

Jews – Subjects of the “Minkovtsy State”

(on the history of Jewish book printing in Ukraine)*

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The interest in the book, having increased among the Jews of Poland in the second half of the 18th century, at the end of the century reached Podolia, a remote province in the southeast of the country. Publishing enterprises of the neighbouring regions¹ obviously could no longer cope with the increased demand of the Podolia Jews for traditional books, which had already seen a number of publications, as well as for modern ones, primarily mystical, ethical and Hassidic writings. The demands of the local Jewish book market on the one hand, and local political, economical and social conditions favourable to book publishing organizations on the other, encouraged the appearance of Jewish printing houses in Podolia. In the period of twenty years (1789–1809), a number of Jewish printing houses were established in succession in seven towns of the region: Mezhirovo, Minkovtsy, Medzhibozh, Mogilev, Ianov, Solobkovtsy, and Kalius.² A printing house in Bratslav, standing apart in this series, was established somewhat later, in 1821.

A common phenomenon that emerged in a limited territory at a certain time presupposes the existence of common favourable conditions. Preliminary acquaintance

* The English translation was made by Julija Korosrenskaja.

¹ Below we enumerate those Jewish printing houses of the nearest regions of Ukraine, from which books freely reached Podolia both before and after the partition of Poland: in Volhynia – Belozerka, Dubno, Zhitomir, Zaslav, Korets, Kremenets, Kupel, Liudvipol, Mezherich, Oleksinet, Ostrog, Polonnoe, Poritsk, Radzivilov, Slavuta, Sudilkov; in Kiev region – Berdichev, Belilovka, Boguslav, and Skralevka. Hereinafter the basic information on printing houses is given in accordance with the bibliographic index by Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri: reshimat ha-sfarim she-nidpesu be-ot ha-ivrit me-reshit ha-dfus ha-ivri bi-shnat 1469 ad shnat 1863* [Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book: Listing of Books Printed in Hebrew Letters Since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing circa 1469 through 1863], 1, 2 (Jerusalem: 1993–95). Here and hereafter the Russian names of towns that were situated in the Russian empire in the period under discussion are given in English transliteration, while the names of Galician towns are given in their Polish form.

² Usually the town of Solobkovtsy is not mentioned in the lists of Jewish printing houses due to the wrong transcription of the Jewish name of the town “Slafkovits” as “Slavkovitse”. There are also sources that point to the presence of Jewish printing houses in the towns of Podolia: Bar, Zbrizh, and Shargorod (see, for example, Боровой С., “Нариси з історії єврейської книги на Україні”, *Бібліологічні вісті*, 1-2 (Київ: 1925): 50); however, the publications of these printing houses have not been registered until the present day. The town of Zbrizh is pointed out by certain authors as a result of the misspelling of a Galician town Zbarazh in Hebrew. In the latter there was a Jewish printing house indeed.

with the historical situation at the turn of the 19th century in those towns of the region where Jewish printing houses were established supports this supposition. The purpose of the present research is to bring to light the historical conditions that favoured the development of Jewish typographical business in Podolia.

Since the Jewish publishing enterprise in the small town Minkovtsy (Pol. *Minkowce*) turned out to be the largest one in the region both in terms of the scope of book publishing as well as the longevity of functioning, a closer look on the situation that had formed in this town may cast light on the general conditions in Podolia, where Jewish printing houses were set up and ran from the end of the 18th till the first third of the 19th century.³ The present article focuses on the analysis of the socio-cultural image of the Minkovtsy community and those specific historical circumstances that contributed to its transformation into one of the centres of Jewish book printing.

Despite the fact that the history of Jewish book printing in the western provinces of the Russian Empire has been researched from various perspectives for more than a hundred years, the task of the reconstruction of the historical context is posited for the first time. An exploration of the known phenomenon from a new viewpoint has called for the use of new archival and literary sources that, at first sight, might be regarded as distant from the issue of the history of Jewish book printing. The main groups of sources for each of the three chapters of the article are strikingly different, which corresponds to the topical and methodological differences of the three parts of the research. References to the sources cited in the chapter “Jewish book publishing in Minkovtsy” and in the Conclusions contain information on relevant publications devoted primarily to the history of Jewish book printing.

A socio-cultural portrait of Jewish community of Minkovtsy in the 18th century

The settlement of Minkovtsy, situated 60 km northeast of Kamenets-Podolskii, on the way to Vinnitsa, received the status of a town as early as in 1637.⁴ The Jews

³ Despite the fact that the example of Minkovtsy seems quite representative, the author is planning to carry on with his endeavours, extending them to other Jewish printing houses of the region.

⁴ Minkovtsy (Pol. *Mińkowce*), presently a village of the Dunaevtsy district in the region (oblast) of Khmel'nitskii, in the periods from 1923 to 1931, and from 1935 to 1959 was a district centre and until 1923 – a town of Ushitsa district of Podolia *gubernia*. The town was situated in the broad valley surrounded by high hills, on the banks of the Ushitsa river (a tributary of the Dnestr), in the sector of the road between Dunaevtsy (21 km) and Novaia Ushitsa (13 km). In the 17th century the royal estate of Minkovtsy became the property of the family of Polish feudal lords Stanisławskis. In 1637 Adam Stanisławski surrounded the settlement by a bank and

apparently did not settle there until the early 18th century, after the destructive epoch of the Cossack wars had finished. The earliest evidence of the existence of a Jewish community in Minkovtsy was found in the list of the allocation of the pool tax from the Jews of the Polish Kingdom in 1735.⁵

This and similar financial documents related to the activities of the Council of the Four Lands (*Vaad Arba Artsot*) allow one to assess the level of well-being of the community. Thus, in the sum total of 9.036 zloty (the basic Polish monetary unit) of the pool tax of the Jews of Podolia voievodship, the Minkovtsy share made up more than 5%, making it the third largest out of 37 communities that paid the tax in 1735.⁶ The participation of the community in the allocation of the tax and a high share of payment point to its relative well-being. Subsequently the Minkovtsy share in the payment of the pool tax slightly decreased, but nevertheless remained higher than average.⁷

A comparison of the data of the pool tax and that of the 1765 Jewish census allows for a more objective approach in assessing the level of well-being of the community.⁸ According to the census, there were more than 38.000 Jews (38.384) in Podolia voievodship, and in Minkovtsy – about 380 (378), which equalled 1% of the total number of the Jews of the voievodship. In the proportional distribution of the sum total of 28.000 zloty of the tax among the communities, the Minkovtsy community was to pay about 1% of the sum total, which amounted to approximately

a moat and succeeded in gaining privileges for the town from King Władysław IV on the basis of the Magdeburg privilege with the right to organize two fairs per year and weekly bazaars; see: *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego*, VI (Warszawa: 1885): 448–449.

⁵ Dyspartament pogłównego żydowskiego, 1735, Biblioteka Czartoryskich, Cracow (hereinafter referred to as BC) 1079 (copy in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem, hereinafter referred to as CAHJP, HM/476). This is the earliest list of the distribution of the pool tax among the Polish Jews, which included Jewish communities of Podolia voievodship.

⁶ From the sum total of the tax on the Jews of Podolia voievodship, viz., 9.036 zloty, the biggest payments were assigned to Medzhibozh (1.050 zloty) and Proskurov (730 zloty). Besides Minkovtsy, the sum of 500 zloty, the third biggest in size, was assigned to the Letichev community (Dyspartament pogłównego żydowskiego, *ibid.*).

⁷ In 1753, Minkovtsy's share of 459 zloty was the third biggest in the district after those of Dunaevtsy (991 zloty) and Tarnoruda (506 zloty) and the twelfth in the voievodship; see: Dyspartament pogłównego żydowskiego, 1753, BC 1079 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM/477). In 1756 the share of 444 zloty was the fourth biggest payment in the district and the eighteenth in the voievodship; see: Dyspartament pogłównego żydowskiego, 1756, BC 1079 (copy CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM/478). In 1764, during the last distribution of the tax, Minkovtsy's share of 600 zloty turned out to be the fifth biggest in the district and the eighteenth in the district among more than eighty Jewish communities, see: Muszyńska J., “Dyspartament pogłównego żydowskiego w Koronie w 1717 roku”, *Czasz Nowożytny*, 5 (Warszawa: 1998): 119–131.

⁸ See *Архив Юго-Западной России*, ч. 5, т. 2, (вып. 2): *Переписи еврейского населения в юго-западном крае в 1765-1791 гг* (Киев: 1890): 145-146.

280 zloty. However, during the allocation of the tax, members of Podolia *Vaad* (Council) considered not only the number of inhabitants in each town, but also the level of their community’s prosperity. The allotted sum of 600 *zloty* corresponded to their “objective” assessment of the well-being of Minkovtsy.

What was the prosperity of the community based on? What were the main sources of income of the Minkovtsy Jews?

The answers to these questions may be found in the surviving economic documents of the owners of the town in 1740–70, magnates Jan Tarlo and, from 1753 onwards, Michał Rzewuski.

The main income was derived from the rent of trades, lease of merchant duty and taxes, as well as alcohol manufacture and trade. In a contract of 1744 between the owner of the town and Jews-lessees, the following income items are listed: the rent of the town brewery and two mills, the leasing of trade, fair and bridge taxes, and collection of a real estate tax from stores which had the right to free sale of vodka as well as brewing of mead and beer.⁹ A more detailed account of the items of income of the town in question, corresponding to the main spheres of the employment of Jews, is given in a 1748 complaint of the community seniors about a new town lessee who had racked up exactions. Those were the charges on boilers and distilleries, taxes on the sale of vodka, beer and mead, on baking bread, a tax on raising pigs, a real estate tax on trade stores, taxes on grain purchase and trade at fairs, collection of animal fat from slaughterers and so on.¹⁰

Major trades rented by the Minkovtsy Jews are given in the lease contracts of 1750–60. Those list saltpeter and gun powder manufacture, maintenance of the town brewery and noblemen’s distilleries in the town and villages, exploitation of the mills in the town as well as four villages, maintenance of the guest house owned by the noble in the market square and inns in Minkovtsy as well as nearby villages (*Minkovtsy kliuch*).¹¹

⁹ See Count Jan Tarlo’s yearly rent contract from 1744 to 1745 with lessees on the sum of 4.100 zloty in the file “Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów korczm i browareń, 1745–73”, Центральный державный историчный архив України, Львів, ‘*Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Lviv*’, hereinafter referred to as ЦДІАУ), f. 181, op. 2, f. 2217 (copy in САНJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.22).

¹⁰ “Skarga kahału żydowskiego w Mińkowcach na arendarza Abramka Moszkowicza”, 1748, ЦДІАУ, f. 181, op. 2, f. 2750 (copy in САНJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.31).

¹¹ “Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów korczm i browareń”, *ibid.*; “Kontrakty na arendę przez Żydów prochni w m. Mińkowce”, 1766–68, ЦДІАУ, F. 181, op. 2, f. 2175 (copy in САНJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.21). Villages were populated with families of sub-contractors of Minkovtsy lessees who were engaged in the exploitation of village mills, inns, and wineries. Thus, for example, according to the census of 1765, 9 persons resided in Kruzhkovtsy and 5 lived in Antonovka (*Архив Юго-Западной России* 146).

Lists of the real estate taxes in 1760–70¹² clarify the data on the spheres of employment of the Jews, enumerating specific professions and allowing one to form an impression about the construction plan of the town, as well as social stratification of the Jewish population. According to the list of 1764,¹³ 25 large Jewish houses with boilers for alcohol production formed a rectangular market square in the centre of the town and were levied with a boiler-charge tax that exceeded the usual state tax. These houses were home to the local elite including community seniors and major lessees. (Apart from the Jewish houses, a guesthouse, which belonged to the owner of the town and was rented by the Jews, also faced the market square, and so did 3 townsmen houses.) In the centre of the square 25 Jewish stores were situated. They had to pay a somewhat lower tax, while the lowest estate tax was levied on 22 so-called “back” Jewish houses, which did not have direct access to the market square of the town. These houses were mostly inhabited by traders, bakers, wine producers and slaughterers.

The place itself was almost exclusively populated by Jews, while its suburbs were inhabited by Christians. In 1770, the number of houses registered in the centre of the town and in the suburbs constituted 80 and 57 respectively.¹⁴ Christian town-dwellers, who resided in the periphery of the town, were mostly engaged in olerculture and agriculture; some owned trades, including a smithy and a furriery.¹⁵

The figures below show the number of the population of the Jewish community of Minkovtsy in the period from 1760 to 1780 as registered by relevant censuses of the Jews:¹⁶ 298 (378 with Jews living in villages) in 1765, 173 (209) in 1775; 312 (391) in 1784; 319 (389) in 1787; and 398 in 1789. A significant decrease in the number of Jewish population, as evidenced by the data of the 1775 census (the number of the Jewish population living in Minkovtsy constituted less than a half of the figure

¹² “Wykaz kahałów zydowskoch”, ЦДІАУ, F. 181, op. 2, f. 2218 (copy in CAHJP, Jerusalem, HM2/8298.22).

¹³ “Wykaz kahałów zydowskoch”, *ibid.*

¹⁴ *Słownik Geograficzny Królestwa Polskiego* 449.

¹⁵ A joint complaint on the Jewish lessee was also submitted by Christians, members of the town council; among them were two “farriers” and two “furriers”. See “Skarga kahału zydowskiego w Mińkowcach na arendarza Abramka Moszkowicza”, *ibid.*

¹⁶ For the censuses of the Jewish population for the relevant years, see *Архив Юго-Западной России* 145–146; 233; 432; 548, 637. As has often been mentioned in historical literature, one should use the absolute data of censuses with reservation. Thus in Minkovtsy, for example, according to the 1765 census, one family had less than one child, which speaks volumes about the fact that most children managed to hide from the inspectors. Obviously the real number of Jews in the town was not 298, as registered in the census, but more than 400. Adult dwellers found it more difficult to avoid inspection. Thus, for example, during the 1787 census inspectors discovered 96 and 18 hiding Jews coming from the town and villages respectively.

registered 10 years ago) and supported by the lists of estate taxes,¹⁷ was probably caused by the plague epidemics of 1770–71, which took the lives of tens of thousands of Podolia inhabitants.¹⁸ In the late 1780s, with a hundred Jewish houses,¹⁹ Minkovtsy represented a town of an average size, typical of Podolia.

The economic documents listed above allow us to supplement these socio-economical characteristics of the community with some features of its cultural image. The obvious evidence of the literacy of Jews is their signatures at the bottom of complaints and contracts, made in Hebrew in accordance with the accepted formula (in this respect one should point out that, in contrast to the governing council of the community, none of the town-dwellers and members of the town municipality could sign a joint complaint on a greedy lessee).²⁰ Among the Jews inhabiting the town were those who were able to set up individual trades and manage the town economy in general. They were artisans skilled in all professions which were necessary for a town: tailors, hatters, furriers, as well as rarer specialists: a jeweller, a boiler-maker, a brandy-distiller and a gunpowder-maker. Two elite houses were run by two barbers who were also skilled in medicine, and in one of the “backward” houses lived a sorceress.

The Jewish community of the town had established its traditional institutions and even had an autonomous governance – the *kahal* (the governing council of the community), a rabbi, a cantor, three *shameses* (synagogue beadles), four *shoikhetes* (slaughterers) and two *menakers* (removers of veins from meat), etc.²¹ In 1776, on the steep bank of the Ushitsa river the Jews built the Big wooden synagogue,²² which had become the most outstanding building in the town. (The old wooden church was dilapidated and was demolished shortly afterwards, while a Catholic church was not built until the early 19th century.) Somewhat later a female gallery (*ezrat nashim*) was annexed to the main body of the building on the level of the second floor. It was connected to the praying hall by a narrow opening. The interior of the synagogue

¹⁷ In real estate tax lists of the early 1770s some houses were inventoried as empty, see “Wykaz kahałow żydowski”, *ibid.*

¹⁸ See, for example, a piece of contemporary research: Alexander J. T., *Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia* (Oxford: 2003): 107 et. al.; on plague epidemics in Podolia settlements, see Гультман В.К., *Памятники старины в Подолии* (Каменец-Подольский: 1901): 327–331.

¹⁹ See *Архив Юго-Западной России* 548.

²⁰ See the aforementioned contracts and the complaint – footnotes 10 and 11.

²¹ The census of Jews of 1765 was signed by rabbi Yosef Itskovich; Gersh Iosifovich, the “quarter” (i.e. the *parnas* of the community elected for the period of one quarter); and Avraam Leibovich, the synagogue sexton (i.e. *gabai*) (*Архив Юго-Западной России* 145-146); for the names of these and other “synagogue beadles”, “slaughterers” and “sinewers”, i.e., removers of veins from the meat are also listed in estate tax lists, see footnote 12.

²² The date of construction – 1776 – is enciphered in the legend inscribed on the cartouche of the wall paintings of the synagogue: *Gomlim Khasadim shel Emet* (Those Providing Unconditional Mercy).

photographed in the 1920s²³ provides the best evidence of the peculiar cultural and psychological images of the community. The walls of the synagogue and the cupola were decorated with polychrome frescos tier after tier, and the lower tier was inscribed with texts of prayers and psalms. The most characteristic pictorial motives are to be found in the paintings of the cupola. The northern side depicted a battle between a lion and a unicorn and a carriage passing through the gates. Above them was the depiction of Paradise with animals painted in the cartouches. The western side featured the leviathan curled into a circle, with a city inside it and the legendary *shor* (i.e., a wild bull) next to it.²⁴ These images as if drew the Messiah times closer, responding to the general mood of the tense anticipation of the arrival of the Messiah and redemption from the *galut* (the Exile). The symbolic depictions of Minkovtsy synagogue are imbued with an air of mysticism, which is particularly characteristic of the Jews of south-eastern provinces of Poland in the 18th century.

The mystical search for the way out of the *galut* was intense in Minkovtsy, as evidenced by the fact that a secret community of the followers of Jacob Frank (1726–1791) had been formed. Following the dispute in 1759, a list of Frankists who had converted into Catholicism in Lwów, includes the names of fifteen Minkovtsy Jews.²⁵

We do not know any facts about the presence of secret Shabbateans in the later period. Minkovtsy get virtually no mention in early Hassidic literature; apparently, religious authorities of the community of the latter half of the 18th century were not to be found among the leaders of Hassidism.

Rare archival documents allowed us to reconstruct the main features of the socio-cultural portrait of the Jewish community of Minkovtsy on the eve of its encounter with a new owner of the town. By that time (the 1780s), thanks to the long-term activity of

²³ The photographs from S.A. Taranushenko’s collection (The Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, Department of Manuscripts, f. 278) depict the exterior, interior, and the paintings of the synagogue. The exteriors of this and other synagogues were photographed by art historian Piotr Zholtovsky in his exploratory examinations of Podolia towns, organized in 1920s-1930s by Stepan Taranushenko, Director of the Museum of Ukrainian Art in Kharkov.

²⁴ Traditional Jewish symbolic images, including those presented by the paintings of the synagogue in Minkovtsy, are thoroughly discussed in the articles by Dr. Boris Khaimovich, researcher of folk art; see, for example, Хаймович Б., “Геральдический орел в художественной культуре восточноевропейских евреев”, *Вестник Еврейского университета*, 3 (21) (Jerusalem: 2000): 87–111; “Еврейское народное искусство южной Подолии”, Лукин В., Соколова А., Хаймович Б. (сост.), *100 еврейских местечек Украины. Исторический путеводитель. Выпуск 2: Подолия* (Санкт-Петербург: 2000): 85–116; “К вопросу о семантике мотива ‘трех бегущих зайцев’ на еврейских памятниках”, *Еврейский музей* (Санкт-Петербург: 2004): 95–108.

²⁵ See “Cathalogus omnium Contratalmudistarum...” in Kraushar A., *Frank i Frankisci Polscy*, 1 (Kraków: 1895): 330–360. It should be pointed out that the exact number of Frankists in Minkovtsy is unknown; 14 persons identified as Minkovtsy Jews probably came from two or three families.

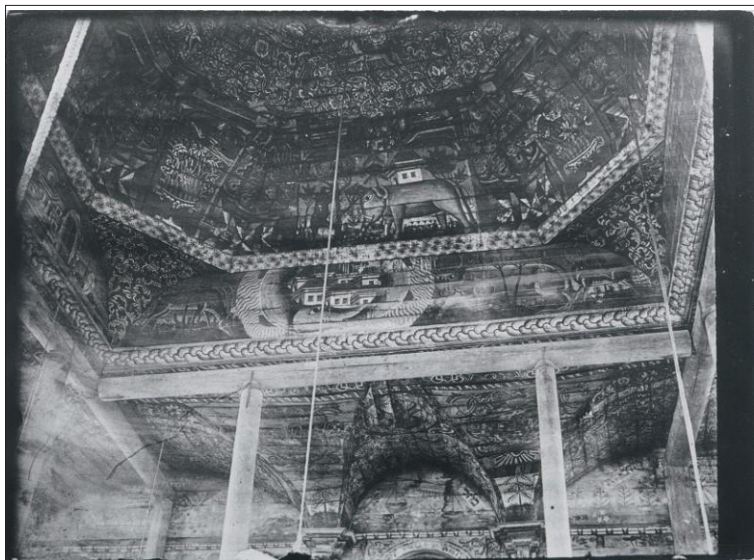


Fig. 1. Murals of the western wall and the dome of Minkovtsy synagogue, c. 1920. V.I. Ver-nadsky National Library of Ukraine, MS dept., f. 278 (S.A. Taranushenko), No. 603.

the Jewish community, the urban character of the settlement had been fully formed. The Minkovtsy market with Jewish workshops and trade stalls was the nucleus of the economic structure of the feudal estate. However, Minkovtsy was bound to become a full-fledged town not only in the economic, but also in the cultural respect, in the next stage of its history, as a result of the joint activity of the Jews and the new owner of the town in the field of book printing.

Count Marchocki – “father of the people” of the “Minkovtsy state” and his subjects, the Jews

In 1788, the small town of Minkovtsy, along with several villages (in total about 6.000 acres) went into possession of a Polish noble Ignacy Marchocki (1755–1827).²⁶

²⁶ Except mentioned otherwise, the basic information on Ignacy Marchocki is borrowed from the article by Josef Rolle “Hrabia Redux”. See Dr. Antoni J., “Hrabia Redux”, *Opowiadania*, ser. IV, t. II (Warszawa: 1884): 1–75. (This historical sketch is devoted to Marchocki and is based on archival data).

Unlike the preceding owners-magnates, who had possessed large latifundias, the estate that the retired major Marchocki had inherited from his uncle was his only land property at the time. In the small Jewish town, the centre of the agricultural estate, Marchocki had decided to fulfil his ideas of the ideal organization of the city – the capital of the state, based on the foundations of freedom, lawfulness, and education. These ideas were practically implemented when, after the Second Partition of Poland in 1793 and the annexation of Podolia to the Russian empire, he placed poles with the inscription “Border of the Minkovtsy state on the Russian Kingdom” at the borders of his estate, introduced his own banknotes and established his own militia. Wearing a long beard and dressed in a purple toga embroidered in gold, Count Ignacy Scibor Marchocki looked and felt himself a patriarch and “father of the peoples” inhabiting his estate. His conceptions of the city, the state and the tasks of the ruler were based on the works of his favourite ancient authors and French encyclopaedists, as well as the data obtained from the Roman law and the statements of the Four-Year *Sejm*.

In one of his first legal acts, Marchocki practically abolished serfdom in his estate, replacing the corvée with a moderate estate tax, and substituting mutual responsibility for individual responsibility in the face of the law; under the threat of a fine he banned referring to a peasant as a *muzhik*, a bond slave or a boor. Afterwards, in his explanatory note to the gubernia’s administration, Marchocki wrote that, “...having entered the ownership of my patrimonial land, having the intention to lead a humble life, distanced from the secular routine..., [I] wished to totally engage myself in land and... improve arable farming, teaching sciences to my peasants... conformable to their country life, thus willing to facilitate and improve their citizenship, as far as possible, to turn bondage into reasonable freedom, I gave them rights,... made a peaceful agreement with my peasants-ploughmen, in as much as this could meet their concepts of simplicity. As Solon said about Athenians, ‘I gave them the law not as it should be, but as the Athenians could forbear’”²⁷

One of the major legislative works by Marchocki is “The Law of the Town of Minkovtsy” (1791),²⁸ which opens with a glorification of the cities, designated to

²⁷ We provide an abridged version of a letter by Marchocki written in the *gubernia* chancellery, see Case of the Special Chancellery at the Minister of Police “Об аресте помещика Подольской губернии графа Мархоцкого И. за неповиновение местным властям в 1815 г. и за устройство празднеств хлебопашества в честь богини Цереры в 1815–1819 гг.”, Государственный архив Российской Федерации, ‘State Archive of Russian Federation, Moscow’ (hereinafter referred to as ГАРФ), Ф. 1165, оп. 1, ф. 26 (copy in САНП, Jerusalem, HM2/9443.6).

²⁸ Ignacy hrabia Scibor Marchocki, *Prawo miasta Mińkowiec* [1796?] – 32 pages. On the title page of this legal act the date of publication is not given; instead, the text finishes with the date of granting the “Prawo” (“The Law”): “Działo się w Mieście Dziedzicznym Mińkowcach dnia 29 Grudnia 1791 roku” (p. 32). Rolle assumes that “Prawo” was issued after 1795 due to the fact in this period Marchocki granted himself the title *hrabia* – “Count”. (Dr. Antoni J., “Hrabia Redux” 20).

benefit their residents, to promote the development of arts, crafts, and trade. To achieve this, they ought to follow reliable rules, which the author presented in detail on thirty-two pages. According to the introduced law, the owner of the town virtually abandoned charges collected from his townspeople, except for a constant and moderate estate tax. The townspeople were granted the freedoms of trade, crafts and construction. New settlers enjoyed particular privileges. These paragraphs referred to the Jews as well. To provide for the town municipality, a magistrate with elected members was established (the only condition for the election of the head of the magistrate and clerk being that they be literate).

A separate 6th Chapter of “The Law” was dedicated to a specific group of residents of the town, the Jews,²⁹ and was apparently intended for bringing remarkable changes in the legal and economical state of the Jews of the town. The *kahal* was virtually ignored; it no longer represented Jews to the owner of the town. Like other town dwellers, the Jews were elected to the town municipality, had to follow its resolutions, and each one of them was under the jurisdiction of the town court. Acknowledging the fact that the Jews constituted the trade element necessary for the town, the owner had introduced scrupulous regulation, which in fact was alien to Jewish trade. According to Marchocki’s views, Christian townspeople were to be engaged in handicrafts held in artisan workshops. Marchocki devoted several sections of “The Law” to the organization of such workshops, restricting the sphere of handicraft trade of the Jews to the minimum.

It is known that Marchocki’s proposed reform of the town municipality was successful: alongside two representatives of the Polish nobles and two of the peasants, two Jewish representatives participated in the proceedings of the Supreme Court, which also examined Jews’ cases.³⁰ However, it is hardly possible that the owner managed to change the naturally formed system of employment of various population groups. Thus, in 1811 the state inspection registered in Minkovtsy 28 Jewish artisans, among whom were a carpenter, a metalworker, a *shmukler* (a manufacturer of ropes, cords, laces, etc.) and a jeweller; some artisans were listed as new residents, possibly, invited by the owner himself. In total the 1811 inspection registered 118 Jewish families residing in Minkovtsy, of which the overwhelming majority, 92 families,

²⁹ Rozdział VI. O Żydach w tymże Mieście, 13–15. This chapter is translated into English from the Russian translation done by the author of the article and is presented in Appendix 2 of the present article.

³⁰ After Ignacy Marchocki’s death, his son, upon coming back from exile to Minkovtsy, restored the Supreme Court in its former structure, which was immediately made known to the police. See “По рапорту Ушицкого исправника об учреждении помещиком Мархоцким в имени своем судилища под названием Юстициариум, 1833”, Центральный державний історичний архів України, Київ, ‘Central State Historical Archive of Ukraine, Kyiv’ (hereinafter referred to as ЦДІАУ), f. 442, op. 1, f. 1497 (copy in САНJP, HM2/ 8924.8).

ascribed to the class of townspeople, lived on the income received from small trade. In 1828 five merchants were registered in Minkovtsy: three of them sold textile and clothes, two traded in cattle and dried fish and owned inns.³¹ It is natural to assume that, having descended from the heights of legislation onto a real small town, despite his intensive economical reforms, Marchocki could rely only on those trade and artisan resources that he had at his disposal. Marchocki established a number of factories and manufactories, viz., carriage, cloth, paper, anise oil, lacquers and paints manufactories, and set up manufactories of saltpeter and bricks as well as silk industry, which derived from raising silkworms. Lacking any other trade element, Marchocki could do nothing but employ Jews, at least for the purpose of delivery of raw materials and sale of goods.

Not positing the task to provide an account of all Marchocki’s innovations, below we will enumerate just some of them: intensive construction of four seasonal residences as well as public buildings – a town hall at the market square with check measures and weighs; the Supreme Court, which, like the Acropolis, rose above the town on a high hill; a medical resort, which gained popularity thanks to invited physicians – a homoeopathist and an allopathist; a “Music Academy” – in fact, an orchestra and a chorus that, among other musical works, performed those composed by Marchocki; a pharmacy, a hospital for the poor, an orphanage, a public school, a communal granary, and others.³² Marchocki was particularly enthusiastic and resourceful in arranging theatrical harvesting festivities dedicated to Roman goddess Ceres, patroness of agricultural community. Necessarily held every year despite the prosecution of the church and *gubernia*’s administration, such festivities attracted thousands of peasants as well as invited landowners and representatives of the local Catholic and Orthodox churches.³³

³¹ “Список купцов г. Ушицы и повета, январь 1828 г.”, Российский государственный исторический архив, Санкт-Петербург, ‘*Russian State Historical Archive, St. Petersburg*’ (hereinafter referred to as РГИА СПб.), Ф. 18, оп. 4, ф. 363 (copy in САНПР, НМ2/9315.8). Below we provide the names of Minkovtsy merchants of 1828: Zeilik Ioselevich Volfenzon, Mortko Iankelevich Kaiterman, Ios Kalmanovich Burdman, Leiba Shaeovich Oksman, Hayim Gershkovich Bertogorn.

³² In the preparation of the article and primarily referring to archival materials and the cited work by Rolle, I also used the following articles and publications: Копылов А., “Миньковецкое государство”, *Русский вестник*, 1 (Москва: 1895): 175–195, 5 (1895): 85–119; А.Г., “Борьба местной епархиальной власти с языческим чествованием древней богини Цереры”, *Подольские епархиальные ведомости*, 33, 34, 38, 41–43 (Каменец-Подольский: 1889); О.Л., “Праздник Цереры (Из воспоминаний польского шляхтича о событиях в Юго-Западном крае 1819–1824 гг.)”, *Киевская старина*, 12 (Киев: 1897): 311–331; Гришук Б., *Поділля коліско і доле* (Lviv: 1988): 16–22, 80–105; and idem, *Граф Мархоцький і Миньковецька держава* (Хмельницький: 1992): 1–27.

³³ See the descriptions of festivities in the published sources listed in footnote 32. Below we provide the description of festive celebrations in accordance with the 1816 report by Archbishop

In Marchocki’s opinion, the establishment of a printing house came to be one of the most urgent and significant innovations. For this purpose, in 1792, a professional typographer Wiesiolowski arrived in Minkovtsy. In his printing house, Marchocki began to publish his legislative acts, religious sermons, opening speeches, medical guides for the people and even classical works of literature.³⁴

of Podolia and Bratslav Ioannikii from the archive case “О буйственных и неблаговидных поступках помещика Подольской губернии, графа Мархоцкого”, РГИА СПб., Ф. 797, оп. 2, с. 5552, 1816, pp. 4–6.

“The custom of blessing [the harvest]... was introduced by landowner Ignacy Marchocki not earlier than some twenty years ago, yearly, on the 15th day of August, i.e., on the holiday of the Assumption of Our Lady, and was referred to Marchocki as a reaping or sowing farming festivity, which was celebrated in the following way: in the morning upon the gathering in Minkovtsy town of all Greek and Russian priests and dwellers with processions and farming devices of all villages of landowner Marchocki, and the municipality of the estates, having arranged the people into rows, that is girls, after them wives with sickles, and after these – unmarried men, and after these married ones with scythes, flails and rakes; after the people – ploughs, also in two rows, which may amount to two hundred; after the ploughs a highly paved cart, covered with carpets, led by four or six bullocks, in the corners with four rye and wheat sheaves..., at the end of the procession the clergy, in this order after midday... followed in the field till the appointed place, before each peasant community and before the cart music was playing, an old man was riding a horse, and the clergy sang public prayers... Upon reaching their destination, where on both sides shelters of branches were placed for the people, and for the landowner, the nobles and the clergy – pavilions, the priests, upon consecrating with water and sprinkling it on seeds that had been prepared for this, which the senior priest takes with his hand and throws at the ground in a cruciform way; after that, upon kissing the cross and congratulating landowner Marchocki, two pavilions are divided: Marchocki with the landowners and the nobles who have gathered for this ceremony – into one, and clergy with bishops, poorest nobles, most honourable artisans and townsmen – into the other: on the snacks, while the music is playing, plough once or twice. After the snacks, the nobles and the clergy go to the town Minkovtsy, while peasants return to Minkovtsy at sunset in two rows, holding in their hands lanterns of four colours, different from each feudal manor, and each third – burning torches, following in front of them the mentioned arranged cart, in which sit four girls (according to the number of four feudal manors of Minkovtsy, Otrokov, Pobujna and Antonovka) with heads decorated in wreaths twined from ears, and sing songs, appropriate for the end of reaping, beginning of sowing, and the usefulness of those. Having come to Minkovtsy, the chief officers of those manors take the girls off the cart and lead them to stop, as earlier, in front of the wife, and after her death, in front of Marchocki’s daughter, dressed magnificently, sitting in an armchair on the carpeted gates of the house which serves the dinner for the gathering, and representing the pagan goddess Ceres. Accepting the wreaths from the heads of those girls, she ties ribbons around their heads and grants money to them; after this ceremony the festivity ends in dinner.”

³⁴ Not giving the exact date of the opening of the printing house, Jusef Rolle reports that typographic presses were set in Minkovtsy in the period between 1792 and 1796 (see Dr. Antoni J., “Hrabia Redux” 19).

Jewish book publishing in Minkovtsy

Initiated by Marchocki, the publishing business could not escape the attention of the Jews, since the owner of the town had made the output of his typographical business part of the daily life: banknotes, miscellaneous forms as well as stamped paper intended for the submission of petitions and various proclamations. There were well-to-do people among the Jews, who shared the idea of setting up a Jewish book-publishing enterprise and were ready to make investments. The external conditions were fairly favourable for the fulfilment of this project: on the one hand, put into practice by the owner, bold and comprehensive reforms created an air of the independence of the inhabitants from the gubernia and central administrations; besides, the issue of censorship over the Jewish book had not yet been raised.³⁵ On the other hand, in the 1790s, Minkovtsy gained credibility of the regional Jewish centre: the rabbi of the community Kopel Hirsh was appointed to the post of the Head of the Rabbi Court of the district centre of Ushitsa, and in 1796 he was elected District Rabbi.³⁶

According to the report submitted by Podolia governor Ivan Essen, Jewish printing houses in Minkovtsy were opened in 1792 and 1802 “by permission of landowner Marchocki”.³⁷ “The list of Jewish printing houses”, compiled in the Ministry of Public

The first publications of Marchocki’s printing house date back to 1796. The most thorough list of the publications of this printing house has been compiled by Tatyana Solomonova, research employee at the Vinnitsa Regional Museum of Local Lore. It comprises 15 publications, opening with a legal act on the organization of hereditary estates: Marchocki Ignacy Sćibor, *Ustawa dla urzřdzenia ziem dziedzicznych* (Mińcowce: 1796), and finishing with a religious sermon: Marchocky I., *Mowa religiina na dzień stycznia (Januarius) 1825, w swiatyni mińkowieckiej przez... /obywatela Marchockiego miana/* (Minkovtsy: 1825). I express my sincere gratitude to Tatyana Solomonova for the materials she allowed me to use before their publication. Among the works of literary classics, published by the typographic press in Minkovtsy, the authors of publications about Marchocki refer to the first translation into Polish of “Hamlet” and a translation of “The Iliad”.

³⁵ The first step in the organization of the censorship of Jewish publications was taken by Paul I: in October 1797 he “conveyed his wish to assign to Riga’s censorship two Jews for the inspection of the books in the Yiddish language brought to Russia...”, “Об учреждении в Риге цензуры еврейских книг”, РГИА, СПб., Ф. 1374, оп. 2, с. 1430 (copy in САНП, НМ2/7779.3). On censorship policy in the period under discussion, see Эльяшевич Д.А., *Правительственная политика и еврейская печать в России, 1797–1917* (Санкт-Петербург / Иерусалим: 1999).

³⁶ According to these notes in the archival document, his name is Kopel Hirsh Judkovich, see “О выборах уездных раввинов и общинных правлений в Подольском наместничестве, 1796 г, ЦДІАУ, Київ, Ф. 210, оп. 2, с. 24 (copy in САНП, Jerusalem, НМ2/9309.6). Here and hereinafter the Jewish names and book titles are given in English transliteration.

³⁷ V. D., “Печатное дело в Малороссии в начале XIX ст.”, *Киевская старина*, 9 (Киев: 1900): Документы, известия и заметки, 88.

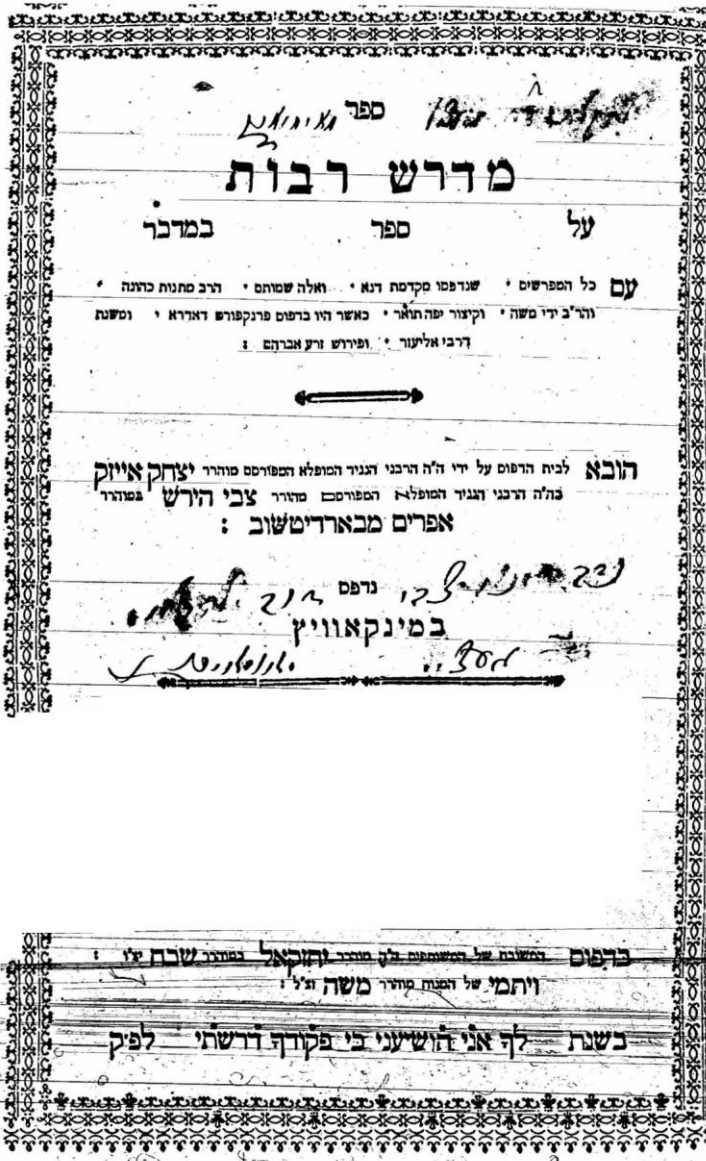


Fig. 2. The title page of the Midrash Rabbot to Numbers (Minkovtsy, 1799). The National Library of Israel, microfilm FI 9540.

Education in 1827, enhances the degree of the involvement of the owner of the town by maintaining that the Jewish printing house was “established [in] 1792 by the will of landowner Marchocki”.³⁸ Hayim Fridberg, author of the seminal work on the history of Jewish book-publishing in Poland, believes that in the early stages Marchocki provided his printing press for the Jews, who had not yet established a printing house of their own.³⁹ Fridberg may have come to this conclusion owing to the following inscription in Polish on the title pages of Jewish books published in Minkovtsy: “w drukarni w miescie Mińkowcach dziedzicznym Ignacego Scibor Marchockiego” (“in the printing house of Mińkowce, the inherited town of Ignacy Scibor Marchocki”). What does not raise any doubts is the fact that the financial interest in the enterprise subject to paying him a tax was not the only reason why Marchocki supported the initiative of the Jews. Raised on the ideas of the Enlightenment, he could not have ignored the thought that the establishment of the printing house contributed to the honour and glory of his town. Hence, possibly, the inscription in Polish, placed on the title pages of the books in Hebrew either by request or by demand of the owner.⁴⁰

We should also note Marchocki’s live interest in the texts of the Old Testament, which received its expression in numerous citations from Ecclesiastes and other biblical books, which he used in sermons, as well as inscriptions on festive gonfalons. Deciphering the notes left by Marchocki, Doctor Josef Rolle, connoisseur of the old times of Podolia, has also found numerous excerpts from such sources as Books of Maccabees, Solomon’s Proverbs, David’s Psalms and others.⁴¹ Such interest to ancient Jewish wisdom points to Marchocki’s favourable attitude towards collaboration with Jewish publishers.

Sharing the above-mentioned view expressed by Fridberg we assume that in the first years of publishing, both Polish and Jewish books were produced in the same facilities, using the same equipment, set under the guidance of Polish printer Wiesiolowski.⁴² Most sources attribute the foundation of Polish and Jewish printing houses in Minkovtsy to 1792. Books in Hebrew and Polish began to be published

³⁸ J. G[essen], “К истории еврейских типографий. Крещенные евреи Зандберг и Фоделло”, *Еврейская старина*, 2 (Санкт-Петербург: 1909): 255.

³⁹ Fridberg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri be-polania* [The history of Jewish book printing in Poland] (Antwerp: 1932): 82.

⁴⁰ See, for example, title pages of the following books: *Sefer Amtakhat Beniamin* (1796); *Midrash Rabot al Sefer Shmot* (1799), in the same series commentary to the books of Torah published in Minkovtsy in 1799: *Midrash Rabot al Sefer Vaikra*, *Midrash Rabot al Sefer Bemidbar*.

⁴¹ See on this: Dr. Antoni J., “Hrabia Redux” 41–42.

⁴² On the basis of archival data, Tatyana Solomonova wrote on the movement of typographer Wiesiolowski in 1792 in Minkovtsy in her article: Соломонова Т., “Книговидання у мастках польської шляхти Поділля: польське, єврейське, старообрядницьке (XVII – перша третина XIX ст.)”, *Освіта, наука і культура на Поділлі*, 6 (Каменец-Подольський: 2006): 126–136.

practically simultaneously – the first Jewish book appeared around 1795,⁴³ and the first Polish book – in 1796.⁴⁴

Jewish books were first published under the supervision of specialist-typographer Ikhiezel, son of Shevakh, who came from Mezhirovo accompanied by two typesetters in 1795.⁴⁵ The Mezhirovo typographer received financial support from local Jews Iosef and his son Moshe, consequently known as Moshe Madpis (the printer). The three co-owners published two manuscripts that had not been published before: in 1795, *Barukh she-Amar*, a collection of halakic rules for writing philacterias and *mezuzas*, compiled by Shimshon, son of Eliezer; in 1796 – *Amtakhat Benjamin* (mystical commentaries to the book of Ecclesiast) by Benjamin, son of Aharon, Maggid in Zoločce and Zaleszczyki, a disciple of two famous *zaddiks*, Dov Ber from Mezherich and Iehiel Mikhel from Złoczów, the work that was never published again,⁴⁶ as well as other books that had been published before.

Alongside local Jews, among the workers of the printing house were such specialists as typesetters and press operators from Mezhirovo, Sukhostav, and Korets. Among religious authorities who had recommended early publications for the printing house were the famous Hassidic rabbi Levi-Yitshak from Berdichev and Minkovtsy rabbi Yakov Tsvi (also known as Kopel Hirsh), son of Iehuda-Leib, aforementioned head of the Rabbi Court in Ushitsa and a rabbi of Ushitsa district.⁴⁷

According to the official “reports”, at the turn of the century, the chronology of book publishing in Minkovtsy strictly corresponded to state resolutions regarding the censorship of Jewish books: Jewish printing house “produced no printing from 1798 to 1799 till the register of books allowed for printing had been obtained from Riga censorship”, and then

⁴³ Yeshayahu Vinograd places the title of the book *Barukh she-Amar* first in the register of publications of the typographer in Minkovtsy with the comment “doubtful”: Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri* vol. 2 (1995): 457.

⁴⁴ Established by Tatyana Solomonova (see footnote 34).

⁴⁵ Until 1795 Minkovtsy editions were not registered. The Jewish printing house in Mezhirovo, the first one in Podolia, began to function in 1789, starting with a halakic work by Yitshak Aisik Shor *Likutei ha-Kemakh*; see Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri* 456. In 1794, 10 books were published in Mezhirovo, and in 1795, after Moshe Madpis had left, the publishing process in Mezhirovo was discontinued till 1802. I base my description of the formation of Jewish book-publishing in Minkovtsy on the historical reconstructions by Hayim Fridberg; see Fridberg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri* 82–83, and Yaari A., “Likutim bibliografiim. Ha-dfus ha-ivri be-Minkovets” [“Bibliographical notes. Hebrew printing house in Minkovtsy”], *KiriatsSefer* [The City of Book], 19 (Jerusalem: 1942): 267–276.

⁴⁶ Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (1795); Benjamin ben Aharon mi-Zalozhits, *Amtakhat Benjamin* (1796).

⁴⁷ This is his full title, cited in the recommendations (*haskamot*) on the reverse of the title page of the book *Amtakhat Benjamin* (1796). The recommendations to later editions (1799–1803) are signed by Yakov Tsvi, the then Head of the Rabbinic Court in Minkovtsy.

“from 1800, by the demand censorship in town of Radzivilov, until 1802” and, finally, “restored by the authority of the Personal Supreme Decree of February 9, 1802”.⁴⁸ In the opinion of *gubernia* clerks, from 1802, there were two Jewish printing houses functioning in Minkovtsy: one of them belonged to Esther, daughter of Moshe (Estera Moshkova), and the other – to Mordekhai, son of Shevakh (Mordka Shelvakhovich).⁴⁹

Judging by the dating of Minkovtsy books, at the turn of the century the publishing process was virtually independent of censorship policy. Three publications appeared in 1797, four – in 1798, and one in each of the years 1799 and 1800. A two-year gap in 1801–02 coincided with the most liberal period in the history of Russia’s censorship. Let us bear in mind that on March 31, 1801, by the decree of Alexander I, free book publishing was allowed in private printing houses, and by the decree of February 9, 1802, preliminary censorship was abolished and the establishment of “free printing houses” was allowed.⁵⁰ While reconstructing the history of publishing in Minkovtsy on the basis of data found in the books themselves,⁵¹ we become convinced that the pulsation of the publishing process during this period was conditioned not so much by the twists of censorship policy, but rather by local circumstances. Two deaths in succession of both Minkovtsy companions of typographer Yehezkel in 1797–98 and the transfer of the book-printing business to Moshe Madpis’ inheritors explain the slowdown of publishing activities.⁵² The break in 1801–02 may be explained by the return of Yehezkel to Mezhirovo and the move to the same town of Minkovtsy printer Iekhiel Mikhel Kahan, who had taken with him typographic materials and printing boards featuring flowers, used for the decoration of the titles of Minkovtsy publications. In the same period the inheritors of Moshe Madpis sold the inherited part of printing equipment to the printers of Belozerka (a town in Kremenets district), providing them with manuscripts originally intended for publication in Minkovtsy.⁵³

In 1803, after a two-year break, two Jewish printing houses were opened simultaneously in Minkovtsy. Having brought from Mezhirovo his printing press, printer Avraham-Mordekhai, son of Shevakh (apparently, brother of Yehezkel, mentioned

⁴⁸ J. G.[essen], “К истории еврейских типографий” 255. The reference here is made to the Emperor’s Decree of 9.2.1802 on the abolition of censorship committees and assigning the censorship responsibility to governors.

⁴⁹ V.D., “Печатное дело в Малороссии в начале XIX ст.” 88.

⁵⁰ Жирков Г.В., *История цензуры в России XIX–XX вв.* (Москва: 2001): 38.

⁵¹ Books published prior to 1805 (on the title pages, on the reverses, and in “colophons” – final comments) generally provide the names of the authors; those who submitted the manuscript for the publication; rabbis who recommended the manuscripts for the publication; publishers as well as typesetters, press workers and the editor. These data allow us to trace the formation of the book printing business in Minkovtsy. Later, probably due to the fear of censorship persecutions, the names of publishers and workers of the printing house were rarely provided.

⁵² See, for example, Yaari A., “Likutim bibliografiim” 268.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

in the official report), published *Sefer ha-Mefoar* by the famous Cabbalist Shlomo Molkho, a collection of halakhic midrashes *Sifrei* and other books.⁵⁴ In the same year, in the printing house opened by Menakhem Mendl, son of Avraham Shevakh, *Yesod Iosef* and *Likutei Iosef* – the works by Iosef Ioska, another disciple of the Maggid of Mezherich and the Maggid of Złoczów – were published.

The third Jewish printing house was opened prior to 1818. It belonged to Chaim, son of Itskhak, who published books both in Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1818 the book *Nakhalat Tsvi* was published in Yiddish. This was a work on Jewish ethics with the narration of the plots from the book *Zohar* by Tsvi Hirsh, son of Yerakhmiel. Possibly, it was in this printing house that in 1819 the only edition of *Magen David*, a Cabbalistic work by David, son of Shmuel from Derazhnia, was published.⁵⁵

Books published in Minkovtsy were valued in the Jewish world for their high quality; reputable rabbis recommended the Minkovtsy printing houses to those willing to publish a manuscript.⁵⁶ Throughout this period, in 1801, 1807, 1813, and 1823, the publishing of Jewish books in Minkovtsy was interrupted and then renewed several times for intervals ranging from two to four years, which was due to the death or moving of publishers. Obviously, the activities of the next Minkovtsy publisher would start from the publication of a new, previously unpublished, manuscript. The person who submitted the manuscript to the printing house for publication may also have been responsible for partial coverage of the publishing expenses.

In 1827, the year of death of the owner of the town, the publishing of Jewish books in Minkovtsy was discontinued.⁵⁷ Throughout the period of thirty-two years more than forty books were published, among which were prayer books, collections of psalms and *slikhot*, books of TaNaKh, books of midrashes, Cabbala books, Hassidic books, books on Jewish ethics and others.⁵⁸ The four aforementioned works by Hassidic authors have survived till the present day thanks to their only edition published in Minkovtsy.

The print runs of Minkovtsy printing houses, as well as those of the majority of Jewish printing houses in Ukraine, were not large, and probably did not exceed 1.000 copies (today Minkovtsy publications are a bibliographic rarity). With such print runs the commercial profit of the book publishing enterprise could not have been high, which forced its owners to close or sell the enterprise from time to time. It is believed

⁵⁴ Ibid. 269, and Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri* 458

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ See Iehuda ben Avraham Yitshak Avida, *Mahberot Minei Kedem* 15.

⁵⁷ An exposition of folk beliefs *Raziel ha-malakh* was the last book published in 1827.

⁵⁸ The most thorough list of Jewish books published in Minkovtsy is given in Appendix 1. In the compilation of the list the author has used reference materials collected in the framework of the project on identification and cataloguing books in Hebrew by the staff of the Bibliographic Institute (*Mifal Bibliografi*) at The National Library of Israel in 2006, as well as the above-mentioned articles and the following publications: Vinograd Y., *Otsar ha-sefer ha-ivri*; Fridberg H. D., *Toldot ha-dfus ha-ivri*; Yaari A., “Likutim bibliografiim” 267–276.

that book publishing in Minkovtsy became the most long-term and fruitful publishing project of the Podolia Jews thanks to the support and patronage of the owner of the town. For the sake of comparison, we provide data on the functioning periods and the number of publications of other Jewish printing houses of Podolia: Mezhirovo (1789–1823), 28 books, Medzhibozh (1800–27), 24; Ianov (1802–03), 2; Mogilev (1802–25), 30; Solobkovtsy (1804–07), 5; Kalius (1809), 3; Bratslav (1821–22), 7.

After the death of Ignacy Marchocki, the Minkovtsy estate was inherited by his son Karol, who, after the Polish uprising in 1830–31 was exiled to Kursk and then to Perm and who did not return to Minkovtsy except for a brief visit in 1832.⁵⁹ In the same year the Jews may have made an attempt to restore the publishing business in Minkovtsy, having published a work on Jewish ethics *Reshit Khokhma*, which was to become the last Minkovtsy publication.⁶⁰

In 1836, the town of Minkovtsy became the state property.⁶¹

Conclusion

The increase of attention to the book in the 18th century is a common phenomenon, characteristic of Poland in general and the Jewish population of Poland in particular. However, while the growth of interest among the non-Jewish population was caused primarily by the dissemination of Enlightenment ideas coming from elite circles, in the Jewish sphere the analogical process did not bear an ideological tint, but was rather stimulated by the tastes and demands of a major part of traditional Jews.

The first generations of researchers, from Avraham Harkavi to Saul Borovoy, attributed the success of the spread of Jewish book printing to the objectives of the propaganda of Hassidism.⁶² However, with the accumulation of the data concerning the publications of local printing houses, the researchers came to the conclusion that Hassidic works proper formed but a relatively small part in the overall book production, while the goals of the propaganda of Hassidism or, to be more precise, oppositions to it, were not decisive in the formation of the book industry. This was

⁵⁹ “По отношению генерала Ридигера о задержанном вблизи австрийской границы помещике Подольской губернии местечка Миньковец Кароле Мархоцком”, ЦДІАУ, Київ, Ф. 442, оп. 782, с. 161.

⁶⁰ Avraham Yaari and Yeshayahu Vinograd point to the possibility of a wrong dating of the book *Reshit Khokhma* – a mistake amounting to a 10-year-span; it may be more accurate to date its publishing to 1822.

⁶¹ See “По рапорту Ушицкого исправника”, ЦДІАУ, Київ, Ф. 442, оп. 1, ф. 1497 (сору – САНІР, НМ2/ 8924.8).

⁶² See Гаркави А., “Из истории культуры русских евреев”, *Сборник в пользу начальных еврейских школ* (Санкт-Петербург: 1896): 164; Боровой С., “Нариси з історії єврейської книги на Україні”, *Бібліологічні вісті*, 1–2 (1925): 48; 1 (1926): 36–38.

clearly demonstrated by Hayim Liberman, connoisseur of the Jewish book, on the example of the printing houses of Volhynia.⁶³ An overview of contemporary registers of the publications of Jewish printing houses allows one to extend his conclusions to account for the majority of Podolia printing houses.⁶⁴ An unquestionable exception is the printing house in Bratslav set up by Rabbi Natan Shternharts, the closest disciple of Rabbi Nakhman from Bratslav, whose only goal was to publish the works of the founder of Bratslav Hassidism.⁶⁵ At the same time, the research of the process of Jewish book publishing in its relation to the development of Hassidism remains urgent to the present day, since the production of the printing houses in Podolia (those in Minkovtsy included) undoubtedly reflects the reading circle and the demands of the Hassids, who constituted the core of the Jewish population of Podolia.

In the conclusion of the present research, it remains to be pointed out that the conditions, in which Jewish printing houses existed in Minkovtsy in the period of four decades, were not extraordinary. The formation of other Jewish printing houses in the region took place within the common framework of the historical context at the turn of the 19th century, determined by the political and censorship conditions that maintained a relatively liberal attitude toward the province.⁶⁶ Among the favourable local circumstances one should name a relatively high level of the living standards of the community and the presence of well-off businessmen, intensive economic development of the settlement, the status of the community with respect to settlers of other confessions, and the interest of the owner of the settlement in the development of Jewish book-publishing branch.

“Free” Jewish printing houses of Podolia, like those in Minkovtsy, “died a natural death” before “the defeat of Jewish printing business” in 1836. Apart from the change in local conditions, we see common reasons in the competition of larger printing houses of Volhynia as well as in the censorship pressure that had increased

⁶³ See the article by Liberman H. , “Bedia ve-emet bi-dvar batei ha-dfus ha-hasidiim. Le-ofiam shel batei ha-dfus ha-ivriim be-Ukraina, Rusia ha-Levana ve-Lita ad shnat 1836” [Invention and Truth with Regard to Hassidic Printing Houses. On the Nature of Hebrew Printing Houses in Ukraine, Belorus and Lithuania till 1836 Asaf D. (ed.), *Tsadik ve-eda* [Zaddik and the devotees] (Jerusalem: 2001): 186-209.

⁶⁴ The most exhaustive registers of publications of Jewish printing houses are compiled in the framework of the project of identification and cataloguing of books in Hebrew, which is carried out by the Institute of Bibliography at the National Library in Israel. Bibliographic materials collected by the Institute by the early 1990s were used as the foundation for the above-mentioned bibliographic index by Yeshayahu Vinograd. A look through the registers of the publications of the majority of Podolia printing houses points to the absence of any definite ideological trend.

⁶⁵ On the publishing activities of Rabbi Natan Shternharts, see: Yaari A., “Likutim Bibliografim: ha-dfus ha-ivri be-Braslav”, *Kiriat Sefer*, 13 (Jerusalem: 1936): 528–532.

⁶⁶ On this, see Эляшевич Д.А., *Правительственная политика и еврейская печать в России* 59–124.

with Nikolai I's accession to the throne. After the suppression of the Polish uprising in 1830–31, the formation of new printing houses in formerly privately-owned little-places, now confiscated by the state, became an unrealistic enterprise. The statement “On the censorship of Jewish books and on Jewish printing houses” in 1836 virtually terminated the activities of the “free” Jewish printing houses.⁶⁷ Due to this, the book publishing enterprise in Minkovtsy, whose historical image reflected numerous features characteristic of the majority of “free” Jewish printing houses of Ukraine, seems to us a significant cultural symbol marking the epoch that had gone by.

Appendix 1

Jewish books published in Minkovtsy

1. וּשְׁמֵשׁ וְב רִזְעִילָא, **דּוּרְב רַמָּאשׁ**, [יניד תביתכ ויליפתה], [ץיבוקנימ], [נקת"ה] Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (Blessed Be He Who Spoke) [laws of tefillin writings] ([Mińkowce], [1795])
2. וַיִּמְנַב וְב וְרֵהָא צִיזוּלוּמ, **תַּחַמָּא וַיִּמְנַב**, [תודיסח], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ו] Benjamin ben Aharon mi-Zalozhits, *Amtakhat Benjamin* (The Sack of Benyamin) [Hassidic book] (Mińkowce, 1796)
3. רִיאַמ וְב הַדוּהִי בִיל שְׂרַפּוֹפ, **רוא רשיה**, [תוליפת פע"י הלבקה], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ז] Meir ben Iehuda Leib Poprash, *Or ha-Iashar* (The Right Light) [prayers according to the Cabbala] (Mińkowce, 1797)
4. **תְּדוּבַע מִימִיָּה**, [תוליפת, רוזחמ], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ז] *Avodat ha-Yamim* (The Everyday Service) [prayer-book] (Mińkowce, 1797)
5. הִירְכּוּ לְדַגְמ בַּלְסוּרִימ, **יכרד קדצ**, [תודיסח], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ז] Zkharia Mendel mi-Iaroslav, *Darkei Tsedek* (The Paths of Righteousness) [Hassidic book] (Mińkowce, [1797])
- 6-8. **אַנַּת יבד והילא**, [מישרדמ], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ה] *Tana de-Vei Eliyahu* (The Arrangement of Elijah) [Midrashes] (Mińkowce, 1798)
9. [נועמש אביקע רב ון פסוין], **ישעמ ה'**, [תוישעמ רהוזחמ], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ה] Shimon Akiva bar ben Yosef, *Maasei Ha-Shem* (The Deeds of the Lord) [texts from the “Zohar”] (Mińkowce, 1798)
10. **שרדמ תובר**, [שרדמ הבר], [ץיבוקנימ, נקת"ט] *Midrash Rabot* (The Large Midrash) (Mińkowce, 1799)
11. [מִיאִיבַנ מִיבּוֹתְכוּ], [ץיבוקנימ, קת"ס] [Neviim u-Khtuvim] (The Prophets and the Writings) (Mińkowce, 1800)
12. **קח לארשיל**, [קוח לארשיל], [ץיבוקנימ, סקת"-]

⁶⁷ Ibid. 125–184.

Khok le-Israel (The Law for the Jewish People) [collection of sacred texts for everyday reading] (Mińkowce, 180?)

13. **ארפס מדאד האמדק**, [לאיזר למהדא, (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)]
Sifra de-Adam Kadmaa (The Book of Primordial Man) [Cabbala book] (Mińkowce, 1803)

14. פסוי אקסוי זב קחצי, **דוסי פסוי** [הלבק], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)
Yosef Ioska ben Yitshak, *Yesod Yosef* (The Foundation of Joseph) [Cabbala book] (Mińkowce, 1803)

15. פסוי אקסוי זב קחצי, **ישוקיל פסוי**, [מישודיה מילופלפון], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)
Yosef Ioska ben Yitshak, *Likutei Yosef* (The Collection of Joseph) [conclusions in matters of tradition law] (Mińkowce, 1803)

16. **שרדמ אמוחנת** [שרדמ אמוחנת (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)]
Midrash Tankhuma [Midrash to the book of Exodus] (Mińkowce, 1803)

17. המלש וכלומ, **רפס ראופמה** [תושרד, הלבק], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)
Shlomo Molkho, *Sefer ha-Mefoar* (The Magnificent Book) [sermons according to the Cabbala] (Mińkowce, 1803)

18. יבצ שריה זב לאומש ליוונז, **תוילגרמ הרותה**, [מאיבנ מיבותכו], (זיבוקנימ), [סקת"ג]
Tsvi Hirsh ben Shmuel Zanvil, Margalioth ha-Tora (The Pearls of Torah) [The Prophets and the Writings], [Mińkowce, 1803]

19. **ירפס**, [שרדמ הכלה], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)
Sifrei (Books) [Halakhic midrash for the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy], (Mińkowce, 1803)

20. **ירפס**, [שרדמ הכלה], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ג)
Sifrei (Books) [Halakhic midrash for the books of Numbers and the Deuteronomy], (Mińkowce, 1804)

21. **שרדמ הבר. תישארב**, (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ד)
Midrash Raba. Bereshit (The Large Midrash. Genesis), (Mińkowce, 1804)

22. **שרדמ אמוחנת**, [שרדמ אמוחנת], (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ה)
Midrash Tankhuma [Midrash to the book of Exodus] (Mińkowce, 1805)

23. **השימה ישמוח הרות** (זיבוקנימ, סקת"ו)
Hamisha Humshei Tora (Pentateuch) (Mińkowce, 1810)

24. **הנעמ וושל** [תוליפת. מילוח מיתמו], (זיבוקנימ, קת"ע)
Maane Lashon (The Right Response) [prayers for the disabled and the dead] (1810)

25. **תוחילס גהנמכ זילופ זטק זילופו לודג אטיל זיסיריו** (זיבוקנימ, קת"ע)
Slikhot ke-Minhag Polin Katan ve-Polin Gadol, Lita ve-Raisen (The Penitential Prayers in the rite of Little Poland and Great Poland, Lithuania and Russia) (Mińkowce, 1810)

26. **רפס מילהת** [נת"ך] (זיבוקנימ, עקת"א)
Sefer Tehilim (Psalms) (Mińkowce, 1811)

27. **תוחילס** (זיבוקנימ, עקת"א)
Slikhot (The Penitential Prayers) (Mińkowce, 1811)

28. **תוניק העשתל באב** (זיבוקנימ, עקת"ב)
Kinot le-Tisha be-Av (Lamentations for the 9th of Av) (Mińkowce, 1812)
29. נתנ עטנ זב השמ רבונה, **ירעש וויצ** [מינוקית תוליפתן], (זיבוקנימ, עקת"ב)
 Natan Note ben Moshe Hanover, *Shaarei Tsion* (Zion's Gates) (Mińkowce, 1812)
30. **תוחילס** [תוליפת, תוחילס] (זיבוקנימ, עקת"ב)
Slikhot (The Penitential Prayers) (Mińkowce, 1812)
31. **רדס מולש מכילע וניקתאו אתדועס** [מינוקית. תבש], [זיבוקנימ], [עקת"ז]
Seder Shalom Aleikhem ve-Atkinu Seudata (Order – Peace upon You and Let us prepare for meal) [order for Shabbat preparations] (Mińkowce, [1817])
32. והילא זב השמ יד שדיו, **תואצות בייה** [רסומ], [זיבוקנימ], [עקת"ז]
 Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, *Totsaot Khaim* (Issues of Life) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1817)
33. יבצ שריה זב לאימחרי שטוח, **תלהנ יבצ** [רסומ מירופיסו רוזהומ] [זיבוקנימ, עקת"ח]
 Tsvi Hirsh ben Yerakhmiel Khutsh, *Nakhalat Tsvi* (Heritage of Zevi) [Jewish ethic book with texts from the *Zohar*], (Mińkowce, [1818])
34. דוד זב לאומש ינורדמ, **מזג דוד** [הלבק] [זיבוקנימ, עקת"ט]
 David ben Shmuel mi-Derazhnia, *Magen David* (Shield of David) [Cabbala book] (Mińkowce, [1819])
- 33-36. **תוחרוא מיקודצ** [רסומ] [זיבוקנימ, קת"ף]
Orkhot Tsadikim (Ways of the Righteous) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1820)
37. נושמש זב רזעילא, **דורב רמאש**, [תוכלה תס"ם = יניד תביתכ זיליפתה], [זיבוקנימ], [קת"ף]
 Shimshon ben Eliezer, *Barukh she-Amar* (Blessed Be He Who Spoke) [laws of *tefillin* writings] (Mińkowce, [1820])
38. **ינוקית רוזהה** [הלבק] [זיבוקנימ], [קת"ף]
Tikunei ha-Zohar (*Zohar* additions) [collection of additions to the *Zohar* on Genesis] (Mińkowce, [1820])
39. והילא זב השמ יד שדיו, פסוי וטייופ, **תישאר המכה רצקה**, [רסומ] [זיבוקנימ, פקת"ב]
 Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, Yosef Poito, *Reshit Khokhma ha-Katsar* (Basis of Wisdom. Brief Version) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1822)
40. היחרזו ינוויה, **רפס רישיה**, [רסומ] [זיבוקנימ], [פקת"ג]
 Zarakhiya ha-Yavani, *Sefer ha-Yashir* (The Book of the Righteous) [Jewish ethic book] (1826)
41. **לאיזר דאלמה** [תונומא תויממע] [זיבוקנימ, פקת"ז]
Raziel ha-Malakh (The Angel Raziel) [collection of popular mystical texts] (Mińkowce, 1827)
42. והילא זב השמ יד שדיו, פסוי וטייופ, **תישאר המכה רצקה**, [רסומ] [זיבוקנימ, עקת"ב]
 Eliyahu ben Moshe Di Vidash, Yosef Poito, *Reshit Khokhma ha-Katsar* (Basis of Wisdom. Brief Version) [Jewish ethic book] (Mińkowce, 1832)
43. **רוזחמ מע שטייט לכמ הנשה** (זיבוקנימ, ?)
Makhzor Im Taytsh mi-Kol ha-Shana (?) (Prayerbook for the Whole Year with Yiddish translation) (Mińkowce, ?)

Appendix

2

Count Ignacy Ścibor Marchocki

Law of the town of Minkovtsy

(Given in the hereditary town Minkovtsy on December 29, 1791)

Section 6. On the Jews in the same town

1. Residing in Minkovtsy, the Jewish community must have, similarly to Christian townspeople, a special book kept in the Magistrate, and there all Jewish residents should be carefully registered by their names and nicknames. All cases (except for spiritual and divorce-related cases, which may only be resolved at the rabbis') are to be totally dependent on the magistrate, and must be resolved in due jurisdictions, selected in accordance with the type of the case, and there one should insist on a sentence passed by the court, for which the governing council of the community or the general meeting of Jews annually select among them two just and prudent housekeepers, and on the day of elections to the presidium of the magistrate they are presented to the town manager to be registered in the minutes. These selected ones must be present on behalf of the Jews and the governing council of the community at all gatherings, town meetings, in order to defend and support the interests of the Jews and express their opinion on general resolutions concerning the course of dealing, and sign them; and the resolutions which will be signed by these two delegates will have the effect with respect to the Jews as well, and the Jews must fulfil them.
2. In the cases between a Jew and a Jew, similarly to those between a Christian and a Jew they, if they want, may be present and express their opinion, and if they do not take part, the case will be resolved and a sentence will be passed; but if these representatives want to be present at this, they will not be able to appeal against it.
3. All Jews are provided with rights of all kinds in trade, every possible assistance and protection.
4. The greatest freedom and support will be available to those Jews who (having such an opportunity) will run trade, especially to those of them who will trade in big lots in bullocks, vodka, hides, honey, wax, fabrics and other local goods, and from this trade will bring money to his region; no less will it be available to wholesale merchants, trading abroad and bringing from there goods obtained first-hand.
5. The magistrate will impose such an order with respect to the Jews so that one will not disturb the other in the way of life, and so that one will not intrude in the trade of the other; for this appropriate services will see that wholesale merchants do not sell goods in fore-arms and pounds, but exclusively in wholesale quantities, pieces, metric centners; those who trade in broadcloth will not have *blavats*, likewise those who keep *blavats* will not trade in broadcloth, the spices shop must not have clothes and etc., in short, every merchant trades in the kind of goods he registers,

for example, a wine seller, an iron seller, a spices seller, a seller of fur clothes, a broadcloth seller, a seller of *blavats*, a seller of haberdashery, a glass seller, etc.

6. A distinction must be maintained: the true merchant is a wholesale trader selling goods in bulk, bought first-hand, and the one who buys goods from other merchants is a semi-merchant, and there are also store-keepers.
7. I also allow the Jews, without any restrictions, to run inns upon the official propination, and sell honey, beer, and vodka and other beverages in them; however, these traders will not enjoy the same respect as trading merchants and cannot expect the same attitude towards them.
8. With respect to construction, the same rights are granted to them as to Christian townspeople (as pointed out in Section 2, points 4, 5, 6 for Christian townspeople), with the substitution of the land tax for the poll-tax.
9. Jewish bakers and slaughterers may openly and freely perform their work without anybody's interference, as well as sell their merchandise.
10. Production is not allowed for the Jews, skilled at other crafts, as not belonging to the workshops and untrained, and is strictly prohibited, except for those items which are of need to the Jews themselves – this they may produce and repair.
11. The Jews have no right to use and grant any titles, such as rabbis etc., without obtaining for that purpose privileges of the owner.