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Medical and Social Care in the Lublin Region in the 19th Century. A Few Comments on Wiesław Partyka's Book, *Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytułki*, Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Lublin 2017, pp. 485

*Opieka medyczna i społeczna na Lubelszczyźnie w realiach XIX wieku. Kilka uwag o książce Wiesława Partyki, "Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytułki", Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Lublin 2017, ss. 485*

ABSTRACT

The article presents and analyses the content of the monograph by Wiesław Partyka titled *Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytułki*. Attention was drawn to elements such as the structure of the book, assumed chronological and thematic framework, and the source basis. The paper presents research problems that were only mentioned in the monograph, and which seem worth further research. Despite the critique regarding the presentation of the image of hospitals and shelters in the Lublin region, the publication can be seen as immensely valuable and useful for those dealing with social history of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

**Key words:** The Kingdom of Poland, Roman Catholic church, the Lubelskie Region, hospitals, shelters, Russification

The issues of social welfare and the activity of hospitals in the Polish lands in the 19th century are not among the issues discussed so far in the scientific literature. It seems to be an interesting field of research not always noticed by scientists engaged in studying social history and the history of upbringing. Scientific research on this subject is usually

treated in a marginal way, although it undoubtedly has great potential to show an important aspect of social history. An exception to this are the works on the functioning of hospital care<sup>1</sup> and the history of individual hospitals<sup>2</sup>. The activity of charity organizations, which were established in the nineteenth century on the territory of the Kingdom of Poland, has also been analysed in detail<sup>3</sup>. Information about charitable activity also appears in the works devoted to the activity of Catholic orders during this period. Wiesław Partyka's book, *Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytułki*, seem in such situation to be an interesting attempt to bring closer the issue of providing assistance to people in need, but limited in area to the Lublin region. The whole work was divided into three chapters and over 250 pages of annexes were added. In the first chapter, the author presents the organisation of care in the 19th century, while the second chapter focuses on the development of the hospital network and the activities of these institutions. The third chapter concerns shelters for the poor and needy run by various institutions in the Lublin region. A substantial part of the work, more than half of it, is comprised of annexes containing, among others, a list of hospitals in the Lublin Governorate in the 19th century, the number of the poor in poorhouses in the Lublin Governorate, a list of persons receiving monthly support from the funds of the Holy Spirit poorhouse in 1908.

The author took, as the area of his scientific research on institutional care, the territory which was administratively part of the Lublin Voivodeship/Government in the years 1815–1844 and after 1866, largely overlapping with the territory of the Lublin Diocese established in 1805. Although in the case of using the term *Lubelszczyzna*, as a definition of the territory, such a narrowing down to the voivodeship, province or diocese of Lublin may raise some doubts, as the territorial scope of the Lublin region is much wider than the one presented in the paper<sup>4</sup>. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that the author's limitation of the Lublin region's territory only to certain administrative boundaries was necessary and facilitated the development of the subject matter.

The title already suggests that the work chronologically refers to the 19th century, which does not reflect fully the time frame customary in the work of historians. It is difficult to discuss the issue by limiting it to the 19th

<sup>1</sup> E. Mazur, *Szpital w Królestwie Polskim w XIX wieku*, Warszawa 2008.

<sup>2</sup> J. Fijałek, J. Indulski, *Opieka zdrowotna w Łodzi do roku 1945. Studium organizacyjno-historyczne*, Łódź 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Cz. Kępski, *Lubelskie Towarzystwo Dobroczynności (1815–1952)*, Lublin 1990; idem, *Towarzystwa dobroczynności w Królestwie Polskim (1815–1914)*, Lublin 1993.

<sup>4</sup> *Dzieje Lubelszczyzny*, ed. T. Mencil, Warszawa 1974, pp. 7–8, 13–18.

century only and not broadening the research scope to the period before the outbreak of World War I – an event which undoubtedly constitutes an important historical caesura. In fact, Wiesław Partyka's publication is not limited only to the signalled period; for example, the described activity of hospitals in the Lublin region, which was actually presented, covers the period to until the outbreak of World War I.

The author begins his argument by presenting a kind of historical outline of solutions concerning institutions providing aid to the elderly, the sick and the poor. The paper focuses on the development of this activity primarily by institutions associated with the Catholic Church. Such an approach seems to be justified to a large extent, because it was the Church that was the main institution which conducted this type of activity on the Polish lands in the pre-partition period and in the 19th century and which tried to continue it. The author notes that, in Poland, as late as in the 18th century, the functioning of institutions such as hospitals was connected with the sphere that we now define as social welfare. This phenomenon indicates the adoption of solutions applied in Western Europe with some delay, where, under the influence of the Enlightenment ideology, the aim was to separate the scope of hospital activities from poorhouses. The author also presents the process initiated in the middle of the 18th century of the gradual assumption of supervision over hospital and social care by state bodies, while leaving the direct management of these institutions in the hands of the Church. It also recognises that the process of making hospitals particularly dependent on state power is intensified during the period of the Partitions. It also devotes some attention to the functioning of the state administration bodies set up by the authorities in the Kingdom of Poland to control and supervise hospital and charity activities. An important role in this respect was played by the legislation created at that time, which regulated in an increasingly detailed way the legal rules of functioning of nineteenth-century hospitals and shelters for the poor, the disabled and orphans. It is worth noting that this was not a trend that occurred only in the Polish territory, on the contrary, it was noticeable in the whole Europe at that time. Last but not least, the legislation of the time did not impose any obligation on the rule of law to provide care to persons in need, but rather a supervisory role in this respect. In the 19th century, however, the need to provide care for the poor was ceded to the local government of rural communes by the legislation of the Kingdom of Poland<sup>5</sup>.

Thanks to our work, we can trace the process of gradual loss of importance of the Church as the main caretaker of hospital institutions

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<sup>5</sup> 'Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego' 1864, vol. 62, pp. 47, 55.

and shelters, which took place in the 19th century. Undoubtedly, the Author managed to show a great contribution of the Church in this area still in the first half of the 19th century, which gradually lost its dominant position in favour of state bodies, local government and charity organizations. However, was the main reason for this change that the government took over the supervision over such institutions and maintained the formal control over them by officials of Russian origin? Was it caused by the hostile attitude to the Catholic Church perceived as the mainstay of Polishness? It seems that this is not the only reason for the changes that the author has noticed. In fact, quite a significant part of the first chapter was devoted to reflections on the idea of charity and mercy and philanthropic activity that guided the functioning of welfare institutions. The author sees the loss of the importance of charity derived from Christian principles in favour of taking responsibility for institutional activities in this area by lay people. This change occurred partly due to the Enlightenment philosophy, but also to the increasingly popular ideas of philanthropy and altruism in the 19th century. When we add to these changes in the world view the policies of the partitioning authorities in relation to the Catholic Church, which consisted in hindering execution of its activities, for example, by the dissolution of orders or blocking the cast of vacant bishop capitals, we will receive an interesting interpretation of the then ongoing changes. To sum up, the author points out to us several important factors that have contributed to the serious weakening of the role of the Church in the field of charity in the Kingdom of Poland. The main emphasis is placed on the policy of the partitioners towards the Church, which, in the opinion of the Russian authorities, by its social influence not only regulated the religious development of society, but was synonymous with Polishness.

On the other hand, the limitation of the role of the Church by the state did not cause the disappearance of charity. To a certain extent, it was replaced by the activity of the Polish society, which tried to make use of the possibilities of undertaking activities in this area by charity and care organizations. What is more, they frequently tried to extend the fields of their philanthropic activities to education and upbringing<sup>6</sup>. It becomes noticeable that activity in societies and associations is not only a personal need resulting from the idea of compassion, but also a perception of it as a civic duty. A duty which, in the opinion of the then activists, served to maintain Polishness. What is important, at the turn of the 20th century,

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<sup>6</sup> H. Markiewicz, *Działalność opiekuńczo-wychowawcza Warszawskiego Towarzystwa Dobroczynności 1814–1914*, Warszawa 2002.

active activity in this field became not only the domain of landowners<sup>7</sup> or intelligentsia, but also of representatives of the lower social strata. The activity in this field is manifested not only by the inhabitants of larger cities, but also smaller towns and villages<sup>8</sup>.

For a better orientation of the reader as to the territorial scope of the area which the author examines from the point of view of care activity, the first chapter contains a brief historical outline concerning the system and heads of state administration in the Lublin region, practically from the establishment of the Lublin Province in 1474 to the beginning of the 20th century. It is a pity that the author did not reach for the studies on the Lublin Governorate<sup>9</sup> and the Governors<sup>10</sup>, which would have allowed to show who were the Russian officials in charge of the Lublin Governorate in the second half of the 19th century. It should be noted that until the 1890s the governorate health departments were often headed by medical inspectors of Polish origin, and in the provinces where their assistants were appointed this post was filled exclusively by Poles<sup>11</sup>. The researching of these issues seems to be an interesting topic, especially since the influence of officials representing authorities of that time on the activities of hospitals and shelters is mentioned several times in this monograph. A little more attention was paid to the structure of the Lublin Diocese and its bishops from the establishment of the Diocese in 1805 until the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, showing the reasons why the activity of the Church was very difficult, not only in the scope of charity work, but also in the aspect of normal pastoral work in the diocese of Lublin since the inter-insurrection period.

Then, the author moves on to the subject of the work marked in the title of the paper, related to the activity of hospitals in the Lublin region. He makes a significant distinction at this point in time by excluding from this category numerous shelters and poorhouses operating under the label *hospital* mainly in the first half of the 19th century in villages and small towns. This procedure certainly seems appropriate, since those rarely provided even minimal medical care and essentially served as shelters for

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<sup>7</sup> A. Przegaliński, *Spoleczna działalność ziemiaństwa lubelskiego w latach 1864–1914*, Lublin 2009.

<sup>8</sup> A. Kopruckowniak, *Lokalna społeczność gminy Bychawa i jej aktywność 1864–1918*, Lublin 1995, pp. 92–99.

<sup>9</sup> A. Górak, *Kancelaria Gubernatora i Rząd Gubernialny Lubelski (1867–1918). Studium administratywistyczne i prozopograficzne*, Lublin–Radzyń Podlaski 2006.

<sup>10</sup> A. Górak, J. Kozłowski, K. Łatawiec, *Słownik biograficzny gubernatorów i wicegubernatorów w Królestwie Polskim (1867–1918)*, Lublin 2014.

<sup>11</sup> G. Smyk, *Korpus urzędników cywilnych w guberniach Królestwa Polskiego w latach 1867–1915*, Lublin 2004, pp. 206–208.

the poor or the handicapped. The process of gradual development of the hospital network in the Lublin region, presented in the second chapter, shows us the transition to a profile of hospital functioning as an institution dealing mainly with patient care. The author devotes most of his attention to hospitals in Lublin (St. Lazarus Hospital, run by the sisters of mercy, was transformed in 1835 into the St. Vincent de Paul Hospital – presently a hospital on Staszica Street, a hospital of the Brothers Hospitallers of Saint John of God, which in the 19th century found its seat in a monastery abandoned by the Carmelites of the Ancient Observance, and was developed into the John of God Hospital on Biernackiego Street in Lublin.

Recalling the history of individual hospitals, one can see how their function changed from a poorhouse-hospital. This is perfectly illustrated by the example of the Jewish hospital, which was established in the middle of the 16th century and would become a medical care facility as late as in the 19th century. Outlining the process of creating new hospital facilities in the Lublin region, which took place in the 19th century, the author does not hide the difficulties connected with their creation and functioning, resulting both from material reasons and the social and political conditions at that time. He also points to the importance of social initiative not only in larger urban centres such as Lublin or the then district capitals, but also in smaller towns such as Bychawa or Gościeradów. Additionally, he emphasizes the generosity of individuals who are prepared to donate their own resources to medical care. What is more, the author makes an attempt to show the material background of the then hospitality, the issue of financing the costs of treatment. He also deals with the issue of the extent of hospital care, trying to demonstrate the underdevelopment of the Lublin region, where there was a much larger number of inhabitants per one hospital place than in Western European countries. It is a pity that when preparing statistics on the number of patients, the author used only Polish sources and did not employ similar materials in Russian, omitting inter alia the generally available printed source, *Памятная книжка Люблинской губернии*, published annually by the Governorate from 1870 until the outbreak of World War I. The use of this publication, for example, would have made it possible to present more fully the extent of hospital care and the number of patients. What is more, it contains information about the management of individual hospitals, statistical data about the state of health care in the province, the number of doctors, the activity of hospitals, the outbreaks of epidemics from the 1870s to the period before World War I<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> For example: *Памятная книжка Люблинской губернии на 1874 год, Люблин 1874*, pp. 21–27, 92–97; *Памятная книжка Люблинской губернии на 1883 год, Люблин 1883*,

While the issues related to the transformation of hospitals in the Lublin region, material and financial conditions of their operations were presented in a practically exhaustive manner, there is a certain shortage of staff issues in these hospitals. The author is definitely more interested in the management of hospital facilities than the doctors who worked in them or the auxiliary staff taking care of the sick. There is a lot of information about the direct takeover of hospital management by Russian officials in the second half of the 19th century, which indicates an attempt to put this area of activity under the supervision of the authorities. An interesting fact is the appearance of Orthodox Sisters of Mercy in hospitals in the Lublin region, who in 1883 took over the care of the sick in the hospital in Szczebrzeszyn, and in 1896, for a period of 9 years, also in the John of God Hospital in Lublin<sup>13</sup>. It is noteworthy that the structures of the St. Elisabeth Sisters of Mercy Russian Red Cross Society were created by decision of the management of the Warsaw district branch of this organization only three years earlier in 1880, although their activity within its structures took place even earlier. Their appearance in hospitals in the Lublin region confirms the efforts of the Russian authorities to remove Polish Sisters of Mercy. The reason for these actions was the fears expressed by officials of the Russian administration that they would carry out missionary activities in hospitals caring for patients and would contribute to the conversion of sick Orthodox Christians to Catholicism<sup>14</sup>.

The third chapter of his monograph is devoted to the functioning of a network of shelters and their differentiation in terms of the scope of activity and overseeing institutions. Among them, the so-called 'shelter houses' are distinguished, but limited only to institutions operating in larger cities. Particular attention is paid to the activity of shelters run by the Catholic Church, although the issue of activity in this field of other religious denominations is also mentioned. There are also references to the functioning of shelters run by charitable societies.

The author deliberately separates poor people's shelters functioning in Catholic parishes, which at least in the first half of the nineteenth century were most frequently represented. It should be noted, however, that the

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pp. 119–121; *Памятная книжка Люблинской губернии на 1891 год*, Люблин 1891, pp. 118–121, 277–283; *Памятная книжка Люблинской губернии на 1902 год*, Люблин 1902, pp. 146–160.

<sup>13</sup> W. Partyka, *Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytulki*, Lublin 2017, pp. 76, 80.

<sup>14</sup> В.А. Соколова, *Российское Общество Красного Креста (1867–1918 гг.)*, Санкт Петербург 2014, pp. 97–98, 104–105, [https://www.redcross.ru/sites/default/files/books/sokolova\\_dissertat.pdf](https://www.redcross.ru/sites/default/files/books/sokolova_dissertat.pdf) [accessed on: 18 X 2019].

name *hospital* is often used interchangeably with shelter, which is probably due to the fact that the author takes over the nomenclature of the source materials he used. This shows the inconsistency of the author's approach, who himself points out that parish shelters for the poor had a very diverse range of activities, but it is difficult to define them as a *hospitals* in the nineteenth century. Hospital activity is quite clearly defined by the legislation of those times and the state administration tries to enforce it so that it is related to providing at least basic medical assistance. While the period of activity of the shelters up to the 1860s was presented in considerable detail, and is supplemented by an impressive Annex II, the data on their functioning at the end of the 19th century is limited. However, does it mean that the Catholic Church did not undertake such activity since the 1870s? It can only be assumed that the former parish shelters still functioned as houses for church servants<sup>15</sup>. But proving such a thesis requires further research.

The author made an attempt to outline the functioning of shelters for the Jewish population, shelters at Uniate parishes operating until the dissolution of the Uniate church and those by the Evangelical-Augsburg parish in Lublin. On the other hand, the initiatives of creating children's shelters by the Orthodox Church, which took place at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, were omitted. They were run by Orthodox nuns at the monastery in Radecznica since 1899. A similar institution was also established at the female monastery in Turkowice<sup>16</sup> before World War I.

In addition, the author omits the activity of the local government, whose duties included taking care of the poor. This concerned both municipal authorities and rural communes. This subject requires further research in the future. More detailed analysis is recommended in regard to the source materials found in the resources of the State Archives in Lublin concerning i.a. the teams of the Public Charity Governorate Council 1870–1918 and the teams of the district-level councils for public charity. It is a pity that this monograph did not do so. Undoubtedly, they could at least partially help to provide a more detailed explanation of the issue of the activity of the shelters directly subject to government administration in the second half of the 19th century. The source publication *Памятная Книжка Люблинской Губернии*, which contains information about the shelters and their management under district administration, was also not utilised. This paper also allows for the preliminary determination of

<sup>15</sup> W. Partyka, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>16</sup> K. Latawiec, *W służbie imperium... Struktura społeczno-zawodowa ludności rosyjskiej na terenie guberni lubelskiej w latach 1864–1915*, Lublin 2007, pp. 223–225.



the personal composition of the governorate charity board as well as the district charity boards. The basic personal data of the members of these boards could contribute to documenting the taking over of supervision of this area of activity by officials of Russian origin. The author devotes much space to the basic materials concerning the functioning of shelters and poorhouses. He is interested both in the living conditions there and in the management of parish poorhouses. It critically assesses the condition of buildings being the headquarters of shelters and poorhouses, resulting both from the lack of adequate finances, the authorities obstructing repairs, and the management undertaking no actions aimed at improving their condition. The author points out that the material problems with the functioning of the shelters stemmed from their poor furnishing, the withdrawal of donors from their obligations or the failure of their heirs to fulfil said promises. A serious problem was often determining what constitutes the assets of the shelter and what constitutes the sole property of the parish.

Attention is also paid to the functioning of childcare facilities. It should be noted, however, that they were specific institutions and only a few of them performed the function of a typical care facility. The protection of the Lublin Charitable Society over orphaned or abandoned children should be considered as such. However, most of the minor care facilities served as day-care centres for children from poor families or, as it was the case in rural areas, for the children of the farm workers. The wards staying in this type of shelters were provided with food and care of the staff, most often for the time when their parents were engaged in gainful employment. Not only associations, but also private individuals were involved in the establishment of the shelters. A specific feature of the shelters built in the territory of the Kingdom of Poland is the combination of care functions with educational activities. The sphere of educational activity, as these institutions have developed, often faced counteraction from the Russian administration. They treated the shelters with suspicion, believing that the educational activity undertaken in them is illegal and serves, especially in the Lublin region, the purpose of Polonisation<sup>17</sup>.

To sum up, it should be acknowledged that the analysed publication is an interesting attempt to fill the gap in the previous research on hospitality and care activities in the Lublin region. While the earlier period was relatively well recognized, the research on these issues in the 19th century has been insufficient so far. The author managed to present in a multithreaded way the care institutions operating at that time, and made attempt to describe

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<sup>17</sup> D. Szewczuk, *Chełmska Dyrekcja Naukowa*, Lublin 2012, pp. 151–161.

the people using this type of assistance. The work essentially refers to the 19th century, but it can be seen that there are references to an earlier period, which is very natural, because some of the described hospitals or shelters had earlier traditions of functioning than the beginning of the 19th century. In the case of hospitals, their development in the Lublin region can be traced owing to the above work to the period before the outbreak of World War I. However, the presentation of the activity of shelters and poorhouses is somewhat unsatisfactory. The monograph contains rich information about their activities in the first half of the 19th century, but the later period was treated selectively in most parts. This was probably due to the fact that the research in this area was based mainly on materials from the Lublin diocesan archives.

The findings made by the author undoubtedly extend the existing knowledge on some social phenomena in the Lublin region. They will also facilitate further research into the functioning of social welfare and health care in the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is also worth to emphasize the value of annexes prepared by the author and published in the monograph. The information gathered in it may be an invaluable source of information for researchers dealing with the activities of such institutions as hospitals or shelters, but also for people dealing with the history of particular localities in the Lublin region.

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#### STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przedstawiono i poddano analizie zawartość monografii Wiesława Partyki *Opieka instytucjonalna na Lubelszczyźnie w XIX wieku. Szpitale i przytułki*. Zwrócono w nim uwagę na takie elementy, jak struktura książki, ramy chronologiczne i tematyczne oraz podstawa źródłowa. Zasygnalizowano w nim problemy badawcze, które w książce zostały przedstawione marginalnie, a które wydają się warte dalszych badań naukowych. Pomimo pewnych zastrzeżeń dotyczących przedstawienia obrazu szpitali oraz przytułków na Lubelszczyźnie, publikację tę można uznać za niezwykle cenną i przydatną dla osób zajmujących się historią społeczną XIX i początków XX w.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Królestwo Polskie, Kościół rzymskokatolicki, Lubelszczyzna, szpitale, przytułki, rusyfikacja

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