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JEWS FROM BESSARABIA IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE POLICIES IN THE XIX-TH CENTURY

SPECIALTY 611.02 – HISTORY OF ROMANIANS (PERIODS)

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CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

Relevance and Importance of the Topic Addressed. The 19th century is largely defining for the evolution of Bessarabia after 1900 and studying this period within the chronological limits of the years 1806, 1812–1900 offers an opportunity to elucidate the historical trajectory of this territory, as well as the processes that determined the development of the Bessarabian population. In our research, we observe that the Tsarist policy towards the Jewish population in the Russian Empire was a particular one, framed within a set of over 100 laws, mostly prohibitive, which in Bessarabia created a situation that fits into the Wallersteinian center-periphery paradigm, where the central government's policies were not implemented exactly at the periphery and led to a completely different evolution – though peripheral, it had in some respects more advantages.

We must point out that there have been few studies or monographs dedicated to the Jewish population that lived in the territory between the Prut and Dniester Rivers. Our study aims to fill this gap in the historiography that analyzes developments in Bessarabia during the 19th century, the laws adopted specifically for the purpose of homogenizing the population of Bessarabia and creating a uniform framework across the entire territory of the Russian Empire. It should be noted that, parallelly, we deduce a series of regularities in the state-population relationship, the bureaucratic regime, the interaction between civil servants and the state, between civil servants and various social categories, as well as the entire set of reports created by the functioning of Bessarabian society.

In the context of the "double disappearance of the Jews", a term used in German historiography to emphasize the massive emigration of Jews from the former USSR and at the same time the "disappearance" of their physical presence from former *locus vitae*, our research aims to contribute to the description of the historical trajectory of the space between the Dniester and Prut rivers throughout the 19th century, focusing specifically on the narrower segment of this history, namely the Jewish community.

This research allows us to observe the evolution of the Jewish community, the logic of the Russian legislator, and the Empire's intentions to manage certain aspects of the life of distinct denominations, as well as their impact on the broader population. The number of processes initiated by the central Tsarist authorities and their method of implementation at the local level demonstrates unexpected effects. As a result, the Jewish population in Bessarabia takes on a special character, influenced by the laws in effect and the degree to which they were implemented. Strange as it may seem, this character is also shaped by the particularities of the Jewish history in the Romanian space up until the Napoleonic wars.

It is indicative that Jews in Tsarist historiography have been subject to certain studies by contemporary authors who attempt to demonstrate a well-defined hypothesis, whether the Jews are seen as a foreign element with negative effects or, conversely, as a marginalized segment of society transformed by the legislative regime promoted by the Tsarist authorities. In Soviet historiography, specifically regarding the period under analysis, the Jewish element is deliberately downplayed. From this historiographical particularity, we can see the role of this research in elucidating the processes that took place in Russian society regarding this community, as part of the imperial policy of homogenization - a *melting pot*.

Another reason that directed us towards the study of the history of the Mosaic confession – a term, as we will see later, which cannot always be applied in our study because we observe a process of ongoing homogenization – is the transformation from the Jewish-Jew at the beginning of the 19th century to the Christian or Catholic Jew towards the end of that century.

The work also includes elements of the study of legal practice during the Tsarist period. An exhaustive analysis of the laws targeting all denominations within the Russian Empire, and especially those targeting the Jewish population, opens various aspects of the logic of the Russian legislator. By analogy, it also defines the Tsarist philosophy concerning the resolution of the" "Jewish question"– methods that ultimately led to what is known in historiography as the "pogrom."

We also address the practical side of the study by elucidating the causes of the Jewish pogroms that took place throughout the Russian Empire, uncovering previously unknown pages of anti-Jewish violence in Bessarabia, which point to processes that occurred during the Tsarist period.

The development of the Jewish community in Bessarabia, annexed by the Russian Empire, holds a particular interest for a better understanding of the historical course of the Prut-Dniester region. Although there have been some attempts to study the history of Jews in Bessarabia, most of them have focused on general aspects that were already known, leaving unexplored elements related to the Russian Empire's policies towards the Jews of Bessarabia, the educational and religious institutions of Bessarabian Jews, the exemption from military service in the Tsarist army, the processes of conversion from Judaism to Christianity, and the anti-Jewish pogroms at the end of the 19th century. These considerations make the subject still relevant and of heightened interest for study and analysis.

The importance of the researched topic lies in the impact of the Jewish community on the history of Bessarabia, as well as the contemporary relevance of the subjects addressed in today's societies. The presence of many Jews in Bessarabia generated significant developments for the territory and led to essential modernization processes, which had important repercussions on the history, economy, spiritual life, and cultural life of the region between the Prut and Dniester.

The aim of the thesis: The main aim of this doctoral thesis is to study the evolution of the Jewish community in Bessarabia during the Tsarist period and to present an analysis of its development in the territory between the Dniester and the Prut rivers, by clarifying and deepening the aspects related to the unique legal-coercive framework, with connections to the social, statistical, educational, spiritual, and charitable spheres.

Objectives of the thesis: To achieve the aforementioned goal, the following objectives were outlined:

- researching the historiography of the issue (sources, materials, narratives, and archival documents);
- analyzing records regarding Jews in the Romanian space; presenting population statistics and studying the demographic evolution of the Jewish population in Bessarabia throughout the 19th Century;

- analyzing the legislation of the Russian Empire applied to Jews during the 19th century, especially in Bessarabia;

- elucidating the particularities of the internal life of Jews in Bessarabia and the role of the community as a religious and legal entity;

- studying community life, the rules governing the functioning of religious institutions and the Jewish educational system in the Russian Empire;

- identifying aspects related to the military service of Jews in the Tsarist army;

- identifying the pretexts and causes that led to the anti-Jewish pogroms and their consequences.

Research Methodology. In our study, we have used several classical research methods, as well as some atypical ones for chronological studies. Among the methods applied were: the anachronic method, the deductive method, the inductive method, the critical method, the legal method, the typological method, the empirical method, the historical method, the structural-functional method, the comparative method, the statistical method, the systemic method, particularization and generalization, analogy, and others. The use of the mentioned methods allowed for the achievement of the goals and objectives of this doctoral thesis, marking the main general and particular processes. By extensively comparing different historical periods using the anachronic method and other classical methods, the expected results were obtained.

Research Hypothesis. Based on the analysis of primary documentary sources, period archival documents, and secondary historical sources, it stands out that the confessional policies of the Russian Empire towards Jews had a different impact on the Jewish population in Bessarabia. This aspect led to a later assimilation and created better conditions for the Mosaic faith than in other gubernias within the Permanent Residence Zone of the Jews (Jewish Zone). However, the legal-administrative and coercive framework applied by the Russian administration could not prevent the inclusion of the Jewish community in Bessarabia in one of the social upheavals of the Russian Empire – the pogroms.

Scientific Novelty and Originality. This is the first and unique work concerning the history of the Jews in Bessarabia during the 19th century. From the perspective of scientific novelty, the thesis presents an analysis of the existing materials on the subject and brings a series of unpublished archival documents, studying for the first time the stages and describing the evolution of the Jewish community in Bessarabia. It tracks the Jewish population throughout the 19th century, provides a pioneering analysis of the legislation adopted to promote certain policies towards this population, and identifies a series of peculiarities. Additionally, the study offers a fresh perspective on aspects of the spiritual and educational life of the Jewish population in Bessarabia, as well as the status of Jews in the Tsarist army.

The thesis analyzes for the first time in the historiography of the Republic of Moldova the root causes of early anti-Jewish pogroms. It also examines the evolution of the Jewish population through the lens of educational and religious institutions, an aspect that has not been addressed in historiography before. The scientific problem solved is the establishment

of the role of the Mosaic population in the evolution of the Bessarabia Governorate during the 19th century, with subsequent implications. Solving this allows for the investigation and creation of a new discipline – the history of the Jews in Bessarabia.

Scientific Problem Solved. Although there have been a few attempts to write the history of the Jews in Bessarabia from a general perspective, we note that historiography has mainly focused on the 1903 Chisinau Pogrom, while other aspects of the daily life and activities of the Jewish community have been left unstudied until now. The aforementioned attempts have left important details about the evolution of the Jewish community uncovered, leaving several areas of Jewish activity in Bessarabia outside of scientific research. Previous attempts to approach the history of the Jews in Bessarabia used a limited spectrum of period archival documents, resulting in an insufficient documentation of the subject and rendering any effort, even scientific, incomplete.

The proposed doctoral thesis, in contrast to previous efforts in national historiography, presents a thorough study of very important aspects of the evolution of the Jewish community in Bessarabia during the 19th century, such as the causes behind the settlement of the Jewish population in the territory between the Dniester and Prut rivers, the perception of the Jewish population, the number of Jewish community members throughout the 19th century, the legislation of the Russian authorities regarding Jews in the Empire and particularly in Bessarabia, the conversion of Jews to Christianity and the policies in this sphere, conscription of Jews into the Tsarist army, the religious and educational institutions in Bessarabia, and the existence and causes of anti-Jewish pogroms at the end of the 19th century.

Theoretical and Practical Value of the Thesis. The thesis creates a theoretical and methodological foundation for studying the social and confessional history of the Jews in Bessarabia, presenting for the first time the temporal, demographic, legal, and practical coordinates necessary for understanding the phenomenon of the Bessarabian Jew and their role in the history of Bessarabia and their influence on the course of general history through the lens of Tsarist policies. The work highlights a historical period and an important part of the historical process between the Prut and Dniester rivers that has been little studied until now, opening the mentioned topic for new investigations within the thematic area. Moreover, the doctoral thesis can serve as a methodological basis for a series of university courses on the confessional history of the Prut-Dniester space, and the obtained results can provide an impetus for new studies in the field of Judaic studies.

Main Scientific Results Presented for Defense. The thesis makes a major contribution to identifying the premises and circumstances of the establishment of the Jewish population in Bessarabia, the number of Jews in Bessarabia throughout the 19th century, and the statistics of the cities inhabited by them. Additionally, the research explains the imperial Russian policies toward the Jewish population, the distinct legislation, and the functioning of the Jewish community in Bessarabia in terms of its administrative, educational, religious, and charitable institutions. The thesis also clarifies the Russian Empire's attempts to stimulate the religious conversion of Jews to Christianity, the status of Jews in the Tsarist army, and the causes and consequences of anti-Jewish pogroms.

Implementation of Scientific Results. The material presented in the doctoral thesis can be used to develop university courses on the history of the Jews, as well as in courses on ethnopsychology, anthropology, and confessional history. Additionally, the information presented can serve as a source for deepening the study of Jewish history to enrich existing research on the history of Bessarabia.

Approval of Scientific Results. The thesis was discussed at the meeting of the Department of History of Romanians, Universal History, and Archaeology at the Faculty of History and Philosophy of the State University of Moldova, as well as at the meeting of the Scientific Seminar Profile 611.02 – History of Romanians (by periods) within the same institution. The scientific research results have been analyzed and presented in the form of communications at more than 30 national and international scientific meetings.

Publications on the Thesis Topic. The main topics addressed in the thesis were reflected in a monograph and in over 15 articles and abstracts, including 4 in peer-reviewed journals (category B), 6 in proceedings from more than 20 national and international conferences.

Volume and Structure of the Thesis. The doctoral thesis consists of an introduction, 4 chapters (one historiographical chapter and three general chapters), which are further divided into subchapters, conclusions at the end of each chapter, general conclusions, and recommendations, totaling 152 pages. The thesis also includes a bibliography of 212 titles, appendices (11 tables and a glossary of terms).

Keywords: *Jewish Zone, Jews, Bessarabia, Russian Empire, religious conversion, military service, kahal, rabbi, synagogue, heder, cantonists, baptism, pogrom.*

CONTENT OF THE THESIS

In the *Introduction*, the relevance and importance of the topic are presented, along with the purpose and objectives of the thesis, the scientific novelty of the results obtained, the theoretical significance, and the practical value of the work. The summary of the thesis sections is also provided.

1. THE JEWS IN BESSARABIA, HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE ISSUE AND HISTORICAL SOURCES

1.1. Historiography of the Issue.

The first chapter of the thesis deals with the historiography of the issue of Jews in Bessarabia. D. Cantemir's[1] work provides the first detailed description of the situation of Jews in historical Moldova, followed by the travel journal of P.Sumarokov[2] and P.Sviinin[3], which offers the first general characterization of the Jews in the localities between the Prut and the Dniester at the

[1] CANTEMIR, D. *Descrierea Moldovei.* Bucureşti: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România. 1973, 371 p.

[2] СУМАРОКОВ, П. *Путешествие по всему Крыму и Бессарабии в 1799 году. С историческим и топографическим описанием всех тех мест.* Москва: Университетской типографии, у Ридигера и Клаудия, 1800.[8], 238 с.

[3] СВИНЬИН, П. *Описание Бессарабской области, в 1816 году*. Записки Одесского общества истории и древностей. Т.6. Одесса, 1867, с. 175-323.

beginning of the 19th century, focusing on their origin and main economic occupations. From this perspective, the description (although general and occasionally subjective) of Bessarabian society in the late 1830s, as seen by the Russian official F.Wighel[4], is also of interest. During the same period, the Russian writer I. Yakovenko[5] provides an account of the economic occupations of the Jews, mentioning, alongside others, the not-so-honest methods they used in trade. This work reflects the prejudices common to that historiographical period. Similar accounts can be found in the works of the official I.Aksakov[6], as well as A.Skalkovski[7] and K.Hanatski[8]. Another representative of the Tsarist authorities, A.Zaşciuk[9], describes the historical and social conditions in Bessarabia in the 19th century, with a particular focus on the ethnic component. Works by the traveler A. Afanasiev-Ciujbinski[10] and the Russian official A.Schimdt[11] are also part of this category, although they are not significantly different from the perceptions of their contemporaries.

For a better understanding of the evolution of legislation in various spheres of activity of the Jewish population, the works of L. Bramson[12], M. Mysh[13], I. Kantorovich[14], M. Sukennikov[15] and Iu. Hessen in collaboration with V. Fridstein[16] and V. Laşkov[17] were very helpful.

Regarding Romanian historiography, until the First World War, at the end of the 19th century, the encyclopedic work of Z. Arbore[18], B. Duică[19], N. Iorga[20], and

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[4] ВИГЕЛЬ, Ф. *Замечания на нынешнее состояние Бессарабии (октябрь 1823)*, Изд. «Университетская типография Страстной Бульваръ», Москва, 1829.

[5] ЯКОВЕНКО, И. *Нынешнее состояние турецких княжеств Молдавии и Валахии и Российской Бессарабской области с картой; изображенное в письмах, с историческим и статистическим описанием сих земель, нравов, обычаев и домашнего быта тамошних жителей с росписями всех бывших доныне в Молдавии и Валахии господарей, и с объяснением разных чинов и их должностей* Соч. Санкт-Петербург: тип. А. Смирдина, 1828, 294 с.

[6] АКСАКОВ, И. *Записка о бессарабских раскольниках.* 1886. Disponibil: https://www.litres.ru/ivan-aksakov/zapiska-o-bessarabskih-raskolnikah/.

[7] СКАЛЬКОВСКИЙ, А. *Опыт статистического описания Новороссийского края*. Ч. I. География, этнография и народонаселение Новороссийского края. Одесса: Тип. Нитче, 1850.

[8] Х[АНАТСКИЙ], К. Статьи из Сорок. In: *Одесский вестник, 1859,* No 140, 141.

[9] ЗАЩУКЪ, А. *Матеріалы для географіи и статистики Россіи, Бессарабская область*, СПб, 1862.

[10] АФАНАСЬЕВ-ЧУЖБИНСКИЙ, А. *Поездка в Южную Россию. Очерки Днестра.* СПб. : [Тип. Мор. мин-ва], 1861-1863. Ч.2: 1863. [2], 438, p. 14.

[11] ШМИДТ, А. *Материалы для военной географии и статистики России, собранные офицерами Генерального штаба. Херсонская губерния.* Ч. 1. СПб: 1863, 632 с.

[12] БРАМСОН, Л. К истории начального образования евреев в России. СПб., 1896.

[13] МЫШЪ, М. *Руководство к Русским Законам о Евреяхъ, Изд. «Типо-литография М. П. Фроловой»,* издание II, 1898.

[14] КАНТОРОВИЧЪ, Я. *Законы о вере и веротерпимости: С прил. Свода разъясн. по кассац. решениям Сената. Сост. Я. А. Канторович. - Неофиц. изд. - Санкт-Петербург: Я.А. Канторович, 1899. -VI.*

[15] СУКЕННИКОВ, М., *Кишинев*. Berlin: Ed. Charlottenburg 2-Russiche Verlag, 1903.

[16] ГЕССЕН, Ю., ФРИДШТЕЙН В., Сборникъ законов о евреях с разъясненіеми по определениям Правительствующаго Сената и циркулярамъ Министерствъ. Тип. «М. Меркушева», СПб, 1904.

[17] ЛАШКОВ, Н. *Бессарабия к столетию присоединения к России 1812-1912 г. (Географический и историко-статистический обзор состояния края)*. Кишинев: Изд. «Типография Бессарабского Губернского Правления», 1912.

[18] ARBURE, Z. *Basarabia în secolul XIX*. Chişinău: Ed. “Litera”, 2001. (retipărită).

[19] BOGDAN-DUICĂ, G. *Românii şi Ovreii*., Bucureşti: Ed. „Tipografia Românească”, 1913.

[20] IORGA, N. *Evreii în ţerile noastre.* Librăriile SOCEC. Bucureşti, 1913.

E. Schwarzfeld[21] emerged. Even in the year of the Great Union, the work of L. Berg[22] stands out, describing Bessarabia from various perspectives. The book has a separate chapter on Jews and provides a relatively well-known description based on information from earlier works, without introducing any major new elements. However, the study includes the Jewish population within the Bessarabian context. From the interwar period, the research of Ş.Ciobanu[23] stands out, contributing to the study of historical, geographical, and statistical aspects, both at the regional level and in the capital, analyzing aspects regarding the Jewish population. Researchers L.Boga[24], I.Jalea[25], A.Boldur[26] are also notable.

From Soviet historiography, works from the "Moldovenist" school stand out, mainly by V.Kabuzan[27], V.Zelenciuc[28], C.Matei and V.Proca[29], who mostly summarize the existing population statistics from previous historiographical works.

A completely different perspective is found in Western historiography, with an important work explaining the phenomenon of Jewish military service in the Tsarist army, namely the book by E.Flisfih[30], A.Orbach[31] and P.Johnson[32].

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a real "explosion" of research on the history of Bessarabia in various historical periods can be observed, along with international studies targeting the era of the Russian Empire in various aspects. General works on the history of the Jews, written by R.Samuels[33] and Sh.Ettingher[34] are also part of this wave. It is precisely during this period that the first work exclusively presenting the history of the Jews in Bessarabia appears, authored by I. Pilat[35]. Also in the 1990s, E.Judge[36] describes, step by step, the events of 1903. Another work dedicated exclusively to the history of the Jews in Bessarabia is the one written by I.Korn[37].

Later, the Western researcher B. Nathans[38] describes the history of Russian Jews in a landmark work. Around the same period, one of the pioneers in the study of the history of Jews

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[21] SCHWARTZFELD, E. *Din istoria evreilor. Împopularea, reîmpopularea şi intemeierea tîrgurilor şi a tîrguşoarelor în Moldova.* Bucureşti: Uniunea Evreilor Pămînteni. 1914.
[22] БЕРГ, Л. *«Бессарабия». Страна – Люди – Хозяйство*. Петроград: Огни, 1918.
[23] CIOBANU, Ş. *Chişinăul*. Editura „Comisiunii monumentelor istorice, secţiunea Basarabia", Chişinău, 1925.
[24] BOGA, L. *Populaţia (etnografie şi statistică)*. f. e., Chişinău, 1926.
[25] JALEA, I. *Basarabia: Descrierea, Istoria, Unirea*, Chişinău: Editura "Logos", 1991. (retipărită).
[26] BOLDUR, A. *Istoria Basarabiei*. Bucureşti: Ed. „Victor Frunză", 1992. (retipărită).
[27] КАБУЗАН, В. *Народонаселение Бессарабской области и левобережных районов Приднестровья (конец XVIII-первая половина XIX в.*Кишинев: Штиинца, 1974.
[28] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В. *Население Бессарабии и Поднестровья в XIX веке*. Кишинев: Изд. «Штиинца», 1979.
[29] МАТЕЙ К., ПРОКА В. *География населения Молдавской ССР и демографические процессы*, Кишинев: Изд. «Штиинца», 1985.
[30] ФЛИСФИШ, Э. *Кантонисты*. Tel-Aviv: Effect Publishing. 1980.
[31] ORBACH, A. *The Russian-Jewish leadership and the pogroms of 1881-1882:The response from St.Petersburg*. 1984.
[32] JOHNSON, P. *A History of the Jews*. Harper & Row, 1987.
[33] СЭМЮЭЛС, Р. *По тропам еврейской истории*. Израиль: Изд. «Библиотека Алия», 1990.
[34] ЭТТИНГЕР, Ш. *Очерк истории еврейского народа*, Израиль: Изд. «Нешер», 1990.
[35] ПИЛАТ, И. *Из истории еврейства Молдовы*, Кишинев: Изд. «Картя Молдовеняскэ», 1990.
[36] JUDGE, E. *Easter in Kishinev: Anatomy of a Pogrom*. New York and London: New York University Press, 1992.
[37] КОРН, И. *Облик бессарабского еврейства*. Израиль: Изд. «Бейт Бессарабия», 2002.
[38] NATHANS, B. *Beyond the Pale. The Jewish Encounter with late Imperial Russia*. Un.California Press, 2002.

in Bessarabia, Y. Kopanski[39], undertook a research project on charitable organizations from the interwar period, based on unpublished archival documents. Since most of these organizations were founded in the 18th and 19th centuries, the information presented provides valuable material for drawing conclusions about this dimension of Jewish community life in Bessarabia.

In addition to E.Flisfih's work, previously mentioned, the subject of Jewish military service in the Tsarist army is very well illustrated by I.Petrovski-Shtern[40], who provides detailed descriptions of the realities faced by Jews enlisted in the Tsarist army, especially in the second half of the 19th century.

The analysis of religious conversions is thoroughly examined in the book by authors A.Buckser and S.Glazier[41], Sh.Dubnov[42], W.Brustein[43] who present the anti-Semitic policies of Tsarism and their direct impact on the lives and activities of Jews in the Russian Empire. Specific examples related to the Romanian space are exhaustively studied and presented by historian and researcher M. Ungureanu[44], who outlines the main reasons for apostasy and the implications of this process.

From a comparative perspective, A.Tikhonov's[45] work is of particular interest to our thesis, as it describes the policies of the Russian Empire toward various confessions (Catholics, Israelites, and Muslims), as well as the works of I.Bartal[46] and A.Miller[47], which examine the evolution of the Jewish community through major modernization processes in the Russian Empire. A micro-historical approach is also represented in the book on the history of Jews in the United Kingdom, edited by M.Leventhal și R.Goldstein[48], V.Levin, I.Lurie and O.Bludnitski[49].

Thus, the research of the aforementioned historiography has allowed for a better understanding of the processes within the Jewish community in Bessarabia throughout the 19th century.

1.2. Sources and Archives

In order to achieve the research objectives, our study relied particularly on both published historical sources (edited) and unpublished documents, which enabled us to trace the historical de-

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[39] КОПАНСКИЙ, Я. *Благотворительные организации евреев Бессарабии в межвоенный период 1918-1940 гг.* Кишинев: „Pontos", 2002.

[40] ПЕТРОВСКИЙ-ШТЕРН, И. *Евреи а русской армии (1827-1914).* Москва: НЛО, 2003.

[41] BUCKSER, A., GLAZIER, S. *The anthropology of religious conversion*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield publishers inc., 2003.

[42] ДУБНОВ, Ш. *Всемирная история еврейского народа,* Москва: «Гешарим». 2003.

[43] BRUSTEIN, W. *Roots of Hate. Anti-Semitis in Europe before the Holocaust*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[44] UNGUREANU, M. *Convertire și integrare religioasă în Moldova la începutul epocii moderne*. Iași, 2004.

[45] ТИХОНОВ, А. Католики, мусульмане и иудеи Российской Империи в последней четверти XVIII – начале XX в., СПб: Изд. «С.-Петербургского Университета», 2007.

[46] БАРТАЛЬ, И. *От общины к нации: Евреи Восточной Европы в 1772–1881 гг*. Москва: Библиотека Юдаика, 2007.

[47] MILLER, A. *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism: essays in the methodology of historical research*. Budapest-New York: CEU Press, 2008.

[48] LEVENTHAL, M. GOLDSTEIN, R. *Jews in Britain*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013.

[49] ЛЕВИН В., ЛУРЬЕ И., БУДНИЦКИЙ О. История еврейского народа в России. От разделов Польши до падения Российской империи. Москва: Мосты культуры-Гешарим, том 2, 2017.

velopment of the Jewish community in Bessarabia, starting with the appearance of the first Jewish communities in the Romanian space and their living conditions during the medieval period, as well as obtaining a clear understanding of the fate of this people throughout the 19th century.

First and foremost, a large portion of the unpublished sources was identified, consulted, and processed within the National Archives Agency of the Republic of Moldova (ANA). Among the numerous funds, files, and inventories stored in ANA, we found many documents related to the Jewish population of Bessarabia. The rich archival materials, brought into the historical research of the Republic of Moldova through a thorough chronological and factual analysis, allowed for the introduction of new terms, previously unknown historical episodes, and the enrichment of domestic historical material.

Notable sources include:

- Fund 2, Governor's Chancellery of Bessarabia, Inventory 1, File 1199, which provides data on the population of Bessarabia in 1828, from which we extracted information on the Jewish population.

- Fund 6, Bessarabian Governorate Administration, Inventories 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, Files 74, 1118, 1140, 188, 1253, 1344, 1833, 50, 78, 82, 83, 84, 85, 110, 111, 115, 115a, 117, 122, 116, 134, 135, 108, 109, 119, 120, 141, 146, 151, 207, 208, 209, 232, 362, 489, 1061, 1068, 1169, 1170, 1221, 1474.

- Fund 3, Regional Council of Bessarabia, Inventory 1, Files 12, 14, 41, 55, 60, 93, and Inventory 2, especially Files 86, 124, 223, 244, 245, 246, 273, 276, 301, 304, 307, 328, 358, 362, 375, 383, 393, 418, 500, 554, 697, 637 (I), 637 (II), 721, 763, 861, 862, 906, 937, 938, 944, 953, 964, 984, 1016.

- Fund 75, City Council of Chişinău, Inventory 1, Files 17, 24, 34, 80, 78, 84, 94, 96.

- Fund 151, Bessarabian Governorate Statistical Committee, Inventory 1, File 93.

- Fund 1393, Inventory 1, Files 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 33, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 51, 54, 60.

Additionally, we used photocopies of documents from the Archive for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem, originating from the State Archives of the Russian Federation (RGIA). These documents refer to Fund 821, Department of Spiritual Affairs and Confessions of the Ministry of the Interior of the Russian Empire, Inventory 9, Files 80 and 125, as well as Fund 1405, Ministry of Justice of the Russian Empire, Inventory 543, File 1244. These materials relate to anti-Jewish violence in Bessarabia during 1881-1882 and 1883-1884, episodes not previously explored in any prior research.

We also consulted several edited sources, among which an indispensable compilation of documents related to the legislation of the Russian Empire, edited by V. Levanda[50], was particularly helpful. This compilation was crucial for understanding the legal context surrounding Jews in the Russian Empire prior to and during the 19th century, as examined in this study.

In conclusion, the historiographic sources used in this research enabled us to successfully meet the objectives outlined in the thesis.

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[50] Леванда В. О., *Полный Хронологический Сборник Законов и положений касающихся евреев, от Уложения Царя Алексея Михайловича до настоящего времени, от 1619 до 1873. Извлечение из Полных Собраний Законов Российской Империи*. СПб., 1874.

2. THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN BASARABIA, PERCEPTION AND ETHNO-DEMOCRAPHIC EVOLUTION

2.1. Accounts Regarding the Jewish Population in the Carpathian-Dniester Region

The Jewish population began to settle in the Romanian lands particularly in the late medieval period, and the most useful information regarding this historical stage can be found in the accounts of foreign travelers, in the charters issued by the rulers of the time, as well as in the writings of contemporary scholars and Russian officials.

Although the information provided reflects the perspective of foreign travelers, scholars, and documents that present the views and dispositions of the rulers of Moldavia, it can serve as a reference for a comprehensive understanding of the Jewish community under the medieval conditions. At the same time, it is important to note that the accounts of contemporaries should be treated with a high degree of critical analysis, considering the presence of hetero-stereotypes that existed during that period. The reflections of contemporaries, presented below, should be analyzed in the context of the often-negative attitude towards the Jewish population, which stems from auto-stereotypes, hetero-stereotypes, and stereotypes existing in the society of the historical period that is part of our analysis.

It should be noted that initially, the privileges and immunities granted by the rulers of Moldavia retained their effect for some time, which, in our opinion, led to an influx of Jewish population into the Bessarabia region after its annexation by the Russian Empire. In this context, we observe the significant impact that this proto-legislation of the Moldavian rulers had, an impact that can still be seen in the second half of the 19th century, up until the moment when Bessarabia became a guberniya (province) within the Russian Empire.

Thus, a first detailed description of the Jews in historical Moldavia is offered by Dimitrie Cantemir: ”It is hard to imagine any other country, bordered by such narrow confines as Moldavia, where so many different nations coexist. In Moldavia, apart from the Moldovans, whose ancestors returned from Maramureș, there are many Greeks, Albanians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Poles, Cossacks, Russians, Hungarians, Germans, Armenians, Jews, and prolific Gypsies... The Jews are also regarded as subjects, being obligated to pay a larger annual tribute than the usual; they have no right to hold any public office, except that of being merchants or tavern keepers. They can build synagogues anywhere, but not from stone, only from wood... Foreign merchants (Turks, Armenians, Jews, and Greeks), who are usually called *gelebi*, have taken over trade due to the indifference of our population, and by usually buying entire herds of sheep and cattle at very low prices, they take them to Constantinople and other cities, where they sell them for double or even triple the price[51]”.

During the Phanariot Era, particularly during the reigns of Grigore Ghica II and Constantin Mavrocordat, there are several references in the princely decrees regarding the distinct taxation of the Jewish population, as well as cases of exemption from taxes. A document from April 13, 1727, issued by Prince Grigore Ghica II, allows the rabbis Jacob and Boroz from Soroca to collect *curupca* (a form of tax) from Jews coming from Poland to the market in Soroca and from Jewish craftsmen: “Io, Grigorie Ghica, voievod, by God’s grace, Lord of the Land of Moldavia.

[51] CANTEMIR, D., *op . cit.*, p. 279.

I have granted my decree to the Jewish rabbis, Jacob and Boroz from Soroca, to be free, with my decree, to go to the market stalls and take *curupca*[52] from all the Jews of the Land of Poland, as is their custom for centuries. And they are also allowed to take from Jewish craftsmen according to custom, as it is written in the decrees of previous princes[53]".

Another series of documents from the years 1736-1741 pertains to the Jews in Moldavia during the reign of Prince Grigore Ghica II, referring to various exemptions and tax relief for Jews who converted to Christianity and were baptized[54], as well as exemptions for Jews working for the princely court[55].

The legislative activity of Prince Constantin Mavrocordat further contributed, through the privileges granted to Jewish merchants, to an even greater increase in the Jewish population. In 1742, Constantin Mavrocordat issued numerous decrees concerning the Jews in Moldova[56], with particular attention to their non-discriminatory treatment not only towards Jews but also towards other inhabitants of Moldova.

In 1774, the Jews of Chişinău established a union called the "Jewish Burial Brotherhood" presided over by the rabbi from Iaşi. During the same period, charitable institutions were founded, such as "Bread for the Poor"[57], "Visiting the Sick" and "Education for Orphaned and Poor Children". All of these initiatives stemmed from the Jewish religious tradition, according to which visiting the sick, assisting with burials, and arranging marriages for girls from poor families would bring those who performed these acts "great honor in the afterlife".

In 1778, in Soroca, as a result of the increasing Jewish population, a Great Synagogue was built, which remained active until the interwar period and was later called the Israelite Temple[58]. The large number of Jews in the land of Moldova is also confirmed by other contemporary testimonies. For instance, Stefano Igo Raicevich, a well-known expert on the Romanian Principalities, stated in 1781 that the Jews in Moldova were "very numerous[59]".

In 1799, the first Kahals appeared in Moldova as organs of self-administration, following the Polish example[60]. The Kahal, which was formed by a rabbinic body, combined administrative, religious, and judicial functions[61]. Disputes related to religious matters were heard in the Kahal, and it was responsible for administering the Jewish community and its judicial matters. The Kahals kept the Jews under strict control, creating a system of rules for daily life

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[52] A tax collected within the Jewish community was typically levied on meat prepared according to religious customs (kosher meat). A portion of the money collected from this tax was deposited into the state treasury.
[53] I.M.R.E.R., vol. II/I, doc. 75, p. 54-55.
[54] Ibidem, doc. 93, p. 74; doc.113, p. 99-100; doc. 114, p. 100-101.
[55] Ibidem, doc. 95, p. 75-76; doc. 98, p. 82.
[56] Ibidem, doc. 154, p. 135; doc. 171, p. 145; doc.172, p.145-146; doc. 173, p.146; doc. 174, p. 146-147; doc. 176, p. 149; doc. 178, p. 149-150; doc. 180, p. 151.
[57] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В. *op. cit.*, p. 64; ПИЛАТ, И., *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[58] A.N.A., F.1393, inv.1, d.15, f. 4.
[59] COTTER, M. *op. cit.,* p. 49.
[60] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В. *op. cit.*, p. 64; ПИЛАТ, И., *op. cit.*, p. 11.
[61] Kahalul ca formă de autoadministrare apare inițial în Polonia în secolele XVI-XVIII, iar în Imperiul Rus va activa în perioada 1772-1844, https://eleven.co.il/jews-of-russia/until-poland-partitions/11902/.

and imposing harsh penalties on those who dared to violate them. In 1804, the Kahals gained fiscal responsibilities, being tasked with ensuring the payment of state taxes[62].

In 1799, the traveler P.Sumarokov noted in his journal that "the city of Dubăsari, located 15 fit from Grigoriopol, is situated on the banks of the Dniester River, and among its inhabitants are Moldovans, Bulgarians, Jews, and a few Russians. This locality does not have proper trade, but the large number of shops with various small goods and crafts keep everything in motion[63]".

Several Russian officials and foreign travelers recorded their impressions of the Jews in Bessarabia throughout the 19th century. Among them, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, sent to Bessarabia in 1816, P.Sviinin[64], describes his views on the Jewish population. In his memorandum written in 1823 to Vice-Governor F.Wighel[65], he provides a negative characterization of the Jews and their influence in Bessarabia.

In 1828, the writer and geographer I. Yakovenko made the following remark about the Jews of Bessarabia: "The occupations of the Jews in Wallachia are the same as in Russia and other places; some are engaged in trade, while others practice certain crafts. However, they have been removed from the alcohol trade... Almost all the inhabitants of rural areas in Wallachia are protected from those ruthless deceptions, which often lead to the ruin of farmers living in Bessarabia, Poland, and even in Russia[66]".

The Russian official I.Aksakov, who visited Bessarabia in 1848, left the following account about the Jews of Bessarabia: *"*The Jews, encouraged by the benefits granted to Bessarabia, have moved there in enormous numbers, many of them under the names of long-dead individuals and living in unknown places, without any written records. This fact complicates the possibility of conducting a census and clarifying their numbers and greatly complicates police surveillance. Of those included in the Jewish community in Chișinău, 362 families are living outside the city, in unknown locations, without passports and without paying taxes, which ultimately results in enormous arrears for their fellow Jews[67]".

In the mid-19th century, around 1850, A.Skalkovski[68] mentioned the favorable conditions in Novorossiya and Bessarabia for Jews. In the late 1850s, in his work published in the "Odesskii Vestnik", K. Hanatski[69] referred to the significant economic role of Jews in Bessarabia.

Later, the statistical yearbook prepared by A.Zașciuc[70] for 1862, in reference to Jews, stated: "This people is scattered everywhere, and in Bessarabia, it constitutes a significant part of the population, both due to their numbers and because almost all local trade is in their

[62] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В. *op. cit.,* p. 64.
[63] СУМАРОКОВ, П. *op. cit.,* p. 234-235.
[64] СВИНЬИН, П. *op.cit.* p., 206-207.
[65] ВИГЕЛЬ, Ф , *op.cit.* p. 19-21.
[66] ЯКОВЕНКО, И. *op.cit.,* p. 173-174.
[67] АКСАКОВ, И. *op.cit.* p. 5-6.
[68] Ibidem, 304.
[69] Х[АНАТСКИЙ], К. *op.cit.*
[70] ЗАЩУК, А. *op. cit.*, p. 171.

hands." In this context, it is important to note that A.Zașciuc's account had a major influence on later historiography in our country, which led to the perpetuation of this subjective description in future scientific research. Another Russian official, A.Schmidt[71], around the same period, in 1863, noted that he wrote about Jews without prejudice, even though the subject at that time sparked heated debates.

The traveler Afanasiev-Ciujbinski[72], during the years 1861-1863, described the Jews in Bessarabia and their daily life and occupations in the following way: "The Russians sell corn to the local Jews at a ridiculously low price, with the latter using various methods to exploit the peasant's labor almost for free. Of all the Jews in the Russian Empire – the truth must be told – nowhere are there fanatics as deeply rooted and unscrupulous as the Jews of Bessarabia".

In conclusion, during both the medieval and modern periods, the Jews of Moldova and Bessarabia represented a complex community with a significant influence on trade and urbanization, yet they had an ambivalent relationship with both the authorities and local populations. Their impact on the economy and the social structure of the region remains an important subject of study, shedding light not only on their success in commerce but also on the challenges and internal and external conflicts they faced.

Thus, the vast majority of works from the 18th-19th centuries describe the activities and daily life of the Jews in pejorative terms. This is due to the fact that the opinions of foreign travelers are presented subjectively and often without proper documentation. The contrasting images of the Jews of Bessarabia, presented by various sources in the 19th century, reflect the complexity of their status in Bessarabian society. On the one hand, the Jews were a vital economic group, supporting local trade and being essential for the region's development; on the other hand, they were viewed with distrust and hostility due to religious and social prejudices, as well as their economic behavior, which was often considered exploitative. These negative attitudes and perceptions continued to shape relations between Jews and the majority populations in the decades that followed, profoundly influencing the social and political life in Bessarabia and other regions of the Russian Empire.

2.2. The Demographic Evolution of the Jewish Population

In 1812, after the signing of the Treaty of Bucharest, Bessarabia became a Russian province, initially with broader autonomy, and later acquiring the status of a guberniya within the Russian Empire. This shift had significant repercussions on the situation of the Jewish population in Bessarabia, both in terms of numbers and in the legislative, daily life, economic, and cultural aspects. Thus, the Jewish population in Bessarabia experienced a constant increase from the beginning of the 19th century, with the dynamics unfolding as follows.

According to the Russian author Rașin[73], the population of Bessarabia in 1811 was 300,000 inhabitants, in 1838 it reached 790,000, in 1851 it stood at 874,000, and by 1863 it

[71] ШМИДТ, А *op.cit.,* p. 510-511.
[72]АФАНАСЬЕВ-ЧУЖБИНСКИЙ, А. *op.cit.,* p. 14
[73] РАШИН, А.**,** *op. cit*., p. 28-29.

had increased to 1,026,300. The census conducted in 1828 revealed that in Bessarabia, at that time, there were 30,929 Jews out of a total of 517,135 inhabitants, representing 5.9% of the total population[74].

For the year 1835, the total population was 693,646 people, of which 42,360 were Jews[75]. According to the researcher V. Zelenciuc, in 1835, there were 49,000 Jews in Bessarabia, making up 6.9% of the total population[76]. The census of 1837, conducted by the authorities, shows that 42,370 Jews lived in the territory of Bessarabia. The researcher V.Tomuleț, in his estimates for the year 1858, places the number of Jews in Bessarabia at 61,162[77].

In the middle of the 19th century, there were 19 agricultural colonies in Bessarabia, exclusively inhabited by Jews. These colonies contained 1,082 houses and a population of 10,589 individuals of both sexes. The colonies were distributed across several districts as follows: **In the Hotin County (1 colony)**: Lomacinți; **In the Soroca County (9 colonies)**: Meremăuca Nouă, Lublin, Vertiujeni, Căprești, Zgurița, Briciova, Starovca, Teleneștii Noi; **In the Iași County (2 colonies)**: Alexăndreni, Valea lui Vlad; **In the Orhei County (2 colonies)**: Șibca, Nicolaevca-Blagodati; **In the Chișinău County (2 colonies)**: Grătiești (or Hulboaca, which was abandoned), Constantinovca; **In the Bender County (1 colony)**: Romanovca (or Romanenco)[78].

According to archival documents, the population statistics from the year 1863 show that there were 45,358 Jews in the cities and towns, while 48,232 Jews were recorded in the rural areas (counties). In total, the Jewish population amounted to 93,590 individuals[79].

The large number of Jews in Bessarabia is also confirmed by comparative data. In the last quarter of the 19th century, Bessarabia was one of the four governorates of the Russian Empire with a significant Jewish population. The percentage of Jews in the total population of each governorate was as follows: Minsk Governorate with 20.1%, Grodno Governorate with 19.7%, Podolsk Governorate with 18.7%, and Bessarabia Governorate with 12.1%[80].

In 1897, the imperial authorities conducted a population census in Bessarabia, which revealed that the Jewish population numbered 228,168 individuals, making up 11.8% of the total population of 1,935,412[81].

In conclusion, throughout the 19th century, the Jewish population in Bessarabia grew approximately tenfold, from 20,000 to 228,168 individuals, and was present in a significant number of the region's cities. This growth was driven both by natural increase and by the migration of Jews to Bessarabia, drawn by the favorable conditions in the region.

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[74] ANA, F. 2, inv. 1, d. 1199. f. 63.
[75] ROMAN, L., VARGATTI, R. *op. cit.,* p. 207.
[76] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В., *op. cit.,* p.158.
[77] TOMULEȚ, V. *Burghezia evreiască* … p. 73-80.
[78] ЗАЩУКЪ, А. *op,cit.* p.173-174.
[79] A.N.A., F. 151, inv. 1, d. 93, f. 44.
[80] ЗЕЛЕНЧУК, В. *op. cit.*, p. 206.
[81] БЕРГ, Л. *op. cit.*, p. 267.

3. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONFESSIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF JEWS IN BESSARABIA

3.1. Imperial Russian Legislative Principles Regarding the Evolution of the Jewish Community

The legislative activity of the Russian Empire concerning national minorities (*инородцы*) and confessional minorities (*иноверцы*) was extremely prolific. The leadership and officials of the Ministry of the Interior, responsible for foreign subjects, based on the vision of the Russian monarchs, developed and implemented various legislative initiatives. These were aimed at integrating religious or secular foreign communities into the framework of the state order of the Russian Emperor at that historical time.

Most of the laws applied to the Jewish community were prohibitive, restricting their rights, especially when compared to the Orthodox Christian confession and the native population of the respective provinces.

On November 9, 1802, Emperor Alexander I ordered the establishment of a Committee for the Proper Organization of the Jews (*Комитет по благоустройству евреев*). Representatives from the Jewish Kahals in each province of the Empire were involved in the activities of the Committee. As a result, on December 9, 1804, the Committee developed the Statute for the Way of Life of the Jews (*Положенее об устройстве евреев*) [82].

From the early years, the Russian monarch had set as his goal the conversion of Jews to Christianity. To this end, the encouragement of Jewish baptism into Christian denominations was initiated. In 1817, the *Society of Israeli Christians* (*Общество Израильских Христиан*) was established to promote this process[83].

The Tsarist government sought strict control over the settlement and movement of Jews, and in April 1824, a law was introduced regarding the ”removal of Jews from the borders by 50 versts” (50 fit = 53.3 km). This was part of an effort to regulate the Jewish population’s distribution and limit their presence in certain areas.

Emperor Nicholas I (1825-1855) was even more enthusiastic about the “Jewish question.” In 1827, the Law on the Military Service of Jews in kind and the abolition of payment in money was adopted, which shook the entire Jewish community in the Russian Empire. On August 16, 1828, the law was passed prohibiting Jews from being elected to public office. This was done with the aim of minimizing the role of Jews in the political life of the Empire. On October 14, 1830, the law was adopted to prevent the false conversion of Jews to Christianity[84], and on November 28, 1830, the law was passed concerning the privileges granted to Jews from the Bessarabia region who had converted to Christianity.

On February 26, 1835, Emperor Nicholas I ordered that Jews living in the villages of Bessarabia should no longer be forced to move to the city[85]. In 1835, the law called the Su-

[82] ТИХОНОВ, A. op. cit. p. 136.
[83] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 123 **,** P. 134-135, № 124, P. 135.
[84] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 153, P. 192. № 176, P. 227-228, № 220 , P. 282.
[85] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 224, P. 286-287, № 300, P. 314-315.

preme Statute on Jews (*Высочайшее Положение о Евреях*)[86] was adopted, which outlined the territory of the Jewish Zone. In 1835, this legislation was named the Pale of the Settlement for Jews (*Черта Постоянной Еврейской Оседлости*), and the governorates that initially entered the Jewish Zone were: Bessarabia, Vilna, Vitebsk, Volhynia, Grodno, Ekaterinoslav, Kiev, Kovno, Minsk, Movilău, Podolsk, Poltava, Taurida, Kherson, and Chernigov. This law remained in force until the abolition of the Pale in 1917[87].

In the context of the increasing number of lawsuits between the native population and Jews, a special oath was introduced on November 27, 1838, for Jews who were required to testify in court[88]. Starting from January 7, 1839, Jews in Novorossiya and Bessarabia were allowed to establish small markets on the estates of landowners[89]. According to the legislators, this would lead to better circulation of goods and improve commercial exchanges.

On June 26, 1844, a law was adopted that stipulated the distance between synagogues and heders in relation to Christian places of worship. The law adopted by the Minister of Public Education on November 13, 1844, required the supervision of Jewish schools by state-appointed officials from the Jewish community, called "Enlighted Jews[90]".

In December 1844, the Kahals[91] were abolished. This decision ended the self-administration and self-organization of the Jewish community and made it easier and quicker for Jews in the Russian Empire to assimilate.

On February 11, 1848, an additional tax of 5 silver rubles was introduced to limit the wearing of traditional Jewish clothing. This tax applied to Jews who intended to continue wearing the *ermolka* (the traditional Jewish skullcap) and required them to notify the Governor of Bessarabia[92]. On January 1, 1851, a law was approved that completely prohibited the traditional Jewish dress "everywhere and at all times[93]".

In 1855, **Emperor Alexander II (1855-1881),** also known as the Reformer, ascended to the throne of the Russian Empire. The reformist visions of the Russian monarch instilled some hopes in the Jewish population. Initially, there were signs that efforts would be made to improve the legislation regarding the Jewish population, but major changes did not occur. For the most part, the restrictive legislation remained in force with a few exceptions.

Among the separate legislative initiatives for Bessarabia, one can mention the law of March 13, 1856, after several petitions regarding exemption from military recruitment during the 1853-1856 military operations. Jewish farmers from the agricultural colony of Valea lui Vlad were granted exemption from recruitment for a period of 50 years. On February 12,

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[86] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 304, P. 359.
[87] ТИХОНОВ, А. *Op.cit,* p. 129-130.
[88] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 387, P. 465.
[89] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 385, P. 463.
[90] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 506, P. 576.
[91] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 510, P.590-594 .
[92] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 578, P. 683-684.
[93] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 615 , P. 725-726.№ 620 , P. 732-733, № 679, P. 794.

1865, Jews were allowed to change their family names upon converting to Christianity[94]. In the same logic, another law allowed Jewish soldiers to adopt the name of their godfather.

Later, in 1882, under the pretext of a plot against the Emperor and the participation of Jews in the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, the so-called "May Laws" or "Temporary Laws" were introduced on May 3, 1882, initiated by **Emperor Alexander III**. According to the 1882 laws, Jews were suspended from the right to purchase property, lease land, and taverns could only be operated in their own homes. From 1883, Jews were prohibited from holding police positions[95]. Starting in 1887, Jews were denied the right to move from one village to another, and from 1895, they were prohibited from leasing land in villages, while rabbis lost the right to leave the Jewish Zone. Beginning in 1899, Jewish craftsmen living outside the Jewish Zone were required to sell their manufactured products only in the towns where they were living[96].

Also, from 1882, Jewish doctors could not constitute more than 5% of the total number of doctors, and from 1888, Jewish pharmacists were excluded from military mobilization, while the percentage of Jews admitted to university studies was reduced.

In conclusion, throughout the 19th century, over 100 restrictive laws were adopted and implemented against the Jewish population. These laws, largely based on the anti-Semitic views of the Russian Tsars, resulted in worsening the daily living conditions and economic activities of Jews, as well as triggering Jewish pogroms in various governorates. As a result, Jews established organizations that promoted emigration from the Russian Empire to Palestine, America, or Argentina. They also joined Zionist, socialist, political, and labor organizations.

3.2. Administrative and Confessional Institutions

Another aspect of the evolution of the Jewish population has always been communal life, a tradition stemming from the high level of religiosity, but also from the customs of Jews that emerged during their exile and frequent migrations. The main institution of self-administration for the Jewish community was initially the Haham and Rabbi, and later the Kahal[97] (לָהָק). Over time, during the 19th century, this body acquired judicial powers as well as fiscal functions. In 1827, when alternative military service was replaced with the conscription of Jews for mandatory military service, the Kahals were responsible for compiling the lists of recruits as well as managing the recruitment process itself. With the formalization of the Jewish Zone in 1835, the Kahals were effectively restored in all 15 Russian governorates.

The 1835 regulation included among the rabbis' duties the administration of vital records, officiating marriages, conducting burials, performing circumcisions, and assigning names to newborns. All of these tasks had to be performed either by a rabbi or by his assistant, but only in the presence of the rabbi himself. A turning point in the spiritual life of Jews across the entire Russian Empire was the introduction of the state rabbi (***казенный раввин***) position.

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[94] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 945, P. 1027.

95 .Х.С.З.П.Е., P. 53.

[96] BOGDAN-DUICĂ, G. *Op. cit.*, P. 52.

[97] The Kahal as a form of self-administration first appeared in Poland during the 16th to 18th Centuries, and in the Russian Empire from 1772 to 1844.

According to the legislation in force, the rabbi was required to take an oath, the text of which combined sacred formulas with bureaucratic terms[98].

On October 19, 1859, three basic obligations of the state rabbi[99] were legislated: Religious, Recordkeeping of vital records, and Police and warning duties. In the context of these measures, on June 26, 1844, it was established that religious and educational institutions of the Mosaic faith in the Russian Empire had to be located at a certain distance from Christian places of worship. According to this law, a synagogue or a heder could only be on the same side of the street as Christian churches if it was at least 100 *stânjeni* (216 meters) away, and on different streets, it had to be 50 *stânjeni* (108 meters) apart. Additionally, any institutions that did not comply with these regulations were to be closed, a provision which also applied to religious and educational institutions in Bessarabia[100].

Ultimately, the role of the Kahal declined, and its functions were transferred to the Spiritual Councils of Jewish communities, which consisted of the rabbi and other congregants, thus maintaining the self-administration of religious communities.

Another important institution was the synagogue or the prayer house, for which there was also specific legislation. This required permission for the construction or establishment of such prayer houses, which were limited in number relative to the Jewish population. In the 1890s, there were 179 legally operating Mosaic religious institutions in Bessarabia, in accordance with the laws of the Russian Empire.

In conclusion, the self-administration and confessional institutions in Bessarabia during the 19th century were subject to strict legislation that regulated their operation, ensuring they were under the control of local authorities. However, the available data indicates that the Jewish population did not always comply with the existing norms.

3.2. Educational Institutions

Education within the Jewish community has always held an important place. The Jewish educational system has a millennial history, and its religious nature has been essential in preserving the Jewish people and perpetuating their customs and traditions. In these educational institutions, only the doctrines of the Jewish religion were taught, with no inclusion of secular subjects. They were divided into three levels: Heder and Talmud-Tora, Yeshiva, and Beit Midrash.

In the context of legislative efforts to integrate Jews into Russian society, Emperor Nicholas I revised the subject of secular education for Jews, placing particular emphasis on the study of the Russian language, as reflected in the regulation of 1835[101]. The next step in the attempt to dismantle the Jewish educational system was the opening of state Jewish schools (*еврейские казенные училища)* by the Russian authorities in 1844, following the example of

[98] ANA, F. 6, inv. 5, d. 143, f. 15, 15 (verso).
[99] МЫШЪ, М. *op. cit*., p. 79.
[100] ANA, F.6, inv. 5, d. 50, f. 6, 6 (verso).
[101] Евреи в Российской Империи XVIII-XIX веков. Сборник трудов еврейских историков, Москва 1995, с.373

Austria and Prussia. The Jewish community vehemently opposed the implementation of the decision made by Minister of Education S. Uvarov in 1841 to establish these schools, which explains the three-year delay in their implementation[102]. On May 1, 1862, Jewish vocational schools were opened, which were popular primarily among poor Jewish masses who could not afford higher education. In addition to classical and religious subjects, students studied practical disciplines such as blacksmithing, carpentry[103], etc.

The period of major reforms under Emperor Alexander II, especially between 1864 and 1873, was characterized by intense efforts from the Tsarist authorities to grant the Russian language a central role in Jewish education at the expense of other languages spoken by Jews, as well as an ideological battle between supporters and opponents of state-run Jewish schools.

In 1882, there were 124 students enrolled in state-run elementary Jewish schools in Bessarabia, 264 students in private institutions, and 59 students in mixed schools, for a total of 447 students across all three education levels. Additionally, 447 students attended public Jewish Talmud-Tora schools, and 955 students were enrolled in Heder schools.

In conclusion, by the end of the 19th century, according to data from the period, approximately 140 Heder schools were operating in Bessarabia, where over 1,800 students received their education.

4. CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF RESTRICTIVE POLICIES AGAINST JEWS IN BESSARABIA

4.1. Stimulating the Conversion of Jews to Christianity

The issue of religious conversion is rarely discussed in the historiography of the Republic of Moldova. Although this phenomenon in Bessarabia, as well as throughout the Russian Empire, occurred among both the Jewish population and the Muslim and Christian populations, it was regulated by constantly changing and increasingly strict legislation, along with certain fiscal incentives.

The law of April 20, 1811, stipulated that baptized Jews would be exempt from military service for life, but the children born to baptized parents would still be subject to conscription according to general rules[104]. The law of September 6, 1827, specified that Jews wishing to convert to Roman Catholicism would be required to undergo the respective ritual only on Sundays and with as much publicity as possible, to prevent false conversions. This law came about in response to a request from Jews in St. Petersburg, asking for permission to convert to Catholicism and Lutheranism[105].

In 1830, the legislation regarding the baptism of Jews in Bessarabia was modified by imperial decree: ”By the command of His Majesty the Emperor, the order of December 29, 1830, from the Senate was discussed in the Bessarabia regional council, namely: the proposal of the

[102] ЛОКШИН, А. *op.cit.* p. 255.
[103] БРАМСОН, Л. К истории начального... *p*.53.
[104] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 35, p. 27.
[105] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 156, p. 209-210.

Minister of Justice, Secret Councilor, and Knight Dimitrie Nikolaevich Bludov, concerning the exemption from payment of dues for Jews in the Bessarabia region who converted to Christianity. Respecting the fact that, until this date, individuals in question, by the decree of the once existing Supreme Council of Bessarabia, had been permanently exempt from the payment of dues (*податей*) and taxes (*повинностей*), according to the laws and customs of the Moldovan land (*земли молдавской*) that they were governed by in the Bessarabia region".

On April 19, 1839, once again, attention was given to the issue of conversion to Protestantism, with new instructions provided regarding the certification of knowledge for Jews who wished to be baptized. It was emphasized that the "certification" of knowledge in Christian religious dogmas should take place in the presence of three of the most respected members of the congregation in question. The results of this investigation were to be recorded in a protocol, signed by all present, and submitted to the local Consistory[106].

Recent studies offer a wider range of details regarding the terminology and onomastics related to apostates. For example, some neophytes received the name Botezatu (a more common case in historical Moldova). Often, in archival documents, only the apostate's first name appears, with the stigmatizing label of Vâkrest. As a result, the contemporary onomastics includes the name Vâhrest, and another variation encountered is the first name Hristoforov.

Archival documents present several cases of Jews from Bessarabia converting to Christianity throughout the 19th century, such as the 34 Jews who converted in 1874, including information regarding the granting of certain privileges and facilities. However, in the end, this phenomenon did not gain widespread proportions.

In conclusion, despite the promotion of policies and laws throughout the 19th century encouraging conversion to Christianity among Jews, supported by financial incentives, this phenomenon did not have widespread prevalence in Bessarabia.

4.2. The Status of Jews in the Tsarist Army

The recruitment of Jews into the Tsarist army represents a subject that has not been extensively studied in national historiography. The reorganization of the Russian army and its establishment as a new entity within the Russian Empire was a personal achievement of Emperor Nicholas I, whose militarization of Russian society reached its peak during his reign.

From the first days after his ascension to the throne, he was in a state of colossal euphoria due to his idea of reforming the way of life for the Jewish population in the Empire, through military service. The Emperor believed that incorporating Jews into the Russian army would be the best way to integrate and "dissolve" Jews into Russian society. Military service alongside the Orthodox population was seen as the key to achieving the long-desired integration by the Russian monarchs. Through mandatory recruitment, a concept shared with the Minister of Internal Affairs in 1826, the distinct identity of the Russian Jew was meant to be destroyed[107].

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[106] П.Х.С.З.П.Е., № 398, p. 471-472.

[107] КЛИЕР, ДЖ. *op.cit.* p. 94.

On August 26, 1827, Nicholas I ordered the introduction of compulsory conscription for the Jewish population of the Empire[108]. This bold measure for integrating Jews into Russian society had no precedent in Russian policy, neither before nor after Nicholas I. The attempts by Catherine II and the liberal reforms of Emperor Alexander I were, in comparison, timid actions in terms of their impact on the development of the Jewish population.

On October 18, 1851, the Senate heard a report from the Minister of Defense dated September 26, 1851, which informed about the lack of impediments for the conscription of Jews from Bessarabia according to general principles. Thus, the conscription of Jews was to begin with the 10th stage of recruitment in the western region of the Empire, with the number of recruits determined according to the provisions of the Emperor's decree[109].

In the correspondence from 1853, it was noted that conscripting the population of Bessarabia into the Tsarist army was inappropriate. This issue was revised only in 1860[110]. Referring to the recruitment of 1855, a legislative act was identified that suspended the conscription of Jews from Bessarabia for that year. In addition to Bessarabia, residents of the following gubernias were also exempted from recruitment in 1855: Poltava, Chernigov, Kharkov, Ekaterinoslav, Kherson, and Taurida[111].

In 1860, due to the personal involvement of Count Stroganov, through the Emperor's resolution of October 24, Jews from Bessarabia were exempted from military service, thus equating them with the native residents of Bessarabia[112]. On August 4, 1861, the Emperor ordered the exemption of Bessarabian Jews from military service until the final resolution of the military service issue for the population of Bessarabia[113].

In the 1860s-1870s, the Tsarist army underwent essential reforms, which also impacted the Jewish population. In 1874, a new statute on military conscription was drafted. During discussions about this new statute, the Jewish issue was addressed, with some members of the commission advocating for equal rights for Jews alongside the native population. However, this did not happen, and the new statute was even discriminatory towards Jews. Thus, the option of emancipation for Jews was replaced with their marginalization, and they were labeled as a distinct and untrustworthy group[114].

For Bessarabia, compulsory military service was introduced in 1874, but according to the documents of the National Agency of Archives of Moldova, Bessarabian Jews had already been conscripted and participated in military operations during the Crimean War (1853-1856), with a list of participants from the war still preserved[115].

Regarding evasion from military service, according to data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in 1875, during the first stage of conscription, the insufficient number of recruits was

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[108] ПЕТРОВСКИЙ-ШТЕРН, И. *op.cit.* p. 207
[109] ПХСЗПЕ, № 652, P. 759-760.
[110] ANA, F. 3, Inv. 2, d. 763, f. 5.
[111] ПХСЗПЕ, № 652, P. 851.
[112] ANA, F. 3, Inv. 2, d. 763, f. 24.
[113] ANA, F. 3, Inv. 2, d. 763, f. 80.
[114] ПЕТРОВСКИЙ-ШТЕРН, И., *op.cit.* p. 230.
[115] A.N.A, F. 6, inv. 5, d. 362, f. 1-32.

noted in the following gubernias: Podolsk - 64, Bessarabia - 320, Volyn - 247, Kiev - 178, Kovno - 169, and Suval - 151. The reason for the inability to recruit the required number of Jewish recruits was their unsatisfactory physical condition.

As for statistical data on the number of Jews conscripted into the Tsarist army, obtaining such data is quite difficult due to the lack of transparency in the recruitment process by the authorities. However, by the end of the 19th century, statistics from 1888 for five gubernias in the Jewish Zone provide a set of comparative data for analysis, allowing us to identify the percentage of Jewish recruits from Bessarabia. The total number of Jewish recruits was 21,721, with the following breakdown: Herson gubernia - 4,919, Bessarabia - 3,674, Minsk - 5,455, Moghilev - 4,097, Vitebsk - 3,576[116].

In conclusion, the recruitment of Jews from Bessarabia into the Tsarist army, which only became mandatory at the end of the 19th century, contributed to the preservation of the Bessarabian Jews and the exponential growth of the Jewish community. The fact that military service became mandatory for Jews in Bessarabia only in 1874, due to its historical context, explains the relatively low rates of mixed marriages and baptized Jews in comparison to other gubernias within the Russian Empire.

4.3. Causes and Effects of Anti-Jewish Pogroms

The assassination of Tsar Alexander II on March 1, 1881, served as a pretext for a series of anti-Jewish pogroms that spread throughout the Russian Empire. Both national and international historiography has never provided a perspective on these events in Bessarabia. The main reason was the existence of "parallel legislative systems", which led to the aggravation of the "Jewish question." The assassination of Tsar Alexander II served as a pretext for pogroms and the tightening of legislation against the Jews.

The historical perception that the 1903 pogrom in Chişinău was the first manifestation of anti-Jewish violence in Bessarabia is becoming outdated due to new archival documents. Thus, Bessarabia was part of the violent processes that affected the Russian Empire at the end of the 19th century.

According to the researcher M. Aronson, there were three "waves" of pogrom events in 1881: a) April 15–26, b) April 26–May 10, and c) June 30–August 16. The anti-Jewish violence that occurred in Chişinău was part of the first wave. From a document titled "Excerpt from the Protocol of Police Investigations Regarding the Violence (*буйство*) of the Crowd at the New Market in Chişinău, April 20, 1881", signed by Prosecutor A. Chernjavskij, we learn about the circumstances of these violent events – from their triggering to the escalation of the conflict and their eventual suppression.

In Bessarabia, as in all other gubernias, the cause of the violence stemmed from a trivial verbal conflict on April 19, 1881, in the Ovsianaya Square (*Овсянная Площадь*), also known as the New Market. The conflict was initiated by an insulting remark from the Jewish merchant Duvid Gil'dner toward merchants Gejnih Mordkov Shvajm and Georgi Nikolaev Bo-

[116] ПЕТРОВСКИЙ-ШТЕРН, И., *op.cit.,* p. 260.

tezat. The argument escalated after a series of reciprocal retorts[117]. On April 20, after Botezat reported the incident, police officer Timofeev intervened and investigated the situation. The Jews blamed Gil'dner's actions and agreed to punish him for his inappropriate behavior[118].

On April 19, a second conflict occurred during the same period near the tavern of the Jewish merchant Mordka Librant. The conflict involved Sergei Vikuvin, who, in a drunken state and wearing a torn coat, insisted that the owner of the bread shop, Jankel' Bronshtejn, should pay for the damaged coat[119]. This dispute was followed by a brief scuffle. A third conflict occurred between three Russians and a Jew near Piotr Kozlov's shop. In this instance, a brawl broke out between the protagonists and some Jewish witnesses present in the area[120]. During one of the fights, someone from the crowd shouted: "I came especially from Elisavetgrad to beat the Jews, and the newspapers say we should beat the Jews".

On May 26, 1881, in the Orhei district, in the Criuleni market, a letter was discovered, which was later found to have been written by the village scribe, Nikolaj Bartash, 19 years old. The letter was intended to intimidate the Jews of the locality, stating that, by the Emperor's order, the Jews must leave Criuleni. The letter read: "Jews, leave Criuleni market voluntarily, otherwise, on May 16, 1881, we will beat you at 3 o'clock in the morning[121]".

In 1882, when the second wave of pogroms took place, Bessarabia was not excluded from these events. According to the file on the anti-Jewish disorders in Bessarabia, managed between May 5, 1882, and September 21, 1882, we learn that on April 30, in the town of Leova, in the Ismail district, minor Jewish disorders occurred, which were suppressed on the same day[122]. A similar situation was recorded on the same day in the town of Noua Suliță in Edineț[123]. The third situation refers to the Jewish colony of Dumbrăveni, in the Soroca district, where, invoking the "right to beat the Jews with the permission of the Ministers[124]" the disturbance was curbed by police intervention. The last similar case occurred on September 16, 1882, in the village of Hârtopul-Mic, resulting in a minor scuffle[125].

In conclusion, although in 1881-1882, Bessarabia experienced skirmishes between the Christian and Jewish populations, these did not escalate into large-scale pogroms. However, the wave of pogroms that swept across the Russian Empire, fueled by the anti-Semitic and restrictive policies of Tsarism towards Jews, led to an increased participation of Jews in Zionist movements and mass emigrations. By the end of the 19th century, Jewish people in Bessarabia began to engage in workers' political movements, which in turn altered the relationship between the Jewish population and the Russian state, irrevocably changing their character and status in Bessarabia.

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[117] RGIA. F. 821, inv. 9, file 125, page172, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/19074.4.
[118] RGIA. F. 821, inv. 9, file125, page 172v, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/19074.4.
[119] RGIA. F. 821, inv. 9, file 125, page 172v,173, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/19074.4.
[120] RGIA. F. 821, inv. 9, file 125, page 174, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/19074.4.
[121] RGIA. F. 821, inv. 9, file 125, page 177, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/19074.4.
[122] RGIA. F. 1405, inv. 534, file 1244, page 3, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/9316. 8.
[123] RGIA. F. 1405, inv. 534, file1244, page 5, 5v, 6, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/9316.8.
[124] RGIA. F. 1405, inv. 534, file 1244, page 10, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/9316. 8.
[125] RGIA. F. 1405, inv. 534, file 1244, page 16, microfilm la CAHJP–HM2/9316. 8.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. National and international historiography has not, until recently, provided a complete scientific analysis of the history of the Jews in Bessarabia in the 19th century. The existing studies are fragmentary, often repetitive, and detailed research on Tsarist policies and Jewish community life is lacking or treated marginally.

2. By capitalizing on unpublished archival documents and comparative analysis, the research makes an essential contribution to understanding the history of the Jews in Bessarabia. The results provide a useful theoretical and methodological framework for the study of the ethno-confessional history of the region and for placing it in the context of Russian imperial policies.

3. After the annexation of Bessarabia by the Russian Empire in 1812, the Jews of the region were subjected to a restrictive legislative regime, specific to the Pale of Settlement. These measures profoundly influenced the religious, educational, and economic life of the community, shaping a distinct identity of the "Bessarabian Jew".

4. The Jewish population of Bessarabia experienced significant growth during the 19th century, due to natural increase and migration. Jewish communities concentrated especially in the north and center of the region, where, in some towns, Jews represented more than half of the population.

5. The abolition of the kahals and the imposition of religious and educational reforms by the Tsarist authorities did not immediately lead to the integration of the Jewish community. Spiritual directions continued to play a major role in community life, perpetuating traditions and the autonomous mode of organization.

6. Traditional Jewish education dominated in Bessarabia until the second half of the 19th century, when a slow transition toward secular education was recorded. This transformation reflected trends of integration into Russian society, but also the community's resistance to policies of cultural standardization.

7. Conversion to Christianity, promoted by the state through incentive policies (tax exemptions, land, social benefits), did not have a major impact on the Jewish community. Instead, cases of fictitious conversion were frequent, which led to the tightening of religious legislation.

8. The introduction of compulsory military service in Bessarabia in the 1880s was perceived as a threat to community identity. Recruitment imposed cultural, linguistic, and religious transformations, marking the beginning of a process of forced and accelerated integration.

9. Compared to other governorates of the Russian Empire, the modernization of the Jewish community in Bessarabia began later, with a traditional, isolated, and autarkic lifestyle being maintained for a long time. This delay contributed to the preservation of local specificity and to weaker integration into imperial social structures.

10. The anti-Jewish violence of 1881–1882 in Bessarabia, although smaller in scale compared to other regions, reflects the general antisemitic climate of the Russian Empire. They anticipated the pogroms of 1903 and 1905, and the lack of intervention by the authorities encouraged the repetition of these manifestations.

Historical research has demonstrated the significant impact of Tsarist policies on the Jewish population in Bessarabia. From the perspective of this historical process and the conclusions formulated, it is **recommended**: **1.** To continue researching aspects related to the economic activities of Jews in Bessarabia, with a focus on Jewish agricultural colonies; **2.** To assess the documentary and archival potential regarding religious conversions and military service in the Tsarist army; **3.** To explore the opportunity to study the Jewish population in the early years of the 20th century.

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ANNOTATION

Roitman Alexandr, Jews from Bessarabia in Russian Empire Policies during XIXth Century, PhD thesis in history, Chișinău, 2025.

Thesis structure: Annotation, list of abbreviations, introduction, four chapters divided into sections, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography consisting of 212 titles, 11 annexes, 150 pages of main text (excluding Bibliography), the results obtained are published in 10 academic papers.

Keywords: Pale of Settlement, Jews, Bessarabia, Russian Empire, religious conversion, military service, kahal, rabbi, synagogue, heder, cantonists, baptism, pogrom.

Field of study: specialty 611.02 – History of Romanians (by periods).

The aim of the thesis: The main aim of this doctoral thesis is to study the evolution of the Jewish community in Bessarabia during the Tsarist period and to present an analysis of its development in the territory between the Dniester and the Prut rivers, by clarifying and deepening the aspects related to the unique legal-coercive framework, with connections to the social, statistical, educational, spiritual, and charitable spheres.

The objectives of the thesis: To achieve the aforementioned goal, the following objectives were outlined: researching the historiography of the issue (sources, materials, narratives, and archival documents); analyzing records regarding Jews in the Romanian space; presenting population statistics and studying the demographic evolution of the Jewish population in Bessarabia throughout the 19th century; analyzing the legislation of the Russian Empire applied to Jews during the 19th century, especially in Bessarabia; elucidating the particularities of the internal life of Jews in Bessarabia and the role of the community as a religious and legal entity; studying community life, the rules governing the functioning of religious institutions and the Jewish educational system in the Russian Empire; identifying aspects related to the military service of Jews in the Tsarist army; identifying the pretexts and causes that led to the anti-Jewish pogroms and their consequences.

Scientific novelty and originality: Is expressed through the study of a significant number of unpublished documents, presenting for the first time in historiography the history of the Jews in Bessarabia in Romanian language.

Results obtained, scientific problem addressed: The result obtained, which contributes to solving an important scientific problem, consists in the elucidation of certain previously unknown aspects of the history of Jews in Bessarabia during the Tsarist period. This provides a conceptual framework for clarifying the evolution of the Jewish population and its role in 19th-century Bessarabia, serving as a scientific and methodological foundation for the study of the confessional history of Bessarabia.

Theoretical significance: Consists of an original approach that opens a new perspective in the research of the history of the Jewish community, as an integral part of the ethno-confessional history of Bessarabia under Tsarist rule in the 19th century.

Applied value: The research results can serve as a theoretical foundation and reference material for an academic discipline or a university course entitled “History of the Jews in Bessarabia”.

Implementation of scientific results: Theoretical and practical results were approved by publishing of 1 book, 10 studies, scientific articles both in the Republic of Moldova and abroad in the form of research papers at over 30 national and international conferences.

ADNOTARE

Roitman Alexandr, Evreii din Basarabia în politica imperială rusă în secolul al XIX-lea, teză de doctor în istorie, Chișinău, 2025.

Structura tezei: Adnotare, lista abrevierilor, introducere, 4 capitole, divizate în subcapitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 212 de titluri, 11 anexe, 150 de pagini de text de bază (până la Bibliografie), rezultatele obținute sunt publicate într-o monografie și 10 lucrări științifice.

Cuvinte-cheie: Zona Evreiască, evrei, Basarabia, Imperiul Rus, convertire religioasă, serviciul militar, kahal, rabin, sinagogă, heder, cantoniști, botez, pogrom.

Domeniul de studiu: specialitatea 611.02 – Istoria Românilor (pe perioade).

Scopul cercetării: Scopul de bază al prezentei teze de doctor îl constituie studierea evoluției comunității evreiești din Basarabia în perioada țaristă și analiza dezvoltării acesteia pe teritoriul dintre Nistru și Prut, prin elucidarea și aprofundarea aspectelor legate de cadrul juridico-coercitiv aparte, cu conexiuni la cel social, statistic, educațional, spiritual, caritativ.

Obiectivele cercetării: Pentru a atinge scopul menționat, au fost trasate următoarele obiective: cercetarea istoriografiei problemei (izvoare, surse, narative și arhivistice); analiza consemnărilor privind evreii în spațiul românesc; prezentarea statisticilor de populație și studierea evoluției demografice a populației evreiești din Basarabia pe parcursul secolului al XIX-lea; analiza legislației din Imperiul Rus aplicate față de evrei pe parcursul secolului al XIX-lea, în special, în Basarabia; elucidarea particularităților vieții interne a evreilor din Basarabia și a rolului comunității ca entitate religioasă și juridică; studierea vieții comunitare, a rigorilor de funcționare a instituțiilor de cult și a sistemului educațional evreiesc în Imperiul Rus; identificarea aspectelor legate de serviciul militar al evreilor în armata țaristă; identificarea pretextelor și cauzelor ce au dus la pogromurile antievreiești și consecințelor acestora.

Noutatea și originalitatea științifică: Se manifestă în analiza unui număr semnificativ de documente de arhivă, care nu au fost studiate anterior și în prezentarea, pentru prima dată în istoriografie, a istoriei comunității evreilor din Basarabia secolului al XIX-lea în limba română.

Rezultatele obținute, problema științifică rezolvată: Rezultatul obținut care contribuie la soluționarea unei probleme științifice importante constă în elucidarea unor aspecte ale istoriei evreilor din Basarabia în perioada țaristă, necunoscute anterior, fapt ce oferă un cadru conceptual pentru clarificarea evoluției populației evreiești și rolul acesteia în Basarabia secolului al XIX-lea, ce servește ca suport științific și metodologic în studierea istoriei confesionale a Basarabiei.

Semnificația teoretică: Constă într-o abordare inedită ce deschide o perspectivă nouă în cercetarea subiectului istoriei comunității evreilor, ca parte componentă a istoriei etno-confesionale a Basarabiei sub dominație țaristă în secolul al XIX-lea.

Valoarea aplicativă: Rezultatele cercetării pot servi drept suport teoretic și material de referință pentru o disciplină academică sau un curs universitar întitulat „Istoria evreilor din Basarabia".

Implementarea rezultatelor științifice: Rezultatele teoretice și practice au fost aprobate prin elaborarea și publicarea unei monografii privind istoria evreilor, a 10 studii și articole științifice, care au fost prezentate, în Republica Moldova și peste hotare, sub formă de comunicări, inclusiv plenare, la peste 30 de conferințe naționale și internaționale.

АННОТАЦИЯ

Ройтман Александр, Бессарабские евреи в политике Российской Империи в XIX веке, докторская диссертация по истории, Кишинев, 2025.

Структура диссертации: Аннотация, список сокращений, введение, 4 главы, разделенные на параграфы, общие выводы и рекомендации; библиография из 212 наименований, 11 приложений, 150 страниц основного текста, результаты опубликованы в 10 научных статьях.

Ключевые слова: Черта Оседлости, евреи, Бессарабия, Российская Империя, религиозное обращение, военная служба, кагал, раввин, синагога, хедер, кантонисты, крещение, погром.

Область научного исследования: специальность 611.02 – История румын (по периодам).

Цель исследования: Основная цель данной докторской диссертации состоит в изучении эволюции еврейской общины в Бессарабии в царский период и реализация анализа её развития на территории между Днестром и Прутом, путем разъяснения и детального рассмотрения аспектов, связанных со особенной юридически-принудительной системой включая социальную, статистическую, образовательную, духовную и благотворительную сферы еврейского существования.

Задачи исследования: Для достижения вышеупомянутой цели были поставлены следующие задачи: исследование историографии вопроса (источники, материалы, нарративные источники и архивные документы); анализ упоминаний о евреях в румынском пространстве; представление статистики населения и изучение демографической эволюции еврейского населения Бессарабии в течение XIX века; анализ законодательства Российской империи, применяемого к евреям на протяжении XIX века, особенно в Бессарабии; выявление особенностей внутренней жизни евреев в Бессарабии и роли общины как религиозной и юридической структуры; изучение общинной жизни, правил функционирования культовых учреждений и еврейской образовательной системы в Российской империи; выявление аспектов, связанных с военной службой евреев в царской армии; выявление предлогов и причин, приведших к антисемитским погромам, а также их последствий.

Научная новизна и оригинальность: Она выражается в изучении значительного числа неопубликованных документов, представляя впервые в историографии историю евреев в Бессарабии на румынском языке.

Полученные результаты и решенная научная задача: Полученный результат, способствующий решению важной научной проблемы, заключается в выяснении ранее неизвестных аспектов истории евреев Бессарабии в царский период. Это предоставляет концептуальную основу для прояснения эволюции еврейского населения и его роли в Бессарабии XIX века, служа научной и методологической опорой для изучения конфессиональной истории Бессарабии.

Теоретическая значимость: Заключается в оригинальном подходе, открывающим новую перспективу в исследовании истории еврейской общины как неотъемлемой части этноконфессиональной истории Бессарабии под царским влиянием в XIX веке.

Прикладное значение: Результаты исследования могут служить теоретической основой и справочным материалом для академической дисциплины или университетского курса «История евреев Бессарабии».

Внедрение научных результатов: теоретические и практические результаты подтверждены публикациями: 1 монографической работой, 10 исследованиями и научных статей, которые были опубликованы в Республике Молдова и за рубежом, а также докладами, в том числе пленарных, представленных на более чем 30-ти национальных и международных конференциях.

ROITMAN, ALEXANDR

JEWS FROM BESSARABIA IN THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE POLICIES IN THE XIX-TH CENTURY

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