

THE CONTRIBUTION OF GRADUATE OF RIGA POLYTECHNICUM ALFONS EIHVALDS (1862–1923) TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TUKUMS TOWN

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Tukums Museum

Summary. The article is the first comprehensive study on businessman, bank employee, Mayor of the *Tukums* town municipality (1907–1915; 1918–1920) and public employee *Alfons Eihvalds*. It reflects the life of *A. Eihvalds* at the end of the 19th century / beginning of the 20th century, his role in the management of *Tukums* town, its economic and social life – *Tukums Sociable* (Latvian) Society and Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. The research uses the collection of *Tukums* Museum and Libraries, and documents of the Latvian National Archives.

Keywords: *Alfons Eihvalds*, Mayor of *Tukums*, *Tukums Sociable* Society, students of Riga Polytechnicum.

Introduction

Alfons Eihvalds from *Kurzeme* studied chemistry at Riga Polytechnicum (RP) at the end of the 19th century and his name is closely connected with the history of the *Tukums* town at the end of the 19th century / beginning of the 20th century. For the research on *A. Eihvalds* and his activities, the author used the historical sources in the collection of *Tukums* Museum: *Tukums* Town Board minutes books (1913–1915; 1918–1921) where *Alfons Eihvalds* signed each protocol. Information was also obtained in the manuscript of *Jānis Cers* «*Tukuma Viesīgās biedrības vēsture (1882–1940)*» («History of the *Tukums Sociable* Society (1882–1940)») (1940), in the monograph of Honorary Doctor of Latvian Academy of Sciences *Inta Dišlere* «*Ar ticību, cerību, mīlestību cauri gadu simtiem. Tukuma evaņģēliski luteriskā draudze*» («With Faith,

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Hope and Love Through the Centuries. *Tukums* Evangelical Lutheran Congregation») (2018), in *Tukums* birth registers and archive documents. Evaluating *A. Eihvalds'* contribution to the field of entrepreneurship (1894–1912), *Tukums* Sociable Society (1907–1911), local governments (1907–1915; 1918–1920), St. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of *Tukums* (1920–1923) the author is convinced that *A. Eihvalds* was a talented change manager able to assess the current situation and make change-oriented decisions, motivate his peers and successfully manage these changes, thus significantly influencing the *Tukums* town governance and public life before World War I and during the first years of the Republic of Latvia.

Education and the Beginning of Working Life of *Alfons Eihvalds*

Alfons Kārlis Teodors, called *Alfons Eihvalds* was born on 8 August 1862 in the family of *Krišs (Kristians)* and *Lība Eihvalds*, owners of house «*Vērpes*» in *Biksti* Parish. *A. Eihvalds* was given one of the names of his godfather Baron Carl Theodor Alfon von der Ropp (1809–1883). In the record of *Jaunpils* Evangelical Lutheran Church about his birth, his father's second surname *Ozoliņš* is written as well [1], which did not appear in official documents later. *Alfons* studied at *Biksti* Parish school and *Jelgava* Real School. After graduating real school, he enrolled in the Department of Technical Chemistry of RP on 1 September 1884. On 31 August 1888, he left the polytechnicum and resumed his studies only on 1 September 1889, but did not attend classes, therefore in September 1890 he was removed from the student list. He resumed his studies in September 1891 and stopped again in September 1892 without completing them [2]. As a student, *A. Eihvalds* joined the Latvian student corporation «*Selonija*» in 1884. His autobiography, published in the «*Selonija*» student corporation's album in 1905, states that after leaving the university he worked for three years at *Andrejs Zēbergs'* (1855–1932) malting factory in *Tukums*, then became the factory manager [3].



Figure 1. *Alfons Eihvalds* (early 20th century).

The owner of the factory, *A. Zēbergs*, bought the alcohol distillery in 1890 and developed both distillery and malting plants of his company. The company was successful. In an effort to make full use of all raw materials, the range also included malted sweets and barley coffee [4]. *A. Eihvalds* developed a close relationship with the owner, which lasted for several decades, but he stopped working in the factory and accepted other challenges.

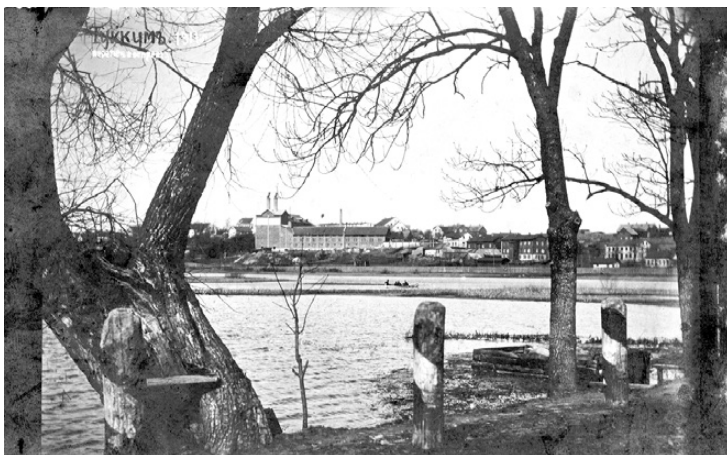


Figure 2. View of *Andrejs Zēbergs'* factory (1911).

On 10 June 1897, *A. Eihvalds* became a family man. Record No. 82 in the Tukums Spouse Register of St. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of says that *Alfons Kārlis Teodors Eihvalds* was married to *Johanna Wilhelmine Kurciga* (Kurtzig; b. *Jēgere*) [5]. A few months later, in August 1897, *A. Eihvalds* was hired by the *Tukums-Ventspils* railway construction company [3]. His son *Kārlis Alfons*, born in the *Eihvalds'* family in March 1898, studied at the Faculty of Economics and Law of the University of Latvia in early 1920s [6]. The details of the son's further fate could not be found.

Tukums-Ventspils railway was a part of the joint-stock company «*Moscow-Ventspils-Rybinsk Railway*» (in Russian: *Московско-Виндаво-Рыбинская железная дорога*), which built several railway lines in the north-western governorate of Russia. It was in the spring of 1897, by order of Tsar Nicholas II, that active work began on designing the line to provide traffic from the central districts of the country to the port of *Ventspils* [7]. At the moment the author does not have information about *A. Eihvalds'* job responsibilities when participating in the construction of the railway. The minutes of the *Tukums* Town Magistrate contain indications that the negotiations of the railway construction company with the Town Magistrate and local nobles regarding the purchase of land in the town territory have been quite long, but without results.

Eventually, the *Tukums II* station, locomotive repair shops, a modern water supply system with a water tower and other infrastructure were built outside the town – on the land of *Vilkāja* (in German – *Willkajen*) manor. As a result of the construction of the *Krustpils–Jelgava–Tukums* (1901–1904) and *Tukums–Ventspils* (1904–1908) lines *Tukums* became an important railway transport hub, nevertheless it did not contribute to the modernization of the town's own technical networks. It was these issues that *A. Eihvalds* addressed a few years later, at the beginning of the 20th century, when he became Mayor of the town. His involvement in one of Russia's largest transport infrastructure development projects gave him experience and also developed a strategic vision.



Figure 3. Railway station *Tukums II* or Western station. Postcard (circa 1916).

Merchant Activities and Assets

Johann Kurtzig (1821?–1889), the first husband of *Johanna*, *A. Eihvalds'* wife, already in 1860 owned land with a rather dense building on *Vecmoku Street* [8]. At least since 1860, he also had an alcohol distillery. After her husband's death, *Johanna* and her five children – *Marija*, *Johans*, *Ādolfo*, *Aleksandrs* and *Konstantīns* – inherited both the land and the distillery at 18 *Vecmoku Street* (at present – an undeveloped square at the corner of *Pasta* and *Talsu Streets*). *Johanna Kurciga* (Kurtzig) also owned a house built in 1891 at 7 *Pils Street* [4].



Figure 4. *Sarkanarmijas Street in Tukums: in the centre ex. Johanna Eihvalde's House at 18 Vecmoku Street (at present – Square in Talsu Street; 1960).*

At the end of the 19th century, alcohol production, like all economic life, underwent major changes. Small producers were pushed out of the market by large factories, which were able to purchase modern production equipment and raw materials and produce higher quality products in large quantities. Compared to *A. Zēbergs'* company, *J. Kurtzig's* distillery was quite small. In order to modernize the technological process and meet the requirements of the *Kurzeme* governorate excise administration [9], relatively large investments had to be made. *A. Eihvalds*, after evaluating the available resources, efficiency and volumes of the production process, quickly realized that the *Kurtzig* distillery would not be able to compete with large producers. Probably it was him, who advised his spouse to stop the production of alcohol. The address book of 1899 shows that the distillery does not exist and *J. Eihvalde* rented premises to *Ernests Volšmits (?-?)*, also called *Ozoliņš*, for a beverage store [10]. In 1901, a new residential building had already been built on the site [4].

Observing how the big Riga beer breweries were developing and how they were trying to penetrate the provincial market with beer of good quality and lower price, *A. Eihvalds*, after working for the railway construction company, became involved in the sale of beverages [9]. The *Kurzeme* Address Book of 1912 contains information that in the land plot belonging to *J. Eihvalde* at 18 *Vecmoku Street*, *A. Eihvalds* wine and beer shop and the warehouse [11] of the Riga beer brewery «*Tanheizers*» are located. *A. Eihvalds'* competitors were four other big beer breweries in Riga – «*L. Kymmels*», *Stricka Beer Brewery*, «*Waldschlossen*» and *Iļģuciems Warehouses*. At that time, there were 23 breweries in the town and almost as many taverns [11] who purchased drinks. Presumably, the

operation of *A. Eihvalds'* company was quite successful, because in 1907 all parts of the inheritance were paid to all Mr. J. Kurtzig's heirs [4].

In 1909, on the second property of *Eihvaldi* Family in *Tukums*, at 7 *Pils* Street, a new smaller house for servants was built in the yard. There was also a large warehouse. In the following year, the house on the side of the street was also modernized. In total, there were 12 buildings on the plot of *Pils* Street: two residential buildings, a large warehouse, a cowshed, barns and other farm buildings [4]. The premises were rented for accommodating a hostel (cheap accommodation for the villagers), the beer hut, which was rented to *M. Būmanis* (?-?) in 1912, as well as a pub rented to *F. Neilands* (?-?) [11]. The tenants changed, but the rooms did not stand empty. In 1919, the building at 7 *Pils* Street housed the Hotel «*Central*» with 10 rooms, maintained by *Leopolds Leimanis* (?-?) and *Kārlis Ošs* (1883-?) [4].



Figure 5. *Pils* Street in *Tukums*: the *Eihvaldi* Family House on the left (at present – 7 *Pils* Street. Postcard. *Tukums*: *O. Zeldovs* printing house; circa 1906).

Both plots of land belonging to the *Eihvaldi* Family were located in the town centre, on main street, near the market square. One trading house and warehouse was located on the corner of *Vecmoku* and *Pasta* Streets, where there was lively traffic; the other – on *Pils* Street next to the town's most prestigious hotels, restaurants and shops. The prestige of the property at 7 *Pils* Street was also enhanced by the beautiful view from the windows of the houses across the ancient valley of *Slocene* River to the *Tukums* mill lake, forests and hills, as well as the garden with terraces on the ancient bank of the river. It was a desirable property. No wonder the richest businessman in *Tukums*, *Ansis Ilsums* (1853–1941), bought it after the death of *A. Eihvalds* [4].



Figure 6. House at
7 *Pils* Street, *Tukums*
(1999). Photo by
I. Smuškova.

The *Eihvaldi* Family House on *Vecmoku* Street has not survived, but it still exists on *Pils* Street. Once there was a sculpture of Hermes, the guardian of the ancient Greek gods, the patron saint of merchants and travellers, above the central pediment of the house [12]. Researching the available photographs revealed associations with the Hermes sculpture by *August Folts* (1851–1926) in the design of the mansion gates (1889–1891) designed by *Carl Johann Felsko* (1844–1918) on *Blieķu* Street in Riga [13].

Alfons Eihvalds' Activities in Tukums Sociable Society

There is very little information about the public activities of *A. Eihvalds* at the end of the 19th century, but on 29 August 1902, when the *Tukums Sociable Society* house was inaugurated, he was among the congratulators representing the *Tukums Charity Society* [14]. In the following years he was actively involved in the activities of the *Latvian Society*, and in 1907, he was elected the Head of the *Tukums Sociable Society* [14]. His activity in this society is related to a rather difficult period, when after the so-called *Tukums War* (29 November–1 December 1905) the society experienced difficult times. During the riots of 1905, its building housed headquarters run by social-democratic agitators. During the shooting, a cannon projectile fired from the railway by a tsarist military unit damaged the facade of the house. The punishment unit, which arrived in *Tukums* already at Christmas 1905, occupied the house and denied the society entrance to it. After the redeployment of the punitive expedition, another military unit was located in the house, which maintained order in the town, so the society failed to regain the house, and its operation stopped.

After a long break the first meeting of the Board of the Society took place on 1 March 1907. The Board decided to take care of the withdrawal of troops from the house and authorized lawyer *Jānis Čakste* (1859–1927) to negotiate with government representatives. The general meeting of the Society, at which *A. Eihvalds* was elected the Chairman of the Board, took place on 29 April [14]. Thanks to him the popularity of the society grew. During the year, 59 members joined the society, including young entrepreneurs. On 15 January 1908, 45 new members joined the society. The aim of the Chairman was to prove to the Governor of *Kurzeme* that the *Tukums* Sociable Society «is moving away from the ideas of the social-democrats». His year of chairmanship ended with a visit to the governor in the result of which he managed to recover the severely damaged movable property of the Society. On 17 March, the Society even decided to demand a rent from the Town Board for housing troops in the Society's house.

Following the general meeting in March 1908, *A. Eihvalds* resigned as chairman, but remained on the Board as a spokesman [14]. From the text on the history of the Sociable Society, it can be seen that this has been a time of controversy. The author admits that neither the conservative nor the left-oriented wing of the society was at peace with the policy implemented by the Board on which the entrepreneurs of Latvian origin, *A. Eihvalds'* like-minded people, had a great influence.

According to internationally renowned American change management experts Harold H. Sirkin, Perry Keenan, and Alan Jackson the success of change depends on the strength of the team [15]. The author admits that at that time not all the leading employees of the Society supported *A. Eihvalds'* vision and the resources of the Society were not such as to overcome external obstacles, therefore he continued to be active in the Board as a spokesperson.

Continuing negotiations with the management of the governorate, on 18 July 1908, the Society managed to regain the store premises in its house. The rest of the premises were reclaimed by the Society on 18 September 1908. In order to address the issues of building management, a commission was established to prevent damage of the building, purchase equipment and rent premises. A loss calculation commission and a commission for negotiations with a possible lawyer for the recovery of losses from the governorate administration were also established to which *A. Eihvalds* was elected. Of the estimated losses of the society (8194.16 rubles) as a result of the sealing of the house (18 December 1905–3 January 1906) and the accommodation of the troops (18 December 1905–18 September 1908), the governor acknowledged the largest part (7047 rubles), but did not pursue the repayment process, therefore the Society hired lawyer *A. Pētersons* (?–?) [14].

The popularity of the Society in the town and its surroundings grew: in 1909 it had 287 new members, in 1910 it had 126 new members [14]. They were educated, active and wealthy, thus the Society grew stronger. However, «wealth was accompanied by ambition, external brilliance and discord» and the Board, in which *A. Eihvalds* served, had to pay a lot of attention to the cultural issues of the organization. In 1908/1909 the Society was headed by *Eduards Rause* (?-?), Chairman of the Peasants Supreme Court, who paid much attention to the Society's reputation by personally following the observance of the statutes. *A. Eihvalds* was elected to the Special Complaints Commission to investigate violations committed by members [14].

Although the Society regained the building, its relations with public administration remained very tense. On 26 March 1910, the Board received a refusal from the governor to purchase a text and image reproduction device. On 16 June, at the request of the governor and the local police, lawyer *A. Pētersons* had to resign as a librarian. He was replaced by *Jānis Freimanis* (1892-?) nominated by the governor as the head of the library [14].

In 1910, the Society paid more attention to stabilizing the financial situation. The theatre troupe of the Society resumed a more dynamic activity bringing a large amount of money to the cashbox of the Society. The performances were so well attended that the Society was able to renovate the house, plan the purchase of new curtains for the hall, buy a second billiard table, as well as renew the study benefits for poor pupils. For example, on 13 March, it was decided to support primary school pupils [14].

On 14 September 1910, Chairman *E. Rause*, an civil servant, was forced to resign and *A. Eihvalds* was re-elected [14]. According to the description in the history of the Sociable Society, it is understandable that in 1911 the Society was undergoing certain fatigue. There were also disagreements in the management, therefore on 1 February it was decided to revise the Statutes of the Society. New members were elected to the Board: civil servant *Jēkabs Ieva* (1874–1955), who later, in 1918, became the Head of the Internal Security Department of the Ministry of the Interior, businessmen *Roberts Ilsums* (1883–1918) and *Matīss Dambe* (1868–1926), who soon became involved in the activities of the Town Council [14]. The Board tirelessly continued to pursue the claim for damages against the state. The revenue of the Sociable Society was stable. The balance sheet of the Credit Union owned by it in 1912 exceeded one million gold rubles. It was ranked among the largest Latvian credit institutions [14]. *A. Eihvalds* not only managed the society, but also acted as the auditor of the Credit Union [11].

Alfons Eihvalds, Creator of Vision of Tukums Town Development

On 9 November 1907, *A. Eihvalds* became the Mayor of the town of *Tukums*, he was elected to this position for four years. In the announcement of the elections in the German newspaper «*Rigasche Rundschau*», he is also referred to as *Ozoliņš* or in the German version – *Ozoling* [16]. In 1911, the next Town Council elections took place. Apparently, due to his activities in the *Tukums* Sociable Society, *A. Eihvalds* became the Mayor of *Tukums* again on 14 October 1911 [11]. For the next 10 years – with a break during World War I – he devoted his attention to the strategic and practical issues of urban development. Reviewing the minutes of the Town Board in the collection of *Tukums* Museum, it must be concluded that *A. Eihvalds* was quite farsighted. His priority was to expand the town's territory and create modern infrastructure, including water supply and sewerage, as well as electrification, which had not been resolved by the previous Board. He also devoted a lot of time to the planning of the construction of the town's primary school, marking the so-called *Praviņi* fields (the area between *Talsu*, *Smilšu*, *Lauku* and *Raudas* Streets) for new construction [17].

With the outbreak of World War I, the Town Board was forced to deal with the deployment of troops and the reception of the wounded, to think about how to pay the building owners for the accommodation of military personnel, and to organize the collection of donations for the wounded. Already on 11 August 1914, the Board had received the order of the governor of *Kurzeme* on 7 August to organize a committee for equipping the hospital with equipment and supplies, to take care of the hygiene of refugees, for example, by renovating the Bath house. The Board had to comply with many orders, including the establishment of a commission to participate in the *Kurzeme* Red Cross fundraising campaign [17]. The activities of the Town Board during the war were strictly supervised and regulated. The orders were mandatory. For example, on 15 September, the governor's circular was received on the renaming of streets whose names have something to do with Germany or Austria-Hungary. This was probably the only issue that did not need to be addressed, because there were no such streets in *Tukums*, therefore nothing had to be renamed. An article from the *Kurzeme* Governorate Administration received on 6 October instructed to prepare the premises for the reception of troops from the Dvinsk War Area from Vilnius [17].

Despite the conditions of the war the Town Board under the leadership of *A. Eihvalds* continued to address important infrastructure

development issues for the town. Most attention was paid to electrification. On 6 November 1914, the boards decided to pay the architect, a former student of Riga Polytechnicum / Riga Polytechnic Institute, *Aleksandrs Vanags* (1873–1919) for the work done on the construction of the power plant. An artesian well was also built in the Market Square [17].

As the front approached, the situation became tense. The first refugees to be accommodated arrived. The needs of the growing army grew. On 4 December 1914, the Board received an order to reduce the share capital by 2000 rubles and direct it to establishing an infirmary. On 21 May 1915, army units from the vicinity of *Grobiņa* and *Talsi* were located in the premises of the primary school. On 2 July, an order was received to evacuate the town administration. The path of the refugees is not known yet. On 26 October, an incomplete Government Board meeting was held in *Valka*. *A. Eihvalds* and Board member *J. Jākobsons* (1875–1936) decided to pay the chancellery staff their salaries of and release them due to health reasons [17].

Renewal of the Town Administration in 1918

After returning to *Tukums* from refuge in the autumn of 1918, the Town Board resumed its work under the leadership of *A. Eihvalds* [18]. The first meeting of the post-war Town Board was held on 28 November 1918. It addressed the issues of benefits, opening of a shop, establishment of a commission to recruit policemen to maintain order in the town occupied by the German army. A Supply Commission was also established to deal with food issues in the town, and to take over the shelter for the poor and a «soup pot» from the County Board. In the next meeting, three subcommittees of the Food Commission were set up: for the supply of cereals, sugar, and similar goods. The Board also decided to lease the land of *Ozolmuiža* for sowing and growing crops and roots in spring. Board members went to the surrounding manors to buy grain. The issue of tolls was also discussed because of the town was short of funds [17]. The actions of the Board were very constructive and decisive.

A week later, on 2 December 1918, a Town Council meeting was convened. Its minutes show that 26 town councillors under the leadership of *Tukums* town Mayor *A. Eihvalds* signed a decision to send a congratulatory telegram with the following text: «*Tukums* Municipality Council congratulates the People's Council of Latvia and the Provisional Government and is ready to fully support the existence and prosperity of the new state». Signature: «Mayor *Eihvalds* on behalf of the Town Council» [17].

Due to unstable political situation, only nine councillors attended the Council meeting on 17 December, but they actively dealt with food issues, stipulating that all those with larger grain stocks have to register in the Town Council by 10.00 a. m. on 20 December 1918, otherwise there was a risk of confiscation of grain. The Town Council set food norms to be issued against food cards, as well as the amount of taxes payable on land, livestock, trade services and rent of premises [17]. The Town Council set purchase prices for groceries and traded them in a self-made store by self-determined prices, using food cards, in an attempt to curb speculation.

The issue of schools was very important. In December, the Mayor himself participated in the school working group together with teacher *Teodors Dikmanis* (1861–1936), malt factory owner and Town Board member *A. Zēbergs*, and doctor *Izidors Klemptners* (1860–1919) and began collecting data on situation in schools. For the next six months, the operation of the Board was not possible due to the declared state of war due to the activities of the Bolsheviks (3 January–22 March 1919). After the liberation of the town, the order was determined by military authorities, including the headquarters of the Baltic Landeswer. During this period, the *Tukums* Sociable Society, whose members were also members of the Town Board, once again took the initiative in addressing food and financial issues relevant to the population. For example, in the spring of 1919, the Credit Union Fund of the *Tukums* Sociable Society performed the functions of a state bank. On 26 April 1919, the Society established the *Tukums* branch of the Red Cross. [14]

Only on 12 June 1919, the Town Municipality was able to resume its work, in which participated Lieutenant *Verners Tepfers* (1893–1958), a representative of the Commandant's Office. 16 councillors gathered, including *A. Eihvalds* and *Jēkabs Bļodnieks* (1849–1929), *Jēkabs Ieva* (1874–1959), *Fricis Strautkalns* (1847–?), and *A. Zēbergs*. The gathering commemorated three deceased councillors; among them was James Baumgarten (1879–1919), who was killed during the Bolshevik terror. The Town Council thanked Major W. D. Brooking (?–?), Head of the American Subsistence Mission, for the shipment of flour and asked for potatoes, herring and, if possible, fat [17]. The Town Council approved the unilateral decision made by *A. Eihvalds* to lease *Johans Brigens'* tannery on *Talsu* Street for tanning leather belonging to the town and *Jānis Ilsums'* sawmill for sawing trees belonging to the town. *A. Eihvalds* also purposefully continued the infrastructure development strategy and charged *A. Zēbergs* and the County Board with the task of ensuring that electric lighting to be installed in the town in autumn [17].

The town established the War Loss Commission, electing *A. Zēbergs* as its Chairman and *Jānis Deičs* (1866–1926) as his Deputy. In order

to resolve the issue of electricity supply, the Board had taken the risk of ordering spare parts from Germany for *A. Zēbergs'* power plant, as well as buying a locomotive from German troops and taking over the Landeswer power plant. The Town Council supported it [17].

On 26 August 1919, the issue of schools was discussed. The Mayor reported that in 1919 the school had 10 teachers and 10 sets of forms: six Latvian forms, two German and two Jewish forms with 170 children, but because of the chaos the studies could long only for two months. In the next school year, 370 children were expected to attend school. There were only seven teachers in the town. There was a lack of money, therefore *A. Eihvalds* suggested to ask the Ministry of Education to cover the salary of teachers, because in that case the municipality could take care of all other school expenses and provide free tuition in primary school. Taking into account that many young people had dropped out of school during the war, the School Commission was trying to relocate the former Director of *Tukums* Business School, graduate of the Riga Polytechnic Institute *Jānis Stiprais* (1870–1946) from *Valka* to *Tukums* and to open the a real school (secondary school) [17].

Following the idea of land reform implemented by the government, at the sitting of 26 August 1919, the Mayor *A. Eihvalds* reminded the councillors about the need to expand the town territory at the expense of the so-called leased land plots. Their tenants were able to build buildings and even inherit lease rights, but the land could not be acquired until the reform. He emphasized the need to acquire the so-called *Praviņi* pub in the town centre to expand the market and to build in *Praviņi* countryside (between *Vecmoku*, *Raudas*, *Smilšu*, *Lauku* Streets) a commercial schools, girls' gymnasiums, as well as county tax collection institutions. To the suggestion of *A. Eihvalds*, this land was temporarily divided into small gardens so that the poorest people could provide for themselves. The Town Council decided to apply to the Ministry of Agriculture for land for construction, and to the Ministry of Education for a school building at 12 and 14 *Lielā* Street [17].

The issue of expanding the town's borders was a priority for *A. Eihvalds*. On 26 August 1919, he urged the Town Council to establish a commission to expand the town's boundaries on the basis of the fact that new parts of the town had actually been formed: Orthodox priests' fields, *Tile* manor, Lutheran pastor's fields, and the *Tukums* II station, which enjoyed the benefits of the town, but did not pay taxes as they were located outside the town limits. *A. Eihvalds*, *J. Deičs* and *J. Šablovskis* (?–?) were members of the Commission [17].

Due to the state of war, the activities of the Town Council and the Board were limited. The *Bermontians* ruled in *Tukums* from 8 October to 22 November 1919, when the 9th *Rēzekne* Regiment liberated the

town. On 6 December, it was finally possible to convene a Council meeting again to discuss topical issues. The main attention was paid to the preparation of local Municipality (Council) elections in accordance with the letter of 25 November 1919 of the Department of Local Municipality of the Ministry of the Interior No. 5487. *A. Eihvalds* reported that the Town Board had started working on the compilation of population lists in the beginning of October, but the work was stopped by the *Bermontians* invasion. He planned to complete the work after the Christmas holiday so that the list of residents could be presented to the Board for consideration from 2 to 15 January 1920 and further action in accordance with the temporary regulations of the People's Council. [17]

A. Eihvalds was still concerned regarding the issue of schools, finding suitable teachers and school managers, searching for premises and conducting negotiations with the Ministry of Education on teachers' salaries, and construction of school buildings. There was a wider debate in the Council about teaching religion in primary schools. The inspector of primary schools pointed out that the decision made by the Council on 26 August 1919 to teach religion in schools was not in accordance with the decision of the People's Council. However, the majority of the Town Council did not change their mind: the teaching religion should be a compulsory subject in primary school. This decision had been made before the decision of the People's Council [17]. *A. Eihvalds'* also clearly expressed his view on this issue.

Financial Activities of *A. Eihvalds*

In the summer of 1920, local elections were held. *A. Eihvalds* no longer remained in office, but transferred to the State Treasury and became the Head of the *Tukums* branch [18]. He had proved his suitability for the position of the Head of the Department by working in *Tukums* Town Municipality, *Tukums* Sociable Society Credit Union, as well as in the «1 Ruble Funeral Fund» (German: *Sterbekasse*; the Mutual Insurance Association of the Residents, to which a small amount could be paid; in this case – one ruble; to create a provision for funeral expenses and grave site payments) [11].

A. Eihvalds has always been concerned about financial issues. According to the minutes of the Town Municipality, he understood the basic issues of the state monetary policy and tried to solve them with the available funds. While running the town, he planned its revenues and expenses. For example, on 26 August 1919, at a Council meeting, the so-called head money was considered and a tax was imposed on all able-bodied men from the age of 18. There were 1001 taxpayers in the town that would make an income of 8127 rubles [17].

When dealing with food supply issues, the Town Board faced not only the problem of where to get it, but also how to do it. For example, in August 1919, Board member *A. Zēbergs* had managed to buy rye flour in *Liepāja* and deliver it by train to *Līvberze* station, as well as buy sugar and herring. He had to be quite skilful, because in *Liepāja* only German money was in circulation, but in *Tukums* – mostly Latvian money. Although the Ministry of Maintenance had instructed all traders to accept all legal money, in reality it did not happen. *A. Eihvalds* insisted that the Town Board, asked the Provisional Government to set the exchange rate: the ratio of the Latvian ruble to other currencies [17].

Also, at the meeting of 9 October 1919, which was attended by a representative of the Commandant's office, *A. Eihvalds* spoke about the need to set the exchange rate for the Latvian ruble in order to normalize the economic situation in the town. After the arrival of the Russian (*Bermontian*) military force, one German eastern ruble was worth two tsarist Russian rubles, but the value of the Latvian ruble was not set. In *Jelgava*, where the so-called parts of the Western Russian army were located, mainly German and Russian money was in circulation, but in *Tukums* – Latvian money. About 500 000 Latvian rubles had passed through the local state treasury, as salaries were paid to soldiers of the Landeswehr stationed in *Tukums*, as well as to Latvian Commandant soldiers. The Board had already asked the Chief of the local garrison to address the issue, but unsuccessfully. The Town Council decided to apply to the Governor of the War to change its order and equate the Latvian ruble with the eastern ruble [17]. *A. Eihvalds'* ability to understand the situation, see the cause of the problem and move purposefully towards finding a solution was manifested in advancing this issue.

Change Management of Evangelical Lutheran Congregation

A. Eihvalds belonged to St. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church Congregation of *Tukums*, which, like the whole country, also underwent great changes. In accordance with the «Provisional Regulations on Evangelical Lutheran Consistory» of 23 September 1919 and the «Provisional Events on the Congregation System» of 23 December 1919, the consistory was subsequently subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior in administrative matters and to the Chamber of Courts in judicial matters [19]. In future, the congregation could decide its own issues relatively freely, of course, in accordance with the laws and regulations in force.

On 16 January 1920, the Consistory of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church issued an order to hold elections to the Congregation Council until 1 March. On 8 February of the same year, all the elders of the congregation gathered in *Tukums* and founded an Election Commission consisting of five people, electing *A. Eihvalds* as the Chairman. All eligible members of the congregation over the age of 21 were registered. The biggest discussion was about who should be given the right to vote. On 22 February, the Election Commission decided to grant the right to vote regardless of whether a person was able to pay the membership fee of one ruble. As a result, a total of 3955 eligible members were registered in the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of *Tukums* and 32 seats were determined in the Congregation Council. The elections took place on 21 March and *A. Eihvalds* was elected the Chairman of the Congregation Council. On 6 April, the Council members, including *A. Eihvalds*, made a solemn promise: «I promise to diligently and faithfully fulfil the duties of the church congregation entrusted to me, as required by the teachings, laws, rules, and ordinances of our Evangelical Lutheran Church in God's name and our Church, and to promote and encourage in the congregation every good work and activity to set a good example for others throughout my life in words and deeds» [19].

A. Eihvalds was also elected the Head of the Church Board. His knowledge, skills, and leadership abilities helped to strengthen the congregation's reputation and financial position in the new circumstances. One of the first decisions of the Board was to lease the dilapidated rectory to the widow of Pastor *Kārlis Gustavs Matisons* (1867–1919) and seven other tenants, to sell fishing, hunting and reed cutting rights, the iron inventory of the manor, and the forest for money to repair the rectory [19].

On 20 May 1920, the Congregation Council elected a new pastor, Vicar *Alberts Virbulis* (1890–1946), and on 27 June, transferred the rectory to him. The inventory deed was signed by *A. Eihvalds* on behalf of the congregation. He persuaded the Council to begin repair work [19]. To be the leader of the Congregation Council was a great challenge because not all Council members were aware that the congregation had its own property. Researcher of the *Tukums* Museum *Inta Dišlere* has concluded that the congregation did not have understanding and the pastor and the Council did not have enough support in these issues.

In the post-war conditions, the congregation and its members experienced great material difficulties. In the autumn of 1920, the congregation received a gift from an American relief mission: 40 puds (1 pud is ~ 16.38 kg) of clothes and shoes, for which transportation costs had to be paid – 6 rubles per pud – 682 rubles in total. In order to obtain such money, the Congregation Council to insistent suggestion of

A. Eihvalds decided to sell the 25 best women's coats for 30 rubles each to the Council members and distribute the rest of the clothes to the poorest members of the congregation for free [19].

Donations were collected to make the necessary repairs to the church and the pastor's residence. On 5 June 1921, 2400 rubles had already been collected. However, this was not enough, so the so-called bazaars (markets) were organized, inviting the ladies of the congregation to sell their products. Proceeds from the bazaars allowed to build a fence around the church in 1921; in 1922 – to repair the church roof and the organ, to install electricity and perform other work [20]. On 9 March 1923, *A. Eihvalds* expressed «gratitude to all those who have contributed to the organizing the bazaar with such great success, especially to the bazaar committee and its boss J. Gruenhof» [19].

After the war, the number of congregation members decreased as many members no longer attended the communion [20]. Thanks to the personalities of Pastor *A. Virbulis* and the Chairman of the Congregation Council *A. Eihvalds*, many members returned to the congregation again. On 27 May 1923, *A. Eihvalds* was re-elected Chairman of the Congregation Council [19]. In these elections, the principle proposed by *A. Eihvalds* that only those who pay the congregation tax (294 persons) participate in the elections was introduced, therefore the number of Board members was reduced to six [20]. This made the Board easier to manage and more operational. Pastor *A. Virbulis* later wrote that the members of the Church Council, «with the exception of the members of the Board and a few others, showed little interest in their duties» [20]. Among the few supporters was manufacturer *A. Zēbergs*, who donated 20 000 rubles to buy a church bell in 1923 [20].

Unfortunately, the life of *A. Eihvalds* soon ended. At the sitting of 11 July 1923, *Tukums* Town Council honoured the memory of *A. Eihvalds* [14]. Jeannot Gruenhof (1884–?) was elected to take his place on 31 July. When discussing *A. Eihvalds'* contribution to the work of the congregation, the Board considered the possibility of placing the crown of his grave in the dressing room or in the church. Pastor *A. Virbulis* has suggested to put up a marble memorial plaque [20], but most likely this has not been done.

Conclusions

The contribution of former Riga Polytechnicum student *Alfons Eihvalds* to the development of *Tukums* town, establishment and management of the Municipality, as well as to its social and economic life has not been evaluated so far. The author believes that *A. Eihvalds*

in the modern sense should be called a change leader whose talents and knowledge showed best when changes were needed: after the riots of 1905, in the early stages of World War I, in the period of Latvia's state formation. He drew the attention of public administration institutions to the topicality of the arrangement of the monetary system and formed and headed the *Tukums* branch of the Treasury, as well as laid the foundations for the operation of the Council of the St. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in the conditions of a democratic state.

Citizen of *Tukums*, *A. Eihvalds*, dared to become the leader of the *Tukums* Sociable (Latvian) Society after years (1905–1907) of unrest and justify the society's right to its own house and its property in the conditions of reaction. He also transformed the society into a financially strong organization that had good reputation in *Tukums* town society as well as a strong economic influence. It assumed the support function of Latvian-born entrepreneurs in the period of tsarist Russia's reaction after 1905, as well as in the first year of Latvia's state operation, when the National Bank was not strong enough yet.

A. Eihvalds was one of the first production managers of *A. Zēbergs'* distillery, who had studied chemistry and was able to organize the production process in accordance with technical and sanitary regulations. At the end of the 19th century, he re-profiled the old J. Kurtzig distillery, realizing that it would not be able to meet the rules of the excise board and withstand the growing competition of large companies. He chose to operate in the beverage business, which could generate enough income for the family, develop property and also provide a certain prestige in the city community.

By accepting the challenge to work in the *Tukums–Ventspils* railway construction company *A. Eihvalds* gained experience in the operation of large projects, knowledge of organizing railway transport and its support infrastructure, later using it in the development of town infrastructure. He was a visionary of urban development, who began to realize the idea of expanding the town's territory and modernizing technical infrastructure even before World War I, marking the further development line, which was implemented during the Agrarian Reform in the interwar period. He did a lot in the development of schools and was actively involved in the development of the financing model of the national education system, emphasizing the collaboration between the state and local governments.

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SOURCES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1. **Graudiņš, K.** *Selonijas albums*, 1880–1905. Jelgava: G. Lansberģis, 1905, X lpp.

Figure 2. Tukuma muzeja inv. nr. TMNM 18120.

Figure 3. Tukuma muzeja inv. nr.: TMNM 27428.

Figure 4. Tukuma muzeja inv. nr. TMNM Pgm 708.

Figure 5. Tukuma muzeja inv. nr.: TMNM 667.

Figure 6. Tukuma muzeja inv. nr. TMNM Pgm 2215/21.



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Agrita Ozola

Rīgas Politehnikuma studenta Alfona Eihvalda (1862–1923) ieguldījums Tukuma pilsētas un sabiedriskās dzīves attīstībā

Raksts ir pirmais plašākais pētījums par uzņēmēju, bankas darbinieku, Tukuma pilsētas pašvaldības vadītāju (1907–1915; 1918–1920) un sabiedrisko darbinieku Alfonu Eihvaldu. Tajā atspoguļota A. Eihvalda dzīvesdarbība 19. gadsimta beigās / 20. gadsimta sākumā, viņa loma Tukuma pilsētas pārvaldībā, ekonomiskajā un sabiedriskajā dzīvē – Tukuma Viesīgajā (latviešu) biedrībā un evaņģēliski luteriskajā draudzē. Pētījumā izmantots Tukuma muzeja un bibliotēku krājums, Latvijas Nacionālā arhīva dokumenti.

Atslēgas vārdi: Alfons Eihvalds, Tukuma pilsētas galva, Tukuma Viesīgā biedrība, Rīgas Politehnikuma studenti.