

## Antroponomy of the Jews from Białystok as a reflection of the nation's culture and history

The personal name of a person is inseparably connected with his or her background. It always originates from the living language and reflects a whole nation's existence, its history, customs, certain inclinations and everyday life. Linguistic analysis of onomastic material enables one to reach to the ancient time i.e. to that moment when the personal name was first adopted into usage. The etymology of the oldest group of names, first names, reveals a great variety of human feelings: joy and sorrow, anxiety and suffering, admiration to the world and pain that is accompanied by grief. It hides parents' dreams and wishes for a new born child as well as social attitude towards an individual. Within this framework, Jewish antroponymy is an extremely interesting research material.

Many legends and stereotypes about Jewish onomastics have arisen because very few researchers have made an effort to get acquainted with the Jewish culture and history. At the same time, Jewish personal names were frequently the subject of rough jokes, sneers and humiliation.

M. Brzezina mentions several first names generalized according to the rule "pars pro toto", for example: *icek*, *judasz*, *kajfasz*, *mosiek*, *srul*, *fajga* and the others<sup>1</sup>, which were used as words synonymous with being a Jew. Many Jewish names with a beautiful etymology have undergone the process of changing into common names and entered into the surrounding nations' languages as common words. Polish language has adopted such common nouns, originating from Jewish names, as: *beniaminek* 'favorite child'; *chaimek* jokingly 'lamp'; *chaja* 'harlot' (whereas etymologically names Chaim, *Chaja* are connected with a root that means 'life'); *małka* 'infirm girl' (whereas name Małka originally meant 'queen'); *rebeka* 'fat woman' (whereas name *Rebeka*, *Rywka* originates from a noun meaning 'sheep or cow'); *słojma* 'slovenly man'<sup>2</sup> (and this is a modified form of name that symbolizes wisdom – *Salomon*).

First names and surnames found in the public register<sup>3</sup> of the Jews from Białystok clearly testify their close relation with the nation's culture

and history and in the same way, reflect the influence of other languages and cultures.

To understand how the mechanisms developed for naming of the Jews who inhabited Białystok prior to World War II, we need to go back to the source of the Jewish culture and history, investigate the nation's life in the Diaspora in different European countries and in the world. The system of Jewish names was first developed in prehistoric times. Even after Hebrew had become a dead language Hebrew continued to inspire the through the literature they read. Biblical names of old Hebrew origin gave support to the Jewish nation; those names were indispensable in the preservation of the Jewish national character. Nevertheless, the living language always triumphed. That is why etymologically different names penetrated the onomastic system of Jewish names during different periods of time. For example, in the Chaldeic period there came into existence names from chaldeic root (*Szerebia, Szobek, Rechum*), in the time of the Babylonian Captivity-Babylonian names (*Mordechaj*) and so on. Greek, Aramaic, Acadeic and Arabic names were also adopted. Until the year 1000 biblical, Hebrew, Chaldeic, Arabic, Persian and European names entered the store of Jewish names<sup>4</sup>. Although Hebrew had become a dead language at that time, it continued to be the source of Jewish names. In Europe they adopted such names as: *Aaron, Abraham, Dawid, Mojżesz, Noe, Szemaria* and others.<sup>5</sup>

Under the influence of languages and dialects of neighbouring nations, Jewish names themselves became modified. They moved from place to place taking these modified name forms with them to other territories, other surroundings that differed in cultural and linguistic respect. New elements influenced garbled names and new linguistic changes took place.

Before the Jews settled down in Białystok they had travelled a long way across the countries of Western Europe. In Białystok they found themselves as immigrants among other nations i.e. Germans, Poles and Belorussians. Even when they used their own system of names, they still modified their names under the influence of other foreign languages. To what extent can the reflection of the linguistic and cultural contacts with many European nations be found in the names of the Jews from Białystok? The analysis of this linguistic interaction can be examined in both biblical and Yiddish first names and surnames used by the Jews in Białystok.

## First names

In the context of first names used by the Jews from Bialystok there appeared names of a various etymology. They can be divided into: 1. biblical names; 2. non-biblical names (these are of Semitic origin, Yiddish origin or taken from other systems of names).

By using biblical names the Jews could keep their traditional pronunciation and spelling. Along with the adoption of Christianity and the translation of the Bible into different languages, biblical names became famous among other nations and some of them entered the store of Christian names creating the foundation of a new set of names (*Jan, Józef, Anna, Maria*). Interacting with European nations through Greek (Septuaginta) and Latin (Wulgata) the Jews introduced into the local vernacular characteristics of the above languages. For example Christian terminology and biblical names from Byzantine Greek penetrate Russian. Some features of the Greek phonological system in relation to biblical Hebrew impacted upon the creation of certain phonetic forms of biblical names in Russian. Russian, from Greek through Old Church Slavonic, accepted Greek and biblical names with the help of simple transcription. Therefore the same biblical first names in Russian and Hebrew have different phonetic forms. What is more, the spelling of Jewish names in the Russian alphabet motivated the changes in the phonic realisation of names.

Between the two World Wars Polish, which had taken Christian terminology and consequently Latin personal names, became an official language in Bialystok. The Polish form of biblical name differed not only from its Hebrew prototype but also from the Russian form. Therefore the same biblical first name with Hebrew etymology can be found in, at least, three variants:

1. Hebrew, strictly speaking, reflecting the pronunciation and spelling of Hebrew;
2. Russian, in other words, reflecting the adoption process in Russian;
3. Polish reflecting the adoption process of first name in Polish.

If we take into account the influence of other European languages and the derivation of Hebrew, Yiddish, Slavonic and other European languages we can find a rich and colourful picture of Jewish anthroponymy in this region. This can be illustrated with the following names.

IZAAK (Hebrew *Jishaq*); the Russian form *Исаак* appears in the material from Bialystok (since 1919) in the following variants: *Исаак, Ицхак, Ицхок, Айзык, Ицек, Ицко, Ицка, Ицель*. Between the two

World Wars there appeared these variants: *Izaak*, *Icechok* (vel *Izaak*), *Isaak*, *Isak*, *Izak*, *Icko*, *Ajzyk*. This abundance of variations is the result of linguistic interference on different levels. The name *Isaak* in this form was adopted in Old Church Slavonic (through Greek) and then entered the store of Russian names. *Icechak* and *Icechok* are the closest to the Hebrew form *Jishaq*, whereas [h] both in Polish and Russian is carried with the help of [x/ch] not [g]; *Ajzyk* was created under the influence of English pronunciation (*Jishaq* > *Ajzak*, *Ajzek*, *Ajzyk*), whereas the German motivated variants *Icek* (*Isak* > *Izak*, *Icak*, *Icek*) – *Icka*, *Icko* were created under the influence of the everyday language of the inhabitants from Białystok. This is similar with *Janko*, *Wańka*, which in this region were associated with such diminutives as *Janek*, *Bronek*, *Tomek*. The variant form *Icel* reflects the in-fluence of the German derivative system: this form was created with the German diminutive suffix -el from shortened stem *Ic-el*.

ANNA (Hebrew *Hannah*); in the public register of the Jews from Białystok we find the following variants: *Anna*, *Chana*, *Chanka*, *Chasza*, *Chasia*. Russian and Polish variants of the name lost [h] as a result of Greek-Latin intervention. But this is not a popular name form among the Jews, which is demonstrated by statistical data (during the Russian period the name *Anna* was given 42 times while *Chana* was used 195 times). The forms *Chanka*, *Chasza*, *Chasia* were formed from the stem of a Hebrew name variant with the help of the diminutive Slavonic suffixes: -ka, -sza, -sia.

EWA (Hebrew *Hawwa*); in the Diaspora in Białystok it had the following variants: *Ewa* and *Ewwa*, *Chawa*, *Chowa*, *Chwolesz*, *Chwolisz* and probably *Chwienna*. The most popular were the forms close to the Hebrew prototype: *Chawa* and *Chowa* (with variancy *a/o*). Other forms are derivatives formed in Yiddish that preserved Semitic consonantal root [hw].

MARIA (Hebrew *Miriam* or *Mariam*); in the public register of the Jews from Białystok it has these forms: *Maria*, *Mariam*, *Meriam*, *Mirjam*, *Miriam*, *Mania*, *Mariasza*, *Marjasza*, *Masza*, *Maja*, *Mera*, *Merka*, *Mirel*, *Mirka*, *Mirsa*, *Mircza*, *Mircze*, *Muszka* and the others. In the society of the Jews from Białystok this name was used in Old Hebrew or close to its phonetic form, because the most frequent forms in the public register are: *Mariam*, *Meriam* and *Miriam*. A great number of forms call for our attention. There is no doubt that some of them arose under Slavonic influence. *Mania* and *Masza* belong to this group since they are created from the Polish, Russian and Belorussian forms of the name *Maria*. There appeared other forms according to the pattern: *Mer-a* and *Mer-ka* (< *Meriam*), *Mir-a*, *Mir-ka* (< *Miriam*), *Maria-sza* (< *Maria*, *Mariam*). There is a Yiddish suffix -el in *Mirel* (< *Miriam*) while *Mircza*, *Mircze* and *Mirsa*

were under Romanian influence (*Mircea*), though these forms could have been created under Slavonic influence: *Miriam* > *Mir-cia* > *Mircza*, *Mircze* where *-cza*, *-cze* show pronunciation of palatal consonants in Yiddish<sup>6</sup>.

The above examples of first names testify to the fact that this important group of Jewish names, which has its source in the Bible, and traditional patterns of Hebrew spelling and phonetics also underwent linguistic interference. The names of the Jews from Bialystok found in the public register at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, prove the influence of many languages, but the greatest number of changes in the Jewish names took place as a result of German (Yiddish), Russian and Polish influence. In many cases linguistic interaction depended on written or oral way of adopting foreign linguistic features. Both as a result of Hebrew influences and other linguistic influences, certain names came into use as first names. Very often Hebrew names were translated into a local language or dialect. Initially, they functioned as double first names, for example *Susanna* (*Szoszana*) – *Rose* ‘rose’; *Sara* – *Regina* ‘queen’; *Cypora* – *Fejgel* ‘bird’; *Chaim* – *Vivacius* and so on<sup>7</sup>. The set of first names used in Bialystok includes numerous names originating in Yiddish. These are *Hirsz*, *Lejb*, *Ber*, *Wolf*; *Bejla*, *Zlata*, *Golde* and the others.

The origin of the names *Hirsz*, *Lejb*, *Wolf* is very interesting. They arose the symbolic understanding of Joshua’s blessing. Joshua gave his children different epithets and nicknames: *Naftali* meant ‘hind’ hence Hebrew name *Cewi* (*Cwi*) and Yiddish *Hirsz* (German deer), *Juda* – ‘lion’ hence Hebrew *Aria* and Yiddish *Lejb*, *Lew*, *Lewe*, sometimes *Leon*, *Benjamin* – ‘wolf’ hence Hebrew *Zew* (*Zeew*) and Yiddish *Wolf* (German ‘wolf’)<sup>8</sup>.

In religious rites in synagogue a Jew was obliged to use originally Hebrew names, therefore there appeared names translated from the local language into Hebrew. This way the Yiddish name *Ber* (< German ‘bear’) was transformed into *Dow*, *Benedykt* into *Baruch* (‘blessed’), *Gottlieb* into *Jedydia* (‘beloved by God’), *Febus* into *Uri* or *Szraga* (‘light’) and so on. This habit of naming among the Jews became the source of enrichment of the anthroponymic system and the formulation of many non-biblical names.

The motivation for choosing names among the Jews is different from that among Christians. The direction of the development of Jewish names was often determined by the living standards of a person giving the name. For centuries the most significant motivation in choosing a child’s name was the semantic background of the word. Jewish names that appeared in

a living language reflected its history, national customs, and its inclinations in family life. Jewish names had to be understood by the Jews themselves. The tendency to make them intelligible for other nations led to translation into other languages. This way there appeared double names: Hebrew served a Jew in a temple but translations into the language of the local population were used when dealing with neighbouring non-Jewish population. In each period new habits connected with giving names were developed. Jews gave names to commemorate their ancestors, names of benefactors to express undying gratitude. They gave their father's or another ancestor's names for boys (*Aba-ben*, *Josef-ben-Raba-ben-Josef*)<sup>9</sup>. In some groups of the Diaspora there appeared a habit of changing the name of a sick person into another name that gave hope for recovery, for example *Chaim* ('life'), *Refael* ('God, heal!'), *Iosif* ('prolong life').

In this connection the Jews treated the meaning of names very seriously. Etymological analysis of onomastic material can depict the nation's life and show the most respected values. The names given at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the Diaspora of the Jews from Białystok, can be divided into two structural types:

1. first names formed from common nouns;
2. composita, i.e. compound names, often making a complete sentence.

If formed from common nouns, male and female names differ. For their sons, the Jews from Białystok chose the names formed from animals' (= animals' names) names that symbolised power, courage, might: *Aria*, *Lejb*, *Lew*, *Leo* 'lion'; *Cwi* (*Cewi*), *Hirsz*, *Hersz* 'deer'; *Zew* (*Zeew*), *Wolf*, *Welwel* 'wolf'.

Girls were given names formed from domestic animals' names, birds and insects' names and others. They symbolised hard work, charm and other values, for example: *Debora*, *Bina* 'bee', *Cypora*, *Fejgel* 'bird', *Cywia* 'gazelle', *Hinda* 'hind', *Tauba* 'dove' and the others. The names referring to plants were also chosen, particularly those of flowers which similarly to the animal world were symbols of some values in Jewish culture, for example a palm was a symbol of perfection and prosperity, beauty, wisdom and life (cf. some verses from the Bible: "How beautiful and charming you are my love! Similar to a palm..." [Song b. s. 7, 8].

In the anthroponymic material from Białystok there appeared the following names: *Tamar* (Hebrew 'palm'), *Hadasa* (Hebrew 'myrtle'), *Szozszana* (Hebrew 'lily'), *Bluma* (German 'flower'), *Roza*, *Róża* 'rose' and the others. Women were also given names formed from the names of jewellery, precious stones and metals: *Penina*, *Margalit*, *Perel* 'pearl',

*Golda*, *Złata* 'golden'. There are not such male names. Female names formed from common nouns used the stems with certain moral values manifesting the fact that the Jews from Bialystok respected noble, mindedness, religiousness, modesty, charm, cleanness, purity, wisdom, beauty and the others: *Ada* 'ornament', *Adel* 'noble', *Ahuwa*, *Liba* 'beloved', *Anna* (*Chana*) 'generosity', *Bejla*, *Jafa*, *Kejla*, *Krasna*, *Szifra* 'beautiful', *Chasia* < *Chasida* 'kind-hearted', *Chiena*, *Rajca* 'charm', *Fradel* 'joy', *Fruma* 'pious', *Gita* 'good', *Glika* 'luck', *Luba*, *Lubow* 'love', *Nechama* 'consolation', *Nadzieźda*, *Szprinca* (from *Esperanca*) 'hope', *Rachama* 'mercy', *Rajna* 'innocence', *Sofia* 'wisdom', and so on. In male names we can find a similar classification, but in comparison to female names their number is smaller: *Aszer*, *Feliks* 'happy', *Chonon* 'merciful', *Codek* 'fair, just', *Dawid* 'beloved', *God* 'happiness, good fortune', *Jakir* 'precious', *Noach* 'serenity', *Symcha* 'joy', and so on<sup>10</sup>.

Names of complex structure among the Jews from Bialystok are expressive of the deity; they include linguistic elements referring to Divinity. The most frequent elements: *-el* 'God', *-jah* 'Jahweh – the name of God', *ab-* 'father': *Abiezer* – a typical sentence name, in Hebrew *abi'ezer* meant 'father is the help', *Abner* 'father is the light', *Abraham* and shorter *Abram* is originally connected with common name *abram* 'father of many', 'dignified father'. *Abi'ram* meant 'my father is tall and wonderful', *Awadja* in Hebrew *obadjah* 'servant of Jahwe', *Azriel* 'God is the help', *Becalel* Hebrew *besale'el* 'in the shadow of God', *Chananij* Hebrew *ananjah* 'Jahwe is the protector' or *hananjah* 'Jahwe is merciful' and so on. The above examples confirm the fact that Jewish names express simple folk religiousness. The meaning concentrates on the birth of a child, thoughts and feelings referring to the event whereas the content of the rest of sentence names what Divinity is to do for a certain name carrier. In names God fights, fills people with terror. At the same time, however, God is kind, friendly, blessing and helping<sup>11</sup>.

## Surnames

The second part of an anthroponymic formation-surname (modern understanding) appeared in Jewish culture only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was imposed by the authorities of the countries where the Jews lived. This does not mean that the earlier Jews were satisfied only with first names for identification. They coped with the problem similarly to other nations: along with first names they used the names of the places of work,

birth, origin, profession and so on. They added the father's or mother's name, combining it with a word *ben* or *bar* 'son' (especially in official documents). In everyday language, they created patronymic forms adding to the father's name the Yiddish genitive ending '-s' which could also be added to the mother's or wife's name<sup>12</sup>. Since 1845, in the Russian Sector of partitioned Poland the Jews similarly to other citizens had to take inherited surnames. They could not always decide for themselves. It was often a clerk who chose the name<sup>13</sup>.

The surnames of the Jews from Białystok contain different linguistic elements: Hebrew, German (Yiddish), Slavonic and others. The specific feature of Jewish onomastics expresses itself in hybrid surnames: they added the ending or suffix from the other language to a Hebrew or Slavonic stem. There is a group of antroponyms originating from first names. They can be equal to the following names: *Lewi*, *Markus*, *Chackiel*, *Salmon*, *Mejkach*, *Abel*, *Matys* and the others formed from etymologically different names with the help of Slavonic, Hebrew, German (Yiddish) formants, for example: *Ber-kowicz*, *Nechem-owicz*, *Jankiel-owicz*; *Chaim-owski*, *Hirsz-owski*, *Jankiel-ewski*, *Jachn-uk*, *Szalm-uk* (<Salomon), *Iser-uk*, *Wigdor-czyk*, *Jachel-czyk*; *Jel-in*, *Lew-in*, *Chilk-in*; *Isaj-ew*, *Boruszczak*; *Lipkie-s*, *Judkie-s*, *Szmerkie-s*, *Mende-s*; *Izhak-i*, *Gerszun-y* and so on. Another type of patronymic surnames is formed with 'son': *Abramson*, *Aron-son*, *Dawid-son*, *Mendel-son*, *Awja-son* (<Aba) and so on.

The specific onomastic feature of the Jews from Białystok is the usage of the mother's name to form a surname. This fact indicates how much the Jews respect woman-mother and her role in Jewish family. Jewish legislation also treats women in a special way<sup>14</sup>. Surnames were formed from Hebrew and Yiddish female names<sup>15</sup>: *Rywk-in*, *Ryw-ski* (Rywka), *Chaw-in*, *Chaw-es* (Chawa), *Chan-in* (Chana), *Chajk-in* (Chaja); *Margoli-s* (Margalit), *Minke-s* (Mina), *Sulk-es* (Sulamit); *Maryń-ski*, *Mariań-ski* (Maria); *Dwork-owicz* (Dwora), *Dyn-owicz* (Dina), *Sur-owicz*, *Sur-ek* (Sara). There are also common names partly composed of the words: -son 'son'; -kind 'child'; -man 'husband': *Dinen-son* (Dina), *Perel-son* (Perel), *Ryw-kind* (Rywka), *Rejz-kind* (Rejza), *Edel-man* (Edel=Adela), *Rozen-man* (Roza), *Taub-man* (Taube). This way of naming is also known among Slavonic nations but it was not used for surnames as frequently as it was among the Jews. In dialects on the Polish-East Slavonic border we can encounter with the formations like son Helin, Wikcin, daughter Basina, Zencina, husband Mańczyn and so on right up to the present time.

In other surnames of the Jews from Białystok we can find personal names equal to:



- a/ etnonyms, common nouns indicating professions, objects of daily use, plants and animals, man's psychic and physical features;
- b/ surnames originating from personal names of the first type and originating from local names;
- c/ composita.

In all types of personal names we find not only Slavonic but also other European (particularly German) linguistic and cultural influence.

Those names that originate from common noun names constitute an extremely big and varied group. Surnames originating from professions or activities in synagogue can have various backgrounds: Hebrew – Kagan and other phonetic and correctly spelt variants (*Cohen, Kahan, Kachan, Kochan*) < kohen 'priest'<sup>16</sup>; *Magid* < *maggid* 'preacher', *Mełamed* < *mełammed* 'teacher', *Rabin* < *rabbi*; *Chazan* < *chazan* 'someone who reads prayer during mess', *Sofer, Sauffer, Sojfer* < *sopher* 'writer, someone who rewrites, copies'. There are also surnames formed from laic professions: *Chajit* and variants (*Chajet, Chajat, Chajetan*) 'tailor', *Kacew* and *Kacef* < Hebrew *kacaw* 'butcher'; *Caref* < *coiref* 'jeweller', *Raffe* < *rojfe* 'doctor', *Szoher* < *sojcher* 'merchant'<sup>17</sup>. The above surnames were often translated into European languages so we have Hebrew, Polish, Russian, German and other equivalents: *Chajit* – *Krawiec* – *Portnoj* – *Sznajder* ('tailor'); *Rybak* – *Fiszer* ('fisher'); *Szewc* – *Szwiec* – *Sapoźnik* – *Szuster* ('shoemaker'). We observe a similar phenomenon in other surnames: *Lis* – *Fuks* (< German *Fuchs* 'fox'); *Rybko* – *Fisz* (German *Fisch* 'fish'). Surnames originating from common names represent the rich world of animals: fish (*Karp* 'carp', *Lin* 'tench', *Okoń* 'perch', *Szczupak* 'pike'), birds (*Bocian* 'stork', *Indych* 'turkey', *Wróbel* 'sparrow', *Łebendik* 'swan', *Kogut* 'cock', *Kanarek* 'canary'), wild animals (*Bobre* 'beaver', *Wilk* 'wolf', *Medwied* 'bear', *Jeleń* 'deer'), domestic animals (*Baran* 'ram', *Koń* 'horse', *Konik* 'pony', *Walach* 'gelding', *Kozioł* 'buck', *Koza* 'goat'), plants: trees, shrubbery, flowers, herbs, corn and even weeds (*Topola* 'poplar', *Olcha* 'alder', *Jabłoń* 'apple-tree', *Jałowiec* 'juniper', *Bez* 'lilac', *Kwiat* 'flower', *Gozdźik* 'carnation', *Pokrzywa, Krapiwka*, – Polish *pokrzywa*, Russian *крапива* 'nettle'; *Minc* – German *Minze* 'mint'); fruit and vegetables (*Śliwa* 'plum', *Cytryn* 'lemon', *Jabłok* 'apple', *Wisznia* 'cherry', *Birenbaum* – German 'pear', *Ajw* – Russian *айва* 'quince', *Maranc, Pomeraniec* – Polish *pomarańcz* 'orange', *Kapusta* 'cabbage'). In Jewish antroponymy we can find names of currency, precious stones and metals, objects of daily use, fabrics (*Pieniążek* 'coin', *Rubel* 'rouble', *Grajcar* 'half-copeck piece', *Złotko* 'gold', *Bursztyn* 'amber', *Rubin* 'ruby',

*Klejnot* 'jewel', *Jedwab* 'silk', *Barchat* 'velvet', *Kalamarz* 'inkpot', *Świcznik* 'candlestick', *Żelazko* 'iron', *Papier* 'paper', *Kirpicz* – Russian 'brick', *Remień* 'leather band').

Surnames indicate man's physical infirmity, his physical features (often negative), appearance (*Blindes* – German *Blinde* and *Ślepek* 'blind', *Wysokier* and *Gros* 'tall', *Gorbaty* 'hunched', *Gawuryn* – Russian *говорун* 'talkative', *Borodacz* 'bearded man', *Czort* 'devil', *Siniak* 'bruise', *Krykun* 'noisy person', *Wariat* 'madman, lunatic', *Fiks* – French 'crazy', *Miły* 'pleasant, agreeable, nice, dear', *Rzykocz* 'reckless gambler', *Zubacz* 'sharp-toothed', *Gniwny* 'angry', *Długacz* 'lanky, gangling', *Mały* and *Klein* – German 'small', *Skory* 'fast', *Biegun* 'runner', *Gut* – German 'good', *Kaleka* 'cripple', *Zawadysz* 'bold, lively', *Piorun* 'lightning', *Chwat* 'young stalwart', *Kartun* – Belorussian 'card player, gambler', *Wejwejek* (from *aj-waj*), *Gdak* < Polish *gdakanie* 'cackle', *Kohtun* 'dishevelled locks; Philistine, vulgarian'.

Surnames corresponding to ethnonyms and originating from them often indicate where the Jews lived previously or where they came from: *Lach*, *Mazur*, *Polak* and *Polaczek* ('Pole'), *Rusin* and *Ruszyn* and very unusual for Polish: *Rosjan* ('Russian'), *Cygan* ('Gipsy'), *Litwin* ('Lithuanian'), *Hollander* ('Dutchman'), *Szwed* ('Swede'), *Turek* ('Turk'), *Ormian* (instead of *Ormianin* *Armeńczyk* 'Armenian'), *Czywusz* (*Czuwasz?* 'Chuvash'), *Czerkis* ('Circassian'); derived: *Jewrejski* (< Russian *еврей* 'Jew'), *Duński* (< Polish *Dania* 'Denmark'), *Holenderski* (< Polish *Holandia* 'Holland'), *Wengrów* = *Węgierski?* (< Polish *Węgry* 'Hungary'). There are personal names formed from the names of the places where the Jews lived, formed with the help of the suffixes -ski, -cki or -er: *Berlin* and *Berliński*, *Berliner*, *Luksemburg*, *London*, *Strausberg*, *Grynberg*, *Ham-burg*, *Czernichow*, *Choroszcz*, *Tykoczyn* (Polish *Tykocin*), *Liwszyc* (< *Leobschutz* in Silesia), *Halpeern*, *Alpern* and *Galpern* (< *Heilbronn*), *Konin*, *Elbling* (Polish *Elbląg*), *Szapiro*, *Szpiro* (< *Speyer*), *Cfas* (< a town *Safed*) and so on. Here, we should pay a special attention to a surname *Kacelenbogen* and its variants *Kanzelenbogen*, *Kancenelenbogen* that were formed through joining abbreviations *Kac* (kohen sedek) and the town name *Elbogen*. But the majority of toponymic names was formed with the suffixes -ski, -cki, -er, -czyk and the others: *Peuzn-er* (*Poznań*), *Sejner* (*Sejny*), *Grodn-er* (*Grodno*), *Koszyc-er* (*Koszycze*), *Grajw-er* (*Grajewo*), *Koln-er* (< German *Koln* or Polish *Kolno*) and so on and *Indur-ski* (*Indura*), *Repl-ski* (*Repla*), *Suchowol-ski* (*Suchowola*), *Zabudow-ski*, *Gdyni-ski* (*Gdynia*), *Gdańs-ki* (*Gdańsk*), *Warszaw-ski* (*Warszawa*), *Wileń-ski* (*Wilno*) and *Wileń-czyk*, *Warszaw-czyk* and so on<sup>18</sup>. These personal names

testify to the fact that the Jews came to Białystok not only from small towns and villages in Belorussia and Ukraine but also from far away European cities and countries and from all over the world.

Composita are also a semantically rich group of personal names. Complex surnames originate from German. In the materials from Białystok there appeared numerous surnames with formant *-sztejn* 'stone' and *-berg* 'mountain', rarely *-feld* 'field', *-baum* 'tree', *-sztam* 'root', *-man* 'man': *Rubinsztejn*, *Blauksztejn*, *Gutsztejn*, *Goldsztejn*, *Perelberg*, *Kronenberg* and so on. There are as well Slavonic clagues: *Modrykamień* (Polish *modry* 'blue' + *kamień* 'stone') and *Szczęсна Góra* (Polish *szczęsny*, *szczęśliwy* 'happy, fortunate, lucky' + *góra* 'mountain'). The majority of surnames may have appeared in Germany and Austria and it would not have happened without influence of local clerks. This fact is demonstrated by German forms which often have odd meanings like „thinking bread“ or „pearl and crown mountain“<sup>19</sup>.

In the onomastic materials there is a relatively small number of surnames-abbreviations. These are personal names typical only of the Jews. They were formed from the first letters or syllables of other names or words and often from the whole idiomatic expressions. The simplest surnames of this group begin with the letter *b* (this is the first letter of *ber* or *ben* 'son' and the first letter or syllable of any biblical name for example *Basz* < *Ben-Szimon*). More complex type of surnames - abbreviations were created from the names of religious customs or professions connected with them, for example: *Kac* < *kohen-sedek*. In the materials from Białystok there appeared also: *Segał* < *seگان-leviyyah* 'Levite's helper'<sup>20</sup> and *Atlas* < *ach tow le izrael sela* 'let it be good for Israel'<sup>21</sup>. Surnames may be abbreviations as well: *Rosz* < *rabbi Szelomo*, *Rac* < *rabbi Cwi*, *Bosz* < *Ben Szimon* or *Ben Szmuel* and others.

To sum up, we must emphasize that the Białystok Jews' surnames were based on the lexical material of many languages. Undoubtedly, the most crucial contribution belongs to the German (Yiddish) and Slavonic languages (Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian).

There are very few surnames of Hebrew origin and also of no etymology at all. We can also encounter surnames with French or English origin (*Harris*, *Gordon*, *Spector*, *Giljot*).

There are very few surnames of Hebrew origin and also of no etymology at all. We can also encounter surnames with French or English origin (*Harris*, *Gordon*, *Spector*, *Giljot*).

It is hard to accept many surnames of German and Slavonic origin to be typically Jewish, because the same personal names may be used by

German, Poles or Russians, for example: *Szmidt, Miller, Kowalski, Kuzniecowa, Kruszewski, Konik, Kozak* and so on. However, a certain group of Jewish surnames differs in etymology and structure from German and Slavonic ones. No doubt that Jewish surnames include all the surnames with Hebrew etymology (*Kagan, Magid*), patronymic and metronymic surnames created with the help of Slavonic suffixes from names that were used only by the Jews (*Judelewicz, Izakowicz, Wigdorczyk*), surnames created with Hebrew suffix *-i/-y* (*Itzhaki, Jakobi, Gerszuny*) and Yiddish *-s* (*-es, -is*) (*Surkies, Frejdkies, Chawies*), complex surnames which were formed similarly to their complex first names (*Perelsztejn, Rozenberg, Rozenblum, Rozenfeld, Wejzenbaum* 'wheat tree'!), hybrid surnames formed from a Slavonic root with the help of a Yiddish suffix (*Krakower, Warszawer, Krynkier*) and the other way around (*Berliński, Jeruzalimski*), surnames-abbreviations (*Kac, Atlas, Bosz*).

The surnames of the Jews from Białystok confirm the continuation of cultural traditions in the onomastic system created by the nation in the distant past. Common surnames (simple and complex) refer to this tradition. With their structure and semantics they remind one of Jewish names, both biblical and non-biblical Hebrew and Yiddish (*Perel, Kalman, Berel*).

On the other hand, the Jews adopt some structural models of surnames and derivational elements from neighbouring nations and use them in creating their own personal names: patronymic surnames with Slavonic suffixes *-owicz/-ewicz, -czyk, -ow, -in, -uk, -ski* and German *-son*: *Mowszowicz, Jankielewicz, Jachnuk, Wigdorczyk, Lewin, Isajew, Chaimowski, Aronson, Mendelson*; and troponomic surnames with the suffixes *-ski, -czyk, -er*: *Warszawski, Wileńczyk, Krakower*.

Personal onomastics of the Jews from Białystok presented in the article depict the cultural foundation of Jewish antroponymy. Reflecting the migration of the Jews across many countries in Europe and the world, it is also the testimony of the nation's tragic fate. The Jews form their modern system of names with the help of other European nations' experience. They adopt their structural models of personal names, lexical and derivational elements. At the same time, they do not have a similar influence on their neighbours. Christian nations, among which the Jews lived, adopt very little from Jewish culture and language except for those phenomena adopted from Judaism and Christianity.

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- 6 A similar phenomenon is notified by M. KARPLUK, Polish Jews' first names and surnames are the example of language interference (based on the book by J.B.Singer), *Onomastica XXIX* 1984, 201.
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- 15 Here we must emphasize that names in Yiddish are calques of Hebrew names, cf Z. ABRAMOWICZ, *op.cit.* 80-116, 209-263.
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