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## ATTEMPTS TO OVERCOME ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES IN THE YEARS 1867–1939 BY THE EXAMPLE OF MAKÓW COUNTY

### PRÓBY PRZEZWYCIEŻENIA TRUDNOŚCI GOSPODARCZYCH W LATACH 1867–1939 NA PRZYKŁADZIE POWIATU MAKOWSKIEGO

Maków County, established by the Tsarist authorities in 1867, included the northern part of the previous Pułtusk County and a small part of Przasnysz County. It was also a part of the newly-established Łomża Governorate. Apart from Maków, two other towns belonged to the county: Różan and Krasnosielc (two years later, in 1869, along with many other towns in the Kingdom of Poland, they lost their city rights, becoming the so-called urban settlements)<sup>1</sup> as well as the communes: Karniewo, Krasnosielc, Perzanowo, Płoniawy, Sielc, Sieluń, Smrock i Sypniewo. The county covered the area of 1.054 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1872, the county was inhabited by 48.500 people and the population density was 46 persons per km<sup>2</sup>. This amount corresponded the average population density in the area of northern Mazovia. In that respect, Maków County definitely dominated over the counties of Ostrołęka, Mława and Przasnysz<sup>2</sup>.

The sources of the weaknesses in the economic development of Maków County in the second half of the 19th century should be looked for in socio-economic factors. Maków County was located on the borderline of two parts of north-eastern Mazovia, clearly different in terms of their social and economic character. A distinctive feature of this region, in social respect, was a considerable number of the landed gentry. In the Łomża Governorate, 28% of the population was gentry and they owned 32% of the land. To compare, in north-western Mazovia, the gentry owned 13% of the land and in southern Mazovia 1%. In 1896,

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<sup>1</sup> The decision on renaming some towns of the Łomża Governorate to persons, dated 30 January (11 February) 1870, announced on 19 (31) May 1870. *Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego*, Vol. LXX, No. 241, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> J. Łukasiewicz, *Powiat makowski w latach 1867–1914*, [In:] *Maków Mazowiecki i ziemia makowska*. Ed. A. Słoniowa. PWN, Warszawa 1984, p. 99. In 1913, in Maków County, there were already 70 thousand inhabitants, and an average population density was 66 persons per km<sup>2</sup> and it was bigger than in Przasnysz County – 62 persons, but lower than in Ostrołęka and Ostrów Counties – 67 persons in each, A. Krzyżanowski, K. Kumaniecki, *Statystyka Polski*. Polskie Towarzystwo Statystyczne, Kraków 1915, p. 8, 42–45; *Trudy Warszawskiego Statystycznego Komitetu*, Vol. 13, Warszawa 1889–1914, pp. 146–162.

among the inhabitants of Maków County, 33,6% of the people were of noble descent, 46% – of peasant background, 18% – of bourgeois origin and 2,4% belonging to other statuses. In 1894, the gentry of Maków county owned 37,7% of the land and, in that matter, only Łomża County was ahead of this county. The gentry inhabited mainly the communes of Sieluń, Perzanowo and Sielc, whereas the peasants clearly dominated in Krasnosielc, Karniewo and Płoniawy communes. In general, the peasants in the county owned 25,2% of the land. At the same time, the landed ownership covered 32,9% of the land. It was bigger only in Ciechanów County – 41%. In the area of Maków county, there were great properties Krasnosielc, belonging at first to Karol Krasiński. It was the largest latifundium in the North Mazovia region, consisting of 7 granges (Krasnosielc, Amelin, Bagienice, Drażdzewo, Karolin, Kucieja and Niesułów). It covered the area of over 12 thousand ha, out of which 68% were forests<sup>3</sup>.

The main source of income of the people inhabiting Maków County was agriculture. Within the territory of Russian partition, which also included Maków County, agriculture was not efficient. After the manumission in 1864, the need for manufactured materials in a village increased, and at the same time villages provided more and more work force for industry, as the manumission had not included landless peasants. Also, the area of arable land and the production of cereals increased. A major change concerning the Mazovian countryside was abolishing serfdom and the liquidation of feudal service. Since that moment, peasants became the owners of the land that they had cultivated, which was a revolution in the arrangement they had lived in for many generations. As a result of the agricultural reforms, they also started to gradually gain civil rights, such as being under the jurisdiction of common courts, establishing rural self-governments and participating in political life equally to the representatives of other groups. However, the way the land had been managed after those changes was not the best. In Maków county, arable lands covered the area of about 48%, similarly to the neighboring counties of Ostrów and Przasnysz, definitely more than in Ostrołęka County, but much less than in Ciechanów and Pułtusk Counties. Meadows and pastures constituted 20% and uncultivated land only 2,6% – it was a relatively low percentage, because in the Kingdom of Poland, in comparison, it was 4,9% on average<sup>4</sup>.

In Maków County, similarly to almost the entire area of Mazovia, by the end of the 19th century, there was a three-field system of cultivating land. It was used on approximately 75% of the arable land area. The structure of sowing was

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<sup>3</sup> The National Archives in Łomża (APŁ), *Obzor Łomżyńskiej Guberni for the year 1896*, p. 16; *Trudy Warszawskiego Statistycznego Komiteta...*, Vol. 15, pp. 52–73; K. Groniowski, *Kwestia agrarna w Królestwie Polskim, 1871–1914*. PWN, Warszawa 1966, pp. 94–95.

<sup>4</sup> *Statistika Rossijskoj Imperii*, Vol. 23, Issue 54 i 57, tab. IV and V. Petersburg 1887; J. Łukasiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 102–103.

relatively good within Maków County. The vast majority of land was sown with cereal (71,4%) but still less than in nearby counties. Among the cereals, rye was ahead of oats, wheat and buckwheat. Potatoes covered 18,6% of the total sowing, and the rest of the crops 10%<sup>5</sup>.

In the 1970s, in the period of good economic situation and price increase, the development of agriculture was systematic, although not at a fast pace. The situation clearly changed during the agricultural crisis and price decrease. Apart from that, there were additional sales difficulties related to river transport through the Narew and the Vistula. Moreover, Maków County did not have the possibility to use rail transport. Ostrów County had used this kind of transport already since 1862 and Ciechanów and Pułtusk Counties since 1887. In 1893, also Ostrołęka received a railway connection. Therefore, cereal prices in Maków County were the lowest in the entire Łomża Governorate. In 1893, a tonne of rye cost about 40 rubles in Maków and, in comparison, 45 rubles in Pułtusk, and 49 rubles in Ostrów<sup>6</sup>.

Farmers, in order to eliminate the declining income, expanded the area of sowing to increase the cereal sales. However, that resulted in further decrease of prices and damage to the profitability of cereals cultivation. As a result of poor harvest of cereals in 1889 and potatoes in 1891, a really difficult nutritional situation occurred among the Maków County population. Additionally, in the years 1894–1896, cereal prices became so low that the financial means obtained from the sales did not cover the production costs. That related mainly to wheat and barley. It forced the farmers to reduce the acreage, especially of wheat, whose cultivation was limited to the most fertile soils, guaranteeing at least a minimum profit<sup>7</sup>.

Since 1896, the situation in agriculture started to improve and cereal prices were slowly increasing. The agricultural crisis was in fact over but its influence on the area of cereal cultivation was so permanent that the amount of income from the cultivation obtained before the crisis belonged to the past. The crisis in agriculture also influenced the changes in land ownership structure. It affected all the land owners but mostly the producers of trade cereals. Granges based on trade cereals did not withstand the significant prices decrease, which led to the situation that the owners sold the farms or parceled their property in part or as a whole. In this regard, the area of peasants and petty gentry's ownership was increasing. In 1904, in Maków County, peasants owned 30% of the land, petty gentry – 38%, and manor owners only 25%. Expanding the area of peasants' land ownership occurred as a result of obtaining land after the liquidation of easements or by purchase. After the manumission, there were 3.307 peasant farmsteads in Maków County, of which 77% used the easements. It must be admitted that the easements' liquidation pace

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 104.

<sup>6</sup> APŁ, Obzor Łomżyńskiej Guberni for the year 1893, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem; J. Łukasiewicz, op. cit., pp. 104–105.

in Maków County was at that time relatively fast. By 1 January 1890, the easements had been transformed into peasants' farmstead lands in 56%<sup>8</sup>.

However, the major reason of the increasing economic underdevelopment of Maków County in the second half of the 19th century was the poor development of industry. In the discussed period, the only and the biggest industrial plant in the county was a sugar factory in Łukowo, Karniewo commune, employing in 1896 about 350 workers. Its constant technical improvement led to the annual production of even 2 thousand tonnes in 1906. Nevertheless, there was a significant decline of another industry, quite well-developed in 1880, when 140 workers were employed in 70 small plants (without mills). At that time, there were among others 8 tanneries and 8 brickyards. In 1891, however, only 36 small plants were located in the county, employing altogether about 64 workers. After the agrarian crisis, the situation of industry gradually improved. The production of buttons and brick developed, a relatively big sawmill was established and, in 1896, the first in the county steam mill was built. Unfortunately, in 1901, the production of buttons was liquidated and in 1906 the newly-built steam mill stopped functioning. Gradual progress in industry could be noticed again since 1906. In 1907, in the county, apart from the sugar factory, there was a distillery in Czarnostów, a brewery in Młodzianowo, 2 sawmills and 4 brickyards. In industry, there were in total about 700 employees working mostly seasonally<sup>9</sup>.

The main source of income of the Maków population was craft and trade. In 1908, 10% of the town's inhabitants worked as traders. The number of merchants, however, was falling. In 1898, there were 132 of them, and only 112 in 1905. One of the wealthiest merchants were the Jewish family of Blum. As regards trade, Maków was at that time definitely behind other Mazovian towns. In 1905, in Ostrołęka, 314 people worked in trade, in Ciechanów – 415, in Pułusk – 439, in Ostrów – 419, in Przasnysz – 280. The industry in the town also developed poorly, similarly to the entire county. The most important industrial plants were tanneries, brickyards and mills. Unfortunately, the number of industrial factories was gradually decreasing – in 1882 there were 36, and in 1896 only 13<sup>10</sup>.

The relatively difficult economic situation of Maków County was even worsened by the outbreak of World War I in the years 1914–1918, which caused major damage.

After the restoration of sovereignty, commenced the rebuilding after the damaging war and began the organization of self-governments at municipal, urban and county level. Important was the issue of a proper organization of the county's

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<sup>8</sup> Trudy Warszawskiego Statystycznego Komitetu..., Vol. 15, tab. I, Vol. 39, Part 2, p. 64.

<sup>9</sup> In the years 1880–1907, the number of industrial plants was gradually decreasing. In 1880, there were 107 plants, and in 1907 only 75. However, the number of workers was increasing. In 1880, 212 people were employed and in 1907 – 662 people. APL, Obzor Łomżyńskiej Guberni za lata 1880–1907 appendix no. 2.

<sup>10</sup> J. Łukasiewicz, op. cit., pp. 117–118.

victualing, and therefore the Provisioning Office in Maków and the Provisioning Committees in particular municipalities were established<sup>11</sup>.

Agricultural Syndicates in Maków and Różan as well as the Cereal Cooperatives in Maków and Krasnosielc dealt with receiving contingent and confiscated cereals as well as dispensing them to particular inhabitants and institutions within Maków County<sup>12</sup>.

Trade Section of Maków Credit Bank played a major role in gaining basic foodstuff and industrial goods. By the agency of it, people received i.a. sugar, saccharin, salt, leather, kerosene, soap, olive, chicory and woolen or cotton materials from the National Office of the Basic Goods Purchase in Warsaw<sup>13</sup>.

The issues related to the purchase and sales of basic foodstuff and daily-use products were handled by the Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering in Maków, which was subordinate to the Regional Department in Mława. The interviewer of this Office was Zatoński, who was sent the lists of products confiscated by the police<sup>14</sup>.

Only the Trade Section of Maków Credit Bank was authorized to the wholesale of the basic food products. The articles which had not come from the Trade Section were confiscated. Warehouses could carry out retail sales of the articles received from the Ministry of Provisioning on the basis of the directives given by Starost's Office. The supervision over the warehouses' activity was supposed to be carried out by national administrative authorities, delegates of the Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering and the County Provisioning Committee<sup>15</sup>.

Police officers from the State Police ensured that the regulations of the Ministry of Provisioning were respected. They controlled all the permissions as well as revised the mills, windmills, abattoirs, shops, farms, craft workshops and service points. The confiscated goods were given to the local Provisioning Committees. There was an obligation to unconditionally issue receipts for the owners during the requisition, indicating the type, amount and weight of the confiscated articles<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (AAN), Ministerstwo Apropowizacji (MA), sign. 379, k. 18, 106, 111.

<sup>12</sup> The Cereal Cooperative in Maków was established the moment the occupants yielded and it took provisioning over Maków, Różan, Krasnosielc and other settlements of Maków County. It supplied its depots with mostly non-quota cereal and it functioned until February 1919, *ibidem*, sign. 905, k. 179.

<sup>13</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie Oddział w Pułtusku (APP), Starostwo Powiatowe w Makowie Mazowieckim w latach 1919–1926 (SPMM), sign. 2, k. 238.

<sup>14</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Warszawie (APW), Komenda Powiatowa Policji Państwowej (KPPP) w Makowie Maz., sign. 40, k. 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*, sign. 39, k. 211, sign. 40, k. 5.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, sign. 39, k. 78, 94, 122, 150.

Thanks to the actions of the County Provisioning Committee and the help from the ministry of Provisioning, people were provided with food at least at a minimum degree, which saved many inhabitants of the county from hunger or even death.

In the inter-war period, agriculture played a critical role in the economy of Maków County. Maków County was a typical agricultural county. In 1921, 45% of the overall area of the county were arable lands, 20% were pastures, 14% – forests, 1% – waters, and the rest of the area were wastelands. The soils, apart from the south-western part of the county, were barely fertile. An average peasant farmstead covered the area of 12–15 morgens of land (6.7–8.4 ha). There were 2.200 small farms (up to 8 morgens). About 20% of the rural population was unemployed. Some were hired for seasonal work by the owners of bigger farms.

According to the First Population Census of 30 September 1921, in Maków County, 44.679 people occupied themselves with farming, which consisted 76,6% of the total number of the county's population. There were 11.956 farmsteads, of which 11.329 (94,7%) were family farms. The rest were institutional farms (134) and those owned by single people (493). The overall area of the arable lands in Maków County was 160.135 ha<sup>17</sup>.

In the agrarian structure of the country, in the first years of independence, small peasant farms were dominant, but at the same time, there were large landed properties, conducting extensive farming. In Maków County were 46 landed properties, which covered the area of 13.053 ha. Almost half of the estates (21) were farms with an area between 50–100 ha, 6 of 100–200 ha and 6 of 200–300 ha<sup>18</sup>. Within the structure of cultivating large property land, arable lands were dominant – 6.443 ha (49,3%) and lands of forestry use – 3.780 (29%). Other forms of land use were: meadows and pastures (14,3%), ponds and lakes (1,1%) as well as orchards and gardens (0,7%). Wastelands covered the area of 526 ha (4%), and the rest, i.e. 176 ha, was used for buildings and roads<sup>19</sup>.

The vast majority of the properties' owners were Polish citizens – 42, and only 4 estates were owned by Jews<sup>20</sup>. 12 landed properties were under the easements at that time. 243 farmyards used those easements, mainly pastures (172), 40 farms

<sup>17</sup> The First Census of the Republic of Poland Population, dated 30 September 1921, Warszawa 1927, k. 197–198; APP, SPMM, sign. 8, k. 198; Z. Landau, J. Tomaszewski, *Zarys historii gospodarczej Polski 1918–1939*. Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1961, pp. 15–16.

<sup>18</sup> *Wielka własność według powiatów*. Statystyka Polski (Warszawa) 1925, Vol. V, p. 26.

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, p. 50, AAN, Ministerstwo Apropowizacji (MA), sign. 905, k. 39, 147, 274–275, 277–280, 300; J. Leskiewiczowa, *Ziemiaństwo polskie XX wieku. Słownik biograficzny*, Part 7. DiG, Warszawa 2004, p. 134.

used forestry easements and pastures, and 23 farms used only the forestry easements<sup>21</sup>.

Among agricultural machines, the properties were equipped mostly with regular ploughs (314 items), horse-mills (50 items), horse threshers (38 items), harvesters (29 items) and binders (12 items). Apart from that, people already used steam threshers (6 items) and traction engine threshers (6 items) as well as motored ploughs and tractors (5 items). In 41 estates, the owners had permanent servants, among whom there were 37 janitors, 263 ordinaries, 282 mailmen, 115 boarders, 89 tenant farmers and 363 seasonal workers<sup>22</sup>.

By a decree-law of the Regency Council from 4 November 1918 and the act “in the matter of donation goods” dated 5 November 1919<sup>23</sup>, all the Russian donation properties in the area of the Kingdom of Poland became the property of the State Treasury. In 1919, the area of the state’s agricultural properties in the Kingdom of Poland totalled 483 thousand morgens, i.e. over 270 thousand hectares. By the end of 1921, 331.8 thousand morgens were given for parceling (185.8 thousand ha) which constituted 68,7% of the land owned by the state<sup>24</sup>.

Due to the parceling, it was possible, at least to some extent, to fulfil the shortage of land in villages as well as improve the conditions of the functioning of schools and agricultural organizations.

In Maków County, in the years 1919–1936, about 145.476 ha of land were parceled between 33.171 private buyers. In 1937, 2.5 ha of land were sold in Maków Maz. to self-government and social institutions<sup>25</sup>.

The land consolidation in Maków County began already before the outbreak of World War I. After the war, the action of land reparcelling started again and developed really well. Most of the reparcelling’s participants did not complain about the consolidation of lands. In the years 1921–1922, 14.170 morgens (7.935 ha) were consolidated in 14 villages in Maków County<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> APP, Akta komisarza spraw włościańskich powiatu makowskiego, pp. 445–482; W. Łątkowski, *Serwituty w powiecie makowskim i ich likwidacja*. Rocznik Mazowiecki (Warszawa) 2002, Vol. XIV, pp. 71–84; K. Groniowski, *Realizacja reformy uwłaszczeniowej 1864 r.* PWN, Warszawa 1963, pp. 192–204.

<sup>22</sup> Wielka własność według powiatów, op. cit. p. 62, 68, 76.

<sup>23</sup> Journal of Laws (Dziennik Ustaw) (Dz.U) 1919, No. 72, item 426.

<sup>24</sup> E. Kołodziej, *Życie gospodarcze*, [In:] *Dzieje Mazowsza lata 1918–1939*, Vol. IV. Ed. J. Szczepański. Akademia Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora, Pułtusk 2010, pp. 284–285; *Ministerstwo Rolnictwa i Dóbr Państwowych*, [In:] *Informator powszechny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Kalendarzem Policji Państwowej na rok 1922*. Warszawa [n.d.], pp. 223–224.

<sup>25</sup> APW, Urząd Wojewódzki Warszawski (UWW), sign. 1490, k. 1–3, sign. 1415, k. 1–2, sign. 1425, k. 20, 26, 78, sign. 1489, k. 1, sign. 1490, k. 1–3, sign. 1598, k. 5–6, sign. 1599, k. 1–2, sign. 1600, k. 1, 24, sign. 1601, k. 3, 69, 79, sign. 1891, k. 1–100, sign. 1896, k. 1–55, sign. 2053, k. 1–60, sign. 2056, k. 1, sign. 2057, k. 1–13.

<sup>26</sup> APP, SPMM, sign. 4, k. 40; E. Kołodziej, *Życie gospodarcze Mazowsza w okresie międzywojennym*, [In:] *Mazowsze w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym (w granicach*

Due to a difficult situation of agriculture within the first post-war years, the local authorities did not oblige farmers to pay land tax. Moreover, they allocated specific sums in support of agriculture. In the years 1919–1922, the County Council in Maków allocated 3.445 marks for that purpose, and in 1924, 4.800 zlotys on fostering agriculture, trade and industry<sup>27</sup>.

In the years 1921–1922, the County Council, in order to spur the activities of machinery rings in Maków County, dedicated subsidies of 1.395.000 marks for the District Agricultural Society to maintain an instructor, a secretary and other expenses. Apart from that, the County Council also set a welfare benefit for the Central Agricultural Society<sup>28</sup>.

Since 1 April 1921, the farmers from Maków County received help from the state in the form of a loan of 600.000 marks (21 owners of minor properties), 77 horses – gained during the demobilization and 67 horses vindicated from Germany, as well as cereal seeds: 1 wagon of rye, 5 wagons of barley, 7 wagons of oat, 1 wagon of field pea and 1 wagon of vetch. Apart from that, the county was delivered a part of agricultural tools, which were then taken on consignment by the Maków branch of the Agricultural Syndicate in Warsaw<sup>29</sup>.

The County Council in Maków Maz., in order to support farming within the county's area, allocated in its budget appropriate amounts of money for this purpose. They were spent i.a. on the purchase of cereal seed and licensed animals, the afforestation of wasteland, the regulations of rivers and amelioration, livestock presentations, the activity of the District Society of Organization and Machinery Rings, scholarships for agricultural school students and agricultural training courses<sup>30</sup>.

In the years 1929–1939, the County Council in Maków Maz. allocated the funds ranging from 23.800 zlotys to 72.162 zlotys on agriculture, which consisted an average of 7,6% of the general budget<sup>31</sup>.

Since the autumn of 1934, an action of liquidating the villages' liabilities was carried out in Warsaw voivodeship. It covered 6.800 farmsteads, which had purchased land within the agricultural reform, by getting loans from the State Agricultural Bank. Despite cancelling 41% of the borrowers' debts and splitting the

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*województwa warszawskiego*). Ed. A. Stawarz. Mazowieckie Towarzystwo Kultury, Mazowiecki Ośrodek Badań Naukowych im. Stanisława Herbsta, Warszawa 1998, p. 52; Rocznik Statystyczny. Warszawa 1939, p. 70; H. Jabłoński, *Województwo warszawskie w latach 1926–1930*. WBWW, Warszawa 1930, pp. 15–16.

<sup>27</sup> *Statystyka finansów komunalnych. Samorząd powiatowy w latach 1919–1922 i 1924*. Statystyka Polski (Warszawa) 1928, Vol. VII, p. LVIII, 20, 122, 246, 284.

<sup>28</sup> APP, SPM, sign. 4, k. 35.

<sup>29</sup> Ibidem, k. 40.

<sup>30</sup> AAN, Związek Powiatów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (ZPRP), sign. 1055, k. 28–29, 209–210, 263–264.

<sup>31</sup> Ibidem, sign. 1053, k. 24, 142, 214, 234, 266, 295, 386, 400, 426, 431.



other part into long-term installments, most of the debtors did not pay the due interest, unfortunately<sup>32</sup>.

The bill on the liquidation of the villages' liabilities, which gave farmers major reliefs, also introduced certain requirements concerning the tardy debtors. In case of not paying two consecutive installments including the interest, an immediate obligation of the entire debt was introduced. Therefore, the debtors had to turn to the Arbitrary Office in order to receive a calculation certificate, which was to contain the fixed amount of the installment by virtue of law. The Arbitrary Office could annul the effects of the debt arrears only in case of an exceptional situation, e.g. a natural disaster<sup>33</sup>.

As it has already been mentioned, Maków County was a typical agricultural county. Therefore, industry and craft developed poorly in this area. In 1919, there were 3 tanneries, 14 oil mills, 10 water mills and 2 steam mills, 25 windmills, 5 sawmills as well as 5 brickyards and 1 concrete plant in the county. Within handicrafts, there should be distinguished shoemaking, carpentry, pottery and rope-making. Moreover, in a domestic environment, canvas and textile materials were made for the needs of manufacturers. Trade did not develop at that time on a bigger scale. A newly organizing itself liquor trade was in Polish hands and petty trade belonged mainly to Jewish owners. Fairs took place twice a week and bazaars once a month. However, the sales were at that time still low, which was related mostly to the impoverishment of the population. In 1919, there were no credit unions or banks in Maków County which would support industry and trade<sup>34</sup>.

According to the First Population Census dated 30 September 1921, there were 5.873 people working in industry in Maków County, which accounted for 10% of the overall number of the county's inhabitants. The majority of people were employed in textile and accessory industry – 2.537, then in food industry – 968, in wood industries – 777 and in construction – 553. At the same time, 2.748 people (4,7%) were traders<sup>35</sup>.

The largest industrial plants included the tanneries in Maków, Maków steam mills – of the Rajczyk, Willenberg and Stefańscy, whose annual production was 30.000 quintals and which employed between 22–28 workers, the Construction Association in Różan, owning a sawmill, cement factories and a factory complex of J. Beckier in Dyszobaba – a brickyard, a mill and a steam sawmill. Apart from that, there were industrial plants in which only the owner worked, or possibly one worker was employed. That kind of plants included: oil mills, water mills, mills, dyeries and groats factories. Within handicrafts, the best developing was

<sup>32</sup> AAN, Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych (MSW), sign. 124, *Protokół ze zjazdu starostów woj. warszawskiego w dniu 14 I 1936 r.*

<sup>33</sup> *Akcja oddłużeniowa wsi a Urzędy Rozjemcze*. Mazur 1935, No. 2, p. 8, No. 4, p. 7.

<sup>34</sup> APP, SPMM, sign. 2, k. 472.

<sup>35</sup> *Pierwszy Powszechny Spis Ludności RP z dn. 30 września 1921 r.* Warszawa 1927, p. 197.

shoemaking – in Maków there were 13 such factories, producing goods for export, and other industrial and crafting plants manufactured their own products mainly for the internal needs of the county<sup>36</sup>.

Among trading institutions, the most distinguishing was the branch of the Warsaw Agricultural Syndicate in Maków, which dealt with the trade of farming articles, the purchase of grain and delivering farm tools and their parts to the people. Moreover, the Syndicate normalized the prices of those goods in Maków as it owned a significant amount of iron products. The second important trading institution in the county was the Regional Association of Consumers. The rest of the trade was in private hands, mostly Jewish. Among credit institutions in the Maków County region, there was the Savings and Loan Association, which was transformed into the Common Bank in 1923<sup>37</sup>.

According to the statistical data of the Second Population Census dated 9 December 1931, in Maków County there were 8.769 people working in industry and craft trades, which accounted for 13,4% of the overall number of the county's population. In comparison to the year 1921, that rate increased by 3,4%, which proves the increase of the role of industry in the county's economy. In that period, 2.797 people (4,3%) occupied themselves with trade, out of which 2.319 persons worked in commodity trading. In comparison to the year 1921, that rate dropped by 0,4%. It was presumably influenced by an economic crisis, which caused the impoverishment of the population and the limitation of the purchase of goods, and that in turn resulted in the reduction of income and the abandonment of such form of activity. However, in comparison to the neighboring counties of northern Mazovia, the percentage of people working in trade in Maków County was high. A higher percentage was only in Pułtusk County, where it amounted to 6,4%<sup>38</sup>.

The economic crisis had a major influence on the decrease in the number of industrial plants and crafting workshops in Maków County, which totalled 515 in 1935 (in 1931 – there were 718). 205 industrial plants were located in Maków Maz., 129 in Różan, and 181 in rural settlements of the county. The majority of the plants and workshops were in textile and leather industry – 189, then in food industry – 123 as well as the chemical sector, including oil mills – 64. At the same time, the number of trading companies in Maków County was 866, of which 254 companies were located in Maków Maz., 147 in Różan, 233 – in rural settlements, and 232 trading units did not have permanent headquarters, which was probably related to itinerant trade<sup>39</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> APP, SPMM, sign. 4, k. 23; *Goniec Mazowiecki* 1923, No. 5, p. 11, 1924, No. 4, p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> APP, SPMM, sign. 4, k. 127.

<sup>38</sup> *Drugi Powszechny Spis Ludności z dn. 9 XII 1931 r. Woj. warszawskie*. Warszawa 1937, p. 79, 149; *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny*. Warszawa 1938, p. 32.

<sup>39</sup> *Statystyka zakładów przemysłowych i handlowych 1935 (woj. warszawskie)*. Statystyka Polski (Warszawa) 1938, Series C, Issue 89, p. 8, 83–84.

During the inter-war period, the development of industry and trade in Maków County was influenced by the County Council, which annually allocated appropriate sums in its budget in support of industry and trade. In the years 1929–1935, it dedicated the sum of 14.400 zlotys to that purpose. In comparison to other branches, such as agriculture, that was not a large amount of money. In the years 1936–1939, the County Council did not allocate any money for the development of industry and trade. The reason was probably the fact that industry did not play an important role in the county and the existing industrial plants and crafting workshops were mainly in the hands of private owners. The subsidies granted in support of industry and trade were mostly used as scholarships for craft school students and the Salesian Company in Jaciążek (Płoniawy commune), the maintenance of vocational supplementary schools as well as the development of folk industries<sup>40</sup>.

The economic situation of Poland after the great crisis was difficult and coming out of the bad economic situation lasted for a long time. Besides, the society felt more and more tired. In 1935, the actual national income per one inhabitant of Poland was still lower than in 1930. The Kościalkowski government announced a rapid fight against the economic stagnation, beginning from a savings policy, which largely affected the masses. Workers earned on average 24–26 zlotys per week, whereas the estimated minimum living cost for a working-class family in Warsaw was 35 zlotys per week. In the entire country, as many as 54% of male workers and 82% of female workers remained below the social minimum. The unemployment rate was also high. In 1936, in Poland, over 900 thousand people were unemployed. In Warsaw voivodeship, there were 22.306 jobless people at that time and in Maków County 305 persons remained unemployed. Within the county plan of tackling unemployment, 204 people were hired for public works. In comparison, in 1927 there were only about 9.431 unemployed in the region of Warsaw voivodeship<sup>41</sup>.

Due to the proper economic policy of the Kwiatkowski government in the years 1935–1939, the economic situation improved and favorable changes were introduced to industry and agriculture, which significantly influenced the improvement of the material situation of Polish society. Food prices remained low

<sup>40</sup> AAN, ZPRP, sign. 1053, k. 24, 137–138, 142, 214, 234, 264, 266, 295–296, 386, 400, 426,431. The County Council, in budget year 1929/30, allocated 3.400 zlotys (0,3%) on the development of industry and trade, in 1930/31 – 5.300 zlotys (0,8%), in 1931/32 – 3.700 zlotys (0,6 %), in 1932/33 – 1.000 zlotys (0,2%), in 1933/34 – 600 zlotys (0,2%), in 1934/35 – 400 zlotys (0,1%).

<sup>41</sup> APW, UWW, sign. 98, k. 191, sign. 18, k. 28; H. Zieliński, *Historia Polski 1914–1939*. Ossolineum, Wrocław 1983, p. 206; M. Śliwa, *Wielka historia Polski 1918–1939*. Pinnex, Kraków 2000, pp. 152–154. Already in 1932 the number of the unemployed in Maków County was only 71 persons. Fewer were only in Przasnysz County – 54 people. And in the entire Warsaw voivodeship, it was much higher than in 1936 and it totalled 29.348 people, APW, UWW, sign. 61, k. 75.

and the wages were higher by 20–30% in comparison to the year 1929. Generally, the economic situation of Poland was slowly stabilizing and the quality of people's lives was improving<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>42</sup> Cz. Brzoza, *Wielka historia Polski*, Vol. IX: *Polska w czasach niepodległości i drugiej wojny światowej (1918–1945)*. Świat Książki, Kraków 2003, pp. 176–177; M. Eckert, *Historia Polski 1914–1939*. WSiP, Warszawa 1990, p. 313.

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## **SUMMARY**

Maków County was established by the Tsarist authorities in 1867 and it covered the area of the northern part of the previous Pułtusk County and a small part of Przasnysz County. The sources of weakness in the economic development of Maków County in the second half of the 19th century should be looked for in socio-economic factors. The main source of income for the population of Maków County was agriculture, which was, unfortunately, less than efficient at that time. In order to improve the situation, farmers expanded the area of sowing. Also, the manumission and the abolition of serfdom were not without significance. The liquidation of easements, the introduction of new agricultural machines and the change in the way of cultivating land partially improved the situation in agriculture. In the second half of the 19th century, industry also developed poorly in Maków County. Some of the largest industrial plants were: tanneries, oil mills, mills, sawmills, brickyards and windmills. During the inter-war period, the development of the industry and trade was supported by the County Council, which allocated in its budget appropriate sums for that purpose.

## **STRESZCZENIE**

Powiat makowski utworzony przez władze carskie w 1867 r. obejmował północną część dotychczasowego powiatu pułtuskiego i niewielką część powiatu przasnyskiego. Źródeł słabości rozwoju gospodarczego powiatu makowskiego w II połowie XIX wieku należy szukać w czynnikach natury społeczno-ekonomicznej. Głównym źródłem utrzymania ludności powiatu makowskiego było rolnictwo, które w tym okresie było, niestety, mało wydajne. W celu poprawy tej sytuacji rolnicy zwiększali obszar zasiewów. Nie bez znaczenia było tu też uwłaszczenie chłopów i zniesienie pańszczyzny. Likwidacja serwitutów, wprowadzenie nowych maszyn rolniczych oraz zmiana sposobu uprawy ziemi częściowo poprawiła też sytuację w rolnictwie. W II połowie XIX wieku w powiecie makowskim słabo rozwijał się także przemysł. Do większych zakładów przemysłowych należały: garbarnie, olejarnie, młyny, tartaki, cegielnie i wiatraki. W okresie międzywojennym rozwój przemysłu i handlu wspierał Sejmik Powiatowy, który przeznaczał w swoim budżecie odpowiednie kwoty na ten cel.

**Key words:** Maków County, agriculture, industry

**Słowa kluczowe:** powiat makowski, rolnictwo, przemysł