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## Disenfranchised Jews in Ukrainian SSR in 1920s – early 1930s: Unknown Pages

**Abstract.** *The purpose of the article is to demonstrate promising areas of research on disenfranchised Jews in the Ukrainian SSR in the 1920s and early 1930s based on archival materials analyzed by the author before the full-scale war between Russia and Ukraine. The author explores the relationship of ethnicity and the employment structure of the Jewish population in Ukrainian SSR with the disenfranchisement, reveals the main actors - declassed Jews, the reasons for their disenfranchisement, mistakes and abuses of the authorities in disenfranchisement, the impact of disenfranchisement on economic and social life, strategies of Jewish resistance to the situation in which they find themselves. The research methodology is based on the analysis of primary sources - archival documents of the archives of Ukraine (TsDAVO of Ukraine and the State Archives of the city of Kyiv), which have never been introduced into scientific circulation. The scientific novelty of the article is determined by the lack of thorough studies of Jewish disenfranchised Ukrainian SSR, since the main attention of scientists is focused on the study of the RSFSR. The author demonstrates his vision regarding the connection of ethnicity, territory and employment of the Jewish population with the number of disenfranchised persons as well as on the methodology of their calculation. The article highlights factors that could contribute to the significant size of this group - the traditional employment of Jews in trade and handicrafts in the Pale of Settlement during the Russian Empire, the continuation of this tradition during the NEP, denunciations, settlement of accounts with Jews by local activists and the poor, anti-Semitism. The article describes a campaign to resettle disenfranchised residents of Kyiv from the housing stock, as a result of which many Jews were evicted from their apartments, as well as various cases of arbitrariness of local authorities. The author shows the attempts of the Jews to fight for the restoration of voting rights, as well as the results of this process.*

**Key words:** disenfranchised, *lishentsy*, Jews, USSR, Ukrainian SSR, voting rights

**The Problem Statement.** A number of works have recently been published on various aspects of the establishment and functioning of the totalitarian regime in the USSR, including the methods used by the Soviet authorities to exclude certain social strata and groups from active participation in political and public life. An element of this system was the construction of the category of the "disenfranchised" (*lishency*), who were people deprived of electoral rights. The British sociologist E.H. Carr made a detailed analysis of this typically Soviet tool of social engineering [Fox, 1985, p.1-16]. Nevertheless, a number of serious issues require more detailed study, in particular the link with ethnicity, the regional context of deprivation of electoral rights, etc.

The life of disenfranchised Jews in the USSR and Soviet republics, particularly in Ukrainian SSR, has not been thoroughly investigated. Existing literature is fragmentary and provides a number of facts, which, however, does not allow to restore the real situation in the USSR and Soviet Republics, particularly Ukrainian SSR, in the 1920s - early 1930s. This actualizes necessity to fill this research gap.

**The Purpose of the Article.** The ultimate purpose of this paper is to outline of promising areas of research on disenfranchised Jews in the Ukrainian SSR in the 1920s and early 1930s. According to the census of the USSR conducted in 1926, Jews made up 5.43% of the entire population of the Ukrainian SSR [Всесоюзный перепись людности 1926 року, 1926, с.8]. We consider this article as the first exploration, based on an initial study of a number of archival documents that we managed to study and analyse before the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022, when Ukrainian archives were open to the public. Although they do not make it possible to fully reconstruct the situation with deprived Jews, they give an idea of some trends, facts and phenomena that may become the subject of a deeper scientific search in the future.

**The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches.** The main attention of Ukrainian scholars who study the phenomenon of disenfranchisement focuses on several aspects. Main target groups of analysis are peasants (G. Starodubets, V. Starodubets, S. Markova) and priests (A. Kiridon, T. Yevseeva). The problem of disenfranchisement is seen primarily in the context of the formation of the

Soviet political system and relevant legislation (S. Meshkova, S. Markova, S. Biloshatskyi). Special attention should be paid to I. Shcherbyna's research on the eviction of nepman (name of entrepreneurs in the Soviet Union during the implementation of the New Economic Policy), who were usually deprived, from their housing in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The author does not mention Jews but procedure of eviction was the same for people of all ethnic groups (Щербина, 2014, с.34-39). Extensive material regarding the historical context of disenfranchisement, its causes, implementation mechanisms and consequences represent the literature dedicated to the NEP (A. Chesnokov, V. Tarasenko, I. Orlov, Sh. Fitzpatrick, Alan M Ball, Schiffer J.R. etc.).

During last decades, the institution of disenfranchisement in Soviet Russia experienced a real research boom among modern Russian scientists. Historians and lawyers using material from Russian archives reconstructed the policy of the state in relation to those deprived of voting rights, the features of its implementation in various regions, analyzed the legal status of this group, the social appearance of various groups and categories of the dispossessed, their behavior, life strategies and the process of adaptation in Soviet society have been studied (N. Fedorova, V. Parkhomov, N. Salamatova etc.).

Many Western researchers consider the deprivation of certain social groups of voting rights mainly through the prism of political repression, Soviet totalitarianism and the history of Stalinism (Sh. Fitzpatrick, G. Baron, S. Merle etc.). One of the best-known scholars who has studied disenfranchisement in the USSR is Golfo Alexopoulos, due to the astounding number of personal files the author collected from Russian archives, creating a database covering the entire Soviet Union. The results of their analysis are represented in a number of publications of the author [Golfo, 2003]. A team of Russian researchers led by Vladimir Tikhonov conducted an equally impressive study, but on a much more limited territory, in Moscow and the Moscow region [Тихонов В.И., Тяжелникова В.С., Юшин И.Ф., 1998]. They also proposed a highly sophisticated statistical treatment of their database. Nathalie Moine was given the right to use this database by this Russian team. Her own research illuminates social situations and long-term trajectories on an individual basis combined with collective group studies [Moine, 2001]

Certainly, these and many other research works are valuable in terms of reconstructing the situation in the Soviet Union as a whole and in the metropolitan region, identifying certain trends and the place of the deprived in the structure of Soviet society, individual survival strategies. While appreciating the contribution of the above scholars to the study of the disenfranchised in the USSR, it should be noted, however, that they were conducted in Russian archives and focused on the disenfranchised who lived, first, mainly in large cities, and, second, in the territory of Russia. The absence of the regional context somewhat limits the field of research, especially taking into account that historically, since the time of the Russian Empire, most Jews have lived in Ukraine, Lithuania and Belarus, which were part of the Pale of Settlement, where it accounted for more than 10% of the population [Константинов, 2007 с.16]. The existing publications also do not explore the link between deprivation of liberty and ethnicity, focusing on the class characteristic of disenfranchisement. In this article we will attempt to fill an existing academic gap and show one of the perspectives for further research into the institution of deprivation in the USSR. Our study is based on the analysis of documents from the Ukrainian archives of DAKO and TsDAVO, which have not yet been introduced into scientific circulation.

**The Results of the Research.** After the end of the civil war in Russia and the "Red Terror", which destroyed the obvious enemies of the Soviet government, it began to reshape of Soviet society by restricting some groups of population in civil rights, including voting rights. Those deprived of voting rights were one of the most massive groups of the population in the USSR that were subjected to various harassments and even repressions in the 1920s and 1930s.

Nathalie Moine considers that disenfranchisement measure was originally designed as a way of marking out and removing from public life all those who the Bolsheviks, once in power, did not want around but whose physical elimination they were unable to order. The founding principle of disenfranchisement was to outlaw all those whose income was deemed to be incompatible with the functioning of the new Soviet society, as well as the former elite of the old regime [Moine, 2001, p.90]. Legal inequality, manifested in the disenfranchisement of citizens, was a clear manifestation of the class approach to the formation of institutions of power.

The institution of "disenfranchisement" existed from 1918 to 1936. The 1918 constitution of the RSFSR (Article 65) gives a first outline of the categories of persons who were subjected to disenfranchisement which included: 1) former members of the Tsarist police and former members of the royal family; 2) former members of the clergy; 3) persons who drew their income from a private business or as an intermediary; 4) persons who hired a salaried employee in pursuit of profit; 5) persons who lived on income not earned from work: rent, annuities, and so forth; 6) the mentally ill; 7) persons who were serving certain sentences [Конституция, 1918].

The 1924 instruction, for example, included all "exploiters" irrespective of the time they were engaged in the exploitation. The scope or criteria of trade and unearned income were not specified in

the instruction, so absolutely everyone fell within its scope: from the smallest traders to former industrialists. The instruction of 1926 disenfranchised peasants and artisans who employed hired labour, except in specially defined cases, as well as all private traders, regardless of the class of the patent they chose, clergymen and church staff which widened the circle of disenfranchised persons considerably. The 1930 instruction defined following persons who belonged to the group of those used hired labor: owners of commercial and industrial enterprises, those who hired out agricultural machinery, those who leased land, etc. The lack of clear criteria for categorising persons as "exploiters" and those who lived on unearned income led to a rather broad interpretation of the range of persons who were disenfranchised [Саламатова, 2018, с.128-140].

For instance, electoral commission of the Ukrainian city Mariupol distinguished the following groups of deprived persons: "shopkeepers and former shopkeepers, former whites, deprived of [rights] by the court, mentally ill, dependents of the deprived, persons who used hired labor, persons who lived on non-labor income, cult servants, prisoners" [ЦДАВО, Ф.413, оп.1, спр.478, с.21]. Many members of artels and craftsmen were also included in this category [ЦДАВО, Ф.413, оп.1, спр.478, с.41]. One can see that this group includes the category of "dependants of the deprived", which included their family members. This was done illegally, as central government instructions did not determine such a category. This also applies to members of the artels. Secretary of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR A.S. Yenukidze wrote to Joseph Stalin in 1930 that "in the same way, not only adults and children of the disenfranchised who have an independent income, but also their other relatives are deprived of voting rights just because they live in the same apartment with the them" [Докладная записка, 1930]. Therefore, one should conclude that the practice has significantly expanded the categories of persons deprived of voting rights. Members of the commissions tried to find out from higher authorities who should have been included in the deprivation of liberty category, but did not always receive answers to their requests, so they often acted at their own discretion.

Regarding the number of disenfranchised in the USSR and Soviet Republics, including Ukraine, both in general and for individual nationalities, there are no truly reliable statistics that would give the exact number of disenfranchised since their centralized accounting was not kept. Only limited data is available, and it is of questionable accuracy. Elena Shkolnikova writes that by 1930 there were about a million declassified Jews in the USSR, that is, a third of the Jewish population [Школьникова, 1996]. Gennadiy Kostyrchenko believes that Jews made up 29% of disenfranchised persons in Ukraine [Костырченко, 2003, с.101].

It should be borne in mind that different regions of Ukraine had different numbers of Jews, so when analysing the statistics, the correlation between the proportion of the Jewish population in the concrete location and the proportion of the deprived should obviously be taken into account. For example, 197428 Jews lived in the Left Bank sub-district, 682812 in the Right Bank sub-district [Всесоюзная перепись населения 1926 года. Том XII, с.9, 282], 1574391 in the Polissia sub-district [Всесоюзный перепись людности 1926 року. Том XI, 1929, с.8], 384179 in the Stepove sub-district, 1122568 in the Dnipropetrovsk sub-district, and 40710 in the Hirnychnyi-Promyslov sub-district [Всесоюзная перепись населения 1926 года. Том XIII, 1929, с.8, 243, 336]. It can be assumed that in areas with a higher proportion of the Jewish population, there were more Jews who were deprived of their liberty. The same rule was evidently true in territories where traditionally many Jews were engaged in trade and craftsmanship. We would like to demonstrate this hypothesis using the example of the town of Mariupol.

**Table 1. Composition of deprived in Mariupol in 1930<sup>1</sup>**

[Всесоюзная перепись населения 1926 года. Том XIII (1929), с.6; ЦДАВО, ф. 413, оп.1, спр.478, с.21].

Ethnicity	Share of the total population	The share of disenfranchised of the total number of disenfranchised	The share of disenfranchised to the total number of ethnic group living in the city
Ukrainians	32,8%	22,5%	6,8%
Russians	35,3%	35,2%	9,9%
Jews	17,7%	29,3%	16,3%
Greeks	10%	8,7%	8,2%
Other	4,2%	4,7%	2,1%

<sup>1</sup> This table was compiled by the author on the basis of data from the Mariupol Election Commission for 1930 and the USSR census of 1926. Although there is a difference between these events, we assume that from 1925 to 1930 the number of Mariupol population did not change much.

As we can see, although the Jews constituted only a third of the city's population, the number of deprived Jews was the largest in proportion to their numbers. A legitimate question arises: why? Has the same correlation existed elsewhere?

An analysis of the electoral legislation in the USSR during the interwar period indicates that disenfranchisement occurred on a social basis, and not on an ethnic basis. We assume that it was precisely the structure of the employment of the Jewish population in the Russian Empire and the USSR in the 1920s that led to a large number of deprived Jews, perhaps even more than among other nationalities. In the Russian Empire, Jews were forbidden to own land. According to Blank, at the beginning of the 20th century, 38.65% of them were engaged in trade, and 35.43% - handicrafts and handicrafts [Бланк, 1908, с.12-13]. It can be assumed that many of them used hired labor, therefore they fell under the category of "exploiters". The same applies to the category of persons who, during the time of the NEP in the USSR, were engaged in trade and various intermediary operations (most likely, many of them had such experience during the time of the Russian Empire). For instance, in Mariupol the largest group of deprived consisted of shopkeepers (70%) and members of their families (dependents of the dispossessed) - 14% [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, снр.478, с.21]. All these people were declassified. In the documents of the and the The Central Committee of National Minorities under the All-Ukrainian Central Committee as well as of other organisations which were involved in the adjustment of different issues deals with Jews, we often met the term "Jewish declassified poor", which leads us to think about the large size of this group. One example: out of 32,000 artisans in the Vinnytsia district, 12,000 belonged to the declassified poor [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, снр. 474, с.71].

The group of Jewish craftsmen was also large and, according to the 1926 electoral instructions, artisans were classed as deprived. On the one hand, historically there were many artisans among the Jews. Thus, in 1897, only in three provinces of the Russian Empire - Kyiv, Volyn and Podolsk, there were 120,971 Jewish handicraftsmen, there were more of them throughout the country [Марголин, 1910, с.11-12]. On the other hand the ORT documents show that in the 1920s the situation of many Jews was so desperate that they would take any job they wanted, even unknown ones [ДАКО, Ф.3669].

In 1926, there were 1 574 100 Jews who lived in Ukraine. According to official information, artisans consisted 19% of all self-employed Jews - 154 493 persons. The structure of this group was following: handicraftsmen - singles – 79 791 persons (51,7%), handicraftsmen using hired labor – 9 509 persons (6, 1%), handicraftsmen using the help of family members and members of artels – 21 281 persons (13,8%), family members helping handicraftsmen in their work – 15 919 persons (10,3%). In addition, there were: workers in the handicraft industry – 23 618 people (15,28%) and office clerks in the handicraft industry – 4 378 people (2,83%) [Еврейское население в СССР, 1932, с.13]. According to ORT data, in 1926, there were 154496 Jewish handicraftsmen in the Ukrainian SSR, 19301 of them used hired labor [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, снр. 474, с.13]. In the Soviet electoral instructions, only artisans using hired labor were classified as dispossessed, but given the lack of clear criteria (for example, whether family members should be classified as exploited), we can assume that in fact their number was much higher.

The attitude of the Soviet authorities towards all artisans was ambivalent. On the one hand, they were poor laborer, i.e. they produced their own products, on the other hand, they were owners of tools, means of production and the goods produced. Accordingly, all artisans were divided into three groups, depending on the use of hired labor and four groups depending the turnover of money. Although these groups were treated differently, many artisans, including Jews, suffered from arbitrariness of authorities and unlegislated or additional taxation as we showed above. For example, single artisans from the town of Chornobyl, Kyiv district, appealed to the Main Bureau of the Jewish Section at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine about the arbitrariness of the local financial inspector, who decided to illegally tax them and demanded to take a patent of the 2nd grade and pay large taxes [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, снр. 78, с.5-6]. After the end of the NEP, this artisan and many others who found themselves in a similar situation could also be disenfranchised, since the transition to a patent of this level could be interpreted as (non-state) trading. Given the above arguments, as well as the fact that a certain group of people worked in the shadows and did not advertise their activities, we conclude that the number of declassified Jews among Jewish craftsmen and artisans was significant.

Soviet legislation established a clear list of rights that were additionally (except for electoral rights) deprived of the mentioned categories of the population, these are following: trade union membership, the right to be in agricultural cooperatives, to participate in the governing and auditing bodies of consumer cooperatives. In practice, however, the disenfranchised were equated to the non-labour category of the population. The loss of voting rights meant a number of serious restrictions in the social, economic and domestic spheres. Alexander Golfo named them "Stalin's outcasts" [Golfo, 2003].

Even representatives of the Soviet authorities themselves recognized this fact. Thus, Avel Enukidze in the Report of the Secretary of the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR stated to Josef Stalin on March 1, 1930, the following: "Recently we noticed a non-class approach to the compilation of lists of persons deprived of voting rights... other motives that have nothing common with class attitudes often guide local authorities. The result is a direct distortion of the directives of the Party and the government, the struggle is not focused on the real class enemies; the blows of wrong practice are directed at loyal citizens only for personal, quarrelsome reasons... Disenfranchised are additionally subjected to such measures that not only do not allow them to return to working life, but put them and their families in an absolutely hopeless situation" [Докладная записка, 1930].

Especially severe were the economic restrictions - inability to find a job, loss of pensions and other social benefits, increased tax burden. For example, citizen Shevakh Rogovyi from Fastiv was excluded from the members of the artel of the disabled "Our Victory" only because he was deprived of voting rights [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр.479, с.41]. So, he could not receive pension from the state and earn money for living.

The practice of disenfranchising the children and relatives of deprived persons who lived in the same apartment was widespread in many areas, resulting in a significant increase in the number of disenfranchised persons. Children of such persons were immediately expelled from schools and other educational institutions. Despite the resolution of the RSFSR Council of People's Commissars of 31 January 1930, abolished this order, it seems that it was not always implemented [Докладная записка 1930].

For example, the Regional Bureau of National Minorities at the Proskuriv Regional Executive Committee sent a number of materials to the Central Committee of National Minorities at the Central Executive Committee, which stated that the former chairman of the Felshtyn Eurada (Proskuriv district), citizen Huberman is a *kurukl*, a bribe-taker, an element alien to the Soviet government. In its letter, the Proskuriv committee, noting that the daughter of Huberman is studying at the Kharkiv Medical Institute, asked the central authority to take appropriate measures and exclude her from the Medical Institute as the daughter of kulak-nepman parents [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр.479, с.183].

The 1926 instruction did not contain any guidelines on the eviction of disenfranchised people from municipal buildings. Even the resolution of the Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR of 8 April 1929, "On restricting the residence of persons of non-labour categories in municipalised houses and on the eviction of former landlords" directly stated that "deprivation of voting rights in itself is not a ground for administrative eviction, if the persons deprived of voting rights..." are not former homeowners and do not have an income of more than 3,000 rubles per year [Докладная записка, 1930]. However, in practice, such evictions actually became the norm of life throughout the USSR and in Ukraine in particular.

The sharpness of the housing crisis, especially during industrialisation and the desire to encourage the nepmans to invest in housing construction, contributed to the expansion of this practice. The experts of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Ukrainian SSR (NKVD) calculated that in the biggest cities of the Republic more than 4000 families of the nepman and other unemployed were to be forcibly evicted: in Kharkov - more than 4000, in Kiev - more than 5100 and at least several thousand in Odessa [Щербина, 2014, с.35].

According to data from the Kyiv City Council, in 1928/1929, there were 36434 disenfranchised persons of all nationalities 6 шь 1930-1931 - 11000. This group consisted of 18630 men and 17844 women; 16678 of them lived from hired labour, 354 hired labour in previous years. This group included 444 merchants and clerks of the Russian Empire, 8387 family members of the disenfranchised persons in [Державний архів м.Києва. Фонд Р-1, оп.1, спр. 3825, с.40]. As for Moscow, there were 80000-90000 disenfranchised of all nationalities in 1929, 49923 at the beginning of 1930 and 24749 at the beginning of 1931 [Moine, 2001, p. 93].

As for Jews, by the time of the 1930-1931, out of 140256 Jews lived in Kyiv, 94949 persons had the right to vote [Державний архів м. Києва, Ф. Р-1, оп.1, спр. 3825, с.40-41]. However, the exact number of Jews who were deprived cannot be determined, as there is no information on the number of children and adolescents who were not allowed to vote.

In the second half of the 1920s, a campaign on eviction of the disenfranchised nepmans from their homes (and not just the nationalised ones) started. A number of Soviet decrees provided grounds for the eviction campaign.

The eviction campaign in Kyiv peaked in 1930. The central headquarter and four district headquarters, which co-ordinated the activities of special teams of 5-7 people each were set up for this purpose. These brigades were authorized to survey the housing stock and forward their results to the district headquarters, which in turn forwarded them to the central headquarter which had to make decisions on the eviction of the proposed persons. Central headquarter forwarded proposals to the institutions that had jurisdiction over the houses - the Housing Association, the Housing Construction

Department or the Office of Military Houses. They instructed the house managers to file an eviction suit in court. Eviction took place by the court decision.

In total, 265 brigades numbering 1600 people were founded in Kyiv. As of 27 January 1930, 176 brigades had completed their work, inspecting 1122 housing cooperatives, 42 communal houses, 275 private tenants' premises - a total of 1439 houses. The persons, who, according to the brigades, were subject to eviction, were registered: "almost certain - 747 people, those subject to review - 405, in total 1152 people."

Given some names mentioned in the archival documents, it can be assumed that there were many Jews among the candidates for eviction. Although at this stage we have not been able to establish a detailed profile of these individuals, some quotes from the brigades' documents allow us to establish their line of work. For instance, "in the Leninsky district, there were following persons: citizen Zorokhovich, deprived of voting rights, a foreign exchange worker, a clerk on General Trepov's estate during Russian Empire, who received money from abroad and was characterized as a fictitious dependent; a citizen Brynos, a collective factory worker, a non-labour element, deprived of voting rights; a citizen Tartakovsky, who was always trading with a 3rd grade (so he was considered a nepman) and hid this behind a membership card of Handicraft Credit Society "Kustpromkredit"; citizen Karant, who used to have a shop, was deprived of voting rights and [during the survey] hid behind a membership in the artel "Nova Zarya"; citizen Ginzburg - a relative of the former owner of the house that was surveyed, a non-native element who caught up to the union "Gobmys", whose husband has been purged from power; citizen Pargament, who has been purged from power, embezzler, "nestled" element; citizen Smolkin, a non-labour element, deprived of voting rights, who worked for his son, who has an iron trade in Yevbaz market; citizen Shilkrot, who has been purged from the artel as a speculator, deprived of voting rights; citizen Champaner, who had "all the time" (apparently during the NEP) three workers, and during the survey was a "fictitious peasant".

The following persons are mentioned in Zhovtnevyi district: G.V. Shvartsman, deprived of voting rights, a former meat trader, at the time of the survey a member of the RTS union, who worked in Sorobkop and whose whole family was deprived of voting rights; citizen Miretsky, a trader of the 3rd category until 1926 who was convicted of flour speculation in 1928 and in 1929, then became a peasant and had no voting rights. At the same time, one of his daughters, C.H. Myretska, was a Komsomol member, and the second daughter was an employee in the Paper Industry".

It was also stated that many people had debts for utilities. According to the report, there were "cases of arrears in rent, mainly among persons of non-labour categories". For instance, at 40 Neronovycha street, there lived citizens: Kobernik, who worked as a farmer and owed 701 rubles as of 1.1.1930, as well as a citizen Steinhof, the owner of a lodging house, whose debt amounted to 98 rubles, 68 kopecks." [Державний архів м.Києва, Фонд Р-1, оп.1, спр. 1654, с.1-5].

These quotes also demonstrate some of the survival strategies of the deprived Jews. We are referring to participation in "useful public work", as well as to joining trade unions or various artels and thereby conceal their past or change their social status.

Reports of the commissions noted that "the brigades were very successful in involving the working people in the identification of ... even those who had managed to change their colours, even to join trade unions and obtain voting rights. Especially many of them were found among artisans". Significant assistance to the work of the brigades provided the "working activists of the housing and communal fractions", which obviously included workers, party members, workers of Soviet state institutions.

However, there were also cases of opposition to the eviction companies as some homeowners or management of houses openly ignored the requirements to indicate the "non-labour element" and persons to be resettled. Thus, it was stated that "the list of disenfranchised persons was not provided to the brigade in the residential complex at 5/7 Kommunisticheskaya street, and in general its management did not facilitate the work of eviction team". Insufficient "attentiveness and persistence" in the eviction of non-labour elements was noted in the housing offices at Pyatakov, Engels 16, Revolution 32, Franko 26 streets and in the communal house at 25 October Street 16-18 [Державний архів м.Києва, Фонд Р-1, оп.1, спр. 1654, с.6-7].

However not only disenfranchised Jews living in cities were evicted from their housing. In rural areas, the space for violations was much greater. An analysis of archival documents does not always make it possible to determine whether such an eviction was "legal" or an abuse of power by the local authorities but it demonstrates results of this process.

Desperate evictees sent telegrams or appeals to the Central Committee of National Minorities under the All-Ukrainian Central Committee and other institutions in order to correct the injustice. One of such telegrams wrote following: "Seventeen Jewish families of Shpikov of Tulchinsky district by the order of the district executive committee on March 10, are evicted from their homes. The property was sold. Doomed to starvation. The lack of vacant apartments in the town will force us with young children to wander on the street." [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр. 526, с.17].

What were the main reasons for the eviction? The first is affiliation to the groups of anti-Soviet elements determined by the Soviet regulations. The second is arrears in payment of utility bills. The third is non-payment of taxes. For example, citizen Natanzon from Bila Tserkva district complained to the Central Committee of the National Minorities about the sale of his property for non-payment of taxes [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 526, с.17]. It should be taken into account that the payment of taxes was often awarded illegally. This refers to cases when single artisans who produced and sold their products themselves (according to the patent of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade) were forced to take a patent of the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and pay tax on turnover [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp.479, с.84] as well as peasants farms, including medium-sized ones, which were taxed multiply by self-taxation. Obviously, this category included Abram Goldovsky, who was disabled and had no left hand. Despite this the head of village council took away 2 cows, 3,5 poods of flour and 4 poods of millet [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp.479, с.108].

Fourthly, according to a resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR issued 30 July 1931, all premises where trade had previously taken place should be transferred to cooperative organizations. However, owns of many businesses allowed during NEP often lived there and had nowhere to live after eviction. Leiba Morgulis fell under this article [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp.576, с.5-6, 10].

Quite often representatives of local authorities settled scores with their fellow villagers, especially if they were engaged in trade, craftsmanship, leased mills or shop premises before or after the 1917 revolution. For example, the village council of Chernyakhiv (Volyn) did not want to consider the case of Borys Yel'evych Vaksman only because he was away on business in Kharkiv during the investigation of his deal. At the same time, he and Feldman Musiy Shayevech were illegally deprived of voting rights only because their parents were traders [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 478, с.28-35].

This case demonstrates that quite often there was an unhealthy atmosphere on the ground - there were frequent cases of settling accounts, denunciations, which can be explained by envy, a desire to get rid of neighbors or get their property. For example, village council of Nova Ushitsa completely ignored the government's directives and systematically refused to restore the rights of the declassified Jews. The district executive committee was even forced to allocate a special commission to find out the reasons for the mass refusal to restore voting rights [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 478, с.40-41]. Leiba Duvidovich Roitman complained that the head of the Tovorski village council decided to take away his house and give it to his father. To do this, he was illegally overtaxed that resulted the impossibility to pay this "debt" [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 576, с.20].

Nathalie Moine that explored cases of moscovites who fought for the restoration of their rights, stated that 7,7% of the dossier of disenfranchised contained various denunciations [Moine, 2001, p.108-110]. Based on the documents we analyzed, it is impossible to determine the role of denunciations and anti-Semitism in disenfranchisement, which requires additional research. Given the manifestations of anti-Nisemitism during the wave of Jewish pogroms in Ukraine in the early 1920s, we can assume that these factors played an important role in such decisions of local election commissions and entailed a number of other abuses. However, unintentional mistakes have also been made in decision-making. For example, by 1930, 167 people (4.08%) were unjustly and wrongly deprived of their voting rights in Mariupol [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 478, с.21].

The mechanism for the reinstatement of rights was fixed in Soviet legislation. As Aleksander Golfo notes, it sought to transform Soviet aliens into laboring elements and useful, loyal to Soviet power citizens [Golfo, 2003, p.31]. It was used partly in response to a significant increase in the number of disenfranchised in the late 1920s. Officially, outcasts could be reinstated in rights if they engaged in socially useful labor at least 5 years and demonstrated loyalty to Soviet power [Golfo, 2003, p.32]. Thus, on April 7, 1930, Gopin Aron was refused reinstatement of his voting rights on the grounds that he had not had 5 years of socially useful work and had earned a non-working income before 1928 [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, сnp. 478, с.8].

People developed different strategies of survival: fled to new regions, forged new identity papers or otherwise concealed their past. Many of them also tried to fight for restoration of their electoral rights and made (un)successful appeals for their reinstatement filling petitions for rehabilitation and deploying diversity of narratives strategies to vindicate themselves.

Sheila Fitzpatrick considers that the importance of petitions can be justified by the type of bureaucratic process established in the Soviet Union, which provided for the possibility of a formal appeal against even the most repressive measures [Fitzpatrick, 1997, p.80]. For researchers, such letters are a valuable source of information that allows to reconstruct partially the strategy of the struggle for the restoration of electoral rights, and in fact - for survival. Documents that we have found in the Ukrainian archives, support this thesis.

Decisions regarding the reinstatement of rights were made locally by the Soviet electoral commissions. Rejected petitions moved up the administrative hierarchy to the next electoral commission (Central Election Commission of Ukrainian SSR) for review. We found a number of

petitions and telegrams to the Central Committee of National Minorities under the All-Ukrainian Central Committee from Jews who complained on the unfair decisions of local electoral commissions [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр.576, с.2-5].

The rehabilitation of outcasts provided a vivid picture of the Soviet social-engineering project where all citizens had to work for the good of the state and build communism. The main condition for the restoration of voting rights was five years of productive work experience. However, it was quite difficult to get job for deprived persons and by the end of 1920s it was at all impossible.

The Resolution of the People's Commissariat of Labour of the USSR of 13 July 1929, forbade to register persons deprived of voting rights in the labour exchanges if they had been engaged in productive and socially useful work for less than five years and had not proved their loyalty to the Soviet government [Докладная записка, 1930]. Thus, a contradiction was formed - on the one hand, to regain voting rights it was necessary to have five years of work experience, and on the other hand, the disenfranchised persons were not registered at labour exchanges and could not get a job.

Many cases of disenfranchised persons were considered for a long time. The responsible authorities sent inquiries to the places of their (former) residence and demanded certificates about the applicants, which would confirm the right to the restoration of voting rights. The Central Committee of National Minorities under the All-Ukrainian Central Committee, whose responsibilities did not include the resolution of these issues, nevertheless took an active part in this process. Apparently, it was due to the large number of complaints, in particular from the Jews. However, local authorities often slow responded to the committee's requests. For example, representatives of the Central Committee of National Minorities under the All-Ukrainian Central Committee wrote four times to the Zolotonosha regional executive committee with a request to provide information about Aronska Malka Davidivna [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр. 478, с.9]. And it is not clear if it had received the feedback.

On 22 March 1930, the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee issued a secret resolution that allowed to restore the voting rights of certain categories of the declassified Jewish poor who had been engaged in trade in the past. Voting rights were also returned to former small traders who traded under patents of I and II grades, if they did not previously use hired labor and did not belong to the ministers of religious worship [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр. 478, с.16, 21-22].

Central Committee of the CPSU also issued a special order to return voting rights to Jews who traded in previous years on the 1st and 2nd grade and belonged to the declassified Jewish poor. This contributed to the revision of many cases and the restoration of the rights of a certain number of Jews. Apparently, this was due to the large number of Jewish declarants who had no means of subsistence. It is currently impossible to establish exact statistics, but it can be assumed that the number of Jews who were restored in their rights ranged from 10 to 30%. For example, in the Kamiansk district of Zaporizhzhia region their number was 34,9%, in Odesa district – 26,5%, in Mariupol – 22,9% (from 10.9% of the deprived who were restored in their rights), in Volyn - 30%, in Berdiansk district – 6,7% [ЦДАВО, Ф. 413, оп.1, спр.521, с.3]. Statistic from different districts is broadly similar and a certain difference most likely depends on the ethnic composition of the population.

**Conclusions.** Thus, it can be concluded that Jews made up a significant part of disenfranchised in the Soviet Union, including in the Ukrainian USSR, and experienced the same difficulties as representatives of other nationalities. However, many aspects require further in-depth research: finding out the objective number of Jews deprived of their voting rights and its connection with their place of residence, employment and ethnicity, compiling a social profile of the deprived, determining the role of anti-Semitism and denunciations in the deprivation of voting rights, comparing the situation with other Soviet republics, such as Russia and Belarus.

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**Безправні євреї в УРСР у 1920-х – на початку 1930-х років: невідомі сторінки**

**Анотація. Мета статті** – продемонструвати перспективні напрями дослідження євреїв-позбавленців в Українській РСР у 1920-х та на початку 1930-х років на основі архівних

матеріалів, проаналізованих автором до повномасштабної війни Росії та України. Автор досліджує зв'язок етнічності та структури зайнятості єврейського населення на території Української РСР з позбавленням виборчих прав, розкриває основних акторів – декласованих євреїв, причини їх позбавлення виборчих прав, помилки та зловживання влади у справі позбавлення виборчих прав, вплив позбавлення виборчих прав на економічне та соціальне життя та стратегії єврейського спротиву ситуації, в якій вони опинилися. **Методологія дослідження** заснована на аналізі першоджерел – архівних документів архівів України (ЦДАВО України та Державного архіву міста Києва), які ніколи не вводились у науковий обіг. **Наукова новизна** статті визначається відсутністю ґрунтовних досліджень євреїв-позбавленців Української РСР, оскільки основна увага вчених зосереджена на дослідженні РРФСР. Автор демонструє своє бачення щодо зв'язку етнічності, території та зайнятості єврейського населення з кількістю осіб, позбавлених виборчих прав та методології їх підрахунку. У статті виділяються фактори, які могли сприяти значній величині цієї групи – традиційна зайнятість євреїв торгівлею та ремісництвом у Смузі осіпості за часів Російської імперії, продовження цієї традиції за часів НЕПу, доноси, зведення рахунків із євреями місцевих активістів та бідняків, антисемітизм. У статті описується кампанія з переселення безправних мешканців Києва з житлового фонду, внаслідок якої багато євреїв було виселено зі своїх квартир, а також різні випадки свавілля місцевої влади. Автор показує спроби євреїв боротися за відновлення виборчих прав та результати цього процесу.

**Ключові слова:** позбавленці, євреї, СРСР, Українська РСР, виборчі права.

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