriously. With the Prussian single mindedness and methods, the police state attempted to destroy the Jewish life style, established for

generations. Jews were especially hurt by interference into the internal workings of the communities. By a stroke of luck, this rule only lasted fourteen years.

PART II

The Kutno community in the 19th century and beginning of the 20th

During the time of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw Kutno belonged to the district of Warsaw and the Jewish community was considered one of the important ones in it.

However, the Napoleonic wars caused the Jewish population in the town to dwindle, and in 1808 the official estimate of the Kutno community was no more than 1,357 persons. In the eight years since 1800 the size of the Jewish community had decreased by more than 3%, although among the Polish population the decrease was greater – from 877 souls to 748, which is a drop of 18%. At that time, the percentage of Jews in the town's population was 64.5%.

In negotiations with the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw, the representative of the Jews of Kutno stood out: head of the council, Moshe ben Yermiyahu Majzler. In 1809 he can be found as civil representative of Warsaw district, who, together with the delegates from Łęczyca and Lutomiensk, he fought for decreasing the burden of tax on kosher meat. This tax was implemented by state law on 25th March, 1809, for the amount of 3,300,000 zlotys, and replaces all previous taxes. However, this amount was beyond all the paying power of the Jewish population which had become impoverished during the wars. The amount of tax was 84 zlotys per family, about four times the load that a family under Austrian rule had borne.

All attempts by Majzler were fruitless.

In his letter to the head of the community council of Poznań, dated 22nd October 1809, he wrote: To hear the reply of the minister of justice, nothing is left but for the mourner to rend his garment to pieces⁴².

At the end of October 1809 Majzler attended a meeting of representatives of the Warsaw district communities, where there was a consultation session regarding the steps taken by the government to make changes in the distribution of the kosher meat tax between the various communities and the Warsaw community, in favor of the country towns. The trifling decreases made by the treasury to the Jewish residents in a number of districts (Łomża, Płock, Bydgoszcz) did not satisfy the Jewish delegates and they met once more in Warsaw, in mid July 1810, and paid a fee to have an audience with the prince, the state council and the chancellor. And in the end the chancellor agreed to call a meeting of representatives of the Jewish population in the area of the entire Grand-Duchy, which was held in Warsaw at the end of March 1811. Majzler as present among them, as the representative of Kutno and, together with Eliezer Moshe Efraim from Inowrocław was received for an interview with the chancellor in the name of the entire assembly. However, all suggestions to lighten the burden of taxes on the Jewish population, and to exempt them from military obligation (arguing that citizens not enjoying equal rights

should not have to serve in the army) – all were rejected by the government.

However, the representatives did not accept the stand of the Principalities' authorities and continued their battle against the injustice. During the second half of the month of July, the heads of the Leszno, Poznań, Inowrocław and Kutno community councils met again in Leszno. Moshe Majzler, the Kutno representative, played an important part in this meeting, which attempted to persuade the government how honorable the demands of the Jewish population were⁴³. While carrying out these activities, Majzler moved from Kutno to Leszno, where he fulfilled the post of civil representative for the community which was one of the most important in the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw. At the beginning of 1811 an order was given stating that all questions to the government had to be made in Polish, but not one person could be found in Leszno who had reasonable command of the Polish language. The wealthy community, therefore, turned to the head of the community of Kutno, who was not only fluent in the Polish language but also it turned out that as civil representative for the government he was well known for good connections with influential people⁴⁴. The community of Leszno requested Majzler to become their representative at a salary of 8 thalers a week and in addition to that he would receive 0.5% on each wedding tax⁴⁵.

And so, in January 1812, Moshe Majzler signed, as one of the delegates for the Poznań district, on an agreement stating that the problems of the slaughtering tax and army service would be settled. In exchange for the Jewish representatives agreeing to put the tax up to 3 million zlotys, the Jews were exempted from military service⁴⁶.

Majzler also continued in this position during the exciting years of Napoleon's journey to Russia⁴⁷. After the abolishment of the Grand-Duchy of Warsaw the district of Poznań was annexed to the large Grand-Duchy of Poznań (1815). Then Majzler was heard of for the last time. On 13th August 1815 he gave a patriotic speech in honor of the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm and his commissioner in the great Grand-Duchy of Poznań, Prince Anatoly Radziwill. The speech was published and printed (*Imrei Shefer*, Barcelona, 1815). Moshe ben Yermiyahu Majzler died in Leszno on 14th of Heshvan 5589 (October 22, 1828⁴⁸).

The rabbi of Kutno, Rabbi Eliezer Brisz, was also connected with Leszno. He came from Leszno and served there as rabbi in the "Youths' Synagogue". In 1820, his name can be found among the signatures on "The Strong Arm", with the title of: Head of the Rabbinical Court of the Kutno community. Rabbi Eliezer Brisz died in Kutno on 5th Tishri 5591 (September 22, 1830).

He was extremely respected among his contemporaries. In a letter from the famous rabbi of Leszno, Rabbi Yaakov Lorberbaum, to the citizens of Kutno, he requests them to allocate Rabbi Eliezer Brisz a weekly salary of 5 thalers, and he writes about him: "The great light, the sharp-minded, the skilled"⁴⁹.

During the time of the Polish rebellion (1830-1831) it was discovered that a Jew from Kutno, by the name of Shimon Bryn served in the secret Russian police and was a deputy agent of Matteusz Szlay one of the leading agents in the secret police in Warsaw. Shimon Bryn, or Shime'le as he was known in Kutno, studied at the religious seminary in his youth and, since he knew a little Polish, was appointed secretary for the community. On a visit to Warsaw on community business he met Szlay who suggested to him that he should be a spy in Kutno. Shimon agreed and swore an oath that he would be faithful to the police and tell the truth. In reward for his service at first, he received 3 florins (54 Polish groschen), and later 5 florins. Apparently, he submitted his reports in Yiddish and reported all that he saw and heard in Kutno. But it seems that he did not have anything significant to report.

During the uprising the police archives fell into the hands of the rebels and so the name of Shimon Bryn came to light. In the spring of 1831, he was arrested and after interrogation his name was made public as a secret agent. The incident was no small sensation among the Jews of Kutno. Later on, the authorities released him and from then on, he was under police surveillance⁵⁰.

The economic prosperity of Congress Poland also reached Kutno. The first buds of industry which started blossoming in the last decade of the 18th century flourished well in the twenties of the 19th century⁵¹ and the prayer shawl factory was awarded a silver medal⁵² at the industrial fair which was held in Warsaw in the year 1828.

Following the opening of the Kalisz railway and the Vienna track in 1845, Kutno turned into an important railway junction in the Płock district and also for the district of Kalisz, since these places had been cut off from a direct rail connection with Warsaw.

In 1852 Herman Epsztajn, the well-known Jewish industrialist and banker, founded the "*Konstancja*" plants – the largest sugar factories in Congress Poland. After his death the factories passed to his son, Mieczysław Epsztajn who managed them until his death in 1914⁵³. His father's enterprise was liquidated after he died. The "*Konstancja*" factory served as a source of much related employment for the Jews of Kutno – transport of raw materials, delivery of sugar to other towns, etc.

Another banker, Shimon Teplic (1822-1894) settled in Kutno after liquidating his business in Warsaw and dealt in supplies for "*Konstancja*", and was also partner in the sugar factory belonging to the well-known financier Leopold Kronenberg⁵⁴.

His grand-daughter Lily converted to Christianity and entered a convent in France. If converts are being discussed, also the Frankensztajn family should be mentioned⁵⁵. Leon Frankensztajn was a merchant in Kutno in the second half of the 18th century. His son Alexander Leon served as an inspector in the tobacco monopoly for the Congress Poland treasury. His grandson, Edward, held an important post at the Russian embassy in Brussels and was elevated to the Russian hereditary aristocracy. He was also known as a gifted violinist⁵⁶.

In the twenties of the 19th century there was a school in the town for Jewish children. There, secular subjects were taught and examinations were held for clerks in the town council. Before the war, certificates relating to this school were stored in the town hall archives.

In the 30's the house owners of Kutno usually sent their children to learn secular subjects in Warsaw, and in the years 1830-1831, the brothers Yitzhak and Naftali Nelkin could be found at a rabbinical school in Warsaw (which got a name among the orthodox as a nest of unbelievers); at that time, they were pupils in the second and third classes⁵⁷.

Hirsh Kopel, son of a wealthy Kutno merchant, learnt in the 50's at the medical-surgical academy in Warsaw⁵⁸.

During the years of the Polish rebellion, in 1863, Dr. Yosef Handelsman held an important post in the neighborhood of Kutno, and this interesting personality deserves attention.

Yosef Handelsman completed his studies at high school in Warsaw in 1833, and in 1859 at the medical school in Petersburg. During the Crimean war he served as a doctor in the military hospital in Warsaw (*Ujazdów*), and in 1854 settled in Kutno.

The young doctor quickly acquired a respected place in the society of the town, and owing to his specialty in brain inflammation diseases, many patients thronged to him and he gained a reputation among both Jews and land owners.

When the rebellion broke out Dr. Handelsman was appointed head of the rebels for the whole area of Gostynin. It can be assumed that by his influence, feelings of friendship prevailed between the rebels and the Jews in the Kutno area. At the Christmas celebrations a toast was raised towards unity between all the faiths and classes. One of the rebels, by the name of Wiszniewski, was in charge of some craftsmen and among them some Jews; Dr. Handelsman went around the place secretly, tended the wounded in the camps near Gostynin, Łęczyca and Końskie.

He was very active in the rebellion and urged the Jews to cooperate with the rebels. One of them was Itzik, servant of the Kutno merchant Hersh, who collected fees and donations from the Jews of Kutno for the rebels' funds. He collected 150 rubles from the merchant Senator, and from Kronzylber – 120 rubles.

In September 1863 Handelsman journeyed abroad to look for weapons. There he met the Jewish agents, Goldsztajn and Kaliszer. On return to Poland, he was arrested and sentenced to exile in Siberia.

However, Graf von Berg, the representant of the Czar, changed his sentence to three months imprisonment in the Dęblin fortress and police surveillance after serving the sentence.

We do not know if indeed Handelsman was imprisoned in the fortress, but in any event, after he returned from going abroad, he stood trial again. This time he was sentenced to two years in prison. After serving his

time he returned to Kutno; in 1909 he moved to Włocławek and died there of old age in the year 1911⁵⁹.

His eldest son, the Polish historian, Prof. Marceli Handelsman, was born from his Christian wife, and was brought up from birth as a Christian. In 1944 he was murdered by the nationalist Polish underground N.S.Z. The younger son, Yosef, was a high school teacher.

During the time of Handelsman and shortly afterwards Dr. Felix Orenszajn (1849-1916) served as doctor in Kutno and was highly esteemed. He was born in Warsaw and completed his studies at the Faculty of Medicine in 1873. The same year he worked in Kutno where he worked as doctor for thirty-four years, until 1907. He died in 1916 from typhus which he contracted while treating his patients.

To his special credit is Dr. Orenszajn's development of a therapeutic centre at Ciechocinek. Also, his research in the field of medicine won him praise among medical circles in Poland.⁶⁰

Among the rabbis in the first half of the 19th century, Rabbi Moshe Aharon Kronzylber should be mentioned, who apparently served as rabbi after the death of Rabbi Eliezer Brisz and also Rabbi Moshe Yehuda Leib (born in

Łęczycza), who was the author of the essays "Fresh Olive" (Warsaw 1851) and "Glory of Jerusalem". At first, he served as rabbi in Kowal, Sierpc, Dobrzyń and Łask. In 1857, he emigrated to Israel and settled in Jerusalem where he died in 1879⁶¹.

After he left, apparently Kutno remained without a rabbi for two years. However, in the month of Tevet 1860, Rabbi Israel Yehoshua Trunk, the famous genius, formerly rabbi in Pułtusk, was welcomed as rabbi.

During the years of the reign of Alexander II, the legal limitations which had been put on the Jews of Poland were lifted.

On 5th June 1862, a law was declared giving equal rights to Jews. The "Jewish territories" were cancelled and Jews were allowed to buy estate in most of the towns in Poland.

On 31st May 1862 Jews were permitted to keep pharmacies and to be craftsmen; on 1st January 1863 the kosher meat tax was abolished, and two days later the day pass was cancelled – Jews had been required to hold a pass entitling them to go to Warsaw.

The greatest satisfaction was concerning the abolition of the kosher meat tax, which had been a burden on the Jewish population for scores of years. The same year Jews were granted the right to vote in municipal elections.

In connection with these events festive prayers were offered in the synagogue and the *Beit Mishpat* in Kutno. The town Rabbi gave a sermon and the cantor Shlomo Yitzhak Osłowski did not spare a "*HaNoten Tshuah*" prayer for the Czar, his representative in Poland the Grand-Duke Constantine, and for the head of the civil administration Marquis Wielopolski, who supported the granting of equal rights to Jews at the price of their assimilation. It was he who persuaded the Czar to publish the *ukases* from 1862 and 1863⁶².

In the Hebrew newspapers from the second half of the 19th century details were published about people and incidents characteristic of the way of life in those days.

For example, the paper "*HaMagid*", in 1861 (no. 16), in an article from Kutno, related that a new scroll of the law (the fourth) was brought to the synagogue, donated by the widow Beile Zylberberg. She was a rich enough lady, since the three first ones costed 6,000 Polish florins. The celebration was commemorated generously – first there was a reception for the whole town, where, according to the reporter's notes, more than one thousand were present (men, women and children).

Rabbi Yehoshie'le Kutner, who was then the rabbi, brought the scrolls under a canopy into the synagogue, accompanied by musical instruments. The cantor sang and there was dancing in the streets. As a token of respect and gratitude, the widow was permitted to place the scroll with her very own hands in the Holy Ark. In the evening the donor arranged a feast for the scholars and generously distributed charity⁶³.

Numbered among the big rich men in the town at this time was the large-scale wood merchant Jacob Erdberg, who dealt with land-owners and employed many

זית רענן

להעלות נר מצוה ותורה אור • מגורת זהב כולה •
 הפלפול והסברא על ראשה גולה • כספר הזקן הזה
 והנעלה • מלא דינים וחידושים • מברר ומלבן הלכה
 בכל דבר קטן ודבר גדול • גבל מה שהעלו הגאונים
 ראשונים ואחרונים • ויש אלו ויש בות :
 מכולם עשה לולאות תכלית ליריעות אוהל תורתו
 להאיר לתלמידים ילכו לאורו : היה אדמו"ר הגאון
 הגדול המפורסם בתורה וחסידות גי' ע"ה פ"ה בקש"ת
 מיה משה יהודה ליב שליט"א • רב ורי"ם רקק
 קוטנא יע"א • ישלום יהיה במעונו • עד יבא שירה :

הוצא לזית הדפוס ע"י ענד לעבדי ה' הרבני המופלג
 מוה' יעקב זאב כ"י בהמנוח מהו' אהרן שלמה אליהו,

זו ארשא

ברפוס של הרבני מוה' צבי יעקב בהמנוח מוה' אליהו ז"ל
 באמנערן

בשנת שוש אש"יש בה' לפ"ק

SEFER ZAIS RAANON
 w WARSZAWIE 1851.
 w Drukarni H. E. Baumberg

Jewish families. In his will, he left 3,000 rubles to a community charity. He died in 1873, at age 69, and in a letter to "*HaMagid*" newspaper his son in law, Feivish Weber, wrote that Christian notables from the town and surroundings came to the funeral. His wife Miriam was also very popular in the town (she was called by the name "*di Mare*" ["the Mary"]⁶⁴.

Among the respected home owners at that time the old Zalman Pinkus who would speak Germanized Yiddish and wore a top hat must be mentioned. Also, estate owner Leib Kuszmirak and the Kocker chassid Yehuda Meir Lipski (later he became a follower of the Rebbe of Gur, the *Chidushei Harim*) who was given special permission to wear the robes of a rabbi.

Among the small group of Enlightened Jews Wolf Leib the teacher [probably Wolf Leib Szymonowicz] must be mentioned. He taught Hebrew and Bible studies and was one of the few readers in the town of "*HaTsfira*". Also, the Kutno reporter for "*HaMagid*", Y. Rozencweig, Israel Wolf Glikzman, father of Dr. Abraham and Dr. Yizhi Glikzman and the stepfather of the leader of the *Bund*, Wiktor Alter.

Authority in the community was, of course, in the hands of the respected house owners, rich men and scholars, although it did happen that the common people rebelled and claimed that their opinion should also be heard in the community.

This interesting happening, from the year 1886, was reported in an article in the newspaper "*Hamlitz*": On Shabbat *parashat Nasso* [24 June 1886], a new cantor who had come to the town was supposed to lead the prayers in the synagogue, but the heads of the congregation did not agree (the reasons were not given in the article). Therefore, the cantor leads the prayer in the *Beit Midrash* and it was very nice. The next Shabbat the common crowd asked that the cantor led the prayer in the synagogue. The matter was brought before the rabbi and according to the compromise that he suggested, the cantor would only lead prayers for the beginning of the Shabbat and the additional Bible reading in the synagogue. But the common crowd did not give up and a skirmish broke out in the synagogue which resulted in a scrimmage, the old cantor was driven off the lectern and even beaten up, and his condition – added the article – was serious. It is amazing how the feelings of the crowd got agitated over the prayers of a cantor when even the accepted authority of the town rabbi was not able to placate them. How the quarrel was resolved we do not know⁶⁵.

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Apparently, at certain times, outstandingly friendly relations existed between Jews and Christians, and this is proved by the catastrophic fire in 1875. On 19th March 1875 a fire broke out in some Jewish houses and six hundred families were destitute. In an article it is reported about the great help extended by the Christians in putting the fire out, and also how a group of amateur Polish actors dedicated the earnings from their show towards the damage. Owners of estates in the area offered flour and potatoes⁶⁶.

Normal relations also existed between the community and the last landowners in Kutno, the Zawadzki. In 1891 when the lawyer Zawadzki died, the community laid a wreath of flowers on his grave⁶⁷.

It is very likely that no wreath of flowers was laid on the grave of a young woman from Suwałki who devoted herself to the education of Jewish girls and who, in the same year 1891, killed herself with her own hand. This woman, after teaching at the gymnasium in Vilna arrived in Kutno with the intention of opening a school there for girls. Apparently, the townspeople did not support her. And due to a shortage of funds – so she wrote in her farewell letter – she was unable to realize her wish. So, she put an end to her life by swallowing poison⁶⁸. Who was this woman, a pioneer in the field of education in the town? About this, the article we have does not tell at all.

PART III

Demographic and occupational structure from the end of the 19th century until the first quarter of the 20th century

According to a population census carried out in czarist Russia in 1897, 5,345 Jews were living in Kutno – 2,611 men and 2,763 women (100 men for 105 women), and the entire population of the town was 11,250 people. The percentage of Jews, therefore, reached 47.5%.

Among this number were 1,496 heads of families and 3,849 dependents on them. On the average, there were 2.6 children per family. The number of children in families engaged in trade was greater than the general average and reached 3.5. This was because among the craftsmen the youngsters became economically independent earlier than among the merchants or shopkeepers.

Table 15: Occupational distribution in 1897

Occupation	Independent	Family members	Total	%
Craft and industry	436	1210	1646	30.9
Trade	458	1589	2017	38.3
Capital holders	134	332	466	8.7
Servants	220	239	459	8.6
Transport	65	226	291	5.4
Clerks (community)	19	60	29	1.5
Teachers	25	88	113	2.1
Free profess.	15	50	65	1.2
State, charity support	9	5	14	0.2
Others	115	50	165	3.1
TOTAL	1496	3849	5345	100.0

It turns out, therefore, that nearly one third of the Jews made a livelihood from craft and industry, as opposed to nearly 40% from commerce. Those marked in the list as owners of capital were, apparently, house owners, interest loan merchants and other who invested money in one way or another in trade. A significant

percentage, therefore, of the Jewish population, made a living from commerce and business credit.

5.4% were employed in transport and in the free professions 1.2%.

The census did not record the separation of wage earners into employers and employed. These two groups are included as independent. At any event, surely servants, clerks, scholars and teachers were salaried. All these together come to 12.2%, which is certainly correct, since this percentage does not include all the functionaries and clerks, for example, the apprentices, industrial workers. No figures are available for determining the part these groups played in the Jewish wage earners group altogether.

It must be mentioned that the list omits agricultural workers completely; it must be imagined that they were not absent among the Jews who leased farms or owners of gardens and fields. But it seems that farming for them was only a secondary occupation during the summer, and the list deals with only one source of income.

Below, the various occupations are given in more detail.

Table 16: Craft and industry

Branch	Independent	Family members	Total	%
Clothing	286	766	1052	64.3
Alcohol & other drinks	49	132	181	11.2
Textile	23	68	91	5.7
Wood	11	57	68	4.3
Foodstuffs	13	33	46	2.8
Skins	5	27	32	2.1
Building	14	56	70	4.4
Measuring	6	27	33	2.1
Mining	13	20	33	2.1
Ceramics	3	9	12	0.7
Other	2	4	6	0.3
TOTAL	425	1199	1624	100.0

The livelihood of two thirds of all the wage earners in craft and industry was derived from needlework of all sorts. As in suburbs of other cities and towns, here also tailoring was a typical Jewish occupation. The second place is taken up by processing of alcohol and other drinks. More than 90% of those occupied in this did not work in breweries, but they certainly were owned by Jews, and mainly Christians worked in them. Third place in the list is held by the textile industry, and the fourth, building. Fifth place goes to the wood industry and the sixth to food.

It must be noted that no Jews at all were found in the metal industry and none either in the chemical industry.

The number of independent women, from the economic point of view, is quite negligible. Only in the clothing branch were a few women occupied, 12 out of 286. In contrast, they made up a significant part in mining services – 5 out of 13.

Very small indeed, according to the table, was the part Jews played in the forest industry; only one man, while in other settlements this was one of the important

occupations involving capital-holding Jews. The second largest branch of industry, after craft and industry, was commerce. Division of the branches of commerce are set out below:

Table 17: Commerce

Branch	Independent	Family members	Total	%
General merchants	119	370	489	24.7
Grocers	100	278	378	19.0
Produce, grain etc	52	235	287	14.5
Textile	67	247	314	15.8
Skins and furs	19	82	101	5.2
Metal and machines	15	59	74	3.8
Household wares	15	42	57	2.8
Wood and heating materials	12	44	56	2.7
Drinks	11	43	54	2.6
Livestock	7	29	36	1.6
Others	9	33	42	2.2
Agents	17	83	100	5.1
TOTAL	443	1545	1988	100.0

According to the above table it turns out that about one quarter of all those engaged in commerce (24.7%) would not have been able to indicate clearly what merchandise they dealt with, and appear in the table as general merchants. Apparently, they were "*luft menschen*" – people with no definite business, who at that time were quite a routine in suburbs of cities and towns, and who made a living from anything that came their way. Together with family members, they made up 9% of all the Jewish population. The large number of agents could be appended to that group (at least, half of them), and also those appearing in the category of undefined employment. Altogether this group, whose economic basis was unsure and was from hand to mouth, amounts to 600 people, including family members, that is, 11.5% of the whole Jewish population.

This number clearly indicates the rundown economic situation of large sectors among the Jews, especially since it does not include poor craftsmen, disadvantaged religious workers and just poor. Together with all those, the number of economically disadvantaged persons was twice as great, at least.

More than half of those occupied in trade were grocers. After them came the textile merchants, produce and skins.

In contrast to craft, women held an important place in some types of commerce. More than one fifth of the grocers were women, and also more than one quarter of the traders in drinks – 3 out of 11. Out of 15 door-to-door peddlers, five were women.

The number of those engaged in services was 220 – 155 women and 55 men. On an average, every seventh family could have engaged a male or female domestic servant.

According to the list, 134 families, which is 465 people (9%), belong to the group which lives off capital. As already noted, these were apparently house owners and money lenders who took interest for mortgage loans.

The group of clerks includes community clerks and clerks from the municipal and state administration. Among these, fourteen families engaged by the community (a rabbi, two judges, a cantor, slaughterers, caretakers, trustees, etc.), only one Jew was employed by the municipality (apparently dealt with the birth records of the Jews), two were engaged in postal services and one young girl who served as a state clerk.

Strangely enough, one Jew appears in the list as a clerk in the orthodox church, and one young man was employed in another Christian sect – but nothing is known about the nature of their work.

A significant number of Jewish families were occupied in transport – 65 families (5.4%), since Kutno was a railway junction for the whole area which had been isolated from a railway line (Płock and surroundings, Koło, Konin and parts of Kalisz district). Carters from Kutno apparently played an important part in transporting loads between these places and the railway station of Kutno.

Twenty-five families made a living as tutors and teachers and four families were active in the area of science and art. However, the author of this article is not able to identify them.

Among those practicing the free professions, the list notes two lawyers and seven doctors and nurses (two women among them); together with the science and art families, a total of 13 families. This accounts for no more than 1% of all the families.

Going by the class division of that time, 81 persons (38 men and 43 women) were merchants ("*kupcy*"), 5,226 were town people ("*mieszczany*"), and seven were classed as farmers ("*krestianye*").

Concerning the educational standard of the Jewish population, 1,209 people knew how to read and write Russian (760 men and 449 women), which is more than one third of all the Jewish population aged 14 and older (34.3%). Their mature national and Jewish awareness is indicated by the fact that only three people recorded their mother tongue as other than Yiddish or Hebrew. Only a very small percentage noted Hebrew as their mother tongue.

The list also records one Jewish prisoner locked up (his family name is not entered) and two prostitutes who supported two children.

It is appropriate to mention the changes that took place in the occupational composition of the Jewish

population in Kutno over one hundred years – 1796 to 1897.

Table 18: Composition of occupations of the Jewish population (percentages)

Occupation	1796	1897
Commerce	24.9	38.3
Craft and industry	41.6	30.9
Clerks (community* etc.)	9.7	1.5
Transport, communication	1.1	5.4
Free professions	2.1	0.2
Servants, domestics	8.4	8.6
Unemployed	5.2	0.2
Other	5.0	15.1
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

The changes in the occupational composition of the Jewish population that occurred over one hundred years are extremely obvious: the share of those engaged in commerce grew from one quarter of all the wage earners to nearly 40%. In contrast, the number of those occupied in craft and industry went down from over 40% to less than a third.

But it must be taken into account that a certain proportion of craftsmen at the end of the 18th century were engaged at the very same time in trade, especially bars, and actually the percentage of Jews occupied in trade was higher than that recorded. However, even after this reservation, the fact remains that in 1796 more Jews were engaged in craft than a hundred years later.

The number of Jews living off community funds decreased. In 1897 the total number of clerks was no more than 1.5%, while in 1796 the number of clerks had reached almost 10% of all wage earners. In contrast, in the 19th century the part taken by transport and delivery workers was almost five times greater. Among the servants and female domestic workers no change was recorded – 8.4% and 8.6%.

In 1796 more than 5% of the Jewish population was unemployed and lived off charity, and in 1897 this group was only 0.2%. From this it can be learnt that the poverty that the Jewish population was sunk into at the end of the 18th century had diminished.

The years before the First World War were boost years for the Jewish population.

Between the years 1897 and 1910 the Jewish population in Kutno grew by 3,900 persons, an increase of 73% and was, in that year, 63% of the population of Kutno. This growth cannot be attributed solely to natural increase which, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, reached an average of 16 per thousand.

During these thirteen years, therefore, the natural increase was 1 per 100 persons. If this number is added to the number of Jews in 1897, the figure of 6445 is reached, while, in reality, the number of Jews in Kutno was 9,245

* Community clerks include 11 scholars who receive a salary from the community.

people. It turns out that the remaining 2,800 people represent Jews from other places who resided in Kutno.

This large migration in thirteen years proves that Kutno was a place for employment which attracted Jews. In the same years commerce and haulage developed. Jews contributed largely to the building of large mechanical flour mills and other plants for the agricultural industry. Jews from other neighboring little towns and faraway places settled in Kutno; at the beginning of the 20th century there was a significant settlement of Lithuanians who engaged in trade and industry.

Table 19: Numbers of Jews and gentiles

Year	Jews	Gentiles	%	% var. Jews	% var Gentiles
1776	1000 [†]	—	—	—	
1796	1800	—	—	+80.0	
1800	1401	877	61.4	-22.0	
1808	1357	748	64.5	-3.1	-14.9
1827	2859	1761	61.8	+110.6	+135.4
1840	2635	1425	64.9	-79.0	-19.0
1857	3859	2009	65.8	+34.9	+14.1
1897	5345	5187	50.7	+30.7	+158.2
1910	9245	—	63.0	+73.0	—
1921	6784	13192	42.5	-26.6	—

This most instructive table represents the growth rate of the Jewish population. In the second half of the 18th century, between the years 1776 and 1796, there was a great increase in the size of the Jewish population which reached 80%. And in the period from 1796 until 1808 the number decreased by a quarter. The reason for this happening springs from the Napoleonic wars and the political reverberations in the years 1796-1815. The Christian population in the town also decreased during that time.

After the stabilization of the national situation and the preparation of congress Poland (1815), a period of consistent growth took place which lasted the entire 19th century. In the first quarter (1808-1827) the Jewish population doubled in size and in the second quarter (1827-1857), by more than a third. It was similar for the next forty years (1857-1897).

The growth rate of the Christian population was almost parallel to that of the Jews, apart for the period 1857-1897 when the growth of the Christian population exceeded that of the Jews, even when the number of Jews grew nearly to 30%, the Christians increased by 158%.

And so, throughout the entire 19th century there was an overwhelming majority of Jews in Kutno. In 1857 they comprised two thirds of the whole population, but at the end of the century the situation changed to the advantage of the Poles, and in the 1897 census the percentage of Jews decreased to half (50.7%).

In the first decade of the 20th century the balance changed in favor of the Jews and in 1910 they comprised 63.0% of the town's population. However, with the

emergence of independent Poland, there was a drastic change.

In the census conducted in 1921, the population of the town was 15,976, from which 6,784 were Jews, that is, 42.5%. And in the following census in 1931 there was a further decrease. Out of a population of 23,368 souls in Kutno, the Jewish population contained only 6,440 people (according to their estimate), that is to say, no more than 27%.

In comparison with 1910, a peak year for the number of Jews, in all periods the number of Jews in the town grew smaller. In both actual figures and percentages, this was the result of events from the First World War and emigration to countries overseas in the 20th century. Even so, it must not be ignored that the decrease in the percentage of Jews in the town results from an artificial calculation based on administrative inclusion of areas in the town jurisdiction populated by Christians.

PART IV

Intellectual and social image of the community in the 19th century

Kutno is sited on the border of Greater Poland and Mazovia and its geographical situation has left its mark on the Jews of this town. The spoken language was a mixture of Germanized Yiddish ("*Deutschmarisch*") – the jargon of Greater Poland – and the popular Yiddish, from Mazovia. Also, there were sharp "opponents" (*mitnagdim*) house owners on one side, who wore shiny top hats on Shabbat, and chassidim of Kock and Warka, on the other side. *Mitnagdim* who were intellectuals and read the "*HaTsifra*" and *Warsaw Courier* newspapers, and Kock fanatics who persecuted the rabbis.

The geographical border line of Kutno expressed itself in the Kutno dialect which contained a mixture of Germanized Greater Poland and Mazovian slightly-distorted Yiddish. While the spoken language of the old generation was Germanized Yiddish, in the spoken language of the young generation Mazovian Yiddish was dominant.

Also, there was a clear blend of Torah erudites and popular country people. In town there were scholars who were downright common. The butchers' street ("*Koyler Gesl*") of Shalom Asz was not far from the *Beit Midrash*, full of young students and sharp learners, and in the neighborhood of the court of Rabbi Yehoshie'le Kutner lived the street organ grinders and the "mob". Like every Jewish town, Kutno was rich in types that became a legend in popular folklore like Mordechai "Pszorek" and Chaim Wodnik described by Shalom Asz in his book *Motke the Thief* and by Y. Y. Trunk in his book *Poyln*.

The "Lithuanians" made up a small group, who began to settle in Kutno after the expulsion from Moscow in 1891. They brought with them the spirit of the metropolis to the quiet atmosphere of the small town, along with a looser relationship with the religious life.

[†] Numbers rounded up, originally 200 families. Relating to the second half of the 18th century, 5 persons per family.

They were large rich merchants and industry magnates who covered the expenses of the community and for this reason were treated quite tolerantly (their not-too-traditional Jewish behavior was frowned upon) and some of them even filled important posts in the community.

So, the foundations of the patriarchal society began to shake and new times arrived and with them, new songs.

The new generation's hearts and minds were captured by national and social movements. Around 1908, the literary society was founded (a branch of the central

one in St Petersburg), which opened a library and organized reading evenings with the participation of authors such as Shalom Aleichem (1913), H. D. Nomberg, Hillel Zeitlin, and others.

In the elections for the second Duma [parliament] in 1907 a group of *Poalei Zion* was active in the town.

With the outbreak of the First World War, the situation of the Jewish population in the town changed and was pushed on to new paths.

NOTES FOR PART I

¹ Yeshayahu Trunk – "When and where did the Jews settle in Mazowia?", *Landkentenisch*, 193 no. 1

² T[eodor] Wierzbowski – *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, part IV, No. 2017, 1513.

³ *Soncino-Blätter*, II Berlin, 1927, p. 110.

⁴ *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego...* Vol V, p. 956. Balinski-Lipinski, *Starożytna Polska*, I, p. 694.

⁵ Jakub Goldberg. "Osiemnastowieczne lokacje miejskie w dawnych województwach łęczyckim i sieradzkim". *Rocznik Łódzki*, tome IX (XII), 1964, p. 82.

⁶ In the next quoted document of the year 1796 is reported that these towns had previously been subjected under the jurisdiction of Kutno Jewish community and paid taxes to the Kutno Jewish community funds.

⁷ Rafael Mahler – *Jews in Old Poland in the Light of Figures*, Warsaw, 1958, p. 37.

⁸ Emanuel Ringelblum – *Chapters from the Early History of Jewish Life in Poland*, Buenos Aires, 1933, p. 200.

⁹ *Idem*.

¹⁰ Lewinsztajn – *Every Generation Has Its Interpretation*, Warsaw 1890, p. 109.

¹¹ Freudenthal, *Aus Moses Mendelsohns Heimat*, p.21. Louis Lewin – *Beitrag zu der Geschichte der Juden in Kalish*. 1909, p. 153–154; A. Hepner & J. Herzberg – *Aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart der Juden u. Jüdischen Gemeinden in den Posener Landen*. Koschmin-Bromberg, 1909, II p. 728.

¹² Emanuel Ringelblum "The Jewish Newspaper in Warsaw", *Landkentenisch*, Warsaw, No. 1 (23), 1937.

¹³ Emanuel Ringelblum – *Żydzi w Powstaniu Kościuszkowskim*, Warszawa, *sine die*, pp. 54, 80.

¹⁴ Konic – *Komisja Rządząca w 1807 roku*, Warszawa, 1904, p. 180; A. Eisenbach – *Status prawny ludności Żydowskiej w Warszawie*. *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego*, 1961, no. 39, pp. 7–10.

¹⁵ Emanuel Ringelblum – *Żydzi w świetle prasy warszawskiej w XVIII. wieku*, *Miesięcznik Żydowski*, 1932, no. 7/8.

¹⁶ 15-Gruetzmacher F. – *Grundherrschaft und Bürgerschaft*. *Zeitschrift der Historischen Gesellschaft für die Provinz Posen*, v. XXVII pp. 90–91.

¹⁷ *Archiwum Główny Akt Dawnych*, Warszawa, Księga Skarbowa, Oddz. 91, ks. 26 (36).

¹⁸ M. Kremer, *Research into Labor and Artisans' Unions among Jews in Poland*, *Zion*, 1937, pp. 319, 320.

¹⁹ The 43 figure is much too small. Unfortunately, we have no idea of how to enlarge it.

²⁰ Dr Mahler also comes to this conclusion in his treatise: "Statistics of the Jewish population in Lublin province in year 1764." *Young Historian*, vol. 2, Warsaw, 1937.

²¹ Besides the 98 families who personally participated in the census, there were 4 families that were not included and about whom nothing is recorded. Therefore, the total number of families is 102.

²² The number here must be regarded as very underestimated.

²³ Of those working as tailors, seven were married; of these, two were working for their father and five for other people.

²⁴ Only one wine-merchant – a member of the community council – was free to trade in alcoholic drinks, "as a favor from the landowner" as the recording clerk noted.

²⁵ Tadeusz Korzon estimates the value of the florin (silver Polish guilder) as 36 pre-WWI Russian kopek. See his *Dzieje wewn., Polski za Stanisława Augusta I*; p. 87.

²⁶ There were also some private teachers who cannot be taken into account, since they were generally not recorded and such material is unavailable. They did not have special pupils and did not maintain an independent livelihood from teaching alone.

²⁷ In this section only Jewish domestic workers are counted. However, one must assume that a certain number of Christian servants and maids were employed in Jewish houses. The percentage of Christian domestics must not be assumed to be a high number (keeping a Christian servant a few score years ago was considered a progressive action) and so the ratio between the values does not change.

²⁸ In the records, according to the statistics, 2 Jews who worked for the landowner for daily wages must be mentioned. Most likely, they worked as agricultural laborers.

²⁹ This is only reasonable for Jewish domestic work. There probably is a significantly higher percentage of Christian workers than appears in the statistics, so that the significant number of workers among the Jews in the villages is probably larger than indicated.

³⁰ We think that the 15 included in the first recorded families do not belong to any particular group, but this does not significantly affect the correctness of the ratio given.

³¹ We have included in the rich group a wealthy lessee living in the town, as noted in the list. No taxes are noted for this.

³² There certainly was no decrease when the evaluation was not sufficiently accurate or fair. So that people who would have been exempt were burdened with taxes.

³³ All were, with one exception, house owners. Also, in fact, one finds that almost all had domestic servants and several of them had two servants, which, from yet another point of view, confirms the prosperous state of this group.

³⁴ A flow of emigration can be seen from the town to the villages. Almost all of the 26 families came from the neighboring towns, Kłodawa, Gąbin, Gostynin, and so on. This accounts for 25% over a year of the general number of the families.

³⁵ Their situation, to show the trend, was not at all splendid. A notice mentions how a long-term tenant, owing to poverty, was forced to rent a yard as a brewery.

³⁶ The village Jews were bound to come into the town and, under a threat of boycott, give the required information.

³⁷ In 1789, the Polish government introduced a tax on animal skins, which, from the year 1791, was changed to slaughter tax [*Podatek od rzezi*, in Polish].

³⁸ No report is mentioned that the "*łopatkowa*" [shoulder blade] tax was also to be paid by the Christian butchers, which until now did not happen.

³⁹ Symptomatic of the direction of the changes that the community has undergone is the fact that 12 years later, it was worth recording in the burial society records that one wanted to exclude a butcher from the society for the reason that his profession was disrespectful to it. Afterwards, here we have a butcher as a member of the community council.

⁴⁰ It was set on fire by the Nazis in February or March 1940 and was totally destroyed.

⁴¹ Archives of YIVO in New-York present a handwritten copy of a notebook, which was made thanks to the efforts of the Kutno-born historian Lipman Comber (deported from Warsaw ghetto to Treblinka, in the summer of 1942: E. Ringelblum's "News from the Warsaw Ghetto", Warsaw, 1952, p. 314). L. Comber has also published a treatise on the basis of a notebook: "Picture of the life in a Polish town at the beginning of the 19th century" (The Chevra Kadisha of Kutno at the beginning of the 19th century), in *Young Historian*, book I, Warsaw 1926, pp. 58-67: Comber's treatise was included in the book later.

NOTES FOR PART II

⁴² Artur Ajzenbach – Documents relating to the history of the department council and centrally planned councils in the Duchy of Warsaw, *Pages for History*, book II, Warsaw, 1938, p. 149.

⁴³ Artur Ajzenbach – "The Central Representative Organizations of the Jews in the Duchy of Warsaw 1807-1815", *Pages for History*, book II, pp. 45-55, 56, 70, 71, 78, 79.

⁴⁴ In the above quoted letter to the head of the Poznań council he writes about his contacts with the Kutno landowner, who was a member of the state council.

⁴⁵ Louis Lewin – *Geschichte der Juden in Lissa*, Pinne, 1904, pp. 305–306.

⁴⁶ Artur Ajzenbach – *Pages for History*, book II, p. 71.

⁴⁷ Idem, pp. 78, 79, 82.

⁴⁸ Louis Lewin, op. cit. p. 114, 168.

⁴⁹ Heppner-Herzberg, op. cit. II, pp. 609–610.

⁵⁰ Yeshayahu Warszawski, "Jews in Congress Poland (1815-1831)", *Historical Writings*, YIVO, book II, 1937, p. 341.

⁵¹ Rodgero Pruemers – *Das Jahr 1793*, Posen, 1895, p. 580.

⁵² Phillip Friedman – *Wirtschaftliche Umschichtung und Industrialisierungs-Prozesse in Polnischen Judentum*.

Jewish Studies in Memory of Alexander Kohut, New York, 1935, p. 235.

⁵³ Phillip Friedman, op. cit. p. 232; Kazimierz Reychman, *Szkie genealogiczne*, Warszawa, 1936, I, p.52.

⁵⁴ *Żydzi w Polsce Odrodzonej*, Warszawa, 1933, II, p. 441.

⁵⁵ Kazimierz Reychman, op. cit. I, p. 190.

⁵⁶ op. cit. I, pp. 75, 76.

⁵⁷ I. Schiper – *Żydzi Królestwa Polskiego w dobie powstania listopadowego*, Warszawa, aneks, 2, p. 199.

⁵⁸ Emanuel Ringelblum – *Historical Chapters of Old Jewish Life in Poland*, Buenos Aires, 1953, p. 288.

⁵⁹ Idem, pp. 312-316.

⁶⁰ Idem, pp. 343-344.

⁶¹ Legislative division, notebook D, series 19.

⁶² *The Preacher*, No. 4, 1863, Sh. Y. Osłowski was previously a cantor in Dubno (*The Preacher*, No. 16, 1861).

⁶³ *The Preacher*, No. 16, 1861.

⁶⁴ *The Preacher*, No. 37, 1873.

⁶⁵ *The Advocate*, No. 42, 1886.

⁶⁶ *The Dawn*, 1875.

⁶⁷ *The Dawn*, No. 99, May 1891.

⁶⁸ *The Dawn*, No. 12, 1891.