

Grzegorz Krzywiec

## THE POLISH INTELLIGENTSIA IN THE FACE OF THE 'JEWISH QUESTION' (1905-1914)

The aim of this paper is to present the attitude of the circles of the Polish intelligentsia in Congress Poland<sup>1</sup> to the so-called Jewish question. Covering all the opinions that emerged in the public debate of that era would go beyond the scope of this essay, instead it seems more useful to bring out some examples of attitudes and opinions. However, in principle, they are going to represent a wider spectrum of views and milieus. Hence, of crucial importance will be the ideological criterion. The body of my exposition is rather devoted to the opinions and attitudes of the intelligentsia, or its leading spokesmen, than to a review of the circles of intelligentsia that voiced those views.

### I

#### THE 'JEWISH QUESTION' IN THE POLISH LANDS BEFORE 1905

The 'Jewish question' has long been of crucial importance for the Polish intelligentsia milieus.<sup>2</sup> In the opinion of the generation of

<sup>1</sup> Polish historiography uses the term Congress Poland for all the lands embraced by the Polish Kingdom created in 1815, also for the period later than 1863, until the end of partitioned Poland.

<sup>2</sup> I accept in this essay a more narrow, 'ideological' definition of the intelligentsia. Thus, 'the Polish intelligentsia' were 'wardens of national memory, propagators of patriotic and social ideas (whether revolutionary or conservative) and of a kind of literature and art that, even if not of the highest order, was as a principle, either meant to mobilize, or bring consolation', Jerzy Jedlicki, 'Przedmowa', in *idem* (ed.), *Dzieje inteligencji polskiej do roku 1918*, i: Maciej Janowski, *Narodziny inteligencji 1750-1831* (Warszawa, 2008), 9. There — a review of the standpoints taken by the literature of the subject.

Polish positivists, who introduced this subject into public debate in the second half of the 19th century, the Jewish question, given all its peculiarities, could be embraced by a well-known unification scheme: the Jews, just like peasants or the gentry, as a relic of feudal society were to undergo a process of modernization. Their separateness was treated as a sign of Poland's cultural backwardness. The assimilation of the Jews was not easy to achieve, but its expected result — the completion of the process of establishing them equal rights in the face of the law — was treated as the only solution. The Polish positivists had one scheme in mind which, in their opinion, had proved correct in other West-European cultures.<sup>3</sup>

The symbol of such a way of thinking among the Polish Jews was the weekly *Izraelita*, established in Warsaw by Samuel H. Peltyn in 1866.<sup>4</sup> This paternalistic scheme started to crumble towards the end of the 19th century as a result of the rise of modern anti-Semitism,<sup>5</sup> personified by Jan Jeleński and the

<sup>3</sup> There is a profuse literature about the attitude of the positivists to the 'Jewish question'. Cf. among others: Alina Cała, *Asymilacja Żydów w Królestwie Polskim (1864–1897). Postawy, konflikty, stereotypy* (Warszawa, 1989), 87 ff.; Marzena Iwańska, *Prasa pozytywistów warszawskich wobec Żydów i kwestii żydowskiej* (Łódź, 2006); Helena Datner, *Ta i tamta strona. Żydowska inteligencja Warszawy drugiej połowy XIX wieku* (Warszawa, 2007), 275 ff. Cf. also Stanislaus A. Blejwas, 'Polish Positivism and the Jews', *Jewish Social Studies*, xli, 1 (winter 1981), 21–36; Maciej Janowski, *Polska myśl liberalna do 1918 r.* (Warszawa, 1998), 185 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Cała, *Asymilacja Żydów*, 49–86. Cf. also Janowski, *Polska myśl liberalna*, 185 ff.; Theodore R. Weeks, *From Assimilation to Antisemitism: The 'Jewish Question' in Poland, 1850–1914* (Illinois, 2006), 64–6. A lot of valuable observations concerning Poles of the Judaic faith are introduced by Agnieszka Jagodzińska, *Pomiędzy. Akulturacja Żydów Warszawy w drugiej połowie XIX wieku* (Wrocław, 2008), 23–79.

<sup>5</sup> Andrzej Jaszczuk, *Spór pozytywistów z konserwatystami o przyszłość Polski, 1870–1903* (Warszawa, 1986), 210–28; Cała, *Asymilacja Żydów*, 279–302; Iwańska, *Prasa pozytywistów warszawskich*, 164–74. Cf. also Weeks, *From Assimilation*, 87–108. On the process of the gradual collapsing of the project of assimilation in the second half of the 19th century, cf. *idem*, 'Poles, Jews and Russians: The Death of the Ideal of Assimilation in the Kingdom of Poland', *Polin*, 12 (1999), 242–56; cf. Andrzej Zbikowski, 'Rozwój ideologii antysemitkiej w Galicji w II połowie XIX wieku. Teofila Merunowicza atak na żydowskie kahały', *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* (hereafter *Biuletyn ŻIH*), 3–4 (167–8), (July–December 1993), 53–62, *idem*, 'Rozwój ideologii antysemitkiej w Galicji w II połowie XIX wieku', *Biuletyn ŻIH*, 1–3 (169–71), (January–September 1994), 21–39; Czesław Lechicki, 'Pierwsze dwudziestolecie krakowskiego *Głosu Narodu*', *Studia Historyczne*, xii, 4 (1969), 507–32. A short but substantial introduction to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism in Galicia at the turn of the 20th century is given by the essays of Michał Śliwa, 'Z dyskusji nad kwestią żydowską

weekly journal *Rola*, established by him in 1883, and as a result of some processes going on within the Jewish community itself.

From the point of view of integration, of considerable importance were the demographic changes that were occurring in Congress Poland towards the end of the century: the growing numbers of Jews as a result of their growing birth-rate, increased by the influx of the Russian-speaking Jewish population persecuted in the East, had halted the process of assimilation. This infusion of industrious immigrants, called 'Litvaks', had animated the local Jewish population. Of some importance were also the changes within the Jewish community: the rise and development of writings in Yiddish, and the consequent revitalization of the Jewish culture in the Polish lands.

The very end of the 19th century saw the rise of the Yiddish theatre. On the edges of the cultural mainstream, dominated by assimilators, many social initiatives developed that testified to the enormous dynamic of the Jewish population. The changes in the structure of this community went hand in hand with the political transformations in the 'Jewish street'.

The trends that developed in the 19th century — the Jewish Orthodoxy in the east of Congress Poland, and Hasidism, very vital in small towns away from the east, and on the other hand the trend of assimilation so close to the intelligentsia — came across the advancing modern tendencies. While at the beginning most assimilators joined the radical Polish groupings active in Congress Poland (among others: 'Proletariat', The Union of Polish Workers, Polish Socialist Party — PPS, The Social-Democracy of Congress Poland and Lithuania — SDKPiL), as time elapsed many Jewish milieus started to call for their autonomous units within the framework of Polish organizations. This was the origin of the Jewish Organization of the Polish Socialist Party established in the Russian Partition in 1893, or the Jewish Section of the Polish Social-Democratic Party of Galicia and Teschen Silesia, and finally the Jewish Social-Democratic Party in Galicia.<sup>6</sup>

---

w Galicji u schyłku XIX w.', in *idem*, *Obcy czy swoi. Z dziejów poglądów na kwestię żydowską w Polsce w XIX i XX wieku* (Kraków, 1997), 22–38; *idem*, 'Grzmot i Antysemita — czasopisma antyżydowskie w Krakowie', *ibidem*, 53–65.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Henryk Piasecki, *Żydowska Organizacja PPS 1893–1907* (Wrocław, 1978); *idem*, *Sekcja Żydowska i Żydowska Partia Socjalno-Demokratyczna, 1892–1920* (Warszawa, 1982).

A considerable change in the attitude to the 'Jewish question' came with the creation of the Bund (The General Jewish Labour Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia) in Wilno in 1897, which effectively competed for influence on the 'Jewish street' in the whole area of the Russian partition.<sup>7</sup> Soon, in Congress Poland, appeared the Jewish Social-Democratic Labour Party 'Poale Zion' which called for the creation of a national state for the Jews in Palestine. However, this pluralism of the Jewish life remained unknown and obscure to the Poles.

The dominant approach to the assimilation of the Jews did not envisage the complete obliteration of cultural or denominational differences, but the inclusion of the so-called Poles of the Judaic faith in the national Polish society. Most hope was invested in these processes by the charismatic leader of the generation of positivists, writer and publicist Aleksander Świętochowski, who treated assimilation as a mechanism of the consolidation of the Polish national potential.

This set of views, at one end featuring the fight against anti-Semitism as a barrier to modernization and at another seeing the Jewish world as a passive ethnic element which must be 'digested' by the 'civilized' majority, had survived intact until the beginning of the 20th century. In Galicia it was connected with the legally active liberal parties (the so-called Polish Democrats), and consolidated in the Polish culture of the turn of the 20th century a dual image of Polish Jewry — on the one hand a narrow group of the Poles of Jewish descent, and on the other an anachronistic *quasi*-society.

## II

### THE 1905 REVOLUTION: THE RISE OF POLITICAL ANTISEMITISM

The events of 1905 brought to light the strong politicization of social life in the Polish lands.<sup>8</sup> The polarization of the political

<sup>7</sup> Joshua D. Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality: The Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in Late Tsarist Russia, 1892–1914* (Madison, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> There is a profuse literature about the influence of the 1905 Revolution on the social and political attitudes as well as the political culture of contemporary society. Especially noteworthy is Robert E. Blobaum's monograph, *Rewolucja:*

scene, at one end of which there was the socialist Left seeking in these changes a chance for socio-political transformations, while at the other were entrenched the terrified conservative social strata, enabled the take-over of the 'rule of souls' in Polish society by the National Democratic (ND) organization, the first nationalist formation in the Polish lands.

The imagination of the conservative section of society was attacked by the spectre of revolution understood as the result of a socialist-Jewish plot.<sup>9</sup> A phenomenon that historians have examined to the least extent is the rise of the modern anti-Judaic discourse that went hand in hand with the growth of anti-modernist trends and the crisis of folk religiousness in the milieus connected with the Catholic Church.<sup>10</sup> The formation of Catholic political culture was accompanied by the revitalization of enmity towards the Jewish population. From 1905, the picture of the

---

*Russian Revolution, 1904–1907* (Ithaca and London, 1995). Cf. Tadeusz Stegner, *Liberałowie Królestwa Polskiego 1904–1915* (Warszawa, 1990), 131 ff.; Janowski, *Polska myśl liberalna*, 230. Many valuable studies that sum up the present state of research are contained in the collection compiled by Anna Żarnowska, Arkadiusz Kołodziejczyk, Andrzej Stawarz and Piotr Tusiński (eds.), *Dziedzictwo rewolucji 1905–1907* (Warszawa and Radom, 2007). Cf. also, Anna Żarnowska, 'Spojrzenie na rewolucję 1905 r. w polskiej historiografii — garść refleksji', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, cxiii, 4 (2006), 59–94.

<sup>9</sup> The gulf between the views of the Left and the conservative section of society in their reactions to the 1905 Revolution is registered by Stanisław Siewierski, 'Zróżnicowanie postaw wobec wydarzeń rewolucyjnych 1905 r. we wspomnieniach i pamiętnikach', in Krzysztof Stępnik, Monika Gabryś (eds.), *Rewolucja lat 1905–1907. Literatura — Publicystyka — Ikonografia* (Lublin, 2006), where a number of other studies that show especially the attitudes of progressive and leftist writers towards the events of 1904–7. Cf. also Krzysztof Stępnik, 'Metafory rewolucji w literaturze polskiej z lat 1905–1914', *Pamiętnik Literacki*, lxxxiii, 2 (1992), 59–82; Agnieszka Friedrich, 'Polish Literature's Portrayal of Jewish Involvement in 1905' in Stephen Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn (eds.), *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews* (Philadelphia, 2008), 143–51.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Robert E. Blobaum, 'The Revolution of 1905–1907 and the Crisis of Polish Catholicism', *Slavic Review*, xlvi, 4 (December 1988), 667–86; also *idem*, *Rewolucja*, 240 ff.; Brian A. Porter, 'Antisemitism and the Search for a Catholic Identity, in Robert Blobaum (ed.), *Antisemitism and its Opponents in Modern Poland* (Ithaca, 2005), 103–23; Krzysztof Lewalski, *Kościół chrześcijański w Królestwie Polskim wobec Żydów w latach 1855–1915* (Wrocław, 2002), esp. the chap.: 'Żydzi — władcy świata, nieprzejednani wrogowie Kościoła', 223–37; *idem*, 'Kościół katolicki wobec społeczno-politycznej rzeczywistości lat 1905–1907', in Marek Przeniosło and Stanisław Wiech (eds.), *Rewolucja 1905–1907 w Królestwie Polskim i Rosji* (Kielce, 2005), 96 ff.

Jew as an enemy of Christian civilization became a permanent element of the writings of Catholic publicists.<sup>11</sup>

Changes occurred also among the conservatives. Henryk Sienkiewicz may be used here as an example. The views of this writer, who was close to the Right, show clearly how Polish traditionalists took over the anti-Semitic motifs and inscribed them in a wider cultural pattern. During the Revolution Sienkiewicz noted the 'over-representation' and excessive 'mobility' of the Jews among the radicals, and more than once warned against the 'newcomers' who spread seditious slogans.<sup>12</sup> In his exposition there were no straightforward anti-Semitic sentiments; rather a fear of the unsettlement of the natural order, and anxiety about the future of the nation. The figure of a Jewish revolutionary perfectly suited this phobia.

The vision of a disciplined society governed by a 'national organization' defined by Roman Dmowski in the *Przegląd Wszechpolski* newspaper in the years 1901–14, might have appeared on the one hand as an authentic barrier against the chaos of revolution, on the other as the only form of preserving the Polish national identity.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Many interesting observations can be found in Dariusz Libionka, 'Kwestia żydowska w prasie katolickiej w Polsce w latach trzydziestych XX wieku'. Doctoral dissertation at the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, MS rights (Warszawa, 1998), especially chap. II: 'Środowiska katolickie i narodowe na ziemiach polskich na przełomie XIX i XX w. wobec kwestii żydowskiej', 50–73; cf. also Stanisław Gajewski, 'Związek Katolicki w Królestwie Polskim', *Roczniki Humanistyczne KUL*, xxvi, 2 (1978), 159–80; *idem*, 'Endecja w Królestwie Polskim wobec katolickich organizacji społecznych', *Biuletyn Lubelskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego*, xx, 1 (1978), 41–8. On the competition between the ND and the Church for influence on the rightist-clerical electorate cf. also Teodor Mistewicz, 'Narodowa Demokracja i Związek Katolicki w latach 1905–1908', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, xcvi, 1–2 (1989), 131–54; also *idem*, 'Stosunek Romana Dmowskiego do religii i Kościoła', *Studia Historyczne*, xxxii, 1 (1989), 57 ff.

<sup>12</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz, 'Przed wyborami do Dumy', in *idem*, *Pisma zapomniane i niewydane* (Lwów, 1922), 542–8. In his private letters of that time, the writer complained outright about 'our socialists' who were 'a plaything in the hands of the Russian Jews and foreign powers'. Cf. 'Do Bronisława Kozakiewicza, 14 VIII 1905 r.', in *idem*, *Listy*, 3, 1 (Warszawa, 2007), 230. An attempt at a comprehensive treatment of the author's attitude to the 'Jewish question' is made by Dobrosława Świerczewska, 'Sienkiewicz a Żydzi. Rekonesans', *Pamiętnik Literacki*, xcix, 2 (2008), 121–57.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Brian Porter, 'Who is a Pole and Where is Poland and Nation in the Rhetoric of Polish National Democracy before 1905', *Slavic Review*, li, 4 (winter 1992),

Anti-Semitism was prominent in Dmowski's ideology from the very beginning. From his first political article in *Głos* in 1891 he propounded the same theses: the war of the races is the principal rule that governs human communities, the racial elements which are foreign to one another should not be mixed, for this will lead to their annihilation, the assimilation of the Jews introduces discord to European societies.<sup>14</sup> At the beginning of the 20th century this ideologue added to these theses new political slogans.<sup>15</sup>

The events of 1905–17 strengthened Dmowski's role in his camp. Moreover, the leader of the National Democrats who took part in putting the Revolution down, for some section of public opinion became a symbol of charismatic leader, ready to assume responsibility for the whole country.<sup>16</sup> Hand in hand with this acknowledgement of his role, a group of activists strictly subordinated to him was formed in his camp, such as Stanisław Kozicki, from 1910 the editor of *Gazeta Warszawska*, Antoni Marylski or Antoni Sadzewicz (editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Poranna 2 Grosze*).

---

639–53; *idem*, 'Democracy and Discipline in Late Nineteenth Century Poland', *The Journal of Modern History*, cxxi, 2 (June 1999), 346–93. Cf. also Teodor Mistewicz, 'Kwestia polska na tle kryzysu politycznego Rosji w publicystyce Romana Dmowskiego z lat 1903–1909', *Dzieje Najnowsze*, xv, 4 (1983); Barbara Toruńczyk, 'Myśl polityczna i ideologia Narodowej Demokracji', in *eadem* (ed.), *Narodowa Demokracja. Antologia myśli politycznej „Przeglądu Wszechpolskiego”* (Londyn, 1983), especially 26–34; Andrzej Walicki, 'Dziedzictwo Narodowej Demokracji (II)', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18–19 Nov. 2006, 25–7.

<sup>14</sup> R. Skrzycki [Roman Dmowski], 'Idea w poniewierce', *Głos*, 8 (1891). Cf. also Grzegorz Krzywiec, '„Idea w poniewierce”. Pierwszy artykuł polityczny Romana Dmowskiego', *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej*, 53 (2008), 147–66. The fullest account of Dmowski's early opinions about Jews and the 'Jewish question' can be found in Brian A. Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (New York, 2000), 176–82, 227–332. Cf. also Mieczysław Sobczak, '„Kwestia żydowska” w interpretacji Romana Dmowskiego w kontekście rozważań o „interesie narodowym” i asymilacji Żydów na ziemiach polskich u schyłku XIX w.', *Prace Naukowe Akademii Ekonomicznej we Wrocławiu*, 1008, *Nauki Humanistyczne*, 8 (2003), 96–122; Andrzej Micewski, *Roman Dmowski* (Warszawa, 1971), 67 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Mieczysław Sobczak, *Narodowa Demokracja wobec kwestii żydowskiej na ziemiach polskich przed I wojną światową* (Wrocław, 2007), 119–31.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Blobaum, *Rewolucja*, 217–25. A literary testimony to this phenomenon is Grzegorz Glass's pastiche, *Wizerunek człowieka w r. 1906 w Polsce poczciwego. Pamiętnik śp. Wiesława Wrony, przemysłowca kupca, obywatela i wyborcy* (Kraków, 1908), and, representing the other side, *Dni polityczne 1910* by Józef Weysenhoff.

It is they who became the moving power of the later anti-Semitic campaigns of the ND.

While analyzing the views of Dmowski on the 'Jewish question' of those years we should draw attention to another aspect of the situation — that is the political circumstances. One has to remember that the politics of the Polish Circle in the Russian Duma was a chain of failures.<sup>17</sup> The pendulum policy consisting in giving support sometimes to the Russian government, and at other times to the parties of the opposition, soon changed into political drifting. Each defeat seemed to entail another failure.

It is significant that the general pessimism concerning the future of the 'Polish cause' was accompanied by an aggressive anti-Semitic rhetoric of the ND. It seemed as if they had found a remedy for their passivity in the enmity against the Jews and their true or would-be spokesmen.<sup>18</sup>

Warnings against the 'Jewish menace' became a permanent element of Dmowski's writings. He presented the Jews as the main instigators of the 1905 Revolution, and he treated each victory of his adversaries as subjection of the Polish nation to the 'Jewish domination'. In his articles the Jews invariably appear as a well-organized camp fighting against the Polish nation.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> An analysis of the policy of the Polish Circle across its history is presented by: Władysław Bułhak, *Dmowski-Rosja a kwestia polska. U źródeł orientacji rosyjskiej obozu narodowego 1886–1908* (Warszawa, 2000); Zygmunt Łukawski, *Koło Polskie w Rosyjskiej Dumie Państwowej w latach 1906–1909* (Wrocław, 1967). An insight into the context of the Chelm question is given by Mirosław Wierchowski, 'Sprawa Chełmszczyzny w rosyjskiej Dumie Państwowej', *Przegląd Historyczny*, cvii, 1 (1966), 115 ff. Zygmunt Łukawski, 'Koło Polskie w Dumie Państwowej wobec kwestii chełmskiej', *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne*, 17 (1966), 159–82.

<sup>18</sup> This pragmatic element of the anti-Semitic action is indicated by Roman Wapiński, *Narodowa Demokracja 1893–1939* (Wrocław, 1980), 129. However, for Dmowski, this conflict with the Jews was of fundamental significance. Cf. Roman Dmowski, *Polityka polska i odbudowanie państwa*, ed. Tomasz Wituch, 2 vols. (Warszawa, 1988), i, 162.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Roman Dmowski, *Separatyzm żydowski i jego źródła* (Warszawa 1909), 27; *idem*, 'Wykształcenie praktyczne w szkole średniej', *Przegląd Narodowy*, 1 (January 1910), 14; 'Zagadnienie sprawy żydowskiej', *Przegląd Narodowy*, 12 (December 1910), 647; 'Polityka polska, kadeci i sprawa żydowska. (Odpowiedź p. Pietrunkiewiczowi)', *Gazeta Warszawska*, 326 (1910), 1.



He also started to use the anti-Semitic key for the strife within his own party.<sup>20</sup> His anti-Jewish obsession gathered strength at that time.<sup>21</sup> At the end of 1909 and the beginning of 1910 in Congress Poland the anti-Semitic jargon entered the language and the imagination of the National Democrats for good.

After 1905 anti-Semitism in the National Democracy had many aspects. In the first place, anti-Jewish slogans had a practical value, for they could mobilize some section of society in Congress Poland against the Left. Thus the ND used those slogans not only against the Jewish community, but in order to fight the Left and the Centre, and even the conciliatory circles.<sup>22</sup> As time elapsed, this rhetoric connected the 'roles of enemy' with the Jews. The Jewish community as a whole was treated as a barrier to the development of every segment of Polish society. The Jewish Orthodoxy became the subject of constant attacks as a caste that was a state within the state, while the Jewish non-believers appeared in the role of intransigent enemies of Christianity. The years of the 1905–7 Revolution also saw the spread of the myth about the Jews having dominated the freemasonry.<sup>23</sup>

This rhetoric also contained other motifs: the Jewish capitalists were in the vanguard of industry and commerce (this fact was strongly accentuated by the propaganda of the National Union of Workers, whose anti-Semitism was a substitute of class struggle), which did not prevent them from being the leaders of the international and native socialist movement. Jews, both as a community and as individuals were attacked not only because of their socio-economic activity, but also at the moral-ethic level. Their presence in public life seemed to be a greater obstacle to the modernization of Polish society than all the partitioning powers taken together.<sup>24</sup> With

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Andrzej Garlicki, 'Relacja Romana Dmowskiego o Lidze Narodowej', *Przegląd Historyczny*, cviii, 3 (1966), 415–43; cf. Dmowski, *Polityka i odbudowanie państwa*, 163.

<sup>21</sup> This is how Dmowski remembered the period after 1905: 'One thing was striking: everything that had anything in common, even in a most distant way, with the Jews, was against us'. Dmowski, *Polityka i odbudowanie państwa*, 163; Micewski, *Roman Dmowski*, 197.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Stegner, *Liberałowie Królestwa Polskiego*, 156.

<sup>23</sup> This motif had an especially strong appeal to the Catholic circles. Cf. Porter, 'Antisemitism', 109 ff.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Israel Oppenheim, 'The Radicalisation of the Endecja Anti-Jewish Line during and after the 1905 Revolution', *Shevut*, ix, 25 (2000), 32–66; Joanna B.

the next elections to the Russian Duma, the ND became even more radical in its attitude, and started to use political anti-Semitism as an instrument of active fight against any opposition.<sup>25</sup> The Jews started to symbolize all kinds of aggression against Polishness, and the ND nominated itself the only depository and defender of Polish values. Ideological anti-Semitism became the *principle of existence* of the nationalist movement.<sup>26</sup>

However, the dynamic of the anti-Semitic rhetoric should above all be connected with the emancipation of the Jewish community. There appeared everyday press in Yiddish (in 1907 the daily *Hajnt*, and later its competitor, the daily *Der Moment*). These newspapers, though they did not show Zionist tendencies, were regarded by some section of Polish opinion as 'centres of jargon culture' and the future breeding-ground of the Jewish nation.<sup>27</sup>

A phenomenon that especially influenced the form and intensity of anti-Semitic attitudes after the Revolution was the migration of the Jews to Congress Poland (but also to Galicia) from Russia that began in the second half of the 19th century.

---

Michlic, *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jews from 1880s to the Present* (London, 2006), 46; Jerzy J. Terej, *Idee, mity realia. Szkice do dziejów Narodowej Demokracji* (Warszawa, 1971), 46 ff.

<sup>25</sup> The further evolution of the ND rhetoric is discussed by Theodore Weeks, 'Fanning the Flames: The Jews in the Warsaw Press, 1905–1912', *East European Jewish Affairs*, xxviii, 2 (1998–9), 63–81. Cf. also *idem*, *From Assimilation*, 149–69.

<sup>26</sup> On the role played by modern anti-Semitism in the European nationalisms of that time, cf. Laurant Loly, 'Les débuts de l'Action Française (1899–1914) ou l'élaboration d'un nationalisme antisémite', *Revue Historique*, cccviii, 3 (2006); Zeev Sternhell, 'Nationalism Socialism and Anti-Semitism: The Case of Maurice Barrès', *Journal of Contemporary History*, viii, 2 (1973); *idem*, 'The Roots of Popular Anti-Semitism in the Third Republic', in Frances Malino, Bernard Wasserstein (eds.), *The Jews in Modern France* (Hanover and London, 1985), 115; Gisela C. Lebzelter, 'Anti-Semitism — a Focal Point for the British Radical Right', in Paul Kennedy and Anthony Nicholls (eds.), *Nationalist and Racialist Movements in Britain and Germany before 1914* (Oxford, 1981); Hans Roggers, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1986), especially chapter 8, 212–32. Cf. also the classic study by Peter Pulzer, *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany & Austria*, rev. edn (Cambridge Mass., 1988). Generally cf. also Shulamit Volkov, 'Antisemitism as Cultural Code: Reflections on the History and Historiography of Antisemitism in Imperial Germany', *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, xxiii (1978), 25–46.

<sup>27</sup> Stephen D. Corrsin, *Warsaw before the First World War: Poles and Jews in the Third City of the Russian Empire 1880–1914* (Boulder, 1989), 66–77.

An intensive migration movement appeared as early as the 1870s. This first wave of emigration was not, however, of great significance for the Jewish community, and even less so for the Polish–Jewish relations.

It was only the tide of pogroms of the 1880s and the discrimination that affected the Jewish population in Russia that resulted in a massive resettlement of the population. It is worthy of note that the newcomers included representatives of the 'professions', of high standing in Russia, who became serious competitors for the circles of both Polish and Jewish bourgeoisie. Researchers accept the numbers of those groups as amounting up to half a million people.<sup>28</sup>

The 'Russian wave' animated the Polish–Jewish circles. The immigrants started to figure prominently in the 'Jewish life', inspiring new initiatives. Interestingly, resentment towards those groups was mainly voiced by the Polish Jews and reached Polish opinion mainly from this side.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, many 'newcomers' were absorbed by the life of Congress Poland. Their second generation was ready to undergo 'acculturation'. François Guesnet noted: 'After World War I the *Litvaks* were not mentioned, except in reminiscences, legal–political anti–Semitic phantasmagorias and historical myths'.<sup>30</sup> It is, however, difficult to forget another aspect of this phenomenon. The enmity towards the 'Litvaks' as a metaphor of a Jew–stranger was the only outlet for Russophobia openly permitted by the tsarist system.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Cf. François Guesnet, „Litwacy” i „Ostjuden” (Żydzi ze Wschodu). Migracja i stereotypy”, in Elżbieta Traba and Robert Traba (eds.), *Tematy żydowskie* (Olsztyn, 1999), 78; Frank Golczewski, *Polnisch–Judische Beziehungen 1881–1922. Eine Studie zur Geschichte des Antisemitismus in Osteuropa* (Wiesbaden, 1981), 97 ff. This author also gives account of the earlier literature.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Krzysztof T. Toeplitz, *Rodzina Toeplitzów. Książka mojego ojca* (Warszawa, 2004), 197.

<sup>30</sup> Guesnet, „Litwacy” i „Ostjuden”, 78.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, 74. Cf. also *idem*, „Wir müssen Warschau unbedingt russisch machen“. Die Mythologisierung der russisch–jüdischen Zuwanderung ins Königreich Polen zu Beginn unseres Jahrhunderts am Beispiel eines polnischen Trivalromans”, in Eva Behring *et al.* (eds.), *Geschichtliche Mythen in den Literaturen und Kulturen Ostmittel- und Südosteuropas* (Stuttgart, 1999), 99–116.

III  
 THE ATTITUDE OF THE POLISH PROGRESSIVES  
 TOWARDS THE JEWS AND THE 'JEWISH QUESTION':  
 ŚWIĘTOCHOWSKI-ORZESZKOWA-PRUS  
 THE DOWNFALL OF A CERTAIN PARADIGM

The changes that started in the years 1904–5 made also a strong impact on the attitude of the progressive milieu, that is in the first place the Polish liberals, towards the Jews and the 'Jewish question'. When in the first months of the revolutionary upheaval the political events started to be accompanied by the activation of Jewish political life, a problem that earlier did not exist appeared in the progressive press, namely — whether the Jews are a nation.<sup>32</sup> At the threshold of the Revolution the liberal–progressive milieu seemed most open to the postulates of the Jewish groups. However, when the two sides came into contact, this atmosphere became more tense. These changes could be seen as if in a model form in the attitudes of the most outstanding figures of the Polish progressive camp.

What aroused most controversy among his contemporaries was the evolution of Aleksander Świętochowski. One can cite a few reasons that influenced the distinct 'stiffening' of his views on the 'Jewish question'. This 'Deputy of Truth' (Świętochowski's pseudonym as a publicist) was unpleasantly surprised by the independence shown by the Jewish population. He recalled more than once the 'idyllic' relationships before the 1905 Revolution.<sup>33</sup> His surprise changed into irritation when in the years 1904–6 the Russian Jews appeared as an independent national group and, according to him, started to impose their tendencies on the Polish Jews.

The revolutionary events, at any rate, took a course that he did not expect. Świętochowski had always been an adversary of revolutionary methods, he also renounced socialist social visions.

<sup>32</sup> A detailed account of the discussions among the progressives is given by Tadeusz Stegner, 'Liberale i Królestwa Polskiego wobec kwestii żydowskiej na początku XIX w.', *Przegląd Historyczny*, cxxx, 1 (1989), 69–88; *idem*, *Liberale i Królestwa Polskiego*, 112–30; *idem*, 'Przyczynek do ewolucji ideowo–politycznej Aleksandra Świętochowskiego', *Dzieje Najnowsze*, xvii, 3–4 (1985), 27–39.

<sup>33</sup> Aleksander Świętochowski, *Wspomnienia*, ed. Samuel Sandler (Wrocław, 1967), 66.

He added to his conclusion a conviction that socialism in Poland was not a product of a workers' movement 'from below', but an instrument of the groups of the intelligentsia whom he later started to define as the 'Jewish parties'.

After 1907 the 'Deputy of Truth' started to criticise the Jewish national movement. In this context, of considerable significance was the breach of contacts with the Jewish Electoral Committee (a representation of the Jewish milieus) by the Progressive Democracy (PD), the political representation of Polish liberal-progressive circles. Frustration was growing on both sides, for the attitude to the 'Jewish question' worked out by the progressives at the beginning of the Revolution was not close at all to the postulates of the Jewish circles. Świętochowski's voice is noteworthy, for it shows the boundaries reached by the Polish liberals; it combined the fear of the vitality and dynamic of the Jewish community, with the renunciation of the thesis of the possible co-existence of separate ethnic entities ('there is no room anywhere for a corporate company of various nationalities that exploit a certain territory enjoying absolutely equal rights ... the Polish nation is and will remain Polish') and with the author's characteristic Euro-centrism.<sup>34</sup> The publicist agreed to assimilation, but only of individuals. Although he renounced nationalism, he was aware that anti-Semitism would long remain an instrument of political struggle and a factor that mobilizes the masses. He saw the only solution to the 'Jewish question' in the Polish lands in the emigration of the Jews.<sup>35</sup>

Among the luminaries of positivism the most open attitude towards the Jewish community was represented by Eliza Orzeszkowa.<sup>36</sup> This novelist was the author of a few texts that were very

<sup>34</sup> [Aleksander Świętochowski] Pośel Prawdy, 'Żargon', *Prawda*, 20 (1907), 231-2. Cf. Barbara Petrozolin-Skowrońska, 'Z dziejów liberalizmu polskiego. Partie liberalno-demokratyczne inteligencji w Królestwie Polskim 1905-1907', *Dzieje Najnowsze*, iii, 3 (1971); Tadeusz Stegner, 'Postępowa Demokracja', in Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis (ed.), *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku. Studia*, 6 vols. (Warszawa, 1981-91), iv, 278-92.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. characteristic articles by Aleksander Świętochowski, 'Komentarz zbyteczny', *Kultura Polska*, 1 (1912), 5-6; 'Żydo-Polska', *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 8 (1913); 'Wywłaszczenie', *Humanista Polski*, 11 (1913), 1-2; cf. also Stegner, 'Przyczynek do ewolucji', 27-39.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Agnieszka Friedrich, 'Słów kilka o Żydach i ich nieśmiertelnej kwestii. Problematyka żydowska w korespondencji i publicystyce Elizy Orzeszkowej na tle nurtów epoki', MA thesis, typescript (Gdańsk, 1993); Grażyna Borkowska,

important for the progressive milieu, the principal one being her dissertation *On Jews and the Jewish Question* published in 1882. Let us give a short summary of her views expressed before 1905. Orzeszkowa was in favour of integration, and assumed the Polonization of Polish Jews. She condemned anti-Semitism, and personally engaged in fighting it since the 1880s. Her approach revealed the greatest readiness to accept cultural differences.

But towards the end of her life (d. 1910) even her attitude underwent an eloquent regression. In a series of articles published after her death in *Kurier Warszawski* (Nos. 266–7/1911) entitled ‘On Jewish Nationalism’ the author recalled a few of her earlier theses, but also put forward some new arguments. She saw Zionism mainly as a reaction to the oppressive tsarist policy. ‘Jewish nationalism’ was in her opinion the result of a conflict between the Jewish community and the local national movements. Although she was not convinced by the idea of a Jewish revival through Zionism, she voiced the opinion that the ‘sense’ of separateness must be a final and decisive factor.

A new element in this exposition was certainly its pessimistic tone. Orzeszkowa reduced her vision of the future of Polish–Jewish relations to a simple and ruthless thesis: the two nationalities living side by side will certainly one day come into an open conflict.<sup>37</sup> In her exposition, broken by her illness, she argued that the Jews, in fact, are not a nation. They have no land of their own nor their own language (in her opinion, Yiddish ‘can be taken off your mouth and heart like a glove off your hand ... in order to fill your pocket or satisfy your self-esteem, it can be bartered away’). In the catalogue of national virtues presented by her, the Jews had none, so their future prospects were non-existent. This kind of reasoning was not encumbered by ill-will or even suspiciousness, but showed the mental barriers of the world outlook of late positivists. Even the most progressive positivist,

---

‘Żydzi Orzeszkowej’, in Grażyna Borkowska and Magdalena Rudkowska (eds.), *Kwestia żydowska w XIX wieku. Spory o tożsamość Polaków* (Warszawa, 2004), 139–50; Ursula Philips, ‘The Jewish Question in the Novel and Short Stories of Eliza Orzeszkowa’, *East European Jewish Affairs*, xxv, 2 (1995), 69–90; Janusz Detka, ‘Narodowy aspekt kwestii żydowskiej u Elizy Orzeszkowej’, *Biuletyn ŻIH*, 40 (1961), 55 ff.

<sup>37</sup> Eliza Orzeszkowa, ‘O nacjonalizmie żydowskim’, in *eadem*, *Pisma*, col. edn (Warszawa, 1913), ix, 233.

like her, could not accept that two different ethnic communities could live in one territory.

This break-up of the positivist paradigm could also be seen in the views of Bolesław Prus (Aleksander Głowacki). This writer, until his death (1912), tried hard to keep to a middle course in this question.<sup>38</sup> And yet, towards the end of the first decade of the 20th century, his views revealed more and more often an apprehension or even fear of 'Jewish expansiveness'.<sup>39</sup> Although he always pointed out Polish unwieldiness and passivity, the preference for dreaming and 'poetry' instead of pragmatic attitudes, the notion of 'Jewish rapaciousness' appeared more and more often in his writings.<sup>40</sup> The attitude of Prus is a good example of how shallow could be the unification approach even in its most progressive version.

Prus did not support the anti-Semitic campaign that broke out in the Warsaw press at the beginning of 1910.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless he spoke out against the economic expansion of the Jews in the Polish lands. Perhaps this was the core of his late views on the 'Jewish question'. He always saw the solution to the 'Jewish problem' in an equal distribution of the Jews in various countries. This evolution of his views on the 'Jewish question' also in this case cannot be analyzed without taking into account the wider socio-political scene. While he noted in his expositions the constant dynamic development of the Jewish community, he also observed the systematic shrinking and weakening of the Polish one. And he did not know how to counteract this process.

<sup>38</sup> 'Czego Prus życzy Rosji?', *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, 3 (1911), cit. after Krystyna Tokarzówna, Stanisław Fita and Zygmunt Szweykowski (eds.), *Bolesław Prus, 1847-1912. Kalendarz życia i twórczości* (Warszawa, 1969), 667.

<sup>39</sup> Agnieszka Friedrich, the author of an unpublished monograph about B. Prus's views on the Jewish question says that the beginning of the 1890s was a period when the author took a more reactionary attitude to this problem, but later returned to his concepts of assimilation and integration. Cf. *eadem*, 'Bolesław Prus wobec kwestii żydowskiej', in Stanisław Fita and Krzysztof Stępnik (eds.), *Bolesław Prus. Pisarz, publicysta, myśliciel. Obrazy kultury polskiej* (Lublin, 2003), 335-46.

<sup>40</sup> Bolesław Prus, 'Nasze położenie', *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, IV, 45, 6 Nov. 1909, in *idem, Kroniki*, ed. Zygmunt Szweykowski, 21 vols. (Warszawa, 1953-70), xx, 146.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Tokarzówna, Fita, Szweykowski (eds.), *Bolesław Prus*, 686.

These ideological and generation changes which appeared in the progressive–democratic camp can be exemplified by the career of a young writer Wincenty Rzymowski (b. 1883). He appeared late in the Polish Progressive Union (PZP), one of the two parties created after the split of the PD. In the middle of 1911 he became the head of the literary section of *Prawda*, the most important journal of the Polish progressive milieu, and since February 1913 became editor–in–chief of this weekly. In 1912 at the general meeting of the PZP he was chosen a member of its Council General.

For long an adversary of the ND, from 1911 he started using an anti–Jewish rhetoric. After the elections to the Fourth Russian Duma he wrote: ‘The elections revealed that towns have been dominated by the Jewish element which showed it could in a large measure decide matters important to the Poles’.<sup>42</sup> What recurred in these arguments was a logical characteristic of the ‘nationalists’, according to whom the development of ‘Jewish nationalism’ could take place only at the cost of the Polish nation, while anti–Semitism was not a symptom of hatred, but a defence against ‘the death and degradation of our own nation’.<sup>43</sup> In another place he added: ‘The Jews, in fact, are not an organic part of our country, but an outgrowth on our organism’.<sup>44</sup>

After the generation of supporters of assimilation (Eliza Orzeszkowa and Maria Konopnicka died in 1910, Bolesław Prus and Stanisław Krzemiński in 1912), a new generation came, whose principal idea was the unification of society. The Jewish community was treated by them as an alien and frequently hostile element.

#### IV SOCIALISM AND THE ‘JEWISH QUESTION’

After 1905, the attitude of the socialist intelligentsia towards the ‘Jewish question’ underwent an evolution.<sup>45</sup> In Galicia the

<sup>42</sup> [Wincenty Rzymowski] W. Rz., ‘Pawie pióra’, *Prawda*, 45 (1912), 4–5.

<sup>43</sup> ‘Wątpliwe zwycięstwo’, *Prawda*, 18 (1912), 3–4.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. also Lucyna Chmielewska, *Wincenty Rzymowski (1883–1950). Publicysta i polityk* (Toruń, 2006), 64. The author documents W. Rzymowski’s participation in the press campaigns of 1911–14 with many quotations.

<sup>45</sup> Generally cf. Michał Śliwa, ‘The Jewish Problem in Polish Socialist Thought’, *Polin*, 9 (1996), 14–31.



relationships between the leading working class party — Polish Social–Democratic Party of Galicia and Silesia (PPSD) and the Jewish socialists were relatively harmonious. Towards the end of the 19th century the Jewish electors divided their votes between the liberal–progressive parties and the arising socialist party. Although some tendency to create autonomous organizations appeared in the socialist movement, the tendency to assimilation predominated.

This fragment of the Galician scene exemplifies a more general situation. The first generation of the socialist intelligentsia of Jewish descent was rather ill–disposed or even hostile towards any autonomous forms of activity of the Jewish socialists. The more serious impulses for creating Jewish separateness came from below, or from outside. The first years of the new century did not undermine this model; any attempts to create separate Jewish social–democratic platforms came up against the opposition of the PPSD headquarters.<sup>46</sup>

The development of the debate over the 'Jewish question' in Galicia, just like in Congress Poland, was connected with the logic of the political scene.<sup>47</sup> Emancipation through socialism, in conditions of a legally operating socialist movement, was one of the more serious solutions accepted by young Jewish members of the intelligentsia. After 1905, almost all Polish public opinion turned its attention towards Congress Poland; this also changed the relations between Poles, Poles of Jewish descent, and Jews from Galicia.

For the socialists from the Russian partition, the 'Jewish question' manifested itself in all its complexity at the very beginning of this movement. This resulted in part from practical reasons; gaining the support of the Jewish petty bourgeoisie was one of the challenges faced by the young movement which aspired to represent all the working classes that inhabited the lands of the former Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Soon the 'Jewish question' became one of the pivots of the controversy with the working class movement. The rise of the Bund, as mentioned above, a separatist Jewish organization, was received by socialist

<sup>46</sup> These endeavours have been discussed in detail by Piasecki, *Sekcja żydowska*, 72–100.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Walentyna Najdus, *Polska Partia Socjalno–Demokratyczna Galicji i Śląska. 1890–1919* (Warszawa, 1983), especially 526–32.

circles as an unjustified claim of a 'non-historical nation'. This approach, later developed by the chief theorists of the socialist movement boiled down to the thesis that a nation as a tribal-linguistic community can exist only within the framework of its own territory. The influential German social-democrat Karl Kautsky (*Die Moderne Nationalität*, 1887) additionally argued that such a community, in order to achieve the status of a nation, must constitute a majority in a given territory. Such extreme requirements would mean that the Jewish population should forsake its national aspirations. The socialist movement, by calling into question the national rights of the Jews, proposed to them instead a programme of complete assimilation and equal rights in a future, democratic and republican social system.

Quite understandably, this integrationist approach of Polish socialists had a negative influence on their later relations with the Jewish organizations. Thus the Bund, the most powerful party of the 'Jewish street' was treated by socialists as a formation representing the strivings of the Jewish bourgeoisie, as an actual instrument of Russian centralism; and frequently as a Jewish counterpart of Christian anti-Semitism. Other Jewish organizations, such as the 'Poale Zion', or the Zionist-Socialist Workers' Party, were also regarded by socialists with disfavour.<sup>48</sup>

The turn of the century saw a silent but growing conflict with the Jewish working class movement. The creation of a branch of the Bund in Congress Poland animated the initiative of Polish socialists. On the strength of the decision of the Centralization of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) a journal *Der Arbejter* was established, addressed to the Jewish workers, for a certain time edited by a leading PPS theorist Leon Wasilewski. It is significant that the PPS activists of Jewish descent, generally coming from Polonized families, frequently having no knowledge of Yiddish and fully supporting the complete integration of the Jews, usually did not take part in such initiatives.

The first years of the 20th century fully revealed and exacerbated these controversies. The stipulation for the national-cultural autonomy of the Jewish population voted by the 4th Congress of

---

<sup>48</sup> They are discussed by Henryk Piasecki, 'Przeciwieństwa ideologiczne i polityczne między Poalej Syjonem a Bundem w latach 1901-1917', *Biuletyn ŻIH*, 3-4 (July-December 1986), 39-51.

the Bund (1901), as well as the wish expressed by those circles of representing the Jewish proletariat of the whole tsarist empire, were received with outright hostility by the Polish socialists. The 6th Congress of the PPS held in Lublin a year later acknowledged these claims as another symptom of separatism directed not only against the Polish socialist movement but also the 'Polish cause'.

The socialists, calling for a restitution of historic Poland, treated the Jewish proletarians as potential Poles; but independent Jewish strivings aroused their irritation which soon changed into hostility. The above-mentioned Congress did not put a seal on this problem. A more conciliatory attitude towards the Jewish stipulations was expressed by the group of Polish socialists of Jewish descent who joined the party later and created in it an autonomous unit — the Jewish PPS Organization.<sup>49</sup>

Some other, important voices were also heard from the fringes of this mainstream. An innovatory approach that met the Jewish stipulations half way, was proposed by an outstanding theorist attached to the PPS, Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz. In opposition to the way of thinking about national problems dominating the socialist movement, Kelles-Krauz stressed the significance of the processes of democratization. In contrast to the approach of Karl Marx and later Karl Kautsky, as well as a whole galaxy of socialist theorists, he laid stress on the cultural aspirations of the minorities. Unlike Feliks Perl, or the influential Austrian theorist Otto Bauer, he saw Yiddish, just like Ukrainian or in future, Byelorussian, as fully capable of developing into a legitimate national language. However, his argumentation, published in the Cracow journal *Krytyka* (1904), where he referred to the debate of the 6th Congress of the PPS (1902), led him to more far-reaching conclusions. This leading intellectual of the PPS appraised positively the standpoint of the Congress saying that Poland was also the motherland of the Jewish proletariat, but he stipulated for extending the notion of equal citizens' rights into the full recognition of the Jewish nationality and its right to maintain its ethnic identity and free development.<sup>50</sup> After 1905, these discussions in the socialist camp gained new tones and a different colour.

<sup>49</sup> Piasecki, *Żydowska Organizacja PPS*, 14 ff.

<sup>50</sup> The discussions around Kelles-Krauz's treatise are presented by Timothy Snyder, 'A Polish Socialist For Jewish Nationality: Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872-1905)', *Polin*, 12 (1999); Israel Bartal and Antony Polonsky (eds.), *Focusing*

The PPS debate on the tactics and strategy of the national socialist movement ended in a split of the party.<sup>51</sup> The younger generation of its activists was more inclined to a compromise with national minorities, because they saw the rebellious national groups as a potential hinterland of revolution. The discussion around the 'Jewish question' became one of the major points of contention between the 'old' (among others Józef Piłsudski, Feliks Perl, Leon Wasilewski) and the 'young' (Feliks Sachs, Maksymilian Horwitz, Józef Kwiatek). When in 1906 it came to the split in the Revolutionary Faction, dominated by the 'old', for obvious reasons, the attitude of its most outstanding theorist, Perl, got the upper hand. His programme (prepared together with Witold Jodko-Narkiewicz) saw the solution to the 'Jewish question' in granting everybody full personal, civil and political rights regardless of his nationality and denomination. A certain novelty consisted in the guaranty of full rights to the national groups (including Jews and Germans) which had no territorial autonomy.<sup>52</sup> Perl, who returned to this problem several times, never changed his view.<sup>53</sup> He repeated after Kautsky that the Jews are a medieval

---

*on Galicia: Jews, Poles, and Ukrainians 1772–1918*, 257–70. Cf. also *idem*, 'Kazimierz Kelles–Krauz (1872–1905): A pioneering scholar of modern nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, iii, 2 (July 1997), 231–50. Cf. also Stanisław Ciesielski, 'Przedmowa', in Kazimierz Kelles–Krauz, *Naród i historia. Wybór pism*, ed. Stanisław Ciesielski (Warszawa, 1989), 18–19. On Kelles–Krauz's views in a larger context of his times cf. also Marian Bębenek, *Teoria narodu i kwestia narodowa u Kazimierza Kelles–Krauz (na tle refleksji marksistowskiej, 1848–1905)* (Kraków, 1987). Cf. also Timothy Snyder, *Nationalism, Marxism and Modern Central Europe* (Cambridge, 1997), 251–2. However, such voices as those of Kelles–Krauz were in a minority in the mainstream of the PPS. Cf. [Józef Kwiatek] J. Wileński, *Kwestia żydowska* (Kraków, 1904).

<sup>51</sup> This problem is analyzed comprehensively by Anna Żarnowska, *Geneza rozłamu w Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej 1904–1906* (Warszawa, 1963).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. [Witold Jodko–Narkiewicz] A. Wolski, *Objaśnienie programu Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej* (Kraków, 1913); *Dziesiąty zjazd PPS. Program. Taktyka. Organizacja* (Kraków, 1908).

<sup>53</sup> Cf. [Feliks Perl] Grzyb, 'W kwestii żydowskiej', *Trybuna*, 15 (1907); [Feliks Perl] Res, 'W sprawie autonomii narodowej Żydów', *Przedświt*, 11 (1908), 443–4; Res, [review] 'Iza Moszczeńska, „Postęp na rozdrożu”', *Przedświt*, 6 (1911), 348–9. A systematic review of Perl's opinions is presented by Adrian Uliasz, 'Poglądy Feliksa Perla na kwestię żydowską', *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie–Skłodowska*, lvii (2002), Sectio F, 51–77; also *idem*, *Myśl polityczna Feliksa Perla* (Lublin, 2005), 186–96; Henryk Piasecki, 'Feliks Perl — historyk i działacz PPS', *Biuletyn ŻIH*, 4

caste condemned to extinction or to being dissolved among the modern nations.

For many years repeatedly calling into question the recognition of the Jews as a nationality in a cultural sense, this activist cited their lack of an independent Jewish territory as well as the illusive character of the Zionist ideas. In opposition to Kelles–Krauz he underlined that the separateness of the Jews does not mean they can become a modern nationality. Neither did he spare the Jewish language, in his dogmatism developing a pessimistic vision of 'degenerate German' disappearing together with the Jewish 'ghetto'. Nor did he see any better chances for the stipulations for a Jewish national–cultural autonomy, defining them straightforward as a symptom of 'arrogant nationalism'. Perl maintained that anti–Semitism was one of the main obstacles to assimilation, but saw the only remedy for it in complete assimilation. Here he also saw the solution to the problem of 'Jewish nationalism'. In his reply to the famous statement of Iza Moszczeńska — to be discussed later on — he wrote point blank: 'we shall oppose to it [i.e. to the Jewish nationalism — note GK] Polish socialism, the interest of the workers and of our country, the *Polish cause as a revolutionary cause* [stress — GK], which also among the Jews must win a victory over „Litvakism”'.<sup>54</sup>

A lot of conviction is carried by Michał Śliwa's view who said that when the adherents of the recognition of the Jews as a potential nationality, the representatives of the 'young' in the PPS, joined its Left Faction after the split of the party, the PPS Revolutionary Faction lost much of its interest in the situation of the Jewish population. Henceforward, the question of equal rights became for them rather a matter of principle than a practical problem. This on the one hand strengthened the Jacobinic–Unionist line of Perl, and on the other closed the circles of those socialists who strove for Poland's independence, to the stipulations of the national minorities.<sup>55</sup>

---

(1974), 65–9; Michał Śliwa, 'Kwestia żydowska w polskiej myśli socjalistycznej', in *idem*, *Obcy czy swoi*, 77–8.

<sup>54</sup> Res, [review] 'Iza Moszczeńska', cit. after Ulijasz, 'Poglady Feliksa Perla', 63.

<sup>55</sup> Śliwa, 'Kwestia żydowska w polskiej myśli socjalistycznej', 77. The voices representing more elasticity and an opening of Polish socialism to the stipulations of national minorities, such as those of the grand old man of the movement,

The opposition to the 'old' had from the very beginning represented a more supple attitude to national matters. After 1905, Maksymilian Horwitz, an outstanding member of the Union of Polish Socialists Abroad, one of the leaders of the 'young', emerged as the spokesmen of the PPS Left on the Jewish question. As early as 1905 he called for a practical guarantee *to all languages* in the localities inhabited by mixed population, adding that proportional division of public funds at various levels of administration between various groups of population would also lower the tensions existing in mixed communities. Nevertheless, 'Henryk Walecki' (this was his pseudonym) renounced the programme of national-cultural autonomy of the Bund, seeing it as a phantasmagoria and indicating that the Jewish population, though deprived of objective determinants of 'political nationality', still remained a 'cultural nationality' (its objective signs being their language and the sense of national consciousness). Although he belonged to the few socialists who openly defended Yiddish, recalling its culture-creative role in the 'Jewish street', he was also one of those who saw the solution to the problems of the Jewish population in a long-term programme of Polonization.<sup>56</sup> According to his reasoning, Yiddish was merely a stage on the road to the 'civilization' of the Jews by their Polonization.<sup>57</sup>

One has to admit that the attitude of the members of the PPS Left carried more chances for reaching an understanding both with the Jewish socialist organizations and the Jewish population itself.<sup>58</sup>

---

Bolesław Limanowski, remained in the margin of the debate. Cf. *idem*, 'Naród, państwo, międzynarodowość', *Krytyka*, i (1908), 336.

<sup>56</sup> In one passage of his programmatic dissertation he maintained: 'One can say that after reading ten books in the jargon, one is induced to read an eleventh in Polish, after which soon comes the twelfth', cf. Maksymilian Horwitz, *W kwestii żydowskiej* (Kraków, 1907), 83-4, cit. after Uliasz, 'Poglądy Feliksa Perla', 59.

<sup>57</sup> Horwitz's views are best presented in Jan Kancewicz's biographical essay, cf. *idem*, 'Wstęp', in Henryk Walecki, *Wybór pism, 1905-1918*, 2 vols. (Warszawa, 1967), i, 5-64. Cf. also Horwitz's views as a polemist of Perl related by Uliasz, 'Poglądy Feliksa Perla', 58 ff.

<sup>58</sup> On the tactics and strategy of the PPS Left towards Jewish groupings cf. Janina Kasprzakowa, *Ideologia i polityka PPS-Lewicy, 1907-1914* (Warszawa, 1965), 234 ff. Cf. also Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews*, 227-54.

V  
THE 1910–1912 CRISIS

When in the spring of 1910 nationalists became actual masters of the Third Duma, the extreme reactionary trends started getting the upper hand in the Russian establishment. This was the effect of Stolypin's reaction: the ruthless fight against the revolutionary movement, but also of the government's struggle against the liberal Left and the national movements. The chauvinist slogans 'one, undivided Russia', and 'Russia for the Russians' proclaimed by the Right coincided with the actions of the administration. As early as May 1910 the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs submitted to the Duma a project of municipal self-government, and in the autumn it came under debate.

This question greatly stirred Polish public opinion, though later on it turned out that just as the 'Chełm project' — that is one of creating a new *guberniya* outside the borders of Congress Poland, which was received as a new partition — this question had also been instrumentally delayed. After the Russian premier Peter Stolypin was assassinated (September 1911), the project of a municipal self-government stopped in the State Council and *de facto* never came into force.

The premier's death affected the Russian scene also in other ways. The tsarist administration decided to punish the Jewish community for it by forcing them into emigration. Some of this 'tide' of refugees came to Congress Poland. Polish public opinion was horrified. However, Stolypin's assassination did not change the general nationalist trend in the Russian policy. And nothing irritated patriotic feelings as much as uncertainty. Polish patriotic anxiety heightened by the adverse moves of the partitioning powers sought an outlet. This universal state of threat to Polishness was accompanied by a rise of patriotic feeling, connected in part with the nationalist persecution of the Polish population in Prussia, and in part with the general international unrest, which many saw as a foretaste of a general European conflict. This was the atmosphere in which the celebrations of the five hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Tannenberg (Grunwald) were held in July 1910. What recurred then, side by side with the then widespread anti-German feeling was an even stronger 'anti-Litvak' phobia.

From 1910 onwards these feelings were dynamically growing. Thus, for example, the Council of Polish Progressive Union stated at its debate that a non-assimilated Jew should be treated as an 'enemy' of the Polish nation.<sup>59</sup> And the leading ideologist of the PPS Revolutionary Faction warned: '*Litvakism* is an abnormal, pathological, reactionary symptom, just as pathological and reactionary as its reasons'.<sup>60</sup> Warnings against the 'Litvaks' recurred in the press of the Party of Real Politics, which was free of ideological anti-Semitism.<sup>61</sup> These were the mere beginnings of a tide.

What was most surprising was that this anti-Jewish phraseology was spreading among the socialist circles.<sup>62</sup> Leon Wasilewski noted the increasing importance of anti-Semitic impulses among socialists who strove for the independence of Poland. The party vocabulary now included both a 'Levite' — an adherent of the PPS Left, and 'social-Litvakism — Jewish nationalism in a socialist guise'.<sup>63</sup>

The fierce polemic between the fighters for Poland's independence and the socialist Left had continued for years, but then arguments with an appearance of factuality were ousted by anti-Semitic generalizations. The author of long pamphlets on this issue — Julian Unszlicht (his essays appeared in *Myśl Niepodległa*, but also in *Przedświt*, and were reprinted by the Cracow *Naprzód* and the *Gazeta Robotnicza* appearing in Berlin) argued outright that the SDKPiL was an emanation of petty-bourgeois Jewish

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Stegner, *Liberałowie Królestwa Polskiego*, 196.

<sup>60</sup> [Leon Wasilewski], S. Os...arz, 'Żydowskie partie narodowosocjalistyczne i ich dążności', *Przedświt*, 4 (April 1910), 212–23.

<sup>61</sup> Por. Agnieszka Kidzińska, *Stronnictwo Polityki Realnej* (Lublin, 2007), 156 ff.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. 'Litwactwo i „kwestya żydowska”', *Przedświt*, 2 (February 1910), 65–8.

<sup>63</sup> Leon Wasilewski, 'Słowniczek gwary partyjnej w Królestwie Polskim', in *Materiały i Prace Komisji Umiejętności w Krakowie*, v (1912), 377, 386. Cf. also Stanisław Stempowski, *Pamiętniki. 1870–1914* (Wrocław, 1953). 'Aggressive Litvakism, and later Zionism, that is the fanatic "Jewish national democracy", have ruined the whole work of assimilation ... and kindled up two savage nationalist fanaticisms. Theirs and ours. They have bought the whole streets of houses and places, erected tenement houses in the worst taste, spoke only in Russian, for they couldn't speak Polish, and by the very fact of their existence contributed to the Russification of the town ... This obviously unceremonious behaviour irritated the Poles, for the newcomers seemed not to take into account they were treading the flagstones so many times stained with the blood of the martyrs of the conquered nation', 222–3.



nationalism.<sup>64</sup> 'W. Sendecki' (Unszlicht's pseudonym as a publicist) accused the leaders of the Social Democracy — 'Litvak Targowica' (the Confederation of Targowica established by the magnates, acknowledged as betrayers of Poland, opposed the Constitution of 3 May 1791 in collusion with Catherine II) — of provoking the violence of the partitioners and of wishing to subjugate the Polish nation. The atmosphere of fear of the 'Litvak swarm' reached its height in those circles in the autumn of 1910 when the attacks against the SDKPiL also came to the knowledge of international socialist milieus.<sup>65</sup>

The year 1910 marked also a turning point in the nationalist movement. Within this camp were found the most extreme anti-Semitic publicists of that time: Ignacy Oksza-Grabowski and Stanisław Pieńkowski. Both contributed to the ND press profuse elaborations that unmasked the 'corruption' of Polish culture by 'the Jewish element'.<sup>66</sup> Pieńkowski soon became the leading cultural critic of *Gazeta Warszawska*. For both those authors the fight against the 'Jewish threat' meant something more than mere ousting of the hostile element from the Polish community. Getting rid of the Jews was seen as a remedy for the illnesses of the 'whole Aryan world', as the destruction of the source of evil that pestered the contemporary world.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Cf. [Juljan Unszlicht] W. Sendecki, *Socjal-litwactwo w Polsce. Z teorii i praktyki 'Socjaldemokracji Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy'* (Kraków, 1911); *idem*, *O pogromy Socyal-Litwactwa w niedawnej rewolucji* (Kraków, 1912).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Georges Haupt and Paweł Korzec, 'Les Socialistes et la campagne anti-sémite en Pologne en 1910: un épisode inédit', *Revue du Nord. Revue historique trimestrielle*, lviii, 225 (avril-juin 1975), 185-95. Paweł Korzec, *Juifs en Pologne. La question juive pendant l'entre-deux-guerres* (Paris, 1980), 41.

<sup>66</sup> Wacław Borowy, 'Grabowski Ignacy', in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [hereafter: PSB], viii (Wrocław, Warszawa and Kraków, 1959-60), 493. Oksza-Grabowski's manifesto of those times was: *Niewdzięczni goście. W sprawie żydowskiej* (Warszawa, 1912); Cf. Artur Hutnikiewicz, 'Pieńkowski Stanisław', PSB, xxvi (1981), 126-7.

<sup>67</sup> Stanisław Pieńkowski's series of articles in *Gazeta Warszawska*, starting with the text 'Rozłam sztuki' (*Gazeta Warszawska*, 32 [1910], 2-4) had striking repercussions. One of his polemicists, Wincenty Lutosławski wrote: 'The racial difference, so important for our life and our art, is only a difference between the Semitic and the Aryan race. Here Mr. Pieńkowski is absolutely right — the Jews have lowered the standard of the Aryan art, politics, even trade'. Cf. *idem*, 'Ludzie rasowi', *Gazeta Warszawska*, 36 (1910), 1. This exchange of opinions (among others the articles by Zygmunt Wasilewski in the *Lwów Słowo Polskie*)

Although this upheaval was led by the National Democracy who cunningly turned the Jews into a universal enemy of Poles and Polishness, the tide that flowed chiefly through the Warsaw press had a much wider extent.<sup>68</sup> A turning point could also be noticed in the Catholic press which had earlier tried to moderate some anti-Jewish threads. Rev. Jerzy Pawelski SJ in the Cracow *Przegląd Powszechny* (where in 1896 Rev. Marian Morawski SJ called for 'asemitism' that should distinguish Catholic communities from the pagan anti-Semitism) declared: "The original sense of the word "anti-Semitism" had lost its edge, for it "declares war on the Jews" while in the new situation Polish society faces a war declared by the Jews".<sup>69</sup> The presence of manifest anti-Semites in the columns of Catholic press became at that time the order of the day.<sup>70</sup>

This anti-Litvak psychosis had left over the so-called progressive anti-Semitism, a trend connected with Andrzej Niemojewski, an activist attached to the Left of the turn of the century.<sup>71</sup> Initially, the interests of this author in the 'Jewish question' did not distinguish him from other progressives. His sporadic declarations in this respect situated him among the adherents of radical assimilation. Up until 1905 he declared himself as a friend of the Jews, which, according to him on the one hand meant he was

---

had wider repercussions in nationalist periodicals. It was reported by *Przegląd Narodowy*. Cf. 'Z prasy. Spór o człowieka', *Przegląd Narodowy*, 3 (March 1910), 371–83.

<sup>68</sup> Weeks writes: 'By 1910, the Endecja's antisemitic stance reflected an almost universal attitude in Polish society', *idem, From Assimilation*, 161.

<sup>69</sup> Rev. Jerzy Pawelski, 'Dwa światy *Krytyki* i dwa inne światy', *Przegląd Powszechny*, 109 (1911), 207. On how the elements of modern anti-Semitism, later including racism, were taken over by the Catholic press, there is an interesting essay by John Connolly, 'Catholic Racism and Its Opponents', *Journal of Modern History*, lxxix, 4 (December 2007), 813–47.

<sup>70</sup> On the writings of one of the most famous anti-Semites of the turn of the 20th century, the conservative publicist Teodor Jeske-Choiński, appearing in the Lwów *Kronika Rodzinna* (a journal of the Lwów curia) and in the Jesuit *Przegląd Powszechny*, see Michał Śliwa, 'Ksenofobie antyżydowskie T. Jeske-Choińskiego', in *idem, Obcy czy swoi*, 89–90; Michał Jagiełło, *Próby rozmowy. Szkice o katolicyzmie odrodzeniowym i „Tygodniku Powszechnym” 1945–1953*, i (Warszawa, 2001), 49.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Andrzej Piber and Witold Stankiewicz, 'Niemojewski Andrzej', PSB, xxiii (1978), 3–10; Elżbieta Basara-Lipiec, *Niepodległa myśl. Rzecz o Andrzeju Niemojewskim* (Rzeszów, 1988).

in favour of complete integration of the Jewish population with Polish society, and on the other revealed his fascination for some elements of Jewish culture.<sup>72</sup> Towards the end of the Revolution his despondency about socialism went hand in hand with his deeper independent religious studies. In 1906 he established the periodical *Mysł Niepodległa*, which disclosed the paradoxes and inconsistencies of faith from the viewpoint of scientism.<sup>73</sup>

Slowly, in 1909, from among his initial not quite coherent views there emerged some anti-Semitic threads. An important stage in their final articulation was 1907, when two characteristic elements appeared in his texts.<sup>74</sup> The first was his criticism, more and more acute, of Jewish religiousness. Another thread is connected with the separateness of Yiddish culture. At the time of the creation of the two most important Yiddish dailies, and a debate about national rights in the Duma, *Mysł Niepodległa* started a radical critique of Yiddish. The journal persistently repeated the clichés of that time: Yiddish was an underdeveloped German serving everyday communication, but absolutely useless for the development of culture — there was no literature or even journalism in this language.

Thus the year 1910 was a qualitative turning point in Niemojewski's writings as a publicist. This change could be noticed even in the September attack of *Mysł Niepodległa* on the SDKPiL.<sup>75</sup> Its polemic with the social-democratic press, not free of cavils and libels, triggered off an avalanche of further accusations. The publicist specified: the year 1905 was an important watershed in Polish history — it signified a victory of the democratic idea that was thwarted by the Jews; their anti-Polish behaviour was the result of their caste character — they are not a nation, but an anachronistic racial-religious group. As time elapsed,

<sup>72</sup> Dariusz Trzeźniewski, 'Biografia ideowa polskiego inteligenta: od filo- do antysemityzmu. Andrzej Niemojewski', in *Kwestia żydowska w XIX wieku*, 319–29; Michał Śliwa, 'Antysemityzm postępowy Andrzeja Jana Niemojewskiego', in *idem*, *Obcy czy swoi*, 96–105. Cf. Tadeusz Stegner, 'Grupa „Kuznicy” i jej działalność', *Dzieje Najnowsze*, xii, 1 (1980), 47–62.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Zenon Kmiecik, '„Mysł Niepodległa” Andrzeja Niemojewskiego w latach 1906–1914', *Człowiek i Światopogląd*, 12 (December 1976).

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Theodore R. Weeks, 'Polish 'Progressive Antisemitism' 1905–1914', *East European Jewish Affairs*, xxv, 2 (1995), 49–68.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Andrzej Niemojewski, 'Pan E. Truskier', *Mysł Niepodległa*, 145 (September 1910), 1220; *idem*, 'Demokratyzm', *ibidem*, 146 (September 1910), 1249–61.

Niemojewski added new charges to those two accusations.<sup>76</sup> He did not say anything new: he just piled up more and more aggressive metaphors, which later lived their own life: ‘the army of the fifth partition’ (1912), or ‘a bijudial of a Pole’ (*dwużydzian Polaka*, 1913), to define the defenders of the Jews. On the eve of the First World War Niemojewski was deeply absorbed by the racial–anthropological tie that connected the Jews as well as by the ethic of the Talmud, which prevented any assimilation.<sup>77</sup>

Niemojewski’s attacks were supported by another publicist, well-known among the progressives — Iza Moszczeńska.<sup>78</sup> Her publications and commentaries of 1910 from *Kurier Poranny* (a journal close to the progressives) turned the ‘Jewish question’ into the chief problem for the whole educated Polish opinion.<sup>79</sup> In a more quiet tone, Moszczeńska argued that the presence of the Jewish population hampered the modernization of Polish society.

These tendencies found their reflection in culture. What appeared as a *signum temporis*, was anti–Semitic fiction.<sup>80</sup> The authors of those novels were generally absorbed by three problems: the ‘Prussian–Jewish plot’, the ‘Litvaks’, and the ‘boycott of the Jews’. Critic Teodor Jeske–Choiński wrote about the leading exponent of this trend, Józef Weyssenhoff (the author, among other novels, of *Dni polityczne* [Political Days], 1910, and *Hetmani* [The Hetmans], 1911), that ‘in *Hetmani* he broke away from the earlier tradition of writing about the Jews in “local terms”, and gave the picture of their general strivings’.<sup>81</sup> About *Przebudzenie* [The Awakening] by Artur Gruszecki (also author of *Litwackie mrowie* [The Litvak Swarm], 1911, and equally anti–Semitic *Bujne chwasty* [Rank Weeds], 1914, a present day critic notes: ‘the Jew

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Śliwa, ‘Antysemityzm postępowy’, 102.

<sup>77</sup> On the later development of Niemojewski’s anti–Jewish paranoia cf. Trześniewski, ‘Biografia ideowa inteligenta’, 326–29; Śliwa, ‘Antysemityzm postępowy’, 104–5.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Iza Moszczeńska, *Postęp na rozdrożu* (Warszawa, 1911). Moszczeńska’s argumentation is related by Weeks, ‘Polish Progressive Antisemitism’, 59–62.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. i.a. ‘Cienie chińskie’, *Kurier Poranny*, 24 (1910), 1; ‘Uogólnienia’, *ibidem*, 27 (1910), 1; ‘Rewizjonizm’, *ibidem*, 28 (1910), 1–2.

<sup>80</sup> Krzysztof Stępnik, ‘Powieść antysemitcka w ostatnich latach Kongresówki’, *Krytyka*, xxxix (1992), 79.

<sup>81</sup> Teodor Jeske–Choiński, *Żydzi w literaturze polskiej* (Warszawa, 1914), cit. after Stępnik, ‘Powieść antysemitcka’, 84.

in this novel appears simply as a general category of threat and hatred, a personification of evil'.<sup>82</sup>

In 1911 a tide of social tensions swept across the lands of the Russian partition. This coincided with the outbreak of Beilis's anti-Semitic affair, which embraced ever wider circles of society, re-awaking medieval anti-Judaic myths.<sup>83</sup> The economic crisis of 1912–14 affected one of the basic groups that made up the body of the ND electorate, the bourgeoisie and small entrepreneurs. It was then, says Robert Blobaum, that a conviction had taken root among the 'Christian middle class' that the presence of their Jewish competitors was the main factor that delayed economic development.<sup>84</sup>

## VI

### THE 1912 ELECTION CAMPAIGN TO THE FOURTH DUMA IN WARSAW

Many authors have already written about the role of the elections to the Fourth Duma in Warsaw, the course they had taken and their significance for the Polish–Jewish relations.<sup>85</sup> It would be

<sup>82</sup> Stępnik, 'Powieść antysemitcka', 87.

<sup>83</sup> The affair of the worker Mendel Beilis, accused of ritual murder, broke out in 1911 and caused a rise of the anti-Semitic feeling in the tsarist empire. Cf. Bernard Singer, *Moje Nalewki* (Warszawa, 1993), 208. Cf. also Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused: Three Anti-Semitic Affairs (Dreyfus, Beilis, Frank), 1894–1915* (Cambridge, 1991).

<sup>84</sup> Robert Blobaum, 'The Politics of Antisemitism in Fin-de-Siècle Warsaw', *Journal of Modern History*, cxxiii, 2 (2001), 283.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, 294–5; Pascal Trees, *Wahlem im Weichselland. Die Nationaldemokraten in Russisch-Polen und die Dumawahlen 1905–1912* (Stuttgart, 2007), 361–83; Stephen D. Corrsin, 'The Jews and Left and the State Duma's Elections in Warsaw in 1912: Selected Sources', *Polin*, 9 (1996); *idem*, *Warsaw before the First World War: Poles and Jews in the Third City of Russian Empire, 1880–1919* (Boulder, 1990), 89–104; *idem*, 'Polish–Jewish Relations before the First World War', in *Gal-Ed: On the History of the Jews in Poland*, 11 (1989), 31–53; Korzec, *Juifs en Pologne*, 42–5; Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, *Narodowa Demokracja 1887–1918. Fakty i Dokumenty*, 2nd edn (Londyn, 1998), 209 ff.; Mieczysław Sobczak, *Kwestia żydowska w kampanii wyborczej Romana Dmowskiego do IV Dumy Państwowej w roku 1912*, *Prace Naukowe Akademii Ekonomicznej we Wrocławiu*, 622, *Nauki filozoficzno-historyczne* (1992), 106–11; *idem*, *Narodowa Demokracja wobec kwestii żydowskiej na ziemiach polskich przed I wojną światową*, 185–230.

worthwhile, however, recalling a few threads that would throw light on the context of those events.

The most dramatic confrontation took place in Warsaw. The former capital, for various reasons, seemed an ideal place to see the crisis in the Polish–Jewish relations.<sup>86</sup> Warsaw was a prism through which could be seen the tensions appearing in the whole of Congress Poland. The pot packed with many nationalities was seething, and nobody knew how to control the situation. The Polish–Jewish relations were affected even earlier, in 1907, by the attempts at changing the municipal legislation; the fear of the Jewish votes turned into a fear of a ‘Jewish domination’.<sup>87</sup> Strong anti–Jewish motifs entered then such humorous journals as *Wiarus* and *Mucha*, and pervaded popular culture.<sup>88</sup>

Warsaw, with its Jewish community numbering over 200 thousand was the most important centre of Jewish population in Europe (second only to New York). The role of this city was fundamental to the development of Yiddish literature. However, of most significance was the many–sided development of Jewish political life. Apart from the dominating Bund, a growing influence was being gained by the Zionists.<sup>89</sup> However, the management of the Jewish community had a tendency to integration, and it was they who *together with the conservative clergy* with small intervals ruled supreme until the end of the tsarist system. Towards the end of the 19th century, the vanguard of the Jewish community, the entrepreneurs of Jewish

---

Worthy of attention among earlier studies is Eugeniusz Ajnenkiel, ‘Życie polityczne Warszawy w roku 1912’, *Kronika Ruchu Rewolucyjnego w Polsce*, i (1938).

<sup>86</sup> Theodore R. Weeks, ‘Polish–Jewish Relations 1903–1914: The View from the Chancellery’, *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, xc, 3–4 (September–December 1998), 233–49, *idem*, *Nation and State in Late Imperial Russia: Nationalism and Russification on the Western Frontier, 1963–1914* (De Kalb/Illinois, 1996), 59–66.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Theodore R. Weeks, ‘Nationality and Municipality: Reforming City Government in the Kingdom of Poland’, *Russian History/Histoire russe*, xxi, 1 (spring 1994), 23–47; Jerzy Jedlicki, ‘The End of the Dialogue: Warsaw 1907–1912’, in Sławomir Kaprański (ed.), *The Jews in Poland*, ii (Kraków, 1999), 110 ff.; *idem*, ‘Nieśmiertelne widmo’. Polityka i retoryka warszawskich antysemitów’, in Włodzimierz Bolecki and Ryszard Nycz (eds.), *Poetyka, polityka, retoryka* (Warszawa, 2006), 31–49.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Robert Blobaum, ‘Criminalizing the “Other”; Crime, Ethnicity, and Antisemitism in Early Twentieth–Century Poland’, in *Antisemitism and its Opponents*, 83 ff.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Jacek Walicki, *Ruch syjonistyczny w Polsce w latach 1926–1930* (Łódź, 2005), 25–7. Cf. also Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews*, 227–54.

descent, gained a predominant position in banking and credits, and the paper and textile industry of Warsaw.<sup>90</sup> This public presence of the Jews was the most irritating to the Christian majority.

Let us come back, however, to the elections. By the decision of the administration a requirement was made in the municipal electoral group — a place where the outcome of the game was in fact decided — to register the candidates. Because of the requirements concerning income, among 83 electors of a deputy from Warsaw, there happened to be 46 Jews, that is 55 per cent, which was a real shock to the political class. These proportions resulted on the one hand from the passiveness of the Polish population, and on the other from the mobilization of the Jewish community. What reasons were hidden behind it? Let us cite them briefly. Among the Poles the overpowering feeling of pessimism was connected with the set-backs encountered by the conciliatory policy.

The sluggard campaign — nobody believed in the chances of the ND — was animated by the attitude taken by Dmowski. He stood no chances with moderate electors. It seems that by forcefully putting himself up as candidate, he counted on splitting the Polish voices into national and Jewish, which was typical of his binary vision of the world. Bernard Singer recollected: 'The tense situation was directly exacerbated by a few unfortunate statements of [Jan] Kucharzewski, who spoke up for equal rights for the Jews, but called for an "economic crusade" and warned against the "Jewish flood"'.<sup>91</sup> Kucharzewski, the candidate of the united camp of progressives, the secessionists from the ND and moderate intelligentsia, stood no chances if he was deprived of the Jewish votes.<sup>92</sup> Jewish electors, irritated by Kucharzewski's time-serving posture, voted for an unknown candidate from the workers' electoral group, Eugeniusz Jagiełło. What is significant is that the aggressive agitation by the ND, despite appearances, was not especially directed against the Jews, but mainly against

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Ireneusz Ichnatowicz, *Burżuazja warszawska* (Warszawa, 1972), 197–8.

<sup>91</sup> Singer, *Moje Nalewki*. Significant were also the repercussions of Beilis's affair that reached Warsaw. Singer remembered: 'It was well-known that if the jury condemned Beilis as the perpetrator of ritual murder, the next day pogroms would be triggered off, and they might reach Warsaw. Boys in the streets were already shouting at the bearded Jews: "Beilis". So it was out of the question that a Jewish deputy could be elected from Warsaw', 211.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Marek Kornat, 'Spory o Kucharzewskiego (I)', *Arcana*, ii (1999), 124–5.

the Polish competitors of Dmowski. The result — the election of a worker, member of the PPS Left, was not the effect of a feedback of two nationalisms, but a sum of coincidences.<sup>93</sup>

It is difficult to estimate the material effects of the anti-Semitic agitation in Congress Poland. Both earlier and the latest studies underline the limited influence of the direct economic boycott on the Jewish community.<sup>94</sup> The conflict in Polish-Jewish relations had a wider scope in a more profound sense. The boycott was directed not only against the Jewish trade and industry, but against all contacts of Poles with Jews, or with people considered to be Jewish. The 'fruit' of this boycott was 'Rozwój', a Society for the Development of Industry, Crafts and Trade, with its branches appearing in the whole area of the Russian partition.<sup>95</sup> 'Rozwój' ran its agitation in nationalist journals: the opinion-making *Gazeta Warszawska*, and the agitation-spreading *Gazeta Poranna 2 Grosze* (the authors of which included the nationalist elite Stanisław Kozicki, Ignacy Oksza-Grabowski, Stanisław Pieńkowski, Władysław Jabłonowski, etc), but also in periodicals addressed to individual social groups. This action was also conducted in the ecclesiastical press (*Przegląd Katolicki*, *Polak-Katolik*, or *Posiew*) and in some conservative-clerical dailies, such as *Dzień*, *Dziennik dla Wszystkich*, and the *Kronika Powszechna* appearing in Galicia. 'Rozwój' also issued its own publications such as *Swój do swego*, or the *Bojkot* of Lwów; it took up also some smaller initiatives, such as *Moje pisemko*, or *Nasz świat* — journals addressed to children and young people (sic!).

In the provinces election results did not differ much from the previous ones: in fact, they became for the ND a pretext for their action against the Jews. Nationalist press had even earlier been full of boycott slogans.<sup>96</sup> They frequently referred to Irish or

<sup>93</sup> Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews*, 272.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Ignacy Schiper, *Dzieje handlu żydowskiego na ziemiach polskich* (Kraków, 1990), 540; Samuel Hirszhorn, *Historia Żydów w Polsce 1788–1914* (Warszawa, 1935), 311–18. Cf. also Weeks, *From Assimilation*, 166 ff.; Konrad Zieliński, „Swój do swego” o stosunkach polsko-żydowskich w przededniu Wielkiej Wojny’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów*, 3 (2004), 335.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Szymon Rudnicki, 'Towarzystwo Rozwoju Handlu, Przemysłu i Rzemiosł', in *idem, Równi, ale niezupełnie* (Warszawa, 2008), 78–103.

<sup>96</sup> The slogan of a boycott of the Jews was introduced into public circulation as early as the 19th century by Jan Jeleński in his pamphlet entitled *Żydzi, Niemcy i my* (Warszawa, 1876).



Czech examples, justifying the action of fighting against 'Jewish expansiveness' by the defence of 'the state of Polish possessions'. But this kind of rationalization could not conceal the fact that the goals of the fight against the Jews were more far-reaching. Stanisław Pieńkowski vociferated in October: 'The boycott, or a ruthless though bloodless Polish-Jewish war is the beginning of a new era for Poland'.<sup>97</sup> This publicist saw the perspective of a revival of Polish society in radical anti-Semitism.

The ND rhetoric, which centred on the Jews, also became more radical. This kind of reasoning reduced 'all the affairs of this world' to the plotting and scheming of 'international Jewry' and the free-masons.<sup>98</sup> Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski wrote about this grouping's line as reaching the 'summits of absurdity'.<sup>99</sup> Under the wing of this campaign flourished the most extreme forms of anti-Semitism, from medieval-kind of accusations of ritual murder up to strictly racist divagations about the degenerating influence of the Jewish race on the Poles. A manifesto of this kind of thinking was contained in the publications of the chief theorist of this camp who on the eve of the World War argued that Poland without Jews was possible only in Europe without Jews.<sup>100</sup>

Although the boycott action was started by the ND and Catholic press, it was supported by a large part of progressive press,

<sup>97</sup> Stanisław Pieńkowski, *Dwa żywioły. Głos w sprawie żydowskiej* (Warszawa, 1913), 21.

<sup>98</sup> Terej, *Idee, mity, realia*, 63.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski*, 2 vols. (Londyn, 1963), i, 610. Even Krzysztof Kawalec and Teresa Kulak, researchers who cannot be accused of any prejudice against the heritage of the ND, write about that period that 'the Jewish question was then growing into a kind of fetish and the actual and imagined threat on the part of the Jews was gradually acquiring mythical proportions'. On the activeness of *Gazeta Poranna 2 Grosze*, as an expression of 'the further escalation of the increasingly primitive anti-Semitic propaganda', cf. *eadem*, 'Endecja wobec kwestii żydowskiej (lata 1893-1939)', in Ewa Grześkowiak-Łuczyk (ed.), *Polska — Polacy — Mniejszości Narodowe* (Wrocław, 1992), 128; Rudnicki, *Towarzystwo Rozwoju*, 840-5 ff.

<sup>100</sup> Theoretical foundations of 'national revolutions' in Europe were explained by Dmowski in his treatise prepared in the years 1913-14, but published during the First World War. Cf. (Roman Dmowski), R. J., 'Podstawy bytu narodów europejskich I', *Sprawa Polska*, 34 (1917); cf. *idem*, 'Duch narodowy i czynniki rozkładowe I', *ibidem*, 10 (1917); *idem*, 'Duch narodowy i czynniki rozkładowe II', *ibidem*, 49 (1917); *idem*, 'Duch narodowy i czynniki rozkładowe III', *ibidem*, 50 (1917).

including *Prawda* and *Humanista Polski*. In a less overt way, the same ideas were propagated by a number of opinion-making periodicals, such as *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, or the conservative *Świat*, published by the Olgerbrand family, and even by *Kurier Warszawski*. The conservative journals, however, the conciliatory *Kurier Polski* and *Słowo*, connected with the Party of Real Politics, kept aloof from this action. The only big Warsaw daily that expressed condemnation of this anti-Semitic demagoguery was *Nowa Gazeta*. Also the independent socialist journals, whose readers were few, were against this agitation.

There were also some personal protests, such as those by Adam Zakrzewski and Józef Lange, who left the Polish Progressive Party. Much more significant were the public voices of condemnation of the anti-Semitic aggression: apart from the Catholic publicist Teresa Lubińska and the leftist activist Stefania Sempołowska, worthy of note is the attitude of Ludomir Grendyszyński, a conservative from Erazm Piltz's school.<sup>101</sup> Nothing could, however, be compared with the activeness of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay, who until the outbreak of the First World War had been engaged in the fight against anti-Semitism.<sup>102</sup>

Segregationist slogans soon affected other 'Jewish enterprises'. *Gazeta Poranna* as well as *Gazeta Warszawska* called for boycotting all the representatives of the intelligentsia of Jewish descent. These journals became a stronghold of the ND vision of the world. Nationalist periodicals in the provinces, following in the footsteps of *Gazeta Poranna* introduced special columns entitled 'Jewish Masquerade', which unmasked the firms whose owners or employees were of Jewish origin. The boycott also embraced the adversaries of anti-Semitic excesses, such as Ludwik Krzywicki or Baudouin de Courtenay.<sup>103</sup>

The campaign initiated in 1912 most painfully afflicted the Poles of Jewish descent. A dramatic duality could be noticed

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Teresa Lubińska, *Do sumienia waszego mówię* (Warszawa, 1913); Stefania Sempołowska, 'Z powodu nastroju chwili', *Nowa Gazeta*, in *eadem*, *Pisma*, iv: *Publicystyka społeczna*, ed. Zanna Kormanowa (Warszawa, 1960), 49–53.

<sup>102</sup> This problem is presented systematically by Jerzy Jedlicki, 'Resisting the Wave: Intellectuals against Antisemitism in the Last Years of the „Polish Kingdom”', in *Antisemitism and its Opponents*, 60–80.

<sup>103</sup> More about the practical vicissitudes of the boycott action can be found in Zieliński, '„Swój do swego"', 325–46.

among the assimilated Polish Jews, the most manifest in the *Nowa Gazeta*,<sup>104</sup> or *Wolne Słowo*, whose authors, mostly connected with progressive democracy found themselves at the cross-roads. Radicalization of anti-Semitism polarized opinion among the Poles of Jewish origin.

While the publicists of the *Nowa Gazeta* (among others Stanisław Kempner, Józef Wascercug and Józef Lange) opposed the anti-Jewish campaign,<sup>105</sup> the majority of the progressive camp, including the most important grouping Polish Progressive Union and the Polish Progressive Party of Henryk Konic — supported the economic boycott.<sup>106</sup> Among the enthusiasts of this action were Juljan Unszlicht and Leon Brunn.

Without more research it is difficult to define to what extent these 'anti-Semitic sports events' (so called by Zofia Nałkowska) had taken root in the provinces. Lesław Sadowski, who has devoted a systematic study to the documentation from the Łomża, Suwałki and Białystok *guberniyas*, finds that this agitation had also spread to a large degree among the circles of the intelligentsia, even if it was not received in the ND version.<sup>107</sup>

## VII CONCLUSION

The most important effect of the anti-Semitic campaign of 1912 — viewed as a culmination of the processes activated in 1905 — was

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Barbara Petrozolin-Skowrońska, '„Gazeta Handlowa” i „Nowa Gazeta” (1864–1918)', *Rocznik Historii Czasopiśmiennictwa Polskiego*, vii, 1 (1968), 47–72.

<sup>105</sup> Among the leading texts of this circle were: Leo Belmont, Jerzy Huzarski, *Zwycięstwo Romana Dmowskiego* (Warszawa, 1913); Leo Belmont, *A gdy zawieszono „Wolne Słowo”* (Warszawa, 1912); B[ernard] Margules, *W sprawie żydowskiej* (Warszawa, 1912); Józef Lange, *Postęp i nacjonalizm* (Warszawa, 1913); *idem*, *Sprawa żydowska jako zagadnienie ekonomiczne* (Warszawa, 1914). In Galicia this trend found a counterpart in the writings of Wilhelm Feldman and the Cracow *Krytyka*, cf. Michał Śliwa, 'Wilhelma Feldmana poglądy na kwestię żydowską', in *idem*, *Obcy czy swoi*, 51–2.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Stegner, *Liberalowie Królestwa Polskiego*, 199. Cf. also 'Rozprawy w Polskim Zjednoczeniu Postępowym', *Prawda*, ii (1913), 11–14.

<sup>107</sup> Lesław Sadowski, *Polska inteligencja prowincjonalna i jej ideowe dylematy na przełomie XIX i XX wieku* (Warszawa, 1988), 233. Cf. also Małgorzata Dajnowicz, *Orientacje polityczne ludności polskiej północno-wschodniej części Królestwa Polskiego na przełomie XIX i XX wieku*, (Białystok, 2005), 155–67.

a firm embedding of anti-Semitism in the political culture of Congress Poland, and later of all the Polish lands.<sup>108</sup> The majority of anti-Semitic initiatives, such as Stojalowski's movement in the Western Part of Galicia, the weekly *Postęp* in the Poznań district, or the movement of *rolarze* (land-tillers) in Congress Poland, were taken under the wing of the ND.

Anti-Semitism in various forms became one of the permanent elements of the cultural code of the conservative section of Polish society,<sup>109</sup> while a negative attitude to the Jews was for this section of society the basic indicator of their national identity. In other words, patriotism meant for them a fight against the 'Jewish influence'.

The spread of political anti-Semitism together with an activation of the dynamic of events among the Jewish community had led to a serious correction of the Polish attitude to the Jews. In the opinion of the majority of the public, the Jews as a community became a separate element, if not hostile, then at best a group who did not bother about 'Polish interests'. This stigmatization in the first place affected the Poles of Jewish descent, for whom this conflict between the two communities carried a dramatic dissociation of identity. For the nationalist Right the possibility of choosing between two options was an illusion from the very beginning, for in their opinion the stigma of Jewishness would remain for ever. One can risk a statement that the first decade of the 20th century activated in the Polish-Jewish relations a process — as Anna Landau-Czajka called it — of revealing three nations: Poles, Jews, and Poles of Jewish descent.<sup>110</sup> This third group became the object of the most brutal aggression of Polish anti-Semitism.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>108</sup> Cf. Herbert A. Strauss, 'Poland-Culture of Anti-Semitism', in *idem* (ed.), *Hostages of Modernization: Studies on Modern Antisemitism, 1870-1933/1939. Austria-Hungary-Poland-Russia* (Berlin and New York, 1993), 963 ff. A similar argumentation in Konrad Zieliński, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie na ziemiach Królestwa Polskiego w czasie pierwszej wojny światowej* (Lublin, 2005), 416-27.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. Shulamit Volkov, *Germans, Jews and Antisemites: Trials in Emancipation* (Cambridge, 2006), especially the part entitled: 'Antisemitism as Cultural Code', 67-155.

<sup>110</sup> Anna Landau-Czajka, 'Trudny wybór. Asymilowani Żydzi o problemie tożsamości narodowej w II Rzeczypospolitej', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, cxii, 2 (2005), 71.

<sup>111</sup> Cf. an interesting study touching on this problem by Antony Polonsky, "Why Did They Hate Tuwim and Boy So Much"? Jews and "Artificial Jews" in

Another, no less important phenomenon that affected the Polish–Jewish relations was the powerful revival of the culture of the Jewish population in the Polish lands. It was at this time that the Jews as a community wanted to appear as a legitimate society. This was a fact of enormous importance for the further Polish–Jewish debate. Icchak Perez, the writer, spoke at a meeting in 1907: 'The Jews want to be themselves'. The Jewish population *en masse* no longer wanted to communicate with the Poles with the help of middle–men, the Poles of Jewish descent. Although this process did not elsewhere reach the same dynamism as in Congress Poland, in fact it could not be stopped. The period of mono–culture (Helena Datner), sustained by both sides, was no longer possible. The majority of the Polish political class did not want to recognize this fact. We should ask here, however, the question whether such conflict could be avoided at all if we take into consideration the mentality of that era, the ideas of nation and national territory, of the rights of the majority to this territory, and the place reserved for national minorities at that time, and compare this situation with what we know of the experiences of other countries. This mono–cultural attitude had many names. For the ND it signified the exclusion of all the 'non–Polish' groups from the national collectivity, up till a wish to turn the fight against the 'Jewish enemy' into the pivot of all its ideology. For other groups, also those referring to the tradition of the Enlightenment, it signified an actual hegemony of Polish culture and an absolute loyalty of the minorities.

These changes affected most strongly the Polish progressive camp. The crisis in Polish–Jewish relations had led to the marginalization of the Polish version of liberalism. Also the socialist parties striving for Poland's independence were not free of anti–Semitic attitudes.

These trends show the main tendencies concerning the Jewish question characteristic of the Polish elite before the outbreak of World War I, and the events in Congress Poland mirror many directions in the development of the independent Polish state.

(transl. Agnieszka Kreczmar)

---

the Literary Polemics of the Second Polish Republic', in *Antisemitism and Its Opponents*, 189–209.