

# Jewish Non-Orthodox Religious Communities in Slovakia in the Interwar Period

The aim of the present dissertation project is to present a comprehensive picture of the history of non-orthodox Jewish religious communities (herein-after referred to as JNCs) on the territory of Slovakia within the interwar Czechoslovak Republic (hereinafter referred to as Czechoslovakia).

The interdisciplinarity of the research lies not only in combining the re-search of the historian with geographical research, in the reconstruction of Jewish registry and rabbinical districts, but also in analyzing the work of the rabbis on a philosophical and sociological level. Similarly, intersections with political science will be necessary, through which I will be able to better in-terpret the complex situation of the political participation of Jewish commu-nities.

On the basis of my discovery of a list of Jewish religious communities in Slo-vakia, made in 1929, I can state that the total number of non-orthodox JNCs should have been approximately 72 mother communities. Also for this rea-son, I consider the treatment of the topic to be important and pragmatic in terms of the duration of the doctoral studies.

## Research Questions

What organisational development did the non-orthodox communities in Slo-vakia undergo during interwar period?

What activities did the non-orthodox communities in Slovakia organize in the interwar period?

What activities did prominent Slovak rabbis and cantors carry out in the ter-ritory of Czechoslovakia and abroad during the interwar period?

What attitudes did the representatives of Jewish community hold towards the Czechoslovak state and its laws ?

How did the non-orthodox Jewish community and rabbis react to the Zionist movement?

At what level were the relations of the non-orthodox communities with the orthodox and other religious communities?

### **Methodology and Work Plan**

The starting point for me is archival research, the most intensive part of which I plan to carry out during the first, second and third year of my studies. It is necessary to carry out research by direct method in the state archives within the regional cities of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak National Archives in Bratislava, Czech National Archives in Prague, Yad Vashem and Zionist Archives in Jerusalem.

Another point of my research is the analysis of the contemporary press such as Židovské Zprávy, Slovenský Domov and local periodicals. Within these magazines I can find information about activities or events prepared by the Jewish community. I plan to summarize information from the above-mentioned national and regional periodicals, which can help me with different perspectives on the topic under study.

I will also include oral history methodology and memory studies in my research. Of course, since it is no longer possible to communicate with direct Jewish memorials of interwar Czechoslovakia, it will be intergenerational interviews with descendants and members of the Jewish community. I also plan to work with the Oral History recordings collections of the USC Shoah Foundation and the Milan Šimečka Foundation.

I am currently planning to divide the dissertation into seven chapters: Methodology, Sources related to the research topic, History of non-orthodox communities, Organization and structure of non-orthodox Jewish communities, Activities of the Yeshurun Union in cooperation with the Union of Rabbis, The activities of the clergy.

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