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**ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES AND PERSONNEL COMPOSITION
OF THE PRISON IN THE TOWN OF WIŚNICZ, KRAKÓW VOIVODSHIP,
II RZECZPOSPOLITA (SELECTED ASPECTS)**

Abstract. After World War I, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe an integral part of the state-building processes was the formation of penal service (penitentiary system) – an integral component of any state law enforcement system. Interwar Poland – the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (II Rzeczpospolita) was no exception, where even before the declaration of independence restoration, the formation processes of penitentiary system were traced. **The purpose** of the article is to study selected aspects of activities organization and personnel composition of the prison in the town of Wiśnicz, Kraków Voivodeship of II Rzeczpospolita. **The research methodology** is based on the use of general scientific and specifically historical research methods, including problem-chronological,

synchronous, diachronic, comparative and historical, etc. **The scientific novelty** consists in the fact that the authors attempted, based on unpublished archival materials, to highlight selected aspects of the organization of activities and personnel composition of the prison in the town of Wiśnicz, Kraków Voivodeship in II Rzeczpospolita.

Conclusions. Thus, the prison in Wiśnicz was an integral part of the penitentiary system of II Rzeczpospolita. Between the two world wars, this prison evolved from one of the largest penal institutions of the state to the prison of a new profile – “a prison – a craft institution” with broad resocialization opportunities. The penitentiary institution under study was designed to imprison 580 people, but it was often overcrowded and on the eve of World War II there were almost 860 people.

During the period under analysis this prison was headed by S. Sledzewski, under whose leadership numerous assistants, inspectors, guards, and office employees worked. The prison staff also included auxiliary personnel – doctors, teachers, and clergy. The staffing level of the prison in Wiśnicz was around 90 – 100 people and was insufficient for the proper functioning of this institution due to its constant overcrowding. At the same time, the prison employees tried to perform their duties properly, which is confirmed by the documentary materials we have analyzed.

Key words: Poland, Wiśnicz, prison, penitentiary system, organization, personnel.

ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ТА КАДРОВА СТРУКТУРА В'ЯЗНИЦІ У МІСТІ ВІСЬНИЧ КРАКІВСЬКОГО ВОЄВОДСТВА ДРУГОЇ РЕЧІ ПОСПОЛИТОЇ (ВИБРАНІ АСПЕКТИ)

Анотація. Постановка проблеми. Складовою частиною державотворчих процесів у країнах Центральної та Східної Європи після Першої світової війни було формування кримінально-виконавчої служби (пенітенціарної системи) – невід'ємного компонента будь-якої державної правоохоронної системи. Не стала тут винятком й міжвоєнна Польща – Друга Річ Посполита, де ще до проголошення відновлення незалежності простежувалися процеси становлення в'язничної служби. **Метою запропонованої статті** є дослідження вибраних аспектів організації діяльності та кадрової структури в'язниці у місті Вісьнич Краківського воєводства Другої Речі Посполитої. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на використанні загальнонаукових та спеціально історичних методів, зокрема, проблемно-хронологічного, синхронного, діяхронного, порівняльно-історичного та ін. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що автори спробували на основі неопублікованих архівних матеріалів висвітлити вибрані аспекти організації діяльності та кадрової структури в'язниці у місті Вісьнич Краківського воєводства Другої Речі Посполитої. **Висновки.** Отже, в'язниця у м. Вісьнич була невід'ємною складовою частиною пенітенціарної системи Другої Речі Посполитої. Між двома світовими війнами ця тюрма пройшла еволюцію від однієї з найбільших кримінально-виконавчих установ держави до в'язниці нового профілю – “тюрма – реміснична установа” з широкими ресоціалізаційними можливостями. Досліджувана пенітенціарна інституція була розрахована на утримання 580 осіб, однак часто була переповненою й напередодні Другої світової війни уміщувала майже 860 осіб.

У досліджуваній час цю тюрму очолював С. Следзевський, під керівництвом якого працювали численні помічники, інспектори, охоронці, службовці канцелярії. До штату в'язниці належав також допоміжний персонал – лікарі, вчителі та духовні особи. Особовий склад в'язниці налічував приблизно 90–100 осіб, однак цього було недостатньо для справного функціонування установи з огляду на її постійну переповненість в'язнями. Водночас службовці в'язниці намагалися належно виконувати свої посадові обов'язки, що підтверджують документальні матеріали, які ми опрацювали.

Ключові слова: Польща, Вісьнич, тюрма, пенітенціарна система, організація, особовий склад.

Problem Statement. The end of the Great War led to the fall of empires in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the emergence of new states on their ruins, which immediately began active state-building processes. A component of these transformations was also the formation of the penal service (penitentiary system) – an integral component of any state

law enforcement system. Interwar Poland – the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (II Rzeczpospolita) – was no exception, where even before the declaration of independence restoration, the processes of prison service formation were traced.

The purpose of the article is to study selected aspects of activities organization and personnel composition of the prison in the town of Wiśnicz, Kraków Voivodeship of II Rzeczpospolita.

Review of Recent Researches and Publications. The history of the prison in Wiśnicz has not been adequately covered in historical and legal scientific literature. In interwar Poland, we find occasional mentions of this penitentiary institution in the specialized magazines “Przegląd Więziennictwa Polskiego” and “W służbie penitencjarnej”, and also in the anniversary edition of the Ministry of Justice of 1929 (Księga jubileuszowa więziennictwa polskiego 1918 – 1928, 1929). In particular, in the pages of the magazine “W służbie penitencjarnej”, M. Czerwicz published the article “Prison Craft Institution in Wiśnicz” in 1939 (Czerwicz, 1939).

Fragmentary information about this prison can be found in the studies of modern Polish researchers K. Pawlak (Pawlak, 1995; 1999) and K. Urbański (Urbański, 1997). Among Ukrainian scholars, the penitentiary system of Poland was studied by O. Razyhrayev (Razyhrayev, 2020a; Razyhrayev, 2020b; Razyhrayev, Rudyanin, & Kunytskyy, 2021; Razyhrayev, 2022a; Razyhrayev, 2022b; Razyhrayev, 2023, etc.), who, in particular studied certain aspects of the prison functioning in the town of Wiśnicz.

The main source base of the presented article is unpublished documents stored in the funds of the National Archives of Poland in Kraków, the State Archives of Volyn Region, and the State Archives of Brest and Grodno Regions (Belarus).

Research Results. *The history of the prison establishment and organization of its activities.* The prison under study was located in the town of Nowy Wiśnicz (modern Małopolskie Voivodeship of the Republic of Poland) in the premises of the ancient monastery of the Order of Discalced Carmelites (Order of the Discalced Brothers of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel), which was built on the initiative of the famous Kraków voivode S. Lubomirski in memory of the Battle of Khotyn in 1621. In 1783, the aforementioned order was liquidated by the Austrian Emperor Joseph II. Since then, the aforementioned monastery had been used for judicial and penitentiary purposes. It should be added that this was a typical practice for that time. For example, in the premises of the church and convent of St. Brigid, which was located in the centre of Austrian Lviv, in accordance with the order of the aforementioned eldest son of Empress Maria Theresa Joseph II, in 1782 a men's prison was located, which became known as “Brigidka”. Similarly, another large penitentiary institution in Lviv – the remand prison – was located in the premises of the Carmelite monastery liquidated by the Austrians in 1784. I. Franko was imprisoned there in 1877 – 1878 (Razyhrayev, 2023, p. 218).

During World War I, the staff and prisoners of the Wiśnicz prison were evacuated to the Moravian town of Myrow by the Austrian authorities. After the end of the war, the prison under our research was under the jurisdiction of the Polish Ministry of War Affairs, which transformed it into a central military prison. However, in the early 1920s, this penitentiary unit was part of the Ministry of Justice, and during the interwar period as well (Księga jubileuszowa więziennictwa polskiego 1918 – 1928, p. 55).

The prison in Wiśnicz was one of the largest penitentiary institutions in interwar Poland. This penal structure, like prisons in Warsaw, Fordon, Grudziądz, Koronowo, Rawicz, Wronki

or Drohobych, belonged to Class 1 and over 450 dangerous prisoners sentenced to long terms of imprisonment could be imprisoned there (Rozporządzenie Ministra Sprawiedliwości, 1928, pp. 1475–1476).

The prison under analysis was designed for 580 people, but it was often overcrowded. Thus, at the beginning of March 1936, in the prison there were about 725 prisoners (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 37). As of July 1937, 749 people were imprisoned there (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji). On the eve of World War II, sources record 859 prisoners, which indicated significant overcrowding in the penitentiary institution under study (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 246).

Both criminal and political prisoners served their sentences in Wiśnicz prison. In particular, in 1931, the Ministry of Justice asked the head of this penitentiary institution to provide a list of prisoners (residents of the capital) convicted of political crimes (SABR, f. 1999, d. 1, c. 1, p. 47). In 1934, the Ministry of Justice recommended that prison administrations be required to inform in writing about the release of people who were serving sentences for belonging to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists or the Ukrainian Military Organization (SABR, f. 1999, d. 1, c. 1, p. 280).

In the second half of the 1930s, as part of the policy of reforming the Polish penitentiary system (creating the so-called “progressive system” – *authors*), this prison received a new profile – “a prison – craft institution” and was used to hold male prisoners who were of urban origin, had the first criminal record, and were at the age of 21–30. This was primarily about the broad resocialization opportunities of the reformed institution by involving convicts in labour (Czerwicz, 1939, pp. 3–4).

The architectural complex of the prison in Wiśnicz consisted of three buildings. The first two-story building housed prisoners sentenced to long sentences. The second building, one-story building, was intended for prisoners sentenced to short terms of imprisonment. Another building served as a hospital for treatment of general diseases, as well as tuberculosis. Initially, it was designed for 100 beds. However, in the late 1920s there were 75 beds, and in September 1938 only 60 (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 45, brak paginacji; Księga jubileuszowa więziennictwa polskiego 1918 – 1928, p. 102). In the early 1930s, sources record a thorough reconstruction of the prison (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 55, brak paginacji).

The prison housed craft workshops where prisoners worked, including weaving, tailoring, shoemaking, carpentry, and metalworking (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 40–41, 47, 54). In general, within the state, the prison in Wiśnicz specialized in mass production of linen products. In addition, raw materials for weaving needs of the aforementioned prison and other penitentiary institutions in Poland were also produced there (Księga jubileuszowa więziennictwa polskiego 1918 – 1928, p. 60, 153). This was due to the operation of a large weaving school, where prisoners could obtain a good theoretical and practical training. The school had modern technical equipment. About 40 students could study the course at the same time (Księga jubileuszowa więziennictwa polskiego 1918 – 1928, pp. 116, 118). It should be noted that the convicts were also involved in agricultural work, road reconstruction, construction and repair work (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 39).

In the prison there was also a museum, where items made by prisoners of bread, glass, cloth, or wood were exhibited. In particular, as of 1937, various types of boxes, wooden frames, human figures, etc. were kept there (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

An inspection of the prison in Wiśnicz, which was conducted at the end of May 1935, noted “exemplary order”: prisoners had water procedures every two weeks, their bed linen

was changed every week, administration respected prisoners' right to a daily one-hour walk, and sick prisoners spent three times as much time in fresh air. In addition, the prison administration implemented prisoners' rights to receive educational, medical, and religious services, and labour department functioned properly (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 27, brak paginacji). At the same time, problems with sewage and drainage were observed, which remained relevant for the prison in Wiśnicz in the second half of the 1930s (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 44, brak paginacji).

Personnel composition. The prison in Wiśnicz was headed by a warden, appointed by the Minister of Justice. The entire staff of the penitentiary institution (an assistant, inspectors, guards, office employees, etc.), as well as prisoners, were directly subordinate to him. The auxiliary staff – doctors, teachers and clergy – also partly depended on the prison warden. The unchanged warden of the prison in Wiśnicz was S. Sledzewski during the interwar period (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 2, p. 5).

The number of personnel of the mentioned penitentiary institution was within the limits of about 90–100 people. In particular, as of 1931, the prison staff, together with its head, amounted to 90 people (SABR, f. 1999, d. 1, c. 1, pp. 3–7). In 1935, 109 people worked there, namely: 10 full-time employees, 5 contract employees, 7 prison guards, 62 guards and senior guards, 24 contract workers and 1 master weaver (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 23).

In March 1936, the prison warden S. Sledzewski noted in his official report to the Ministry of Justice that the number of guards was not sufficient for the normal functioning of this penitentiary institution. First of all, the prison warden emphasized the need for increased security for professional workshops where prisoners worked; 3 spacious school buildings, as well as the playground where prisoners went in for gymnastics. The current staff was overloaded. For example, security guards only had a day off on Sunday once every 5–6 weeks; only about 50% of employees could use their vacation rights (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 37).

On March 16, 1937, the prison staff numbered 102 people (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji). As of January 1, 1938, the Ministry of Justice determined the staff for the prison in Wiśnicz (according to positions) in the amount of 81 people, including: 1 chief commissioner, 4 deputy commissioners, 1 graduate student, 8 assistants, 29 senior guards, 31 guards, 1 chaplain, 2 doctors, 2 orderlies and 2 teachers (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 2, p. 95). The *de facto* staff consisted of at least 20–25 people more. Thus, as of July 1, 1939, the prison staff in Wiśnicz consisted of 106 people, namely: 9 full-time employees (including a doctor and a Roman Catholic priest), 6 contract employees (including 3 teachers and 3 accountants), 7 prison guards, 31 senior guards, 29 guards, 1 contract employee of the economic department and 23 contract employees of the labour department (including 2 foremen) (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, s. 240). On the eve of World War II, the prison staff of the penitentiary institution we studied consisted of 107 people (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 5, p. 244).

During the interwar period, the issue of involving police and military personnel in guarding the prison in Wiśnicz remained relevant. In particular, on June 10, 1931, S. Sledzewski, wrote in a letter to the vice-prosecutor of the Kraków Court of Appeal that even in the event of an emergency, the prison could not count on the help of the military garrison stationed in Bochnia. In addition, the prison warden recalled that a special commission had studied the security situation, which had stated the need to involve the military in the event of a mass uprising of prisoners. According to the head of this penitentiary institution, in reality, in a critical situation, one could only count on “God's grace and self-defense” (SABR, f. 1999, d. 1, c. 1, p. 28).

The decision on admission to prison service was made by the prison warden, after having studied the applicant's biography thoroughly. The head of the Court of Appeal in Kraków, in one of his letters to the head of the Wiśnicz prison, noted that candidates for service in the prison system had to comply with the legal acts on state civil service, including educational level. In addition, each application had to include: a birth certificate, documents confirming Polish citizenship, a school certificate, a medical certificate, a military ID card, as well as a handwritten autobiography. The prison warden also had to contact the Prisoners Registration Department of the Ministry of Justice to obtain confirmation that the applicant for the service had no criminal record (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 7, p. 23).

For example, in December 1936, the warden of the prison in Wiśnicz, S. Sledzewski, addressed the Kraków Grodzkie Starostwo with a secret letter requesting information about the “moral qualifications”, general characteristics of K. Gouda, and information about his attitude towards the Polish state, a native and resident of Kraków. In addition, a request regarding the presence of the latter in the register of convicts was sent to the Ministry of Justice. The fact was that the latter had applied to the prison warden with a request for employment as a teacher. Therefore, the warden of the institution had the obligation to collect as much information as possible about this person in order to make a personnel decision. As a result, K. Gouda was denied employment, as it was determined that the latter had previously been detained by the police on suspicion of committing a crime, but he was later released due to the lack of evidence of guilt (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

Prison service was carried out in shifts, in appropriate uniforms and with personal protective equipment. In particular, as of April 1937, the officers of the Wiśnicz prison were armed with 52 German-style carbines (caliber 7.92) and the same number of bayonets (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

The prison warden, S. Sledzewski, focused on the educational level of the employees. Thus, all guards were obliged to complete a local training course, which took place at the place of service. According to the order of the Minister of Justice of May 16, 1923, in the same year, a three-month training of the service personnel began in the prison of the town of Wiśnicz. The students studied in the guards' dining room from 5 till 7 p.m. (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 7, p. 26).

From December 1926 to March 1927, another local training course for guards was held in the Wiśnicz prison. The classes were conducted by the prison staff. In particular, “Prison Science” was taught by the prison warden S. Sledzewski, “Prison Regulations” – by an inspector K. Majewski, “Geography, Arithmetic and Polish” by a chaplain F. Kmecynski, “History of Poland” by an inspector K. Kimila, “Criminal Procedure and Law” by a judge Lazarski, “Hygiene and Rescue Work” by a doctor V. Jablonski, “Rifle, Ballistics and Service Regulations” by an assistant D. Jasinski, etc. In total, the curriculum was mastered by 42 students, who on March 22–23, 1927 were required to pass the relevant exams before an examination commission headed by the head of the Kraków District Criminal Court, Pelc (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 7, p. 87).

In March 1927, the head of the Kraków Court of Appeal informed the prison warden in Wiśnicz that for candidates for the positions of senior guards it was necessary to organize another, additional, training course with a syllabus different from a syllabus for guards. In turn, candidates for the positions of senior guards or current senior guards had the opportunity to improve their qualifications at the Central Prison School of the Ministry of Justice in Warsaw (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 7, pp. 41, 163).

On October 1, 1935, another training course for lower-ranking officials began in the same prison with 42 students. Classes were held mostly on Sundays and holidays. Due to certain personnel changes (transfers, dismissals, etc.), 38 people completed the training on May 31, 1936, of whom 34 passed the exam with a positive grade (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 8, brak paginacji). In the same year, the Ministry of Justice sent textbooks and other school materials to the prison in Wiśnicz, intended for teachers of prison guard training courses. In particular, the works "Near and Far" (Part I, authored by Chervinsky and Szymanovsky), "Collection of Arithmetic Tasks" (Part II, authored by Borovytska), Spelling Dictionary, physical and political maps of Poland by E. Romer (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 7, p. 481).

In the second half of the 1930s, the prison employees in Wiśnicz also improved their qualifications at the Prison Guard School under the Ministry of Justice (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 9, brak paginacji). In particular, in October 1937, the head of this prison delegated several prison guards to this departmental educational institution to master the syllabus of a special two-month training course on security issues. An obligatory condition for participation in such training was the presence of a medical certificate confirming good health of a trainee (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 9, brak paginacji; SAGR, f. 55, d. 1, c. 249, p. 4).

Transfers were an integral part of the life of the prison workers in Wiśnicz (as well as other prisons in Poland – *authors*). In particular, in the autumn of 1938, three employees of this institution joined the ranks of the newly established corps of employees of penal institutions in Zaolzie (Cieszyn Silesia). The fact was that after the annexation of the aforementioned territories by the Poles, the Minister of Justice on October 7, 1938, sent a letter to the warden of the prison in Wiśnicz, as well as to the wardens of other Polish prisons, stating that due to the need to staff the penal institutions of Cieszyn Silesia with Polish prison guards, two candidates for officers should be submitted. It was stated that these should be individuals with good professional qualifications and proper moral standards. In order to save public finances, it was welcomed that such individuals provide for the move at their own expense or receive compensation only to cover transport tickets. Therefore, in October 1938, the warden of the Wiśnicz prison reported to the Ministry of Justice that three employees had submitted reports for transfer to Cieszyn Silesia (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 1, pp. 481–483; Razyhrayev, 2023, p. 84).

While on duty, the prison employees in Wiśnicz sometimes violated discipline, in particular, they slept on duty, did not follow subordination, etc. Another manifestation of violation of discipline was the change in duty hours carried out by prison employees without any consent of the warden (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji). Sources rarely record criminal prosecution of the prison guards. In particular, in 1939, the Kraków District Court considered a case concerning sexual relations between one of the guards of the Wiśnicz prison and a minor who was not 15 years old. During the investigation, it was determined that such actions took place against the will of the girl, who also had a delay in physical development. The suspect initially denied such a relationship, but then confessed. At the same time, he insisted that everything happened by a mutual consent (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

At the same time, excellent service could be a reason for a special award for a prison officer. Thus, on July 26, 1937, the warden of the Wiśnicz prison submitted a suggestion to the Prison Administration Department of the Ministry of Justice to award special awards to two employees of this penitentiary institution, V. Karpiezh and Yu. Danets. The aforementioned document noted that V. Karpiezh began his service in 1924, and was characterized by a high

level of discipline, he had exemplary behaviour, and worked excellently in the administrative department of the prison, as well as in the economic department. His colleague Yu. Danets also began working in the prison system in 1924. In addition to serving as a prison guard, he additionally performed the duties of a master bricklayer in the prison workshop, managing to train many qualified specialists in this field among the prisoners. Moreover, he himself often participated in the repair work of the prison's service premises (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 2, p. 93). In 1938, the prison warden sent a proposal to Warsaw to award the bronze "Cross of Merit" to the employee V. Flak, a contract manager of the weaving workshop and a teacher at the prison weaving school. The prison management noted a high professional level of the latter, his patriotic attitude, as well as a high level of discipline and efficiency (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 2, p. 123).

An integral part of a daily life of the prison workers in Wiśnicz was social and cultural life. For example, sources record the activities of the orchestra in this penitentiary institution. Prison employees were also members of the Maritime and Colonial League and other organizations. In June 1937, celebrations were even to be held in Wiśnicz on the occasion of the holiday, at which a performance by the local prison orchestra was planned (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 11, p. 257).

It was noted above that the auxiliary staff of the prison we studied consisted of doctors, teachers, and clergy. In general, in penitentiaries where district hospitals operated, the medical staff usually included several doctors. For example, on May 27, 1938, the prison warden in Wiśnicz, S. Sledzewski, concluded a fixed-term contract with doctor V. Breitbart. The latter was to perform the functions of an assistant doctor at the district prison hospital, namely: to manage the laboratory and pharmacy, participate in complex surgical operations, visit sick prisoners who received outpatient and inpatient treatment at least once every two days, appear at the prison in urgent situations at any time of the day, etc. (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

The presence of a well-developed educational system in the Wiśnicz prison led to the employment of teachers. For example, in early October 1934, V. Vojas was hired as a teacher of general education subjects. His salary was 2 zł per academic hour (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 3, p. 135). As of April 1937, the position of head of the weaving school remained vacant in the prison. In this regard, the head turned to the Board of Trustees of the school district in Kraków with a request to help find a suitable teacher. In 1939, the prison warden concluded and sent employment contracts with teachers E. Ryl and Ja. Switalski for approval to the Ministry of Justice (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

An integral part of the activities of the prison school teacher in interwar Poland was to improve his own qualifications. In particular, in December 1937, the prison warden in Wiśnicz sent the prison teacher E. Kwietnia to a 10-day course for teachers, which took place at the Central Prison School in Warsaw. Students were provided with free accommodation and meals during the study period (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 9, brak paginacji).

As of 1938, 562 prisoners attended a general education school in the Wiśnicz prison, and 161 studied at vocational schools (carpentry, mechanics, tailoring, and weaving) within the aforementioned penitentiary institution. The school was located in the building of a former hospital and there were five rooms (84 desks and 204 chairs) for the educational process and a teacher's office (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 40, brak paginacji).

In October of the same year, the prison school teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the prison administration regarding the violation of the training regime by certain

representatives of the prison administration. The point was that during the training process, the prison employees often involved prisoners in carrying out various small tasks, such as receiving packages. Moreover, prison employees who were in charge of the clothing or food warehouse, the labour department, or the boiler room generally refused to let prisoners attend classes at the prison school. According to teachers, such actions hindered the educational process, which took place only three times a week (ANKr., zesp. 480, sygn. 6, brak paginacji).

The task of prison chaplains was to meet the spiritual needs of prisoners. In the prison, a Roman Catholic priest carried out pastoral work on a contractual basis. At the same time, prisoners of other faiths also had access to religious practices. In particular, in 1938, the Polish Ministry of Justice delegated the famous Greek Catholic chaplain J. Kladochny on a long-term mission to 15 prisons in Poland to perform pastoral duties. From May 3 to June 4, he was to visit various prisons with a chaplaincy mission, including the prison in Wiśnicz (SAVR, f. 47, d. 1, c. 8, p. 35; Razyhrayev, 2023, p. 335).

Conclusions and Prospects for Further Research. Thus, the prison in Wiśnicz was an integral part of the penitentiary system of II Rzeczpospolita. Between the two world wars, this prison evolved from one of the largest penal institutions of the state to the prison of a new profile – “a prison – a craft institution” with broad resocialization opportunities. The penitentiary institution under study was designed to imprison 580 people, but it was often overcrowded and on the eve of World War II there were imprisoned almost 860 people.

At the time of the study, this prison was headed by S. Sledzewski, under whose leadership numerous assistants, inspectors, guards, and office employees worked. The prison staff also included auxiliary personnel – doctors, teachers, and clergy. The staffing level of the prison in Wiśnicz was around 90–100 people and was insufficient for the proper functioning of this institution due to its constant overcrowding. At the same time, the prison employees tried to perform their duties properly, which is confirmed by the documentary materials we have analyzed.

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